



# WOT!

## About Ratby

PUBLISHED BY RATBY SCOUT GROUP



## REMEMBRANCE



I have been marching as part of the Remembrance Day Parade for the last thirty years, beginning as a Cub Scout, and now as Group Scout Leader. In that time I have seen 1<sup>st</sup> Ratby Scout Group grow from one Cub Pack to the current Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and our latest edition of Explorer Scouts.

I was extremely proud to see so many of Ratby Scout's youth march alongside the other village youth organisations.

It is a testament to Ratby as a community, and the continuing relevance of Remembrance to everyone today.

**Dave Payne**, 1st Ratby Group Scout Leader

**More on page 2**





## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The haunting peal of half muffled bells greeted villagers at the start of the annual Remembrance Service on Sunday November 8<sup>th</sup>. The parade, marshalled by Chris Boothby, with Ratby Co-operative Band and Union Jack Bearer Tony Briggs arrived at church for the service, which was conducted by our Rector, Dr Peter Hooper, assisted by Rev. Fred Brodie. The large congregation included a record number of our uniformed young people with their seven flags.

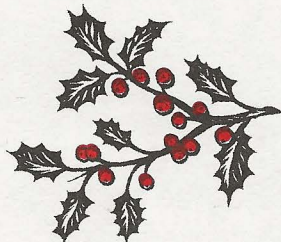
The service included readings by Deputy Lieutenant Mr Riaz Rabat Bem, and RSM Ponter of the Anglian Regiment. Poems were read by Mrs Helen Gray and Mr Chris Boothby. The Act of Remembrance and responses said by Mr John Weston MBE.

Wreaths were laid at the Memorial Screen and the names of the sixty who fell in two World Wars and Afghanistan were read out by Mr Jack Haywood.

At the conclusion of the service the Band led the parade to the War Memorial for a short service. Wreaths were laid, and a bugler sounded the last post.

The Village Hall was open for viewing of a special display of photographs and accounts of Ratby servicemen and women, organised by Mr Doug Harwood of Ratby History Society. The Deputy Lieutenant had nothing but praise for the organisation and turn out for the event.

Jack Haywood



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Ratby Community Orchard Apple day was held on Sunday October 4<sup>th</sup>. Crowds came down to enjoy the apple themed activities. There were plenty of apples to taste and for juicing, and a whole range of games and activities to join in with. The refreshment tent was busy as usual, and the sun even managed to shine! Ratby Junior Band played for us, making the event extra special. See the picture below.



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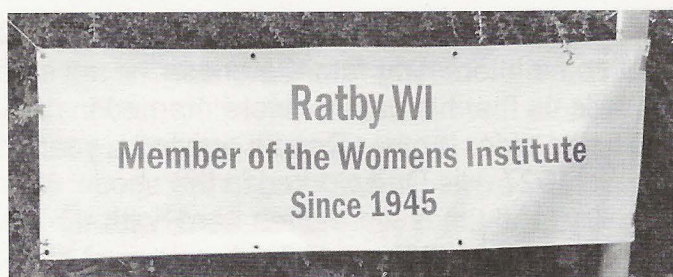
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## **Ratby Women's Institute**

### **Cream Tea.**

Ratby WI would like to thank all of you who came to our complimentary Cream Tea on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September to help us celebrate our 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday and the WI Movements 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The displays of old Minute Books, photos and memorabilia proved a popular attraction and visitors were also able to see some of our Members writing, flower arranging and craft skills. To ensure Ratby WI continues for many more Birthdays why not come along and join us. Our meetings are lighthearted and fun with a variety of speakers or social evenings and a chance to make new friends. We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month at the Village Hall, Main Street at 7.30 p.m. Just turn up for a visit or ring the President Viv for further details (0116 2393738). Speaker topics for 2016 include, "Fused Glass", "Costumes from Concordia Theatre" and "Being a Policewoman in the 1960's"

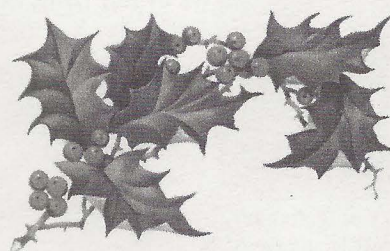
### **Escape from France**

In August we held an Open Meeting at which Jack Haywood gave a talk about his family's escape from occupied France during WW11. Visitors doubled the usual numbers attending and were captivated by the details of the journey Jack and his family endured to get to safety in England.



