

# IWERNE MINSTER NEWSLETTER

February – March 2022

## WINTER LIGHT AT APPLGARTH



*(PHOTO COURTESY OF GEOFF DORRINGTON)*

## IWERNE MINSTER OPEN GARDENS

Every four years we have an Open Gardens event in Iwerne Minster and the next one is due in 2022. It is proposed to hold this on Saturday and Sunday the 25th and 26th June. If you would like to be involved or would like further information about this event please contact Dianne Benfield 01747 811507 or Sue Le Prevost 01747 812173.

*(Photo courtesy of John Goodliffe taken at the Secret Gardens 2018)*



## VILLAGE CLUB NEWS

We are anticipating running a full programme this year.

Having moved the panto from its January dates, we will now be opening the year's events with another very popular quiz on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please see the posters around the village for more details.

Meanwhile the much anticipated pantomime, *Sleeping Beauty*, will be performed at the Clubhouse on the nights of March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are available from the shop. We are still being careful and COVID precautions are still in place. Raffle Prizes are needed so if anyone feels like contributing please contact Penny 811339.

**Penny Marsh**

### SWIM WI JANUARY MEETING "Buns 'n Bingo"

We had all been living with COVID restrictions and then Omicron popped up to add to the miserable winter weather. So the question was how to start our 2022 WI meetings on a cheerful note. It was at a committee meeting that Liz Westwell volunteered to host a Bingo session (brave soul!) and Jane Hood volunteered the alliterative title of "Buns 'n Bingo". This was greeted with memories of the various phrases we all knew from old and led to us wondering if some of them were still politically correct!

Liz took charge and even bought small prizes to hand out at the session. Sally Bryant produced a feast of blueberry muffins, cheesy muffins and hot cross buns to match the title. Jane baked buns also and Marilyn provided finger sandwiches for those who preferred something savoury, as well as handing out our new green 2022 diary of events. We were all told to join in with the fun responses and everyone entered in to the spirit. Pam Jelley was the first winner, followed by Fran Deeming and Anne Boddy.

Thanks to Liz for being a great host, to Sally for a tasty "afternoon tea" and to the members who joined us on a gloomy January afternoon and made it so enjoyable. Here's to the February meeting!

**Barbara Ball and the SWIM Committee ladies**

## IWERNE MINSTER 100 CLUB

### November Draw

£15 Sharon Westwood (12)  
£12 Penny Marsh (48)  
£10 Trevor Rees (77)  
£5 Steve Harrison (40)

### December Draw

£30 Debs Purdue (46)  
£20 Derek Pike (99)  
£20 Richard Thomas (64)  
£20 John & Carol Carter (97)  
£20 Julie Lester (57)

**Dianne Benfield**

## JANUARY 2022 WALK

Eighteen walkers and three dogs met at the village hall, Tarrant Gunville, on Saturday 15th January. The weather was slightly misty with little sun until the afternoon, and a trace of frost. Final lunch arrangements could not be rung through to the Home Farm tearoom until we'd started towards Chettle.

We followed well marked paths round fields and parkland to Chettle. Some members wanted to stop at the village stores for coffee and their renowned pies so a later stop to look at St Mary's Church was missed. There is a 4000-year-old yew tree in the churchyard.

The walk turned past the church and Chettle House, through more parkland and curious alpacas, into woodland leading back to the access path and the village. Fourteen of us transferred to Home Farm for a delicious and varied lunch in the tea room.

**Judy Westgate**



(PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM BIRD: LOTS OF CHETTLE PARK AND HALF THE WALKERS...)



## **R.I.P.**

**Bill Medd** of Home Farm, aged 97.

### **Eric A Sellgren**

Eric arrived in Iwerne Minster in 1986 and was the vicar here until he retired in 1998. He lived in the village with his wife, Gill, and his family. An enthusiastic traveller, he took the opportunity of an exchange with an American pastor, John Baldwin, who came to minister to the Iwerne flock while Eric went to live and work in Minneapolis St Paul's. He found there was a huge contrast between the two places but felt that it was both a valuable and interesting experience. Eric went to live first in Motcombe after his retirement and latterly lived in Shaftesbury where he died in December. He is survived by Gill.

**(With thanks to Dennis Webb for passing on the information about Eric.)**

### **Stella and Hal Humphreys**

About 14 years ago, Hal and Stella Humphreys moved from the West Country to live at Home Farm. We came to live next door, and to care for them during the last 16 months, and learned a little of their lives together.

