

Christmas Round-up

Whatever Christmas means to you, the Wychwoods have a lot to offer. Festivities kicked off gradually; Martin and Trevor Prew put up their lights around the garage and they certainly get bigger and better every year. Let's hope that soaring fuel costs do not put an end to their colourful display.



Let the Lights Shine Out

This year Martin was persuaded to put out a collection bucket so that folk could express their pleasure and £182.52 was raised for the *Help the Heroes* appeal. Malcolm and Mary Cochrane's window displays are another treat that heralds the approach of the big day - many thanks to them for putting up with the gloom inside while we enjoy the unique display!

Then the Christmas trees, courtesy of David Astor and the bands of volunteers who do the spade work, went up in Milton and Shipton.

Singing carols around these trees signalled the real start of Christmas for many. This year, Milton's singers donated £214.05 for the Wychwood Day Centre and Shipton raised £432.55 for the maintenance of the fabric of St Mary's church. John and Edna Naish served mulled wine and mincepies to the crowds in Milton, and in Shipton, once

the singing was over, we all adjourned to the local hostelries for a warming drink. In Fifield (see page 41) carols were sung round the

village with mulled wine and mince-pies afterwards in the Hall.

Hymns of Praise

Church Services were the high point of this festive season. The Ministers of our various churches work so hard to provide services in each church. Bernard West, the organist and choir master in St Mary's, Shipton, is to be congratulated again for the excellence of the choir's singing, particularly for the Midnight Mass Service. It was truly uplifting and could we please arrange to be on *Hymns of Praise* next year?

Weekly visitors to the Wychwood Day Centre had the most delicious Christmas meal, organised by Katherine Gidman and her volunteers.

The spirit of giving was reflected in the money raised for charities, but the true spirit of Christmas lies in looking after each other as a close, caring community. For Christmas 2009 I propose sending a donation to charity in lieu of exchanging cards with people I see regularly - anyone care to join me?

Christine Halliday