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A Traditional Olde Freehouse Village Inn

# **Whimble News**

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## **Feb/March 2001**

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## ‘What’s On’ in Whimble

### February

- 13 WI Talk ‘Collecting Fountain Pens’                      Victory Hall 7.30pm  
 26 VPA Winter Coffee Evening                                  Victory Hall 7.30pm

### March

- 3 Royal British Legion Jumble Sale                      Victory Hall 2.30pm  
 13 WI Talk ‘Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital Trust’ Victory Hall 7.30pm  
 23 Whimble History Society talk  
 ‘Local Resident’s Experiences in the Royal Marines’ Cricket Club 7.30pm  
 31 Big Night In 'A Common Source', Ben Osborne Victory Hall 7.30pm

### April

- 10 WI Talk ‘Stained Glass Windows’                      Victory Hall 7.30pm  
 27 Whimble History Society talk ‘Sing the Song of Grandisson’  
     The life & times of Bishop Grandisson                      Victory Hall 7.30pm

**Please use the Whimble Diary held in the Post Office for checking availability of venues and booking events. If your Association has an event which you would like listed above please contact Vicky Stewart on 823374.**

### St Mary’s Church Monthly Programme of Services

1st	Sunday	8am	Holy Communion
		11am	Family Service
2nd	Sunday	11am	Parish Communion
3rd	Sunday	8am	Holy Communion
		10.30am	Service with a Smile
4th	Sunday	11am	Parish Communion
5th	Sunday	8am	Holy Communion or Joint Benefice Communion

**Whimble News is published bi-monthly and run by local volunteers. Articles of local interest can be e-mailed to Bob at bob.scanlan@eclipse.co.uk or handed in to Gordon at the Post Office by 12 March.**

## The Whimble News Team

### Editor

Peter Smith                      822828

### Production

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Vivienne Leonard              822415

### Delivery

Nicky Hitchcock                823194

Ed Hitchcock                    823194

### Advertising

Miles Leonard                 822415

Jill Wilson                        823339

### Community diary

Vicky Stewart                    823374

### Treasurer

Miles Leonard                 822415



## Cancer Relief

Jean Coombe would like to thank everyone who came to her party on 6 January and for all the cards and donations received on behalf of Cancer Relief (£420).  
Many thanks to all who helped in any way.

## Ottery St Mary Medical Trust

Thank you to everyone who bought Christmas goods, dolls and cushions.  
A cheque for £965 was given to the Medical Trust.  
Sorry some of you did not receive your orders. It was due to weather and transport problems.  
Many thanks to Barbara for her help.  
Myrtle

## The Beggars Opera

The Cygnet Theatre Company's production of the Beggars Opera can be seen at 7.30pm at the New Theatre in Exeter on March 20th - 24th with a matinee at 2pm on Sat 24th.  
There is a 'PAY AS YOU CAN' evening on Tuesday 20th March.  
For tickets ring 01392 277189

Answer to Brainteaser

There is no letter 'e'  
anywhere in the paragraph

## Editorial

It was good to be able to celebrate the turn of the year in the Village Square when I counted (though it was a bit late!) about 150 people. Thanks to all involved - in ringing bells, providing mulled wine, fireworks, generally organising and for being there. Perhaps this will become a Whimple tradition.

We were all sad to hear of the death of John Shepherd at the end of December. John's contribution to the village, and the regard for him, was very evident and he will be considerably missed. Bob Roberts has written a fuller appreciation in this edition.

The new year also brings more news of the proposed East Devon new town. Herbert Breyley gives his personal views arising from the recent meeting at the Victory Hall on a later page. What do you think? We would like to air a selection of views in future issues.

To cover all the current events means that this is a very full issue and I hope the smaller print in parts isn't too difficult to read. Please keep your articles coming! Please could contributions for the April/May edition be left at the Post Office or sent by e.mail to [bob.scanlan@eclipse.co.uk](mailto:bob.scanlan@eclipse.co.uk) by 12 March.

With good wishes

Peter

## FROM MY WINDOW IN THE SQUARE

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee  
 Whether the Summer clothes the general earth  
 With greenness, or the red breast sits and sings  
 Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch  
 Of mossy apple tree, while the night thatch  
 Smokes in the sun-thaw

