

## INTO OUR TWELFTH YEAR

**A**ROUND the end of 1979 the late Cdr. 'Rob' Long conceived the idea of a local magazine. He discussed the matter with the late Col. Oliver Stedall and Mr. Dudley Hopkins, and it was decided to have a go.

An appeal for funds resulted in donations being made by the Parish Councils of Ascott (£5), Milton (£30), and Shipton (£10), together with Charles Early and Marriott (Witney) Ltd. (£5), Parker Knoll Ltd. of Chipping Norton (£5), and a few others who are not recorded (£23). In addition a number of subscribers later gave small sums, so that a 'grand' total of £78 was collected. A circular letter was sent to all houses in the Wychwood villages, Fifield and Lyneham, with the result that 660 annual subscriptions of 72p p.a. were obtained for the first year. The sale of advertising space for the first volume for nearly £700 ensured that the costs would be covered for one year.

An editorial board was formed in early 1980. Col. Stedall was Chairman, Cdr. Long became Editor and Mr. Hopkins acted as Business Manager with responsibility for selling advertising space and collecting the money. Many villagers helped to set up a distribution system, and in this connection particular mention must be made of Mr. F.Roebuck, Milton, and Mrs. Tait, Ascott. The founder Hon. Treasurer was Mrs. Dulcie Arundell who during the first two years of the magazine looked after our funds and introduced a reliable accounting system.

The editorial board as recorded in the first issue of the magazine was as below, and our thanks are due to all

the members for their early efforts.

Mrs. D.Arundell, Hon. Treasurer;  
H.Cook, (Ascott Parish Council);  
Mrs. P.Haynes, Circulation Manager;  
A.D.Hopkins, Business Manager;  
R.O.B.Long, Editor;  
R.A.Montgomery (Milton Parish Council);  
Mrs.G.Ray, Hon. Secretary;  
F.Roebuck;  
Mrs.P. Sheppard;  
T.G.Souch (Shipton Parish Council);  
O.P. Stedall, Chairman;  
Mr. F.Tait.

Thanks are also due to the original advertisers who helped us on our way. Nineteen are still with us in this volume, they are:-

Belinda of Burford; R.A.Broadhurst;  
K.F.Early & Son; Forge Garage; Roger D.Gorton; J.W.Harman & Son; F.W.P.Matthews Ltd.; P.A.Meecham; Melplash Turkeys; Milton Post Office; J.Puschnik; W.H.Rawlins & Son; The Red Horse; Seconds (Now London House); The Shaven Crown Hotel; Shipton House Stores; Mrs. Winifred Swann; T.A.Wilson, Shipton Post Office; Wychwood Hair Fashions.

In the letter which was circulated in January, 1980, the then Editor stated that it was intended to run "The Wychwood" as a non-profit making but self-supporting concern. This concept has not changed.

We have the occasional year - one of them was last year - when an operational loss occurs, but over eleven years a modest reserve has been accumulated. The increase in advertising and subscriptions for volume XII will ensure that costs are covered. Our main expense is the printing of the magazine, as the many people who assist in assembling it - more of that later - in distribution, collecting subscriptions,

selling advertising space, and many other jobs, do the work voluntarily.

The assembling, or 'collation' deserves further mention. It takes place in Shipton Village Hall at 2.00 p.m. on the last Thursday of each odd month. Here the cover and loose pages received from the printer are assembled, stapled and folded by a team of about twenty volunteers who are rewarded with a cup of tea and a biscuit. The line production, little altered over the years, was planned by Mr. Dudley Hopkins, and since our first issue, our number one stapler, also responsible for keeping the stapling devices in trim, has been Mr. Reg Ray. It is known that this merry gathering has saved our venture many thousands of pounds in our eleven years of existence. Well done!

The front cover of the magazine was designed by Mrs. Dorothy Cotsell, and except for Christmas issues, also designed by Dorothy, has been used for every issue since 1981. The designs for the back cover were first seen on the second volume. These delightful seasonal themes, including that for Christmas, were given by Mrs. Anne Iredale.

The appearance of advertisements has gradually improved over the years. Some advertisers have provided their own copy but in the main the layouts have been the work of Dennis Swann, who, very generously, has spent many hours every year fashioning advertisements to the wishes of our advertisers. Although we now have the luxury of a computer, we shall continue to need Dennis's expertise to guide us..

A great supporter of our publication has been Mr. A.V.Mitchell (Val), of Bruern. He has contributed his informative piece on gardening to every issue over the eleven years.

We must also acknowledge the assistance given by local establishments which sell the magazine without profit to themselves. They account for 15% of our sales. They are The Swann Inn, Ascott; Milton Post Office, and in Shipton, The Lamb Inn, The Post Office, The Red Horse, The Shaven Crown Hotel, Shipton House Stores and Station Road Garage.

And now to the future. Our circulation rises slowly but steadily - it is now about 900 per issue - and our advertisers buy space readily; we could sell more if we had it. We are financially sound and have a modest reserve for a rainy day, which we hope will never come.

Mr.'Don' Salter, our two-fingered keyboard thumper, has 'computerised' all of the advertising, and over recent years has prepared the editorial matter for printing for each issue. We have now left the typewriter behind, and are struggling with 'Desktop Publishing'; we like to think that this has made the whole thing much neater in appearance. Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Porter of the Evenlode Press continue to give excellent service and are willing to co-operate readily in our future development.

The present committee is listed at the end of this piece. Without exception each member contributes willingly with effort, advice and dedication. They are backed by the excellent people, most of them ladies, who collect money, distribute and collate.

We need the continued support of our readers and advertisers. The Editor, Mrs. Rosemary Salter, needs articles and reports on the activities of all local organisations.

(continued overleaf)

As we have no 'staff' reporters or authors, we need a constant supply of bright, interesting, stimulating (o.k. then 'any') articles, because unless they drop through the letter box, we have no magazine. We would much appreciate contributions from the younger members of our communities; perhaps the schools could fire up some budding authors!

We particularly need the interest of younger people who would like to help to produce their magazine in the years to come - some of us on the committee are, to say the least, 'mature'. The backup of someone into word processing and /or desktop publishing would also be much appreciated, particularly if they have access to, or own an IBM compatible PC computer.

#### The Present Committee:

Mrs. Dorothy Cox, Milton;  
Mr. & Mrs. Eames, Ascott;  
Mr. Hugh Fairgrieve, Fifield;  
Mr David Johnson, Shipton;  
Mr. George Longhurst, Chairman & Hon. Treasurer;  
Mr. Reg Ray, Shipton, Production;  
Mrs. Rosemary Salter, Editor & Hon. Secretary;  
Mr.E. Dennis Swann, Milton, Advertising;  
Mr. Jim Wandless, Shipton, Distribution Manager;  
Mr. T.A. Wilson, Shipton;  
Mrs. Jo Schofield, Shipton, (kindly taken over from the late Mrs. Celia Riddick), Shipton and Postal Distribution.

Anyone wishing to offer their services in any capacity, please contact anyone of the above, or phone George Longhurst on 831042.

# Wychwood Gardeners

Landscape Design and Construction

- ☆ Drystone Walling
- ☆ Seeding and Turfing
- ☆ Patios and Paving
- ☆ Fences and Walls

Phone Richard Watkins on Moreton-in-Marsh 50423

