

THE CHRONICLE

ASTON ABBOTTS PARISH MAGAZINE



ISSUE 196 DECEMBER 2000

The Chronicle online

e mail us at our new address

editor@aston-abbotts-chronicle.co.uk



Editorial

Tuesday 21st November 2000

Well, this is it then. My last **CHRONICLE** in charge. No more Mr. Big Cheese; no longer the head honcho; au revoir et finis.

Actually, and for the sake of complete accuracy, our editor-in-waiting Phil Spooner has pretty much produced this month's paper, helping to ease me into early retirement! Thanks Phil.

The past 2+ years and 24 issues have flown by in a bit of a blur but casting my mind back I can remember a number of events that have made **THE CHRONICLE** headlines.

Back in September 1998 we first reported the plans for improvements to the Church Room / Village Hall. Progress has certainly been made since, with the first funds raised and agreements made, but there is a very, very long way to go. This is one project that will, without doubt, benefit the entire village so hopefully in another two years time Phil will be able to report that the building is nearing completion, or even open! And maybe we will have settled on a name.

On a much sadder note, the A418 has made the headlines all too frequently for all the wrong reasons, and will continue to bring tragedy to our area until BCC acts to slow the traffic and improve conditions. Perhaps their new found enthusiasm for by-passes (another **CHRONICLE** headline grabber) will lead to some extra cash for safety improvements. I will be keeping a very close eye on road plans and hope to report developments as they happen.

The air-lanes overhead have got much busier (and not because

Important!

For our new contact details please see below. You can email **THE CHRONICLE** at

editor@aston-abbotts-chronicle.co.uk

of the Helipad); some petty vandalism came and went; a bonfire crisis was averted; and Nash's Farm part II was approved and built in super-quick time. Further building development in the area is another area that I hope to take a keener interest in.

But the village has seen some major triumphs as well. 1998 saw a record fete with close to £2,500 raised, nearly equaled in 1999 and then beaten this year, with the millennium fete raising close to £2,600. However, at the moment the committee needs new volunteers to ensure the fete's continued success, so please help out if you possibly can.

Then there was the fantastic achievement of AA2000 who produced the book of the history of the village and the exhibition in the Church. This was closely followed by the millennium celebrations, with villagers coming together to welcome the new millennia. On balance, there has been much to celebrate and I'm sure that **THE CHRONICLE** will continue to report on the good news as well as the not so good.

But no matter what happens, I am confident that I will retain one record for all time. I will be the only person to have edited **THE CHRONICLE** in two millennia!

Anyway, for the first time in over two years I can look forward to reading this issue without knowing what's in it! So enough of my ranting - enjoy **THE CHRONICLE**!

Andi Swain

In your Cracking Christmas Chronicle ~

- ◆ Bowled Over
- ◆ A Dog Lovers Plea
- ◆ Doddershall
- ◆ The Merry Mowers
- ◆ Andy Ford in Australia
- ◆ Rain, Rain and More Rain
- ◆ Vic Scott Interview part 2

and much, much more.....

PRODUCTION TEAM CONTACTS

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Distribution	Andy Bystra, 31 The Green 01296 681690
Advertising	Ivan Greenaway, 1 Nash's Farm 01296 682605

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

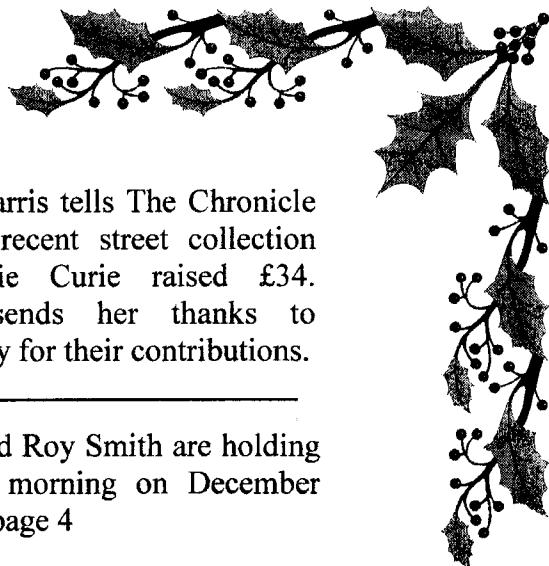
For Editorial and General Enquiries please phone Phil Spooner on :

01296 681544

Please deliver contributions to The Birches in Wingrave Road — it's on the right just before the Royal Oak on the way out of the village.

Copy date for December issue is Tuesday January 2nd 2001 - please pass items to Phil Spooner at The Birches in Wingrave Road or to a member of the Production Team as early as possible. Printed at Waddesdon School and distributed free of charge to all Households in Aston Abbotts, our local Doctor's Surgeries and to Wing Police House.

THE PEOPLE'S PAGE



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

Ivan Greenaway	2nd Dec
Phil Spooner	2nd
Allison Hewitt	11th
Becky Lord	11th
Rosie Manning	12th
Stella Howell	14th
Jack Turner	15th
Claire Barnett	18th
Derek Ludlam	19th
Michael Ellis	19th
Robert Smith	20th
Andrew Lovell	25th
Nicholas Osborn	25th
Val Smith	25th

Elaine Harris tells The Chronicle that the recent street collection for Marie Curie raised £34. Elaine sends her thanks to everybody for their contributions.

Sheila and Roy Smith are holding a coffee morning on December 7th – see page 4

WELCOME

Welcome to Adrian, Vanessa, Sam and Charlie who will be moving into Barry and Mellie's house (1 Longmore Cottage) during December. They are no strangers to Aston Abbots since they lived at 22 The Green for a short while whilst their house in Aylesbury was being decorated. Also, Adrian (who advertises on page 13 of The Chronicle) has decorated several houses in the village. We wish them a long and happy life in Aston Abbots.

Congratulations...

... to Elizabeth Osborn and Ian Wynn who were married at Cublington Church on October 21st. We wish them every happiness for their future together.



FAREWELL

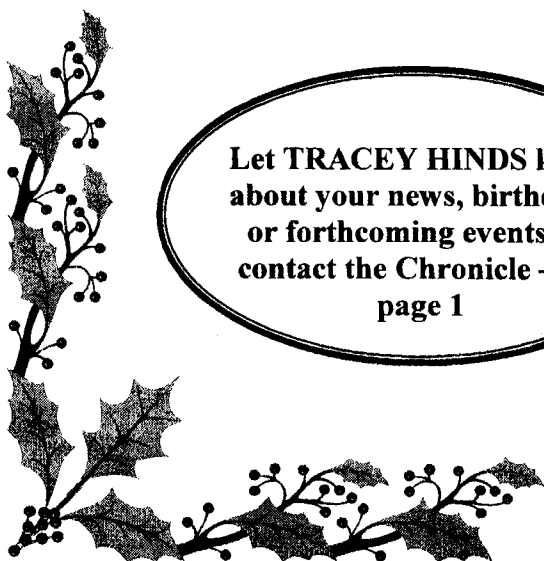
By the time this issue hits your doormat Jack Rennie will have left the village to join his wife Irene and start their new life together in the USA. We wish them 'bon voyage' and a long and happy life the other side of 'the pond.'