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n  
ninth of December; this is the first real Winter's day. Looking out the window it is magic to see the Square clad in snow, there are still whirling snowflakes blowing around. It seems as if Winter has begun in earnest. When Paul the Postman rings the bell, his concern is great and his advice not to venture out and fall on the ice. He so kindly offers help with shopping if I need it. We are so lucky to have such a kind postman. In the Winter months, I see the skeleton of the great Linden tree silhouetted against the sky. One day the background is dark grey, another it is clear blue, but I find there is almost an eternal pattern of trunk and branches. This morning I see a thin line of white snow clinging to the branches and twigs, also on the telephone wires and television aerials. What a delightful and perfect picture. Sounds in the Square have their patterns too. My greatest joy when I open my door in the early morning is to be greeted by the sweet hello of my red robin. We have quite a conversation. He is always the first to sing his sweet melody before anyone awakes. On the bird feeder by my sitting room crowds of birds are here today to feed on their favourite nuts, but sometimes there is a great commotion and battle amongst the blue tits. Suddenly I see the cheeky robin getting right inside the lidless feeder and refusing to let the tits get anywhere near him. Once he finds what he wants, he pauses, taps on the window and sings his sweet song before flying off into the great tree. Often when the skies are dreary and dark, a thrush sings undismayed, her song leaps up defiant of despair. In the most sombre Winter days, her melodies are of great joy. None of us is immune to seasonal changes, some of us are more sensitive to light and sunshine than others. I thrive on light and sunshine, but I also welcome the much-maligned Winter months, because I so enjoy sitting by my open roaring fire reading and listening to music in this my Winter mood. Village life, like the human character, never stands still, it either improves or gets worse, because the external influences at work are beyond our control. Our new country dwellers commute each day by car and a new phenomenon in our village is the increase in motor cars and also a more luxurious type of car. The television aerials, and Sky dishes displayed on most houses now show the demand for more sophisticated entertainment. Village dances, theatricals have been taken over by television and computer games. There is less interaction between people. We have become watchers instead of doers. Formerly everyone knew each other, either they worked together or had family ties. That was the subtle difference which made village life attractive. Luckily we have our local History Society which tries to maintain old tradition so that we do not lose our identity.

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t y -

The speakers said that their understanding was that 3 new primary schools and a secondary school would have to be built. Obviously these schools would be strategically placed within the settlement which could mean that Whimple will lose its school and the children bussed to a new school technically in the existing Whimple parish.

The developers in their statement to the public enquiry stated that a settlement of less than 3000 is not supported. Now they are prepared to build 2000 which entitles one to ask who is to pay for the new schools, community centre, sports facilities etc? No doubt the developers will opt out and the taxpayers of East Devon and Devon County will pay up.

The new plans make a nonsense of the developer's submission to the public enquiry that there is no concern over coalescence. It could easily lead to Whimple being merged with Whimple Mark II.

It has been suggested that another public meeting will be held with the consultants when they would produce flood and sewerage experts but prior to that Whimple Parish Council will hold a public meeting when the revised East Devon local plan is published. I hope that the parishioners of Whimple will turn out in force for both meetings as the future of Whimple is very much in the

## Dear Whimple Villagers

What can I say! From the bottom of our hearts Pat and myself thank you so much for the gifts and the send off for our  
ement.

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Sixtee

en years is a long time, but with the enjoyment we have had from the Stores the time was well spent, behind the counter joking with you. Where else would people find such a nice place as Whimple?

Yours sincerely

Fred

Don't forget the old man in The Square with a tray of matches will always strike a friendship!

## A NEW TOWN FOR EAST DEVON

Herbert Breyley gives a personal view on the meeting held in Victory Hall to look at proposals for the new town in East Devon. Let us have your views, too. We will print a selection in a future edition.

On the 22nd January, I attended, with about 80 other Whimble parishioners, a presentation by consultants on behalf of the developers Beazer Redrow Homes Ltd and Prowtings who propose building a new town of 2000 dwellings in the Cobden-Southbrook area.

The somewhat glib presentation took the format of the style of houses, and their proposals for a range of local services including schools, shops and employment. A railway station had to be constructed and their proposal was that it would be located in the Southbrook area. The development would have to be completed by 2011 and it was their hope that their plans would be accepted and building would commence in about 2003.

The speakers were unable to say how they saw the impact of the development on the parish of Whimble especially in respect of flooding and sewerage. In a number of aspects their proposals were totally contrary to their submission to the Public Enquiry of the Devon County Structure Plan.

Para 2.6 of their submission states such development in this locality would have minimal impact upon the wider landscape of the area. The topographical setting provides a physical separation from the principal settlements of Whimble and Broadclyst located respectively some 1.5 miles and 2.1 miles from the new settlement site.

Their current proposal includes a sizeable portion of Whimble parish.

Para 2.10 states the physical and visual separation from the principal settlements of Whimble and Broadclyst has been described above such that there is no concern over coalescence.

Para 3.8 states given the considerable housing needs of the area, and the need to create a sustainable settlement, a scheme comprising substantially less than 3000 dwellings is not supported.

The current proposals will have a considerable impact on Whimble. To build a new station at Southbrook may result in the closure of Whimble Station.

We are so very lucky to have such a dedicated chairman, John Shepherd, who is the life and soul in organising Wassailing on a mid-January evening. A noisy participation is required to improve the quality and quantity of apple crops. It is very fortunate that we have been selected as a village as part of a detailed study of apple orchards, their development and decline. Very soon we will have our Heritage Centre going. We have such a variety of items to display.

As a village Parish Church we are so fortunate to have still maintained the very moving service of Blessing of the Plough in mid January. That is when the farming community play an important role.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst warn thy disciples  
Having put their hand to the plough, not to look back  
Bless this plough and the skill of the ploughman,  
For the service of mankind  
God speed the plough and the ploughman, the farm  
and the farmer.  
God speed the plough, on hillside and in valley  
On land which is rich, and on land which is poor  
In countries beyond the seas and in our own homeland  
God speed the plough in fair weather and in foul.  
In success and disappointment.  
In rain and wind, in frost and sunshine  
May the ploughman's hope be fulfilled in a plentiful  
harvest  
Grant that the bountiful fruits of the earth

On the 31st December, the History Society will unveil a plaque to mark the place of the tethering stone in front of the Old Manse which was originally the village Post Office. I don't know if anyone has noticed that the original window frames are Georgian, except one on the side which is oblong, and that was the entrance door to the Post Office. I feel very privileged to live in this very historic house, and although I am at present the rightful owner, I feel more like the custodian of a place which will pass into posterity.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Edith Grout

Since writing this article on 29th December, we lost a very dear friend in John Shepherd. I was getting ready for the 31st December when the unveiling was going to take place. On Saturday 30th I had a very jolly chat with John to make the last minute arrangements and yet, an hour later, I was told of the sad news. Imagine my great sorrow to have lost such a friend. We were together as a small group of founder members of the History Society, because of our great love for this our village.

