

COMMUNITY CALL

BURNS NIGHT - 2017

The wonderful sounds of the piper rang out over the village green on January 21st as the village once again celebrated the life and times of Robbie Burns.



The evening, MC'd by the ever effective Roger Watts started with drinks in front of the roaring log fire (albeit projected onto the stage curtains) in the wonderfully decorated hall complete with swords, shields and Saltires.

At 7.05pm the Haggis was processed around the room lead by the piper, James Mackey.

The assembled gathered round the beast so that Claire Macklin could explain what on earth Roger Macklin was talking about as he recited the Ode to the Haggis, abusing Jamie Russell-Flint in the process.

Indeed so animated was the ode that the poet nearly took a couple of people's eyes out as he flailed about with a huge great knife, killing off the Haggis and threatening the audience.

Fine food was then served and consumed along with quantities of wine, beer and whiskey. The kitchen and waiting staff worked tirelessly to provide excellent service.



Once the traditional supper was over, we were then treated to a series of wonderful speeches - the Immortal Memory from Jamie Chapman, followed by a double act from Tim and Sheila Sawyer providing the Toast to, and the Response from, the Lassies, in Sheila's case, complete in rhyming couplets.



Once the formalities were over, Phil Thurman and the Chameleons took over for some very energetic Scottish Country dancing.

In the break our MC arranged a coin throwing competition in which the general aim was to get as close to a bottle of whiskey as possible but in hindsight would probably be considered as a major health and safety risk to those trying to recover the coins. The dancing then continued on finishing with a rousing rendition of Auld Lang Syne

Our thanks go to the organizing committee of Jan Barbour, Claire and Roger Macklin, Cath Walmsley and Sheila and Roger Watts for all their hard work in sorting out what was a fantastic night. Not only was it a wonderful evening for all who took part, it also managed to raise a tidy sum of money for the Association.

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VILLAGE BULLETINS

The **Village Bulletins** have been running for well over three years now and are available by Email to **everyone**. They contain all information of direct interest to Ashley Green residents and you don't have to be an association member to receive them.

Just send in your name and Email address to:- davedharmer@aol.com

Do your neighbours get the Bulletins?

If not encourage them to get in touch.

ASHLEY GREEN "FREEBAY"

Our village "FreeBay" service is alive and well. People can advertise things they no longer need and need a good home - All "Free of Charge".

Just mail details of any item looking for a home - with a photo (if you can) to:- davedharmer@aol.com and this will be sent out via a Village Bulletin.

We have "relocated" about 60 items to date, the last few being a greenhouse, some tomato plants and a desk and chair. Keep your eyes open!

TO HIRE OUR HALLS

To hire the Memorial Hall, or the Old School, contact the Lettings Officer.

Email :- lettings@ashleygreen.org.uk

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THE ANNUAL VILLAGE FAIR

On June 3rd we had a lovely sunny day for our annual Village Fair on the Green.

It was bit breezy as the stalls and Sideshows were being set up, and one awning almost flew away before it could be made secure, but the wind dropped and the crowds flocked in when the fair opened.

The agility dog show was a great attraction, as always.



Being such a warm day, and with so many people too, the bar did a roaring trade - almost running out of beer.

The Pimms stall **did** run out and new supplies had to be brought in to keep up with demand.



Don't forget the teas supplied by the ladies of the WI.



The Classic Car display attracted a large fleet of cars and a lot of admirers too. Malcolm Rimington knows how to bring 'em in!



The "Throwing the Egg" event was a "Cracking" success with pairs trying hard not to break the eggs hurled from one end of the green to the other.



Then we had the tug-o-war. Not surprising that in this particular heat the girls beat the boys as they used a secret weapon. Can you see what it was?



Inside the Memorial Hall the Ashley Green Art group staged an exhibition of their work.



When the fair was over and the clearing up done, the helpers sat down to a well deserved "after fair" meal.

We must say well done and thanks to Paula Harris who took over as the organiser this year. It was her first year and, backed up by a great team, this was a very successful event

Roll on 2018!





TRACK CITY

If you happen to have driven past the Memorial Hall on a Friday morning within the last few months you may have wondered why the car park was so busy?

Back in October a villager, having recently become disillusioned by the lack of opportunities for mums to work part time and also be around for those early years of school, came up with a new concept for a children's group.

She struggled herself, having 2 boys aged 3 and 1, to find suitable daytime indoor options which entertained both children sufficiently enough for her to enjoy a cup of tea and a chat with friends in relative peace. With a train mad 3yr old who loved nothing more than bringing them to life the inspiration for **Track City** wasn't hard to find!



