

# FOUR AMAZING BUSINESSES IN ONE SMALL VILLAGE!

## Is this the busiest spot in Ash Vale?



**The Swan Pub has been a central meeting place in Ash Vale since 1857 when it was built by the Tupper Family in whose hands it remained until 1928.**

It was from the outset much patronised by the military who had come to Aldershot in 1854, the year Anglo-French troops left for the Crimea. "Tuppers" fame spread throughout the world as it was so well known in the British Army, with many a soldier in a far flung corner of the Empire dreaming of a cold glass of ale in "Tuppers" as the heat beat down upon him.

**Once you've finished house hunting pop in for a meal and a drink!**

In the 19th Century "Tuppers" had the reputation of being the resort of sportsmen such as prize-fighters, cock-fighters and pigeon shooters. Customers included the famous prize-fighters Tom Sayers and John Heenen. There was also a rat pit on the premises where spectators would bet on the

number of rats killed by a dog put into the pit for that purpose.

When The Swan was rebuilt in 1900 it was for a short time known as The White Swan. With the rebuilding "Tuppers" lost a little of its rough image. Now there was dancing on the lawn in the summer to a Salvation Army band and there was also a maze for the amusement of customers. At this time many parties and couples arrived by boat at the pub from the Basingstoke Canal, coming under the Heathvale Bridge known as "Tuppers" Bridge.

Over the last 20 years under the guidance of Derek and Andrea Middleton it has been refurbished to an amazing standard and offers an enormous choice of fine dishes with an interesting selection of wines and real ales.

## An iconic business!

**Vale Furnishers started in the 60's that has grown over the years in Ash Vale. Alan Chandler built the new store across the road from the wharf 15 years ago, not long after we opened our Ash Vale office.**

Both Bridges and Vale Furnishers have continued to grow over the years and we are currently watching them under go their 3rd extension to the building, making them one of the largest family owned and run furniture stores in the south. The store is like Doctor who's Tardis, and as you walk round the selection is never ending, as the building has grown so has the selection as they now sell sofas, dining, beds, carpets, curtains, accessories and lamps.

**When we have found the home for you, furnish it with furniture that inspires you from this fantastic local company.**



I think like us the reason for their success is service; like buying a house buying furniture is a major decision, once we have helped you find your perfect home, then it's important to be able to make it yours, their staff are there too guide you into the right decision, not just pounce on you when you walk through the door.

At times like this a friendly, experienced attitude, and first class service is just what we all need.

## BRIDGES...OF COURSE!

**The first office we opened, back in the recession of 1991.**



Our reputation locally is totally unrivalled and the staff over the last 17 years have been dedicated to keeping this office at the forefront of the local property market. Several former employees have gone on to open their own companies or been promoted to the board of Directors at Bridges and I am sure they all look back on their times at this superb office with very fond memories.



## High Quality Joinery & Aluminium Services

**High Quality Joinery & Aluminium Services is a well-established, local family run business that was started in 1968 by Steve Lingwood and his partner John Humphries. The company was originally situated in Redan Road, Farnborough and moved to their current location at Lynchford Lane, in 1980's where it has been owned and managed by Steve's son Paul Lingwood for the past 18 years.**

As all the directors and many of the staff live in the Ash Vale area they have worked hard over the years to build strong links with other local companies in the area such as Vale Furnishers and Bridges Estate Agent. They have completed many projects in the village such as building a new property in Woolards Road, installing a Japanese Tea House in Ash and are currently involved in the

extension at Vale Furnishers. HQJ originally started as a joinery company, installing doors, windows and conservatories but as with all business they adapted to changes in their customers requirements and expanded into Aluminium and UPVC products. The newest addition to their range is the Aluminium Bi-Fold Doors, which are all made in their factory, each to

