

Open House - How We Live in the Wychwoods The Old Post Office - Still Central to the Village

Over this snowy Christmas, the Old Post Office had its fair share of festive cheer. Welcoming all the family, it donned tinsel and holly and even provided mince pies for the entire village.

From the street, I am shown into a large sitting room. Elements of previous lives are clear, the old shop's bay windows, and meat hooks still embedded in the ceiling



crumbs to enjoy a mince pie before the annual *Carols Round the Tree*. On Christmas Morning, it turns into a more intimate family room, a place for opening presents and 'generally making merry'.

Christmas dinner brings the family into the dining room. At the far end, a blazing fire warms the room. The colour scheme is neutral, keeping the inglenook fireplace the focal point of the room. French windows lead through to the sunny yellow conservatory, boasting views into the rear garden.

from its stint as a butchers. Yet the current owners, when converting the property, have incorporated them prettily into their scheme. The windows, for example, afford a view up and down the road outside, and the meat hooks provide a rather quirky means of hanging Christmas cards.

A Home for Making Merry

Here is where Milton-folk come on Christmas Eve, bringing with them sticky floors and dropped





At the centre of the house, a winding staircase leads up to the first floor. Here it is clear where the house has expanded over time; different ceiling heights, door

shapes and beams in the ceiling give the place a charming character.

Another short flight of steps leads up to the master bedroom. This is a long room with elegant sash windows, sitting above the old shop room. Period features include another fireplace and a sloping, tongue and groove wall that hides the attic staircase.

Above All a Family Home

This house is clearly a family home, as the four spacious bedrooms and large kitchen



demonstrate. It is also a house with a lot of history behind it; home as it was to shopkeepers, butchers, washers and drapers.

Wills and Deeds

My visit ended with a good search through some fascinating old deeds, mortgage

records and wills, really colouring the house's past.

The house was the Post Office for Milton from 1869 except for a brief five year period in the 1930s. Thomas Venvell and



his family ran the Milton Post Office from 1871 until 1930. In 1935 Alf Moss returned to the house and ran the Post Office from there until the late 1950s. Norman Frost and his wife Eileen were the postmasters from 1968 to 1980 and were then followed by John and Edna Naish. It is fascinating to read and recognise the names that are included in the history; names that are still central parts of our villages today, just as this house plays a central role in Milton's Christmas, even after it has shut up shop.

Michael Cradock



Open Gardens

We are planning to have an Open Gardens day in Shipton in the summer, probably July, in aid of the Wild Gardens. Do you have a garden you are proud of, however small? If so, please consider joining us to make a really worth while event and raise money for the Wild Garden Acquisition Fund. Please contact me for more details and to offer your garden.

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