Since October each Friday the Memorial Hall has been converted into a mini city linked by an enormous train track for under 5's to enjoy and explore.

Trains are picked from the abundant supply, carriages added, wheels turned to automatic and off they go! The next biggest choice is whether to stop to visit the castle, farm, load up at the docks or drop in on Fireman Sam.

The sessions run for 1hr 15 mins giving the parents and guardians a chance to grab a free hot cup of tea/coffee and have a catch up with each other. The sessions are always drop in so people come and go as and when they like.



It has become so popular that regularly people are travelling from as far afield as St Albans and Leighton Buzzard.

Sessions run most Fridays for 18mths - 5yrs (up to 7yrs in the holidays) at 10.15am-11.30am and again at 1.15pm - 2.30pm. "Newbies" are always welcome so do spread the word to anyone who you think may enjoy it.

For more information take a look at our Facebook page www.facebook.com/trackcityuk

or contact Nicky Buckle at trackcityuk@gmail.com

HOLLYWOOD COMES TO ASHLEY GREEN PART 1 - JOHNS LANE

In early March there was a flurry of activity up at Johns Lane Farm. A villager going to buy eggs saw that parked in the farm Yard there was a coach, some vans and a food van.

The coach was for transporting film crews - judging by the logo on the side - so the villager found someone who said he was in charge and asked if he could take some photos.

That request met with a stern "No Publicity while filming."

There were people and vans all over the road way up the lane as you can see.



They were filming in Pancake and Hockeridge woods, but for what and with who was not known.

PART 2 - THE HOG LANE SITCOM

Houses in Hog Lane became settings for the filming of a television sitcom when a production team for Channel 4 descended in force in May. "Wishanger", the home of Sue Freeman and her husband Rob, was spotted by a location manager for London-based Big Talk Productions as he searched for a setting for a show called **Back**, starring David Mitchell and Robert Webb.

Filming at the house took place over five days, and a number of rooms in the house, as well as the front and back gardens, were used for various scenes. A bedroom in Ashley Chase, also in Hog Lane, home of Lesley and Mark Popescu, was also used as a location.

A very impressive "Support Village" for the production crew and cast was set up at Snowhill Farm as well.

'It was fascinating getting a close-up behind-the-scenes view of the making of a sitcom,' said Sue. 'Although it was with some trepidation we saw the entire house being re-modelled, refurbished and sometimes jam-packed with scores of people, cast and production crew, as filming progressed. 'Rob added: 'I was certain this would be my big break and I was poised every day to be drafted in as an extra - but sadly the call never came.'

Here you can see the team setting up

The six-part series, also stars Downton Abbey actress Penny Downie and Louise Brealey.



It is provisionally scheduled to be screened on Channel 4 in the autumn..
Rob Freeman

"Hollywood" it definitely was not, but certainly something a little different up here in Ashley Green.



THE OLD SCHOOL

THE "THREAT"

You may recall in the last issue of "Community Call" that the Chiltern District Council (CDC) had been trying to claim ownership of the Old School here in Ashley Green with the possible result that if they were to succeed in their bid, the Community Association (AGCA) might have to leave.

The team working to resolve this responded to CDC in July of last year. Early this year 2017 there was still no response.

Accordingly, at the end of April the AGCA Chairman again wrote to the council offering to take over responsibility for the buildings including external maintenance, once some baseline repairs were carried out and on the understanding that title would ultimately pass to the AGCA and detailed how they would deal with the on-going maintenance of the fabric.

The Council responded quickly but were still maintaining their position. While they confirm that the exterior repairs they have agreed to will go ahead, they would continue to investigate their ownership position.

It is a fact that AGCA had been using the property for over 30 years without paying rent, and under those circumstances it is believed that CDC would have difficulty, in law, in removing the Association.

Meanwhile we will continue to resist strongly any moves to take the building and the management of same away from the village and we will continue to manage the lettings for the activities which use the building and will continue with the programme of improvements for which we are responsible.

We know that you will support us in this, and we will keep you posted via the Community Bulletins should the position change.

PAST PUPILS

You may recall that several old pupils from the school came to visit their old haunt, and others wrote in with their memories and recollections. Below is a new piece from Stephen James, the son of Mrs James the headmistress.

RETURN TO ASHLEY GREEN SCHOOL

I have been interested to read about recent developments at what is now known as "The Old School" and as noted in the Autumn edition of Community Call. I was pleased to be able to visit and be shown round by Mary Axon - many thanks to Mary for making the necessary arrangements.