The unveiling of the plaque has now been fixed to take place on St Georges Day 23rd April, a date thought to be a real tribute to John who so

# THE THIRSTY FARMER

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## Organisations in Whimple

<b>Whimple Parish Council</b>	
<i>Chairman:</i> Sara Randall Johnson	822524
<i>Clerk:</i> Mrs. Amanda Newman, Council Office - Torno	823385
<b>Royal British Legion</b> , Branch and Womens Section.	
<i>Chairman:</i> Mrs. F. Pratt, Sandfords	822451
<b>St. Mary's Church</b>	
<i>Contact:</i> David Rastall, Killigarth, Church Road	822486
<i>Contact:</i> Raymond Burrough, Gateshayes Farm	822257
<b>Devon County Councillor</b>	
Mr. R. Giles, 14 Winters Lane, OSM. EX11 1AR	813387
<b>Whimple County Primary School</b>	
<i>Headteacher:</i> Mrs. D. Brice	822584
<b>Whimple History Society</b>	
Mr. Bob Roberts	822311
<b>Whimple Mothers Union</b>	
Mrs. D. Rastall, Killigarth, Church Road	822486
<b>Whimple Pre-School &amp; Toddler Group</b>	
<i>Chair:</i> Mrs. Sarah Griffin, Hillcroft, Church Rd.	823265
<i>New admissions/Playleader:</i> Sue Solf 1, Hillside, Talaton	822981
<b>Whimple Womens Institute</b>	
<i>Secretary:</i> Mrs. Rosemarie Burrows, Higher Slewton	822422
<b>Whimple Over Sixties Club</b>	
Mrs. Lin Carder, 18 Dince Hill Close	822538
<b>Whimple Recreation Trust</b>	
<i>Knowle Cross Sports Ground.</i> Mr P. Garraff, Luppit	891206
<b>Whimple Village Produce Association.</b>	
<i>Chairman:</i> Mr. A. Bratt, Rockwell, Talaton	822437
<b>Whimple and Broadclyst Young Farmers' Club</b>	
Mr. R. J. Burrough, Gateshayes Farm	822257
<b>Whimple Youth Club</b>	
<i>Chairman:</i> Pam Scanlan, Albecq, The Green	822262
<i>Leader:</i> Alison Lawry, Willowbrook, Whimple	822292
<b>Whimple Football Club</b>	
<i>Chairman:</i> B. Weeks, Briar Cottage, Church Road	822674
<b>Whimple Tennis Club</b>	
<i>Secretary:</i> T. A. Lang	822512
<i>Treasurer:</i> J. Hughes	822659
<b>Whimple Cricket Club</b>	
Mr. R.J. Smith	822244
<b>Whimple Victory Hall Management Committe</b>	
<i>Secretary:</i> Pam Scanlan, Albecq, The Green	822262
<i>Booking Sec:</i> Mrs. P. Weeks, Briar Cottage, Church Rd.	822674
<b>Whimple Post Office</b>	
Gordon & Heather Owen	822359
<b>Whimple News</b>	
Peter Smith, Lawn End, Church Road	822828
<b>Neighbourhood Watch</b>	
John Munslow, 44, Slewton Crescent	823456
<b>St. Mary's Bellringers</b>	
<i>Captain:</i> Judith Canniford, 22 Grove Road	822873
<b>Whimple Scout Group</b>	
<i>Group Scout Leader :</i> Alex Spry	851290
<i>Scout Leader:</i> Adam Bird	813923
<i>Cub Scout Leader :</i> Alex Spry	851290
<i>Beaver Scout Leader</i> Valerie Bond	822473
<i>Marquee Booking Sec :</i> Mrs. Mary M <sup>39</sup> Connell	822729

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# WHIMPLE AND DISTRICT VILLAGE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

There will no doubt be other tributes to John Shepherd elsewhere in this edition but it is only right for the VPA to record its thanks for all the work John put in over the many years he was associated with it. Like everyone else in the village who knew John, we were all very shocked to hear of his sudden and untimely death just before the New Year. John was so much a part of the village life and was involved with so many things in the village not just the VPA. Over the years he contributed so much to the VPA, being chairman and secretary for a number of years. He played a major part in our annual flower show particularly when he wrote the computer programme for recording the entries and the results which was a huge task in itself. It will be very strange not seeing him around at our events, especially the flower show. He will be greatly missed by us all.

Last November Sandfords was again packed when we held our AGM. Another successful year was reported with all our events being thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. The Officers were re-elected for another year and although we have one or two new faces on the Committee we would welcome anyone who feels they would like to be involved with the VPA. Come along to our Winter Coffee evening to find out more about us.

