

Oxfordshire County Council



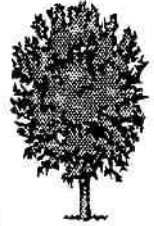
WYCHWOOD C. E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

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KICK INTO READING

Quite an apt title really when Oxford United, the Wychwoods Library and Wychwood school all took part in this initiative. The scheme was designed to highlight the enjoyment of reading, and was initially aimed at raising the profile of reading for boys, but had a much wider appeal than that.

Beryl Brown asked if we would like to participate, and Mrs. Barrett and Mrs. Bysouth, teachers of years five and six children (the nine to eleven year olds) readily agreed. Both classes recently spent almost an hour at our local library and colleagues and children unanimously agreed it had been worth the walk.

The children were enthralled by the story-telling and obviously enjoyed it. Pat Ryan, a storyteller by profession and Peter Rhoades-Brown, community liaison officer from Oxford United (and a former Chelsea and United player) “performed” the stories. I wasn’t there but the children told me that one story involved a sheet of A4 paper – nothing remarkable in that perhaps, except that it became a sailboat on which a character called Ben lived. Unfortunately the boat sank after running into cliffs and the A4 piece of paper became a T-shirt – the only object to be salvaged from the wreck.

The other story involved a towel which became a chicken. Apparently the chicken had a hedgehog as a friend but when the chicken crossed the road (don’t ask!) it was flattened (hence the towel) but was mysteriously brought to 3-D realism in the hands of the storyteller (or was it the hedgehog?) and everything turned out fine in the end.

We are very grateful to Oxford United, Pat Ryan and Beryl Brown for working hard to make sure this scheme reached as far as the Wychwoods – our older children certainly had their interest in reading developed or re-kindled and if you want the full details of the stories, the you’ll have to ask one of the children involved – they were certainly animated when they told me about it!

Geoff Padmore,
7th March 2001,
Wychwood C.E.Primary School.