



Shotesham Times

Issue 3

Autumn 2013

Editorial

For the 3rd issue of this Shotesham newsletter we are trying a different format so we can include larger photographs. Once again we've tried to cover different aspects of life in the village and its surroundings, some of which might surprise you. We are always looking for articles and photographs so if you know something about Shotesham that might be of interest, please contact Sue 550377, or Mike on 498151. Give them a ring if you would like to help in any way, or give us any feedback. Contributions in this issue from Frank, Maureen, Mike, Ruby and Sue.

Keep warm during the winter and we look forward to seeing you at some, or all of the village events.

News in Brief

St Martin's – A summer soiree.

Initially planned to coincide with the Mid-Summer solstice, in the end, because of a very wet weather forecast, our picnic plans were postponed until 21st July. Thank goodness we did, as we had the most gorgeous warm evening. I'm sure there were at least 50 picnickers sat around this beautifully restored ruin and we were all greeted with glasses of Pimms provided by Christine and Ted Burton.



Patrick Falgate played acoustic guitar to set the mood and we all had a lovely relaxed evening.



Wildlife Conservation

What do barn owls, common spotted and pyramidal orchids, brown argus butterflies and red eyed damselflies have in common? Answer - all are doing better in Shotesham because of the work of the conservation group (we hope and believe). Most of the land in the village is looked after by someone - farmers, gardeners, commons trustees etc and all have an important part to play in assisting our troubled wildlife.

The conservation group does its bit by helping to manage some small but important areas as follows:

St Mary's churchyard, St Martins churchyard, St Botolphs, All Saints church hill (part of Shotesham common), the village pond, Stubbs Green (the meadow margins and the pond) and 2 small roadside nature reserves.

Most of the work is done in the autumn and winter, so last year was difficult because of the weather and for the first time we had to cancel several working parties when all that rain made it impossible to work. All credit therefore to the team of volunteers who came out, often at short notice, and chopped at hedges, cut and raked the meadows and dragged out weed growth from the ponds.

Those who take part have a thoroughly good time and have the satisfaction of doing something useful for wildlife whilst getting tired dirty and sometimes wet but always in good company.

If you are not involved in the group and have an interest in wildlife and slightly masochistic tendencies, then do come and join us. (Phone Frank on 558545 or email

frank333mitchell@btinternet.com) also watch Contact for details of the group's next evening meeting at The Trinity on Wednesday 20th November



The Globe Annual marrow competition

The winners were from the right Mo's 18.25 lbs; Brian Harmer's 15.25 lbs; Dennis Jewel's 14.50 lbs and joint fourth was Penny and Paul with a marrow weighing 14.25 lbs.



More News in Brief

Village Fete

We had a circus theme this year with performers strutting their stuff in the afternoon on stilts, a fantastic face painter and jugglers entertaining the children. An archer with long bows turned out to give everybody the chance to play Robin Hood and there was an entertaining dog show and the usual *Tug of War* competition.



In the evening the circus acts turned to more elaborate performances with fire and dance and as the sun was going down, the image of fireballs rising into the evening air left vivid images in our minds. Magical sounds beamed out from the main tent thanks to Mike Knights, and with Raz and others running the bar selling beer from the Green Dragon brewery, nearly everybody was on the dance floor enjoying another very successful Village fete. Many thanks to all who helped out and made it such a success.

Harvest Summer and Ceilidh

The glorious summer continued and on a late September evening 100 plus people ate and danced the night away at the 2013 Harvest Supper and Ceilidh. The tables groaned with food, most of it local produce, with the delicious Gammon coming from the Jackson's farm above the Common. This year the Ceilidh band were the Red Herrings, who with very good humour managed to get even those with 2 left feet dancing!

Once again this event wouldn't have happened without willing volunteers to help with the catering, putting up the marquees and the essential clearing up. Biggest cheer must go to Ed Howard for lending his field.

No photographs I'm afraid!

Stoke Radar Station

Earlier this year I heard about this interesting complex close to Shotesham which, during the Second World War, provided early warning of approaching enemy aircraft. As part of the Shotesham Oral History project, Sarah Webber and I visited Derek Bales, the current owner, to record some of his early memories about the radar station and to see his old photos, general memorabilia and press cuttings telling the story of this important site.