Our first offering for the new year will be our Winter Coffee Evening on Monday 26th February in the Victory Hall, starting at 7.30pm. We have invited Mr Derek Bedder to come along and give us a talk on the Basics of Home Wine Making and what judges look for. It should be a very entertaining evening and we will be having a draw for all those who attend with a Wine Making Kit as the prize! There will be no charge for this event so we hope the chance to learn or to improve your wine making skills will entice you along.

We hope to run a coach outing on Sunday 17th June and more details will appear as and when they are available. So for all of you who enjoyed last years trip keep this date free for what will hopefully be an equally enjoyable trip.

We will also be having our spring plant sale and coffee evening in May, and of course the highlight of the village year will be our annual flower show in August. As usual it will be on the second Saturday which this year is 11th August. Further reminders will appear in subsequent editions of the News! We looking forward to seeing you all in February.

Paul Wilson,  
Hon. Secretary.



## NEWS FROM P.O. CORNER

I am writing this on Wednesday 24th January 2001 and this is the third draft - the first two were unprintable in a family magazine. Why? you may well ask!

The New Computer - We were phoned at 3.45pm and informed that, due to an administrative error, the equipment due in on the 25th would not be coming and may be delayed about 6 weeks. As far as we knew everything was go; we had all the electrics, all tested and Heather and I had done our three yrs training event. (now we will have to go on another event or to the next planned installation date!)

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We had anxiously waited for Friday 26th - 'go live' day - and were nervously looking forward to getting stuck in but ... sorry folks you will have to wait! Anyway on the first two drafts I was \*\*\*\*\* off, now I have cooled down a bit but am still a bit miffed!

While I am in the mood and putting on my V.Meldrew Esq. hat - why do dog owners not clear up the mess they have allowed their dogs to make on the station path? Lately the path has been disgusting as the messes have not even been kicked to the side but merely left where they fell. I speak as a dog owner and feel ashamed by others who make no effort and thus endanger childrens lives (apart from the general inconvenience of mess on shoes, pushchair wheels etc.).

Purely for research purposes and to keep me up to date with current topics I have just read the first Harry Potter book! - one of the best escapist, and quickest reads I've enjoyed for many years. Also you know my opinion of the contents of Tate Modern - well the Tate in St. Ives is similarly stocked and my elder son went to have a look recently - his only comment nice building.. - its all in the genes!

I think that the January blues have set in, or I was suffering anxiety attacks over the intended installation of black boxes, but humour seems in short supply at the moment - as is obvious from the above.

So I will end with a simple wish that John will rest in the peace he deserves.

Bye for now from GO @ the PO

[www.noncomputerisedserviceasnormal.com](http://www.noncomputerisedserviceasnormal.com)

**Our Next Big Night In! Event is.....**

## **A COMMON SOURCE**

*Presented by*

**BEN OSBORNE**

**on**

**Saturday 31st March at 7.30pm**

**At the Victory Hall**



**A year ago Ben Osborne delighted a packed Victory Hall with his spectacular show LIFE IN THE FREEZER. By popular request he is coming back to us with his latest show, Common Source. After the show last February he was going to drive to the Severn Bridge to spend the night in his camper van hoping to catch some good shots of dawn over the Severn.....**

**Common Source is a celebration of two great rivers, the Severn and the Wye, which start life within a mile of each other high in the Welsh Hills, before joining together as they meet the sea. In association with the Anglo-Welsh Poetry Society, the show is a journey in poetry, music and photography, blended with Ben Osborne's atmospheric audio visual sequences, and taking you through some of the most beautiful countryside in Britain, encompassing the culture and natural history of the region.**

**Tickets (*includes glass of wine or juice*): £4.00 adults (£2.50 concessions) £10.00 family (£8 conc) from Whimple Post Office or phone Louise Barchard on 01404 822008**

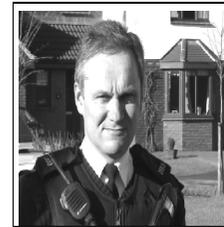
**A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the last two events. A special thanks to the team who planned, prepared and served the highly successful Party Tea after Goldilocks.**

## **ARE YOU IN NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH?**



There are 22 Neighbourhood Watch schemes in Whimple, but many of the newer housing developments and infill areas have not yet formed themselves into Neighbourhood Watch areas. It would be a good target, before this years Neighbourhood Watch week, to encourage as many as possible to become part of the growing National Neighbourhood Watch movement.

To get advice in the first instance on setting up a new Neighbourhood Watch, you can contact either:



**PC J Tyrrell 2883**

**The East Devon Neighbourhood Watch Support Team** at Exmouth Police Station, North Street, EXMOUTH, EX8 1JZ. (Telephone 01395 226156) **Mailto:** [nhw@eastdevon@virgin.net](mailto:nhw@eastdevon@virgin.net)

Or contact **PC Tyrrell 2883**, the new Whimple Ward Police Officer who works out of Ottery St Mary office. He can be contacted by telephoning **0990 700 400** and ask for a message to be left for him to contact you.