FAREWELL

Barry & Mellie and family who are leaving the village on the 8th December to move into their new farm in Wales. They will be missed by all their friends and family but it is a sure bet that we will see them again from time to time when they return for family get-togethers (no doubt with many tales of 'the good life').

Let TRACEY HINDS know about your news, birthdays, or forthcoming events, or contact the Chronicle – see page 1

Len and Doris, Grace, Harry and their family would like to say "thank you" for the many sympathy cards and generous donations received for our brother Reg's sudden death. A cheque for £358.00 has been sent to The British Heart Foundation. Once again, thank you all.



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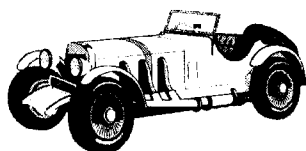
CHILTERN HILLS VINTAGE VEHICLE RALLY 2001

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The above Rally Event is run by the Game Club Charity, which makes donations to individuals and worthy causes within the Aylesbury area where assistance is not covered by any National Charity. If you know of any one who's in need of assistance, for whatever reason, send in details to The Chairman, the Game Club, c/o The Partridge Arms, Green End Street, Aston Clinton, Bucks.

Coffee Morning

Raising funds for the Aylesbury Hospice at
Florence Nightingale House

On

Thursday 7th December 2000

At

7 Bricstock, Aston Abbots

From 10am to 12.30pm

Please come and bring your friends

*Bring & Buy—Tombola
Hospice Christmas Cards—Gifts—Cakes*

Sue Cato the fundraising manager will attend. Any
gifts for the stalls will be greatly
appreciated—Tel: 01296 688198

IN THE VILLAGE 1

MERRY MOWER'S GATHERING

On Thursday 2nd November the 'Churchyard Mowers' gathered at The Royal Oak to celebrate another successful year of maintaining our churchyard grass in a manner to which Aston Abbots has become accustomed!

The evening provided an very pleasant opportunity to share a 'beer or two' and thank those involved in cutting the grass, trimming around the grave stones, especially RGC for keeping our old mower going and providing (through funds made available from our Parish Council) a shiny new 'sit-on' mower.

Since this new equipment should make cutting the grass considerably easier next year, all the existing 'mowers' willingly signed on for another year! However, it is hoped that a few public spirited souls reading this might like to come and swell our little band. If you are interested in helping in this way to keep Aston Abbots the pleasant place it is, please contact Gordon Kemp on 681763.

Finally, many thanks to all at the Royal Oak for hosting our little soiree and providing a very pleasant buffet.



DO YOU FANCY A COFFEE?

On Thursday 7th December Sheila and Roy Smith are holding a coffee morning at 7 Bricstock, to raise funds for the Aylesbury Hospice. Sheila and Roy moved to the village from Linslade in the Summer. They told The Chronicle:

"We have been fund-raising for the Hospice for the past two years, after losing our daughter-in-law to cancer, aged 29. Thanks to the generous support of friends in Leighton Linslade, the total raised is now over £500.

"As we haven't got to know many of the villagers in Aston Abbots yet, we would like to extend a warm welcome to anyone who can come along or to any other supporters who would be willing to assist in any way, or donate items for sale. We also have a selection of cards including Christmas Cards printed on behalf of the Hospice, should anyone be interested.

"Hopefully with enough support we will be able to hire the Village Hall next year! Any unsold items will be taken by Sue Cato (Fund-raising Manager for the Hospice) to be sold in their charity shops."

Thank you and we hope see you there - Sheila and Roy Smith

THE JANUARY CHRONICLE

As school holidays will affect the printing of the Chronicle's January issue it will appear some time during the week beginning January 8th 2001.

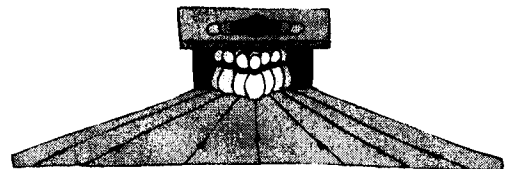
630 MEMBERS BOWLED OVER!!

Like most events, members and guests met at the Bull for a glass or two of lemonade prior to boarding the Motts coach for Xscape, that huge 'blot' on the Milton Keynes landscape which houses such a wonderful selection of entertainment and sporting activities.

Since very few of our members are anywhere near fit or skilled enough to be able to use the 300 or so metres of real snow ski slope, it had been decided to opt for a much safer ten pin bowling 'contest'. Nigel Palmer organised everyone into six teams of mixed ability and it was purely coincidence that the two most recent editors of the Chronicle were in the same team as his. Modesty also prevents making too much out of the fact that his team were the clear winners over two games or that 'vast fortunes' were made in 'side bets'.

Francesca (who seems to have considerable influence at the site) kindly arranged the bowling and for a light meal to be served halfway through the game - thanks Francesca. The entire evening was great fun and apart from a few 'sore losers', the general consensus was that a similar trip should be arranged for next year.

The facilities at Xscape are extensive and very well presented. As well as the ski slope and bowling it includes a swimming pool, gymnasium, saunas, extensive pool/snooker hall and rock climbing. There are also several restaurants, bars sports equipment outlets and amusements; something for everyone. If you are interested just pop in and have a look around; I think you'll be impressed.



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

It rather looked as though the rain would ruin Remembrance parades held in this area this year but as luck would have it, the legion parade held at Long Marston assembled at 10.45 on Sunday the 12th in bright sunshine. A colourful sight with the autumn colours contrasting with the standards and uniforms. Admittedly it was jolly cold but this didn't seem to bother the Legion members, Scouts, Guides and Brownies as they stood to order for the few minutes of silence and the laying of wreaths; Tim Loder laying the wreath on behalf of the Legion.

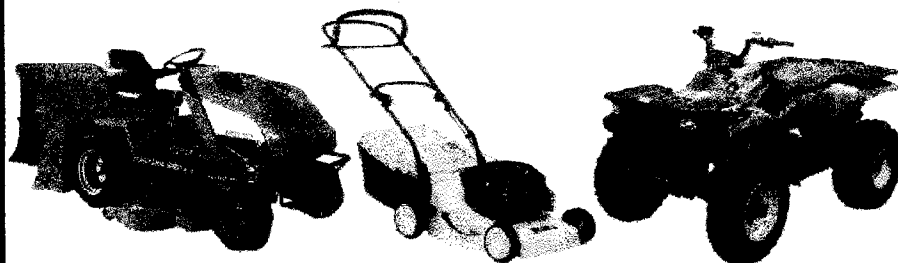
The order to Quick March down to the church was well intended but it made you realise that not only are the survivors of the war getting to be few in number but anything quick was rather out of the question. Nonetheless, it was a proud column which arrived at the church for what was to be a very good service. It was nice to see such a relatively big church so full that several of us had to stand.



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IN THE VILLAGE 2

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ALEXANDER M. ALLCOCK-ROUSE
24 Beamish Way, Winslow, Bucks MK18 3EU

The Editor, "The Chronicle"

8 November 2000

Dear Sir

I am a very regular visitor to your parish (or, more specifically, The Old Masters!) and have enjoyed reading your most entertaining publication over the last few years.

