

COMMUNITY CALL

BONFIRE NIGHT in ASHLEY GREEN



So - another year gone and here we were again staging our own very successful Annual **BONFIRE NIGHT!!** Yes, it is one of the most popular celebrations of Guy Fawkes night for miles around and it always attracts a bumper crowd every year.

This year was no exception since the weather was fine and it looks as if we had well over 1300 people - and that does not include the children who came in Free of Charge, or the small(er) group who watched from the green rather than coming into the Glebe.

The roads were jammed with parked vehicles despite many villagers offering their drives to visitors. One visitor was heard to say that he was not sure where he had parked, but it must be about half a mile away!

Whatever - another terrific bonfire (thanks to all who helped build it on the Saturday before) and tremendous fireworks as well.

The sausages in rolls were very popular indeed as was the mulled wine, the sweets and coffee and the soup and mulled cider supplied by the landlord from the "Golden Eagle". Most of the refreshments were sold out and demand was so high that the electricity failed a couple of times as the various heaters kicked in together.



The Community Association always manages to stage a terrific night and all thanks must be given to all the people who came to help on the gate, as Marshals to make sure we were kept safe and to the folk who came to man the stalls for all the food and drink which made the evening so successful.

I hope you enjoyed the evening - I know that I did. Roll on 2019!!



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HILARY WILSON

Just as we were going to print we were shocked and saddened to learn that our Minister, the Rev. Hilary Wilson, had died after very sudden illness. She will be sorely missed after serving us at St. Johns for ten years and our thoughts must be with her family at this time.

COME AND HELP

Lots of new faces in the village over the past year and we hope they will join in and quickly become active in the community.

Just now the Community Association needs a **Secretary!** Can you spare a little of your time? *(if you can, please contact the editor - davedharmer@aol.com)*

SPEED CAMERA

The speed camera by the church really does make people slow down but someone didn't like it and slapped paint on it. Did you see anyone with a paint can?



What's On Summary 2019

Quiz Night - Feb 23rd 2019
Annual Village Fair - June 8th 2019
(full details will follow)

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A PILOT RECALLS - Part 2

I was a Captain with British Airways and flew quite a number of types of airliners over the 34 years I was with BA. In the last issue of "Community Call" I wrote about my time flying the De Havilland Comet - but this is how it all started.

Back in 1960, after obtaining my Commercial Pilots License after many hours on the Tiger Moth, another member of the club where I flew was a Captain with a company called **Tradair** and said that they were looking for pilots so off I went and joined them. Pay rate £850 per annum. I was 19 years old.

They were based at Southend and flying the Vickers "Viking". The Viking was developed from the Wellington bomber using the wings and engines but with a new fuselage. It was unpressurized and carried 36 passengers. The engines were the huge Bristol Hercules piston engines that had been used in many WW11 bombers.



We normally cruised at 10,000 ft doing 175 knots and used 95 gallons of petrol an hour with each engine using up to 2 gallons of oil an hour. A flight to Rome took nearly five hours but since we could not fly over the Alps we flew down towards Nice and then on to Rome, I would have to re-fuel and put up to 10 gallons of oil in each engine myself!

We flew all over Europe and A typical flight to Palma would take almost five hours with a refuelling stop on the way. A little different from today!!

After the busy summer Tradair had started package tours to the Middle East so we would be away for over two weeks with the same passengers. Early days for exciting tours.

Once we were away we were on our own and if there were minor technical faults we had to fix them ourselves. The Viking had a fairly ineffective de-icing system too and ice build up could happen very quickly. The noise of chunks of ice coming off the massive propellers and hitting the fuselage was incredible.

By autumn of 1961 Tradair was in financial difficulties and I and other pilots were being made redundant. I had flown 970 hours on the Viking and had flying experiences that were soon to be a thing of the past as turbo prop and Jet aircraft were now arriving for all the airlines.

