

TIMES GONE BY

As I was walking up the Wartnaby Road I stopped to watch a field of corn being harvested. 3 men, 1 combine harvester driver and 2 tractor drivers with large trailers to take the wheat into storage. About 150 years ago just about the whole of this village would have been involved. A large team of men with scyths would cut the wheat. Their scyths were fitted with cradles made of iron rods which allowed the wheat to be laid evenly. Women and children would follow to gather the corn into small sheaves. The women were mostly the wives of the men scything and if they had babies it was known for them to be given a plum to keep them quiet. In earlier times the corn would have been harvested by using a sickle. The straw was used for thatching, bedding for humans and animals.

A lot of corn fell on the ground. The very poorest of the community had the rights to glean from the fields after the harvest was brought in and before livestock was released to graze the stubble. I was told by my grandad that a gleaning bell was rung to signify that all the fields were cleared and the gleaners could move in, usually women and children. Some of the poorest of families would hope to pick up enough corn to be ground for their winter supply of flour.

When the men were scything down the corn a stand of corn was left in the middle of the field. This was thought to contain the spirit of the corn. When cut it was made into a "Corn Dolly" and would be kept until the following harvest. The Corn Dolly would be carried home on the final load. Villagers would throw water over them as they passed as a fertility charm for next season.

Harvesting was the climax of the agricultural year and was an excuse for feasting and drinking.

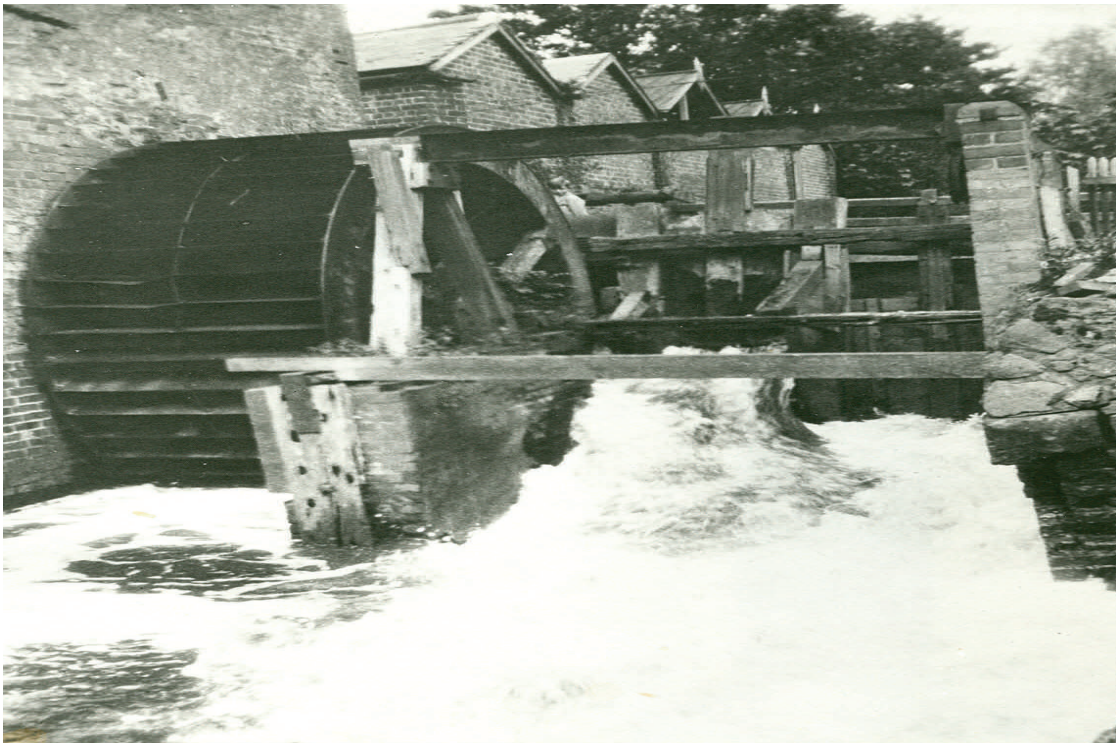
A lot of threshing was done in the Tithe Barn which stood where Tom Hall's shop was the entrance to Riverside Walk. Handflails were used, this was an ash handle with a swivel on top. The part that struck the corn was called the Swingel which was usually made of Holly or Blackthorn. It was attached to the swivel on the handle by throngs of leather. The thresher would swing the flail over his shoulder and bring the swingel down just below the ears of the corn so that the grains of corn were shaken out without bruising. A skillful job. The grain was then sieved to take out the small weed seeds. A wooden shovel was used to throw the grain high into the air. The heavy grain falling further away the lighter dropping short forming a kind of tail. Tail corn was inferior and kept separately.

