



The Newsletter for Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney

© Issue 191 January/February 2023

Pitch Improvements planned for the New Year



As 2023 begins Aston Youth Football Club continues to provide community-based sport for children from 4 - 15 years. Started in 2015 with just six children and one coach, the club has grown to over 130 children and 18 coaches.

Our Mini Dribblers for Foundation and Year 1 children remains as popular as ever, a fun way to play and learn. It is pay-as-you-play £2 per week and runs on Saturday mornings at Aston Village Playing Field from 9-10am. Our age group teams play in the Witney and District or Oxfordshire Youth Leagues.

Visit the Playing Field on a Saturday morning and you will find a community

coming together to provide sporting opportunities for local children. You can get a bacon bap and a coffee while you enjoy the games.

This year we begin a six year pitch improvement programme funded by the Football Foundation and the Club. We have several local businesses and organisations sponsoring the club and individual teams, making it possible for us and our unpaid volunteers to provide football opportunities to so many children.

Stephen Kavanagh

If you are interested in joining the club, sponsoring us, volunteering or simply finding out what we do please visit our website: www.astonyouthfc.org

Donation Appeal

As the new Treasurer, it is heart warming to have been able to collect and bank the donations from villagers in support of the running costs of The Voices newsletter.

We hope Voices brings both information, amusement, and comfort to those living in Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney along with a sense of community.

The appeal for funds to keep this link going has brought in £877.00 at time of going to print - which is a very healthy addition to the grant we receive from The Parish Council. Many thanks to everyone who contributed. We will keep the appeal going until the end of January for anyone who still wants to donate.

Thank you and Happy New Year from the Voices Team

Ian Peat Treasurer



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Articles can be emailed to: astonnewsletter@hotmail.com

or delivered to Penny Black House, The Square, Aston.

Editors: Andrew Long (850271) Helen Wheaton (684185)

Treasurer: Ian Peat (670459) Advertising: Liz Harper (850346)

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Editorial

Firstly we would like to thank the Aston Community Minibus Group for their generous donation to the Voices. This will certainly help with next year's running costs.

In this edition we begin a "new" recipe column. Millie Fyfe has taken up the challenge and we look forward to recipes using locally sourced ingredients!

We have included lots of photographs of various events that have taken place in our active and diverse village. We hope you enjoy looking back on the old year while heading into the new.

The electronically operated speed signs in Cote Road and North Street do not, at the time of going to press, seem to be working. Possibly some recalibration is needed now that we have the new 20 mph speed limits. Like it or not the 20 mph speed limits are here are to stay. Let's hope that they make our parish a safer place. Regarding safety, what is happening to the street lighting in Cote Road? Walking at night to the Village Hall is a not without its pitfalls, literally. Half of Cote Road is in complete darkness. The repair of the road over the hills to Witney was disappointing. I think many of us were expecting a more comprehensive repair. Instead, there was some patching, but this did not include some of the worst stretches. However, this road is notoriously difficult to maintain - the clay subsoil makes cracking inevitable. Has anybody got any answers?

Editors Helen Wheaton and Andrew Long

New Year – New Start

This year I think I finally cracked it. After decades of suffering under my cooking the family finally caved in and they cooked the Christmas dinner and a cracking good job they did. A new tradition has been established! And my contribution? I sat on the side-lines with a bottle of sherry! Perfect! I think I definitely come into my own with sherry.



It was also noticeable this year that the Christmas card season was greatly extended. Some, from the super-cautious, started arriving at the end of November. Clearly these were being posted early to avoid any strikes. Later postings, I was reliably informed by our ever-cheerful Postie - on his guest appearances - were piled up in mail bags in the post office yard! They will probably still be trickling through until next Pancake Tuesday somewhat damp at the edges. It's different! and means Christmas may last for a while longer!

And now we have entered a New Year with a great deal of trepidation. On the plus side the days are definitely getting longer. To date we have not been buried in snow drifts as so many other parts of the world have, and Thames Water {bless them!} have had no floods to mismanage – yet!

Doctors' surgeries have done sterling work keeping us up to date with all our vaccinations. Coincidentally, I have invented a new game of chance. When you telephone a surgery how many games can you play on the computer before you manage to speak to a real person?

So despite the looming strikes, terrifying bills, and all the other horrors which we know are waiting around the corner we can be sure of two things: -

We will manage – we always do - and the UK will not win the Eurovision Song Contest.

A very Safe, Healthy and Happy New Year to you all!

Brenda Smith

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Hazel Dormice

How we can help?



A Hazel Dormouse

The hazel dormouse, the only dormouse native to the UK, is a very fragile species of mammal that is declining massively (the population has declined by 52%) and have been doing so since the year 2000. I am currently in year 7 and I have chosen to do a project on the hazel dormouse and how we can help. I am very worried that they might be extinct before I become an adult.

They have gingery fur and a fluffy tail. They also have black beady eyes. They look very like a mouse, and you also may be thinking they are mice, but they are not at all a mouse. We are very lucky to be near hazel dormice and we need to look after them. Helping doesn't take a lot of time and is very easy. Hazel Dormice have been declining in numbers and have been doing so for many years. The reason for their decline is human activity and climate change. They need natural hedgerows to survive but humans are destroying their habitat.

I have been learning a lot of information from a website called The People's Trust for Endangered Species and they have been working on the hazel dormice for many years. They are a very useful company to have and I think they are doing a wonderful thing. To help them, you can go onto their website and find the right part where you can report a sighting of one. Complete the survey and then that will help them collect more data about the hazel dormouse and it helps them a tonne.

Why not have a simple stroll through the woodlands? You can get loads of fresh air, a brilliant walk and possibly spot some animals you didn't know existed! Try looking out for the hazel dormouse or evidence of it and then report your findings to The People's Trust for Endangered Species.

Barney Hope

Editors' note: We were really pleased to receive this article from Barney, a pupil at Cokethorpe School.

Part of his course work was to have an article published. "Voices" is always keen to help youngsters get into print. If you have a letter, a review, or just an experience to relate why not contact us?

