

COMMUNITY CALL

Edition 2005/02

Newsletter

September 2005

Village Newsletter Second Edition 2005

Here we are again, the second edition of "Community Call". I hope you will feel it is of interest. Think how you might contribute the next issue in Spring 2006. Contact myself, or any member of the committee. Ed

For contributions or for further information
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STOP PRESS Burglaries and Break-ins

You may well be aware that Ashley Green has suffered several break-ins to private dwellings over the past few months, and the latest being at St John's. A leaded window was destroyed as they entered, and collecting boxes forced open.

Please be vigilant!!

Keep your eyes open, look out for anything suspicious, make sure you lock up well (sheds and ladders too), and keep an eye out for your neighbours.

Make it harder for the burglar.

ASHLEY GREEN AT WAR

May 2005 marked 60 years since VE day and there were celebrations in Trafalgar Square, with Dame Vera Lynn singing again, so some things never change.

Talking to long time residents **Irene Hollylee** and **Winnie Collins** is like travelling in the tardis with Doctor Who as they recollect what it was like 60 years ago.

Ashley Green was called sheep village then as sheep and cattle grazed all over the green, no fences barred the way and the village was probably a third of the size it is today. Very few villagers had cars and everyone used a bike or walked to town and back, carrying shopping up the hill! The two wells were still working then and the village shop sold everything bar alcohol (leave that to the Eagle) and baked bread for everyone.

Self sufficiency was vital. Every village garden would have their own vegetable plot not to mention a few hens, ducks, pigs and rabbits that you could always sell to the local butchers.

Jamie Oliver would have been proud of the school. The children grew their own vegetables and cooked their own school dinners and if you were milk monitor that meant walking across to the farm and waiting for the farmer to milk the cow.

Nature walks were always part of the curriculum and also served a dual purpose as the children could carry firewood back with them. Gathering sheep's wool from the hedgerows was another preoccupation and back at school they would dye the wool and spin it and on one occasion a multi - coloured scarf was sent to King George VI.

With all the young men serving away from home the whole atmosphere of the village changed during the war as many evacuees from London arrived to fill the empty rooms.

Many of these children had never visited the countryside before and there were quite a few who really didn't want to leave by the end of their stay.

There was very little "action" in the village although many planes were heard overhead and only two doodlebugs landed in the fields nearby. The most exciting action was probably the shilling hops in the village hall.

There were a number of American camps nearby and many of the local girls took a shine to the Yanks.

Most villagers would visit the "hops" in Berkhamsted and the cinema at least once a week and think nothing of cycling home late at night in the dark. With the Black Watch based in the town there used to be guards on duty at Brickhill Green and Rene recalls they always had their guns at the ready and the cry of "Halt who goes there" would usually receive a very cheeky response.

A prize for anyone who can get Rene to tell the whole story!

(This piece was submitted for the previous issue by Lorna Ingham, but pressure for space meant it could not be included. Many thanks to Lorna, and the villagers who spent time to make this piece possible)

And while on the subject of Self Sufficiency

Allotment to Let

There is ONE allotment to let.

Contact the Clerk to the Council:
Helen Garthwaite on 01442 833286

The Last of the Fast and the Furious



“I have just heard a bang”. It was 12:30am and my wife woke me with a poke in the ribs. “It was probably nothing”. Turn over – snore. “I think that there has been an accident on the road”. Snore. “Get up and have a look”. Curse. Fumble for dressing gown. Shoes. Out the front door. Security light dazzle. *What is that car doing there?*

We had moved into Ashley Green in the beginning of February 2002 and, two days later, a vehicle driving towards Berkhamsted careered off the road straight into the hedge outside our house. Indeed, without the hedge, the car would have been taking up space in our front room. The car was totally written off and the two inhabitants were taken off to hospital with serious injuries. The driver claimed that he had swerved off the road because there had been two cars racing side-by-side towards him. Whatever had caused the accident, it was clear that all the cars had been driving too fast.

Speeding or inappropriate speed contributes to a significant percentage of all crashes and a higher percentage of more serious crashes. Accident frequency rises disproportionately with increasing speed. It rises approximately with the square of the average traffic speed. For example, on urban roads a 21% increase in collisions could result from a 10% increase in mean speeds. Conversely, a 1 mph reduction in speed is associated with a 10% reduction in the risk of being involved in a fatal accident. Quite simply the biggest problem with speed is down to physics – the higher the impact speed the more it hurts.

After a lengthy consultation period stretching back to 2002, the county council agreed on 29th July to reduce the speed limit in Ashley Green from 40mph to 30mph.

This will be implemented in October as part of a program though out the ‘Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership’ area to improve the safety of our roads. After all, Thames Valley has the worst accident record in the UK second only to London. However, to put this into perspective, you are four times more likely to be killed on the roads in the USA than here.

Broadly speaking, we can expect that a 10mph reduction in average speed will reduce the accident frequency by 60%. The probability of serious injury to a belted car occupant in a front seat at an impact speed of 30mph is almost half that at 40mph.