Ratby Community Orchard Wassail will be held on Saturday January 9<sup>th</sup> 2016! Look out for posters in the village. We'll be meeting up at The Railway at 7.30 before walking to the Orchard, making a clamour on the way with drums and saucepan lids....

Wrap up warm and bring a torch please!



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## LOUIS ARMSTRONG in LEICESTER

Ratby resident Brian Leader has shared with Wot some interesting family stories. He tells us that his parents were married in 1926, his older brother Dennis arriving a year later in 1927. His Dad worked in the shoe industry, and times were often hard, with sometimes very little work. To supplement his wages he took on a part time job as a scene shifter at the Royal Opera House in Leicester. Brian recalls watching rehearsals, including a memorable scene in 'The Vagabond King' when a guillotine came down over the unfortunate King's head. The curtain always closed before the 'beheading.'

Amongst Brian's father's many tasks was the job of collecting baggage and musical instruments from the station to transport to the theatre. Brian remembers as a young lad riding on the baggage en route to the theatre. His Dad was proud to remember that he was asked to transport instruments for the great Louis Armstrong, who promptly offered him a job in America. Sadly he had to decline, as he had his family to consider.

Brian himself was born in 1935, and his Dad was called up after the outbreak of war. But the Royal Opera House remained a feature in the family's life. Brother Dennis had a friend, Alan Boot, who worked there, and he encouraged Dennis to join him in operating the limelights. He was just sixteen at the time. Dennis also had a brush with fame, when he was invited to join the Joe Loss Orchestra as Joe's valet. At the time Joe Loss was the Glenn Miller of Britain. The Royal Opera House was popular during the war, as people wanted entertainment to help them escape the horrors of war.

During the sixties Brian worked at Jones and Shipman in Leicester. The premises had been a Lockheed Factory during the war, making aircraft components. A fellow employee of Brian's told him that he'd been there during the war, and recalled that one of the work crew had arranged to get Glenn Miller to play for them. The Glenn Miller Orchestra was over here entertaining troops at the time. A US Airborne division was based at Victoria Park, and others in Braunstone. The arrival of 'swing' from America transformed music over here too!

The Royal Opera House opened in 1877 and was demolished in 1960. Malcolm Arcade in Silver Street was built on the site.



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## Woodland Creation in Ratby

Cawrey Ltd has contributed to woodland creation in and around Ratby for the last 30 years. Much of the planting has been along the M1 corridor, to supplement the established trees along the edge of the motorway between the Groby Road Bridge and the N63. cycle route between Ratby and Glenfield, the old Leicester to Swannington Railway Line.

As part of the new homes developments earth banks have been raised alongside the M1 from Kirby Grange Farm at the end Taverner Drive to near the new road entrance off Groby Road on Bancroft Way. These provide some acoustic sheltering from the motorway, already partly in a cutting. Native woodland trees and shrubs have been planted on the bunds and up to the M1 boundary. The first sections were planted in 1992/3 and some of the trees are now 40 feet tall ! Recently the bunds along the new cycle path from Groby Road to Fielding Lane have been planted, including a new hedge alongside Bancroft Way, assisted by Ratby cubs. Over 25,000 trees and shrubs have been planted alongside the M1. The plantations are managed by Greg Thurlow. The oldest sections are now being thinned to remove faster growing species and allow Oak and other traditional broadleaf trees to grow & strengthen the shelter from the M1, for the Eastern side of the village.

To the West of Ratby, Wirlybones Wood was planted in 2002, 15 acres of former grazing land, part of Pear Tree Farm, planted with 11,500 Native tree species to be managed as a commercial Wood, for long-term timber production, with areas of coppice to produce Hazel, Willow & Ash stakes for local use. Areas of meadow have been left to encourage & support wildlife, particularly in the old meanders near Burroughs & Slate Brook. Permissive paths have been created for public access and are now well used by walkers.