Derek was born a few years before the outbreak of the Second World War and his family farmed around 35 acres adjacent to the site. In 1938 approximately 6 acres were bought from the family by the Ministry of Defence so it could be laid out as one of 20 top secret Radar Stations stretching from the Isle of Wight around the east coast to Scotland.

He remembers the erection of 8 feet high metal railings around the perimeter and during 1938 four 240ft wooden masts were erected on concrete bases. A guard house, pill boxes and a substantial operations room surrounded by large earth banks and concrete helped protect it from aerial attack. Inside, substantial electrical cabling and other apparatus were installed to receive radar signals beamed out from the transmitter station nearby.



One of the main pieces of electrical equipment inside one of the operation rooms



That site had 4 even taller 360ft metal masts which transmitted radio waves a long distance out to sea so they could "see" enemy aircraft approaching the east coast. Friendly

aircraft returning from missions over enemy territory could also beam in a signal to show they were friendly and help them identify their bases. These radar signals could pick up aircraft about 130 miles away at an altitude of 15,000 feet, falling to 53 miles at 1,000 feet and 18 miles at 500 feet. One of those masts, which is one of only five remaining in the UK, is clearly viewed from Shotesham

In the last years of the war, Stoke utilised its expertise in tracking V2 rockets fired at East Anglia during autumn 1944 and although they couldn't stop the rockets exploding, they could identify the launch sites and thus direct allied aircraft to bomb those sites. Stoke Radar Station was attacked by bombers and ground strafing planes several times during the war and it is possible that the V2 rocket which exploded in Shotesham was targeting not Norwich, but Stoke.

Since the First World War the military were interested in developing a device which could identify approaching enemy aircraft. For years experiments were carried out into listening devices, latterly consisting of concrete lined dishes with audio receivers that could amplify the noise of approaching aircraft, attempting to discover how far away they were and in which direction they were heading. The range and accuracy were not great, and so other ideas were tried and tested eventually leading to the development of Radar, which is an acronym for **R**adio **D**irection **A**nd **R**anging.

Without the development of this technology it is doubtful that we would have won the war so decisively.

Ancient or Modern-Part One

“I’d just love to live in a house like this”, is the refrain often heard by Wally and Heather Jackson from passers by and visitors alike, about their aesthetically pleasing home, Grove Farm. It is a beautiful and interesting house. It has lots of space both inside and out. It has a long and well-documented architectural history and has many stories to tell about the people who have lived there. One of the things that struck me whilst reading its history was the number of times the property had been in the sole ownership of a woman. Watch out Wally!



The exact date Grove Farm was built is unknown. Until recently it was part of a large farm complex. It may have originally been known as “Coles” during the Middle Ages and didn’t become known as Grove Farm until 1880. Like many properties, it has evolved over the centuries. “From a small structure with a few heated rooms to a farmhouse of considerable size” (An historical Survey by Adam Longcroft. The survey reveals Grove Farm was not constructed in a single phase. There is evidence of several major episodes of rebuilding and smaller piecemeal improvements and additions. Records of Hearth Taxes documents show 4 or 5 hearths for exclusive use by the farmer and his family. In fact the parlour block may have been a latter-day granny annexe or a place to show off wealth by the Tudors

and Jacobean Nouveau Riche. It has a moulded ceiling and overtly expensive stone fireplaces.

Grove Farm is a grade 2 listed, timber framed, wattle and daub building. The architectural survey conducted in 2000 suggests some brickwork was added at a later date, possibly during the 18th or 19th century. It is unclear if the white-washed plaster render was applied originally, but it was a common practice to do so. In the parlour block there is a stone fireplace dating from late Tudor or possibly Jacobean times. I wonder if any public consultation took place at that time about how the building fitted in the landscape and the other things taken into consideration nowadays or if the owners just went ahead and built on their land as they saw fit?

One of the famous families to live in the farm was the descendant of Robert Kett, from Wymondham. Robert Kett led the rebellion in 1549, largely against the enclosure of land. His son, George took the name Knight instead of Kett. He lived at the farm from 1590. One of his descendants Elizabeth (Branch) left a silver Porringer to All Saints Church.

Grove Farm is a wonderful house, but owning such a property brings with it big responsibilities for maintaining its structure and fabric. It is costly, in time, energy and money. Like all ancient properties it can be cold and draughty in winter despite central heating and log fires but to compensate it is beautifully cool in summer. If you don’t like housework or are an arachnophobe, beware as Grove Farm attracts dust, cobwebs and spiders galore.

