

The Rest is History

Once upon a time, in the 1980s, a fairy godmother joined the Shipton WI She wished to put on a pantomime for Christmas and asked for volunteers. Five or six of us said we were willing to be involved in the production. The fairy godmother could write, direct and produce the pantomime, which was a great advantage. *Jack and the Beanstalk* was a great success.

The next Christmas many more wished to be involved; we had a 'cast of thousands'. With the help of costume makers and scene painters the fairy godmother once again wove her magic - another success. New blood was needed - MEN, so the name became WI and Friends. One of the most popular acts was 'the commuters'. A group of about five or six men, dressed mostly in bowler hats and dark suits, except one who wore a brown suit and trilby. They sang and moved in rhythm but not always in time with each other. The old Beaconsfield Hall was becoming worn and tired and was oh so cold. The



dressing rooms were at either end of the hall, the ladies' dressing room had a broken window and no heating. To get to the stage we had to go outside and in another door. On a dark, winter's night with rain, sleet or snow it was not very pleasant. Nobody seemed to mind, we had many laughs and lots of fun.

The pantomimes carried on in this format for many years. More and more people wished to join and the fairy godmother waved her wand. There were The Wychwood Players, and the rest, as they say, is history!

Barbara Wilson

Wedding Fair



Early in October we held a Wedding Fair in the New Beaconsfield Hall, Shipton. This new enterprise started as a means of showing the hall in all its glory for weddings, parties and celebrations and to give local people the opportunity to

highlight their businesses with over 20 exhibiting. If you are looking for somewhere to hold a party, wedding or celebration take another look at our hall. With the canopy up, tables laid and decorated with balloons or flowers it can look like the best marquee at a fraction of the cost. If you are interested in booking the Hall either speak to Lee on: 01993 832216 or take a look at the website www.newbeaconsfieldhall.co.uk Plans are underway to hold another similar event next year, with the emphasis on celebrations and gifts for every occasion. Look out for more information. It is too good to miss.

Christine Halliday