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Parish Council

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Parish News

Terra Development Without doubt, the main parish news at the end of 2022 was the refusal on 5 December by the WODC Lowlands Planning Committee (LPC) of the planning application by Terra for 40 new houses behind Marsh Furlong. After many, many months of community uncertainty and impassioned preparation by the Parish Council and the Aston Action Group, this success has met with universal acclaim by Aston residents. Particularly satisfying for those of us present at the meeting and who were expecting a much tougher fight, was the fact that the application was refused firmly and unanimously by all members of the LPC, all of whom had taken the trouble to conduct a site visit prior to the meeting to see for themselves the impact of the proposal on our community. Full details may be seen on the 'Notice of Decision' (Application 22/00986/FUL) on the WODC website. Whilst this battle is won, the war may not be over as the applicant now has six months to decide whether to appeal. If this occurs, we will be ready.

Hawthorns 'Stockade' Planning victories for the Parish are like buses it seems; you wait ages for one, then two come at once! After objecting vehemently to the retrospective planning application (22/02636/FUL) by Matthew Homes to retain their ugly, incongruous, and unnecessary wooden fencing at the southern end of the site by Bull Street, we were delighted to see the application's refusal by WODC.

More Good News – The Precept The Parish Council Draft Budget for 2023-24 was approved at our December meeting. We are pleased to announce that for the 5th consecutive year, there will yet again be no increase to the Precept (retained at £49.74 per Band D household).

Traffic Calming Residents will have noted the recent erection by OCC Highways of new 20mph speed limits across the Parish. Installation was somewhat premature, as we had been assured repeatedly that detailed final implementation would be subject to agreement by the Parish Council (as stated explicitly in OCCs '20mph Restriction Programme' policy). Implementation also seems to have been considered by OCC as part of those for Bampton. These oversights have been taken up with OCC Highways – informally at present. Whilst we are broadly content with the new measures themselves, opinions vary on certain elements (such as those at the Cote crossroads and the gap between there and Aston, for example). Noting the peremptory manner of installation, we would welcome feedback from residents on the new measures as they settle over the next few months before we consider raising the matter formally with OCC in the Spring.

Queen's Green Canopy Following a joint initiative with the Community Trust, we saw the planting in November of a number of new trees in the southwest corner of the Recreation Ground as part of the Platinum Jubilee 'Queen's Green Canopy', a fitting memorial to our now late Queen.

Save the Date.... The Annual Parish Meeting will take place in the Village Hall on 18 April, all residents are welcome.

And finally If you have any questions or comments for your Parish Council and you are unable to raise them directly with a councillor, please forward them to the Parish Clerk by email on clerk@astonoxon-pc.gov.uk or by post, c/o 16 Foxwood, Aston, Oxfordshire, OX18 2DZ.

*Russell La Forte,
Chairman Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council*

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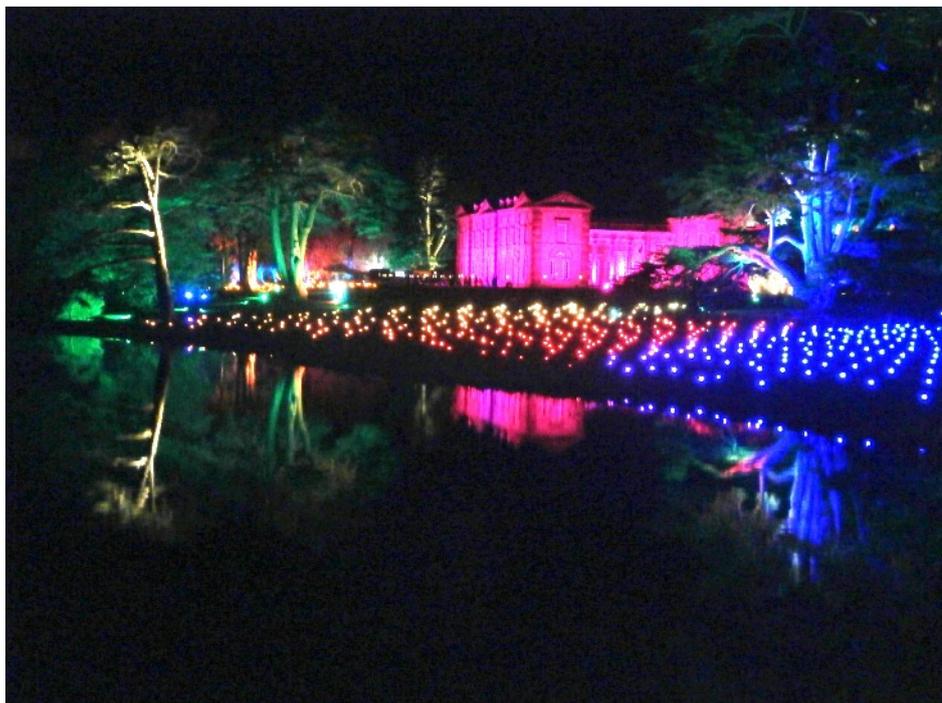
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Garden Ramblings - Light Up Winter



'A Spectacle of Light' at Compton Verney

I hope you are not feeling dismayed when you look out at your winter garden and think that's it for this year. It's easy to think the garden is dead and nothing is happening but now is the time we can all appreciate the structure of the bushes and trees in our gardens. A leafless tree can look quite magnificent against a winter sunset showing the spreading structure of it. The silhouette of the branches clearly showing its shape and form.

I, for one am delighted that some gardens open especially so that we can enjoy the spectacle of trees in winter often with clever lighting techniques. One such garden is Compton Verney which I was able to visit last year. This historic house which is used for art exhibitions with parkland designed by Capability Brown is a magnificent backdrop for a wonderful light display. This isn't Christmas Lights but 'A Spectacle of Light' which runs from February through till March. The majestic trees, shrubs and house are beautifully lit to show their stunning structure and this is then reflected magically in the lake which is the centrepiece for the garden. Well worth a visit to cheer up those wintry days. There is food available from various outlets and plenty of hot drinks too. Full details of dates, timings and booking are on the Compton Verney website.

Even if you haven't trees in your garden its worth considering some interesting garden lighting. This can be managed so easily these days with a vast array of solar lights from strings of lights to adorn your fence to glowing balls and individual pieces which look like plants themselves. It all adds extra interest and can transform a sleeping winter garden into something magical which is a joy to look out on and will brighten up your thoughts.

Enjoy your winter garden and see its different beauty and as the New Year gets underway can I wish everyone happy and successful gardening for the year ahead.

N.M.D.