My mother was the Headmistress of the School from the 1930's until her retirement in 1958 when the family moved to Berkhamsted where I still live.

My mother, father (Stan) and I lived in the School House - the small bungalow attached to the School which until I was born in 1945 had only one bedroom.

A second bedroom was added then but even so the only access to that room was through the original bedroom.

I suspect that the Headmistress was probably expected to be a spinster and so not to have need of any more spacious accommodation than that!

They were very happy times for me in Ashley Green and as a pupil at the school. I am told that when the time came for me to start at school I ran the short distance from the school house to the infants' school - the separate metal building which still stands today - where the only other teacher at the school, Mrs Glover, taught the little ones.

A number of you may have seen the short film "Ashley Green goes to School", which can be accessed via the Association's website. This featured my mother who was also the narrator and Mrs Glover. It makes interesting viewing for me as it was made five years before I was born!

The purpose of the film was to be shown in cinemas in the USA, as at the time Britain was trying to persuade the USA to join the war and to show how the "plucky" Brits were dealing with wartime. That explains the children singing "John Brown's Body" as they gathered wood.

One other matter of interest is that the young couple, who are shown briefly in the closing shots strolling hand in hand across the village green, were Peter Scott (the well known conservationist and son of the explorer Scott of the Antarctic) and his then fiancée (and subsequent wife) Elizabeth Jane Howard who went on to be a prolific novelist.

My father, Stan, worked for Captain Cory who was the "gentleman" farmer at Nashleigh Farm. In my early years during part of the long school holidays and when Captain Cory and family were away at one of their other locations, we moved there - quite a contrast to the School House. I think the kitchen was bigger than the complete School House!

Sadly Captain Cory (who was my godfather) died when I was young but not before he had kindly paid for building the second bedroom at the School House.

My father was a very keen sportsman playing for both the village football and cricket teams. He and my mother also organised dances and whist drives which were held in the Memorial Hall.

I had a very happy early upbringing in Ashley Green and look back with great fondness to my time there.



Stephen James

Mrs James

For information.

The "School House/Bungalow" mentioned in the above was where the Kitchen, Cloakrooms and Office stand today to the left of the corridor as you enter the Old School.

POND CLEANING ON THE GREEN

In the last issue of Community Call you will have read about the pond clearance in October last. The Chiltern Society volunteers, together with the help of villagers, managed to remove a skip full of undergrowth, muck and weed.

The weed is New Zealand pygmy weed which had grown over the base of the pond, but thanks to Christine - the leader of the Chiltern Society volunteers - and the special tool she brought along, the job was quickly done.

However, another visit was needed to finish the job and a date was fixed in November but torrential rain meant the work was postponed yet again into February this year.

Rob Warren, who lives just by the pond, was undeterred and went out to keep clearing, using the special tool - A Draw Fork - that the Society left behind.



Came the date in February and there was a good turn out too - a dozen Villagers and six from the Chiltern Society - **but this time it snowed!!** The team decided not to let that get in the way and they filled up another skip.



As on the previous occasion, the Parish Council Chairman, Jan Ship, was among the local volunteers as was the Jackson family, including their son, Herbie. In addition to all the work on the weeds and undergrowth, a major breakthrough occurred when the Jackson family successfully cleared the culvert which was supposed to take water from the road to the pond. It had been blocked for some time and no one had realised where the exit to the pond had become hidden in the undergrowth.

A further improvement is in the look of the bench by the pond which has now been power-washed and will be stained. That seat is one we should look after since it was donated by the parents of a 4 year old boy from the village, Nicholas Holliday, who died from leukaemia in 1973

So now we now have a clean pond thanks to all volunteers - Rob, the Villagers and the Chiltern Society. All we need now is some rain to fill it up again.

A good co-operative community effort!
(Photos courtesy of Cindy Poston and Jan Ship)

ASHLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL.

ALL CHANGE

This past year has seen another change in the Ashley Green Parish Council.

The incumbent Chairman - Jan Ship - has moved from the district and stepped down after a year in office. The Parish Clerk, Marylyn Wood, has also stepped down.

We must thank them both for the work that they have put in for us all during their time in office.

Our new Chairman is Mike Smith. Mike currently serves on the Chiltern District Council as well, and was one time Deputy leader there. We welcome his experience of such matters and hope he will bring that to the benefit of our Parish Council.

Roger Watts, one time chairman of the Community Association and now a Parish Councillor, now steps up to the role of Vice Chairman.

We also welcome Nicky Buckle as our new Parish Clerk as from June 1st. We wish them all every success.

