

# West Ashton Magazine



**Fungi In Clanger Wood**

*Photo by Rich Fricker*

## **In This Issue...**

**A Journey Down  
West Ashton Road**

**Green Farming**

**West Ashton  
2020**

**Hedgehogs**

**And Much More....**

***Our community magazine keeping you up to date in West Ashton, Rood Ashton, East Town, and Dunge.***

The West Ashton Magazine is published quarterly by the West Ashton Parish Council. WAPC has devolved full authority for the magazine to an independent volunteer Editorial Group formed for the sole purpose of producing this magazine. The intention is to inform and entertain the residents of West Ashton. The magazine is distributed free of charge to all residents of West Ashton village. The Editors warmly invite you to submit reports, articles and photographs relating to past or future village issues and events, or any subject that may be of interest to the readership. The editors reserve the right to edit any submissions and make corrections, omit material or do minor reorganisation to any submitted work and reserve the right to reject any submissions. We prefer typed or electronic material. Photos will be returned on request.

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All contributions welcomed. Please send them, in the first instance, to Jo Watkins.



Our Hall

Western View

With Works Completed

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## Editorial

At the time of writing, we are once more subjected to another lockdown. This one will probably bite harder than the last, especially for those living on their own. During the summer lockdown, I enjoyed seeing new faces on my walks and while working in my front garden, but with winter approaching the temptation is to stay indoors. Plans will have been scuppered, with early Christmas parties and other festivities cancelled and so it goes on. I shall miss selling poppies for the British Legion and for the Church Christmas Concert. My husband's 'significant birthday' falls in the middle of November, so no family celebrations to look forward to. I'm sure I'm one of many to feel the repercussions of

this dreaded virus and know I'm not alone in trying to make sense of these uncertain times.

At last, after several repeats, I managed to see the Barn, Shepherds Drove, featuring in the TV series 'Escape to the Country'. Read more about it inside. Hopefully lockdown restrictions will have been lifted for Christmas, enabling us to be with family and friends. A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year from myself, Richard and Tim and also to contributors and the delivery team.

Look after yourselves in these uncertain times and stay safe,  
Jo

**Schoolreaders**  
improving literacy • increasing life chances

### Volunteers Needed to Listen to Children Read in Local Primary Schools After Lockdown

Our reading volunteers are going to be desperately needed following the Coronavirus pandemic. Thousands of children won't have had enough reading practice during lockdown. In a normal year, one in four children leave primary school unable to read well. Most children will have missed a term of school, so the reading gap is now even wider. Children who struggle with reading are more likely to live in poverty and be unemployed as adults.

Schoolreaders needs more volunteers in your local area to support children's reading and prevent them falling further behind. If you want to make a difference to a child's life, apply to become a Schoolreader. No qualifications are needed; just a love of reading and some spare time each week.



To join us, please visit the website [www.schoolreaders.org/volunteer-application-form](http://www.schoolreaders.org/volunteer-application-form) or call 01234 924111 for further information.

Registered Charity: 1159157

## POTTERING IN THE GARDEN

It's just amazing how quickly 12 weeks pass by, and when I open my diary and my only findings are oil delivery, dentist, chimney sweep etc., that's when I realise there are no meetings, coffee mornings and suchlike organised - a very different way of life altogether. Alas, we are all in the same boat. I have at last overcome the deer problem with the help of my garden helper, who, over the last few weeks, has extended the height of the fence with some trellis which is where I saw it exit into next doors garden. I watched a farming programme, where it stated that deer can jump two metres, so it was finished off with some rows of fishing line. It seems to be working for now, at least no sign of hoof impressions. My son in Houston said his problem was with armadillos, a family of five living under his decking. He acquired a trap which will catch one at a time. All now returned to the forest, but one at a time 20 miles away with good straight roads and cheap 'gas'. Back to the garden - the second sowing of runner beans I planted has been fairly good, a little late with the planting as the first ones had their flowers eaten by the deer. I was not alone as they made their way into Jo's garden next door and devoured the flowers up to their eye level. The good weather and of course an abundance of rain, have given me some prolonged pick-

ing, even though earlier some flowers were eaten by saw fly. I enjoyed washing down the greenhouse both inside and out. No, that's not strange when a window cleaner's charge is £60 for the outside only, and now with my new heater installed which will just cut in when the temperature drops. I am inspired by something new, like growing some spinach in the greenhouse which could give me some greens during the colder weather, not normally planted in the garden until March, also good for cut and come again for salads. Tomatoes were exceptional this year, freezer well stocked with soups, and chilli jam in jars. It needs peppers, garlic which I also grew this year, red onions, tamarind lemon grass and ginger. It really tickles the taste buds with some vintage cheddar. I love it, so much so that I'm growing my own Mexican chillies for next year's batch.



I had a kiss of life tray of stocks from a garden centre and planted them in pots either side of my summer house. So I collected the seed pods of these, planted them and now have six trays of 15 doing well in the greenhouse. They will flower in summer 2021. I had a voucher from my son and bought a salvia 'Blue Spires', but on my arrival home, two stems had collapsed and straight away I turned them into 16 cuttings.

