

Ringing In The New Millennium At Ascott under Wychwood

At 11.45 am on January 1st, 2000, the bells of Holy Trinity Church, Ascott under Wychwood rang out to welcome the new millennium along with hundreds of other churches up and down the country. This fifteen minutes of ringing was the culmination of a year of effort.

In December 1998 Kathy Pearce rang me up to ask if I would consider teaching a group of adults to ring the bells at Ascott, so that they may be heard ringing for the millennium. I agreed and we arranged to meet on December 7th 1998 to make a start. Most Monday evenings at 7.30 pm we met and, gradually over the months, progress was seen and, above all, heard. Bell-ringing is not something that can be practised quietly until you get proficient. From the word go you make a loud noise which is easily heard in the next parish.

Sylvia and Peter Swann, Rosemary and Mark Dawbarn, Stuart Fox and Nick Leadbetter have now joined Mike and Kathy Pearce (who learned to ring with dear old Frank Tucker at Ascott) in being able to ring for services on Sundays. Our first performance in public, so to speak, was on Remembrance Sunday 1999, nearly a year after we started.

We must thank John and Julie MacVicker from Shipton for their timely help on occasions, and special thanks to the residents of Church View who have born the brunt of all our efforts for a year, at the closest of quarters, without complaint!!

Well done team, you stuck at it when it all seemed impossible, and we achieved the first of our aims – we did it!!

Martin Kirk

Ascott Millennium Beacon and Fireworks.

The Millennium Beacon and Fireworks event staged at Priestsgrrove – one of the highest points in the Parish, appears to have been a great success. It was estimated that 200 – 300 people gathered on the site around 4.30 pm on the 31st December to watch the spectacle, and for most people it was the start of an evening of celebration.

Many thanks must go to Chris Badger for allowing us to use his land for the display and for collecting most of the material for, and building the Beacon. Grateful thanks to all those residents who most generously donated money for the fireworks, without which the display on the scale provided would not have been possible. Thanks also to the helpers with the display and to those who supplied and addressed the Firework Donation envelopes. In addition those who provided and distributed the mulled wine and sausages. It was a real community effort and certainly made the whole event go a lot easier for me.

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It would have been nice if we could have linked up with a line of Beacons throughout the Country but the scheme appeared to falter early on in the year through lack of support, certainly there were no takers locally. However at least the old Ascott spirit prevailed to prove we could make a success on our own. Well done everyone.

Mike Pearce, Parish Council Chairman.



Ascott Millennium Mugs.

In the Spring of 1999 Ascott W.I. members agreed it would be a nice idea to give the children of the village (112 children, up to age 16) a Millennium mug to celebrate the Year 2000.

Mr. Vivian Lewis who lives in Ascott kindly produced the design for the mug. Many thanks Viv for getting us started.

On the 9th January 2000, a Tea Party was held at The Tiddy Hall which 72 children attended. Mrs. Schwarz, The President, welcomed the children and parents and thanked all who had contributed to the day. She went on to say the Mugs were intended to mark the year 2000, a time for reflection and renewed hope for the future. The Women's Institute offer this small token of regard to our futures ----- the children of Ascott under Wychwood.

It was marvellous to see so many village children all together enjoying themselves and obviously appreciating the delicious tea put on by the members.

Mrs. Schwarz then presented each child with a celebration mug. There were many words of thanks and appreciation from both children and parents. It was a very happy and memorable day for us all.

Ascott W.I.