

EWELME NEWS

June / July 2009



EDITORIAL

What a fantastic day we had on Saturday, 2 May. After the years of waiting and hoping, months and months of carefully meticulous planning, our 'new' Ewelme Store opened its doors for business.



It was a glorious day and there was certainly a party atmosphere in Parson's Lane. The traffic was diverted and chairs and tables were laid out on the road ready for the crowds to turn up – and, boy, did they turn up!

It was a fantastic display of village unity and determination. Sarah Maine spoke briefly to the crowds about the history behind the store and then handed over to the Revd Jonathan Meyer. Jonathan spoke about the hard work put in to the creation of the Ewelme Store by a small but dedicated band. He also mentioned the generosity of Sylvia and Michael Jay for kindly providing the property. The sun came out and Jonathan grabbed a pair of specially borrowed 'golden scissors', cut the golden ribbon and declared the Ewelme Store officially "open for business".

After the brief formality of the opening ceremony the store began to hum with the throng of shoppers desperate to sample the delights on offer. Those of us who stayed outside were able to taste the many different types of food for sale. The one type of sausages that really grabbed me were the 'wild boar and apple'. I happily stayed by the plate for half an hour!





The committee and friends posing for the obligatory photograph

Two people who certainly deserve a mention are Andrew Clements and Henry Smith. Andrew was the unofficial ‘clerk of works’ who put it many hours – often staying after midnight. Henry was the bespoke joiner whose excellent handiwork with the shelving and all things wood is very evident in this wonderfully appointed store.

The atmosphere outside was superb with people chatting and sampling the food and wine whilst the atmosphere inside the store was more patient as so many people were waiting good-humouredly to be served.

The 2 May was certainly a day to be remembered and my hope is that the store will go from strength to strength. I’m certainly thinking about my carbon footprint to Wallingford and back. With the car costs alone being about £5.00 a journey – shopping locally makes brilliant sense. Let’s hope that the level of interest in May will still be as great in November. With the support of everyone in the village our Ewelme Store will be a resounding success!

The Editor

PARISH NEWS

Well, the promised wheelie bins have arrived in Ewelme. The response is mixed with some people refusing to even take them on to their property and leaving them out on the road! Many people feel that the whole situation is overkill but only time will tell. The company have obviously tried their best to set it all up with all the necessary literature and stickers but I'm sure that I shall get it wrong from time to time. The hardest part for me will be remembering which bin goes out when and then getting it to the kerb side by the correct time. Only time will tell if I get it right.

We are having traffic problems again rearing their ugly heads. The speeders are still racing through the village – usually late at night. We have a very odd motor cyclist who thinks it clever to do wheelies along the High Street towards the Village Hall. Anti-social drivers have been reported driving around the recreation area. Parking by the Village Hall and the junction with Parson's Lane is an accident waiting to happen. Now that the Ewelme Store is up and running there should be fewer vehicles parking so close to the junction. The police will be checking the area for unsuitable parking and will issue warning notices to the offenders in the first instance.

The meeting regarding the possible extension of the car park at The Common was a resounding success. Over seventy people turned up for the meeting to voice their obvious concerns and to consider all the possible alternatives. The overwhelming feeling of the meeting was that the permanent spoiling of The Common was not an option although we could use it if necessary for a few occasions during a year for any really large events. The need for any car park extension was questioned as there were only a few occasions when parking seemed to be out of control. It was decided to rationalise the existing car park at The Common, sorting it out so that more cars could be accommodated. By 'tidying' the car park edges and corners it was felt that many more parking spaces would become available.

Finally, what has happened to The Shepherd's Hut ? Rumours have been going the rounds but no-one seems to know for certain what the future plans are. Having lost three pubs within the Ewelme area – the last one being The Greyhound – we certainly can't afford to lose the 'Hut'. If you hear of anything happening, please let me know!

Peter Lemaire, Chairman of Ewelme Parish Council

Andrew Markham, Headteacher at Ewelme School

I will be leaving Ewelme School at the end of this academic year.

This was not a decision made easily! My move to Watlington represents a great challenge and career opportunity. However, it fills me with the greatest sadness to be leaving Ewelme School and its wonderful extended family. For the last 3 years I have been consistently proud of the efforts and achievements of the staff, parents, supporters and children. The staff has such a developed dedication. They rarely stop talking about how to make the school even better. The PTA is unique, the commitment shown by this group is fierce and commendable. Parents are protective, supportive and above all, understanding of our complex and delicate occupation. On a daily basis I hear the public comment about the remarkable school. I often clarify with them that the reason the school is remarkable is the children within it. The diligent and courteous atmosphere created by the children of Ewelme School outstrips most schools.

Ewelme School is in a very strong position in all aspects including team cohesion, standards, partnerships, support and much more. Furthermore, amongst many great values and principles, the children demonstrate a mature outlook throughout the school. For these reasons, I feel secure that a change of Headteacher can only have a positive effect - bringing yet more innovative and exciting ideas to the school.

This letter was written by Andrew Markham and sent out in the school's newsletter. I have reprinted it here with Andrew's permission so that it reaches a wider audience. The Editor

Wheelie bins

Could I remind readers of the Ewelme News to open the envelope which is probably inside the recently delivered food recycling bin and look through the contents please?

It contains a useful calendar showing which sort of rubbish will be collected in which weeks - we start on 9 June with the grey bin. It also says what happens around bank holidays (Christmas arrangements are different from those in the past).

There are also 3 stickers to go on each of the 3 bins (or anywhere else you find helpful!) to show what should and should not go into each of the bins and there is an introduction to the new system.

It always helps to know what we should be doing!

Sue Cooper, SODC Councillor

Police reports

Reports of rubbish has been an occurring element in Ewelme at the moment, please could I remind all to use the bins provided and hopefully visitors to the village will follow these actions and keep Ewelme a desirable and tidy place.

PC Paul Webber P5578 and PCSO C9904 Sarah Talbot

Please remember, if you see or hear anything suspicious or anti-social or dangerous, ring this number straightaway - 0845 8 505 505. The Editor

A date for your diary!