The wet weather as I write at the end of October, is telling me to keep off the garden for now, but there are things we can do like cleaning tools and pots in readiness for spring, and smearing with oil to prevent them from rusting in the garden shed. And my top tip would be, don't waste all those falling leaves, try running your mower over them to chop them up, pierce a plastic bag for storage/ drainage as that's really good leaf mould to add to your borders in the



Spring.

Holly Westlake

*Footnote:- Looking forward to spring, several of us with garden ponds will be on the lookout for frog spawn, so please get in touch if you have any going spare.(Ed)*

**Fairy ring?**



Photo Hazel Berry

## A PIECE OF WEST ASHTON HISTORY SAVED FOR POSTERITY

A piece of history was saved when the above stone was retrieved from a skip in the village. During the clearing of the site at Shepherds Drove, the stone, which was mounted on an old barn, was thrown away. Luckily Geoff Watkins spotted it and stored it safely in his garage until now; the time has come to repair the stone and put it back on the barn in Shepherds Drove for villagers to see.

The stone details the name of Edward V11 (also known as Bertie) and a date of 1902. There are also a number of letters i.e. C, D, F and P. Having done some research, Edward V11 was due to ascend to the throne in June 1902 but became gravely ill with Peritonitis. He was forced to delay the coronation until August 1902 so the date on the stone depicts the year of his coronation. Apparently over 50,000 meals were prepared for the poor in advance of June 1902, so the feast went ahead despite the coronation being postponed!

Edward made an official visit to France in May 1903 and following his visit to the see the Pope in Rome, helped create the atmos-



phere for Anglo-French Entente Cordiale. Edward was known as the Peacemaker. So the letter F could represent the strong relationship with France and the letter P his status as Peacemaker. The letter D could be the fact that he was the Duke of Cornwall, or D could stand for Denmark as Edward married Alexandria of Denmark. Of course, it could all be Latin, so if anyone has any other ideas, please let me know!

Watch this space, we will provide an update on the stone in the next newsletter.

Nicky Bull

## BIRTH CONGRATULATIONS – LUKE McOWAN

Luke McOwan was born on the 6th of August at RUH Bath. He weighed 3.62 kg (7lb 15 oz in old money) and was back home in Welam House



the same day.

Luke is a delightful, healthy and a very happy baby who smiles a lot. He has four older sisters- Elysia age 11, Keilani 9, Sabelle 6 and Maxine 3. When they met Luke, the sisters were delighted as they had been

counting down the days throughout the pregnancy. The girls enjoy playing with their baby brother and insist on helping with feeding and washing him, and he is starting to respond actively to their attention. Mum Claire and dad Stewart say Luke can be amusing and very cheeky with his facial expressions, he is definitely very good company. As a family, they hope that Luke continues to thrive.

As a qualified public health practitioner, Claire has started to set up her own business and hopes to practice full time in a few months. The work involves helping people in every aspect of their lives including health, work and social relationships. Similar to the work of a life coach, Claire will be facilitating her clients to identify barriers in their lives and empower them to remove those barriers. Claire's work is mainly online but would be happy to see local people face to face. We wish her every success.

Jo Watkins

## 10 Years Ago



**Photo Liam Silcocks**

10 years ago 'Wayfarer' remarked in his article 'West Ashton Wanderings', that the severity of the previous winter may have affected the buzzard population as he had seen fewer than normal. The bird is known in Scotland as the 'telegraph eagle' due to its habit of perching on telegraph poles to observe its prey which includes leverets among others. Liam Silcocks took a photo this year of a buzzard perched on the side of Yarnbrook Road.

## West Ashton 2020

We can no longer:

Walk the private road to Rood Ash-ton or use the original 150 year-old route of the footpath to the church Park easily outside our house, go out and return when we like or ar-range for deliveries at any random time of the day

Go to watch our football team play or visit the theatre

Be volunteer guides at local places of interest or be spontaneous about visiting them

Shake hands or give friends a hug  
Meet up with family or groups of friends for celebrations or even just a coffee and a chat

### **BUT**

We can:

Discover new local beauty spots within walking distance, while sav-ing money by not putting petrol in the car

Have time to do all the creative jobs that we couldn't find time for be-fore

Hear birdsong and enjoy spending time in the garden

Chat for hours on the phone and find new ways of connecting with people

Not feel guilty about spending all

afternoon with a good book or watching a film on TV

Take time to be calm and reflective

Paul and Margaret Workman



**Moss covered tree in Clanger Wood-  
photo Rich Fricker**

## Larkrise Farm Managers AGM Report - Wednesday 14th October 2020

What a difference a year can make. We only had three months into this year before all changed; COVID-19 certainly did that.