In the latest issue, I noticed the Caption Competition and could not resist writing in with the following:

- It's Ben Johnson - he always does better on grass
- You get a lot less bovver with a hover
- And in the 8.45 at Aston Abbots it's Dave riding 'Flying Mo.....
- He'll be doing the trees next
- This way to the alternative helipad
- Have you got a license for that??
- That Luton Airport is taking the p-ss

Hope these will be helpful to you. Keep up the good work!

Yours faithfully

Alex Allcock-Rouse

PS What's the prize for winning????

Errr... prize??? Oh dear! We did have a bottle of something put by, but unfortunately the outgoing editor drank it. Never mind, it was only cheap aftershave. Can we offer you oodles of kudos for appearing within our pages? You are el ganador, le gagnant, der Sieger, il vincitore, o vencedor! In short, you are the winner. Also, you were the only entrant.

Seriously, thanks for the letter and we're glad you enjoy THE CHRONICLE—Phil (new Ed)

RETIREMENT

A surprise party was held at the 'Bull' on Sat 18th Nov. to mark John Brancker's transition from being 'boxed in' by meaningful employment to well earned (some would say) retirement. Friends and family gathered at the pub to celebrate the occasion in the only way Aston Abbots knows how: with tremendous enthusiasm.

Of course, the cabaret 'team' were there (John included) to sing the night away – well some of it as Lol Provided a great selection of 'nostalgic' 60-80's music which kept most people dancing till late. A very nice buffet was supplied by Frank & Louise and all in all another great night.



A WARM WELCOME?

St. James' Church likes to give people a warm welcome when they come to worship. But, unfortunately our overhead heaters are very rapidly approaching the end of their useful life – one of them has already broken. They can no longer be repaired, and we are faced with purchasing replacements.

We have had an estimate to replace the heaters with more modern and efficient ones. But, we cannot afford the estimated £2,500 cost - certainly not in the next financial year. Each heater costs about £300 to buy and install, and we should really like to have them installed before the weather gets really cold.

The question is – can anyone help us with the finance? Are there perhaps twenty people in Aston Abbots who would be prepared to make an interest-free loan of £100 for a couple of years or so? Would someone like to sponsor one of our new heaters? You may not be able to do either of these things – but please could you help us in any way that you can?

Please contact either Bob Willmott (681623) or Shirley Ford (681865) for further information.

If you can help, by however little, please contact Bob or Shirley.

A PLEA TO DOG LOVERS

In their September interview Liz and Patrick Clarke told of their love of dogs. Now Liz offers a yuletide plea for help.

As you know, I often help out at Chilterns Dog Rescue at weekends, where we normally keep around 25 dogs who are waiting to be found loving new homes. Christmas can be a desperate time in the dog world - already we are being inundated by requests to take in dogs that are no longer wanted. CDRS also tries to help with the plight of dogs from Wales, where there are no local rescue centres & the dogs have a mere 10 days at the Council Pound to be reclaimed/rehomed before being put to sleep. Already we have a backlog of Welsh dogs waiting for places in rescue centres as kennel spaces are full, with few people wanting to rehome a dog in the busy pre-Christmas period.

In previous years we have managed to save more dogs by placing some in foster homes over the Christmas period and I was wondering if you could print this appeal in the Chronicle to see if anyone in the village might be interested in fostering a dog over Christmas - or indeed helping in this way at any other time. We don't know yet what the demand will be but knowing there were people to call on in an emergency could save dogs lives.

If anyone is interested in fostering, please contact me on 01296 681064 or Chilterns Dog Rescue on 01442 867009 to discuss the possibility.

We would also welcome dog walkers at the kennels any day between 10.30 & 2pm. Donations of blankets, leads, dog food etc also gratefully received - and of course we always need funds! Many thanks.

Liz Clarke

Photographs

by Paul Ridgley

A photograph captures a moment in time and can communicate directly with our imagination and emotions to bring back a myriad of memories.

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(07971) 936767

ANDY FORD AT THE 2000 OLYMPICS

My trip to the Sidney Olympics really began in September 1999 as I began to wonder how I could arrange to get there. Luckily my aunt in Scotland found a full page advert in one of the Sunday papers describing a tour company called Sports World and based at Abingdon. This set the wheels in motion and through them my flight, accommodation and events tickets were soon arranged. The time from September 99 to Sept. 2000 seemed to slip by and it was time to go.

On the evening of Monday the 18th Sept. I boarded a Cathay Pacific flight to Hong Kong, leaving Heathrow at 10.50 pm. and arriving in Hong Kong at 5.40 on the Tuesday evening. I changed planes, taking off at 7.30 and arriving in Sidney at 7 am Wednesday morning where I was met by a Sports World representative and transferred to my accommodation just outside Sidney. This turned out to be a superior Motor Inn. After unpacking and looking around, I had lunch and fell asleep for 5 hours; had an evening meal and turned in again.

Thursday 21st Sept. I was due to go on a sight seeing tour of the Blue mountains. I got to the pick-up point but the coach did not arrive so I made my way back to the motel and just lazed around the pool.

Friday 22nd Athletics started today. I was up at 7 o'clock showered, breakfasted and out of the motel at 8 o'clock. Caught the train into central Sidney and another out to the stadium arriving at 9.00. Olympic Park consisted of Home Bush Stadium and Swimming Pool. The athletics started at 10 until 2.00 pm. Then the stadium emptied. The second session started around 5.00 pm. However the times varied each day. There was always entertainment on hand in the park, music, dancing and lots of food. The weather was hot, above 25 degrees. I arrived back at the motel at 11.00

Saturday 23rd. Usual routine; up at 7.00 arriving at the stadium by 9.00. The weather was cooler now and I saw the men and women's 100 metre races and watched Steve Backley win a silver medal. I usually sat with the English fans though in a different seat each day. Back at the motel at midnight.

Sunday 24th Back at Homebush Stadium, lots of exciting athletics to watch including the women's marathon and a gold won by G.B. Denise Lewis in pouring rain. English fans ecstatic. We all sang and cheered. Got back to the motel at 11.30

Monday 25th. Cold and cloudy today but back to the stadium for some great athletics with G.B. doing well. 112 thousand people saw Jonathan Edwards win a gold medal and Catherine Merry and Kelly Holmes a bronze each. Much to celebrate so didn't get back to the Motel until 1.30 am.

Tuesday 26th. No athletics today as it is a rest day. I decided to have a bit of a 'lay in' and then caught the train into central Sidney where I wandered down to Darling Harbour. A cruise seemed a good idea so I boarded a tourist boat for a trip

(including lunch) around Sidney Harbour. We left around 12.30 for the 2 hour cruise and the lunch turned out to be a beautiful buffet meal with plenty to drink. The weather was rather cloudy but this didn't spoil the trip. Once back at the harbour, I went for a look around the inside and outside of the Sidney Opera house, returning to the motel for an evening meal and an early night.

Wednesday 27th. Raining as I left the motel but by 10 o'clock the sun was shining and it just got hotter and hotter. Once again there were some very exciting events taking place in the stadium including the men and women's 200 metres.