An area of short rotation coppice planting was established with over 10,000 'Stools' of fast growing 'Tora' hybrid willow on a 1 hectare site north of Burroughs Road, near the Ford. This is harvested on a 3 year cycle and processed

through a diesel 'chipper' to be dried in the storage building off Desford Lane. It is used as fuel for heating the Pear Tree Office Units.

If Planning Permission is eventually granted for development South of Markfield Road, we have pledged to increase the area of coppice planting and create more woodland as screening to add to the Southern boundary of the National Forest. The new areas of woodland will allow access to the public for the foreseeable future to hundreds of acres of new and established woodland, an asset for the whole community.

**John Cawrey, November 2015.**



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## SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

The Lunch Club in Ratby Church Rooms continues to thrive, as can be seen from the picture below! A Christmas Lunch will be held on Sunday November 29<sup>th</sup>. January 31<sup>st</sup> will be the next date for your diary. If you would like to attend please call:

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Photo by Sue Hooper



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## The first OPEN MIC NIGHT at THE PLOUGH

Wot a first night event! Everyone rolled up not knowing what to expect. It was a great evening: kicking off with Steve Boud, Tim Brooke and John Adsley playing songs from Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Bill Withers and the Eagles. They were followed by the voice and guitar of Keith Sinclair with a set that included a brilliant rendition of 'Girl from the North Country'. Then it was Les Eastham on guitar, harmonica and vocal performing Dylan, Donovan plus his own songs which told of his meeting with Gene Vincent (I remember him!) and a tongue in cheek story of his own love life, 'We're not right for each other.' Both great fun and good stories. The Sunset Buskers, Sam & Sam -- saxophone & acoustic guitar duo delighted the audience with a wide range of styles and genres. You can find them on Facebook [thesunsetbuskers](https://www.facebook.com/thesunsetbuskers) and Twitter @sunsetbuskers.

Eddy Hall was up next accompanying himself on acoustic guitar, again with a wide repertoire of mod songs from Small Faces, Kinks, Stones, and the Troggs.

The last set of the first half was Stuart Rowe from Ratby who accompanied himself on key board, again with a wide selection of songs including Stevie Wonder. He was then joined by Les to complete the first half.

All the guest artists then performed an encore which rounded off a great evening. It was such a success that the landlord, John is enthusiastic for a repeat on the first Monday of every month! The next Open Mic night will be on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015, 8.30pm at the Plough.

Alan Sims



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## Ratby Pre-school gets GOOD OFSTED Report

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> October Ratby Pre-school received a visit from Ofsted and following a thorough inspection it was found to be a solid GOOD in all areas.

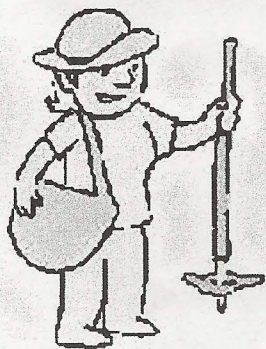
This is fantastic news for the Pre-school and the community and is a reflection on the incredible hard work and dedication shown by the staff. A couple of the comments made by the inspector are here:

"Staff know children well and teaching is good. They use their observations of the children's play and interests to provide a varied range of experiences that capture the children's curiosity. Children make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for school. Staff place a strong focus on those who need any additional support to help them catch up quickly."

Also, following some great fundraising efforts the setting has been able to install some much needed French doors in the Church Rooms. This gives the children direct access to the side garden, which is a huge improvement for everyone.

So, massive CONGRATULATIONS to the Pre-school Staff and Committee on a well-deserved GOOD rating.

Thank you for



keeping Ratby tidy

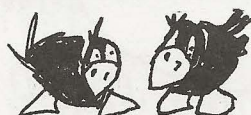
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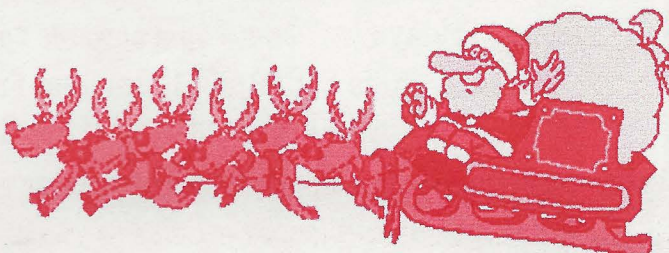
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