They both were brought up in the East End of London, from very different backgrounds. When they met, Hal took Stella home to meet his mother, and Stella's Jewish family, shocked at her going into a non-Jewish house, could not accept her back.

They married - Stella in a lemon-coloured dress and picture hat - and Hal became a taxi driver, learning 'the knowledge' to take his passengers to all parts of London. They both loved dancing, each weekend, at a variety of different palais de dance.

Stella learnt her much-loved mother-in-law's hairdressing skills, worked with her, and when they moved to the West Country, she came to live in an extension to their cottage. Hal's work took them to live near Shrewsbury, then back to North Devon, where they had a smallholding tending livestock, mainly pigs. Hal worked as accountant for an abattoir (they both became vegetarian) and he was later a senior office-holder in his trade union. They loved to travel,

and bought a boat – sailing all round the Continent on their holidays. He took an Open University Degree, read extensively on a wide variety of subjects particularly Philosophy and Quantum Physics, and was lively company with a challenging sense of humour.

Their delightful garden at Home Farm was a constant pleasure, full of birds, hedgehogs, private and peaceful.

Those who knew Stella when she first came to Iwerne, comment on her elegance, and her pretty appearance. Hal's devotion to her – they were married for 69 years – led to his care for her: he cooked, shopped and, when he was ill, discharged himself from hospital on a number of occasions, so as not to be parted from her.

Nelly, their little dog, completed their family.

Hannah Barrington, who came to help Stella and Hal and could often be seen in the village walking the Humphreys' dog, added how they both certainly loved Nelly. They were always very friendly and appreciative when she worked for them. Both always looked immaculate and were a very proud couple.

Stella Humphreys: 30-October-1931 to 30-December-2021

Hal Humphreys : 22-January-1930 to 21-January-2022

**(John and Lavender Buckland)**

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## **THANK YOU TO CLAYESMORE SCHOOL CHOIR FOR THE CAROLS ON THE CHALK IN DECEMBER**



## THE VIEW FROM ST MARY'S

With the ongoing works at St Mary's we were not sure what Christmas would bring, especially as the church was without heating! Happily, however, we enjoyed our traditional Christmas services in Clayesmore Chapel, thanks to the generosity of Mrs Jo Thomson, head of Clayesmore School, who offered us the use of the chapel for our services.

On the Sunday before Christmas we held our traditional Crib and Carol service, organised as ever by Penny Marsh and led by David John. It was as always a lovely occasion, although we did miss having our own crib which has graced St Mary's for so many years. The service was well-attended, perhaps partly thanks to the mulled wine and mince pies we enjoyed afterwards, courtesy of Clayesmore.

We also held the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day communion services at the Chapel. We enjoyed celebrating the birth of Christ by singing traditional hymns to the sound of Clayesmore's magnificent organ as much as our organist Sam Ryall enjoyed playing it! Thanks are due not only to Mrs Thomson but also to the school chaplain, Andrew West, who set up the chapel for us and preached our Christmas Day sermon.

Although we were unable to hold services at St Mary's this Christmas, the church has been open so that people can go in and pray, or simply sit quietly, and will continue to be for the time being.

Since Christmas we have reverted to holding services in the Abingdon Hall. It is convenient – right in the centre of the village – warm and relatively spacious so that our congregation can socially distance. This will continue during February, but we can't wait to get back into St Mary's to worship!

David Parkhouse

## MORE NEWS FROM ST MARY'S

**Churchyard Group** During the last year a group has met on the third Friday morning each month to work on the churchyard. We have removed much ivy from the yew trees, and the patches of brambles and elders from the bases of the trees. One of the conifers died, and we applied for and received permission to remove it. We replaced it with a red, single-flowered hawthorn, which is growing strongly. We have learnt how to upright gravestones and this year shall upright several of those which are a safety risk. Many thanks to all the group who have worked hard month after month. We meet at 10.00 and break for coffee and flapjack at 11.00. All are welcome.

**Easy Access** When the faculty for the redevelopment was granted, the Church Planning Authority (DAC) asked us to consider including an additional project for easy access to the building. We promised that this would be our next project, and we are now starting to prepare for submission for Planning Consent and also for funding.

There are several possible routes by which access for everybody could be provided, but the major problem with all but one of them is the amount of excavation needed to provide a ramp with a legally acceptable gradient.