After threshing the grain was ready for storage. If it was kept vermin free and dry it would last for several years. Grain was only milled as and when necessary as flour has a very much shorter shelf life.

Village children were sent to the flour mill (Mill Lane) with some corn to have it milled and would bring the flour back in a pillow case.

Haymaking in June was also a village affair. Teams of men scythed the grass. Each man was expected to mow an acre a day. Women and children followed to turn the hay to ensure that it dried evenly. A good crop of hay was good for the economy of this village. It provided the main winter fodder for animals. If it was a bad crop, fewer animals could be kept over winter. So a good crop meant a good supply of fresh meat and a good supply of breeding stock and a surplus for sale.

Provided by Bill Rudkin



THE OLD MILL

**Please note the lottery is now
available at the Co-Op Store,
Bradgate Lane**

I t ' s Y o u r P a r i s h

Written by Mr. John Bullimore, Chairman of Asfordby Parish Council

If you didn't already know by now, we have a new Beat Bobby. His name is Martin Taylor whose voice box number is 0116 2222222, his collar number is 1235. He is part of the new system for beat bobbies just introduced by the Leicestershire Constabulary which should mean that unless there are exceptional circumstances Martin will not be taken away for other duties. Now I know that in the past I would have made a sarcastic remark just here, but Martin has told me that I've written too many negative and sarcastic comments about the past incumbents who have been Asfordby Beat Bobbies and YES I have to admit he's right. I had no right to criticise someone who I rarely saw and didn't get time to know. Under the new system I've got every confidence that Martin who has committed himself to Asfordby along with some other parishes for the next 3 years will do an excellent job. We have provided a small office for Martin in the annex in our I.T. centre. This nearly makes him the first Police Officer stationed in the Parish for many many years. Now a warning for all those who haven't got the strength to walk from the car parks to the shops BEWARE he's mustard on parking tickets, and for those of you who buy drinks for our under-age drinkers he's on your case! GO GET 'EM MARTIN.

Despite being reminded at regular intervals by Clive Summerland, one of the Hill's Parish Councillors, I must admit that it is easy to forget that the Hill is part of our Parish and so I was quite pleased when I received a letter from Mrs Millward Oak classes teacher at the Hill Primary School along with letters from some of her pupils to go along and explain to them about the work that had been going on over the summer months along the brook in the Valley. I had to dig deep to remember what year it was so it was back into the files to find newspaper cuttings. My wife reminded me that I also had photographs mounted on cardboard under our bed. Eventually I had all the facts and figures and all too clear memories. One of those being Christmas Day afternoon and the suffering the effects of the floods caused. What was I going to tell the children? I wrote down facts and figures, mostly they came to me in the middle of the night. Yes sad but that's me. I came to realise just how much hard work teachers have to put into a project before its put to the children. The night before my big day, I realised just how boring a lesson must be, so it was forget what I had written and draw on the blackboard although it is no longer black and I forgot to wipe the board clean as I moved on, so it was NIL point for technique but a flow of questions from the pupils showed that I had managed to get through, one of these was how much did it all cost. I realised that at today's prices it was no more than the price of a semi-detached house and that for a relatively small amount it will give peace of mind, I hope, to the 17 properties that had really suffered and all because for what was the smallest part of a very large jigsaw, the culverts. Will it happen again? Never say Never but I doubt it very much and so passed an hour, which if I am honest I had been dreading, in a very pleasant way. The pupils were a credit to themselves, their teacher and school. Keep up the good work. Whilst I am on the subject of schools CONGRATULATIONS to Asfordby Captains Close yet again. They have been awarded a Basic Skills Quality Mark in recognition of the effort made to improve performance in literacy and numeracy skills. A big well done to the staff and governors. The school has had an excellent year based on its ability to give our parish

youngsters a good start on the educational ladder and further proof if it was needed that the other mans grass isn't always greener, and no travelling involved. You know it makes sense. Stay in Asfordby.

