

Issue 44, Spring/
Summer 2008



Speen and North Dean News



SPEEN AND NORTH DEAN NEWS

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2008

What's on in Speen and North Dean, 2008?

<u>August</u>	What	Where	Contact
6 th , 11a.m.- 5 p.m.	Take the Wheel	Grange School, Aylesbury	Nicola or Mark on 01296 382450.
7 th , 7:45 p.m.	W.I. Plants for small Gardens (Edwin Rye)	Speen Village Hall	WI, Barbara Collett, 488348,
16 th , 1:00 p.m.	Bike Park Challenge	Ridgley's field	Gloria Holmes, 488420
<u>September</u>			
4 th , 7:45 p.m.	W.I. -Geology - 50 million years in 40 minutes - Dr. Jill Evers	Speen Village Hall	WI, Barbara Collett, 488348,
5 th , 6. pm.	Marquee erection for Caribbean Carnival	Willotts Farm	James Entwisle, 488875
6 th , 7 p.m. for 7:30	SSG's Caribbean Carnival Evening	Willotts Farm	Edie Radford, 488679 [edie@speenbucks.org]
20 th , 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Men's breakfast: John Ryland, "Christian Healing; fact or fiction?"	Speen Chapel	For tickets, Andy and Carolyn, 488758 or James and Sandy, 488875
<u>October</u>			
1 st , 7:45 p.m.	Alpha Supper	Chapel Hall	Andy 488758
2 nd , 7:45 p.m.	W.I. Spare Parts, Dr. Tony Maisie	Speen Village Hall	Barbara Collett, 488348,
18 th , 8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.	Ladies' breakfast: Prof. Paul Matts "It's a tough job but someone's got to do it (...keeping the women of the world beautiful)"	Speen Chapel	For tickets, Andy and Carolyn, 488758 or James and Sandy, 488875
<u>November</u>			
6 th , 7:45 p.m.	WI, TBC	Speen Village Hall	Barbara Collett, 488348,
8 th	Bonfire Night	Speen Playing Field	Christian Nagele, 488247
22 nd	Rotary Club of Princes Risborough concert for SKIDZ	Sytner/BMW/Mini car showroom, High Wycombe	For reservations call John Holmes, 488420
29 th , 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Men's Breakfast: Chief Constable Matt Baggott, "Policing for Christ"	Speen Chapel	For tickets, Andy and Carolyn, 488758 or James and Sandy, 488875
<u>December</u>			
13 th	Christmas Tree and Carols	Speen Playing Fields	Annabel Warr, 488346

See page 27 for North Dean events. In future they will be in this calendar, too.

2009

What's on in Speen and North Dean, 2009 ?

<u>January</u>	What	Where	Contact
24 th , 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Ladies Breakfast: Jo Gambi "Hanging On"	Speen Chapel	For tickets, Andy and Carolyn, 488758 or James and Sandy, 488875
<u>March</u>			
14 th , 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Men's Breakfast: Noel Fellowes "Killing Time"	Speen Chapel	For tickets, Andy and Carolyn, 488758 or James and Sandy, 488875
<u>May</u>			
16 th , 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	(TBC) Tracey Elliot-Reep, "Riding by faith; Mexico to Canada"	Speen Chapel	For tickets, Andy and Carolyn, 488758 or James and Sandy, 488875
<u>September</u>			
	Speen Festival		Sue Taylor (Festival Secretary) sue@dairymed.gotadsl.co.uk 488168



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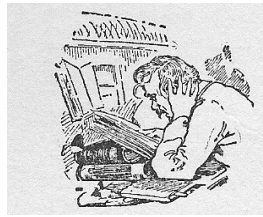


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Dear Reader



Speen and North Dean are certainly busy places. As your new editors , we have been immersed in its reported activities for the last two months, and now emerge gasping with our first edition , amazed at the range and quality of what people accomplish on a voluntary basis in a short period of time in these two communities

We are sorry that this is a much delayed edition. It means that the range of events that we are covering has had to be even wider than usual. We are grateful to Alison Holmes for handing over to us so much good material from the edition that she was unable to complete. And we are grateful indeed for all of the support given by members of the Committee, led by Gloria Holmes, who have ably helped us up the learning curve

All the deficiencies are, of course , down to us. Did we miss a vital name? Or fail to cover a truly significant event ? Is our balance right or wrong? Only you know, and we can only know if you tell us. We have strong aspirations for the News. We think that it needs to be better integrated with the village web presence, and that while it continues in print, fuller length articles and more pictures could be gathered into a continuous Web edition.. We want to see more original writing, art and photography from the two villages and we strongly support those voices who say that the contributions of children and teenagers are sadly missing from our

pages. We would like to hear more local history, and hear the voices of those who know it.. Above all, we would like your interests and concerns to shape our direction: please tell us about them.

Speen and North Dean News is free. We are therefore hugely grateful to our advertisers, as well as to the local Council for their support. And now, as we start to prepare our next edition, we await your contribution. We live in the centre of Speen, alongside Speen Stores.

To c o n t a c t u s :

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Speen Festival organisers need you for September 2009

Join the successful production team that has wowed the villages since the Millennium.

Last year's fourth Speen Festival attracted enthusiastic audiences to an exciting range of musical, theatrical, artistic and outdoor activity for all ages, designed to express the creative talents and achievements of the village and surrounding area. What makes the Festival buzz is the many ways children and adults get involved, as active players, as planners and organisers, or working behind the scenes, around the village and on the field.

(See what made the Speen Festival 2007 the talk of the Three Counties. Visit www.speenfestival.org)

We are eager to get Speen Festival , September 2009, under way. And we are starting now!

Here's what we need:

If you've an idea for an event and would like to put it into action, now is the time to get in touch.

Let us know too if you'd like to act, sing, dance, play an instrument or share another special talent.

If you are keen to support the Festival 'behind the scenes' in some way, register your interest.

If you simply want to express your views on the kinds of events that will entertain and inspire audiences – whether young children, teenagers or adults – we'd love to hear from you.

We are looking for the following for a steering committee:

Director/Committee Chair (replacing Catherine Haddon),

Treasurer (replacing Clive Rainbow),

Logistics Manager (replacing Jill Rogerson),

Publicity Manager (replacing Bronwen Davies).

The hunt is also on for a Website Manager (replacing John Allwright).

Send us your name – or suggest someone you think would do well for us. What's in it for you, apart from a lot of hard work? Well, the warmth of applause, the excitement of working with extraordinary performers who live in our villages, seeing your children engage in something new, watching the marquee fill with friends, neighbours and talent scouts...generally, being part of the community we all boast about to our less favoured metropolitan friends.

Please contact Sue Taylor (Festival Secretary):

sue@dairymed.gotadsl.co.uk

telephone 01494 488168

Speen Supporters Group – Winners of the Chilterns Outstanding Achievement Award, 2008

“Winning the award brings publicity to the hospices, the tremendous work they do, and how little funding they receive”

The Speen WI nominated the Speen Supporters' Group for a Chilterns Outstanding Achievement Award in recognition of the SSG's vital activities in raising funds for 5 local hospices. The Award recognises people who make life in the Chilterns “even more special”, because they have “carried out work selflessly for their community.” The following stories tell us how the SSG earned its prize.



On 20th July Mary Craft, Jo Keatch and Shelley Jennings accepted the award on behalf of the SSG.

Barn Dance raises £335 to add to SSG funds.

Caribbean Carnival will take place Sept. 6 at Wil-lots farm

A big thank you to everyone who supported our Barn Dance. A great time was had by all. The dancing was energetic and lively and the limited space didn't cramp anyone's style! We made £335 profit to add to our funds to donate this year.

The Caribbean Festival will be held, thanks to the generosity of Grace and Barry, on 6th September in the Marquee at Willots Farm with a Steel Band and Pig Roast. Tickets are nearly sold out at press time. The Carnival starts at 7 p.m. for 7:30. Caribbean costumes are optional. (Ed. Note, although some costume must be worn...)

If you are not on the list and would like to be to get details of SSG and local events, please send me your e mail address to edie@speenbucks.org

Edie Radford , 488679

Taking the bike – round two

Well, if the boys can do itthe girls can do it for longer!!!!

The Challenge - Cycling 500km across Vietnam and Cambodia

The Challengers – Two ladies of Speen who, by now, should probably know better:

Shelley Jennings

Christine Symondson

Now, read on...

Two ladies of Speen go out of their way to raise money for Helen and Douglas House

The Story

When we tell people what we are doing, everyone has a different reaction. Some are excited and encouraging with a "good for you" attitude, some are a little more reserved and reticent about our ability to



do it while others just laugh. However, one thing everyone is in agreement about is that the charity we are raising money for is an extremely worthwhile cause.

Many of you will be familiar with the work of Helen & Douglas House, a hospice for children and young adults in Oxford, as it is one of the five hospices we have supported over the last seven years

through our fundraising activities with Speen Supporters' Group.