It means that there are now **TWO** vacancies on the Parish Council. anyone interested should get in touch via the Parish Clerk - ashleygreen.clerk@gmail.com or on 07815 957311.

All Parish Council Information, including Minutes of meetings, etc can be seen in their notice board by the Old School and also on their website at:-

www.ashleygreenparishcouncil.org.uk

THE LONDON MARATHON

This year, Faye Warren, daughter of Rob and Kim Warren, ran in the London Marathon on Sunday 23rd April 2017.

She completed the course in 3 hours 50 minutes.

Her target was 4 hours and she beat last years time by 30 minutes.

She was running to raise funds for:-
CHILDREN WITH CANCER UK





STOP PRESS

HELEN, OUR LANDLADY, IS LEAVING

Helen has been at the pub for SEVENTEEN years, starting when she began to serve behind the bar in 2000. She stayed with it as landlords and landladies came and went, and after the last one she thought for a bit and decided that she knew enough about running a pub - so why not?

She moved in with her family SEVEN years ago in 2010 and has developed the business and built up a solid base of loyal “regulars” since then.

There have been lots of events every year and a really tasty menu - very good food indeed - and a great range of ales and wine. What more could you want?

However, running a pub on your own - even with such a great team “front of house” and in the kitchen - is a big job.

It is tiring too, as you have to be working long hours and **EVERY** day while trying hard to work with suppliers and the group who own the pub.

Her daughter, Megan, has been there by her side for all that time, but very recently took a job away from the pub.

Below, we can see Helen and Megan together.



Life has not all been about the pub though - there has been time to come along to the Community Association events and have a good time - as we can see!



Helen has said she wants to take a bit of a break and travel a bit. Maybe in her own Mobile “Motorhome” - who knows.

We shall miss her smile, her service and her friendship and above all we will miss having our very “own” landlady at our pub - The Golden Eagle - when she has gone.

We wish her every success in what she plans to do and just want to tell her that we will always love to see her whenever she comes this way again.

Helen’s last day will be August 29th.

(Anyone know of a comfortable Motorhome for her??)

EVENTS AT THE GOLDEN EAGLE

EVENT 1 - CAROLS AT THE PUB



The “Consort” returned to the Golden Eagle for an evening of carols on Wednesday December 21st.

The Pub was packed and everyone sang along with their favourites and listened to the Singers who entertained with some very special Carols.

“While Shepherds Watched their flocks” to the original tune of “On Ilkely Moor Bar T’at” was a great hit. It was a good evening all round and nearly £100 was raised for the FoodBank. It was good to see our pub so full.

EVENT 2 - CHINESE NEW YEAR



Another packed event at the Golden Eagle, staged by Helen and her team to celebrate the Chinese “Year of the Rooster”.

A variety of excellent Chinese meals were served with villagers turning up to support the pub and having a great time too.



Throughout the year there are other “events” or themed evenings such as the ever popular “Tapas Nights” and Live Music events as well and during the week there has always been the Pub Quiz night followed by the “Spot the Joker” draw where - if you are lucky - you can win quite a tidy sum.

All these events make our pub what it is - our pub! Do continue to support it!



BROADWAY BOWLS CLUB

COMING TO ASHLEY GREEN



Plans are still being finalised, but it appears that all planning has been agreed for the site along Chesham Road (by the now defunct recycling layby) and also for the development of their old site in Chesham.

Given a fair wind they think that work could start as early as the end of June. We look forward to this new venture up here in Ashley Green. We will keep you posted as soon as we hear any more news.

CHRISTMAS IN ASHLEY GREEN 2016

Ashley Green prides itself on its focus on its Community Services and at Christmas time we had a number of events held here in our village for the villagers.

There was the Ashley Green Community Association **Annual Christmas Party** - a regular event where villagers can come to have a great spread of party food and drinks, and to sing some carols and also a get a visit from Father Christmas who came down from Lapland specially to see us.



We hope that we will see more people - and especially newcomers to the village - next year.

We also had the **“Lunch and Chat”** Christmas Party/Lunch in the Old School. You will know that the “Lunch and Chat” event staged weekly provides a venue for anyone who would like to get out occasionally and meet other villagers for a bit of company and to have a bite to eat for lunch.

This week was the annual “party” where some fizz was served as well as a massive variety of sandwiches and nibbles - and we mean massive. Warmest thanks to the helpers who really did us proud this year - Kate Bowder and Lisbeth Cameron - and also to the “pass the parcel” game and the quiz they organised. It was a real success.