My time at Southend was truly memorable. To be on the tarmac in the evenings as Viking aircraft, and the DC4 and DC6 planes started up their huge engines with fire and smoke and thundering noise was quite wonderful and emotional. That era was about to close and I went on to fly the Comet

Carr Withall

OUR PUB - THE GOLDEN EAGLE

In August of 2017 the management at the Golden Eagle changed after Helen left and all looked well for a while after two new managers took over. The detail was well documented in the last issue of this newsletter.

The pub was refurbished and the meals were good and regular but despite attempts they were not able to find a live in Chef/Manager and over the ensuing months getting a meal during the week became a bit hit or miss. Then some of the beers were not always available and many evenings when things were a bit slack, the pub would shut early. It was slowly going downhill.

Towards the end, a new chef was found and moved in but shortly after that - in September 2018 - the two managers suddenly left the pub.

The new chef took on the tenancy as manager and quickly rejuvenated the menus and the meals were good. Events were restarted and you could find live music on some nights



Then, out of the blue, a "Pub to Let" sign appeared.

People began to get a bit worried. What was going on?

We were told that this was just "procedural" while the temporary tenancy ended and before it could be made permanent - but it was not to be. Stories/rumours flowed thick and fast, but in mid December this new manager left the pub for good.

The good news was that another experienced manager and his wife (they already run the George and Dragon in Northchurch) were found to take over the management of the pub.

Paul and Viv Burgess took over on December 12th 2018 and installed a husband and wife team - **Jack and Zoë** - to live-in and run the pub with the existing staff, and use one of their chefs - **Tim** - for the catering. Phew! what a relief.

The kitchens were in a bit of a state and needed a "industrial" clean so, at the time of writing they are still closed, but expect them to be up and running shortly.

We wish the new team all the best and hope they will keep our pub - the "Golden Eagle" - alive and well!!

CAROLS IN THE PUB

The "CONSORT" returned to the Eagle to sing carols in the pub again just before Christmas - a regular annual event.

The aficionados turned out in force and the pub was full. A wonderful evening was had by all as they all heard the group deliver some great pieces and everyone was able to sing lots of the well loved carols too.

WORLD WAR ONE CENTENARY

ASHLEY GREEN REMEMBERS

November 11th, 2018 marked the centenary of the end World War I. Yes - one hundred years have passed since the signing of the armistice which marked the end of "The Great War".

The whole community in Ashley Green joined together to make sure that this was marked appropriately and that the men from the village and surrounds would be remembered.

Prior to remembrance day itself, the community - The Ashley Green and District Community Association and the Parish Council - acquired and erected two of the "Soldier Silhouettes" which many communities were erecting across the UK.

One was erected outside the church, by the memorial and the other at the far end of Two Dells lane.



The Silhouette Soldiers



The day itself started with a service at St John's which began at 10.30am. The church was full.

During the service we heard pieces which echoed down the years - the very words of those who had been involved in the armed forces way back then and endured those terrible times.

At 11.00 am on the dot there was a two minute silence to remember all who had fallen during the war.

This was followed by the choir singing:-

*"They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them".*

The congregation then moved out to the memorial where wreaths were laid by community members for the men who had died - by representatives from the Church, the Community Association, the Parish Council and the WI as well as family members of some of the men.

Young people from the community also came forward and laid tributes - each one marked with the name of one of the men whose names are listed on the memorial.

Finally, the names all the men from Ashley Green and the district were read out in Commemoration.



After that, everyone moved in to the Memorial Hall where cakes and refreshments had been prepared and laid out, and teas were served by the ladies of the WI and drinks dispensed at the bar.

For entertainment the local Community Choir - the "Choir on the Green" - gave us a selection of topical songs from way back then and others a little more up to date. A great performance!



After a successful and rewarding day, people trooped home but at 6.00 pm there was the final "event" - the lighting of a beacon. - to join in with the beacons being lit all over the UK.



As it was a **very** chilly evening the turnout was quite small, but everyone warmed up by the fire with a sip of wine to round off the day.



FROM THE CHAIR

The Community Association is run by volunteer villagers, with a shared purpose.