Helen House was established in 1982 by Sister Frances Dominica and was the world's first children's hospice and became the blueprint for children's hospices around the world. In 2004 Douglas House was opened for teenagers and young adults.

Helen & Douglas House provide respite and palliative care and end of life care to children and young adults with life-shortening conditions, offering personal and practical support to their families. The care is modelled on that provided in the family home - living life to the full, whatever the circumstances. Even after many years of fundraising for the hospice, it is difficult to convey what a positive and supportive environment they provide for children and their families in the most difficult of circumstances.

For some time we had talked about taking on a personal challenge, so when we heard that Helen & Douglas House were organising a sponsored bike ride we just had to go for it.

Shelley:

"In December 2007 I reached

the grand old/young age of 50 and decided that it was time to challenge myself in some way and if I could combine that challenge with the opportunity to raise some money for a charity I am personally involved with, so much better. So, when Christine phoned me and told me about the bike ride I think I shocked her when I said, without pause, 'Let's go for it!!'

Of course, taking part in this bike ride will give us the opportunity to see some of the wonderful sights and scenery in Vietnam and Cambodia but it's going to be an uphill struggle. We will be cycling an average of 75km a day in hot and humid conditions with much of the route on dirt and gravel tracks. For those who have enjoyed a happy relationship with their bike this may not seem too onerous but I have to admit that, as a 50 year old, I have never owned a bike or done any cycling beyond the odd couple of miles along a towpath in France one year, so to call me a novice is an understatement - hence the personal challenge. Sometimes the largest commitments we make are made spontaneously because they involve something you know you have to do.

So, if you see the vision of a grimacing, perspiring (some might say glowing) woman, wearing her husband's cycling shorts (and quite honestly, I should be able to raise sponsorship just for preventing Simon wearing lycra...) but on her very new and pretty bike, slowly (very slowly) struggling up one of our many hills please give an encouraging cheer.

To be serious for one minute, the ultimate aim in all this is to raise as much as possible for Helen & Douglas House. I am funding all my costs relevant to the bike ride so that every penny I raise will go directly to Helen & Douglas House."

Christine: "Sadly, unlike Shelley, December 2007 found me well past the grand old/young age of 50! Having completed my last charity bike ride in 2000 I really felt I had hung up the padded pants and seen the last of the Vaseline. I really should have known better than to mention the Vietnam Cambodia ride; unfortunately it was my pal's moment to take up the gauntlet and, for many of the same reasons as Shelley, I am back on my trusty bike - padded saddle and all. I hope my own well-padded saddle will be somewhat reduced by our strenuous training regime.

Physically this is a major challenge and I have to say the fund raising side of it is just as daunting, we will try not to

drive everyone mad with countless events. We are both aware that over the next few months our new commitment means we will be unable to commit as much time to Speen Supporters' Group as we would like to. However the rest of our very supportive committee will be cheering us on. Sore legs, sore backs and sore bottoms will all be bearable in the knowledge that the amazing Helen & Douglas House will benefit from our efforts making them all worthwhile.

Like Shelley I shall be financing the cost of the trip .On March 6th I start as a volunteer at the hospice and this is certain to make me even more determined to succeed."

Villagers of Speen and North Dean can help, too

You can follow these links

www.bmycharity.com/shelleyjenning

or www.bmycharity.com/christinesymondson . You can write a cheque payable to Helen and Douglas House, sent to Shelley Jennings, 1 Hampden Gate, Hampden Road, or Christine Symondson, Westwood, Hampden Road, both Speen Bucks, HP27 0RU .

Rotary Club will celebrate the SKIDZ

The Rotary Club of Princes Risborough is arranging a charity concert on **SATURDAY 22nd NOVEMBER** in the Sytner/BMW/Mini car showroom in High Wycombe. It will be similar to the one we organised in 2005 which was a great success and enjoyed by all.

SKIDZ is the workshop based charity that motivates difficult and disadvantaged teenagers and gets them back into education or apprenticeships. There are workshops in High Wycombe, Aylesbury and Banbury. This concert is to celebrate SKIDZ's 10th Anniversary. Earl Howe and Paddy Hopkirk will host the concert. The very talented young people of the High Wycombe Music Centre will again provide the music.

Tickets will be available at the end of July at £12. We hope you and your friends will join us. John Holmes is happy to take reservations. See note in What's On in Speen and North Dean

Youth routs experience at Funday

Once again Speen's day of fun on 7th June was a success. An adult's escape to the games of youth and a child's dream of being hurled down a slippery slope, united to make Speen's Funday unique for us all. The scores of the five street teams remained close, until a final push from Hampden Church Road's young side clinched a victory. Despite the fact that my team didn't end up taking home a winner's medal, the day itself was exciting, competitive and enjoyable for everybody who took part. Money raised goes to the Playing Field and Helen House this year.

Tom Slade

Hot sausage, hot sausage

As Tom notes, Funday teams seem to be getting younger and more energetic, though there is still room for more mature contributors. Strategy, as well as tactical nous, seems increasingly called for, as chairman Keith Fisher and his excellent committee members strive to stay ahead of the game(s) by setting new challenges every year. This year's tight race was won at the last gasp, almost literally, by Hampden Church Road (the original name for the Hampden Road). An enthusiastic bout of Kiddie Curling followed immediately, with

many competitors vying for the Cup, won this year by the expert and enthusiastic Beth Podmor. Once contestants were dry and the curlers recovered, over 200 people attended the Pig Roast, consuming all the pork available (and a mound of sausages as well!)

It is not true, as many in the villages claim to believe, that Jeremy Symondson ("Jem") spends the intervening months between Funday concerts auditioning bizarre and

agents, and established audiences. And each of them has commented on the pleasures of performing in the Speen marquee – this year in front of 210 people from the villages who gave Cosmic Sausages a warm welcome and a sincere ovation at the end. The evening also included (almost) voluntary contributions from villagers Anthony Cox (spoons) and Johnnie Thirkell (whose comments below do less than justice to an impression of James Brown which, for many of us, has fundamentally changed our perception of that great artist!)

In a further porcine twist to a weekend of Cosmic Sausages and Pig Roasts, Jem asserts that he came upon this band when the group he had booked, The Chippolatas, had a scheduling clash.

Clearly the audience felt that Simon, Greg, Luke and Dan of Cosmic Sausages were worthy substitutes.



wonderful bands in strange locations late at night. In fact, each of the four professional groups who have performed since he took on his impresarial role as talent-spotter extraordinary to the pre-Funday festivities have websites and

(www.cosmicsausages.com).

Wrights BuildBase kindly sponsored, delivered and erected the staging, and David Hill of the soon to be opened William IV gave an early sample of his skills with refreshments and a wonderful Paella. And grateful as the villages are to Jem, there are probably still some who picture him limping off on his crutches to audition the Old Spots or the Berkshire Tamworths for some



village event as yet unplanned

Cosmic Sausages 'Meat' Expectations

Picture the scene. The audience filter excitedly in to La Scala in Milan, the air filled with an anticipation made all the more palpable by the evocative sound of the orchestra tuning up in the back-ground. Backstage, the Prima Donna scurries through scales whilst being attended by a small army of dressers and acolytes - and at the hub of all this frenetic activity, the impresario paces nervously in the wings, never sure whether tonight's performance will be a triumph or a tragedy.

At precisely the same moment, this highly charged atmosphere is being replicated in the Speen marquee where Jeremy Symondson, our very own Harvey Goldsmith, agonises over whether his plucky gamble will pay off. Having been sadly let down by one of his less reliable cohorts, Jem has been forced to try and follow last year's spectacular triumph by putting on a band which he has been unable to audition - and the pressure is beginning to tell. He's been pacing the floor so much he needs a crutch!

ritual humiliation and you have



the recipe for a great evening.

So, it seems that Jem's worries about The Cosmic Sausages being



However I'm happy to say that his perturbation was all in vain as the old magic hadn't deserted him after all. The Cosmic Sausages were a triumph. Their unique brand of musical humour had the audience rapt from the beginning with a collection of interpretations of well-known songs which ranged from the sublime to the downright bizarre - culminating in a never-to-be forgotten version of Anarchy in the UK. Throw in some exemplary musicianship, four genuinely funny characters and a bit of good old-fashioned

'panned' as being the 'wurst' band he'd ever put on were unfounded. Once again Speen, and its resident Bandfinder General, maintains its worldwide reputation for quality entertainment on a truly global scale.

I believe next year it's Bon Jovi.

Johnny Thirkell

Speen Playing Fields

Speen Playing Fields AGM; continuity of leadership is important for this successful village resource

Our AGM was held on the 26th February. John Holmes, our Chairman for the last 3 years, stepped down, in accordance with our constitution. Andy Thompson is our new Chairman. On behalf of the committee and all the villagers who use our playing fields, I'd like to thank John for his stewardship and hard work over the past years and for leaving the running of the playing fields in very good order. John will be staying involved in the role of Secretary and also helping with the various activities and events run on the fields.