As of March 2020 lockdown changed our way of working, like many other businesses we had to adapt the best way we could, our priorities at that moment forward was keeping the farm open for our students to return to, financially secure and of course virus free. With a skeleton staff of four and three volunteers, we managed to keep the animals fed, mucked out and healthy, whilst behind the scenes the trustees worked hard to secure our financial situation through grants and implement health and safety precautions. As the months went on, we were able to open to certain students, adults at first, bringing some support staff off furlough. Students were later brought back as and when lockdown eased, which also brought life back to the farm, albeit restricted and in bubble form. All the activities had also been put on hold including Riding for Disabled and Equine Assisted Learning, but as previously mentioned the animals still had to be tended to and exercised, this led to putting one of our RDA horses out on loan to an already 'horsey' family, where the first three months he was enjoying life of hacking out and the occasional dressage activity. Unfortunately, he became ill with a degenerative bone disease and sadly the difficult decision was made to have him put to sleep. This hit all our staff and RDA volunteers very hard, he was a superb RDA horse, well loved by everyone who met him and kind to those who rode him, he is sadly missed.

Sadly, we are unable to do the student and volunteer awards due to this year being cut short, but I would like to add a statement of thanks to our students, our volunteers, and our staff. Firstly, our staff who have shown remarkable resilience in returning to work under such difficult circumstances. Our volunteers who right from the start supported me, Ashley, and Lucy, albeit it at the two metres distance, working alongside us looking after the animals. Not forgetting the students who returned in slow stages back to the farm and embraced all the difficult changes that lay before them.

Thank you to everyone whether you are employed by the farm or on the outside supporting everything we do, this has been a difficult year, it is hard when we cannot all come together in our wonderful environment, but I can guarantee that everyone's efforts have not gone unnoticed.

STAY SAFE

Wendy Self Farm Manager.



*Donald the  
pygmy goat*

What a strange year this has been, not least in respect of the weather and its effect on our young trees. The very late frost was a severe set back for some of our wild cherries and especially for the walnuts but, as with so much in nature, everything seems to have come bouncing back despite weeks of drought and high temperatures and what a reward we have had this autumn with such splendid, long lasting colours.

The one thing that has done really well all year is the grass and the undergrowth, which has grown with such vigour that we have had to go back to cutting under the trees over the whole site or risk the trees being overwhelmed by an impenetrable jungle. So much for our plans for a three-year cycle of cutting one third a year! Re-wilding sounds great when you read about it but has turned out to be somewhat different in practise. Hopefully, it won't be long before the trees form a dense enough canopy to do the job for us.

Thanks to some really hard work by our maintenance team, our toilets and centre passed a stringent Covid 19 Risk Assessment and we were able to re-open for small, socially distanced groups for day and evening visits and we have welcomed Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, members of the Youth Adventure Trust and our old, or should I say, young, friends from Wally's Nursery School who come out to enjoy the fresh air, stamping in puddles and generally having the time of their lives in heat and cold, rain and shine.

The Scouts had some exciting night adventures planned for the next few weeks but,

sadly, it does not look as if these will now be able to go ahead and it will be back to "virtual" scouting using Zoom. Such a disappointment for the children and for the leaders that have spent time organising these events and making sure that they are safe. Still, many of the virtual meetings have been very good, one included a camp where our young members pitched tents in their gardens, slept out with a parent and took part in coordinated activities including cooking meals with the same menu. I know several dads that loved it!

Covid-19 has meant that we have not been able to help as much as we would like in Biss Wood but we did manage to cut and rake one of the large glades, so hopefully we will be rewarded with another stunning display of primroses and bluebells when the time comes.

Our plans to expand our woodland into three surrounding fields are slowly gaining momentum and we have made an initial application to the Forestry Commission for what is called a Woodland Creation Planning Grant which will hopefully open the door to a complicated three-stage process ultimately leading to a grant to cover the cost of the 25,000 trees that we hope to plant, tubes and stakes and fencing and a contribution towards annual maintenance. If we succeed with the application, "all" that we would then need to do is raise the money to buy the land – watch this space! Lastly, we are still hoping to recruit someone to survey and record how well we are doing in increasing biodiversity on a regular basis and we do still have plenty of free willow wands available (on a "pick your own" basis of course). *John Cox*

**We prepare young people with skills for life**

## Next steps for the regenerative agriculture fields on East Town Lane

After the diversified cover crops grew (described in the last edition of the magazine), which you will recall were an eight plant mix of rye, vetch, clover, radish and phacelia, the fields were grazed for two months by 19 cows and their calves, plus one bull. The cattle loved grazing at head height, a buffet of salads for them, and because they were being strip-grazed, we could watch them charge in and see what they favoured - the vetch was what they ate first. By the last week of September, the fields were well eaten down, the cattle were taken off the land and the fields prepared for planting. One learning is that a flock of sheep could have readily followed the cattle through the fields as there was rapid plant growth that would have provided ample food for sheep. What to do next? Winter sown wheat was chosen. But how best to benefit from the soil health and biology improvements we will have gained since planting the cover crop in May? The worm, fungal and root activity over the summer will have fertilised, aerated and allowed water infiltration and drainage. First, we took the decision not to plough any of the land. Of the three fields, all of about the same size at 13 acres each, we cultivated one with minimum tillage (“**min-till**”), working the ground down more con-

ventionally with a subsoiler first before drilling the seed, and cultivated the other two fields with a no tillage (“**no-till**”) drill (see photo) in a single pass - literally cutting the soil an inch or two with a disc and dropping in seeds with the crop residue still on top of the ground, albeit dying back. The min-till field looks tidier at the moment, but the greater tilling has upset a corner where the drainage has historically been poorer. With the no-till drill, we have been able to plant two corners that we couldn't get to even in the spring when drilling the cover crop seed because of the wet.