### **NATIONAL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH WEEK SPONSORED BY ADT Saturday 16 June to Saturday 23 June 2001**

This is an annual event during which the Neighbourhood Watch movement is encouraged to put on special events in their local areas to support, promote and encourage Neighbourhood Watch.

"Neighbourhood Watch is almost an extension of the good neighbour concept. By highlighting good neighbours at the start of the Week we hope it will stimulate the formation of more Neighbourhood Watches." Said *John Howell*, Director General National Neighbourhood Watch Association.

The NNWA will launch the Week with a "Good Neighbour Day" on Saturday 16 June 2001. **Ideas to me please for what we should do in Whimple?**

We would all like to see more beat policemen walking around WHIMPLE but that at the moment is not possible. So self help by a strong and active Neighbourhood Watch must be a good alternative.

So come on those areas not yet in Neighbourhood Watch, start the ball rolling, so that Whimple becomes an even safer place to live.

**John Munslow** 01404 823456 'Conway House 44 Slewtan Crescent Whimple  
Secretary 4 Area Neighbourhood Watch Forum **Mailto:** [jcm@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:jcm@globalnet.co.uk)

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# Whimble WI

Members and friends will be interested in the programme of talks arranged for the next few months.

- Feb 13 'Collecting Fountain Pens' given by Mrs S Coutier.  
The competition is Flower of the Month.
- Mar 13 'Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital Trust' by Professor R Hawker OBE. The Competition is as last month.
- Mar 27 Spring Group Meeting at Ottery St Mary
- Apr 10 'Stained Glass Windows' by Mrs R Margetts
- Apr 19 Spring Council Meeting in Exeter
- May 8 Decisions will be made on the Resolutions
- May 17/18/19 Devon County Show.

In previous years Whimble WI has entered with much success

- Jun 6 IGM Cardiff
- Jun 12 Members Night
- July 10 'WRAF Aircrew Duties'.  
Miss A Paddy recalls her working life.  
Competition is Flower of the Month

In August there is no meeting.

Further dates will follow later in the year.

Meetings are held in the Village Hall starting at 7.30pm and usually finishing at 9.30pm.

The meeting starts with the business of the WI.

Then the guest speaker has the floor.

The talk is followed by tea and biscuits.

New members or visitors are always welcome.

H.O.

## New Year's Eve Festivities

What a super evening. The weather was really kind to us and relented at around 11:10pm having rained almost non-stop all day. It was incredibly mild and we were able to wander around The Square in shirtsleeves.

Our thanks must go to all those who donated their change for the fireworks and for those who brought round wine for the mulled wine.

We collected over £145 in collection jars in The New Fountain, Whimble Stores and The Thirsty Farmer. Special thanks must go to Paul and Gill who donated half of the Christmas Draw money to this collection with the remainder being donated to a local Hospice.

We received over twenty bottles of wine and we were able to produce sufficient to distribute 150 cups and there were a number who managed to come back for refills. I hope they were able to remember how much they enjoyed it.

We must also thank the Bell Ringers for ringing in The Hour and also for entertaining us for fifteen minutes.

The fireworks were especially ordered and I would like to thank Honiton Toys for their help.

Finally, as it was so successful, and following on from the success of the Millennium celebrations, we are happy to start collecting again for next year (look out for the collection jars) but would be grateful if someone would like to join us in organising the activities. It is intended to retain the level of spontaneity but we can still improve next time around.

We hope you all enjoyed it as much as we did and hope to see you all again next year.

John and Jan Discombe

The Jays

# WHIMPLE WEATHER - 2000

Here is an update on the weather information in the Christmas edition of Whimble News. You may remember, with a few weeks to go, it was touch-and-go whether Whimble's heavy rain in 2000 would get into the record books. As you can see from the figures below - it certainly did!

	2000	1999 (Comparison)
Rainfall	45.48 inches	43.02 inches
Rain fell on	203 days	173 days
Snow fell on	3 days	3 days
Gales/Strongwinds	54 days	40 days
Thunder heard	8 days	15 days
Wettest month	December	September
	8.12 inches	8.34 inches
Driest month	June	July
	0.98 inch	0.48 inch
Wettest day	5th November	18th September
	1.62 inches	2.36 inches
Hottest day	21st July	24th July
	87 f	90 f
Coldest day	29/30 December	19/20 December
	22 f	23 f

My records span 30 years of weather in Whimble. The year 2000 is the wettest on record, the previous being 1974 with 45.40 inches of rain. December was also the wettest December. For the nine months January - September we appeared to be heading for a comparatively dry year with 24.2 inches of rain but in the last three months 21.28 inches was recorded, exceeding the previous highest October - December by some 6 inches! For whatever reason, the 90s have been much wetter than the 70s and 80s. 1990s average monthly rainfall was:- 38.20 inches

1980s	29.14
1970s	33.11

Could temperature be having some effect on rainfall?  
The average mean for December 2000, in Whimble, was 44.02 f

In December 1999 it was	42.37 f
1998 it was	43.25 f
1997 it was	43.91 f
1996 it was	38.91 f

I am led to believe a one-degree change in average mean temperature would have significant implications on our climate. Higher means wetter, stormier weather and possibly drier at times. Again I must emphasize these details are recorded in a garden in Whimble. They may not agree with those even 1 mile distant!  
All readings are taken at 8 a.m.