One of our roles is to stage events and activities that benefit the village and the other is to maintain both our halls - The Memorial Hall and The Old School and the other buildings on that site - to the highest level possible so that they are always available for such events and activities.

One of our members also runs our Village Email Bulletin, informing villagers about all things that are of direct interest to us or which might impact us. Please be aware that we can only inform with accurate and factual information but we cannot be partisan in any way.

We have many activities which involve the whole community. For example our Good Neighbours Group runs a weekly "Cuppa & Chat" (including lunch), every Thursday at 12pm.

We also have a weekly **Toddler & Baby Group** in The Old School, every Thursday at 10.30am and "Track City" - a weekly Playtime for Pre-schoolers on Fridays in The Memorial Hall (1st session: 10.15am, 2nd session: 1.15pm).

We are always looking at ways of involving as many villagers as we can at all our events and I was really pleased to see so many children at this year's Annual Christmas Party. You will see some of these described in other pages of this newsletter,

We are a busy village and have lots to offer but we are always on the look out for more volunteers. You will see on Page 1 that we are looking for a **Secretary** (could this be something you could do?) and we welcome more helpers with new ideas who would like to come along too.

One of our newest members will be running a **Quiz Night** (see below) on Saturday 23rd February 2019 in The Memorial Hall, doors open at 7.30pm. Tickets will soon be on sale priced at £10 each. I do hope to see you there!

As 2018 closes, I would like to thank all who have helped in any way this year, however small, and I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Paula Harris (Chair)

Ashley Green Community Association

**WE NEED
YOU**
at our



**QUIZ
NIGHT**

**IN THE MEMORIAL HALL
SATURDAY 23RD FEBRUARY
7.30PM FOR 8.00PM START
TICKETS £10**

**CHEESE BOARD PER TABLE AND CASH BAR
TEAMS OF SIX. GET A TEAM TOGETHER NOW
REGISTER/INFORMATION - ROB BARNES.
EMAIL - THEBARNESY@GMAIL.COM**

ASHLEY GREEN YOUTH GROUPS

ED TAMKIN REMEMBERED

Quite a few people may remember Ed Tamkin who was active, for many years, in the youth service in Chesham. Ed, sadly, passed away recently in Aberystwyth, his home of recent years.

Ed was a volunteer at Ashley Green and Chesham Youth clubs for many years. He never let his disability hinder his lifestyle.

He was loyal to his Peugeot car, and went all over the country, forever discovering new walks that were wheelchair friendly. He wrote a book 'Short Walks on the Pembrokeshire Coast - Giving access for All'

YOUTH AWARDS

The following young people have been awarded for their outstanding volunteering efforts at:-

Di Burnett's Youth Theatre at Ashley Green.



From top left, clockwise :-

*Emily Painter
Luke Haworth*

*Jennie Marshall
Oliver Russell*

*Scarlett Raffellini
Rohan Carr*

There were also trophies for:-

Nia Johal,

Elliott Pearce

Emily Came,

who were away when they were presented.

The youth theatre could not run without these wonderful young people, who selflessly give up their own free time.

Apart from one, they all hail from Ashley Green, or the immediate catchment area.

Please join with me in congratulating them all and celebrating the positive contribution they make to the community

Di Burnett.

CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE

ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY

Doesn't Christmas come quickly and with it the Annual Christmas Party arranged by the Community Association for everyone in Ashley Green?

In 2017 everything was arranged until the snow came and it had to be postponed until the New Year. This time, however, the weather was kind and things really swung into action on Sunday December 9th.

The Christmas tree was decorated and villagers brought in plates of festive fare - all organised by Elizabeth Foster - and lots of drinks of all kinds and people began to arrive.

By just after 6.00pm the Old School hall was getting full. We were pleased to be able to welcome many newcomers to the village and also a lot of people who had been here for a while, but who had never come before - great to see you all - so it was a very jolly affair.

It was nice to see so many children They could be "seen and not heard" because a *silent disco* was arranged. Each had headphones (with coloured lights) and they could rush around to music which none of us could hear.