The League of Friends of Wallingford Hospital will be holding their **Annual Fete** in the hospital grounds on **Saturday 13 June** starting at 2:00 pm. As usual we will be inviting a well known personality to open the fete – guess who?

There will be plenty of stalls to visit during the afternoon including a Teddy Bears' Picnic – please don't forget your bears. This is a very popular activity for owners and teddy bears but this will be the last year it will be held at the hospital so please make sure your bear has a good afternoon out. A giant raffle will be held with the opportunity to win £100. Teas will be served all afternoon. So come along and enjoy the Fete.

The League of Friends supports the Wallingford Community hospital in many ways. The money raised is used to provide small items of medical equipment, contributing to the fabric and furnishings of the building and providing comforts and amenities for the patients, none of which would be provided by the NHS.

We are aware that so many people have reasons to thank the hospital for the care they or their family have received. Please support your local community hospital by adding the date, Saturday 13 June to your diary.

If for any reason you are unable to support the hospital by coming to the fete you can - for a few pounds - become a "Friend" of the hospital. Please contact Lesley Sharratt (01491 825089) if you would like to join.

Nature notes

March

Despite it being a very cold winter, Nature seems to be ahead of itself this year. In March, there were plenty of bright, sunny days. Sometimes it was windy, and an occasional frost. It has been the driest March since 1997.

An early start to the butterfly season, I have seen small tortoiseshells, brimstone and speckled wood butterflies.

Tricia Scott saw the first bumble bee on the 1st March. There are more violets out than I have seen for years, frog spawn in several ponds, late February. Unfortunately ducks & pigeons eat mine.

Pam Tindall saw the first ducklings on 20 March, probably from the nest at the bottom of Angela & Ian Harrison's garden.

April

Sometimes it is sunny, windy, overcast with a few frosts and dry.

Louise Jaggard saw and heard a Lesser Whitethroat bird in Eyre's Lane. Louise thought she saw the first swallows on the 15 April, but she was pipped at the post by Tony Munday who saw them on 9 April. For the third year running Tony has a Reed Bunting in his garden. Bobby

Munday has seen swifts on the church, the 28 April. Tony has also seen a large black feral cat in Jocelyn and Logan Scott-Bowden's field, that I hadn't seen for two years.



Red Kites

Their nests are made from moss, rags and wool. This one is nesting 50 yards from the cress beds. Notice the pigeon in the Red Kite's claw, I also thought that they were only Carrion, but they have been known to take young crows from their nest. Terry Allsop has an interesting theory that the Red Kite does so well in this part of the country because of all the road kill in the Thames Valley!

John and Anne Critchley gave me a photo of what I thought was a Goshawk, but after several different opinions it turned out to be a juvenile Sparrowhawk.

It is Bluebell time again. England has more bluebells than the rest of the world put together. How lucky we are.

I would like to thank the Friend's and everybody else who contributes to my Nature Notes. Please keep the information coming in. It is recorded and may be used in later Nature notes.

Kenyan Projects

Visiting the site just after Easter it was good to see the catchment area had a considerable amount of water in it - the long rains had just started. A tap has been fitted to the outlet pipe and this is manned morning and evening to make sure that the water is being equally distributed to the villagers. The painting of the outer wall of the dam and the erection of a fence to keep wild animals and cattle out is well in hand. We should have some photos of the completed job for the next issue.

This water catchment/dam is what we offered to fund for the village and this we have done. The next stage of water delivery is a much bigger and more expensive project than we feel we can commit to, so we have made contact with World Vision – a global charity to see if they might take on the more sophisticated filtering and delivery system. They have visited the site and it seems very likely they will, together with the Kenyan government, take on the project. They were not previously interested but are now prepared to get involved because of the work we have funded.

We still had £1100 in hand so in January we looked at three other projects that might benefit from our money and chose the Limuru Childrens' Centre, www.limuruchildrencentre.org. This is a charity that feeds and educates children who have been neglected and often abandoned. In January we gave them £600 to buy new cooking stoves and as you can see from the extract from their April News Letter, this is exactly what they have done, so we have now given them the last £500 from our funds to continue their kitchen improvements.

When we visited them last month we actually had lunch with the children. The lunch had of course been cooked in the new stoves! All the clothes, football kits, sweets and pencils and pens that we had been given to take were VERY gratefully received by the centre.

We have two fund raising events planned for 2009 the proceeds of which will go to the Limuru Centre. 19 July - Lunch at Linden House £10 p/p.

19 December - Christmas Special - an evening of entertainment and supper £15 p/p. We look forward to seeing many of you at these events.

Gemma Benoliel

Developments

We have improved our kitchen facilities @ both branches thanks to the **people of Ewelme in England** who provided funds from their village for the purchase of some new 'energy saving stoves'. At the main branch we have converted one of the classrooms to accommodate the improvements. We hope to



Julia and Jane with new stoves.....

put up a big sink and cupboard, all in one and have our kitchen more hygienic and spacious for manageability. It's very exciting and the Moms are happy working in a nice kitchen, with a nice roof, enough space to move around, and energy saving stoves which don't emit lots of smoke. New adjustments underway.....!

Limuru Childrens' Centre

Notes from the Parish Council meeting on 11 March 2009

Present: David Cooper, Melissa Fletcher, Paul Humphrey, Peter Lemaire, Vernon Miners

Apologies: Theresa Redgewell

Cricket / football clubs – a possible conflict of interests was noted. Councillors agreed that existing bookings would be honoured and reminded everyone that the bookings were only for a season at a time.

District councillor – Sue Cooper had requested that potential problems with the new wheelie bins should be directed to SODC. Households

would be given a trial period after which their requirements could be amended by mutual agreement.

Bus services – Thames Travel had agreed to attempt to use the smaller buses for travel through Ewelme. The school buses would have to remain the same size.

Skips – whilst Oakley Wood was being refurbished, Councillors discussed the need for possible skips in the village. After much discussion it was decided not to forward the idea.

Shepherd's Hut – Council proposed writing to Greene King to encourage them to keep the pub open.

Common parking – a request had been made to use the Recreation Ground for car parking to aid a function taking place throughout the village. Councillors felt that this would create a precedent and only agreed to parking being allowed on the Recreation Ground for events actually being held on the Recreation Ground – for example the Annual Village Show run by the Horticultural Society.

