

## **Milton under Wychwood Allotments and Gardens Association**

Thirty-two members and three visitors were present at our April meeting, to hear Bob Haines talk on his experiences in South Africa and his description of getting 'lost' on a walk up Table Mountain added to his obvious enjoyment of the whole trip.

Pictures of the many different trees and the beautiful flowering shrubs gave a very good idea of the scenery in that part of Africa and Bob described the hard work that was entailed by local staff in maintaining the National Park, which covers a very large area that he visited.

Our Annual Flower Show will be held this year on Saturday August 21st in Milton Village Hall.

Schedules will be found in Milton Post Office and also the library nearer the time and if you live in the parish of Milton under Wychwood there are a great many classes that you can enter – it costs very little and is great fun.

There are teas and a raffle so do drop in even if you are not a Milton resident, everyone is very welcome.

Jane Lewis

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## **HORSES AND THE MOTORIST**

There are more and more horses and ponies kept for pleasure these days and most villages have a livery yard or private owner somewhere. Unfortunately for them, roads are becoming busier and they have no option but to use them in order to reach the bridleways . There are 3,000 horse related accidents a year and it therefore makes sense if the motorist and the horse rider learn more about each other.

No horse is bomb proof, they are unpredictable animals and their defence mechanism is one of flight. Mostly they are controlled by their riders who they have learned to trust but sudden incidents can cause their herding instinct to take over. Horses have virtually all round vision, and alert, aware riders also know that a motorist is approaching, so please do not sound your horn. Instead be patient, check your mirrors in preparation to move out and pass wide and slowly.

We hope that you will be thanked by the rider but if not please don't take it out on the next horse and rider that you pass. It may have been that the rider's hands were full controlling the horse, so a smile and a nod are all that they could manage.

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Where many horses tolerate large noisy vehicles, it is the unexpected objects that cause them to react in a more violent manner. Rubbish blowing around, dogs running out, umbrellas and other animals on the other side of the hedge test the ability of the rider to combat these stressful occurrences.

Road works are another common problem and sometimes quite frightening to the horse. It is safer for everyone to allow the rider to pass completely before proceeding to pass them.

At junctions, be aware that horses and riders do not move out to the middle of the road to turn right. They are much too vulnerable between two lines of traffic and for the same reason, they will keep to the left of the traffic at roundabouts, signalling right and only indicating their intention to turn left as they approach their exit.

You may, as a motorist, be given a signal to slow down or to stop by the rider. Please do not think that they are being pompous, they may have seen something ahead that their horse may react to. It is vital therefore to be patient and understanding. It is annoying to some motorists to come upon two riders riding abreast but this could be for a special reason. The inside horse may be young and inexperienced therefore requiring confidence and protection. Likewise for a novice or young rider it is a far safer position to be in. They should, however move into single file around bends and where vision is restricted.

Horses are strong, powerful animals but very vulnerable. Please try to understand and help keep our roads and countryside free from accidents.

A British Horse Society Video 'Horse Sense for Motorists' is available from myself and also information on the BHS Riding and Road Safety Test.

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Contact your local CAB at 33a High Street, Witney, 01993 705691 or  
31 High Street Chipping Norton, 01608 641367.