Thursday 28th. Repeat of yesterday with a wet start and the sun coming out by 11.00. During another feast of athletics, Darren Campbell won a silver in the 200 metres final causing terrific excitement amongst us English fans; once again, back late to the motel.

Friday 29th. Wake up to a very warm morning and get to the stadium by 9.00. By now, at 31 degrees it's really hot but I settle down to enjoy the mixture of track and field events which include women's javelin, relay heats and the men and women's 100 metres. Unfortunately the G.B. men made a real mess of their heat and the women failed to qualify. We still didn't qualify in the men and women's 4x400 either.

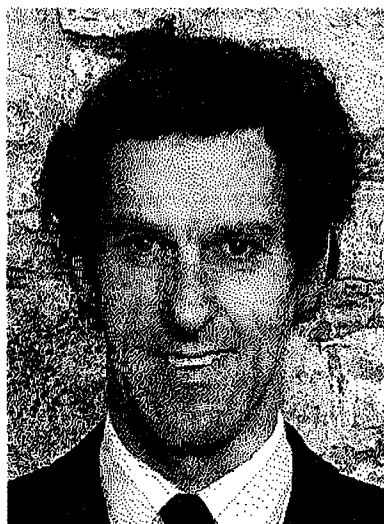
Saturday 30th. Went sightseeing this morning and then to the stadium for the evening session where I witnessed Paula Ratcliffe run a brilliant 10,000 metres only to finish 4th. It was a very hot day but I also saw Kelly Holmes run in the 1500 metres, women's javelin, high jump and sprint relays.

Sunday 1st Oct. The athletics have finished but there is still a lot going on. Decided to watch Show Jumping, Women's Pentathlon Canoe and Kayak on TV during the day. However, late afternoon I caught the train back to Sidney to go to the party being held at the Watersedge Restaurant and given by Sports World for it's guests. This turned out to be right at the base of Sidney Bridge. There was plenty of food and drink and a giant TV Screen so everyone could watch the closing ceremony. The party started at 7.30 and at 10.30 we saw the most fantastic fireworks display which took place right above our heads. Millions of people were out and about around the harbour that night. I finally got back to the motel at 2.00.

Monday 2nd. Slept in and after breakfast packed up to catch the 4.00 o'clock flight, changing in Hong Kong before arriving in Heathrow at 6.30 on Wednesday.

My memories of Sidney Harbour, the Opera House, and Homebush Stadium will stay with me for ever. I found the people open and friendly and I am so pleased that I went to the best Olympics ever.

Andy Ford



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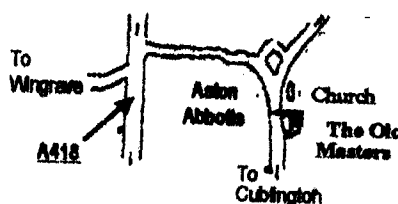
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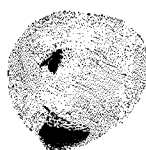
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DODDERSHALL

Chronicle history writer Colin Higgs tells us the history of an ancient Bucks house.

Doddershall was originally one of the three old manors in the parish of Quainton. It is thought there was a house on the site at least 1000 years ago, and in mediaeval times it was said to have belonged to a family which gave it their name – Dodders Hall.

In 1503 it passed by purchase to Thomas Pigott, a sergeant of law, and continued in that line of family until 1735 when the estate descended to a Shropshire branch. The house has remained in the same family since the days of Sergeant Pigott.

Doddershall is tucked away and up to 100 years ago there were no roads to it. It is full of character with much of historical and architectural interest.

The building stands on three sides of a quadrangle, of which the oldest side is said to date from the era of Richard III.

Drinking water was drawn from a spring in the cellar of the south wing, which was built in the 17th century. Prior to that the well stood in the open. The politician John Wilkes of Aylesbury presented a bell for the roof and part of the ancient moat remains on two sides.

It is stated Sergeant Pigott's widow put in hand some alterations to the house, involving her in legal action concerning timbers she used. It was contended they should have been put at the disposal of a naval shipbuilder, but she was able to prove she had acquired them in good faith as free lumber.

Doddershall has many trapdoors, secret passages and hidden rooms. Also old spits and wooden hooks for hanging hams, an ancient oven, salt and spice cupboards and an elm-sided table.

The banister rails are thought to have been the communion rails from the long vanished Hogshall church and panelling in the chapel room was made up of old doors from the former boxed pews at Quainton church.

A fine house in rural Bucks.



Colin Higgs

RAIN RAIN RAIN

The recent rains have not hit Aston Abbots quite as badly as some parts of the country as we are lucky enough to live on top of a hill, thanks to our ancestors who moved the village up from Burston. OK, the road has been covered just short of the Wingrave Crossroads, however this is but a minor inconvenience to those walking back from the bus stop.

At least one AA resident is considering whether to make a claim for a flood damaged car, though it beats me where it must have been parked. Dog walking has been a bit hazardous as well on certain paths. The impact on me personally has been the cancellation of Saturday morning golf on at least three occasions. When we have managed to play there has been the additional hazard of lost balls in water-filled bunkers. That will teach me not to hit the ball in the right direction.

Elsewhere in the country, people have not been so lucky. One of my company's hotels situated at Box Hill in Surrey was able to boast an indoor swimming pool for the first time in 300 years. Unfortunately it was in the reception area. Britain's rainiest town is further north at Fort William but it can only manage rain on 240 days per year on average. Compare this to the most rainy place on earth, Mount Waialeale on the Pacific island of Kauai which manages an average of 335 days of rain per year.

While Yorkshire and the Midlands saw around eight inches of rain in October, the soggy city of Hilo in Hawaii (average annual rainfall 134 inches) managed 27.24 inches in 24 hours on 1st November. One inch of rain is the equivalent of 14.5 million gallons of water per square mile, so this downpour represented 395 million gallons per square mile or 40,000 gallons for each inhabitant of the city. Even this was nowhere near the one-day world record. Chilaos on the Indian Island of Reunion was deluged by 73.6 inches (188cm for those who cannot remember what inches are) on March 15, 1952. Now that's what I call rain!

Nigel Palmer

LIVE MUSIC AT THE 'BULL'

I have to say I rather miss those Friday 'jazz nights' at the 'Bull' but since they were generally poorly attended by village folk, it was probably inevitable that they were discontinued a few weeks ago.

However, just as the echo of the last jazz riff became a distant memory, a group called 'Scared of Heights' showed up at the 'Bull' on the 11th Nov. to entertain with a great selection of mostly popular rock numbers; just the sort of music which the regulars enjoy. 'Same again' please landlord!!



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ASTON ABBOTTS PARISH COUNCIL

Aston Abbots Parish Council met at the Church Room at 8.00pm on Wednesday 1st November. John Sansome, the chairman, took the meeting. No representatives from the District or County Councils were present, but Police Constable Buckle gave a brief report, indicating that we are a relatively crime free area.

A Periodic Electoral Review is currently taking place in Aylesbury Vale, and the Council reaffirmed their previous decision to increase the number of Parish Councillors representing Aston Abbots from five to seven at the next election in 2003.