Then we come to the dinner provided by the team at the

GOLDEN EAGLE

They staged an evening for the senior members of our Community where a two course meal was served (Roast and Christmas pud) to be accompanied by glasses of wine and tea and coffee and a raffle when each person seemed to be a winner.

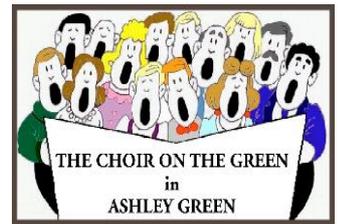


It was a good evening and such a generous gesture from Helen, our landlady at “our pub!”

The pub was full and a good time was had by all!

“CHOIR ON THE GREEN”

The **“Choir on the Green”** is a rock and pop "Community" choir which meets at the Memorial Hall every Monday.



No previous experience or auditions required - just turn up and sing with us! It is a really friendly group of all ages, male and female.

If this is for you, just come along. (Doors 7.15pm. Start 7.30pm. Fee £5).

The choir is run by the Paul Bullen, an Ashley Green resident who has worked with winners of X-Factor & The Voice).



Recently the Choir supported Brit Award Winners “Blake” at The Elgiva in Chesham.

They will also be singing at the **BerkoFest** in September.

For more information contact:-

choironthegreen@gmail.com

or visit:-

www.facebook.com/choironthegreen/

FROM THE CHAIR

CHAIRMAN'S END OF YEAR REPORT

Another year has just flown past.

The Village Fair is now behind us and we look forward to the AGM on Tuesday the 13th of June.

That will be held in the Old School at 8.00pm and **ALL** villagers are warmly invited to attend. Do come along.

This year we will be celebrating the well-deserved retirement of a valued member of the team, Dennis Clifford our caretaker for many years. A great job and well done!

The Fair this year was a great success, thanks to the planning and organisation of Paula Harris, well supported by the many helpers on the day. Initial reports are that we had a record attendance and it was very successful in raising funds for local community groups.

You will have seen the pictures earlier in this issue.

There were many other successful and enjoyable events throughout the year too.

The annual Ashley Green Bonfire and Fireworks display is now reputed to be one of the best in the area, and is a major fundraiser for the Association.

Earlier in the year we had a theatre evening production of "Victor and Albert" which was really enjoyable. My thanks go to Mary Axon for taking the lead in organising this.

The letting of Association buildings to local clubs and arts and crafts groups is now under very professional organisation by Cath Hurling. Her skill and efforts ensure we generate enough income to maintain the buildings in good order.

The AGCA continues to work with the Church, the Golden Eagle and the Parish Council to maintain and improve the quality of life of village residents. One major activity in the past year has been the ongoing scrutiny of the Local Plan and proposed developments on the Green Belt.

Elsewhere in this edition you will read of the continuing developments on the Old School Lease.

None of this would be possible without the hard work, dedication and sacrifice of a small group of volunteers.

We are all fortunate to live in one of the most pleasant localities in the country with thriving community groups and activities.

However, this should not be taken for granted. It is time others stepped up and took on some of the burden. If more people come forward to help then even more social events would be possible. Do come to the AGM and get involved.

John Mayne - AGCA Chairman - June 2017

COMMENT - WELCOME NEW FACES

We have seen a number of new faces to the village in the past year or so and our membership secretary has been to see many of them and signed them up to become members of the Community Association. Hopefully, in the coming months we can persuade more of them to come along and get a little more involved in the life of the village.

NEWS FROM ST. JOHN'S

THE ROGATION WALK.

Rogation Sunday is the day when the Church traditionally offered prayers for God's blessings on the fruits of the earth and the labours of those who produce our food.

These days we celebrate that day with a simple ceremony of 'beating the bounds' in which a procession of parishioners, led by the minister, proceeds around the boundary of the parish and prays for its protection - and the food production therein - in the forthcoming year. The word 'beating' may come from the then common custom of beating the boundary markers with wooden wands so as to impress the parish boundary upon the memory.

Sunday 14th May this year was the annual rogation celebration here in Ashley Green. After a Ploughman's lunch in the memorial hall the more hardier among us walked through the woods to the Black Horse and back before tea and cake - and here they are.



THE BARN DANCE

Just a few days later, on 20th May, over 60 people spent a great evening dancing to the wonderful "Cock and Bull" band in our Memorial Hall.

Sustained by a meal - and with the bar open too - what some of us lacked in skill we more than made up for in enthusiasm. It was another great evening!



CREAM TEAS ARE BACK THIS SUMMER