Taking our experiment and making changes in sensibly sized steps, we plan on farming the three fields similarly in terms of “inputs”, being sprays and fertilisers, over the winter and through to harvest next year, except on one of the two no-till fields where we will reduce the artificial fertiliser used by 25%. This will enable us to assess the productivity in terms of grain and straw yields of the three fields with different tillage, varying soil disturbances and slightly varied fertiliser input. As someone said to me recently, with the incorporation of livestock in the arable rotation, we are returning to farm like our grandfathers.

Tim Page



James doing the drilling

#### IN MEMORIAM GILBERT WILSON GREEN 1924-2020

Gilbert spent his childhood on a small-holding in Ashford, Surrey. He went on to study Natural Sciences at St. John's College, Cambridge specialising in geology, afterwards taking up a job with the Geological Survey of Great Britain. He married Julian in 1950 and went on to have four sons. During the summers, most of Gilbert's professional life was spent 'in the field'. Winters were spent processing the fieldwork results and turning them into revised geological maps. In 1968 he was seconded to the Geological Survey of Jamaica, where he was responsible for training his new team and mapping the area around Kingston. He returned to England moving to West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire and progressed to District Geologist for the South West, retiring in 1983, and finally moving to Edington in 1987.

As a retirement project, he purchased

Biss Wood, a 57 acre tract of Ancient Woodland which appeared to have been more or less neglected since 1945. He purchased a further 9 acres of farmland, planting nearly one thousand trees, mostly ash and oak. The rides were cleared and eventually stoned, a pond was dug, and a 20 year coppicing cycle reintroduced. He conducted 20 annual bird censuses and was proud that the wood had become a nesting site for sparrow hawks and a territory for falcons and even a nightingale, also recording the presence of Bechstein bats, hornets, silver washed fritillaries, orchids and 340 species of fungi. Gilbert finally gifted the wood to the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

Robert Green

*As ever, the autumn colours of Biss Wood were spectacular this year, a fitting tribute to Gilbert. Ed*

## Parish Council Matters

Good news for the Parish Council, Nicky Bull has agreed to become the parish council clerk. Welcome to Nicky who can be contacted on 01225 754552 or email: [westashtonpc@outlook.com](mailto:westashtonpc@outlook.com) Carol Hackett has agreed to continue with a handover for a couple of months to help Nicky get up to speed and get accustomed to her new role.

Because of changes in government legislation, the West Ashton website is undergoing redevelopment. This will of course take some time but in the meantime the website is still available <http://www.westashton.org.uk/>

If you have any comments or wish to contact the parish council please contact Nicky.

Parish Councillors are: Richard Covington (Chair), Simon Alford (Vice-Chair), Steve Molloy, Ian Robertson, Horace Prickett (Wilts Councillor).

The parish council continues to meet online using “Zoom” as restrictions have tightened.

**Neighbourhood Plan** – The REG16 consultation by Wiltshire Council has now

been completed, the comments and plan documents have been submitted to the examiner for scrutiny, which will then lead to referendum and final adoption of the plan.

**Fly Tipping** – Contact Wiltshire Council on 01225 777234 or online at: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/parkingtransportandstreets/roadshighwaysstreetcare/mywiltshirereport.htm>

**Community Speed Watch (CSW)** – The kit to carryout speed watch has been allocated and a couple of sessions have been done. Again, it would be really helpful for more volunteers to get involved. It is usually only a couple of hours a week and unlikely to be more than once every two or three weeks.

Richard Covington, Parish Council Chairman

NB. The new website is here: [westaston2020.org.uk](http://westaston2020.org.uk) and most information is now on it.

## Village Hall News...

It continues to be a quiet time for hiring of the village hall but the events that can take place and follow the COVID-19 guidelines are up and running. Any changes to the guidance are being monitored to ensure continued compliance with any new restrictions. In addition, the meeting room has been set aside as COVID-19 room with additional first aid items.

The storm damage that occurred way back in February is now finally underway. The delay was in part because of COVID-19 and the time needed to resolve the insurance assessment. There were a couple of options for the repair but since the old black wood on the mock Tudor facade was in a poor state and the bay window was leaning and not water tight it was decided a complete overhaul of the gable end was necessary.

The first step to making the repairs was to move the 3-phase cable from the apex on the gable end to underground. This unfortunately took longer than forecast and caused some disruption to using the car park because the trench was not filled in as soon as expected.

The second phase of the repairs has started and hopefully will be completed by the time you read this edition of the magazine. All the damage and the facade has been removed and the bay

window replaced. Disruption to regular events has been minimised where possible but it has been necessary to store the large oak timbers in the hall prior to their installation.

The aim of the repairs is to keep the overall appearance of the hall the same and at the same time achieve a long term solution to the sagging old bay window and the ingress of water. That said it is an old building that is showing signs of its age and is likely to need further remedial work.

Richard Covington, Chairman, Village Hall committee.