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Paul Lock Photography
Peter Smith Funeral Director
Vicky's After School Club

Village Groups

Aston & Cote Badminton Club
Aston & Cote Pre-School
Aston & Cote Day Centre

Local Authority

Aston & Cote P.C.
W.O.D.C.

News from Aston and Cote CE Primary School

December was filled with the magic of Christmas, and it was wonderful to share this with our school families after two years of COVID restrictions. The nativity plays in our Early Years and KS1 classes perfectly showcased the many talents of our amazing children as well as reminding us of the true meaning of Christmas. Parents and carers of children in KS2 were equally impressed with their children's performances at St James' Church – this included the retelling of the Christmas story by the children in Year 6 and some joyous singing by everyone.

At the end of term, we said a very sad farewell to three much-loved members of staff – Mrs Gray and Mrs Long are both re-locating to other parts of the country and Mrs Pilling is retiring. All three will be greatly missed by children and staff alike for the outstanding contribution to learning they have made as well as the love, care and support they have given – each one leaves big shoes to fill! We wish them the best of luck as they embark on their new adventures.



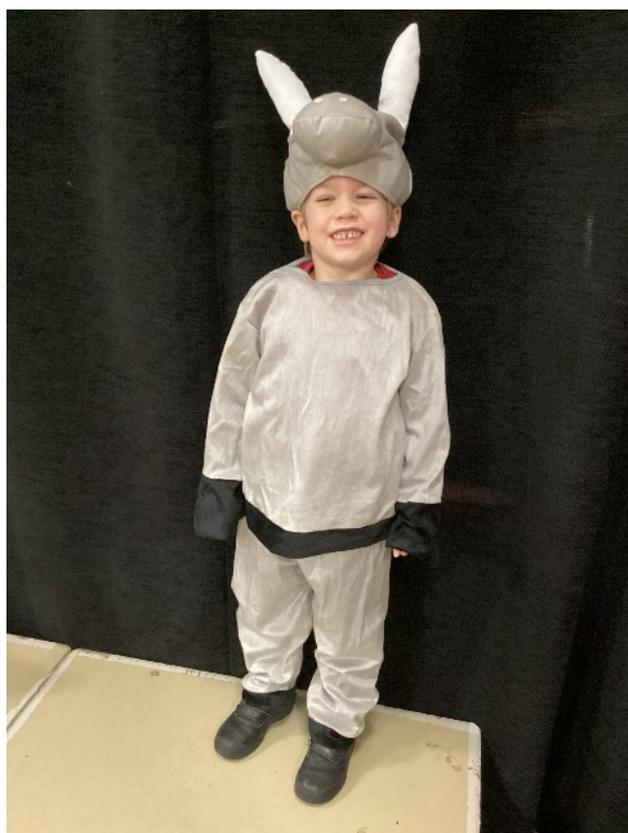
We are very grateful to the Aston Parish Community Minibus committee who recently donated £2,500 to the school. This incredibly generous gift along with a previous donation from St James' Church and a bequest from Janet Glanvill (a former headteacher) will be used to provide a Reading/Nurture Den in the school grounds. FACS is also busy fundraising for this project. Our next big fundraising event will be the return of the FACS Music Quiz which will take place on Friday 3rd February at 7.30 p.m. in the school hall. To register your team of four, please contact the school office



(office.3120@aston-and-cote.oxon.sch.uk) or Rob Taylor (rob@aston14.plus.com)

If you know of any local businesses who would be willing to make a donation towards this project, please contact Mrs Taylor – office.3120@aston-and-cote.oxon.sch.uk .

Fiona Taylor Head Teacher



Christmas Concert at St James Church



Bampton Folk Group

It was good to be back! Three years have elapsed since our last concert. Because of Covid-19 in March 2020, we were banned from congregating in the church. Our enterprising vicar, Reverend Janice Collier, used her kitchen to broadcast services over Zoom into our homes. My cat joined in the hymn singing, so I had to be on permanent mute!

Months later we were allowed into the church, but only if we wore a mask – but NO singing. The communion wafers were distributed with kitchen tongs and then finally in January 2022 off came the masks and we could mingle and sing together, at last!

And so it was that on the evening of 16th December 2022, the temperature outside St James at - 8°C – there was a warm atmosphere inside. Janice was festively dressed in a silver tunic (very Doctor Who) and in possession of Christmas cracker jokes. Her opening welcome was to thank God for our life and the happy expectation of Christmas.

The first casualties of the concert were the 1st Aston Brownies who could not attend, due to a Covid outbreak. After Sylvia Brown completed her reading we enjoyed the Aston Bell Ringers, not in their normal role, but with hand bells. More talent followed as Mary Wade conducted the Aston ladies Choir. The audience then sang “A White Christmas”, after which the newly formed musical group "Aston and Cote Christmas Winds" enchanted us with some delightful pieces.

A very animated Gill Long read a Christmas poem by Alan Titchmarsh. Bampton Folk Group, with a very lively lady soloist, sang a medley of songs before Matthew Russ, accompanied by his mother Catrin at the piano, performed a moving piece of music by Handel.

In between we had one of Janice’s party jokes. Q. “What do you get if you cross a snowman with a vampire?” A. Frostbite. A St James concert favourite “Twelve Days of Christmas” was performed with traditional gusto. It was Aston themed - no turtle doves or partridges in pear trees etc but! Pottery mugs, parish councillors, Aston Footballers etc.

Bampton Folk Group accompanied our seasonal mulled wine and mince pies.

Q. “Why didn’t the skeleton go to the Christmas party?” A. “He had no body to go with”.

Lizzie Wood



*Matthew Russ and friend
Lauren Walker*



The Rev. Janice Collier



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Aston History Group



The Meaning of Place-Names

For our November meeting we had a hands-on event instead of the usual invited speaker. Andrew Long gave a brief introduction, describing the way that different elements of a place-name had historical meanings. Members were then given copies of an Oxfordshire map and asked to search for and list names under various categories. Everyone accepted the challenge and after a short time the lists were compared. The longest list had over seventy names; quite a feat!