Notes from the Parish Council meeting on 8 April 2009

Present: David Cooper, Melissa Fletcher, Paul Humphrey, Peter Lemaire, Theresa Redgewell

Apologies: Vernon Miners

RAF – Councillors had received their bi-annual invitation to the base to meet with the new station commander and hear about past and future plans for RAF Benson.

Village Hall – a retaining wall beside the emergency access was looking somewhat tired. Council will find out who actually owns it and will look for repairs to be completed soon.

Stiles for The Common – these had been approved and the grants requested to replace the 5 stiles with kissing gates had been accepted. The majority funding would be provided by TOE with OCC funding 10%. The contract for the work would be given to one of the two professionals who quoted who could begin the job first.

Car park extension – feedback from the meeting. Generally, villagers did not want the car park extended onto The Common but users should be educated and the existing car park re-jigged to accommodate more vehicles. The Council will consider gaining a license for temporary use of The Common as an overflow car park for a few days a year if large events warranted this. The hire forms sent to people wishing to hire the Recreation Ground should comment on the need for sensible parking. An information board has been ordered which will explain sensible car park use for locals and visiting groups who use the car park facilities.

Planning – plans had been presented to Council for three ‘affordable’ dwellings at the end of Hampden Way. Although they were in favour of ‘affordable housing’ in Ewelme, they rejected the proposal because of severely restricted access and the parking issues that would only aggravate already congested parking in the area.

Tourism – Wallingford Tourist Office had requested a leaflet on Ewelme. This would be discussed at our meeting in June.

Day’s Lane – the daffodil planting had been a great success and another planting spree would be organised for the autumn.

Please remember that these are only random jottings from a couple of lengthy meetings. If you wish to read the minutes in more detail, they are on display on the noticeboard outside the Village Hall and also on Green Lane. Anyone wishing to be emailed a copy should contact Sue Hill, Parish Clerk, on sue@hill1285.orangehome.co.uk

The Editor

Village Action Plan – April 2009 – Progress Report

By the time you read this our new Village Store will have been opened for business and we must congratulate the numerous people who have expended a tremendous amount of effort and time into making this a reality for the future benefits of the village. It’s now down to all of us to ensure our full support in making all this effort worthwhile.

The opening of the Store marks the first success arising from the initiatives identified two years ago (!!) in compiling the Action Plan arising from the “Consultancy” which identified the return of a village shop as Priority No.1 and which resulted in a Working Group set up to develop this issue under the able leadership of Sarah Maine. Now that we have achieved this ‘milestone’ in implementing the Plan we need to turn our attention to the other priority issues which were also identified.

Of these, the problems of traffic congestion in the High Street (principally) will be the next main focus. We have noted the difficulties of congestion at the High Street / Parson’s Lane junction during construction work and it may be that the shop will attract some inconsiderate parking and exacerbate an already difficult situation – time will tell. The recent decision not to extend parking at the Common end of the village is probably the right one in terms of protecting our environment but we still need to try and find a solution in the centre of the village and along the High Street. It is a fact that we suffer from being one of only a small number of villages in the whole of Oxfordshire where the village hall does not have some form of off-road parking available! That said, this is clearly a very difficult problem to solve without some radical approach and any ideas which residents may have will be welcomed!

The Steering Committee will be meeting shortly to continue looking at progress on all identified ‘issues’ and endeavouring to initiate further activities toward achieving more of the objectives which you, the residents, have identified. Incidentally, in case there are members of the community who have not yet seen or read the Action Plan, we will make a few copies available in the Village Store.

Brian Smailes - Chairman, Village Action Plan Steering Committee.

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, EWELME

Priest-in-Charge - Revd Jonathan Meyer
 Ewelme Benefice
 The Rectory
 Parson's Lane
 Ewelme
 OX10 6HP

Telephone 01491 837823

Churchwardens	-	Mr Martin Spence
		Mr Chips Gell
Organist	-	Mr Peter Lemaire
Tower Captain	-	Miss Kay Tuckwell
Church Flowers	-	Mrs Angela Smailes
Parochial Church Council		
Secretary	-	Mr Graham Bayford
Treasurer	-	Mr Neil Blake

Warden of the Almshouses - Mrs Dee Rosier
Ewelme School headteacher - Mr Andrew Markham

Ewelme School attends church every Friday in term time. Preschool children have a very informal 'Pram Service' on the first Tuesday each month in term time. Check details with Natalie Fraser 834721 or George Cannon on 835154.

NEW SERVICE TIMES

The service times will be changing at the church of St. Mary the Virgin in Ewelme from Sunday 7 June. The most significant differences will be the times, early morning services of Holy Communion using the Book of Common Prayer will continue at 8:00 am. There will be two services each month at 9:45 am using more modern language, to which all will be welcome; the traditional services of Matins and a sung Holy Communion using the Book of Common Prayer will move to the slightly later time of 11:15 am. Evensong will remain at 6:00 pm once a month. There may be changes for services at the major festivals or for special services such as Remembrance Day.

Sunday 24 May
11:00 am Matins

Sunday 31 May
11:00 am Benefice Service at Ewelme – Sung Holy Communion BCP

Sunday 7 June
8:00 am Holy Communion BCP
9:45 am Parish Communion, Common Worship - Modern Language

6:00 pm Evensong BCP

Sunday 14 June

8:00 am Holy Communion BCP

11:15 am Matins BCP

Sunday 21 June

8:00 am Holy Communion BCP

9:45 am Family Service

Sunday 28 June

11:15 am Holy Communion BCP

Sunday 5 July

8:00 am Holy Communion BCP

9:45 am Parish Communion, Common Worship- Modern Language

6:00 pm Evensong BCP

Sunday 12 July

8:00 am Holy Communion BCP

11:15 am Matins BCP

Sunday 19 July

8:00 am Holy Communion BCP

9:45 am Family Service

Sunday 26 July

11:15 am Holy Communion BCP

Parish Registers March - April 2009

Baptism

Barnaby George Badcock 19 April

Burial

Lucy Tuckwell 16 April

Funeral and Memorial Services

Alan Dawes 7 April 2009

Ian Forbes Watson 16 April

Dreaming dreams

The extraordinary oratory of Barack Obama has led to a number of television programs lauding the gift of public speaking. We have seen footage and heard comment on great speeches of the past, many of which still resonate today. One of the greatest was the haunting speech by Martin Luther King with passionate and recurring words, “I have a dream”. Maybe they seem especially potent because there is now a black President in the White House. The speech always put me in mind of the words from one of the readings for Whitsunday or Pentecost, “and I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams”. St Peter addresses the people of Jerusalem quoting this passage from the prophet Joel. If you chanced to hear Elgar’s oratorio *The Kingdom* performed recently at Dorchester Abbey, you would have witnessed them majestically set to music.