Roger Clarke agreed to continue in the post of Treasurer for the next 12 months as did John as Secretary and so we have a couple of vacancies to fill. Anyone who would like to help run our valuable village playing fields please give me a call, no experience necessary, full training will be given! For those of you not aware the playing fields of Speen are not provided and maintained by the local authority, they were bequeathed to the village and are run as a charity relying on fundraising and volunteers to keep

them maintained for us all to use. Everyone's help is very much appreciated and the hard work can be seen by all in two very well kept sports fields.

Playing Field will get new equipment from Funday funds

The winter has been relatively kind to us this year and little damage to the

field and pavilion has occurred. We held a work party on Saturday 19th April to carry out Spring maintenance on the playing fields. We are considering a new piece of play equipment for 8-12 year olds and are looking at various designs. We are hoping to replace the cricket nets in time for getting some practice in for the new season!

Ridgley's Field takes its place in village life

The bike park has been fairly well used over the winter on the dry days. We cut down the meadow grass in Autumn and are letting this grow back in the Summer to provide a meadow environment for people to use. We have erected a number of bird boxes around the

field and in the small copse to encourage nesting by small birds. There was a Spring Bat Event on Friday 11th April, where children learned to build bat boxes and bird feeders with Wycombe Rangers. There will also be a table tennis tournament and hopefully a paid BBQ/tuck shop..



12 April saw a successful Bike Park Challenge in Ridgley's Field. On 16th August there will be a repeat in Ridgley's Field.

Monthly Draw is a key source of income

The monthly draw is one of our main sources of income. If you would like the chance to win cash prizes and support a vital village amenity then please contact Penny Stokoe (488676) and she will ask a collector to call.

Andy Thompson 4888524

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Wildlife Watch

Local birds made good use of our bird-table during the winter period. In January the occasional Siskin appeared and they were still about at the end of March. Few other winter visitors were driven into the garden as the weather remained relatively mild. A constant flow of Robins, Blue Tits, Great Tits, Marsh Tits, Long tailed Tits, Nuthatches and a regular Great Spotted Woodpecker were recorded. In early March Blackbirds were already sitting on eggs and one resident reported the local Red Kites mating whilst delicately balanced on the top of a conifer within the village. They were subsequently seen carrying nesting material

Previous reports have highlighted the increasing number of sightings of Roe Deer in the area. Several villagers have reported ones, twos and a small family group, albeit this remains an uncommon species locally. In March a female Roe Deer appears to have been the victim of a road accident in the middle of North Dean with the body noted lying just inside one of the roadside fields.

Another less common mammal mentioned previously was a Long-eared Bat found with a broken wing in Ab-

botswood. I have now established that there is a small colony resident in the locality where they are welcome. The bats have solved a previous problem with Cluster flies in the roof space. Rats have still been recorded but in much fewer numbers than last year. More interesting were two sightings of Polecat firstly by myself and Jeremy Symondson on the road from Redland End to Speen and secondly by Ashley Cooper over towards Lacey Green

Red Kites have definitely nested and raised young in Speen this year. I would however mention that they are very susceptible to disturbance so please try and keep away from any nests you come across. Mallards nested in the top of a hedge in the middle of the village some way from any larger ponds. 12 mallard chicks subsequently turned up in the garden pond at the Simms household. In my own garden the bird table has remained busy throughout the year with countless young birds appearing. In addition to the regulars colourful small groups of Goldfinches have been present constantly together with the occasional Jay and Jackdaw.

Frogs laid spawn in the warmer village ponds from the end of February followed shortly thereafter by local Toads about a fortnight later as usual. In my own pond many of the tadpoles

are taken by Smooth and Palmate Newts More recently Jeremy recorded a dead Slow Worm on Chapel Hill which is close to where they have been recorded previously around the bottom end of Coleheath Bottom. An interesting addition to my own garden list was a Grass Snake seen in our ponds on 28 June and then again on 5th July. On the first occasion I was able to watch the snake for about 40 minutes on and off, but it was very wary of any movement. It was firstly noted slithering across the surface but later was seen hunting underwater and then sunbathing on the far edge among the reeds Subsequently Peter Dawson has mentioned sightings in his own garden in 2006.

Many villagers will have heard of the Peacock which suddenly turned up in the Holmes's garden before moving on to Alistair Rose and then numerous addresses in Grubbins Lane and even round into Woodview Drive. The bird seemed capable of fending for itself but equally enjoyed any hand outs it received. Subsequently it has been established that it should be living behind the Old George.

Please let me know of any further interesting sightings; *Peter Symonds* 488016 or symonds@speen10.freemove.co.uk

West Wycombe Art Group

Annual Exhibition

Fri. 22nd Aug 10am until 6pm

Sat 23rd. Sun 24th 10am until 7pm

Monday 25th 10am until 6pm

Tuesday 26th 10 am until 5pm

West Wycombe Village Hall

Work for sale from local artists



News from Speen Church

<http://speenchurch.org>

Andy writes:

In mid July an historic point was reached in the development of Christian worship in the village: we paid the final



instalment to complete the purchase of the land adjacent to the Chapel (the area marked in bold on the map below).



Long before the first Chapel was built in 1802 folk had been meeting for worship in homes in the community. The Chapel was their first local public place of worship and the building was progressively expanded as the congregation developed. Latterly the 1960s built hall has been unable to cope with the needs of the growing church family and the new land will enable us to build facilities suited to the

needs of a C21st congregation.

We celebrated this historic occasion with a special thanksgiving service and a walk around the land followed by a BBQ. I have been asked to share one of the prayers we used when we prayed for the community:

Lord Jesus we lift up in prayer the community in which we worship, and those whose lives interweave ours.

We pray for the local schools; may they be places where children are prized, education is valued and the best of our society's understanding is passed on to the next generation.

We pray for those employed and unemployed;

May those who work find their work adds value to their own lives and to those of others;

For those seeking work; would You so arrange circumstances that they may find profitable employment.

We pray for those who are sick;

Grant them patience and a recovery to full health

Give wisdom and skill to those

who care for them.

For those who are facing death, may they know the peace and reassurance of Your presence.

For those who are bereaved and grieving, May they know Your comfort in their loss.

And for all in the community, we pray You would grant a revelation of Your love and compassion.

We ask these things in Your name, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Coming up:

Baby-Sitting Training Course - if you would like more details contact Kate on 488622.

A new Alpha Course, starts with the Alpha Supper 7:45pm Wednesday 1st October in the Chapel Hall. Contact Andy on 488758 for more details.

See What's On in Speen and North Dean for dates and topics of Ladies' and Men's Breakfasts.

**Speen Shop
Charity 10
years on – it
can only give if
we are there to
use it.**

Over the years the Shop has generated £21,082 for the benefit of the community

This summer it is ten years since the new Speen Stores opened as our 'useful little shop' on the site of the old village shop.

It is useful in more ways than one.

The rent from the shop lease is paid to landlords, the Buckinghamshire Housing Association, and that rent (less expenses) is



made available to Speen Shop Charity for distribution to worthy educational and socially beneficial projects within the village. Grant Application forms are available in the shop.

During the last 10 years £21,082 has been distributed in 55 grants to the benefit of the community.

We hope to be able to continue this for the years to come, but, as an old article in Speen & North Dean News once said of the shop: 'Use it or lose it'. This is as true now as it was 10 years ago.

Andy Gower Chair,

Speen Shop Charity Committee

Speen WI report reflects on something for everybody: delightful young women and tall, dark, handsome men.

It's a long time since I mentioned we were having Cohn Oakes to talk to us about Soho last October but we decided to have him take us round Soho, as he is a proper guide, and in March, on a rather chilly and wet Sunday, we took a coach trip to London and saw the places where famous and infamous people had lived and worked. The best part was when we had lunch at a lovely Italian Restaurant in one of the streets and it warmed us up and made up for the weather,

Back in November we enjoyed a matinee at the Mill at Sonning and in December Anna Conti, who was a delightful young woman, told us how she had come to de-

sign and make stained glass and in April she came to give a workshop for those of interested in making some small items out of stained glass. A very interesting day.

Tall, dark and handsome Neil Rees gave an interesting talk and computerised show in February of Bucks County in Pennsylvania, USA. And local girl, Claire Radforth gave one of our members (her mother, as it happened) a face massage. She informed us that any make-up over 2 years old should be thrown away. Oh dear.

We had a lovely day out with husbands and friends in May to Sulgrave Manor Bicester, which was the home of George Washington's ancestors and where the staff wore clothes of the period. Our latest speaker was Alison Rivett who gave a slide show of Farm Africa which is a charity that sends volunteers to various parts of Africa to show farmers how to work the land better and some were given a stronger breed of goat which gave more milk. They were also able to build stronger houses for themselves. See What's On in Speen and North Dean for dates and topics of next meetings.