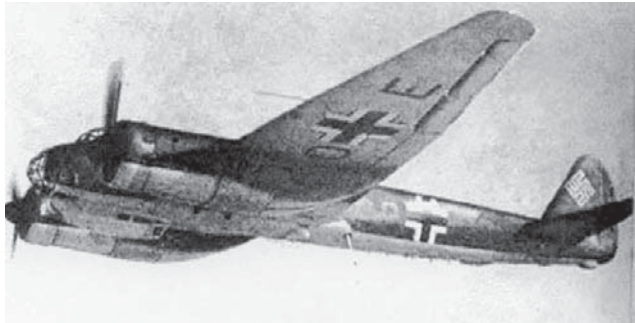
the customer's specification. As you can expect from a quality installer High Quality are members of FENSA and members of National House Builders Council & Federation of Master Builders. All sizes of projects are undertaken, from installing a new window to building a new house, they are always happy to provide a free no obligation quote.

**Please visit us a**  
[www.hqj@btconnect.com](http://www.hqj@btconnect.com)  
**Tel: 01252 548702**  
**for more information.**

# George Crosses

## 1940 By Omar Fowler

(9 years old at the time and living in Aldershot, Hampshire)



I woke up suddenly, the air raid sirens were wailing their warning once again. I quickly got out of bed, put on my coat over my pyjamas and trudged with my

mother through the night and into one of the community air raid shelters just around the corner on 'The Green'. We would probably have to stay there for the rest of the night as the sirens were now sounding more frequently and there seemed little point in returning home until the morning.

In the distance, we could hear the sound of 'crump;crump' and the sound of the 'AA' guns firing into the night. We had seen the searchlights scanning the night sky as we walked through the darkness to the shelters. The noise of explosions seemed to be getting nearer, they seemed to be only a few miles away. It was then that there was a buzz of conversation around the shelter "They're bombing Tongham station!". There was a general movement towards the entrance of the shelter and then outside into the night.



Tongham station

We lived on a hill and 'The Green' where the shelters were situated, overlooked the rooftops. Once outside we could clearly see fires and explosions in the distance. Tongham was only about 3 miles away and unknown to us at the time, an ammunition train had pulled into the tiny station for the night.

The German intelligence had been pretty good and their navigation had been spot-on! Unknown to the British

at the time, their accurate navigation was due mainly to the German Lorenz beam system, transmitting precise co-ordinates over the target area. In addition to this they had a spy situated high up in the 'Hogs Back Hotel', only a mile or so from Tongham station! The spies signal light had been spotted by a Home Guard outpost, also positioned on high ground a few miles to the south. The bombing continued for some time and the explosions vibrated through the darkness.

Finally the drone of the bombers moved away into the distance, leaving flickering fires and few explosions at the scene of the smoking station. It was later revealed that a brave railway worker had uncoupled one of the blazing ammunition wagons from the rest of the train, thus preventing a major disaster. An heroic act for which he was awarded the **George Cross!**

The German spy was caught at the Hogs Back Hotel and later taken to London where he was tried and subsequently executed.

*This story was submitted to the People's War site by Lin Freeman of Radio Derby CSV on behalf of Mr Omar Fowler*

## A brass plaque commemorates the award of the George Medal to George Keen and George Leach.



The two Tongham railwaymen separated a burning wagon from a bombed ammunition train, thus saving Tongham from a major catastrophe.

The hop kiln opposite has been converted for business use, other buildings in the area are decorated with designs of hops, which used to be grown in the area.

## Education, Education, Education.

**Right from the very start we have supported the local schools. I personally was lucky enough to win a scholarship to Salesian College when I was 11 and it made me understand the value of a good education.**

We are privileged in this area to have a variety of very good schools. Walsh Memorial, Holly Lodge, Wyke, St Paul's, Shawfield and Ash Grange all offer excellent primary education and Ash Manor grew in stature for many years under the guidance of Bob Linell. All have benefitted from our sponsorship over the last 17 years and have been kind enough to recognise our support allowing us to display our sponsored by boards during the various events. Even in these tough times we try hard to keep the support going.