Some of the places noted in the six categories included:

Religious - Churchill, Steeple Aston, Minster Lovell, Church Hanborough

Direction - Northleigh, Southmoor, East End

Family name - Stanton Harcourt, Carterton

Water feature - Shifford, Fulbrook, Newbridge

Size - Long Hanborough, Great Rollright

Landscape feature - Ascott Under Wychwood, Chimney, Kencot

Next meetings:

January 26th - Members' annual supper and social

February 23rd - '600 Years of Morris Dancing' A talk by Michael Heaney

The group normally meets on the last Thursday of the month.

7.30pm at The Fellowship Centre in Cote Road. Visitors are always welcome for a small charge.

Martin Bowley
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aston.historygroup@hotmail.co.uk



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Vicky Hickman: 07887711454 Email: info@vickysafterschoolclub.co.uk

www.vickysafterschoolclub.co.uk

Nature Natters - Rooks

It is often said that if you see a flock of crows, they are sure to be rooks, and if you see a solitary rook, it'll be a crow. The more objective distinction is that rooks have a whitish bald patch at the base of the beak and crows have a heavier black beak.



We have two other largely black birds – jackdaws and ravens but jackdaws are significantly smaller than rooks and ravens are quite a bit bigger. Rooks are very sociable both foraging and nesting colonially, and we are lucky that there is a rookery here in Cote.

Rooks eat a very wide range of food, from worms to corn and from baby birds to leather jackets. The leather jackets are the larvae of daddy-long-legs and may do a great deal of damage to grassland and can ruin a lawn. They are a great favourite of rooks and the whitish bald patch at the base of their beaks probably evolved to make them better at digging for them. Their technique is interesting as they stab the closed beak into the lawn right up to the bald patch, and then open the beak to grab the insect. This leaves a series of holes in the grass which makes them the enemy of gardeners and golf course managers.

One of the great things about rooks is the way they bring the very first hint of spring because they start their breeding season before any of our other birds. The thing to look out for is nest building. They can start on this in February, and you can see them carrying twigs and sticks to the rookery. It's amusing to watch them as they are inveterate thieves stealing sticks from their neighbours' nests which produces endless swearing from them all.

James Gray

Computing for All Who Are You?

Securely identifying yourself has always been a bit of problem. This is particularly true in the digital world. We all know the issues with passwords: if they're complicated enough to be secure they are hard to remember, and if you can remember them they are probably easy to break. An increasingly common way to resolve is multi-factor authentication (MFA). Here you need more than one identification item to validate your security and this is normally split into something you know and something you have. Perhaps the earliest widely adopted example is the "Chip and PIN" authentication on credit and debit cards. Here the "something you know" is the PIN and the "something you have" is the card itself. This increases the security of the transaction because you have to have both the secret knowledge (the PIN) and the physical object (the card).



The use of some unique, identifiable part of our body for security access has long been a staple of science fiction. One memorable example was the use of retinal imaging in the original *Bladerunner* film (1982). Over the last few years we have gradually seen these ideas move into the mainstream reality. The first common mechanism adopted was the fingerprint scanner and this is now being superseded by facial recognition technology. These technologies work by extracting some elements of the shape of the face or the fingerprint and converting these into a code which is then stored as the identity. Key to this process is that it is easy to generate the code but hard to work backwards from it in order to impersonate you. This is then coupled with a PIN or password that you are required to enter occasionally.

It is worth setting these up on your devices if you haven't already. That is not just for the increased security and ease of use, but because the trend is for other applications to hook into the infrastructure and use it too. I'm always using this on my mobile banking app for example. Industry gurus are now predicting "The Death of the password", though I expect that will be farther off than most of us would hope!

Tom England

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What's in a name? Beddle's Turn

Beddle's Turn is a name used by a few of the older residents of the parish. It refers to the T junction on the road from the Jubilee Seat to the Brook



Beddle's Turn

If you turn towards Cote at Beddle's Turn you reach Corner House, the home of Caroline and James Gray. This was once the home of James Bedwell, a local farmer, whose grave can be found at St James. The turn was at one time probably "Bedwell's Turn" and became shortened by usage to Beddle's Turn.

Andrew Long



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Poppy Appeal

November 2022

The Aston and Cote community raised £2021.24 to send to the Royal British Legion.

Collection boxes were left at The Pottery, Community Shop, The Red Lion, School, and Kingsgate and there were 11 house to house collectors.

Much of the organisation was done by Bob Jones before he died in October.

The large amount collected is a fitting tribute to all his work as coordinator over many years.

Our village needs a new coordinator.

Please give this some thought and email fliz68@icloud.com or call 850346 to discuss, if you feel you can offer to take this on.



Liz Harper

A Poor State of Repair

The bridge, or what is left of it, spans the ditch which runs from the Jubilee Seat to The Great Brook and is a cause for concern. The remains of the bridge are not only an eyesore, but the bridge is not fit for purpose and does not offer any protection for toddlers and their families, walkers, runners and cyclists crossing it. In summer the ditch is usually dry, but in winter and at times of flooding the water is deep and if left unguarded possibly dangerous.



Repairs have been made to the bridge in the past and indeed it has been rebuilt more than once. However, the repairs have not stood the test of time. Large vehicles, too large to negotiate the turn, have demolished the walls and rails of the bridge. Keeping the bridge in good order is difficult but not impossible. The short stretch of



road from Beddle's Turn to Cote could be made a no entry for large vehicles. After all, why should the desire for ever larger vehicles trump every other consideration?

The actual type of bridge, its construction and its dimensions could also be reviewed. This might prove very costly, but surely worth considering.

Andrew Long

500 Club Winners

November 2022

No 234	£40.00	S. Blakey
No 328	£30.00	S. Hoskins
No 429	£20.00	C. Miller
No 149	£10.00	M. Wade
No 55	£10.00	I. Anstee
No 386	£5.00	P. Hook
No 152	£5.00	T. and S. Jennings
No 189	£5.00	C. Glenn

December 2022

No 39	£100.00	P. and J. Webb
No 12	£50.00	K. Neal
No 123	£50.00	S. Cox
No 236	£40.00	A. Harman
No 91	£30.00	R. Daniel
No 397	£25.00	T. Evers
No 74	£20.00	D. Long
No 209	£10.00	D. Shenton
No 444	£10.00	C. England
No 15	£5.00	N. and K Barrett
No 23	£5.00	D. Knight
No 181	£5.00	J. Wilks

ASTON & COTE BADMINTON CLUB

**We are a friendly club
which would welcome new
members aged 15 years
onwards. We meet at
the Village Hall on
Thursday evenings
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Queen's Green Canopy



Site clearance by Steve Malin, Russell LaForte, Bob Anstee, James Angus (not shown) and Ian Dunstan

In a joint project between the Parish Council and Community Trust, the previously overgrown southwestern corner of the Recreation field has been cleared, with 14 new trees of various species planted as part of the national 'Queen's Green Canopy' initiative to mark the Platinum Jubilee of our site clearance took quite some time and a lot of physical effort by a small but determined band of volunteers, with tree planting occurring on what turned out to be a very wet day on 6th November.