Our meetings start at 7:45 on the first Thursday of the month. Ladies, do come along. *Barbara Collett, 48834*

County and District Council News July 2008

Risborough
Rural
Neighbourhood Action
Group (NAG)



The recent meeting of this police led group, has concentrated on finding solutions to the Speeding Traffic issue. It was decided that three specific areas would be examined: the A4010, the B4009 and Perry Lane, Bledlow as these would give an indication, for each type of road, what is happening with rat runs and main highways. The new Speed Watch equipment, replacing the old SID, will be used initially to check on the numbers of vehicles exceeding the limits to verify speeds and this will be collated with the information held by the County Council.

Action has also been taken to support the purchase of a hand held radar gun to be used by the local police to identify offending drivers. This equipment is now in constant use by the Risborough Officers to enforce the limits within the area.

Adult Social Care

A new initiative is aimed at

getting closer to the local communities in Buckinghamshire. Members of Adult Social Care teams are holding a series of Social Care Surgeries in the local areas so that those needing help and advice may find it locally. Details of future events can be found by calling Karen Adamson on 01296 383847 or on the County Web Site or through contact with the Parish Council.

Speed Limit Review and Tranquil

Following the meeting of the Speed Limit Review Panel new limits are being proposed for several areas. These include: Marsh - 30mph, Forge Lane and Lower Loosley Hill, Loosley Row - 30 mph and Great Hampden - 30 mph. Other actions are being taken to look at the signage of lanes where de-restriction signs are currently placed on small lanes leading off main roads

In Ellesborough the 30 mph limits are now to be kept. Congratulations to all those that took part in the Speed Reduction competition, the impact that these have had in keeping speeds down is really noticeable especially as it can be seen that it comes from local children. Some changes are envisaged on the A4010 where, in Kimble, the 40mph is to be extended to include residential areas within the village; near Monks Risborough the 40 mph transition between the 30mph and 50

mph limit together with the 40 mph limits either side of the Terrick roundabout are to be increased to 50 mph.

All of these changes are to be advertised as final consultation process so if you have a view, either in favour or not, please let the County officers know when the adverts are published. If you do not comment it may be taken that you are not concerned and those that do will be in the majority.

The Tranquil Project has seen the erection of the white village entry gates on some roads. Orders are being placed for the Oak Features and these will be erected where speed limits are not likely to be changed. Where changes to limits are envisaged the gates / features will be erected at the time the new orders come into place. Orders have been placed for the new traditional 'finger post' direction signage and these should be appearing by the end of the summer.

Road Maintenance

Some of the promised £3.25M pounds for Buckinghamshire to improve local roads has been spent in our area. Main Road, Lacey Green and the Hampden Crossroads have seen work carried out to improve the running surface of the roads. White lining is also part of the improvements and this has been done in Chalkshire Road and on the Rignal Road. Pot hole repairs can still be reported through High-

ways on Call **0845 230 2882** so if you see a problem please report it.

Other improvements have been implemented by a new Community Road Gang with the specific remit to carry out maintenance works such as hedging and ditching. These gangs will visit each Parish, on a requested basis, so if you feel action is required then the Parish Council should be advised so that they can request action.

Community Fund

This year's grant funding for Community projects has again been made available. If you have a community project then please let me know and I will see if some funding can be arranged. If you have an issue with which I can help please also let me know. As well as writing to my home address Canastel, Water Lane, Speen, HP27 0SW, I can be contacted by phone 01494 488315 or by email at progerson@buckscc.gov.uk

Paul Rogerson, County Councillor

BCC Road safety team let pre-drivers take the wheel

Buckinghamshire County Council Road Safety Team and Community and Youth Engagement Team are working together to provide an

activity day for pre drivers. On Wednesday 6th August 'Take the Wheel' will be held at The Grange School, Aylesbury, from 11am – 5pm

It's an innovative scheme that aims to educate pre drivers about the responsibilities that come with the privilege of driving. Organised by Buckinghamshire County Council, this campaign has been designed to inform young people of all the aspects of driving they need to consider before they get behind the wheel. The highlight for many of the students is the opportunity to drive a car, accompanied by an Approved Driving Instructor.

The project is aimed at 15 to 18 year olds, who have not yet passed their test. They will have the opportunity to talk to representatives from: the Driving Standards Agency, A-Plan Insurance, Bucks Fire and Rescue, Approved Driving Instructors, Red Cross, Trading Standards, Road Safety, Thames Valley Police, and the Skidz Project.

For more information, and to book please call Nicola or Mark on 01296 382450.

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Here's how

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- Request a service or a call back
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- Book a doctor's appointment (subject to your GP surgery's participation)

Looking local on Sky

- Press the Interactive button on your remote
- Select SKY Active from the menu
- Select Interactive Service
- Select Local Services
- Select Looking Local
- or
- Press the Interactive button on your remote
- Select SKY Active from the menu
- Select A-Z
- Select Looking Local

Looking local on Virgin

- Press Interactive
- Select Home and Away
- Select Find It
- Select Looking Local

Looking local on Telewest (Service branded Virgin TV but using the Telewest interactive interface)

- Press the Interactive button on your remote control
- Select News & Info
- Select Community

- Choose Looking Local

Neighbourhood watch:

Residents urged to be vigilant about burglary within the District.

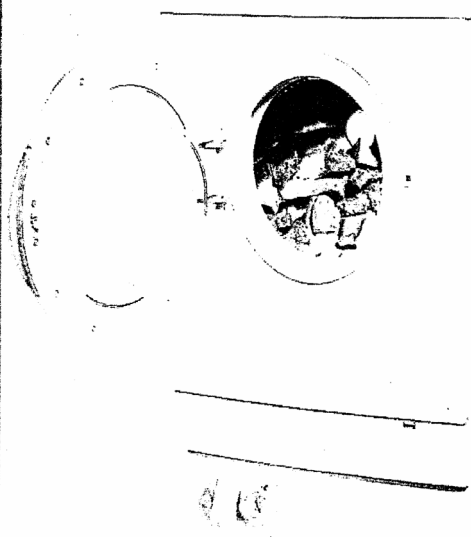
Police and partner agencies in Wycombe are asking people to be vigilant after a significant rise in burglaries of homes over the past weeks. Latest statistics show the number of burglaries reported to the police in February 2008 has increased by 53% compared to February 2007.

show the main ways burglars have gained entry are through insecure door/windows, by smashing windows, through rear patio doors and by reaching through letter-boxes to obtain keys.

Although it is expected to see some rise in burglaries at this time of year because the nights are longer, the increase we have seen over the past weeks is alarming. It is vital that residents take the following steps to protect themselves from burglary: - Lock all windows (even if you are just popping out for a while) - thieves can wriggle through any gap larger than the size of a human head. - Lock all doors - ensure UPVC (white plastic) doors are double

Crime reports

Mean machine



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locked so that the handle is fully pushed up and the key fully turned. By pushing the top or bottom of the door, thieves know that if it flexes, it's not locked.

Recovery of Neighbourhood watch - the editor of the Speen and North Dean News has also offered to take on Neighbourhood Watch functions and as soon as her criminal background check is complete, we will resume communication as in the glorious days of Dave Howarth.

*Speen School PTA's
Midsummer's Ball
raises £3400.*

Speen Schools thrive on volunteer support

Pre-School volunteers keep the machine oiled

The summer holidays are here and all the children from Speen are at home enjoying the break, so it gives me great pleasure to reflect on what has been a busy year for the pre-school; new rules (more red tape), new teachers, new lessons in French, getting through the OFSTED inspection (thank you Annabel) and lots of fun and laughter. In a

The Speen Fete committee kindly allowed the pre-school once again to have a Kiddies corner, a chance for the parents to drop their children for some sedate flower face painting, etc while they had tea or sat quietly reflecting for a while, perhaps? Well not this year. We even rivalled the noise level of the cannons at one point. We had face painting with super heroes, and maybe the odd flower, design-a-mask, the Clown game, lucky dip, stringing breakfast together on a string, paper plate painting which turned into wet Frisbees and THE STOCKS which proved very popular with male adults and children alike. We will of course be renting them out, for extra funding for the pre-school.

Sports Day had to be re-arranged because of the weather, which sadly meant that some relatives and friends who had been invited where unable to attend (note to God for next year). But on the day the weather was great and the children had loads of fun. Priceless memories of them in their team colours, waiting for their turn while proud parents looked on, will linger for some time. A big thank you to Natalie and her team for all their hard work making the day perfect, and thank you to the mums who helped



Photo: Phil Dodd

Lesley Thompson reports that 176 people came to the ball, with live music from the cover band Finger Mouse (www.fingermouseband.com). Profits reached £3400 and some will go to the Pre-school.

true Speen tradition of Committees we have had our own "changing of the guard". We owe a big thank you to the ladies who have worked so hard to keep our small but perfectly formed school open, and running like a well oiled machine, thank you all.

with the Pimms lunch afterwards. All profits from that went to the school

Unfortunately, calendar conflicts with holidays, weddings and private parties, meant that our summer event, the Vice a Versa evening, was not as well attended by the parents and the village as we had hoped, and this affected the amount of money raised for the school. Those who did attend had a ball. The great music duo "Chemistry" stepped in at the last minute. Tammy the comedy drag act sang badly and got people playing games and generally had people in stitches. Our resident DJ Patrick Cleaver ran the disco that warmed us all up. We offer a big pre-school thank you to David and his team who provided the bar and the excellent food, and everyone that helped with getting the marquee dressed and undressed before and after the event, and a very big thank you to the various Speen committees for the use the Marquee, the playing field and the tables and chairs.