I have been asked why the recycling bins at the parish hall have been taken way. Well, for the same reason as those in Bradgate Lane car park. They were being used by those who weren't entering into the spirit of the grey and green boxes for whatever reasons. I spoke to one individual who answered "because I want to" and that was as the kerbside collection team had just passed his home and the recycling bins in the parish hall car park were overflowing. What's that old saying "there's nowt as queer as folk"? There isn't a need anymore under the new system and it will save the Borough Council if they were all removed Borough wide about £12K a year and you know "that does make sense".

Walking over the country park I have been aware again of hoof prints and these after a quite a wet spell. It causes the park to be cut up. Horses are NOT ALLOWED in the country park or playing field. Why should they be allowed to spoil something that is starting to look very natural. If only the riders had as many brains as the horses. They can't get in accidentally and know it. If you see them and know who they are ring the Parish Office on 01664 812177.

If this was a pre-recorded TV show I'd be saying "Happy New Year" but, of course, it's not. In fact it is December 2nd and the old year for the Parish Council has been a particularly hard one. Our Parish Clerk of long-standing had to leave us suddenly due to ill health in April and we all wish her well on her way back to full fitness. We had 3 months with no clerk, and the rest of the year with our new Clerk getting to grips with the job. So for us roll on 2006. To all of you who care about the Parish I wish you a Happy and particularly Healthy New Year. To those of you who do things because you want to with no regards for others I wish you each other.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

Not quite so many at the service this year but reasonably well attended. It was a new style of service that overall fitted what the day was all about and once again a sermon that was very relevant and well received. There were many TV programmes on about the time of 11 November showing old news films of both the first and second world wars and for anyone who wasn't born at the time of either of them it would be hard if you saw them not to say in some small way "thank you but what a waste" and if that small way is only to attend ours or anyone elses Remembrance Day Service and hear the names read out of those who gave their lives for the freedom that we have today they will realize just how lucky we all are. Its not a lot to ask for. We hope to see more of you at next years service.

Visit the Council's new website
www.asfordbypc.org

FRISBY LAKES PLANNING APPLICATION

This is actually the Sailing Club and Asfordby Society of Anglers Club Lakes on Hoby Road in our Parish. The applications have now been withdrawn until an Environment Agency detailed flood plan investigation is undertaken and the report published, but will undoubtedly re-appear. It was for 67 high class holiday chalets and 2 for administration plus a new improved sailing club/holiday chalet club house. This is a very ambitious application and one that your Parish Council is doubtful that it is what those of us who live in Asfordby and enjoy walking around the lakes but who have a good idea of the costs involved would attract that many clients. We have listened to the applicant and although he must have a good business plan and backers we still have certain reservations particularly on the extra traffic it will generate down what is a very straight fast stretch of the Hoby Road. If this does go ahead Asfordby could be fast becoming the Leisure Centre of the Borough.

YOUR POST OFFICE

Do you want to lose it? If not, then use it. An awful lot of those who choose to live in Asfordby do so because as a village we have local services that are convenient but then only use them when they've forgotten to buy something or used them elsewhere. Some of our businesses when used like this might, and to some extent, do just survive. However, the Post Offices are something else. Rural life and, in particular, Post Offices such as ours are fair game for the Government. Don't give them any reason to take it away. There are services to suit most needs, namely:

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Car tax and insurance | International Phone Cards |
| Banking access to current accounts | Saving Stamps |
| Payment of utility bills | National Savings |
| Mobile phone top-ups | Premium Bonds |
| Electronic Vouchers | Childrens Bonus Bonds |
| Foreign Currency | Travel Insurance |
| Home Insurance | Easy Access Savings Accounts |

All this while being served by 2 very obliging Clerks. While you are awaiting your turn there is every opportunity to make new acquaintances, have a chat or a laugh while reading the slightly Blue Birthday cards in the racks, always a favourite and if you are really lucky pass the time of day talking with Tricia who serves in the newsagents side of the shop. YES there are many reasons why you should use your local Post Office plus you can go in feeling miserable and come out with a smile on your face **but at the moment it is only EBay postings that are keeping it afloat.**

If it goes, it will have gone forever. You have been warned. Who wants to go to Melton to fetch their pensions?

ASFORDBY PRE-SCHOOL

Asfordby Pre-School now has 46 children on roll and they are open for 7 sessions per week. For further information contact Kim Price on 01664 812630 or Bev Fotheringham on 01664 813343.