They also loved Father Christmas who turned up later with some small gifts. The grown ups were able to go in for the Chocolate tombola then partake of the wonderful spread of food, and take a glass of mulled wine while they met up with friends and neighbours



Later on the assembly joined in with Carols led by John Poston and accompanied by Sylvia Howe and when that was done the raffle was drawn and some lucky people went away clutching their prizes.



First Prize Number 145

A really successful Community event and all thanks must be given to all the association members who helped this time.

We hope that people new to the village or new to events like these will come along again and again.

GOOD NEIGHBOURS EVENT

The Good Neighbours "Lunch and Chat" group also met for their annual Christmas party in the Old School when 17 villagers turned up to celebrate.

Lunch was a really splendid meal with a roast turkey and all the trimmings, Christmas Pudding with cream and brandy sauce **and** a Whisky cake too. There was Prosecco and other wines and then shortbread and tea or coffee too. (Bet you wish you had been there!!)



Father Christmas turned up too.

He had been to see the children who were at "Playtime" in the next room, then came in to distribute some presents to all assembled.

This is a regular event each year and this time it was made possible by the volunteers who prepared and served the lunch - Sue and Madeleine - and others who made some of the food for the lunch as well - Leslie, Annette and Theresa.

THE ROTARY CLUB FLOAT

In the evening, after the Good Neighbours event we were visited by Father Christmas himself - yet again - this time riding on his sleigh as he toured the district and came up to Ashley Green before going on to Whelpley Hill.

Not a real sleigh of course, but the annual Christmas Float organised by the Rotary Club in Chesham. This is an annual event too and the team from the Rotary do a wonderful job as they raise funds for charity.



People had been forewarned and so they turned out to cheer him on his way. Always nice to see him - and Rudolph too.

CAROLS IN ST JOHN'S

At the end of the week there was the Annual Carol Service in St. John's, conducted by our vicar, Hilary Wilson.

The church was packed with villagers and their friends and families, there was a large choir too, and the Christmas message was reinforced by some very hearty singing from everyone. This is always a great community event with which to start Christmas.

ISSUES THAT COULD AFFECT OUR VILLAGE

In the recent year there have been quite a few issues that could have had a significant effect on Ashley Green and its residents - all concerned with development in the land around the village.

Only one formal planning applications has been lodged which meant that formal and factual details have been lacking.

We summarise the position below as we understand it at the time of writing this newsletter.

CHESHAM FOOTBALL CLUB.

Back in February, 2018, an article appeared in the Bucks Free Press announcing that:-

“The Chesham Football Club were looking towards a move away from their current ground in Chesham - which would be sold for funding a purpose-built stadium with additional training pitches. According to a spokesperson for the club, several sites of significant interest had been earmarked with one in Ashley Green, close to The Bellcote.”

However it was found that this site could not be developed.

After that rumours flowed thick and fast and it was understood that they then had their eyes on a large site which would butt up to the new bowls club and stretch way along towards Chesham.

Some villagers were concerned by these rumours, feeling that the ground such as the club wanted would be completely out of keeping with the area and cause great inconvenience, not least to the houses that bordered the land. However without concrete details being available - no formal planning application having been made - the Community Association was not able to inform villagers with any accurate information.

A small sub-committee was formed with some villagers and the land owner to try to understand the Club's position and review the developers plans in more detail.

In late November, it was learned that the club was no longer pursuing their intent to try to come in to the village and that no formal planning application was to be made. The developers plans were agreed to be not in the best interests of the area and the landowner has decided to keep the land for grazing.

DEVELOPMENT UP HOG LANE

While all this was going on many, if not all, villagers received a communication from a company who said they were assessing the need for affordable housing in Ashley Green. They were doing this on behalf of a development company which was hoping to build a large quantity of affordable dwellings (flats and houses) on the field behind the houses at the beginning of Hog Lane and the Golden Eagle.

It looked very official and many people were not sure whether they should complete the survey, or not.

We were able to let everyone know that Parish Council took the view that the Parish of Ashley Green is already well provided with low cost housing just now and that there was no statutory requirement to complete that “Housing Needs” survey.