*Start of repair work*



*Work in progress – Photos Jo Watkins*

## West Ashton School

Teaching and learning remotely was challenging for everyone and so the children and teachers were very excited to be together in classrooms again in September. The children have been amazing – all very positive and keen to learn. They settled really well back into some familiar and some new routines: plenty of handwashing, a daily temperature check and staggered starts, breaks, lunches and end of days have quickly become the norm. Our supportive parents have really helped ensure the success of start and end of day routines.

Our new reception and nursery children are exploring Autumn as their topic and have a Tree of Pride in their classroom which they are covering in pictures and drawings they are proud of. KS1 have been, “busy, busy, busy” according to one pupil! They have been inspired by The Enormous Turnip and The Lighthouse Keepers Lunch and have produced some incredible drawings and writing based on these books. Y3/4 have been mummifying tomatoes as part of their learning on Ancient Egypt and have

been researching to answer the question ‘What was the Ancient Egyptians greatest achievement?’ Y5/6 have moved their classroom to the hall due to the size of the class and the social distancing advice. They are loving the space and “feel like I’m ready for secondary school” according to one Year 6 pupil. They have been studying the local Anglo-Saxon and Viking history and discovered that the famous and decisive Battle of Ethandun in 878 took place just up the road at Edington. Suddenly history seemed more real! The whole school were invited to take part in Alabare’s Big Sleep In. Last year, Trowbridge Youth Parliament, with representatives from our school, organised the Big Sleep Out which inspired Wiltshire Council to join the fundraiser too. Due to fundraising restrictions this year, the charity which supports vulnerable, homeless and marginalised people, encouraged us to build a den, or sleep on the floor, or camp in the garden whilst raising money. The children loved this idea and raised a magnificent £350.

It feels strange not expecting to celebrate Christmas in school in quite the same way as we traditionally do but before long we hope that we will be once again welcoming villagers to our end of term services at St John's. As always, if you have time to volunteer to listen to a child read or a wonderful story to tell which could help bring local history alive for the children, please do get in touch.

Alex Blake-Thwaite



Reception children with their Tree of Pride



Our children supporting Alabare's Big Sleep In Fundraiser

## Hedgehogs

Late in September we took delivery of two hedgehogs. There were 10 that were let loose on West Ashton at the time. After opening their travel box Mr and Mrs Hedgehog appeared for a few nights scurrying about and nibbling on the dried cat food left in their feeding station. Every morning we were excited to see what the trail camera had caught of their activities and then that was that, no sign of them. Of course it's coming up to hibernation, hedge hogs are one of three native hibernators in the UK. Anyway it was time for Richard to build a hedge hog house and fill it with leaves and bedding. Hopefully the pair will take up residence for the winter particularly since a badger has reappeared but fingers crossed they'll be ok. They need to be

left alone now until next March so we won't know until then if it was successful.



Jean Covington

Hello Everyone

Ladies are you fancying a chat? We are planning to have six chairs socially distanced in the Village Hall on a Wednesday afternoon from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Bring your knitting or just chat. Wear a mask till you are seated then it's up to you if you wear it whilst you chat.

If you are interested and wish to book a place please let me know. Once I have a list I will select random groups

of 6 for each week and let you know when it is your turn!

Hope to start on 11 November.

Stay safe.

Jackie Bradley Tel: 01225 754100

*Footnote:- Since this was written, the government has introduced another period of lockdown. Hopefully, once the social distancing rule has been relaxed, Jackie can set this up*

*Ed.*

## Up and Down the Yarnbrook Road

After hearing from Jo Watkins that she had been told that Kettle Lane used to be gated and having this confirmed by my neighbour (Clare Humphries ) who in the 1980s grew up at Woodside Cottages at the start of Kettle Lane, I started to look more closely at old maps and documents featuring Yarnbrook Road, West Ashton.

**The West Ashton Crossroads and the Ale Garden.** I started the trip walking down Bratton Road toward the crossroads and looking at the view of Trowbridge and Bradford on Avon in the distance. From old maps (1770s – to the early 1990s) you can see that the crossroads was a staggered junction and there was a smallish rectangular enclosure to the west of the crossroads. In the early 1990s the junction was widened and slightly realigned and traffic lights were installed. Documents in the Wiltshire Museum archive refer to the enclosure as the West Ashton ale garden. The apple trees that were in the garden before the widening of the crossroads are there today.

**Westbury Turnpike Road** - Turning left on to Yarnbrook Road, we are on the Westbury Turnpike Road. Old maps show the road as West Ashton Common, West Ashton Hill and the Westbury Melksham Turnpike Road. The Westbury Turnpike Trust was set up in the 1770s to build, maintain and operate toll roads around Westbury. Turnpike trust originated because local government (parish councils) were unwilling or unable to invest in roads. Finances were levied by tolls on the users and were collected at toll houses/toll gates. The Trusts erected milestones along the route

of the road. The road was taken over by the Wiltshire County Council in 1873 and was later designated as the A350 and named Yarnbrook Road.

**Along the Yarnbrook Road south from West Ashton** - After turning the corner into Yarnbrook Road on the left (east) are the 1990s red brick houses (Orchard Close ex-



tension) built on the site of the **Red House** – a late Georgian farmhouse demolished in the mid 1990s.