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Richard Woolley, Elaine Anstee and Simon Blower prepare for planting



Russell LaForte

W.I. News

Aston W.I. have had an eventful twelve months with speakers and demos, outings and crafts. The last meeting included a folk duo 'Turning Signs' along with nibbles and the chance to sew a felt Christmas tree decoration.



At work making Christmas tree decorations

The Quilt donated to the group to raffle has raised £80 so far. Proceeds will go to the charity we will be supporting through 2023. It is Compassionate Friends - which supports parents who have lost children. We will be making every effort to raise funds for this very worthy charity.

We are looking forward to our meal out in January, then our meetings will be back at the hall once a month with a variety of new speakers and subjects.

Please join us if you would like to meet new people and make new friends.

The first meeting is free of charge then there is a fee for the year. We meet at the Village Hall on the second Wednesday of the month. The next meeting there will be 8th February at 7.30pm, when our local vicar, Janice Collier, will tell of her time as a physiotherapist. You will have a warm welcome.

Gill Long

theWI
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Bampton

Christmas Lights

The pictures on this page and on page 16 were taken by Paul Lock



St James' church door

Aston Repair Depot



Colourful Christmas lights in a Cote Road garden



Red Lion Update

As we go into 2023 The Red Lion team would like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy New Year and to thank our customers, old and new, for your continued support over the last year.

It's been a fun filled year and, although we are still in tough times following the Covid years and now with the cost-of-living crisis etc, we are planning for new events this year - keep an eye on our Facebook page and blackboard outside for more details.



Although dates are to be confirmed we are planning more open mic nights - we do have some very talented people in our village and these are always enjoyable events. We are also hoping to host an evening of Mediumship and should this prove popular then we will endeavour to offer further similar events. As always, we have our regular quiz nights every other Wednesday, re-starting again on Wednesday the 18th January 2023, with our resident quiz masters, Richard Buss and Steve Malin - quiz starts at 8.00pm - get here early to get your table. Our Xmas Quiz was very popular, and a fun night was had by all.

The pub will be re-opening after a short break on Thursday 12th January 2023. Although we have great concerns about the rising cost of living, we will try to keep a full service going, but should this prove nonviable we will look to reduce hours until the spring when lights and heating are not needed as much. That just leaves us to say a big thank-you to all our regulars for your continued support and look forward to welcoming new faces.

The Red Lion Team





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Christmas Lights



Reindeer in an Aston garden

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A Christmas tree in an Aston garden

Aston Action Group Up-Date

Following an eight month period of uncertainty concerning a planning application for 40 new homes on land to the north of Cote Road, we are delighted to report that the West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) Lowlands Planning Committee have unanimously refused the application.

Meeting at their council offices in Witney in early December and after hearing presentations from the applicant (Terra Homes) the Parish Council, Aston Action Group (AAG) and Dan Levy, (our County Councillor), the 13 Councillors rejected the application outright for a number of reasons. We now await to see if the developers decide to appeal. Full details can be seen on the WODC planning website. The reference is 22/00986/FUL.

Working closely with the Parish Council, the AAG fought the case very carefully and were able to show just how the “harms” substantially and demonstrably outweighed the alleged “benefits” of such a scheme. Many thanks to the AAG for sending out three Newsletters, placing banners at strategic points and holding open meetings in the Village Hall to make sure everyone could contribute to the team effort.

Detailed discussions with our many stakeholders took place throughout the summer and included planning consultants, solicitors, Thames Water, Bampton Surgery, the Primary School, our local MP, County and District Councillors. And to the 150 residents who submitted their objections to the WODC, a massive thank you – your comments really helped our cause and made such a difference.

We must now continue to focus on strengthening our case should an appeal be submitted - the developers can come back to the WODC at any time during the next six months with revised plans.

WATCH THIS SPACE!

*Stuart Revell
Aston Action Group*



Flooded fields at The Brook on New Year's Day



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 lorraine@cotswoldgardendesigner.co.uk
 07516262560
 www.cotswoldgardendesigner.co.uk

Aston & Cote Day Centre




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 Cllr Charlie Maynard
 Mob: 07487 708 681
 Charlie.maynard@westoxon.gov.uk

Cllr Lysette Nicholls
 Mob: 07766 251 125
 Lysette.nicholls@westoxon.gov.uk

View all the Latest news from the Council
www.facebook.com/westoxfordshire

What a busy last few months: first the Radio Oxford interviews where we were able to explain what happens at the Day Centre. Then the BBC Central News Camera Team and Reporter came to interview members and filmed a typical Wednesday morning. Various press releases were sent out within the Adult Care Sector showing our success and that there is a real need for this sort of facility. In fact, my phone did not stop ringing with words of encouragement from members' families and strangers too!

Following this publicity, we had an incredibly kind anonymous donation with the proviso that we spend the funds on giving all the seniors a fantastic Christmas, which we did, the funding covered the costs to provide two weeks of free entry to the members, lovely food, fabulous entertainment, providing a taxi service for members, lots of presents and our Christmas Decorations. A huge thank you.

Thank you also to Witney Lions for sending us Santa during our Christmas celebrations as he gave out the presents and The Aston Parish Community Minibus Committee who gave us a fantastic donation, after the sale of the minibus.

I am busy planning the programme up to June with more live music, speakers giving information, demonstrations, arts and crafts, quizzes, and one or two big surprises. If you're over 65 and interested or you know of someone that would enjoy this very social, safe place every week, get in touch. We are also looking for more volunteers. If you would like to be part of this great new Day Centre, either for just a couple of hours, a morning, an afternoon or all day, please contact Karen on 07887974468.
 email: target.meukmail.com

Stay Safe.



Karen Stay. Founder: Aston & Cote Day Centre.

