

Wychwoods Local History Society

At January's meeting John Rawlins spoke about the buildings in Shipton which carried the name of St. Michael's. Originally it was set up as a girls' school in 1869 in two buildings overlooking the Village Green on the same side as The Crown. The name transferred to a newly erected building in Milton Road where you will now find Willis Court. In 1881 it opened as a College for Young Ladies, but, by 1900 it had been acquired by the Waifs and Strays Society, originally as an Industrial School/Home for girls. In the 1920s it became a Home for Waifs and Strays (Girls) until 1930 when it accepted young boys for a short period.

In the 1930s it remained unoccupied for some time until 1939 when Basque refugees were housed there. In the same year it was requisitioned by the military who billeted troops there for the whole of the war. During this time the late Dr. Scott began a scheme to convert the building into a Wychwood Social Centre at the end of the war. But, when this came Dr. Scott's scheme collapsed and St. Michael's became a mill and corn chandlery for Alfred Meeham. In 1967 the building was sold to Mr. Bernie Hill who turned it into The Junke Shoppe, a haven for collectors. It then became Bed and Breakfast accommodation for a short period, after which it was sold to developers. There was then much discussion over several planning applications until 1989 when St. Michael's was demolished.

Anthea Jones spoke at the February meeting on some of the complicated history of the parish, manors and patronage of royalty and of a canon of Salisbury. From 1291 the church conducted surveys to record the taxable income of the parishes. Rectors were in sole charge, they sometimes appointed vicars and curates, collected tithes and generally kept law and order, subject to the rules of kings, archbishops and parliament. From the survey of 1535 to the next in 1835 there had been very little change in organisation. Shipton parish encompassed Ramsden, Leafield, Ascott, Swinbrook, Milton, Lyneham, Fifield and Idbury at various times.

The 1835 survey by the Royal Commission showed that, based on the value of the Vicar's stipend, Shipton parish was among the top third among the ten and a half thousand English parishes. Since then, there have been many changes.

Future meetings:-

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| 15 April | Shipton Pictures from the Past. Henry Taunt and his Photographs of Oxfordshire by Malcolm Graham |
| 20 May | Milton English Civil War - a Soldier's Story by David Murphy. |

John Rawlins