Bridges have been a good friend to Walsh Memorial Infant School for many years. As a main sponsor they have helped our PTA provide additional equipment, visiting theatres, and exciting visitors all which help bring our curriculum alive. We are very grateful for their support.

**Mrs S Cawson  
Headteacher**

"We have been very grateful to have Bridges supporting numerous events over the years, mainly the main prize for our Summer and Christmas Fayres. It is always nice to be supported by local businesses and the money raised makes a big difference to our school!"

**Sheila Ratcliffe -  
P.A. to Headteacher**

# SAXONS



## Ash is a Saxon village!

The last Saxon to whom the area belonged was called Azor and he was one of the few Saxons who kept some of their land after the Norman Conquest.

When he died he left the land to the monks of Chertsey abbey in return for prayers for his soul. In the Domesday book, compiled in 1086, the church is listed and there were 10 villagers and six smallholders. Azor's land would have included the whole of Ash & Normandy and it was referred to as Henlei because that is where Azor would have lived, on the site of the present Henley Park Mansion in Normandy.

## My amazing Mum! Ash library is one of the most outstanding in the county.

Run super-efficiently by MY AMAZING MUM, Anne Raffermati, for the last 30 years it has one of the best feedback scores recorded in the whole country. For a small village library this is almost unheard of.

The traffic at the library is relentless with people using the Free Internet Access, Borrowing books or DVD's or just relaxing with a coffee and a magazine.

**"The library is very child friendly and hosts lots of class visits from local schools".**

There's a Children's Story time on a Thursday and Babies Rhyme time on a Friday.



# Victoria Hall

**The Victoria Hall in Ash Hill Road was built in 1897 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.**

It was built at a cost of £475 by W. Woodman on land donated by Dr Chester who owned Poyle Park. Dr Chester laid the foundation stone and, a few years later, provided the clock in memory of his mother.

The clock tower and its deep well were added in 1900, and the halls at

# Ash or Aesc?

In the year 976 Ash was spelt 'Aesc', which meant 'at the ash tree' - an appropriate name, since ash trees still spring up like weeds every year in the middle of the village.

The village of Ash grew up on an area of London Clay, next to the river gravel of the flood plain of the Blackwater River where the soil was good.

## About Ash...

Ash is a village and civil parish in the borough of Guildford, with a population of 17,549 according to the 2001 census. It is at the far west of the Guildford borough, and the urban development in the parish runs directly into Aldershot, which is on the western side of the River Blackwater, in Hampshire. The census area of Ash Wharf has a population of 6,071.

A museum is located in the cemetery chapel. The parish is served by Ash railway station, Ash Vale railway station and North Camp railway station. Ash Manor Technology College has 1,013 students aged 11-16.

*Ash United* is the local football club, which came 20th in the top 20 of the 2007/08 season league finish. The club is situated on Youngs Drive, opposite Shawfield Park.

## and Ash Vale

Ash Vale is a village in the parish of Ash. Its population according to the 2001 census is 7,326, yet extensive development in the following five year period has led to a current population nearer 9,000, giving Ash Vale an equal number of inhabitants to the historically more significant neighbour with which it now merges.

Ash Vale is located in the borough of Guildford, yet is geographically positioned closer to the Hampshire towns of Aldershot and Farnborough, immediately across the Blackwater River.

The village owes its existence to transport links, its geography demarked largely between its railway station and Ash Wharf on

the Basingstoke Canal.

An increasing proportion of the village's population relies on the half-hourly 40-minute railway connection to London's Waterloo railway terminus, and the small semi-military community of the post-war era has become a largely commuter settlement.



## *The* Greyhound Pub

Is a late medieval building, once the only public house in the village.

Its name came from the greyhounds on the Coat of Arms of the Gaynesford family of Poyle Manor.

the side in 1906. There are two foundation stones, either side of the front entrance, commemorating those involved in raising the hall. There are town inscriptions cut into the brickwork. "DEEDS NOT WORDS PROVE MANS WORTH" and "WORK WINS"

Village fairs were once held on the green outside Merryworth (1510), a timber framed, jettied yeoman farmer's house of flint and brick construction, and one time home of the "Merryworth" breed of cocker spaniels.