For pedestrians and cyclists the reality is even more stark. At-the-scene investigations of collisions involving pedestrians and cars found that 45% of all deaths occurred at impact speeds below 30mph. Another 45% of all deaths occur at impact speeds between 40mph and 30mph. About 40% of pedestrians who are struck at speeds below 20 mph sustain non-minor injuries. This rises to 90% at speeds up to 30 mph. The change from mainly survivable injuries to mainly fatal injuries takes place at speeds of between about 30 and 40 mph.

So a change in the speed limit from 40 to 30 takes us, statistically speaking, into the ‘survivable injury’ category.

The other effect will be on noise. There are three major sources of noise: the vehicles transmission; the tyres in contact with the road; and loose bodywork. Two of these are directly related to speed. Noise, of course, has an impact on house prices. One of our more celebrated residents spent several mornings parked near the house he was considering buying, during rush hour, to ensure that the road noise would not affect him unduly.

Speed limits on their own have little effect on vehicle speeds.

Worryingly, in places where speed limits have been reduced and no other action taken, the change in mean traffic speed is observed to be about a quarter of the change in posted speed limit.

For example, reducing Ashley Green’s limit from 40 mph to 30 mph would only reduce speed by 2.5 mph. .

However, speed cameras are particularly effective at reducing vehicle speeds. A Home Office research report shows that speeds at camera sites were reduced by an average of 4.2 mph and accidents by 28%. Many argue that the speed camera only reduces the speed on the specific short stretch of road that it monitors but research shows that speeds are significantly reduced certainly after the speed camera if not before it. So our speed camera is of great importance. Speed cameras seem to be one of the only artefacts of modern society that can be described as the opposite of a NIMBY. Most people *would*, I suspect, want them Only In their Back Yard

All in all, the reduction in the speed limit in Ashley Green will improve our overall quality of life. It will help to make the village safer and quieter. So, thank heavens for speed cameras but how about an Ashley Green bypass!

Future Village Events

- **A Caribbean Evening**
Saturday October 8th
- **Theatre in The Villages**
Tuesday October 18th
- **Bonfire Night**
Saturday November 5th
- **Family Christmas Party**
Sunday December 11th
- **Quiz Night**
Saturday November 19th
- **Barn Dance**
Saturday January 21st
- **Valentines Dance**
Saturday February 18th

Please support these. They are fun, and a source of funds too.

Put the dates in your diary -
NOW!!

For further information call
01442 878166 or 01442-874931

Previous Events

A Round-Up of some of the previous events follows.

Events and Activities

THE VILLAGE FAIR

Yet again the sun shone on another successful Village Fair on 18 June, a very popular annual fixture and one of the main fund raisers for the Community Association.

We had the usual variety of stalls – old books, new books, home produce, plants, crafts, equestrian goods, and jewellery, plus charity stalls for the NSPCC, Cancer Research and The Chiltern Society (who, by the way, said it was the best traditional village fair they had been at!). The side-shows were great fun. The Trolley Run in particular is a favourite for the children although the co-opted dads need a lot of stamina and muscle power to keep it going. Our thanks to Anne Turner for providing this and the hoop-la stall. John Howe's popular Chuck-a-bale attracted those wishing to test their strength, the penalty shoot-out run by John Lewis gave the lads a chance to prove their goal scoring skills, and the golf putting - run by Peter Mills on his immaculately mown strip of the Green - was a necessity for those who needed their golf fix for the day.

Karen Landers provided a Shetland pony at short notice so that we could re-establish the traditional pony rides. Thanks Karen The pony did so well despite the heat and kept going all afternoon. A plea for next year: we need more ponies as the queue for rides gets very long.

Our dedicated and enthusiastic Youth leader Di Burnett, as ever, organised races for the children and then cajoled, persuaded or pushed mums and dads to join in.

One of the in highlights of the Fair is the Tug of War. We splashed out and bought our own rope so this event should always be with us. The team from Bellingdon village gave the Ashley Green team a good fight but WE WON! And then the bit that all the children wait for - they have a tug-of-war match themselves, which provides the parents with plenty of opportunity to shout and cheer.

Many of us were gasping for a cup of tea on such a hot day – many thanks yet again to the stalwart members of the WI for providing us with such a lovely selection of tea and cakes. Of course the Beer Stall was a must on such a hot day; thanks to Rob Warren for selecting the brews and organising it again.

The Raffle as always raised lots of money. Well done Anne Broschomb and Kim Warren for doing such a good job here.

This year Kim Norman, from the Golden Eagle, offered his services and gallantly stood in the heat cooking at the barbeque from midday to 8 p.m. A very big thank you goes to him and his staff, and we rounded off the day with the usual evening barbeque on the Green, where we relaxed at the end of a busy but successful and fun day.

Our overall profit was £1523, which will be put towards the refurbishment of the village hall kitchen. I must thank all committee members who helped me with the Fair this year. We managed to have quite a laugh organising it as well. I would like to put in a plea for someone else to take over the running of the Fair. I have done it for many years and I think it is someone else's turn now – so any offers? *Mary Axon*

Ashley Green Women's Institute



The WI Summer BBQ

No Jam or Jerusalem - instead an enormous BBQ and wonderful puddings thanks to Pat and David Harmer. The WI Summer Barbecue was even blessed with fine weather in Pat and David's lovely garden.