A proposal to install new street lights in Moat Lane and Lines Hill, thus paving the way for a 30mph speed limit to be introduced was discussed, but it was decided not to proceed with this very expensive option. The Parish Clerk was asked to arrange for the branches of trees which are obscuring street lights to be lopped before the Spring.

Recreation Ground

Vandalism has now spread to the trees surrounding the Rec, and in particular the memorial tree has been badly damaged. The issue of safety in the children's play area was discussed. It was agreed to donate a sum of money towards the cost of the village firework display.

Church Room Extension

Cllr. Manning reported that there is already £5,884 in the Church Room Fund; a splendid amount to have raised in so short a time.

The accounts were approved and planning decisions ratified. Cllr. Margaret Kent agreed to organise the planting of the free spring bulbs we have been given by AVDC, and the meeting closed at 9.34pm.

HELP!

FETE! PLEASE HELP!

We still need a co-ordinator for next year's fete. Although the fete seems a long way away there are a few advance things it is useful to be doing in December or January. The fete is the village's major social event of the year, and the funds that it raises are vital to the village.

Please consider making this the year that you make a significant contribution. You will find that you get masses of support from an experienced committee and from lots of other people in the village - this really is a rewarding thing to do. If you would like to know more about what's involved ring me on 681373.

Gordon Smith

WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN FAITH?

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT BAPTISM? CONFIRMATION?

JANUARY/FEBRUARY : SEVEN EVENINGS OF DISCOVERY

1. **Is the village church relevant?** How? We will be using part of a video showing a discussion with church people and non-churchgoers.
2. **Who is Jesus?** Jesus is the central figure in the Christian faith, without him there is no such faith. Using some of the Alpha material we will find out some of the answers.
3. **Church history;** some of the reasons why the church has developed in a particular way. To understand the past is to begin to understand the present.
4. **The Lord's Prayer.** What about prayer? Does it work?
5. **The Creed.** Every Sunday Christians all over the world say the Creed. What is it and why say it?
6. **Who is the Holy Spirit?** Can God become real in our lives? Will that change anything? Some people who have a personal experience of these questions may join us if the group agrees.
7. **The Eucharist or the Holy Communion.** What does it mean and do I want to be part of it?

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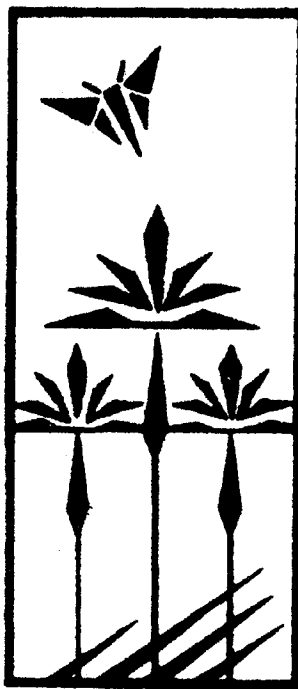
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THE VILLAGE INTERVIEW

Last month Vic Scott told of how he grew up and worked in the village. This month he talks about becoming a freelance naturalist and he treats us to some more reminiscences of past village life.

Travelling had been an early ambition of Vic Scott's. "You know we had the Czechs in the village during the war and I became quite friendly with President Benes. The following year I went over and I went to the Palace and I was invited in and had dinner with the President and Madam Benes. That was one of the highlights of my early life. After that I never looked back and I've been abroad every year since."

Leading groups of people on naturalist tours became an important part of Vic's freelance work. "I did that up until quite recently. We retired from professional work like that when I had a slight stroke three years ago."

As well as leading natural history tours, Vic teaches and lectures to this day, and he met Christine through work. "We actually met on a Natural History WEA course at Uxbridge. Christine was one of my students." Christine explains further, "He didn't turn up on the first meeting. I wasn't going back but the person organising it said 'Give him another try'". Vic admits, "I got the dates mixed up!"

"I do a lot of work for the WEA - that's the Workers' Education Association - and also do some for local authorities. All based on aspects of natural history or travel. I'm on the official panel of speakers for the National Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Royal Horticultural Society. We use colour slides."

Vic had bought a camera soon after he left school. "I started nature photography when I was about 16 or 17. I saved up and bought my first really good 35 mm camera and my first bird photograph that I ever took on that is still one of my best ever wildlife shots that I still use regularly in lectures. That was a picture of a little owl standing on brickwork in an old building. I got into my hide with my camera focused on his bit of brickwork at 8 o'clock on a June evening. I was still in that hide at 2 o'clock in the morning when the Church clock struck two and at that very moment the owl settled on the brickwork and I fired the flash. You can use a mediocre camera, but to get the pictures you've really got to have the patience."

Despite his busy lecturing schedule, Vic spends much of his time in his beloved garden. "We are nearly self-supporting in fruit and vegetables through the year. I love growing things like any sort of fruit. We grow apricots, nectarines, peaches, grapes, all the currants, apples, pears, but I love experimenting with things like sweetcorn, sweet peppers - all those sort of rather unusual newer type of vegetables."

Vic has seen enormous changes take place in the village over the course of his life. "I don't want to see much more. I think the village shouldn't really get any bigger. What I dread is one-day the possibility of a motorway or dual-carriageway cutting through the lower part of the Parish - and then it's not so much the motorway and traffic but all of the ancillary developments that follow on."

"It's tragic at the moment the state that farming is in. I have been associated with the land all my life and to realise that a lot of farmers today are not taking home at the end of the year as much money as a farm worker would have earned a few years ago... it's terrible... it really is."

"The other thing that has changed since my schooldays, it was almost a self-supporting community. There were so many people who lived in the village who were tradesmen in their own right. We had the village blacksmith who didn't just shoe the horses, he could make the metal rim for a cartwheel, repair an engine, weld, do electrical work - he really was a jack-of-all-trades. We had a village Baker, Tom Humphreys at the Bull and Butcher. On a Friday he would bake a lot of cakes and he would pull these cakes out of the oven, the old chickens will be running around in the bakehouse picking up the crumbs. Nothing about all this nonsense of hygiene and all of that. Pigs out in the yard."

Christine asks, "Wasn't there somebody who took teeth out?" Vic remembers, "Oh that was in Wingrave. That was a chap who actually qualified as a dentist and was then turned out of the dental profession and he then set up as an unlicensed bookmaker. People would drop in to make bets and at the same time people would say 'I've got a dreadful toothache' and he would either fill it or take it out, quite illegally. He used to charge £2 for a filling and £1 for an extraction, in his sitting room in Wingrave."

"We had a village barber. He was actually an under gardener at the Abbey for Mortons and he used to cut hair in his village shed down in the council houses. He used to charge sixpence in old money to cut your hair. There used to be three or four men in there waiting their turn and all the village gossip and all the local news was all talked over in that little garden shed. Before he moved down there he had a workshop in Moat Lane and that was the barber's shop."