It would be possible to create a ramp from Church Hill on the outside of the church wall which rose as the road fell. The major problem is that it would breach the listed section of the churchyard wall, and require an unsightly new ramp and wall where there is currently a grassy bank. The current stepped ramp access could be modified by breaking through the wall on left or right, at road level. The current steps and gateway celebrate the completion of the project to re-roof the church in 1952 and, whilst the ramp requires renovation, new ramps would require such long and extensive excavations to achieve an acceptable gradient that we feel it would visually spoil the entrance, as well as being very expensive. We were advised not to consider a mechanical lift which would in fact fit quite neatly into the bank on the RHS of the gate because they usually cannot be accessed without an able bodied person to find the key, and they often fail to work.

We have concluded that the most practical and visually attractive solution will be to create a new gateway in the wall bordering Church Road, towards the Vine Cottage end of the churchyard. It is here that the levels of the road and churchyard are closest to each other and this wall is not listed. We propose to

create a new gateway, which matches the existing one, and the ramp will start here and will initially go towards Vine Cottage, then turn north and then west so that the path meanders through the churchyard towards the main door, avoiding existing graves.

A second part of the project will be to restore the main ramped entrance steps so that the cracks and unevenness are removed and the entrance is better lit. A standalone ramp within the porch will bring the level up to that of the church floor.

We estimate that this whole project will cost about £30,000 and at present we do not have any of this money. We would welcome all and any donations towards this project and will also be applying to funding bodies for their help.

**Renovation of the Church Building.** In early December the church electricity supplier replaced and repositioned the meter. We were finally able to finish placing and consolidating the insulation in the south-west corner and begin installation of the under-floor heating pipes. These pipes are now all installed, and are being concreted in place. We hope that serious delays are now behind us.

**Richard Hood**



## THE GREAT DORSET STEAM FAIR

The Great Dorset Steam Fair is set to return in 2022 for the first time in three years. There will also be new attractions including a modern classic motorcycle section in addition to the modern classic car section. The show dates will be on Thursday August 25<sup>th</sup> to Bank Holiday Monday August 29<sup>th</sup> inclusive. All details about bookings can be found on the website: [gdsf.co.uk](http://gdsf.co.uk)

## VOLUNTEER NEEDED FOR MILK BOTTLE TOP COLLECTION

Firstly, may we thank Jean Glavin who, for many years, collected and found a good home for plastic milk bottle tops. We now need to a volunteer to continue this work. People may deposit tops at the church, and it is from here that the volunteer should routinely collect them and take/send them to a suitable home. Any takers? – Please ring John Goodliffe 01747 772970

Please note that we are discontinuing the printer cartridge collection. There have been too few in the last twelve months of any value. Thank you to all who have taken the trouble to leave them at the church in the past. Over three years we did raise nearly £200, which was distributed to The British Heart Foundation and Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance.