## Over 60s Club New Year Luncheon Party 16 January

Outside, the weather was so cold and miserable it even tried to snow, but inside the Cricket Club there was a wonderfully warm welcome for all. It was full to capacity, with drinks offered on arrival and the buffet table laden with very appetising food, bingo cards and draw tickets for everyone. The table with the draw prizes was a sight to behold.

Under the Chairmanship of Mr Lesley Carter everything went well from start to finish. The Reverend Gardner said grace. Everyone looked so happy and the whole hall buzzed with fun and laughter. The volunteers who prepared the food really excelled themselves and the sweets were really scrumptious. This is praise indeed coming from a retired hotelier used to the five star category.

A most warm and heartfelt thank you to the small band of people who do so much for so many. We certainly returned home warmed up in body and soul.

Edith Grout



## Over 65's Christmas Party 1 December

Ladies of the village were very pleased with once again such a lovely party in every way held in the Victory Hall on 1 December.

Thanks are due to the many helpers who gave so much of their time to make it such a success.

The date of this years party is Friday 7 December.  
Lucy Smith



In a similar letter of thanks sent by Mr L Carter he says:-

"Thanks to the Whimble WI for the wonderful meal and entertainment in the Village Hall early in December for the Over 65s Christmas Party..... A big thank you for the Ladies of Village and to Edna Carthew for arranging the draw".

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## BRAINTEASER

Study this paragraph and all things in it. What is vitally wrong with it? Actually, nothing in it is wrong, but you must admit that it is unusual. Don't just zip through it quickly but study it scrupulously. With luck you should spot what is so particular about it and all words found in it. Tax your brains and try again. Don't miss a word or symbol. It isn't all that difficult. Can you say what it is?

For a change the answer to above can be found elsewhere in this magazine but don't seek until you have thought about it!

### Answer to Christmas 2000 edition brainteaser:

- a. ages multiply to 36 therefore the options are:
- |                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| $1 \times 1 \times 36 = 36$ | $1 + 1 + 36 = 38$ |
| $1 \times 6 \times 6 = 36$  | $1 + 6 + 6 = 13$  |
| $1 \times 2 \times 18 = 36$ | $1 + 2 + 18 = 21$ |
| $2 \times 2 \times 9 = 36$  | $2 + 2 + 9 = 13$  |
| $1 \times 3 \times 12 = 36$ | $1 + 3 + 12 = 16$ |
| $2 \times 3 \times 6 = 36$  | $2 + 3 + 6 = 11$  |
| $1 \times 4 \times 9 = 36$  | $1 + 4 + 9 = 14$  |
| $3 \times 3 \times 4 = 36$  | $3 + 3 + 4 = 10$  |
- b. The sum of their ages is same as house next door but he needs to ask for another clue, so two of the options must be the same - so next door must be 13 as this covers two options **1,6,6 & 2,2,9** but which one is right?
- c. The eldest plays the piano - only **2,2,9** has an eldest.

Easy really!

**Gordon**

## Old Whimble Tales

Time changes the way of life of rural folk slowly but surely. At a recent talk on farming in the Whimble area a retired farmer told of moving his chattels from one farm to another with his own farm cart and horse. It was in the early 1920s and needed several journeys each day and took three days in all.

Another Whimble lady recalled her beloved grandmother who married in 1901. When a girl of twelve years old she was given for her birthday one of those then 'new-fangled' sewing machines The name Singer comes to mind. Some of us have seen such old table machines with handle turning action, in museums.

However she quickly mastered it's use and proceeded to make shirts for her young brothers, and in later years all kinds of clothes for her own wee ones. The memory of this lady passing on her skills with the old machine to her daughters and granddaughters is a much valued one.

In the last hundred years , three or four generations of Whimble folk must have been instructed in many similar tasks by their elders. Do share these memories with us.

## Whimble Youth Club

The club is thriving with an average weekly attendance of 25 youngsters. Our Leaders, Alison and Vicky, work hard to make it a success. However it is increasingly difficult for them to manage on their own, with so many young people.

I am therefore again appealing for anyone with time to help out with our youngsters. We need assistance with the sessions, and with fund raising, shopping and administration.

You do not have to be a parent to help. Age is no barrier.

In May we will be looking for new members to join the management committee - so if you feel tempted please telephone me and find out more. The Youth Club needs YOU. Please get in touch.

Pam Scanlan - Management Committee Chairman 822262

## WASSAILING IN WHIMPLE - 17 January 2001

We gathered at the Thirsty Farmer around 7.00 p.m. to practice our singing, and to be re-introduced to the words of the Wassailing songs. Of course there was a need for essential lubrication of throats so that the singing was of the highest and loudest quality. I have noticed that the more lubrication that I use, the less concerned I am about my total tone deafness! Col. Bob Roberts had bravely volunteered to lead the Wassail, and he did it well, wearing a white coat stolen from a lollipop lady. Our Village Beadle, Tommy-George Perry, as John Shepherd used to call him, ensured that order was maintained throughout, proudly carrying his staff of office through the village. We had a grand assortment of instruments to accompany us, from banjo to squeeze box to saucepan lid. The most unusual was the bagpipes not a typical Devon instrument associated with cyder, but on Wassail night, anything goes!