The orchard behind the house was developed in the 1960s as Orchard Close.



Next on the left and opposite on the right are the five pairs of **1850s stone cottages** formerly part of the Long Estate at Rood Ashton.



Soon after the pair of cottages on the left and about 200m south of the West Ashton Crossroads is a 200 years + old **milestone**



with a benchmark carved in the side. The metal plate is lost but read “Westbury 3/ Melksham 51/2”. The stone is registered with the National Milestone Society with the ID WI\_WYMK03. Heading south to Yarnbrook, what is now Sunnyside, were up until the 1990s, **allotments**. The late Cyril Sweetman of Yarnbrook Road was the last tenant. In the early 1800s the allotments were managed by the Parish as part of the poor relief system. Until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were more allotments on the other side of the road running from the boundary of the bungalow in a wedge through what is now the Ashton Hill Farm field. Down the hill on the left are **Kettle Lane and Woodside Cottages**. Kettle Lane is a

private road with no public right of way, that must be gated to through traffic once a year to keep its private status. Old maps and documents show that Kettle Lane, Woodside Cottages and Kettle Lane Cottages were created in the 1850s and the gate was outside Woodside Cottages. The woodland behind the cottages (Flowers Wood) is shown on some old maps as “Skittles Wood” – perhaps this is the origin of the name “Kettle”. Into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Kettle Lane continued as a track over the A350 and through what is now Ashton Hill Farm towards the River Biss and then to the road from West Ashton to Trowbridge.

## Ancient Forest of Selwood

What struck me most when I looked at maps from the 1770s to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century was that the woodland was far more extensive, particularly on the west (Trowbridge) side of Yarnbrook Road.

**Carters Wood**, stretching westwards from Yarnbrook Road towards the River Biss and Trowbridge, disappeared in the 1960s and 1970s to make way for farmland



woodland clearance along Kettle Lane is now being restored.

It appears that **Clanger, Picket, Flowers and Carters Woods** were part of the ancient forest of Selwood. The forest ran from Gillingham in Dorset to Chippenham and was as formidable natural boundary in the Anglo-Saxon period and the site of important historic battles before that.

### Over the border into Yarnbrook

**Brookside Cottage** on your left (east) just before the roundabout was functioning as a school in the 1840-1850s.

Around the corner was the **turnpike gates/tollhouse** for this stretch of the Westbury

Melksham turnpike road. It has since been demolished and replaced with a three storey red brick house (diagonally opposite the Longs Arms and across the road from the petrol station)



The turnpike gate at the other end of the road at Little Marsh, Semington has also been demolished, but the name lives on in the name of the industrial estate.

Pauline Hume, Yarnbrook Road

Thanks to:

Clare Humphries of Yarnbrook Road and Jo Watkins of Bratton Road

Wiltshire and Swindon Record Centre for maps I copied years ago: Andrews and Drury 1773, Enclosure Map 1816, Tything Map 1840.

Wiltshire Museum, Devizes archives – notes I made 20+ years ago

WWW.old-maps.co.uk - for detailed OS maps of West Ashton 1880s – 1970s

British History on-line – A history of the county of Wiltshire Volume 4 – Roads  
[www.turnpikes.org.uk](http://www.turnpikes.org.uk)

[www.milestonesociety.co.uk](http://www.milestonesociety.co.uk)

*Footnote: - Thanks also to Peter Hughes who told me that in previous years a gate to close off Kettle Lane was ceremoniously closed once a year to establish the principle of it being a private road. The gateposts were destroyed many years ago by a visiting lorry. I duly contacted Pauline, asking her if she had heard of this custom, and as a result, she came back with this splendid piece of local history. (Ed)*

## Getting Away

Despite the Coronavirus we managed to get away for 10 days in September to the Black Forest, Southern Germany. The weather was very warm, our host suggesting it was the hottest part of Germany and I wasn't about to argue whilst having breakfast on the patio.

Situated not too far from Loffingen, the farm house was on the edge of the forest gorge and provided many options for walking by the river. It was quite uneven, including some rocky ledges to get across but the scenery was spectacular. Reaching the river was often a pleasant descent, but by the time we finished walking out of the gorge it was more of a slog to get back to the farm house, but the reward was a cool German beer – “Munchner Hell”

It was otherwise a very relaxing break with

a couple of excursions to see the source of the Danube, and Rheinfalls in Switzerland, which was about an hour's drive just across the border. I mustn't forget to mention the Black Forest gateau, I was glad not to be driving afterwards as it contained quite a lot of kirsch!

A brief mention of the journey: to avoid doing the whole journey of nearly 700 miles in one day we stopped overnight at Ashford and caught the early morning 6:50am train to Calais. Setting off from Calais at 8:30 local time we used the Auto-Route and Autobahn for most of the 500 miles and arrived around half past four in the afternoon. Tolls were just 50 euros each way.