Amanda Dobbs



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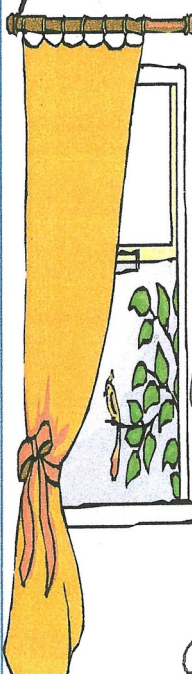
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Speen_Fete was a glorious day in July

" It was about the noon of a glorious day of June

That we saw their banners dance and their cuirasses shine...

Like a servant of the Lord , with his Bible and his sword,

The General rode amongst us to form us to the fight "

Even if it was not the battle of Naseby, and we had to make do with a sporadically wet day in July , and we had no General Cromwell , but simply the spirit of his cousin , John Hampden, the Regiment of Foote named for that great man still lit up the Speen Fete , for Roundheads and Cavaliers alike. The local connection (Hampden's memorial is less than a mile from Speen) was part of the charm. The living history was apparent, with women and young people in period dress as well as the grizzled campaigners re-enacting the techniques of seventeenth century warfare. And now we have some younger villagers who have learnt how pike men defended the infantry while the guns were reloaded , and we will long remember the noise of the artillery pieces going off (not cannons , but in this case a Minion Drake). John Hampden died at Thame from a fatal wound received early in the war on Chalgrove Field outside of Oxford, but his name lives on through these splendid voluntary efforts, as well as in our neighbouring villages and the Hampden Arms pub. (www.johnhampdensregiment.org.uk)

sheltered from the showers or shouted their wares to passing visitors. The children's magic show, Punch and Judy, tractor and Speen pony rides satisfied seekers after traditional entertainments. The Speen School Country Dance Display was outstanding and



the Amersham Band played with skill and gusto throughout the afternoon. Dave King , the Fete President , and his organizing committee covered all tastes and interests this year, as well as supporting two great causes in the Stokenchurch Dog Rescue charity and Speen's own Village Hall , which was en fete itself with the art exhibition. Prize winners in the afternoon's many competitive categories were:

Children's Competition

Between displays, as stall-holders alternately

Colouring Competition

(Sponsored by Rob Lenko).

UNDER 6 YRS Amy Entwisle

6 - 9 YRS Emily Campbell

10 - 11 YRS Keiran Thompson

BEST IN SHOW Jamie Thomson

Pizza Portrait of a King/Queen

FIRST PRIZE; Noah Chitty and Ben Allwright

Collage of Warrior

FIRST PRIZE; William O'Brien

King's Castle

FIRST PRIZE; Ben Allwright

6 Queen of Hearts tarts

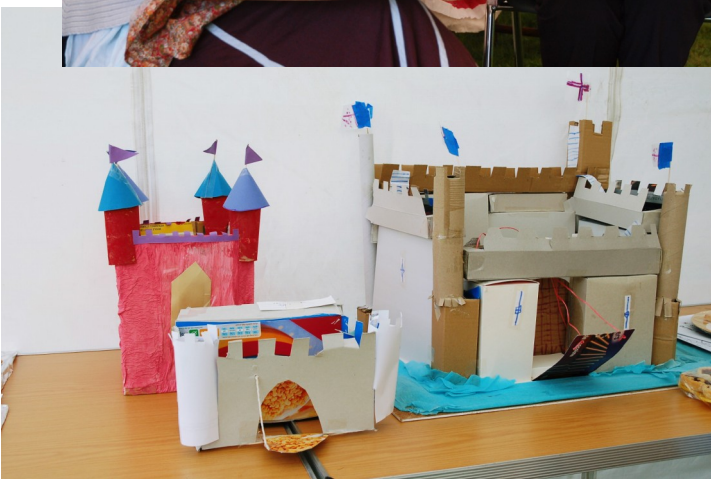
FIRST PRIZE Laura Vale

Fancy Dress (Sponsored by JNP Estate Agents).

1st – Luke Lakeon

2nd – Rosie Allwright

3rd – Lucy Entwisle



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“The Best North Dean Fete since 2007”

Last year we all agreed that we had had the best fete for a long time, the change in format had worked, we took the highest takings ever and the weather was great. The 2008



North Dean Annual Fete had a lot to live up to. Planning started in the deep dark recesses of winter and the committee bravely decided more change was required. More space was the cry and off the car park went to the adjacent field (thank you farmer Charlie). What do we fill all this space with was the next cry, so the committee re-planned the field and focused on making the fete even more traditional.

The ever present welcoming committee allowed everyone to participate in the prize draw, and everyone gathered in front of the now re-located Speen marquee. At 2.30pm, Lillian and Eric Cash, at their last fete as North Dean residents, officially opened the fete. As last year, the “run for Bric-a-brac” was held up for 30 minutes and the numerous prize givings got the attention they deserved. One new addition to the prize draw was the Best garden in North Dean, suitably won by Eric and Lillian Cash. With everyone applauding the winners, the marquee opened and the carnage began.

As you walked in through either of the entrances (one new gate kindly installed by Steven Rodgers), the traditional nature of our very special fete was all around: teas in the village hall, the clunk of the traditional skittles; the giggling and laughter of adults on the coconut shy or the quintessentially British sight of a large traditional band playing in the middle of a field. The steam train chugged away and the top of the spacious field displayed a collection of old and new cars including a 97 year old Model T (on the Model T’s 100th Birthday).

Wherever you stopped, groups of people were chatting and laughing. Whether drinking from the bar, eating from the unique South African or enjoying a locally produced ice cream, the fete provided the social event of the year. Maybe not quite so “traditional” was the army tank giving rides around the fields next to the Fete but judging by the huge number of people who had a ride, there is also room for something a little noisy and brash.

With fantastic weather, a bar pro-

vided by the King William and plenty of great food the fete rambled on longer than ever. The clearing up started around the remaining merry visitors and everyone mucked in to help tidy up the show ground.

A large gathering re-appeared at the village hall for the evening meal, now an annual event that has grown with the fete.

North Dean fete raised a record amount of money in 2008, a fantastic achievement at a time when money is becoming harder to find. Thank you to the committee and eve-



ryone else who helped. The fete is only a success because of the people who get involved.

Thank you and see you next year

Andrew Howard

Chairman

NDVH



North Dean Village Hall Forthcoming Events for 2008

Sunday 07 September	PIG ROAST / FAMILY DAY
Wednesday 10 September	NDVH COMMITTEE MEETING
Sunday 05 October	TREASURE HUNT
Friday 07 November	FIREWORKS DISPLAY
Friday 19 December	CAROL CONCERT

Future Events

Feb 09 **RACE NIGHT**

April 09 **NDVH AGM**

25th July 09 **ANNUAL FETE (provisional)**

Residents: If you have any suggestions for future fund raising and social events
please contact

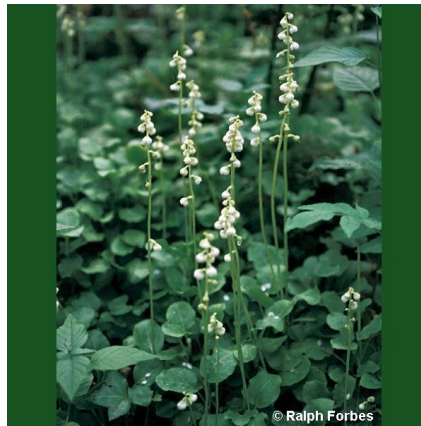
Julie White, NDVH Secretary on 01494 562311

Wildflower News

In April, 2007 a new group was launched, called "Buckinghamshire Rare Plants Recorder Group", headed by Roy Maycock, the County recorder for vascular flora. (Vascular flora refers to the category of plants that have tissues and fibres that carry sap. Ed.) The task ahead is to find and update the state of both the rare and scarce County flora.

On visits in the field we have found that "Wildflowers of Britain and Ireland" by Marjorie Blamey and R and A Fitter can sometimes be useful. Roy Maycock's own book, written with Aaron Woods, called "Checklist of the plants of Buckinghamshire" (2005) is the first book for Bucks since that of the late George Claridge Druce, published in 1926.

We began with a list of fifteen rare or scarce flora to find, and so far have sent in thirty records! But it's not all good news. We have three doubtful identifications, one of which is called Common Wintergreen. It lives in woodland and has flowers like Lily of the Valley, white to pink. If you have seen this



© Ralph Forbes,
www.habitas.org.uk/flora

plant, please give a call to 488303.