We visited Littlemead Orchard where the Wassail Queen (Sandra Cottee) and the Princess (Michelle Mallett) recited their verses, threw the apples, and placed the toast soaked in cyder in the branches so that we may have a good crop. Then the guns were fired into the air and this is the part of the evening where two thoughts quickly go through my head (always unfounded!) have the men with the guns all remembered to use blank cartridges and how long have they all been in the pub? I can remember having a conversation with John and Paul Mallett a couple of months ago about how we could transport John and his Meccano leg during the Wassailing. One suggestion was to borrow a pony and trap and have John travel in style, but when I reminded them about the potential dangerous combination of the gun noise and a horse, we felt that perhaps John didn't want an unplanned and speedy trip to Honiton behind a very frightened horse!

We processed through the village with all the noise that we could make receiving concerned looks from people in cars who had to stop because of the sheer numbers of people on the road. I imagine that if you don't know what is going on, it could look a bit frightening! It was an excellent turn out; John Shepherd would have been very pleased. We went via the Square, and gathered at the Tethering Stone to remember John and all that he had done for Whimple. As Col. Bob said in his tribute at the funeral, John was Mr Whimple and he will not be forgotten in the village.

As we went around the village, we were served some excellent mulled cyder, so thanks to the providers and the servers! We repeated the Wassail at Ian and Ann Hardcastles and then repaired to the New Fountain Inn to investigate the bread and cheese, and the apple cake. Thanks to those who supplied that. During the evening, David Rastall, as Vice Chairman of the Whimple History Society, presented both Paul Mallett of the New Fountain, and Michael Corbett of the Thirsty Farmer, with copies of the Village Millennium photo.

It was an excellent evening and I was pleased that we continued the tradition despite the loss of John. I am sure that he was watching over us and giving encouragement with our singing. Thanks to Bob Roberts for leading the

## *Royal British Legion* Poppy Appeal 2000

The  
Poppy  
Appeal in  
Whimple

realised the sum of £1102:

Church Collection	£145
House to House Collection	£670
Poppy Wreaths	£ 48
Jumble Sale	£119
Donations	£120

Thank you to everyone for supporting our Appeal, in particular Rev Feltham for conducting the Service on Remembrance Sunday, his last in Whimple before retirement, Mr Arthur Thompson, Mr M Northcott, Mr John Shepherd, Mr Michael Mallett and the Scouts and Beavers with their Leaders.

Frances M Pratt

Since writing this we have heard of the sad loss of Mr Shepherd

On March 3 the Royal British Legion Women's section will be holding a Jumble Sale in the Victory Hall at 7.30pm. White Elephant, Cakes and Draw.

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## A THATCHING EXPERIENCE

Molly and Dick Power, Jasmine Cottage

Usually it is necessary to renew a thatch about every twenty-three years. Ours was about fifteen years old but was showing signs of wear. Wheat reed was used the first time but because of the use of nitrates and our prevailing weather, it was disintegrating.

We were fortunate that Sam Goss and her apprentice Paul were able to fit us in last July. She estimated four weeks plus and indeed that was so. The weather was good, only two wet days, but the hot sun was rather trying. Sam is a great organiser and is really on the ball. First of all the scaffolding went up, excellently erected and I only lost one rosebud!

From then on the cottage sort of disappeared. Huge piles of water reed were delivered on time, a lovely shade of yellow as we had asked. Our reed came from Turkey because Norfolk reed is in short supply. There is an area in Turkey which produces black reed - the Black Lake, we preferred yellow.



The work proceeded according to plan.

Taking off the old was pretty horrendous but they worked carefully and cleared up each day. Mr Bucknell, of Holways Farm very kindly allowed it to be burnt on his land. We were extremely grateful. Sam and Paul worked quietly and courteously and became part of the family. Our dog (also called Sam) loved all the titbits they gave him!

We now possess a lovely new thatch complete with a gable end and a fully lipped end- this knowledge supplied by Sam! We have a plain wrap-over ridge traditional to Devon, made of wheat reed and carefully netted. A copper wire was inserted along the ridge and this causes an electrolytic action with moisture which suppresses, to a certain extent, plant life e.g. lichen. This I remember from my days in a lab!

Sam installed Stumpy, our pheasant so named for his short legs. He likes the feel of the wheat ridge and is quite happy. Very fast cars make him nervous but car horns make him want to take flight.

We enjoyed our experience. Sam is a highly professional lady and it is evident that our thatch has the female touch! Thatch dwellers are a breed apart, especially those born under thatch. It is a warm and comfortable feeling with a living roof warm in winter and cool in summer.

We have a duty to preserve our thatched cottages so that they can be appreciated by future generations. We mustn't forget that it is an important environment for many living creatures

## Carol Singing in the Square

It has now become a tradition for all-comers to enjoy singing carols in the informal anonymity afforded by the darkness of Whimble Square at 7.00pm on Christmas Eve. For only the 3rd time in 20 or so years the weather drove us under cover into Whimble Church whose warmth and shelter were generously made available by the officers of the Church.

Accompanied by a varied assortment of instruments (including no less than four oboes), a mixed gathering of villagers sang lustily through many Christmas favourites - and it was gratifying to see many family groups present, including a number of small children for whom Christmas always has a very special magic.