Pentecost this year falls on 31 May; it celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with a mighty rushing wind and tongues of flame. After ascending into heaven Jesus promised that the Spirit of God would be poured out to invigorate and strengthen and restore us. It is sometimes difficult to see the Spirit at work in the modern world. Perhaps we don’t always look in the right place; certainly the Spirit is not confined to church. The cynical might say the church is one of the last places to look. Often the Spirit confounds us by working in ways we do not expect. Not everyone would agree but I would say the opening of the shop is a manifestation of the Spirit. It has brought people together, it has harnessed their energies and enthusiasms, and it has released and encouraged acts of generosity. Above all it is for the community and what could be more important than encouraging a community spirit. Its facilities should help bring people together, to share a coffee, to pass the time of day with people you don’t always see.

It is my prayer that the shop will thrive, that it will succeed in giving village people a service but above all that it will bring people together. It is so important in the modern world for villages and in turn people to have a sense of identity; these are things of the Spirit. It is through the seeing of visions fulfilled and the dreaming of dreams that we achieve something. May the Spirit be poured out on all of this Whitsuntide whether in the church or the wider community.

The Reverend Jonathan Meyer, Priest-in-Charge

The church housekeeping team

Do you ever think about why your church is so spick and span (with the exception of cobwebs, of which more later)? It's because a small group of volunteers sweeps, dusts and polishes on a monthly rota. It takes no more than an hour once a month. But when someone is away, we have to find help at short notice, so we do need one or two more volunteers on the list.

And there's even a small prize for anyone who can remove the cobwebs safely and easily. It's a two or even three person task with bamboo poles – one to wiggle the topmost brush and the others to hold the whole contraption steady. Or there may be a better way. Please give me a call to help us keep the place sparkling, and claim the cobweb champion prize if you can.

Margaret Blake, telephone 826462

Chiltern Chase Charity 10km and 5km runs

Location: Ewelme Common, Oxfordshire

Date: **Sunday 7 June 2009 @ 10:00 am**

Fancy a healthy jog (or even a walk if you wish) for good causes in the picturesque Chiltern Hills?

The Chiltern Chase is a 10k charity run that starts from Ewelme Common and wends its way up into the Chiltern Hills using tracks and bridleways before returning through this historic village to finish on the Common. Now in its fourth year, the race has gained popularity with athletes and joggers from Oxfordshire and further afield who enjoy running this uniquely beautiful multi-terrain course.

2009 will see the addition of a 5k event which we hope will attract runners, walkers and many Teams from clubs, pubs and services. Our web site www.chilternchase.org.uk has further details of the event, along with many testimonials from those that have joined us to raise money for "Life, Health and Opportunity."

This year we are dividing all proceeds equally between Ewelme Primary School (<http://www.ewelme.oxon.sch.uk/>) and a very worthy cause further afield - OneWater (www.onedifference.org) who help many communities in Africa. We aim to make the day fun for all the family with fairground rides, stalls and refreshments. So download an entry form off the web site and come along and join us.

Barry Tindall

Make your voice heard - vote 4 June

On 4 June 2009 make your voice heard by voting in the European and County Elections. Choose a member of European Parliament to represent the South East region for the next five years. Elect a councillor to represent South Oxfordshire on Oxfordshire County Council for the next four years. To affect the decisions on everyday issues get out and vote for a representative.

To vote you must be registered by 19 May 2009. If you have moved house since October '08 or changed your name, you may not be on the register. If you can't vote in person, you may be able to vote by post or proxy. To register, update your registration, or apply for a postal or proxy vote ring 0800 389 5560.

Sue Cooper, SODC Councillor

The trouble with moles.....

1. Today's mole was yesterday's mole's brother (or sister);
2. Today's mole was alive;
3. Today's mole was strong;
4. Today's mole was deposited into the lounge;
5. Today's mole sought sanctuary under the telly;
6. Today's mole just about fitted in the oven gloves (which are great for catching anything with pointy teeth);
7. Moles exude a smell;
8. My slip-on-shoes don't slip-on very well when I'm in a rush;
9. I am rather displeased with my cat, Buffy.

On a lighter note – at least my other cat, Binky, is getting his daily portion of vegetables. This morning I found him eating the tops of the sweetcorn which Phil had carefully ‘potted on’ last night and brought into the kitchen – just in case it was going to be a cold night....

Sheila Collins

Grannies on the road

Sitting on the side of the road waiting to catch speeding drivers, a policeman sees a car puttering along at 22 mph. He thinks to himself, “This driver is as dangerous as a speeder!” So he turns on his lights and pulls the driver over.

Approaching the car, he notices that there are five elderly ladies, two in the front seat and three in the back, wide-eyed and white as ghosts. The driver, obviously confused, says to him, “Officer, I don't understand. I was going the exact speed limit. What seems to be the problem?”

The policeman, trying to contain a chuckle, explains to her that 22 was the road number, not the speed limit. A bit embarrassed, the woman grinned and thanked the officer for pointing out her error. “But before you go, Ma'am, I have to ask, is everyone in this car OK? These women seem awfully shaken.”

“Oh, they'll be all right in a minute, officer. We just came off the A 127.”

The Ewelme Society

Bennett's Shop at Kings Pool House – Memoir of Margaret Robins McCurley



Bennett's shop (and sometime bakery) was located in Kings Pool House. It was one of the many shops serving the village that are now distant memories, but as interest is now focused on the newly opened Ewelme Stores next door, we were pleased to receive this memoir from Margaret Robins McCurley. The Robins arrived from the Slough area in 1945 and ran the shop until 1947 for Mr Bennett, who lived on a smallholding called "Woodside" on the Henley Road.