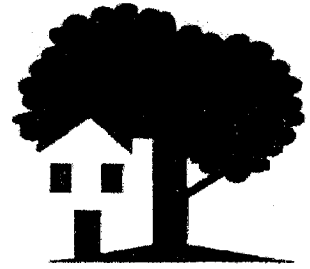
"In my young days it was essentially an agricultural community. Nearly everybody either worked directly or was associated with a farm in the village. Now... there are only one or two working farms in the village, but most of the other farmland now is kept for what I call hobby farming. Most working people in the village now commute."

"There was a time of course when I knew the name of everybody in the village. Well now, I wouldn't think I know a quarter of the people. I hope it won't change much more. I think for a small village it's still a fairly close knit community and one thing I'm very, very pleased about is that most of the relative newcomers mix in with other people and join in things to the benefit of the village. It's lovely to see people around at the Nashs Farm development joining in things in the village and becoming very friendly. That is very nice."

"My great-grandfather came into this house when it was built in 1854 and we've been here ever since. A survey was done right back in the early years of the century of the population of the village and what people did - and the report said of us, 'A very respectable family'!"

Vic Scott was interviewed by Phil Spooner

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GUY FAWKES

We all doubted whether there would be a bonfire this year since it seemed to have rained continuously for the past month. A cruel twist of fate decreed that the day before the bonfire party was due to take place (Sun. the 5th Nov.) was just about perfect – no rain or wind. Indeed, an attempt was made to hold the event on the Sat. night but the insurance cover could not be arranged in time.

I think it rained just about all day on Sunday but Lol and the 'lads' were determined not to be deterred and worked hard, in difficult conditions to 'prime the fire' and set up the fireworks display with safety in mind as well as the need to keep every thing dry. Getting the fire to burn with anything like enthusiasm was not easy but Dave Lewis, armed with the huge ex-army flame thrower that Alison regularly uses to 'crisp up' her crème brulee soon had it burning fiercely enough to provide a modicum of comfort to those stood around to watch.

It seemed a miracle that any firework could be lit in such a downpour; or indeed that there were so many 'kids of all ages' prepared to stand out in such conditions to see them. However, light them they did and we thoroughly enjoyed the show. Of course 'like banging your head against the wall' it was very nice to be able to stop and in our case go home to a change of clothes, a warm fire and hot soup.

Very many thanks to Lol for organising it yet again, to all those fine fellows who helped to run it and those who contributed to the cost of the fireworks, especially our Parish Council.



TRICK OR TREAT

Written on 1st November, while events were still fresh in my mind.

Treat

What a joy to be once again visited by the ghost and ghouls of Aston Abbotts. The children and small tots (or their parents) excelled themselves again this year with their make up and costumes, and all in the spirit of the evening.

To open ones door and find a small girl who hasn't yet learnt how to say "trick or treat" being prompted by Mum is so sweet. We always make sure we have a good supply of chocolate bars ready for the event. It is a real treat, so please keep it up Kids and Parents.

Trick

After the welcome treat, comes the not so welcome TRICK.

When all the young ones were safely back indoors, the second wave of "trick or treaters" arrived. They were a group of village teenagers both boys and girls. No knocking on doors, no make-up, no costumes, just running and shouting around the street, flour and eggs being thrown everywhere (please note this was not in front of their own homes). When they had finished the area was littered with MacDougals flour bags, supermarket carrier bags, flour, broken eggs and empty egg cartons (incidentally the egg cartons were marked Bitter-swell Farm Lutterworth), which I had to clear up. We had eggshell and yolk on our front wall, flowerbeds and window-sills. Please leave it out Kids have some respect for other villagers and their property.

We will always welcome the TREATERS but not the TRICKSTERS.

JOHN (Victor Meldrew) BRANCKER... "I don't believe it"

VILLAGE SKIPS DUMPED

The fleeting and largely unnoticed appearance of the village skip in November may have been its last visit to Aston Abbotts.

AVDC have voted to end the scheme, believing it to be abused by the dumping of non-household material. Also, concern had been voiced over the hazard posed by overflowing skips filled with potentially dangerous waste.

As a replacement we are to get visits from a "roving refuse freighter", which will collect bulky household items. This will visit the village with the same frequency as the skip, but it will remain for just half a day and the driver will vet the materials being dumped.

Let us hope they are sensible enough to send the freighter at weekends and evenings, and not during weekdays when most villagers are at work.

When we hear that the freighter is coming we will let you know.

Phil Spooner



**The Editor and Team of the
Aston Abbotts Chronicle
would like to wish a very
Merry Christmas and a
Happy, Prosperous and
Healthy New Year to all of
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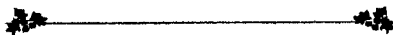
scrambled egg with prawns served on garlic toast

or

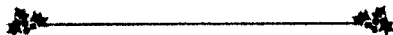
Piquillo pepper filled with ratatouille and served with a sweet pepper sauce

or

Melon and Fresh Fruit Platter



Home Made Sorbet



*Roast Breast of Fresh Turkey with home-made stuffing,
Chippolata wrapped in bacon and Fresh Cranberry Sauce*

or

Salmon Dieppoise

poached in white wine served with mussel, mushroom and cream sauce

or

Beef Bourguignon

braised in red wine with bacon, garlic, onions, mushrooms and fresh herbs

or

*Pancake filled with fresh spinach and pine nuts in a béchamel sauce
with a hint of nutmeg served with a spicy tomato sauce*



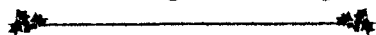
A Selection of Fresh Seasonal Vegetables and Potatoes



Desserts of the Day

or

Christmas Pudding with Brandy Sauce



Coffee and Mince Pies



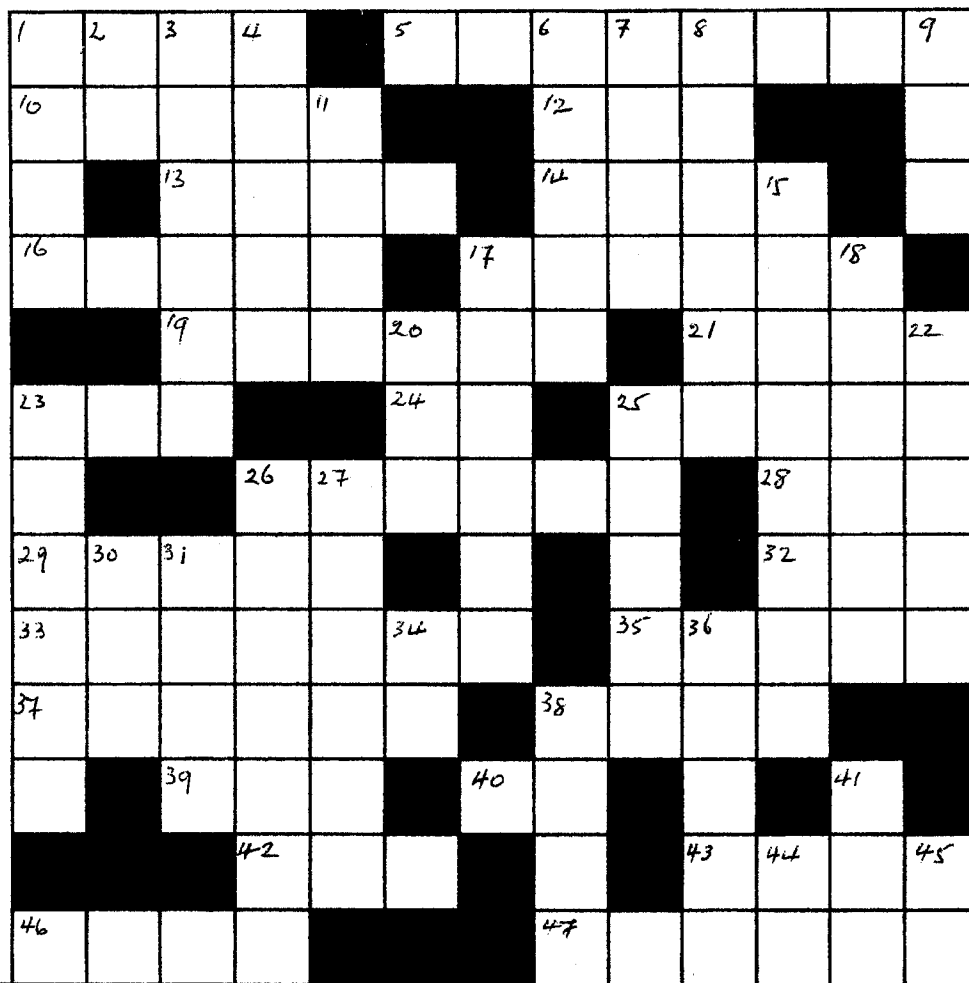
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THE DECEMBER CHRONICLE CROSSWORD