# THE BIRTH OF FLIGHT

**One of the most famous residents of Ash Vale must be Samuel Cody.**

**Cody was born in Davenport, Iowa in 1867. A showman & Cowboy he toured the USA with a wild west show with demonstrations of pistol sharpshooting & horsemanship.**

In 1890 he took the show to Europe. He is famous for his 'Cody War Kites' that were used in World War I as a smaller alternative to balloons and used mainly for artillery spotting. His most famous achievement though was to be the first man in Britain to conduct a powered flight on 16th October 1908. His home, Valecroft, on the corner of Lysons Avenue and Vale Road displays a plaque commemorating his residence. His funeral procession in 1913 started at the property with full military honours, the gun carriage and four massed bands and made its way to the Aldershot Military cemetery. It was described by one resident as 'the greatest affair Ash Vale ever saw'.



## Valecroft - the home of Samuel Cody



**Valecroft was the home of Samuel Cody, the first man to take a recorded flight in Great Britain.**

Cody worked on "man-lifting kites" for the army, and tested his flying boats on the Basingstoke Canal. He was killed in 1913 when one of his aircraft crashed, and was given a full military funeral. His coffin was drawn on a gun carriage from Valecroft to the Aldershot Military Cemetery, with four massed bands following.

*Images used with kind permission of Farnborough Air Sciences Trust.*

# Ash Wharf

**At the turn of the century Ash Wharf was still busy**

With pleasure boats operating from Charles Knowles' Boathouse, situated on the bank, on the site of the present parade of shops.



Behind the boathouse, in Wharf Road, was the George and Dragon Pub; and the Bridge House Pub was on the corner now occupied by Vale Furnishers, with William Instone's smithy and the Standard of England behind it. Although the canal went into decline when railway transport became available, it was still occasionally used to transport heavy goods. In 1906 the bricks for the building of St Mary's Church in Ash Vale were unloaded at Ash Wharf.

## ...WHY WE ASH VALE!!!



### **Tony Raffermti** **- MD, Bridges**

Apart from living in the area since 1976 it is where I opened the first office of Bridges in 1991, no houses, no buyers, just me and my telephone! It seems like a lifetime ago, but I can still remember the first visitors to the office, the first property I took on and the first buyer I registered. Old Farm Place wasn't built, Vale furnishers had only just started building their fabulous showroom, and you used to be able to park in the village quite easily! How things have changed. This little village at Xmas looks great, both us and Vale make a big effort and the new Xmas lights add so much to an already idyllic street scene. Friendly people and a busy and industrious Parish council are sure to make this area a great place to live for a very long time.



### **Gary A Milton -** **Ash Vale lettings**

Gary has lived in the Ash Vale area since 1981.

Starting work as a trainee butcher in Tom, John & Harry's in Ash Vale, he soon became very well known in the village and is still recognised by "old" customers. Upon leaving the butchers he looked to join Bridges Estate Agents was told to get trained and come back as they were new to the area, so he joined Mann and Co and subsequently was head hunted by Redwoods in Basingstoke. 9 years later came back to Bridges where he has developed a great rapport with the general public.

His knowledge of the Ash Vale area is considerable having spent some 28 years or so here.



### **Dominic Barnes** **- Director, Bridges**

It's a great place to live and it's a great place to work. I'm lucky enough to have been helping people move here for the last 12 years and one thing that stands out is how down to earth the people are and their loyalty is like nowhere else I have worked before. I have lost count of the amount of repeat business from those loyal clients that return to us time after time, year after year. One couple have moved four times with me starting with their first one bedroom house to their current four bed family home so they have never moved through anyone else! There is a real village feel and with the busy lives we all lead you will still find people have the time of day to stop and chat or give a wave and At Bridges we have always felt we are part of this community, long may that continue.