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1st Aston Brownies



We are currently planning the new Spring, 2023 term, with lots of exciting things planned for the unit. What a busy year last year was and with the last meeting of the year which was our party, and Badge Presentations Evening with a surprise visit from Santa too.

All the girls have been working very hard towards their Communications Skills Builder Badge and the Network Skills Builder Badges during the Monday meetings, we were able to also present lots of Interest Badges of which the girls have been doing at home, so a massive 'Well Done' to all the girls. Also, Father Christmas came to visit us, and he was able to give out presents to all the girls which was a lovely surprise. Thank you to Witney Lions for all their help in making this happen for the unit.

The girls also went on the trip for the special Girlguiding Screening of Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical at the Odeon Cinema in Oxford during December. Again, thank you to the various parents who assisted us with this and to some of the Witney Unit leaders who stepped in at the last minute to assist us for this trip to go ahead. It was clear that a great time was had by all, adults included

We are very grateful to all the parents that came forward to assist with the parents' rota previously and we will continue this. If any adults would like to join Guiding and assist us in providing this facility for the girls, please get in touch, I can explain the training that the Guiding Association provide, please get in touch with me on 07887974468 or karenthegardener123@gmail.com

Stay safe

Karen Stay. Unit Leader.



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Big Quiz for Charity



On the 19th of November, teams of quizzers at the Fellowship Centre joined thousands of others across the country to raise money in the Tear Fund Big Quiz Night. Eleven teams were entered, many from the village and area but some travelled from as far afield as Scotland to take part! A series of pub-quiz question rounds were enjoyed which were run simultaneously with other locations across the country. Some of the rounds were unusual and perhaps the most intriguing round was entitled “Apples, Pears and Potatoes”.

Thanks to the enthusiastic contribution of those who took part in the Aston event, a total of £350 was raised locally and an enjoyable time was had by all. Our congratulations go to this year’s winners “Three Smarties and a Tube” who repeated their success from last year.

The annual event is organised to support the Tearfund charity which works in more than 50 countries around the world, working through local partners to help individuals, families and whole communities reach their God-given potential. Perhaps Tearfund’s most visible activity is disaster emergency response. In addition to this they promote longer term community development partnerships to empower communities to lift themselves out of poverty. Another important focus is on advocacy at local, national and global level to combat injustice and poverty.

We are looking forward to another instalment of the quiz next year and the challenge is laid down to see if anyone can snatch the trophy from this year’s worthy winners.



Winning team “Three Smarties and Tube” being presented with the trophy

Tom England

Eating Out - The Plough, Witney



The Plough, High Street, Witney

The Plough is reputedly the oldest pub in Witney; with a long garden, bedecked with lights, gas heaters and fire pits, and backs onto the river; always nice to hear on a summer's evening. To stay afloat these days, pubs need to offer something special, and sadly, just having great food doesn't seem enough anymore, although I'm pleased to say the Plough certainly delivers on both fronts. It's a waste having a garden if you don't exploit it, and they have nailed this, with open mic music nights, film nights, quizzes; most nights seem to have a theme, whether 2 for 1, half-price wine, fish night etc. They even have a Christmas carols evening (at Christmas of course) with mulled wine and marshmallows.

My daughter praised the Sunday roast and inventive menu, so booked an outside table for my 65th birthday.

I chose the specials of crispy Shetland scallops and tempura roe with sauce vierge, followed by Wychwood venison, parmesan roasted hispi cabbage, crispy new pots, greens & salsa verde, and loved it.

We also chose the Halloumi chips (perfect) with Sriracha mayo, plus beer-battered gherkins and tartare sauce as shared starters, which we expected to be finger-sized, but we were presented with four monster gherkins in batter that were delicious. My daughter chose pan-fried mushrooms, green beans, cavolo nero, crispy potatoes, salsa verde, to which she added the optional feta (certainly worth the extra), while my wife had the Dover sole. As she makes a dog's dinner of getting at the fish, we asked if the chef would fillet it, and the result was a beautiful plate of fish untainted by a single bone.

For dessert we wanted to try the intriguing sounding miso and lemon cream choux buns (described as small and cute) but they were sold out, so I opted for a very nice Eton Mess and then a couple of Bourbon cocktails.

When the weather is not crazy hot as it was in August, the inside is cosy and inviting with a small private room also available. There are a lot of dining options in Witney, some very good, but this is one we mustn't let fail, so we'll be doing our bit to support Henry and Jess and the friendly staff in ensuring The Plough is here to stay.

Russ Avis

Wreath Making



It seemed that this year that there were less Christmas lights on show in the parish but more Christmas wreaths on front doors. Perhaps the escalating electricity bills may have been a factor.

These wreaths were among the dozen or so that were made at The Fellowship Centre on 13th December. The wreath makers brought their own greenery and after an hour or so had produced their own beautiful, individual wreaths.

The wreath making was part of the informal art group that meets on the first Tuesday of the month at The Fellowship Centre.

Andrew Long

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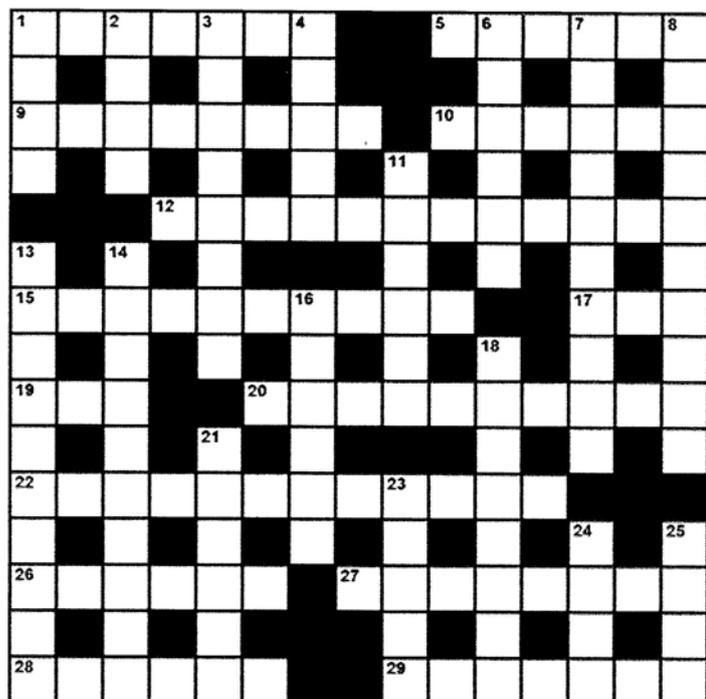
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Crossword by Caroline Gray