Answers to November

ACROSS: 1&9D Milton Keynes. 6 Block. 10 Idiom. 11 Squat. 13 Nagger. 15 Urdu. 16 Hegemony. 17 Attar. 18 Use. 20 Rush. 21 Unearths. 22 Edna. 25 To. 26 Store. 28 Respect. 31 Art. 32 Air. 33 Park. 34 Paton. 36 Orate. 39 Lea. 40 Wired. 41 Dirt. 42 Isle. 43 Asset. 44 Estate.

DOWN: 1 Mind. 2 Ida. 3 Lights. 4 Together. 5 Omega. 6 Burn. 7 Lady. 8 OTU. 12 Quote. 14 Rerun. 17 Australia. 18 Uttered. 19 Shock. 22 Narrows. 24 Dean. 26 Sap. 27 Otters. 29 Spares. 30 Pate. 35 Oats. 37 Rile. 38 Date. 42 It.

ACROSS: 1. Local Village (4)

- 5. Bedfordshire town (8)
- 10. Fool (5)
- 12. Letter; — belt (3)
- 13. State of mind (4)
- 14. SOAR (anag 4)
- 16. Mends (5)
- 17. Heavily decorated (6)
- 19. To turn to bone (6)
- 21. Covers (4)
- 23. Strange (3)
- 24. Preposition (2)
- 25. Confess (5)
- 26. Country landowner (6)
- 28. Utilize (3)
- 29. Goodbye (5)
- 32. Not tall (3)
- 33. Recount (7)
- 35. NO SUN (anag 5)
- 37. Sententious (6)

38. Oxfordshire river (4)

- 30. French no (3)
- 40. Depart (2)
- 42. Compass point (abb. 3)
- 43. Fish (4)
- 46. Suits; sudden seizures (4)
- 47. Seat; impose a burden (7)
- DOWN: 1. Zephyr (4)
- 2. Identity (abb. 2)
- 3. Hunter (6)
- 4. Harry Secombe was one of them
- 6. Tusk (5)
- 7. Wild Cherry (4)
- 8. A forerunner (6)
- 9. Nothing (3)
- 11. Throw (4)
- 15. A spur (8)
- 17. Clerical work room (6)
- 18. American Inventor (6)
- 20. Promise to pay (3)

22. Casseroles (5)

- 23. Fruit (6)
- 25. Long periods of time (5)
- 26. Given from the pulpit (7)
- 27. Attractively unusual (6)
- 30. Boy's name (3)
- 31. Press (4)
- 34. Chem symbol technetium (2)
- 36. Lubricated (5)
- 38. IS ON (anag 5)
- 41. Everything (3)
- 44. Short editor (2)
- 45. Compass point (2)

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RECTOR'S REPORT

We are fast approaching that season of the year when we dust of the Christmas Decorations again. Indeed, some of the shops seem to have been decorated for weeks already!

To an extent Christmas Decorations follow a pattern. There was a time when we used to make paper chains with gummed paper to festoon our rooms – the trouble was that the glue would always give way at just the wrong moment. Then came the crepe paper decorations – and those very clever bells and balls made from tissue paper that could be folded flat.

The lights on the Christmas Tree evolved from having rather large screw-in bulbs to much neater bulbs that can now not only flash but twinkle, and even provide a background of Christmas 'musik'.

But it is the decorations that we hang on the tree which are perhaps the most interesting. Some are made of wood, other plastic or glass. There are some that are earthenware/china, whilst others are made from paper. There may even be some that are made of metal – although I suspect that these would now come with a health warning about being dangerous – especially in the immediate vicinity of the lights.

The material from which they are made is not that important – nor is their value derived from the number of years that we have owned them. Their value comes to a very large extent from the things they symbolise. For many of them have a Christian meaning.

There has always been an argument about whether the Christmas Tree should have an angel or a star at the top. The angel reminds us of Gabriel who brought the good tidings to Mary, whilst the star reminds us of that star which led the Wise Men to the Stable in Bethlehem. Other angels and stars can remind us of the shepherds watching their flocks by night who saw a great company of the heavenly host. The round balls remind us of the wholeness of God's creation, whilst the apples speak of the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The bells remind us of the proclamation of the good News. Even the figure of Father Christmas is a reminder of St. Nicholas, a Bishop of the early Church, who, as well as proclaiming the Gospel, brought gifts for needy children. I do not think that our collection of decorations includes a dove. But the dove reminds us of God the Holy Spirit who descended on Jesus at his Baptism and on his disciples on the Day of Pentecost, and through them has come to us.

As you put up your Christmas Decorations I hope that you will reflect on their significance, on the story of which they remind us, and may be drawn to wonder at the greatness of God's love for us which that story reveals.

Bob Willmott



1ST WINGRAVE SCOUT GROUP

Our new hut is progressing well and we hope to be in by Christmas.!!!

BEAVERS

We have been busy making a number of crafts to be sold at the Christmas Bazaar. The Beavers have really enjoyed themselves, whilst at the same time helping to raise money for the hut.

CUBS

November was a month filled with crafts. The Cubs have also been busy making crafts to sell at the bazaar. They also had the chance to take part in the District Handicraft Day at Wing, all those boys who went along had a wonderful day (and gained part of an award).

Highlight of the month was the 14th when we were treated to a wonderful evening with an Indian lady. She talked to the Cubs about her Hindu way of life. She brought greeting cards from many of their special occasions, which the boys found fascinating and provoked many questions. She also brought along examples of shrines and illustrations of many of their Gods. Finally the boys had the chance to taste some authentic food..... Delicious! This was part of their Countries and Cultures badge work and was a real hit with the boys (and Leaders!!).