This is an extract from her childhood story, relating just to the family's time at Kings Pool House.

"At last we arrived at Kings Pool House in Ewelme in the village centre – a very old three storey building that was also a working general shop. Difficult to date - although after our time, the new owners, on making alterations, unearthed a boarded up bedroom and found a Roundhead's helmet!

We arrived at the weekend and the shop had to be opened on Monday. Everywhere needed a thorough cleaning and old stock destroyed – it had been much neglected. So beds were put up and basics arranged in the house. Fires were lit downstairs, including the enormous black kitchen range in the large kitchen. There was no heating of any kind upstairs, only hot water bottles and plenty of bedclothes!

Mum's worse fears were realised! Not only being in the country away from family, she had to deal with a large decrepit house with no piped water, no gas or electric cooking facility and an earth closet halfway up the yard! They had to get familiar with the shop right away and as rationing was still in force the paperwork was phenomenal. They began cleaning the room at the rear of the shop. There was a baker's oven – obviously not used for some time - but there were numerous sacks of flour and cake-making packets that filled the whole space. When they were disturbed, hordes of mice ran out! All the outbuildings around the yard were also infested. They had also invaded the house. My poor mum was terrified. The lovely big kitchen had built in cupboards the length of the back wall which made a super larder, these also had to have a spring clean. After this was done, mum had a wooden spoon on hand to bang the doors before she dared open up. We weren't completely free of these unwelcome guests - they held parties in the roof space!

There was a brick and glassed extension onto the kitchen that had a sink and draining board but no piped water to the sink. Mum hadn't realised this, she saw a sink complete with tap and assumed....! Dad had the decency to look uncomfortable when he handed her a galvanised bucket and led her across the road to the stream. The water was as clear as crystal, once dad put a bucket in and came out with a trout! It was delicious.

There were three bedrooms and a large attic which we used as playrooms. My room overlooked the front with mum and dad and baby Christine, whilst she was still in her cot, had the large corner room. At the back, across the width of the house, was a lovely large bedroom with floor to ceiling windows across the whole wall and another complete wall of fitted cupboards, but we could only have used this room during the summer as it was like walking into a fridge – it was so cold.

The neighbour on our left hand side was a farmer. [Lower Farm, now Fields End]. Mr Jim Orpwood was a bachelor and was looked after by a live-in family with two sons, Norman and Donald Lansley, who were part of my group of friends. We had great fun helping with the farm work – lambing, harvesting, feeding the animals, and probably making nuisances of ourselves if the truth be told. At weekends and holidays, we would be away all day playing quite far away from home. Our mothers would

make us a sandwich and give us a small bottle of lemonade, water or milk. We didn't have any bicycles, just walked. How wonderful if children could be as free nowadays.

There was a very large garden beyond the yard that dad put mostly to vegetables. He also kept chickens and a pig named Frances (after mum). Frances, the pig, was bought to share with the Lansley's at the farm. We already had a pigsty that was in good condition, so she lived in our garden. She became quite a pet, but we happily waved her goodbye when she went to the abattoir, and we ate the meat and bacon. Our chickens had a perfect roost and nest box right at the top of the garden in a Shepherd's Hut (a 'caravan' for the shepherd to live in when the flocks were lambing). My friend, Kathleen Winfield [Baker], who lived opposite and I often played in the hut when it was empty and before the next batch of chickens arrived. One summer it was very hot so we had ended up in vest and knickers playing 'house'. We were hot and scratching ourselves. Mum called us in for tea – took one look and pushed us outside – stripped us naked and scrubbed us from top to toe. We were smothered in chicken fleas!

Dad had a small Morris van that he used to deliver groceries and paraffin oil to outlying customers. This paraffin was stored in one of the outhouses in a large tank. The room was fairly large, it had a lowered floor. One afternoon, Christine went missing. Mum and dad and I began searching for her. We found her at last in the paraffin store where she had managed to turn on the tap. She had probably been there for at least twenty minutes and was paddling up to her ankles in paraffin!

Having the shop helped our integration into village life. Dad had become involved with the cricket and football teams and mum was recruited to help with making the tea during the summer and hot suppers in the winter. I went to Ewelme School. Mr Quixley, our headmaster, was very strict and pretty scary as he had been in the Army before he took up teaching. During the long summer holiday, some of the children went potato picking. We waited at the village centre where the farmer collected us at 9 o'clock. We trundled off sitting on a flat trailer pulled by his tractor. We worked until lunchtime and then we were brought home. I earned one shilling! It was probably against the law being child labour - as I was only eight! My employment didn't last long – just three days. It was very hot and back-breaking, so I resigned.

Village life was busy and we all joined in. Most of my friends and I were in the church choir. Rector Jenkins arranged lots of social outings for us – picnics and parties. We had a reputation as a good choir and were often invited to sing in neighbouring churches. There were Magic Lantern shows in the Village Hall. In the summer, I was a fat little fairy in the production put on in the Manor House farm garden of ‘A Midsummer Nights Dream’. There were always masses of things we found to do.

How dad managed to cope with the shop and work as Mr Bennett’s chauffeur/handyman amazes me now! Mum had to help serving in the shop most of the time, cleaning Mr Bennett’s cottage, and looking after me, my sister Christine and the house. Finally, mum and dad found it too difficult juggling the shop and working for Mr Bennett so we moved to Benson, although I still attended Ewelme School, riding to and from each day on my bike.”

Although Margaret lived in Ewelme for a comparatively short time, she often comes over from her home in Windsor to visit.