We have been searching up hill and

down dale. Some plants on the list are normally to be found in water meadows, near the River Ray, in the Vale of Aylesbury. We found a very small plant, looking like a miniature Greater Plantain. Its shape gives it the name Mousetail.

On the Ivinghoe Hills we found Pasqueflower-early gentian, field fleawort. Ivinghoe is worth a visit just for the views. Hounds-tongue can be seen on Grangeland and nearby the Musk Orchid. Our oddest record was for Lesser Sea-Spurry. This is a seaside plant that has traversed our salted roads and can be found on the A404 Marlowe Road and the A41 near Waddesdon. More on flowers to come, and how you can become a Buckinghamshire Wildlife Recorder.

Fred Burnham 488303

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Being green can hardly be something new in a community once so enmeshed with the forest and the farm. Bringing old green and new green together in these pages, we hope will give villagers a sense of the continuity in our landscape, as well as some of the things we can do to keep it viable for the future. In this section, therefore are old and new.

Alice Dean remembers a green economy

The bodger wasted nothing

Transforming a tree - the art of finding the best tree on the Hampden Estate

I first became interested in these craftsmen when I started visiting the home of my husband in Speen, this pretty- village in the Chilterns. I would watch for hours my father—in—law, Richard Dean working his pole lathe, the rhythmic action of the feet and hands and the gentle sway of the body, and the smooth finished legs and stretchers produced, fascinated me so much that I would talk to him at great length about his work and all that went into the production of a chair leg and the stretchers or spars.

The lathe was made by the man who was going to work it so that it was the right height for comfortable and easy use. The tools were handmade, the village blacksmith producing the metal part and the bodger the handles. This was done so that each tool fitted the size of the man's hand,

thus producing a balance of weight and pressure for each individual.

The bodgers worked mostly in the beautiful beech woods of the Duke of Buckinghamshire's Estate at Great Hampden. The Estate auctioned trees once a year either in late December or early January. The buyers received tickets for the sale which entitled them to lunch and ale at the Hampden Arms. Before the sale a buyer would walk the woods inspecting the lots of timber marked for sale and would estimate how many trees he needed to buy to last him one year. At the beginning of the year the Estate men felled the trees, before the green leaf appeared, and the bodgers set to work cutting the tops off to preserve the sap in the trunk of the tree, as only green beech could be turned successfully on the pole lathe; nothing was wasted. The twigs were made into bundles of faggots ready for the bread ovens, the larger branches into logs for winter fuel.

The largest trees, too big for pole lathe work, were sold to the timber mills for sawing into planks, and were transported into the Town on timber bobs, pulled by shire horses.

The bodgers set up their lathes at the site of the felled timber inside a very primitive type of hut in the beech woods.

Making a shapely leg

The logs were rolled up on to trestles and sawn into the lengths needed for the size of leg to be turned. With a wedge and axe, the bodger split the log in half, and

then placed the half log tall piece of log with a wedge shaped cut in it for firm holding and then cut into billets with a flam (or froe) to the required size. The billets were held on the chopping block and the first shaping made with the shaping axe; the bodger took that piece to the shaving horse, a long wooden seat with three legs and foot holds which had a swinging motion; pushing the feet forward, the shaving horse gripped the partly shaped leg in iron teeth, and then a draw shave shaped the leg ready to be put into the lathe. At this stage, the bodger sawed any surplus off the leg.

When a number of logs were ready the bodger climbed to the back of the lathe and started turning. The leg was gripped by two metal pieces named dogs and tightened by means of the dog screw handle. A gouge roughed out the shape of the leg, and a smoothing chisel smoothed it off. Then, according to the pattern to be turned, a tool called a buzz cut into the wood making a buzzing sound. These cuts were smoothed out to make a perfect finish.

The bodger pushed the finished leg through a little flap in the side of the hut ready- to be stacked for maturing.

Home from the forest

The men took their meals for the day, plus bottles of water for making tea. A long iron rod with a hook on the end was wedged into the ground over a fire made from the shavings and a big iron blacksmith-made kettle would be boiled, and the men sat round

the fire to have their meals. The choppings made when shaping the billet were put in sacks and sold for lighting wood. The smaller shavings and choppings would be scattered along the path out of the wood, to make it easier to see the way home when it was dark -- nothing was wasted.

At night, they worked by candlelight or oil lamp. This was a very lonely life but one could hear these men singing miles away; they seemed to really enjoy this hard but rewarding life.

They could turn four dozen legs per hour, or eight dozen stretchers. The price they received for one gross (144) of legs and nine dozen stretchers was twenty -- one shillings (about £20 today). This made up the under parts for thirty -- six Windsor chairs. For a smoker chair consisting of four legs, four stretchers, six spindles and two stumps the price was two shillings and sixpence to three shillings per chair. (£2 - £3 today)

Wood, is a living thing, once shaped by living hands

Richard Dean had eight sons all of whom had to learn the craft of pole lathe turning, not all of them stayed in the family business but sought work elsewhere. The craft gradually died and there are very few left now who can do this work. None at all is carried out on a commercial ba-

sis, but people have been showing an interest in how this work was done and an effort has been made to show the young people of today a little of past history in practical form.

Down On The Farm

The Chilterns must boast the best footpath network in the country; certainly in the Hughenden valley we have very few fields without any paths. Fortunately walkers in this area are very considerate and obey the country code; rarely is a gate left open and barring fields by the road, we don't encounter many broken bottles, tins etc. which damage cows' feet and mouths. However there is one problem that some of you may be able to help us with. Machinery nowadays is very sophisticated and we spend a lot of time each spring rolling the grass fields to put down any protruding stones. When we come to cut the grass, the machinery is often damaged by sticks which appear to have been thrown for dogs and not retrieved.

Now that the government introduced foot and mouth disease has been overcome, we have another disease to contend with--blue tongue, which affects cattle, sheep and also deer. About 50% of infected sheep die from the disease; most cattle eventually recover but are then unthrifty and hence unprofitable. The disease is spread by a midge in a similar manner to the mosquito spreading malaria and experts think that the present

infection was brought by midges on flowers exported from Kenya to the Dutch flower markets. The disease was rampant in Belgium and Holland last year and last autumn after an easterly wind had been blowing, blue tongue was found in a cow in Suffolk. Movement restrictions were immediately introduced (different rules applied in Wales and Scotland made by their own parliaments) to try and limit the spread but unfortunately midges don't understand movement restrictions so the disease is spreading across the country! Infection cannot be passed from animal to animal except by midge bite and as it is obviously impossible to control midges, we must vaccinate all our stock. The vaccine arrived in May and as we have about 600 head of cattle spread around many fields, you can imagine just how much work was involved in catching and injecting every animal. Three weeks later they all had to have a repeat vaccination to get full immunity. The latest news suggests that the blue tongue disease which is spreading up though Spain and France is not the strain against which we have vaccinated. Heigh Ho!!

Rising food prices are a constant source of comment in the press and on the television; they are also very much in our minds, as like other livestock farmers we are now having to pay more than double last March's price for wheat; this makes meat and milk much more expensive to produce. No doubt the barley barons of East Anglia will be

making a lot of money but the average family mixed farm is still in financial difficulties. For years the press has complained about farmers being subsidised whereas it was actually the food which was being subsidised! The price rises in the supermarkets are far greater than the increase in costs of ingredients, and if the supermarkets don't pay a realistic price to producers soon, then 'British Food' will be a thing of the past.

Gill Kent 25.7.08

Solar energy in Speen

With one of the first installations of solar panels in Speen taking place at the time of writing, this surely is an ideal opportunity to put the spotlight on solar, to clarify the benefits, to outline the costs involved (and the savings) and along the way to dispel the many myths that have developed ... for starters, solar can work effectively even with our overcast skies but it will only ever meet part of your hot water requirements.

What does a solar system offer?

Solar can provide about 1,500kWh - 2,000kWh or 40-50% of a household's year-round hot water requirement (Solar Trade Association figures) and reduce CO₂ emissions by around 350kg per year, (the equivalent of flying from London to Barcelona and back).



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How does it work?

Solar collector panels or tubes soak up energy from the sun's radiation and use this energy to heat a liquid within the system's pipework. This pipework leads down from the roof into a water storage cylinder (thermal store) and heats the water stored inside - producing hot water. As only half of the water heating energy can come from solar energy, the rest, especially in winter, has to come from a boiler, heat pump or an immersion heater. The key is to ensure that your boiler does not provide the hot water when there is solar energy available. This can happen on some systems! A controller that monitors the heat available from the panels and

the heat available in the tank will ensure that the boiler and the solar system work in harmony making solar do the work to maximum capacity when it can, and using the boiler as a back-up.

Tubes or panels?