## PROGRESS IS MADE ON THE CLAYESMORE BOTTLE PROJECT... but empty bottles over 1L can still be handed in at the shop





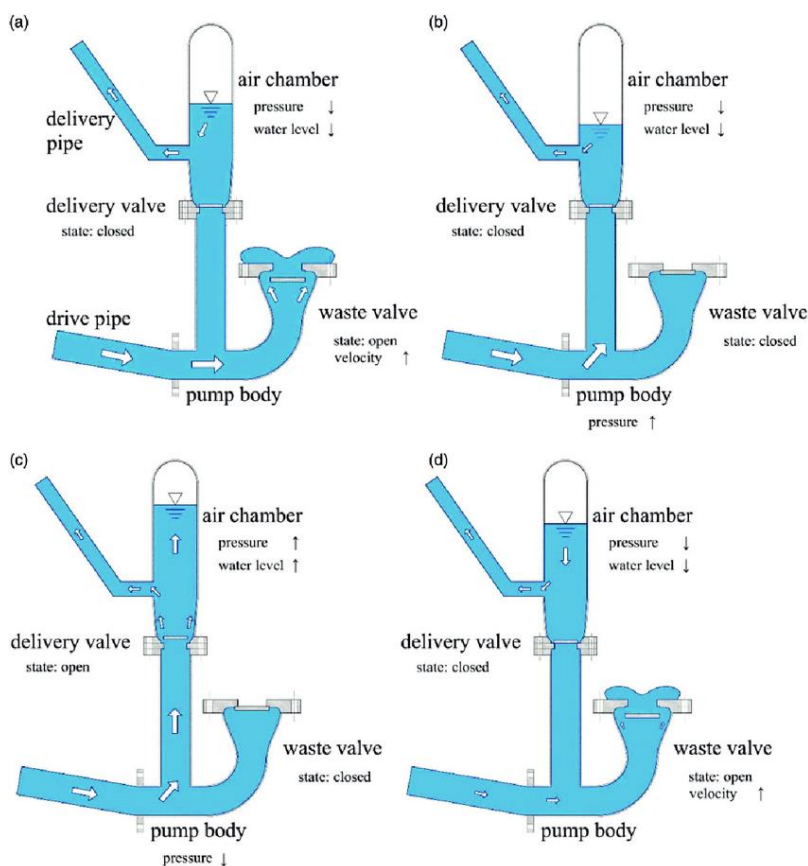
## IWERNE MINSTER'S WATER SUPPLY TO THE LATE C20TH

At this year's Royal Institution's Christmas lecture, Jonathan Van-Tam asked the question "What is the most important thing for human health, more important even than antibiotics?" The answer is, of course, clean, potable, water.

Until it went on the main supply, where did Iwerne Minster get its water? The village is lucky. It is renowned for the number of springs it has - over forty have been counted in wet weather. Our local geology is one of chalk overlaying Gault clay which in turn overlies Greensand. Rainwater percolates down through the chalk and then runs down from Iwerne Hill and Brookman's Valley, along the impermeable clay to the village where it comes to the surface. This is clean water, if a little hard. Until recently most villagers' water supply came from shallow wells dug down to the base of the chalk. To draw the water, sometimes you dipped, and sometimes you pumped – there is still plenty of evidence of both modes in the village. Once collected the water was carried in buckets to where it was needed, the whole affair a somewhat laborious chore.

There was another way. It required a little capital outlay, but, once installed, this system cost nothing to run, just a little preventative maintenance every few years. It is a water supply system powered by a hydraulic ram. The Iwerne Estate's water supply was powered by a hydraulic ram situated in what is now the garden of 'Sycamores' near the bridge on the A350.

What is a hydraulic ram? It is a simple pump powered by the flow of the very water it pumps. See diagram.