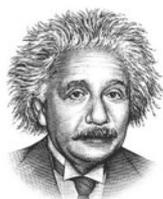


Across

- 1 Firmly place Chinese sauce round supermarket (7)
- 5 Almost some and all zig zag down hill (6)
- 9 It is publically authorised to wrap entrails around here in France (8)
- 10 Specialised words heard from Mother Hubbard on opening cupboard (6)
- 12 Over hill and dale in pursuit of hybrid land (12)
- 15 If flu U-turn spins things will be unproductive (10)
- 17 Headless woman of an age (3)
- 19 Kiss kiss around a winter sport (3)
- 20 Pre hotel derby found in St Andrew's (4-6)
- 22 Costa Rica fir used to aerate the earth (12)
- 26 What B Wiggins is heard to say in very cold weather (6)
- 27 The silly girl grew and couldn't sit still (8)
- 28 Eastern Tszar is a substitute (6)
- 29 Grind an alien for a fish (4, 3)

Down

- 1 "It... or never" white stuff (4)
- 2 Raise the oposite of right that is exchanged (4)
- 3 Sour style of art akward and proper (8)
- 4 WB concealed in tasty eats (5)
- 6 Association of measurement (6)
- 7 Travelling a huge distance can result in grisly heat (5-5)
- 8 Tomatoes that bring profit (5-5)
- 11 Crazy dog show short of time but extra loud looks a mess (6)
- 13 Funds Parisienne river and makes baggy fishing net (5-5)
- 14 Written oaths used in a divas tiff (10)
- 16 Twit with a personal problem is cheap (3-3)
- 18 A boat gong can be used in snow (8)
- 21 The setter prepares the soil for grain (6)
- 23 After spear thrown (5)
- 24 Navy down (4)
- 25 Exam alternative to Jolson (4)



All the answers are on page 25



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Alphabet Quiz

A simple twenty question quiz, but all the answers begin with the letter J.



1. Where is this astronomical observatory?
2. What is the name of this mouse?
3. What is the name of this band formed by Paul Weller?
4. Which Oxfordshire village was the birthplace of Flora Thompson and was fictionalised in "Lark Rise to Candleford"?
5. Which BBC TV children's programme, which ran from 1965 to 1996, was designed to stimulate an interest in reading?
6. Who had an "Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat"?
7. The pub "Jude the Obscure" is located in which part of Oxford?
8. Which bird is specifically mentioned in Lewis Carol's poem the Jabberwocky?
9. What first name is shared by singers Bieber and Timberlake?
10. Who wrote "Three Men in a Boat"?
11. What skin condition gets its name from the French word for yellow?
12. What is a young kangaroo called?
13. Which woodland bird has the scientific name *garrulus glandarius*?
14. Which Roman god was the guardian of gates and doors?
15. What is the name of a burglar's crowbar?
16. What is the name for a person who crosses the road, regardless of passing traffic?
17. What was the nickname of the Victorian beauty Lilly Langtree?
18. What is the name of the pirate flag?
19. Which word is the name of a Hindu god and a large articulated lorry?
20. Which small, all-purpose car developed by the USA during World War II, was also known as G.P. i.e. General Purpose Vehicle?

Compiled by Andrew Long

Where in the parish?



This was taken on New Year's Day 2023

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Another Great Folk Night

On Saturday November 26th we were treated to a double bill with the opening act – The Jay Birds – an all women group made up of ladies based mainly in Kencot, as well as Fairford, Highworth and Witney, who have been singing together for four years.

Jay Mathews, the leader, who was also rehearsing for the part of Glitz in the ACTS production the following week, had an amusing, lighthearted, presentation style. The ladies were very well received.



The ladies of 'Jay Birds'



After a break for refreshments, the main act – Jigantics - took to the stage. They played a variety of styles, both traditional and not so well known. They cleverly included a wide range of instruments, some of which were fascinating and there was a wealth of talent amongst the group. The packed audience was included in some of the refrains and the whole evening was most enjoyable, ending with a collaboration between the two groups.

We look forward to seeing them all again in Aston. An absolute treat of an evening.

Helen Wheaton

The Jigantics on stage



A group finale

Introducing ... Milly Fyfe ... Promoting British Food and Farming

When I saw a call out in the Voices asking if someone would like to be a regular contributor to the magazine with cookery and recipe ideas, I had to throw my hat in the ring.

I grew up in Cote, where my parents Ann and Martyn Wastie still live, and have fond memories of delivering the Voices magazine with my mum. Whilst I've now moved away, mum still saves me a copy and I enjoy keeping abreast with village life. Growing up in such a rural area and joining the Young Farmers at a young age has inspired my passion for promoting British food and farming. So expect some tasty treats and recipe suggestions using produce grown locally and in the UK, promoting low food miles, cooking from scratch and the importance of buying British.

I wanted to share this tasty recipe using brussels sprouts, because believe it or not, they are not just for Christmas! How do you like the sound of Stir-Fried Sprout Risotto?

You will need:

Brussel Sprouts chopped up finely
 1 pack of British bacon lardons
 1 clove of garlic
 200 ml of double cream
 100g of frozen peas
 Risotto rice
 1 litre of Chicken stock
 Pepper to season
 Parmesan cheese to garnish

Method

- Fry the bacon lardons in some rapeseed oil on the hob. Use a wok or high sided pan.
- Add the chopped garlic and finely chopped sprouts to the pan and allow to fry until slightly brown.
- Add the risotto rice to the pan using quantities directed on the packet per person.
- After a minute or so, add in some chicken stock. Never allow the mixture to dry up but feed the risotto mixture every now and again.
- Shortly before serving, add in some frozen peas and cream and allow to cook for a further two minutes.
- Serve with a parmesan cheese garnish and black pepper on top

You can find more tasty recipes in my new e-book No Fuss Meals For Busy Parents by visiting:

<https://www.millyfyfe.com/store/No-Fuss-Meals-for-Busy-Parents-E-Book-p516676969> or follow the pages on social media @NoFussMealsForBusyParents or www.nofussmealsforbusyparents.com



Milly Fyfe

ANSWERS

Alphabet Quiz

1. Jodrell Bank. 2. Jerry. 3. The Jam. 4. Juniper Hill.
5. Jackanory. 6. Joseph. 7. Jericho. 8. The Jubjub birds.
9. Justin. 10. Jerome K. Jerome. 11. Jaundice. 12. A joey.
13. Jay. 14. Janus. 15. Jemmy. 16. Jaywalker.
17. The Jersey Lilly. 18. The Jolly Roger. 19. Juggernaut.
20. Jeep.