Finally we would like to welcome our latest addition to the pack. Kaa had her baby on 8th November and brought Judith along to meet the Pack on 14th (at 5 days old!).

SCOUTS

The Scouts have been enjoying their temporary home at the MacIntyre, where they have enjoyed a variety of wide games in the beautiful grounds.

Julia Ellis

1st Wingrave Scout Group

Christmas Bazaar

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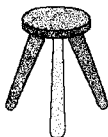


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	10.00	Wingrave	Parish Communion
	11.15	Aston Abbots	Morning Service
	18.00	Wingrave	Advent Carols with Singers
10th	08.45	Cublington	Parish Communion
	10.00	Wingrave	Parish Communion
	11.15	Aston Abbots	Parish Communion
17th	10.00	Wingrave	Parish Communion
	15.00	Cublington	United Carols & Readings
	18.00	Wingrave	Christingle
24th	10.00	Aston Abbots	Three Parish Communion
	18.00	Wingrave	Blessing the Crib
	23.00	Wingrave	Midnight Eucharist
25th	08.45	Cublington	Christmas Communion
	10.00	Wingrave	Christmas United Service at Methodist Church
	10.00	Aston Abbots	Christmas Service & Communion
31st	10.00	Wingrave	Three Parish Communion & Brunch
7th Jan	10.00	Wingrave	Parish Communion
2001	10.00	Cublington	Family Service
	11.15	Aston Abbots	Family Service

THANK YOU

A big thank you to all the lads who have kept our church-yard so neat and tidy – and to the lasses who have supplied them with liquid refreshments!

Also many thanks to all who turned up for the autumn leaf clear up; clearing gutters and drains and generally tidying up. It is much appreciated and earns us a lot of marks from the Best Kept Village competition – and from visitors. Thanks to you all.

Colin Higgs

SUNDAY READINGS

3rd Dec	Advent 1	Thess. 3.9-13; Luke 21.25-36
10th	Advent 2	Phil. 1.3-11; Luke 3.1-6
17th	Advent 3	Phil. 4.4-7; Luke 3.7-18
24th	Advent 4	Heb.10.5-10; Luke 1.39-45
25th	Christmas	Heb. 1.1-4; John 1.1-14
31st	Christmas 1	Col.3.12-17; Luke 2.41-52
7th Jan	Baptism of Christ	Acts 8.14-17; Luke 3.15-17,21-22.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptism	24th Oct	Rachel Sutton at Aston Abbots
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ST JAMES CHURCH ASTON ABBOTTS

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Rev Bob Willmott	681623
Gordon Kemp	681763
Shirley Ford	681865
Ann Goodman	681763
Andrew Ford	681865

CHURCH SIDESMEN

3rd Dec	Mr Hartnett
10th Dec	Mr Kemp
17th Dec	Mr Higgs
25th Dec	Mrs Ford Mr Kemp
7th Jan 2001	Mr A Ford

CHURCH FLOWERS

3rd Dec	No flowers (Advent)
10th Dec	No flowers (Advent)
17th and 25th Dec	Christmas Decoration. All as detailed
31st Dec	No Service
7th Jan 2001	Donated



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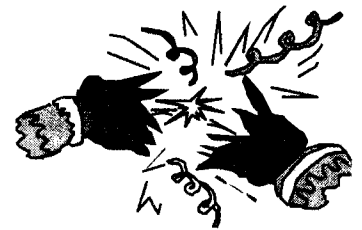
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WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER

Saturday 2nd	Christmas shopping trip to Bristol Departs Bull & Butcher 8.20 am. Fare £8.50 1st Wingrave Scout Group Christmas Bazaar Community Centre, Wingrave	1-4 pm
Tuesday 5th	Mobile Library The Green, Wingrave road, Oxley Farm Aylesbury Vale Transport meeting – any bus and train queries to Colin please	
Thursday 7th	Coffee Morning at 7 Bricstock. Bingo in the Church Room	10 am - 12.30 7.30 pm
Sunday 10th	Rambling club members meet at Lomond Drive. – walk to The Boot Soulbury for lunch	Departs 11.30
Tuesday 12th	Floral Class. Church Room.	7 pm.
Wednesday 13th	Parish council meeting in the Church Room.	8 pm
Thursday 14th	Whist Drive. Church Room.	7.30 pm
Sunday 17th	Carol Service at St James Church.	3 pm
Tuesday 19th	Mobile Library The Green, Wingrave road, Oxley Farm	
Christmas Day 25th	Family Service/Communion with carols.	10 am
Boxing Day 26th	Village footpath walk. The Green.	2 pm
Sunday 31st	Rambling club members meet at Moorlands Road Wing	2 pm
Thursday 4th Jan	Bingo in aid of Whitby Lifeboat. Church Room.	7.30 pm



ALLOTMENT RENTS

These are due by the end of January. Please pay Colin.

BUS SURVEYS

Bus Surveys will be carried out in December. Make sure you use the bus: 11.08 to Leighton Buzzard returning at 1.40 & 2.01 to Aylesbury returning at 4pm. We are lucky to have a regular bus service to the village but we need more support.

FRIENDS OF WHITCHURCH SURGERY

There will be a Christmas fayre on December 9th at Quenington House, 7 High Street, Whitchurch by kind permission of David and Pip Ryder-Richardson. The fayre is from 10.00 am to 12 noon and includes a Bring and Buy Stall, a Cake Stall and also a Christmas raffle will be drawn.

WANTED for the month of December -
casual waiting staff.

Aged 17+, own transport an advantage.

Please ring **The Old Masters** on
01296 681432 for further details.

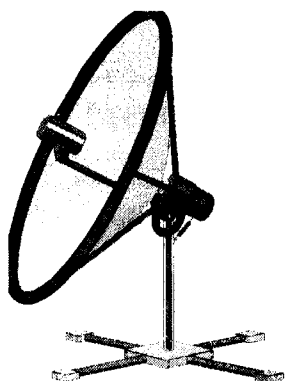
BABYSITTING

Hayley and Sarah - Reliable Babysitters
Please phone Hayley on 688597
or Sarah on 681740

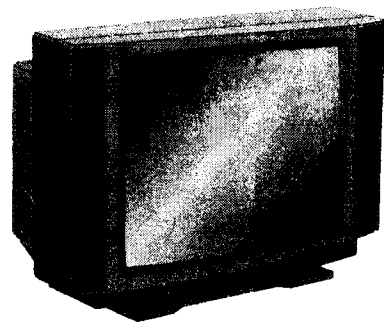


FLACKWELL ELECTRONICS

OF CHURCH FARM, ASTON ABBOTTS

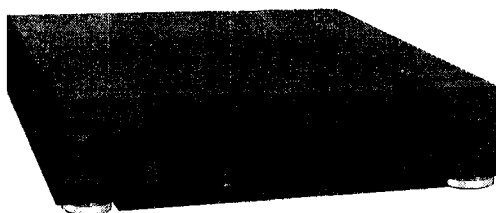


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Music Maestro**

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