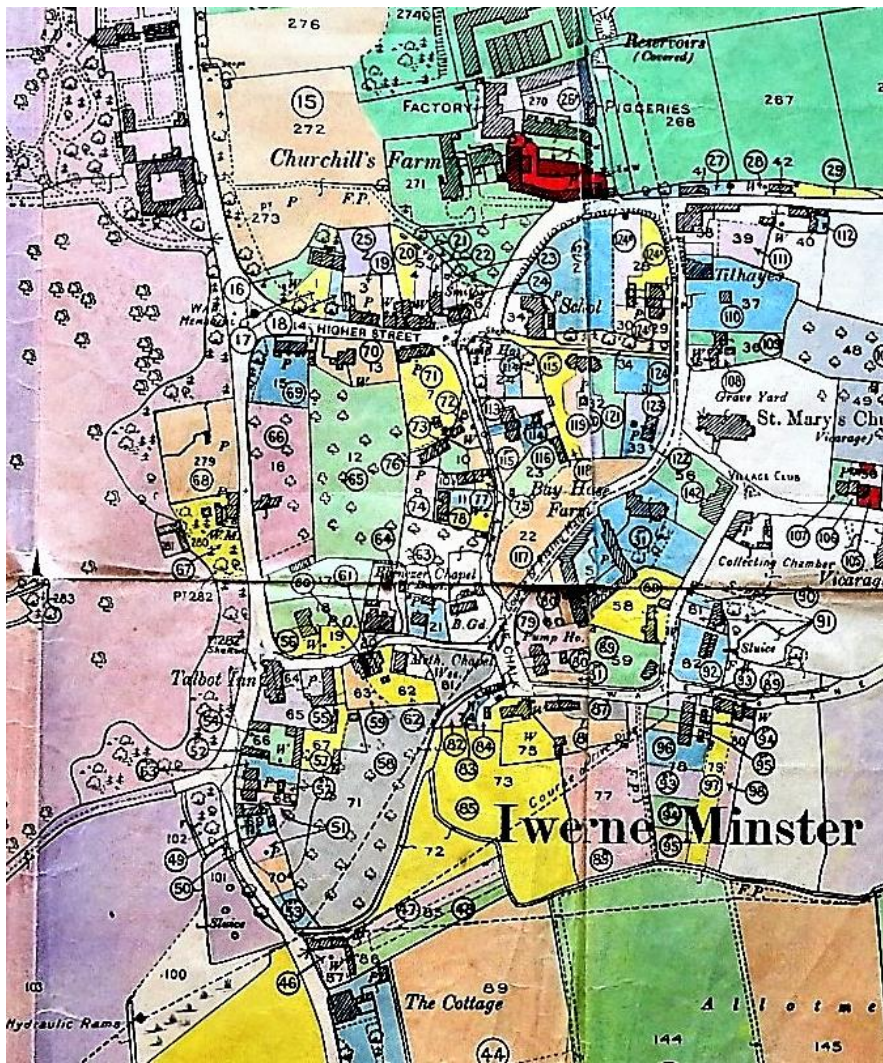


The flow of water closes the waste valve, so water is forced up past the delivery valve, and compresses the air in the air chamber. When the air pressure in the chamber gets too great, it starts pushing water back, which closes the delivery valve and water is diverted up the delivery pipe. While this has been happening, the water pressure at the waste valve has dropped, so it opens and water begins to flow through it again. The cycle repeats.

The Iwerne Estate supply was driven by water originating from springs in the old vicarage, now Devine House. Follow the dotted line on the extract from the map accompanying the 1930 Estate sale on the next page.

It fed to a 'collecting chamber' on Old School Lane (still in existence). The drive pipe went down Old School Lane, crossed Watery Lane and went through the gardens

of The Terrace, then across what is now the children's play park then south west, along the Brookside Cottages, under the A350 to the pump. Waste water was vented back into the Iwerne Stream. The delivery pipe went back under the A350, through what was the orchard to The Chalk, up Hobgoblin and Church Hill, under Tower Hill and on up to a reservoir where the Home Farm complex now is. From there it was fed to the dairy, piggery, etc., and, once treated with chlorine, to the main house, which, from the 1930s, became Clayesmore School. The ram supplied the school until the mid-1970s when it was replaced by an electric pump.