Where in the Parish?

At the Bridle Bridge over the Great Brook

Crossword Solution



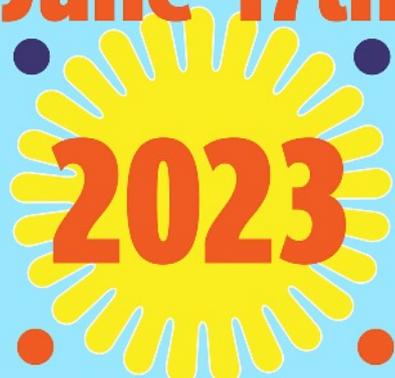
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Diary

January

Wednesday 18th
Day Centre
10am-3pm Fellowship Centre

Monday 23rd
Brownies
6-7.30 Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 25th
Day Centre
10am-3pm Fellowship Centre

Thursday 26th
History Group
Supper and Social
7.30 Fellowship Centre

Monday 30th
Brownies
6-7.30 Fellowship Centre

February

Wednesday 1st
Day Centre
10am-3pm Fellowship Centre

Thursday 2nd
Parish Council
7.30 Village Hall

Friday 3rd
Aston School Music Quiz
7.30 Aston School

Monday 6th
Brownies
6-7.30 Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 8th
Day Centre
10am-3pm Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 8th
WI
My Life as a Physiotherapist
Rev. Janice Collier
7.30 Village Hall

Monday 13th
Brownies
6-7.30 Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 15th
Day Centre
10am-3pm

Monday 20th
Brownies
6-7.30 Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 22nd
Day Centre
10am-3pm

Thursday 23rd
History Group
'600 Years of Morris Dancing'
A talk by Michael Heaney
7.30 Fellowship Centre

Monday 27th
Brownies
6-7.30 Fellowship Centre

March

Wednesday 1st
Day Centre
10am-3pm Fellowship Centre

Thursday 2nd
Parish Council
7.30 Village Hall

Monday 6th
Brownies
6-7.30 Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 8th
Day Centre
10am-3pm Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 8th
WI
Annual Meeting
7.30 Village Hall

Monday 13th
Brownies
6-7.30 Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 15th
Day Centre
10am-3pm Fellowship Centre

Saturday 18th
Folk Concert
"Jigsaw"
7.30 Village Hall

..... **Church Services**

St. James, Aston



**Aston and Cote
Community Church**



Service pattern

First Sunday

9.30am St James, Aston, Holy Communion

Second Sunday

9.15am St Mary's, Shifford, Holy Communion
9.30am St James, Aston Family Service

Third Sunday

9.30am St James, Aston Holy Communion
6.00pm St Mary's, Shifford Evensong

Fourth Sunday

9.30am St James, Aston Family Service



Date	
15-Jan	No Meeting in Aston (10.30am Celebration service in Witney)
22-Jan	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School (with communion)
29-Jan	10.00am Worship, talk and Sunday School
5-Feb	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School (with communion)
12-Feb	10.00am All-age Family Service
19-Feb	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School
26-Feb	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School
5-Mar	No Meeting in Aston (10.30am Celebration service in Witney)
12-Mar	10.00am All-age Family Service

Do also check for notices of any changes and updates, on the church noticeboard, WhatsApp, The St James Facebook and other social media. These services are regularly live streamed via Facebook

Please contact Alastair Barnett on acc@rootsanddrivers.uk for more details, or go to our website at <https://astoncotecc.org.uk/>

FOLK NIGHT
Sat 18th March
Aston and Cote Village hall

Featuring:
JIGSAW

Supported by:
Under the Wychwood

7.00pm for 7.30pm start
Tickets £12
Aston Repair Depot or
Sylvia Brown 12, Cote Road
01993 850 553

WE NEED YOU!

Exciting New Community Project working with the over 65's. We are looking for more Volunteers to join our team for a few hours every Wednesday morning/afternoon. Venue is Fellowship Centre, Aston Village.

For more details ring Karen 07887974468.

Andrew Long – Chair and Editor (Content)
Helen Wheaton – Editor (Technical)
Ian Peat – Treasurer
Martin Bowley – Secretary and Lay Up
Paul Lock – Lay Up
Tom England – Lay Up
Liz Harper – Advertising and Distribution
Lizzie Wood
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Established 10 years

Our Motto "Prompt Attention"

ACTS are back ! Who Killed the Secret Agent ?

There was murder and mayhem on Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th December at the Village Hall: ACTS presented a murder and mystery play, the object of which was for the audience to decide who had murdered the spy.

As the performance unfolded clues were given, the relevance of which were missed, misunderstood, or ignored by the audience. I found Chris Martin's script difficult to follow, but that did not spoil my enjoyment of the evening. The acting was excellent, and the cast members brought their characters to life in a lively and entertaining way. It was not all murder though and there were plenty of laughs.

There were breaks in the performances where the audience discussed, in their teams, who they thought had "done it", piecing together the evidence. To aid the thinking process fish and chips were available on Saturday evening, while the Sunday afternoon show included a cream tea.



*Pictured left to right:
Jay Mathews, Steve Neal, Jenny Warwick, Vicky Fuller,
Simon Hoskins, Richard Buss-Keating and Andy Ball.
Mark Goss (not pictured) also narrated the tale.*



The cast with Director Val Crowson

At the end of the show the answer sheets were collected and the list of Bond films and songs which had been worked into the story, revealed. Finally, the culprit and motive were revealed.

Congratulations to all involved with ACTS, it was a great evening and I'm looking forward to the next production.

Andrew Long



Quote: Julian and Cathy Smith

'... Never a dull moment. The acting was superb! And the props, staging and front of house all perfect.

Thank you all for giving us such a wonderful experience and Congratulations!'