Both have their merits. However as tubes are insulated, they perform better in cooler, cloudier countries such as the UK. They also have the advantage of being easier to fit as less surface area is required and they are roof-mounted, not recessed. Finally if a tube is damaged, individual tubes can be replaced instead of

having to buy a whole new panel

How much do you have to spend to save?

A typical installation can cost between £3,200 and £4,500 (Energy Saving Trust figures). Parts and labour of renewable items are chargeable at 5% VAT for example panels, controller, solar pipework, scaffolding but not the cylinder or boiler.

With an average of 50% of a household's water heating needs supplied by solar, this means a conservative annual saving of 15% on your household's energy bill based on a four-bedroomed detached house. If you also fit an air source heat pump, you could further reduce your reliance on fossil fuels and further cut your

bills. Studies have also found that with the introduction of Energy Performance Certificates*, (which are now mandatory for all homes before they can be sold) homes with solar thermal hot water systems will sell more quickly than those without.

Sizing/installation

As a rule of thumb, 1-1.5m² of panels are needed per person and the cylinder should be at least 50% bigger than the size normally required for your daily hot water demand for a boiler-only system.

Installation takes about 3 days. For optimum performance the panels should be positioned at 45 degrees on a south facing roof but can be configured east-west. They can be mounted on the ground or a flat roof. Excessive shadow should be avoided.

As of 6th April 2008, planning permission is no longer required for solar. Listed Building Consent is still required and permission is usually needed in Conservation Areas.

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*The purpose of an EPC is to provide an energy rating of a home to indicate both running costs for heating, hot water and lighting and the carbon dioxide emissions. This is converted into the A-G rating also used for white goods.

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Letter to the editor proposes recycling of spectacles and mobile phones

Dear Editors,

Partially because I wear specs, and partially because I am a fan of recycling anything that is useable -my idea is to offer our villagers a chance to recycle their out of date mobile phones and their defunct specs - all in a good cause.

The way to do this is very simple - I will provide the shop with boxes, positioned outside for at least a month or two, to deposit said items, after 4 September.

I will also position boxes in the porch of THE OLD PLOW for the benefit of those on the outskirts of the village, also after 4 September. We will try to encourage people to react quickly by limiting the length of time the boxes will be at the Shop/Old Plow.

For info - the specs should not be broken; should not be bifocals or varifocals and no cases are required. I will despatch them to **Vision Aid Overseas** a charity set up in 1985 who send teams of volunteer optometrists and dispensing opticians (as well as the recycled specs) to help those in the developing world in need of their expertise. Once the glasses are received by VAO, they are sent to prisons in the UK to be cleaned, mended etc., before being sent abroad.

The mobile phones minus their SIM cards will be sent to

"**Greener Solutions**" to be recycled. They work in tandem with many charities and are currently donating £3.00 for every mobile received to the National Blind Children's Society.

I have lots more info on both these organisations if required .

Kind regards

Olivia Cowan,

Old Plow, Flowers Bottom

Community work and adventure inspire Laura Page in Tanzania

Swimming a virtual Channel was the first leg of a voyage to the top of Kilimanjaro

Last May I left Speen to spend six weeks in North Tanzania in East Africa. Before leaving England I needed to raise part of the money for my trip and to do so I challenged myself to swim the equivalent of the English Channel (1408 lengths of a 50m swimming pool!) I managed it and a very big thank-you to everyone that supported and sponsored me as I raised an amazing £1850.

A few weeks later I jumped on a plane to Kilimanjaro airport, landed, found my way to the hotel that was to be my home for four

weeks and - slept for 10 hours. I was exhausted! Later that evening, Becca and Runa, my two companions arrived. We got to know each other well and became very close which undoubtedly helped us all to relax and enjoy the trip.

We spent the weekend settling in to our room and exploring the surroundings, before we began our community work at the local primary school, Mbokomu. Unfortunately the company we were with had little faith that the three of us could really make much of a difference so their plan was to have us plant seeds for three weeks.

A week into the project we spent an afternoon with a standard seven class - equivalent to our year six students, teaching English. Their ability to pick up our language was incredible and we were amazed at how willing the children were to learn from us. The children sat four or five to a desk. We wanted to make a contribution to the classrooms, so we eventually persuaded the organisers to supply us with wood, nails, varnish and paint which soon became three new desks. We presented them to the school at a leaving ceremony at the end of our time in Moshi.

That was one of the most emotional moments of the whole trip. We were given traditional African kangas (brightly coloured cotton wraps) and a Tanzanian meal of Mtori, a beef and banana stew.

Ed. Note (For a recipe see <http://ezinearticles.com/?Mtori:-Banana-Soup-from-Tanzania&id=71951>)

Our hotel, Keys Hotel, had a sensational view of Kilimanjaro. In the first week we decided that we should attempt a climb! Two weeks later with no training and hired equipment we began our trek. At our first camp, a cabin on the edge of the rainforest, we watched the monkeys in the trees and then later came a sight I will never forget. Becca had run off to the toilet after we had all gone to sleep and came hurtling back, demanding that Runa and I get out of bed and come out into the cold. I followed her out and saw the stars. They completely took our breath away. *I have without a doubt never seen something as beautiful as that night sky;* the stars were so bright and their numbers so great that they illu-

minated the edge of the forest surrounding us. It was just unbelievable!

Three days later we weren't concentrating on the stars...Runa and I had begun our ascent. Sadly Becca had become ill from the effects of altitude sickness so Runa and I continued up without her. It was a painful six hours but we made it to the crater rim just after the sun rose and were immensely proud of our achievement, if a little out of breath. We had been a bit too ambitious to think we could climb Kili comfortably!

We ended our trip with visits to three famous Tanzanian Parks, Ngorongoro crater, Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Park. The animals we saw in the wild are unforgettable. As was our final stage, spent in Zanzibar and at the beaches in the North. Our final night was

spent on the sand sat singing around a campfire with some of our new friends; a fantastic end to a fantastic trip and six weeks that I shall never forget. Tanzania was a truly inspirational and beautiful country full of the smiling faces; I'm now desperate to return.

Laura Page

For more information about Tanzania http://uk.encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761562305_3/Tanzania.html

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The Pub is saved

Villagers nestle in eating comfort from Hampden to Flowers Bottom

The seventeenth century farmhouse that houses the King William IV pub in Speen has come alive again - and villagers very much hope it stays that way after a brief period as a Bangladeshi restaurant and some eighteen months of boarded-up desolation. The thirsty campaigners who led the "save our pub " campaign deserve special thanks , especially in terms of their discovery of David and Tracey Hill , who are now resident landlords and who, on the weekend of 25-26 July , opened their eating and drinking facilities for a "soft launch " trial run.

While the newly extended bar is not yet in place - or the customer loos - the village gave a warm welcome to the new look , to the excellent food , and to the ability to get a drink in the centre of the village on a hot day. When everything is open later in August villagers will be able to appreciate how much time , investment and effort has gone into the business of making the King William IV a habitable place with twenty-first century facilities for preparing and serving food and drink. David Hill described this experimental opening as a soft launch to test his systems : for the villages it was a

welcome opportunity to test the menus and wash away the gardening dust from throats that seemed to become progressively more vocal as the two evenings progressed .

Speen and North Dean are very fortunate now to have a real range of choice within the immediate locality , with the excellent Hampden Arms at Great Hampden at one end , the reborn King William IV in Speen itself , and a restaurant , the Old Plow at Flowers Bottom , representing national and international standards of cuisine at the other. This hugely favourable circumstance will only prevail if these facilities are fully patronised, so eat and drink local should be our concern. None of these places is more than a short exercise bike ride away !

Finally , it has been observed that the villages are deeply split on what they actually call the King William IV. Is it , as some of the more proper and correct



Photos: ©TFW

amongst us claim , only to be abbreviated to the "William " ? Or the " King Billy " (but that causes confusion with a very different English monarch) , Or the "Sailor Bill " (which was this king's alleged popular nickname)? Or even as some eccentrics claim , the "Billy Ivy " (geddit ?) Let us know your views and we will report back on the Preferred contraction in our next issue .

SPEEN PLAYING FIELDS – VANDALISM

We have two major assets in our village – the Playing Field on Hampden Road and Ridgley's Field on Moses Plat Lane. Both are owned by the village (not the council) and managed by the Playing Field Committee as trustees.

The Committee, with help from many villagers, tries to keep these fields in good order as attractive places for youngsters and others to use. It is sad that we sometimes have spells of vandalism. Recently on Ridgley's Field we found:-

Bottles/packets all around the new rope swing.

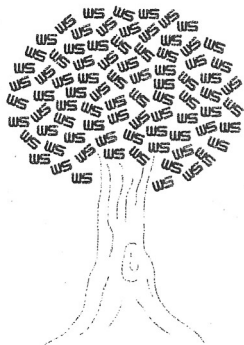
The new plain wire separating the Bike Park from the copse cut and left loose.

The top of a picnic table broken off.