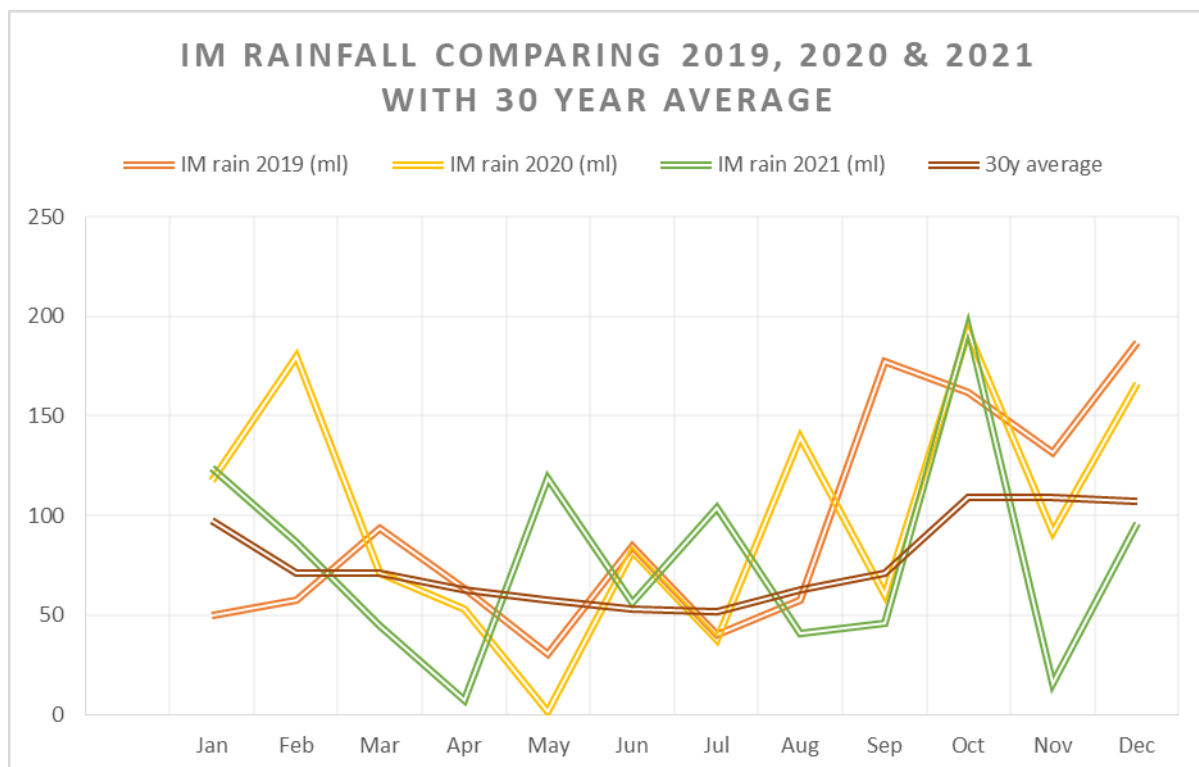


Rams are *cheap to run and maintain*, so are widely used where a suitable water supply exists. See [Ram Pump Documentary-BBC - YouTube](#) . A local example is Peggs Farm which has used rams for decades. Its first, installed in 1926, can pump 1000 gallons a day to a height of 30 feet. Its second, installed in 1934, can pump 1500 a day to a height of 100 feet. Both are still running (now with valves lined with old wellie boot rubber). When he still had his dairy herd, John Hopper reckons they saved him £10,000 a year on the electricity he'd otherwise have had to buy to pump water to the dairy and for the cattle troughs around his fields. There is a supplier in Accrington: <https://blakeshydram.co.uk/>

Many thanks to John Hooper, Brian O'Luanaigh, Ron Benfield, Graeme Watling, Geoff Dorrington, and others, for sharing their first-hand knowledge. Any errors are mine alone!

**John Goodliffe**

**An historical society for Iwerne Minster? Are you interested in being part of an informal group researching the history of Iwerne Minster? If so, please contact me: [john@hairy-barbarian.com](mailto:john@hairy-barbarian.com) or 01747 4429705** **John Goodliffe**



With thanks to Ron Benfield for the figures



## VILLAGE CHARACTERS

In earlier editions of the newsletter, Penny Marsh wrote about her memories of life in Iwerne Minster in the 50s. She now thinks that we should look at some of the characters mentioned in those articles and where better to start than with the oldest of them, Willie Wareham, who lived in what is now Goose Corner.

When Willie turned one hundred and one in October 1960, the *Western Gazette* celebrated his birthday with an article all about his life. Apparently Willie's main interest in life was looking after his quarter-acre garden, which he cared for almost unaided. He had spent the day before his birthday up a ladder picking apples. 'But I thought I'd have a holiday today,' he told the *Western Gazette* representative who called to offer congratulations.

Full of energy, he spent many hours daily working in the garden, but that year's rainy summer made things difficult for him. 'There's been too much mud,' he said. A few weeks before he had finished digging up 10cwt [half a ton] of potatoes in his garden. Then, finding time hanging a bit heavy on his hands, gave his son-in-law and daughter, Mr and Mrs Arthur Woodley, who lived next door, a hand to lift their potatoes.

He lived in Iwerne Minster nearly all his life. He was a roadman for over fifty years, and on his retirement took over a small holding which he subsequently gave up because of illness. 'I had heart trouble in 1928 and thought it was all over with me,' he said.



He served on the Iwerne Parish Council, the Shaftesbury Rural Council, and the old Board of Guardians. At the time the article was written,

Mr Wareham had eight surviving children, fourteen grandchildren and nineteen great-grandchildren. His wife had died in 1944.

Besides his sister he had a 91-year old brother, Mr. Richard Wareham, living in Devizes Road, Salisbury.

In Jack Hooper's (John's father) memoir *Memories of a Dorset Countryman*, there is another charming story about this remarkable sounding character: "William Wareham worked on the roads; in those days it meant splitting up stones etc, and as he was not well he saw his doctor who told him to take an easier job; he was then about fifty. He went to Ringwood market and bought a donkey and walked it back as far as Wimborne, but the donkey, being tired, he left it there, came home, and the next day walked back to Wimborne, and brought the donkey home!"

**With thanks to Penny Marsh for the loan of the newspaper article.**

### IWERNE MINSTER NEWS

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Contributions are welcome from residents of Iwerne Minster or anyone with an interest in the village. Get in touch if you know of anything that is newsworthy.

Please send any contributions by email or hard copy through the letter box.

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The views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor.

#### Village Diary

Paul Le Prevost compiles the Iwerne Minster Village Diary, available by email and pinned to noticeboards. Please let Paul know of new events at [paul.leprevost@btinternet.com](mailto:paul.leprevost@btinternet.com)

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