THORNE BARTON HALL.

The formal planning application to develop Thorne Barton Hall as a private members country club elicited quite a response from villagers, and especially those living close up to the hall who would be seriously affected.

At the time of drafting this newsletter in early December, the District Council had not made a decision about it but had called an open meeting for December 20th.

STOP PRESS On the **Morning** of the 20th they notified people that it had been taken off the agenda and in the **Afternoon** they notified people that the application had been withdrawn.

ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Ashley Green and District Community Association is often placed in a difficult position with issues such as the above. People sometimes feel that it should take a more active role and should adopt a firmer position either in opposition or support to such planning issues.

The association cannot do that. It was not set up for that purpose and cannot be partisan in such cases.

What it does is to keep villagers positively informed about such issues when factual information is readily and publicly available - like when a planning application has been made.

The Parish Council is the body with the more formal remit to deal with planning issues on behalf of the parish.

BOWLS CLUB

You will all have seen the work being carried out in the old football field by recycling lay-by, as was. Yes, the bowls club has been busy turning that unused grass into a bowling green at last. The original forecast was that it would open in April 2018, but it stalled. Now it is moving.

Work has been going on for many months now. An artificial grass bowling green has been laid, the car park prepared and a new drive in entrance appeared about a month ago.

At the time of writing the forecast was that the new clubhouse would be assembled by Christmas ready for an opening in the Spring - but that has not happened. Quite a few villagers - who are not bowlers at the moment - have expressed an interest in joining, so will we see a team of the "Ashley Black Balls" come into being. Watch this space.



Work in progress - mid December 2018

WILDLIFE IN ASHLEY GREEN

There's a new hotel in the village. Four stories high, has an outdoor swimming pool and has already attracted thousands of visitors.

Don't worry, the "**Bugley Green Hotel**" is actually a 'bug hotel', we built as part of a new wildlife corner we have developed in our garden. In addition we have also put up a number of nest boxes and bird feeders.



"Bugley Green Hotel"

As a family, we have always enjoyed the outdoors and wildlife and, since moving to Ashley Green in 2018, we've been amazed at how much we have seen right on our doorstep. Recently, we have put a wildlife camera trap next to the "bug hotel" and have regular visitors caught on camera including:-

- A badger who pops by for a regular drink in the pond
- A fox checking out the hedgehog house
- A squirrel who gnaws on the bricks outside the 'hotel'.
- A mouse who has taken up residence in the "hotel"

The variety of birds we have seen has also been incredible - 36 in all!

We saw the winter migrant Redwings and Bramblings and with Sparrow Hawk, a Cuckoo, Bull Finches, and a Pheasant.



Redwing



My favourite has been the Tawny Owl who has taken to sitting on our washing line in the evening to hunt in the veg patch. We have seen dragonflies, false-stag beetles, damselflies, and countless bats cruising the skies hunting for an evening meal.

It's been fantastic to see so much wildlife right on our doorstep and have found it inspires the kids to disconnect from an increasingly digital world and get outdoors.

I would encourage us all to do one thing in 2019 to help these 'other' residents of the village. For example, an old washing up bowl full of water dug into the back of a flower bed will attract lots of wildlife; a log pile undisturbed in a sheltered corner or perhaps the odd bird box (they are very easy to make if you want to get creative!).

We've got a book or two we'd be happy to lend if anyone would like some inspiration, and would love to hear of any interesting sightings or inspiration from around the village...and remember everyone is welcome to stay in the hotel, you just need to be less than four inches high!!

The Barnes Family

TALKING ABOUT WILDLIFE



Following an escape from Lord Rothschild's private collection at Tring in 1902, the Glis Glis population has grown to around 10,000 strong and is concentrated in a 200-square-mile triangle between Beaconsfield, Aylesbury, and Luton, around the south-east side of the Chiltern Hills.

Hockridge Woods - just along Johns Lane - has one of the highest populations of Glis Glis in the UK it is said.