The Preschool has been accepted onto the IQ Scheme and has been asked to become a Lead Setting. Credit for this goes to the Staff, Committee and volunteers for all their hard work. The IQ Scheme (Quality Assurance Scheme) is about the development of high quality childcare by thinking about the way in which we work and how our service can be improved. When we pass, we will be accredited by the Investors in Children Quality Assurance Scheme, this in turn will demonstrate that we are committed to excellence in childcare and our services go beyond the minimum standards. Wish us luck in achieving this.

We held a Christmas Fete - a great success and we raised £261 which will be used for outdoor equipment. Thank you to everyone who has supported us throughout the Autumn term. The children have been learning about shapes and celebrating the Festival of Lights (Diwali), Guy Fawkes and Christmas during the Autumn term. We also enjoyed singing Christmas Carols at Bradgate Lane flats and had a visit from Santa.

Our topic for the Spring Term is "People who help us". We are looking for people who help us to come in and visit us and tell us about your job, e.g. Police Officer, Crossing Patrol Person, Fire Fighter, etc. If you are interested please contact the Pre-school on 812630.

We are also looking for a volunteer to help the children learn about Nature through gardening and to help maintain and improve our outdoor area. If you are interested, please contact us.

If you are interested in volunteering for the Pre-School or have a hobby that would be of interest for 2 to 4 year olds, come and share it with us. Contact Kim Price on 01664 812630.

Written by Jennifer Hurst
Committee Chair

ASFORDBY ICT CENTRE

The Asfordby ICT Centre at the Parish Hall provides a local facility for the people of Asfordby to have access to computers and the Internet, free of charge. It's on the doorstep for the people of Asfordby and for those who wish to come from Melton, it offers a quiet setting with free parking!

We have a self service system for the computers - drop in and we can show you how it works. You can book a computer ahead if you want to use one at a specific time and it's all free. (The only charge we make is if you want to do any printing). Our internet connection is broadband and we also have a scanner for use.

If you want some help using the computers or would like an hour's taster session learning to use the internet or e-mail, pop in and we will try to fix it up for you. Occasionally we have family history taster sessions too which will highlight internet resources which can be useful.

A photocopier is also available.

Homework - The centre is open for young people to complete homework using our computers. If you are doing homework you can have 5 free printouts each day and staff are available to get you started.

The ICT centre is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 4.00 - 8.00 pm
Friday and Saturday 9.00 am to 12 Noon
(Closed on Wednesdays).

Janet Gilchrist
District Community Manager

NEW YEAR - NEW OPPORTUNITIES

The New Year heralds an exciting batch of new courses for Melton brought to you by the WEA. Starting with 'The Listening Heart: storytelling and the oral tradition' on Monday evenings in the Library with tutor Chris Corps. This course begins on Monday 16 January 2006, 7.30 - 9 pm and runs for 8 sessions.

Also on Monday nights, we have popular local historian and tutor Bob Payne leading a course called ' Pubs, Inns and Taverns - a local exploration' which runs for 8 meetings, 7.30 - 9pm, in B22 of Brooksby Melton College starting on 16 January.

If the moving image is more your scene, then come along to 'Carry on Filming: a history of British cinema', which takes place on Wednesday evenings on Melton campus starting on 18 January, 7 - 9 pm and runs for 8 weeks.

In Melton on Thursday evenings - a must for parents, teachers, youth workers or anyone who wants to find a more effective way of relating and communicating with teenagers. Christine Lane, an experienced youth counsellor and tutor, will lead a 10 week course, 'Talking with teenagers', starting on Thursday 19 January 2006, 7 - 9 pm. It will be held in Room B22 at the Melton campus of Brooksby Melton College.

Finally, a new opportunity for all artists, at a new central daytime venue, the Samworth Centre on Burton Street. Tim Fisher, a locally well-known artist, is to lead two linked day workshops on Fridays 20 and 27 January from 10.15 to 4pm. You will be looking at 'Water colour techniques' with an emphasis on creating atmosphere in a painting. Experienced and novice water colourists are sure to learn something new. Places are limited, so again be sure to enrol early.

We are also offering two new daytime courses in Tai Chi and Fitness Yoga at the Samworth Centre on Monday and Wednesday afternoons respectively.

The WEA is still able to offer concessions to adult learners so you could be entitled to attend for free!

For more details on any of the above courses, pick up our new yellow and black Spring 2006 brochure in the Library, phone 01664 566816 or email the WEA office on omelton@wea.org.uk.