Houses evolve over time. Indeed Grove Farm has done so. If our housing design remained static we would still be in mud huts. So if not Grove Farm, how would you like something very modern? If so, read about an Eco house in our next edition.

Shotesham’s playing field has seen many games of football played over the years, from informal knockabouts to teams striving for glory. It is now the home of Stoke United under 13’s to train and play there. This team, which is part of the wider Stoke United club, plays in the Norfolk Combination League and is coached by Shotesham’s own Matt Sykes. When I last looked at the league table they seemed to be doing very well having won their first 3 games of this season, and are now in 2nd position. Players come from Shotesham and the surrounding villages, and this year Ed Carr, Ollie Sykes and Isaac Yuill are representing the village. If there are other boys, or girls, who enjoy a game of football and would like to be involved with this local team, there are also teams for other age ranges, contact Matt on 550185.



Even if you are not a player, or your playing days are long behind you, Matt and the team would love your support on the touchline. Home matches all kick-off at 10:30am at Shotesham playing field on the following dates, 24/11/13, 01/12/13, 08/12/13, 26/01/14, and 02/02/14

Lastly, these lads keep growing and the kit often needs replacing, so if there is anyone who can offer a bit of sponsorship for the team, once again contact Matt.

News in Brief



A local artist-Robin Matthews

I thought it would be a nice idea to interview local artists of the village, as Shotesham is a village with many an artist tucked into the rural scape. Robin has been an artist for as long as he can remember, having picked up a flair for painting and drawing as a boy, creating pieces from country scenes to local landmarks such as Norwich Cathedral and displaying them at local exhibitions in Tasburgh, Swainsthorpe and Hempnall. As a young man, he worked in the army with horses and dogs, quickly forging a strong bond with the animals and later using them as inspiration for his suede prints. He later worked for Walls, and then at a nearby plant nursery,

continuing his strong relationship with nature and rural life.

It is this connection that resurfaces in his pieces, from horse and cart ploughing fields, to old wooden gates and a hunter and his hound. Many of these idyllic scenes hark back to a Shotesham of no cars or industrial tractors, and all together create a very charming image. His suede prints themselves are quite a tricky process to create; the surface of the suede itself having to be completely flat and precision with a sharp knife for cutting the image has to be perfect to allow for detail. Ink such as Indian ink is then used to print the image onto good-quality thick paper. Robin has been giving them as Christmas cards for many years, with some family and friends holding quite an impressive collection of his works. When asked, he and his wife, Pat, say that the three things they most like about life in Shotesham are that it is such a quiet pastoral village, that it holds an abundance of interesting artistic people, and that the views (particularly from their perfectly placed house) of the fields and surrounding countryside just cannot be matched.

Ruby Woollacott



A star

About 3 years ago Ed Howard, from Hill Farm, thought that an interesting and fun project would be to buy a young horse, 'bring him on' to develop his potential and then possibly sell him.

To this end Ed found Zandokan a 16.1 hands Belgian Warmblood. Little did Ed know what potential Zandokan, known as Marius to his friends, had! Marius and his young rider, 19 year old Chloe Winchester, have exceeded Ed's wildest dreams.

Marius, who is stabled at Chloe's, loves to jump and is fast as well. The pair have worked their way up through 15 qualifying competitions, coming first or second in each to reach this year's Horse of the Year Show. At the Show, which took place on Wednesday October 9th, Marius was completely unfazed by the bright lights and crowds and just knocked down one pole to come 10th out of a class of 30, an amazing debut. From this promising start they are all hoping that he will qualify for the GP Junior European team next year, so watch this space.



V2 rocket site

Next time you are walking down Joy's Loke, behind All Saints Church, be sure to look out for this sign marking the spot where on October 6th 1944 a German V2 rocket landed. Have a read and find out how Shotesham might have looked very different!



Thanks to Mike for organising the sign.

Coming up

Friday November 1st-Halloween Film night 'Dracula', Trinity Hall 7.15

Saturday November 30th -Village Christmas Market, Trinity Hall 10am onwards

Saturday December 7th- Murder Mystery and Village Supper

Christmas events and New Year fun run details to be announced later

See **Contact** for up to date information