

## Thanks for the Memory A Village of Shopkeepers

Chatting with Gordon Duester, when we put together the article in the last issue of *The Wychwood* about the tin tabernacle, he mentioned the small general shop which had stood opposite the church on Fiddlers Hill.

“Of course that was just one shop. I reckon there were nearly twenty retail businesses of one kind or another in Shipton just before the war ...and that’s not counting Milton!”

### A Hive of Activity

We made a mental tour starting with Mr Bowl at the shop opposite the tin church. Further back towards the A361 was the business of Owen Turner who carried out boot repairs and cut hair. Around the corner down Simons Lane, Jack Hawkes sold seeds and also traded under the unusual slogan of *Hawkes the Draper sells Wallpaper!* Further along Fiddlers Hill was the business of Arthur Rainbow. He had a small greengrocery and also delivered fish from a horse and cart equipped with an ice-box. His fruit and vegetables often came from his own garden.

The area surrounding the Lamb Inn was a veritable centre of commercial activity. The Lamb itself included a butchers run by Dick Avery. The hooks for hanging game outside can still be seen. Just before the Lamb (coming from Chapel Lane and now derelict) was the shop belonging to



The Old Sweet Shop, now derelict, in Upper Shipton

Charlie Tubbs. Again his own orchard supplied much of the fruit on sale but the shop became known chiefly as a sweetshop. Opposite this shop was the business of Jack Kethero, the baker. He would supply the crusty bread for the cricket club teas

and anybody scoring fifty plus was rewarded with one of his renowned lardy cakes.

Further down, towards the junction with the A361 was the forge run by Mr R Burgess. Right on the junction itself stood the dairy of Rowley Davis with a small shop. Milk from his own cows was also delivered in the villages. His wife worked in London House in Milton and eventually the dairy moved there.

### Around the Shaven Crown

The second commercial concentration was around the Shaven Crown. The first business, in the building to the left of the inn, was Willis’s the saddler’s who also mended and supplied bicycles. On the opposite side of the road, on the junction, was Avery’s general store and taxi business (now a florists run by Percy Avery’s granddaughter and named after his wife Ivy). A profitable side-line was fish and chips. Second on the right down Church Street was the Post Office, reputedly the oldest sub post-office in the country. From the last house before

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Magpie Alley, Fred Bradley ran his travelling fishmongers. Beyond Magpie Alley was the barber shop of Cecil Viner. Salisbury House at the bottom of Church Street was another butchers, E.E. Bradley. Moving back, along the High Street, the potential shopper came first to Hathaway's (formerly Dee's) general emporium. On the opposite side, attached to Bank House, was Franklin's ironmongery and in the same building, the Bank itself. In Milton Road were the offices of Pratt and Haines, coal merchants, virtually opposite the present school, although the

coal was supplied from the station yard. Along the Ascott Road was the workshop and office of Alf Miles, the village undertaker and jobbing carpenter.

### **Totalling Twenty Businesses**

By my count that makes exactly twenty businesses, all managing to scrape a living from the rural economy with an incredible amount of competition and the Coop from Chippy calling for orders and deliveries on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday!

**Alan Vickers with Gordon Duester**

## **Shipton Fête - A Date for your Diary**

Plans are well underway for this year's Shipton Village Fête on **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August** at the earlier time of **1.30pm** on the Recreation Ground and in the New Beaconsfield Hall. Put the date in your diary NOW!



the rest of the family to enjoy the fun. More information closer to the time but sufficient to say that our canine friends will be well catered for!

All the regular

attractions will be there along with some exciting new stalls and great games. The Go Karts and Bouncy Castle are already booked and the Music is lined up.

This year we will be raising money for **Local Village Facilities**, so if you organise a village activity that needs some capital for a **specific project** we want to hear from you. We have already started the ball rolling, buying a new **Village Marquee** for use at this event and any other community events in the village. It will also be available for private hire.

And with the new marquee, the regular gazebos and the New Beaconsfield Hall we reckon we can handle most of what the weather can throw at us! Finally we are always looking for help to set up, run stalls and generally assist on the day, so do contact me if you would like to get involved.

This year's fete will have a distinctly 'doggie' feel about it, with a Fun Dog Show and Dog Agility Course, so do bring your four-legged friends as well as

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