Richard and Jean Covington



## St John's Church - Here Comes Winter

The final quarter of the year has not proved too encouraging, although we have had two Sunday Services – one in September, one in October and by the time you have read this, we had a service scheduled in November, but due to Lock-down, it was cancelled. It is with regret that the Remembrance Service will not be held at St John's and that the annual Christmas Concert has had to be cancelled – will miss the mulled wine and mince pies! The Morning Communion Services have been led by Rev. Allan Coutts and his sermons have been very inspiring. The Strict Government guidelines were put into place; extra cleaning beforehand; seating arrangements 2 metres apart; hand sanitizer at door; face masks being worn; no hymns; modified giving of bread and no wine; no hugging or handshakes; no chatting after the service within the Church but fine outside; doors and windows open and a register being kept of attendees. More like a military exercise than a Sunday Service. However, it was nice to see folk back in the pews and a sense of relief and peace engulfed the Church. The magnificent East window seemed to promote calmness in its beauty.

Even though it has been a quiet few months, there is always work to be carried out. Minor stonework repairs had taken place in the autumn; lightening conductor inspected; PAT testing took place (inspection of portable electrical items); front garden cleared and replanted; final electrical connection made for power surge unit and earthing of lighting conductor; Church Annual Parochial Church Meeting took place. Although “business is not

open as usual”; activity in our small rural church has been evident. Catherine Holland had made some raspberry jam – fruit from her garden, but as no harvest festival, she sold the jars and gave the proceeds to the Church – a very fine jam and we appreciate her effort and kind donation. As long as the lockdown does not continue far into December, it is hoped to have a Sunday Service on the 20 December at 10.30 am, with possibly a mid afternoon service on the 24<sup>th</sup> December (this depends on numbers). Thanks must be given to those who continue their weekly contribution, even though the church is closed. These offerings help to pay for some of the required maintenance/ housekeeping of the Church and helps cover the monthly “share” to the diocese. May St John's Church wish you every blessing at this time of year with peace and goodwill at Christmas and always. Wishing you good health and happiness in 2021.



St John's Church, Warbleton  
East Sussex

Jean Robertson



**St John's Church will always  
commemorate Remembrance  
Day, even if no service was held.**



**ST JOHN'S CHURCH, WEST ASHTON**

WARMLY INVITE YOU TO REJOICE  
IN THE FOLLOWING CHRISTMAS SERVICES :

*SUNDAY, 20 DECEMBER - Revised Carol Service*  
10.30 am

*THURSDAY, 24 DECEMBER - Christmas Eve Communion*  
*Service*  
3.00 pm

Both Services Being Led By Rev. Allan Coutts  
If You Wish To Attend And Keeping To The Government  
Guidelines Relating To Attendance Numbers, Please contact Jean  
On 01225 760368.

The Services Are Subject To Current Government Instructions.  
Please See Detailed Information Regarding Church Services.  
Thank You.



**ST JOHN'S CHURCH, WEST ASHTON** - Opening for Sunday worship  
Christmas Services

wel come

Please read the following and adhere to instructions : Thank you.

Please let Jean know if you propose to attend (760368)

Please enter the Church by **Main Door**.

Please use hand gel provided when **entering** and **leaving** the church.

It is **mandatory** to wear a face covering whilst in the church.

Please follow the **2 metre** distancing policy.

Please observe the non contact greeting rule – no hand shaking or hugs.

Please sit where indicated in pews.

There may not be any organ music or hymns. There will be no service sheets.

Please **leave** the Communion Book in your pew.

The Communion wine will be taken **only** by the Minister. The Minister will come to **each pew** and hand out the Communion wafer to each member of the congregation. (Do not leave your pew). Duration of service : 35/45 minutes.

No toilet facility available. There will be no refreshments.

If you are feeling unwell, **please consider** whether you should be present.

There will be no Collection during the service, but there is an opportunity to leave offerings in the **offertory dish** when leaving through the **Main Door**.

Please leave promptly after service has concluded via Main Door.

Once the church has been vacated, surfaces will be hygienically cleaned and Church left closed for 72 hours.

St John's is attempting to provide a clean, safe environment and is mindful of health needs.

It would be wonderful to see you.

With Blessings For Christmas And The New Year. Stay safe.

## Textile Studios at Steeple Ashton.

Have you ever wanted to sew but lack the basic skills or confidence?

Why not join our basic beginners sewing and patchwork lessons designed with you in mind. You will be taught in a small group so as to provide individual attention from the tutors in a sociable friendly atmosphere in our dedicated studios. We have the space to comply with Covid 19 regulations and all users must adhere to these guidelines. You will learn about all the features on your sewing machine, basic sewing and cutting for soft furnishings, dressmaking and patchwork and lots more. We can provide patchwork equipment but a sewing machine is desirable. Coffee is provided. The course will be morning or evening every two weeks for four sessions lasting 2.5 hour and starting soon.

Follow on courses are also available for patchwork or sewing. At the end of the course, if you become a guild member you will have access to handicrafts, felting, sewing bee and patchwork groups and other guild activities. Ample parking. Course Fee is £80 and £60 if a member of Wiltshire Guild of Spinners Weavers and Dyers. So come along, be part of a lovely small group, learn to sew, chat and make friends. For further information and discussion contact:

Valerie Laverick: [valerielaverick@hotmail.com](mailto:valerielaverick@hotmail.com)

Beryl Francis: [berylbadgers@icloud.com](mailto:berylbadgers@icloud.com)

tel: 01380 870524

Website. [wiltshireguildswd.org](http://wiltshireguildswd.org)

The 50 Club draw was done at Busy Bees by Jackie Bradley and Sylvia Preston with 4 other members in attendance.