POLICE VOICE

Firstly, for those of you who don't know me, I am P.C. Martin Taylor, your local Beat Officer. I have been your Beat Office since the beginning of October and look forward to working in this village for a considerable time.

This page, which will continue in future newsletters, is the first "Police dedicated" page which I will use as a point of contact with the residents of Asfordby Hill, Asfordby Valley and Asfordby. I intend to use this page to inform you of crime, witness appeals, requests and other matters of local interest.

In this my first page, I would like to say just a few small things. Asford by, and its sister villages, are I believe, generally very nice areas to live. For "rural villages", we are lucky to have a good selection of shops, amenities and open spaces. This area doesn't have a crime problem although it is a sad fact of life that crime occurs in all areas. Problems that do affect this are parking, anti-social behaviour and litter.

1. Persistent parking outside the shops on Bradgate Lane has forced me to issue tickets to offending drivers. It is illegal to park on the road outside these shops between 8.00 am and 7.00 pm every day of the week. This problem has been around for several years and I will not let it continue as the local officer. It is very dangerous. If you drive to Bradgate Lane shops between these times, use one of the two free car parks. **IF YOU DON'T YOU WILL BE PROSECUTED.** Would you like one of your family injured or even killed due to illegally parked vehicles....**NO.**

2. Another whinge is about groups of youths hanging around the Co-op on Bradgate Lane. If you are one of these youths, please behave!!! I don't mind groups hanging around for social purposes but I will not have groups hanging around causing a nuisance or being threatening or abusive to other people. If you are a parent reading this, please be mindful of where your child is and what they are up to.

3.

3. Litter - There is nothing worse than the pavement, parks or other areas being covered in litter. Please put litter in bins. There are now plenty of them around the village so please put all of your rubbish in them.

I think a closing statement is - **PLEASE RESPECT THE AREA IN WHICH YOUR LIVE.**

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a great Christmas and all the very best for the New Year.

I can be contacted via my voicemail on (0116) 2485675, ID 1275 or via the force website on www.leics.police.uk.

MONTHLY SURGERIES

Meet your Borough Councillors, John Robinson and Mal Sheldon to discuss any matters that concern you on the following Saturdays at Asfordby Parish Hall between 10 am and 11 am. No appointment necessary.

7 January 2006 11 February 2006 13 March 2006

ASFORDBY GARDEN CLUB

Ian Cooke, Grounds Manager for the University of Nottingham and author of several gardening books will speak to the Club on the 9th January at Captains Close School - his title "Design of Small Gardens".

"A Botanist in Norway" by Ian Whitehead will be the theme on 13th February - this time at the Methodist Chapel.

On 13th March, back at the school, we have a return visit of Richard Adams with "Country Camera".

All meetings are at 7.00 pm and you are welcome to attend. For more details speak to Margaret on 01664 813127.

Football Bowls Pool Darts Rifle Range Dominoes Whist

HOLWELL SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB – THE STUTE

**Warm, friendly members' club open to all
Open 7 days a week – Entertainment every Saturday night
2 large function rooms available for hire**

WANT TO JOIN? CALL IN FOR A MEMBERSHIP FORM

Welby Road, Asfordby Hill

COMPOST AT HOME CAMPAIGN

Leicestershire Councils' have teamed up with the Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP) for a "Compost at Home" campaign which aims to encourage residents to transform their kitchen and garden waste into nutrient-rich compost for a beautiful garden.

The Leicestershire scheme will play its part in the nation-wide drive covering 6.5 million households across England and Scotland to promote the recycling of kitchen and garden waste and reduce the amount of rubbish sent to landfill.

Nearly two thirds of kitchen and garden waste can be tipped straight into a compost bin. Cardboard, eggshells and teabags also make for great compost.

Composting means hugely cutting down on the amount of waste we put out for collection - not to mention a beautiful garden to enjoy as well.

A Home Composting Advisor is working closely with Leicestershire Councils. Local residents can call 0845 600 0323 for advice and information on home composting, or visit www.recyclenow.com/compost.

WRAP is helping to provide Leicestershire residents with compost bins and residents eager to start home composting should call 0845 0723 2001 to order their bin.

For further information on the scheme please contact

Sallie Butt
WRAP
Tel: 07985 953185
Email sallie.butt@wrap.org.uk.

**FOR RENT
ALLOTMENT FIELD
HOBY ROAD
ASFORDBY**

£NEGOTIABLE

INTERESTED?

CONTACT PARISH OFFICE