The new concrete table tennis table badly damaged. Two corners cracked, probably by jumping on them. Top scratched, metal net bent.

An old fire extinguisher and 2 pallets dumped in the copse.

These are your fields. Please be alert to inappropriate activities. The community police officer is supportive and is happy that you contact him if necessary (08458 505505).



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Speen Festival – Secretary	Sue Taylor	488168
Speen Fete - Chairman	Jim Barton	488547
Speen Fete – Secretary	Nicki Pitt	488713
Speen & North Dean Good Neighbours	Christine Oliver	488409
Speen & North Dean Guides	Pauline Hall	488372
Speen Infants School - Head	Denise Nayna	488321
Speen Infants School PTA	Trish Preston-Whyte	488387
Speen Marquee	John Holmes	488420
Mother and Toddler Group	Jo Podmore	488602
Speen PreSchool	Annabel Warr	488340
Speen Playing Fields Chairman	Andy Thompson	488524
Riding for the Disabled	Gloria Holmes	488420
Speen Supporters Group	Edie Radford	488679
Speen Stores	Tracey Matthews	488258
Speen Tennis Court - Secretary	Cherry Seekins	488355
Speen Village Hall – Secretary	Pauline Flynn	488510
Speen Village Hall – Bookings	Sue Taylor	488500
Speen WI - Secretary	Barbara Collett	488348
North Dean Village Hall - Chairman	Andrew Howard	562775
North Dean Village Hall - Secretary	Julie White	562311
North Dean Village Hall – Bookings Secretary	Megan Chinn	563074
Pigotts 748' Musical Evenings	Nick Wheeler- Robinson	562167
Hughenden Parish Council - Chairman	R F Gould	
Lacey Green Parish Council - Chairman	Cathryn Davies	342800
Lacey Green Parish Council – Councillor for	Roger Craft	488343
Wycombe District Council – Member for Lacey	Paul Rogerson	488315
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Best of both worlds

Olde worlde charm combines with masterful modern menus to make **The Old Plow** a continuing success story. Review by Debra Aspinall



WITH a scarily high number of restaurants failing in their first year and top chefs skipping from kitchen to kitchen faster than you can say bon appetit, it's a real pleasure to dine in a restaurant which has been keeping diners happy for 20 years with the same successful format and, more importantly, the same couple at the helm.

Malcolm and Olivia Cowan are this year celebrating 20 years running The Old Plow in the tiny village of Speen.

It may only be a ten-minute drive from the bustling High Wycombe town centre, but it's a different world. This quintessential country bistro and restaurant boasts heaps of chintzy olde worlde charm.

Where the Cowans have been particularly clever, in my opinion, is in keeping The Old Plow in something of a time warp (decoratively speaking) while warp totally up to date with dining trends and techniques.

Whereas 20 years ago creamy sauces might have been all the rage, Malcolm (who had classical French training and was executive chef of Maxims de Paris and held top positions in London before opening The Old Plow) has masterfully incorporated some very modern fusion styles into his cooking. He creates sauces which wouldn't be out of place in a Japanese sushi bar; light, delicious and

thoroughly modern.

We'd already read their publicity – with celebrity endorsements for their fresh fish – and it being the first week in the new year we were looking for a tasty, but lighter, meal (despite the howling wind and driving rain outside teasing us to stock up with a hearty meal).

The menu certainly offers something for every taste, hearty and light. Several starters caught my eye: hot black tiger prawns la plancha with lemon and garlic mayonnaise; acorn-fed pata negra with 24-month cured ham, melon and mustard syrup and the continental-sounding Italian cured beef bresaola, Spanish chorizo, Serrano cured ham and home made pickles.

We were dining from the fixed-price menu and I chose the smoked chicken salad with Bang Bang style peanut and cashew nut dressing for my starter. This was super. The combination of the rich peanutty paste and the subtly-flavoured strips of tender chicken melted in the mouth while kick-starting my taste buds. Hubby Kim had chosen one of the daily specials; warm salad of tiger prawns and fresh scallops with French bean salad, mango and caviar. Not usually a huge fan of scallops (which can be slimy if undercooked) these he declared perfect and the generously-sized prawns certainly hit the spot. What Kim was most enthusiastic about, however, were the accompanying sauces, a lovely chilli

concoction drizzled over the main items and a wonderfully sweet balsamic affair adding the final decorative touches.

It should be said at this point that all the food was beautifully presented and pretty as a picture.

For our main courses we both went for fish knowing that The Old Plow sources fresh seafood daily from Brixham. For me it was Lyme Bay line-caught fillet of seabass grilled with prawns and mussels. They can certainly cook fish here. This was scrumptious and came with a delicious red wine jus and tasty gratin potatoes and veg. Kim again chose from the daily specials: fresh sea bass and red mullet with fresh asparagus and stuffed mushroom.

The two fish, both delicious in their own right, were a successful double act and the asparagus (so easy to cook and so easy to spoil) was spot-on.

Other main attractions here include Aberdeen Angus rib eye, duck, Cassoulet Toulouse and grilled Cornish lamb's kidneys as well as vegetarian options and daily specials.

The desserts were all deliciously tempting but in our effort to show some new year restraint we opted to share a wonderful lemon and brandy creme brulee which came with an intense raspberry sorbet and fresh berries. Yummy.

The Old Plow offers a French Bistro area with individual dish prices and a restaurant area with a two-course set price dinner at £29.95 (three courses £33.95), plus tapas lunch on Saturdays (new for 2008). Wines start from £14.95. Closed Sundays except for special occasions. Call 01494 488300.

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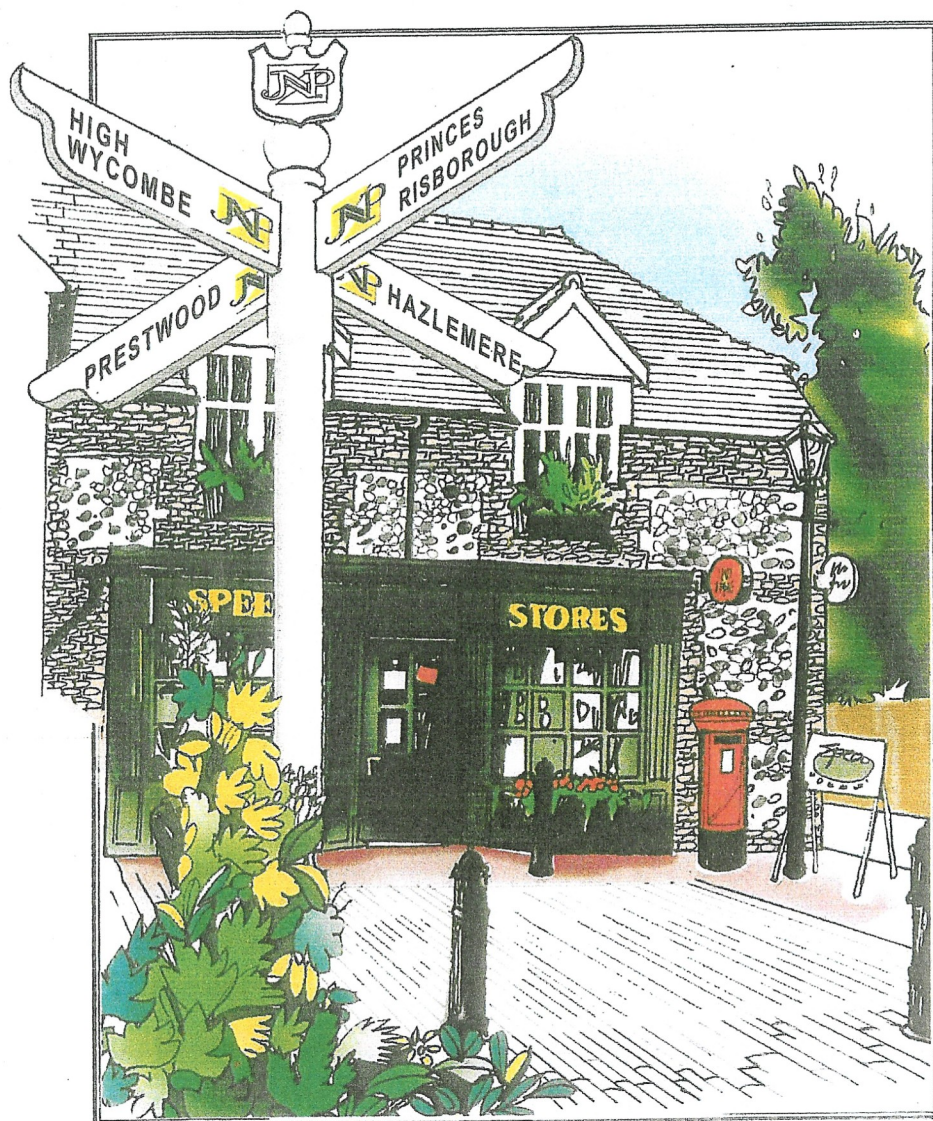
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