2020	First	Second	Third
March	Peter Holland	Eileen Eggleton	Margaret Harris
April	Pamela Piggott	Charles Payne	Lyn Pybus
May	J. Bonome - Maciver	L. Bonome - Maciver	West Ashton W.I.
June	Joy Sherrin	David Smith	Catherine Holland
July	David Webb	Graham Blight	Tina Morse
August	Michael Shiles	Betty Cronan	Alan Rozkosze
September	Ursula Jenkyn	Ann Ogden	Margaret Davis

## SPICED RED CABBAGE

1 x medium red cabbage  
 4oz (100g) butter  
 1 x medium onion (finely chopped)  
 2oz (50g) lean bacon (chopped)  
 2 x cloves  
 1 bay leaf  
 Salt and pepper

Cut the cabbage into eight segments and remove any tough stalk. Shred the cabbage coarsely. Cook in boiling salted water for five minutes. Drain well and transfer to a pan with the butter, very finely chopped onion, chopped bacon, cloves, bay leaf and seasoning. Cover and cook gently for thirty

minutes. Remove the bay leaf and cloves (if you can find them) and serve hot. This is very good with sausages.

Lyn Pybus



## Regular Activities In The Village Hall

<b>Dance Class</b>	Tuesdays at 10am	Dee Dee Wilde	01380 871608
<b>Dog Training</b>	Thursday's at 6.30pm	Ken Scott	07867 820497
<b>Pilates</b>	At present on YouTube	Amie Hawker	07738 449245
<b>Tai Chi</b>	Monday's at 10.30am	Brian Wooding	01985 213474
<b>Wives Group</b>	730pm 1st Wednesday of the month	Marlene Pike Sylvia Preston	01380 870272 01225 765858
<b>WI</b>	Fourth Wednesday of the Month	Holly Westlake	01225 755866
<b>Yoga</b>	6.15pm Most Monday's duration 1.5hrs	Angeline Nicholson	01380 830458
<b>Coffee Mornings</b>	Fridays 10.30 to Noon	Margaret Workman	01225 766998
<b>Zen Judo Classes</b>	Age 8+ Village Hall 7.00-9 Fridays.	Colin Delve	colin.delve@dano ne.com
<b>Moo Music</b>	10 to 10.40 & 10.50 to 11.20	Nicola	07534799276
<b>Taekwondo</b>	Fridays 4.20 to 5.00 & 5.00 to 5.45	Nick	07921855900

**TO BE RESUMED WHEN RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED**



<i>Other Useful Numbers</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>	
<b>Builder</b>	Paul - New build, extensions, renovation specialist, alterations.	01225 753997/07799 563347 19 Bratton Road,
<b>Invictus Plus Care CQC reg</b>	Kay Kamunga home care for the Elderly and Disabled	01225 760356
<b>Foot Reflexologist</b>	Annie Ritchens	01225 752002 Mob 07967630429
<b>Garage Services</b>	Briken Motors Garage....MOTs, servicing etc,	01225 755203
<b>Library</b>	The Mobile Library visits Orchard Close 3.30 to 4 pm	<a href="http://www.services.wiltshire.gov.uk/MobileLibrary/Library/Stop/57">www.services.wiltshire.gov.uk/ MobileLibrary/Library/Stop/57</a>
<b>Logs</b>	Logs for sale. Ben Pike	01380 870808
<b>Newspapers</b>	Richard –Seend News	07702 868863 seendnews@gmail.com
<b>Parish Council</b>	Chairman: Mr Richard Covington	01225 761904
<b>Police Concerns</b>	David Bradley Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Village Co-ordinator Neighbourhood Policing Team PC Mathew Till	01225 754100 Non-emergency No 101
<b>Refuse</b>	Community skips in Canal Road, Trowbridge for larger items.	<a href="http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/rubbish-collection-days">http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/ rubbish-collection-days</a>
<b>Seamstress &amp; Soft Furnishings</b>	Clare Humphries, curtains, dressmaking and alterations	01225 767703 Mob 07929 122631
<b>St. John's Church</b>	Services Sundays 10.30am. Rev Allan Coutts	01225 777331
<b>West Ashton Boomerang Taxi Service West Ashton to Trowbridge.</b>	Taxi service. Mon-Sat West Ashton to Trowbridge. Price each way: adult £1.60; child 80p; children under 4 free. Bus passes can be used.	Morning pickup 9.30am, return 12 noon Or 2pm. Tel: <b>0800 371297</b> to book.
<b>West Ashton C of E School</b>	Debby Huxham Head Teacher	01225 754354
<b>West Ashton Ladies Skittles Team</b>	Liz Hickerton	01380 870437
<b>Footpath Warden</b>	Paul Workman	01225 766998
<b>Beauty Salon Manicure Pedicure Facials etc</b>	Kelly Beavis (Gift Tokens)	31 Bratton Road 07766117813