We became involved in about 1981 - can't remember exactly. Prior to that the event had taken place under the guidance of Geoffrey Brace, at that time music teacher at The King's School, Ottery St. Mary, and who then lived in Whimble. We and our two daughters blew things, nephews who came to stay played fiddles and various friends came with an assortment of instruments including flutes, clarinets, trumpets and an accordion. We have always hoped for an even greater gathering of young local instrumentalists - and there must be many teenagers learning. Next year, perhaps!

In recent times Peter Bolwell and Paul Brand have taken much of the organising work and this year Branco Love was recruited at very short notice to act as MC on the night. More recently, too, members of Whimble's folk band, "Slack ma Girdle", have joined the instrumentalists, filling out the sound.

Another more recent innovation has been the introduction of the collecting box in aid of Devon Air Ambulance into which the gathering donated £69.04, this year. Devon Air Ambulance Trust wish to thank all those who contributed.

Until this year, part of the event has always been the rotund and benign figure of Father Christmas mingling among the children. John Shepherd's injury meant that this could not happen this time and it is very sad now to realise that his jolly presence has passed forever. For many children, including ours, John made Father Christmas an absolute reality, and we recall gratefully those years when the children staying with us couldn't wait to scamper to bed after seeing him in the Square. Thanks, John, we are sure you will be there in spirit in future years.

It seems wrong to be talking of next Christmas so early in the New Year. So let us just hope you stay in good voice.

Tom and Barbara Lambert

# John Shepherd

Robert John Shepherd or John as he was known to many, was born in January 1934 and lived all his life, and sadly died on 30th December 2000, in the same house in Grove Road. He attended the village school, was in the local Scout pack and a choirboy. John first went to work at Howards TV business in Exeter. Most of his working life was, however, spent with the Water Board. On retirement he embraced the new technical age being the first person in Whimble to have a computer. He used it to good effect compiling the accounts and records of many local businesses. He answered the call of his country and served in The Royal Air Force for his National Service. He joined the village branch of The Royal British Legion and at his death had been Chairman of the men's branch for a number of years.

John took over leadership of an embryo youth club and transformed it. Firstly, changing the name to White Arrow Youth Organisation. He decided its function was educational as well as fun. He engineered the taking over of a cottage at The Hand and Pen junction and, with the willing help of the youth of the village, converted it into a first class club with many facilities modern day clubs would envy. But the club was only a base; he organised year after year trips away and many other activities. One offshoot from the youth organisation was the first village newspaper, produced by the members under his direction.

He was one of those who established the village Tennis Club. To raise funds for the court and clubhouse he took a leading part in the fund raising 'Star Spangled Review'. He helped in many other aspects of the fund raising and was also a leading member of the enthusiastic band who dug the foundations, trenches for drainage and erected fencing.

His performing talents were also to the fore in a duo with the late Ken Stone, of Devon Talks and Dialect. For 34 years he ran a Christmas Club.

He was a patriot, and English through and through.

A staunch member of The Society of St. George. He was a leading organiser in the village celebrations of Her Majesty The Queen's Silver Jubilee and the wedding of The Prince of Wales.

Stallcombe House at Woodbury was also one of his charitable interests and he devoted much time and patience supporting the residents.

Although not a gardener himself, he became very much involved with the VPA and it was he who used his computer to cope with recording entries and statistics each year.

John was a familiar visitor to the village school, playgroup and Scouts where he gave many a talk. To help give these talks he accumulated a lot of information about the history of the village. In 1989 it was his idea to gather together interested residents to form a formal organisation to safeguard that history. His drive and enthusiasm resulted in the formation of Whimble History Society. His ability to enthuse others has resulted in that society now having nearly 150 members. 4½ years ago he thought that the society ought to have a permanent home. Last year a suitable one was found - Lockyear's Linhay in the grounds of The New Fountain Inn. Meanwhile, his enthusiasm and drive had infested the society, and its members, and fund raising led by him had produced £40,000, enough to buy the Linhay and much of the adjoining ground for future expansion. He instituted a number of events in the society to mark millennium year. The last of these was to restore The Tethering Ring outside the Old Post Office, by the stream in The Square in front of The Manse. He was to unveil it on 31st December. The previous morning it was set in the ground. We now know it was being done at the time of his heart attack.

Many readers have sat in the church to watch and listen to the many wonderful 'Son et Lumiere' performances telling the history of the church. They were John's idea. He wrote the script, recruited the actors, rehearsed them, recorded sound and music and directed the performances.

He was well known for two uniforms. A red one trimmed with white - Father Christmas. Two Christmas's ago he toned down his appearances to only those in Whimble. Prior to then, for over 30 years, he appeared at 25 other schools, homes and charity events in Exeter, Honiton and East Devon. His second uniform was, of course, that of Mayor. He revived the age-old post and graced many village events in his flowing cloak and coloured waistcoat.

John was a faithful friend to many, a sincere man, someone who was happy and jolly, with bags of energy, enthusiasm and keenness in everything he did. I am sure you can think of your own plaudits, all will be well deserved.

It was fitting, and a great compliment to him, that nearly 300 persons crowded into the church for his funeral. His Mayoral Insignia were taken in, the local British Legion Standard was paraded and the Cross of St. George flew from the tower.

The congregation joined in saying a Farewell from Whimble:

John we salute

Whimble thanks you

DRR