Carol Sawbridge for The Ewelme Society

Ewelme Village Preschool News

‘Belbroughton Road is bonny, and pinkly bursts the spray of prunus and forsythia across the public way’... and so wrote John Betjeman about the delights of May in Oxfordshire. It certainly is a beautiful time of year and does help to remind us how lucky we are to live in such a wonderful village. Well, the Easter eggs have been eaten and the Easter Bunny can breathe easy until next year as Preschool returns after the holidays! This term the children are learning about MINI BEASTS (or creepy crawlies to those of us whose schooling pre-dates the National Curriculum!). This is always a favourite as children do love to grub about in the dirt and unearth terrifying insects for our perusal. Amongst the (poor!) creatures being examined will be ladybirds, caterpillars, butterflies, snails, worms and bumble bees (..I notice no spiders ?!) The children will be using this theme to expand their knowledge of living creatures and of course using the topic as a springboard (though hopefully not literally) to learn about shape, relative size and to develop those all important language skills

through discussion. Won't Mr Ed Balls be pleased! It sounds a fun term once again.

Since I last wrote, Ewelme Preschool has had such an exciting time with the construction of the new play area. Vernon Miners and colleagues did a splendid job in shoring up the front wall of the garden which was threatening to take up residence on the pavement! We are really grateful that he managed to complete this within a very short period, as this enabled Play Top to put down the special all weather safe surface before the holidays. On St George's Day, our new vicar, Reverend Jonathan Meyer, officially opened the garden and gave it a blessing. It was a fun packed occasion and we were glad that the foundation stage children from Ewelme School joined us for this special time. It was also great to see the event so well supported by parents. Huge thanks must go to all the committee members, staff and parents who have given their time and money! Special mention must be given to Nicki Climpson and Kerry Sawyer who have put in hours of work behind the scenes. What a wonderful resource it will be for our children to use! If you haven't already had a peep then do go and spot the Wiggle Bars, toadstools, Betonkas and huge new sandpit! One bit of disappointing news is that we have had to cancel the Summer Fair which was due to take place at the end of June. Unfortunately there were insufficient offers of help and the committee did not feel they were able to manage a large undertaking such as this without that support.

Thanks, as always, go to Diane and her staff for making Ewelme Preschool the wonderful place it is. The successful addition of the two afternoon sessions has only been possible because of the hard work and flexibility of all the staff. Particular congratulations this time go to Jane and Kerry for passing NVQ level 3. We would also like to send our best wishes to Alison and hope that she will soon be back at Preschool as everyone misses her.

Preschool is now operating at full capacity. Ewelme Preschool is open to all children aged 2 ½ to 5 years. We run during term time, Monday to Friday, 9:15 to 12:00 noon, with extended lunch sessions offered on Monday and Wednesday. Afternoon sessions run on Tuesday and Thursday. If you are interested in enrolling your child, please do contact our admissions registrar. Please call 01491 835413 or e-mail ewelme.preschool@yahoo.co.uk for more information.

Natalie Fraser, Secretary

Ewelme Horticultural Society AGM 20 April

Chairman's Report

We have had a really fantastic year. All our fund raising events to pay for the marquee for the Village Show have been successful.

The plant sale last year was excellent. Many villagers came to buy their bedding plants and coupled with Cynthia Winfield organising the coffee and biscuits it turned out to be quite a social event. We made a very healthy profit of almost £400. The Plant Sale this year is 16 May so we hope people will come along and support us again.

The show last year was possibly one of the busiest, with visitors coming in from as far away as Reading. This could have been due to the early advertising around the area thanks to Ian. The number of entries increased to 518 from 501 the previous year. These were organised by Terry Allsop. Thank you Terry for taking on such a demanding job in your first year on the committee. Hopefully we can improve on some of the classes to encourage even more entries this year. The day went very well due to enthusiastic committee members and invaluable friends and family members who always support us. Michael Glasson and Cynthia work tirelessly on the setting up for the day and sorting the prizes; Sheila and Phil Collins managed to get fantastic raffle prizes and sit for hours selling tickets; Anne Critchley produced marvellous teas; Sue Rushton and Gemma Benoliel organised the lunches and Tracey Perkins who introduced the Chocolate Challenge 2 years ago - and we haven't looked back since. We are pleased to have Ann Truesdale, who is new to the committee, and comes up with some very good ideas. A valued member is Brian Connolly who does so much for us. Unfortunately Brian is unwell at the moment. We all miss him and wish him well. Peter Lemaire chose to have his annual holiday last year on the same date as the Show. We did manage without him but would ask him not to do it again! (*Point taken! The Ed*) We all missed him on the day. Peter produces our Show Schedules and all the advertising posters you see around the village. Also thanks to Gemma Clive who is our President. Thank you for your

commitment on the day and for handing out the prizes with such aplomb. There will be more attractions this year making it bigger and better.

On the Saturday evening before the Show this year the marquee is being used for a barn dance (and a pig roast) jointly run by the Cricket Club and the Church. This will give us a good family weekend.

The Skittles Evening this year was attended by so many people at the last minute we actually ran out of food. I have to thank Gemma and Sheila for saving the day. Thank you also to Peter and Michael for controlling the crowd! Our profit that evening was £775.

We do have 2 extra events this year.

20 June we have a coach booked to take us to the Royal Horticultural Society Gardens at Wisley. If anyone is interested we would love you to join us.

12 July we have 18 gardens in Ewelme open so if you are interested in your neighbour's gardens, that's the day to have a look. The proceeds of this will go to our Church Funds. Ann Truesdale will be very kindly organising teas in the Watercress Centre and would be very grateful for any donations of cakes. There are teas also in the school as usual.

All these events are successful due to the determination and enthusiasm of the committee, who I would like to thank very much. We have been able to donate £200 towards the opening of the Village Store, and we are looking into installing a water stand pipe in the allotments near the church.

Unfortunately we are losing two members, Sue Rushton and Gemma Benoiel. They will be missed at the committee meetings but both say that they are still willing to help us at our events. Thank you both very much. If anyone would be interested in joining our committee please let us know.

I have survived my first year as chairman and I would like to thank you all very much for your support, and especially Cynthia for always being there.