Over 30 members, husbands and friends came to enjoy the event held on 31st July 2005.

As you might expect, the company and conversation were of the highest order and I can truly say that a good time was had by all.

We all took our own wine, but soft drinks and coffee were provided in the £6 per head price.

I do not know how Pat managed to break even. Sunday lunch has never been so easy or pleasant.

Also this year so far we have had talks about Victorian Berkhamsted, clocks, woodturning and prison life, with a keep fit session at one meeting to ring the changes a little.

A few of us have walked at Dancer's End, Little Hampden, Hockeridge Woods and the Berkhamsted Canal and many have joined the few at convenient pubs for excellent lunches afterwards.

There are similar delights to come this year including a trip to hear Betty Boothroyd speak at Wycombe Swan - so why don't you come along to the WI on the second Thursday in the month at the Old School at 7.45 p.m. and you will find a very warm welcome and much more than Jam and Jerusalem.

ART GROUP

The Art Group is well and thriving as those of you who attended the excellent exhibition in June will have seen, and we were delighted that so many of you purchased some of the paintings, ceramics and glass ware on display.

We will be back in the Old School on **Monday evenings from 12th September.**

This is a very friendly and sociable group who enjoy the unstructured informality of the evenings and anybody is welcome to come along just to see what we get up to or even better join us on a regular basis. You do not need to be an "artist!", but if you would like to 'have a go' be assured that you will get lots of help and friendly advice. Do not be shy just because you haven't picked up a pencil or brush since you left school. We will be holding a Calligraphy workshop on the evening of 3rd October.

Any enquiries please contact;
Marion John - 871700
Margaret Bowler - 862294

Behold a Village Green

Closely allied to the piece about Ashley Green in the war on the front page, is the following poem sent in by **Marion John**.

Ashley Green

Behold! a Village Green,
Woods and fields between,
And little houses set
In flowery gardens. Yet
Not so far apart
From London's throbbing heart.
For see: there runs beside the Green
A shining road which ties
Us to the city's life unseen
And draws our curious eyes.

Our Church was built in days gone by
By a revered and pious dame,
And stands beside the village Green,
Three branching roads between.
Above the swallows cleave their way
Beneath the children shout and play
They chase the ball and turn and catch;
The skimming birds in swiftness
match.
Eager and happy in their games
They dart like sunlight or like flames.

Behold within the garden of the School
In place of flowers, cabbages, by war
time rule,
Now stand in measured rows with
beans and peas
The sunny green in front, behind tall
trees

We would not have our children drill,
Rigid as cabbages. Yet free as birds
They cannot live. They will,
We pray, link liberty with rule
And freely choose within the school
To join the oft conflicting ends
Freedom and Law, as God intends
With liberty and Order filled
Be ready Man's new world to build

M.C. Turner - Ashley Green C/E School

Marion writes: "This poem was passed to me some time ago, but I can't remember who sent it to me.

I think the M.C. Turner was Mrs Turner who was my teacher at the school and whoever sent me the poem had written that she was "Stanley's Teacher" at the bottom, so that might confirm it. If it was her, then she was a very interesting and artistic.

She had a love of poetry and Nature, which she tried to pass on to us and she would often take us

out into the fields and on to the Green to show us how wonderful our world was.

This poem mentions the war, and is contains aspirations from another time when there were different values."

Thanks, Marion. Can anyone tell us more about Mrs Turner. Were you taught by her? Any ideas about who Stanley might be and where he lived?

Do you have any similar pieces, or pictures, or photographs to show how our village has grown and changed?

Gardening Corner

Composting for Beginners or the Bemused

Earlier this year in response to a peculiar attraction that compost has for me, I applied and was accepted into The Bucks Master Composter Programme. This programme involved attending a two day course - and resulted in my being declared a Master Composter. This now means I know a bit more about it than I did before I started!!

Bucks is trying very hard to cut right down on waste to reduce the pressure on landfill sites as well as saving transport costs. One simple way is for more people to understand how easy it is to use compostable waste, and to start composting at home. The result will be a free source of rich material for their gardens, vegetable plots, tubs and window boxes.

There will be a talk on the subject run by the Ashley Green WI on February 9th 2006 at the Old School at 7.45pm.

This is open to all, and I hope to be able to produce samples of compost recently made using the knowledge I gained.

If anybody in the village or its environs would like more information before that, and would like to start now, please contact me.

I look forward to hearing from beginners, or the bemused.

Jill Lea - 01442 874931
(Ashley Green's own composting expert!)

Adverts and Announcements

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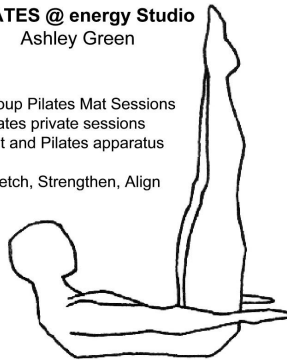
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on 07881925181 or 01494-890810

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URGENTLY NEEDED

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Renee Hollylee 01442 862895
Head Office 01296 487556
Mrs Millward 01494 771645

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