Many houses in Ashley Green have had visits from Glis Glis at one time or another which often means sleepless nights, as they seem to hold frenetic dances on bedroom ceilings just at bed time. Alternatively they find electric cables quite a tasty snack and short out the electricity as they chew through them.

We have had lots in the Memorial hall and, using traps set by a pest controller, caught one a day for some weeks until trees and bushes by the hall were trimmed back so that their "ladder" into the hall was removed. They have recently come back.

It used to be that they were a fully protected species, but no longer.

The advice is to "Use a recommended trap and, when caught, shoot them or get them into a sack and whack them sharply on the head". Sounds a bit hard but these are the permissible humane ways by which they can be dispatched.

If you use a "non humane" way to dispose of them, you might fall foul of the law if caught. Drowning in your water butt is not allowed and only last year a householder dropped a rodent into his water butt to drown it and was taken to court and fined about £650.

These little fellows hibernate for about six months every year - roughly from October to March. They find a cosy hole in some soft earth, sometimes using an old birds nest as a cover, and sleep away - living off the fat they have accumulated in readiness.

With so much human habitation around now, however, a cosy corner in an attic or a bit of a shelf somewhere does just as well and because it is a bit warmer they may wake up a little earlier.

Yes - they look lovely, but we do have far too many round here.

Just now they are asleep and the dancing should have ceased, but Spring is on its way!!

If they come to visit you later next year you will soon know, as they leave their little droppings around and you will hear them tap dancing on your ceilings again.

Have you tried our local farm shop??

Johns Lane Farm FARM SHOP



WE SELL
CALOR Gas



Farm Fresh
EGGS



Seasonal
Vegetables



POTATOES



Traditional
House Coal



Cakes &
Biscuits



Ice Cream



Jams, Honey
& Preserves



LOGS



Milk



HAY



Bird Seed



MANURE



STRAW



Apple Juice

Find us along Johns Lane (off Hog Lane) Ashley Green
Tel: 01442 864366 Mob: 07774 493863

ASHLEY GREEN GOOD NEIGHBOURS GROUP

"LUNCH AND CHAT"

INFORMAL SOCIAL GROUP
ALL WELCOME
in
**The Old School
Ashley Green**

EVERY THURSDAY
For a "Cuppa" & Chat
and
Lunch

12.00pm to 2.00pm

PLAY Time

Thursdays

10.30am - 12.00 o'clock
A friendly toddler and baby group for anyone looking after little ones!

THE OLD SCHOOL
CHESHAM ROAD
ASHLEY GREEN
HP5 3PP

Please feel free to just turn up, we'd love to see you!
or Contact: Anne - 07704-650166

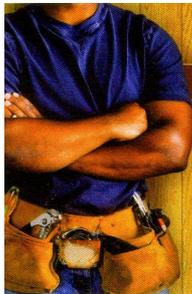
£2 a session

UPHOLSTERY CLASSES



Want to try upholstery?
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Track City

PLAYTIME FOR "PRE-SCHOOLERS"

At this new Playtime session, children can pick an engine and make a train to push round a huge train track we have laid out in the Memorial Hall in Ashley Green.

Suitable for children 18 mths- 5yrs
(younger siblings very welcome)

Weekly drop-in sessions :
Fridays in Ashley Green
10:15- 11.30am and 1.15-2.30pm

First child £5, Siblings £3,
Non walkers free. No need to book!
Free refreshments provided



5 - 18yrs YOUTH THEATRE

THE OLD SCHOOL, ASHLEY GREEN

LOVE DRAMA HAVE FUN
BUILD CONFIDENCE

NEW ADULT GROUP
18-180 yrs

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teenactors@msn.com

WEEKLY CLASSES

TRINITY GRADE CLASSES

REFLEXOLOGY

Wendy Waterman

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Wendy is a member of the AOR
(Association of Reflexologists)



She is fully insured and offers both mobile and treatment room service in the daytime or evenings

Please call to arrange a convenient time for an appointment

Make time for yourself, invest in your health
For appointments please call Wendy Waterman
on 07786 411418 or email: wend.w@sky.com

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