Angela Harrison, Chairman

Ewelme Watercress Beds and Local Nature Reserve

Management Team Newsletter No. 5

We were delighted to welcome a group of children from RAF Benson Primary School on a blustery day at the end of March. The children's excitement was not dimmed by the weather and we were very impressed that they walked from their school to Ewelme. They were enthusiastic, well briefed and all set to apply their learning in practical terms. As part of their experience they pretended to be Victorian naturalists, collecting specimens and making drawings of them. The visit to the Watercress Centre was combined with a visit to the Church and the School. The children were fascinated to be shown Duchess Alice's tomb by George Cannon. Their head teacher, thanking Marian Shaw, Margaret Connolly, Christine Thompson and Tom Stevenson, said that the children had had a very interesting and enjoyable day and the combination of visiting the Centre and the village worked very well. We hope that more local schools will take up our offer of an educational visit. For further information please contact Margaret Connolly (Education Officer) 01491 833649.

The first Sundays in the month events are now Open Afternoons taking place from May until September. Guided walks will resume from October. Please come and visit us any time between 2 pm and 5 pm. Entrance is free to Friends of the Watercress Beds. We are hoping for some lovely sunny afternoons when you will be able to explore the site on a self guided walk or follow a route with one of our guides. We will be serving tea and home-made cakes. We are of course delighted to be able to support the Ewelme Store where we will be buying our supplies. If you are interested in learning to be a guide or would like to help serve tea please contact Ann Truesdale on 835173.

An exciting discovery was made on the site on 26 April by Ian Stevenson (Biodiversity Officer) and Tom Stevenson of a thriving population of the rare adder's tongue fern (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*). There are no existing records of this small plant at Ewelme, which can be difficult to identify. Adder's tongue fern used to be used as a cure for snake bites, and is an indicator of ancient grasslands. Fortunately, or perhaps unfortunately, we will be unable to test its medical properties as the only snake found at Ewelme is the non-venomous grass snake. It is likely that new grassland management regimes have made this plant more obvious and even

enabled it to flourish. The other good news is that the management of the wildflower meadow has shown early signs of success with many hundreds of self-seeded yellow rattle or cockscomb (*Rhinanthus minor*) seedlings. This plant feeds on the roots of grass, stunting its growth which allows more light to reach the soil and gives the seeds of wild flowers a chance to germinate and flourish.

Des Dix reports that the female water voles have been cleaning out their burrows ready for the breeding season. The male water vole takes no part in this nesting activity. He mates with several females. Des expects to see evidence of young from the beginning of May.

Although we held a meeting with the village last November in the Village Hall, we have decided it is more appropriate to hold our Annual Meeting at the Watercress Centre. The first of these will be held in the evening on Friday 11 September. Further details will be given later but in the meantime make a note in your diaries! Our next Team Meeting will take place on Wednesday 3 June, 6:30 pm at the Watercress Centre. Visitors are welcome to attend.

There is much to do in maintaining our beds and nature reserve. We are always keen to have new volunteers. If you want to know what we do, the list of jobs is pinned up on the Watercress Centre notice board several days before workdays. These are held the first Saturday and third Wednesday mornings each month. Please contact Tom (01941 836888) or Thomas.stevenson@ntlworld.com if you want to find out more or be kept informed by email.

John Taylor, Chairman Management Team

The Northmoor Trust

Northmoor Trust: Landscape Photography Course –

A Practical Guide - Sunday 24 May, 10 am – 5 pm

Join professional landscape photographer David Hall for an enjoyable day at the Wittenham Clumps to improve your landscape photography. Explore both the technical and artistic aspects of landscape photography in the classroom before (weather permitting) going outdoors for 'hands-on' tuition.

Saturday 13 June, 2 pm – 4 pm: Wonderful Wildlife and Outstanding Orchids Mowbray Fields Nature Reserve, Didcot. See the glorious display of common spotted and marsh orchids. Adults £5, Friends and under 16s free. Booking is essential, please call 01865 407792; www.northmoortrust.co.uk.

Wednesday 16 June, 6:30 pm – 9 pm: Northmoor Trust Hedgerow Management. A walk around the Northmoor Trust estate looking at various hedgerow management options. Adults £5, Friends free. Sorry, not suitable for children. Booking is essential, please call 01865 407792; www.northmoortrust.co.uk.

Saturday 27 & Sunday 28 June, 10 am – 6 pm: Northmoor Trust's Children's Food Festival, Northmoor Trust Estate but entrance will not be via Northmoor Trust offices. A celebration of food and cooking, fronted by Raymond Blanc & Sophie Grigson. Entrance £10 per car. No booking necessary. www.northmoortrust.co.uk

Zoe Burns, Northmoor Trust

Classic (pre-1984) Car / Motor Cycle Owners...

...are invited to display their vehicles at the Village Show on the Recreation Ground on Bank Holiday Monday, 31 August. So, if you have a classic (ie. over 25 years old), and you'd be willing to bring it along, please call or e-mail David Langston to book your space:

telephone 01491 826453 or email davidlangston@btopenworld.com

David Langston

Ewelme's church – two dimensions of a multi-dimensional legacy

For those of you who know all about it, skip to the next article. But I did promise to shed a little light on how your church is sustained nowadays. I say "yours" because it's the visible centrepiece of Ewelme, having survived some 600 years in its present form – more if the original structure is taken into account. It is not the church's property but

everyone's, and we look after it in trust for the many next generations as others have before us. We are partners with the Ewelme Trust to keep Alice's "show on the road".

I have always felt that there are two facets of a church. A congregation can flourish in a tent, shack or someone's front room. Having a wonderful building may (or may not) be a bonus to the spiritual and pastoral part of life. Maintaining our extraordinary historical legacy is another dimension, and one is not necessarily dependent on the other. It is a big challenge in its own right.

If we had no church here, but we had a full-time vicar, the Church of England would expect us to pay more than £30,000 a year to support the ministry overheads of the Oxford Diocese.

In 2007 we failed to meet that target by £6000. In 2008, we were put under enormous pressure not to "default" again, despite having no incumbent whatsoever. We literally scraped together enough to pay the £31144 demand and in doing so put the PCC on the verge of insolvency (just as I was innocently persuaded to become treasurer!).

The target – a kind of Church of England Diocesan Council Tax with 80% going towards its own overheads – will be halved in future, but it is still a huge challenge for a small village, and we have to put our finances back in order first.

The other costs are to maintain the building and the grounds as a wonderful backdrop to all our lives. If there are no catastrophes, insurance, heating, lighting, grass cutting and minor repairs will cost us upwards of £10,000 a year.

But surely we have big reserves? Yes and no. We are custodians of "trusts" for which people gave money with specific instructions. There are four "restricted trusts" and they can only be spent on the very specific things they were set up for. We can't touch them for any other purpose, however deserving. They include the restoration appeal and two churchyard trusts making a total of £60,000. But we can't use them to pay day-to-day running costs or the Diocesan Share.

So that's the situation. That's why we run a fête and other fund-raisers. That's why we need everyone's support. This not a begging letter but simply to explain what we have to deal with. I confess to having been shamefully ignorant of the details, and I hope this helps others realise

what being a part of a fantastic architectural heritage and a caring spiritual legacy means in practice.

Neil Blake, Parochial Church Council Treasurer

Village Show – a reminder

Don't forget - the subject for the photographic entry is **'Shadows'** and for the adult drawing or painting entry (not to exceed 60cm x 60cm) it is **'Farming'**.

The Editor

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

Ewelme Parish Council

I am sure you have received many congratulations but I would like to put into print how very much I have enjoyed the daffodils on either side of the bank at the entrance to Ewelme, they were a delight and an amazing improvement to 'Days Lane', a real stroke of genius, I wonder why this had not been thought of before. Well Done.



There are however two points I would like the P.C. to address. The rear entrance to the pavilion is not up to standard, in fact quite an obstacle race to reach the loos, I am sure there is room for improvement. Also, the deep puddle which has appeared in front of the no longer in use telephone box is a slight hazard, no doubt

these small problems are just waiting for your input.

P.C. Groupie, (*Parish Council not Police Constable, The Ed.*)

Cynthia Winfield, Burrow's Hill, Ewelme

Irish Sausages

“Can I have some Irish Sausages, please?” asked the Irishman, walking up to the counter.

The assistant looked at him and asked: “Are you Irish?”

“If I had asked you for Italian sausage, would you ask me if I was Italian?” demanded the Irishman indignantly. “Or, if I asked for German Bratwurst, would you ask me if I was German?”

Then, warming to his theme, he went on: “Or if I asked you for a kosher hot dog, would you ask me if I was Jewish? Or, if I asked you for a taco, would you ask me if I was Mexican? Would you? Would you?”

The assistant said: “Well, no.”

Suitably encouraged by the success of his logic, the Irishman steps it up a gear. “And if I asked you for frog's legs, would you ask me if I was French? What about Danish Bacon, would you ask me if I was Danish?”

The assistant said, “Well no, I probably wouldn't.”

So, now bursting with righteous indignation, the Irishman says: “Well, all right then, why did you ask me if I'm Irish just because I asked for Irish sausages?”

The assistant replied, “Because you're in Homebase.”

Gleaned from the Internet

EWELME HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

presents a trip to the fantastic

WISLEY GARDENS

owned by the Royal Horticultural Society

Coach fare £11.50 – entrance to the gardens £6.00

Coach leaves Ewelme Village Hall

Saturday 20 June at 9:00 am

Bookings to Cynthia Winfield, Secretary, 01491 835687

EWELME OPEN GARDENS

Sunday afternoon 12 July

Tour the village visiting the many gardens which will be open to the public. Maps will be provided.

Teas available at the School (organised by FOES) and at the Watercress Centre.

All proceeds to Ewelme Church

Saturday 29th August 2009

in the Marquee

on the Recreation Ground

Bar opens at 7pm

Live Band

Hog Roast (included in ticket)

Adults -- £10

Children -- £5

Family ticket -- £25

**Contact Martin Spence (838534) or
Andy Climpson (825132)**

**Proceeds will be shared equally
between Ewelme Parish Church
and
the Cricket Club**

Friends of Ewelme School

*in association with
Oxford Touring Opera
proudly present*

Opera Al Fresco



Saturday 20 June

8 pm

Picnics from 7:30 pm

*Please invite friends, bring a picnic, relax and enjoy some light
opera in the beautiful setting of the school grounds.*

*Tickets £12.50 per person available from
the school office 01491 839240*



**Ewelme Watercress
Beds Local Nature
Reserve**



First Sunday each month



Open afternoons

2 – 5 pm

7 June, 5 July

2 August, 6 September

Self-guided walks around the upper and lower sites of the nature reserve.

Teas available



DVD of old watercress industry, photo, and historic tools display

Adults £2 accompanied children free

- Friends of the Watercress Beds free entry -

No dogs allowed, except guide dogs

Stout footwear advisable

Watercress Beds Centre, High St, Ewelme

Further information telephone Ann on 01491- 835173

Village Diary

Please note that all events are held in the Village Hall unless stated otherwise.

- 16 May Plant Sale, 10:00 am til 1:00 pm
Ewelme Pottery open for Oxford Artweek until 25 May
- 25 May Ewelme Church Fete on the school lawns, 1:00 pm
- 1 June Ewelme Society AGM 7:30 pm in the Reading Room
- 3 June Watercress Team meeting at the Centre, 6:30 pm
- 4 June European and Council Elections
- 6 June Watercress work morning on the beds at 9:30 am
- 7 June The Chiltern Chase starting at 10:00 am at The Common
Open afternoon at the Watercress Centre from 2:00 pm
- 10 June Parish Council meeting at 7:30 pm
- 13 June Wallingford Hospital Fete starting at 2:00 pm
- 14 June FOES teas in Ewelme School from 2:30 pm
- 20 June Trip to Wisley Gardens, leaving at 9:00 am
Opera Al Fresco on the school field from 7:30 pm
- 27/28 June Northmoor Children's Food festival
- 4 July Watercress work morning on the beds at 9:30 am
- 5 July Open afternoon at the Watercress Centre from 2:00 pm
- 8 July Parish Council meeting at 7:30 pm
- 12 July Open Gardens around Ewelme
FOES teas in Ewelme School from 2:30 pm
- 19 July Lunch at Linden House for Limuru Children's Centre

Cover picture of the Ewelme Store at 6:30 am on
2 May 2009 – before the crowds arrived!

Copy date for the next edition is **3 July**.

Please email to pjlemaire@aol.com or drop it in at
Firethorn Cottage