



# Eydon Village News

JUNE 2026

ISSUE 467

## *In This Issue*

### Regular Features

- Bin Collections . . . . . 6
- Notes from St Nicholas . . 2
- Parish Matters . . . . . 2,3

### News & Views

- Eydon Ladies . . . . . 3
- Plant Sale Review . . . . . 3
- Village Statement . . . . . 3
- First Wednesday Club . . . 4
- Gallery in the Garage . . . 4
- Centenary Celebrations. . 5
- Recipe of the Month. . . 6
- Eydon 200 Club . . . . . 6
- Meet Your neighbour . . 7
- Personal View . . . . . 8

## *Next Issue*

Deadline for July newsletter is 21st June 2026

**Please email to:**

evn@eydonparish.gov.uk



## The Freedom Of Eydon Awards 17th August 2026

**HOLD THE DATE!**

As Parish Council Chairman I am delighted to inform everyone the Parish Council has awarded more individuals this prestigious award.

We will be arranging a presentation ceremony for this to be held in the Village hall provisionally set for 17 August.

We will update the village later with who will be presenting the awards and details of the celebration.

There are four awards to be made this time unfortunately 2 are posthumous.

The recipients are

**Judith Watson, John Grindlay**

And posthumously:

**David Kench, Alan Watson**

I am sure many villagers will recognise the efforts all four have put in for our community in many ways over many years. Further details to follow.

Kind regards to all

**Keith Simmons**  
**Eydon Parish Council Chairman**

# PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

**The May meeting was held on 12 May at 19:30 in the Village Hall**

**Attendance:** Councillors, Keith Simmons, Andy Reynolds, Kim Keeble were present, along with the Clerk, Steven Fox.

**Previous Minutes:** The minutes from 14 April were Approved.

**Council Governance:** The May meeting is the most important meeting of the year where Roles and Responsibilities are assigned and Governance documents agreed. Key actions were the election of Keith Simmons as Chair and Kim Keeble Vice Chair.

**Public Comment:** Twenty members of the public attended mainly to discuss the planting of a new hedge line by a resident on Moreton Road. This hedge line is of a non-indigenous species and has been planted very close to a neighbour's border. Although the Village Design Statement stipulates the use of indigenous species in hedgerows the council was unsure of how to enforce this directive and together with other associated planning issues on this site the council resolved that the Chairman would contact WNC for advice.

**Matters Arising:** The Chairman advised that he will be setting up a Sub Committee to update the Village Design Statement and will be contacting those who have already expressed a wish to be part of the project. Should any further individual wish to join the project please contact him at [Keith.Simmons.Gov.Uk](mailto:Keith.Simmons.Gov.Uk)

It was reported that the two stiles on the Culworth footpath are in a

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Notes from St Nicholas



### SERVICES FOR JUNE 2026

#### Sunday 7th June

10.00 Morning Prayer

#### Sunday 14th June

930 Holy Communion

#### Sunday 21st June

10.00 Family Service

#### Sunday 28th June

11.00 Holy Communion at Aston Le Walls

930 BCP Communion Byfield

Please contact the Rector or a Churchwarden if you need further information or have any questions

**Rector** Rev Clare Glover 260204  
[revclare@outlook.com](mailto:revclare@outlook.com)

#### Churchwardens

Lyn Evans 01327 261164

[lynandsimon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lynandsimon@hotmail.co.uk)

Matt Wheeldon 07968 092503

[majwheeldon@btinternet.com](mailto:majwheeldon@btinternet.com)

St Nicholas Church, Eydon, has stood at the heart of our village for many generations, marking the seasons of life through worship, celebration and community. Today, as much as ever, we hope to be a welcoming and friendly presence for everyone in the parish; whether you attend church regularly, occasionally, or are simply curious to come through the door and join us.

Our pattern of services each month is simple, relaxed and rooted in the traditions of the Church of England, with worship that is accessible and familiar. We try to keep our services welcoming to all ages and backgrounds, using hymns that people know and enjoy singing together, and creating an atmosphere where nobody feels out of place.

On the first Sunday of each month, we hold Morning Prayer at 10am using the beautiful words of the Book of Common Prayer. This short service lasts around half an hour and includes three traditional hymns. It offers a peaceful and reflective start to Sunday, with the timeless language of the Prayer Book continuing to bring comfort and inspiration to many people.

The second Sunday of the month at 9.30am is our Holy Communion service, held according to Common Worship. Lasting about 45 minutes, this service combines scripture, prayer, hymns and communion in a straightforward and thoughtful way. Whether you are a regular communicant or someone returning to church after many years, you will find a warm welcome and a congregation that values friendship and fellowship as much as formality.

Our third Sunday service at 10am is a Family Service, designed to be especially accessible and informal, while still offering meaningful worship for all ages. This service lasts around 45 minutes and is followed by refreshments, giving everyone the opportunity to stay, chat and enjoy each other's company.

Families, children, newcomers and visitors are always very welcome at all our services, and we are keen for the church to remain a place where village life and community spirit continue to flourish.

Like many village churches, St Nicholas is far more than simply a building used on Sundays. It is part of the shared life of Eydon; a place connected to baptisms, weddings, funerals, remembrance, harvest celebrations and Christmas carols. It belongs to the whole village, and we hope people feel able to come in not only for services, but also for quiet reflection, community events and moments of peace in busy lives. At a time when life can often feel hurried and disconnected, the church continues to offer something simple but important: a place to gather together, sing together, pray together and support one another. We would be delighted to welcome you to any of our services.

Eydon is part of a benefice of 5 churches and this means that if you want or need a particular service (from Holy Communion to Cafe Church) on a given Sunday then if it isn't happening in Eydon you will be made very welcome in Boddington, Byfield, Woodford Halse or Aston le Walls!

With best wishes, **Matt and Lyn, Churchwardens**

# PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

(Continued from page 2)

dangerous state of repair and the Clerk was asked to contact the owners to seek remediation.

**Planning Matters:** The council agreed to support the application for 1 Blacksmiths Lane and to continue to oppose the development of double garage on the building development on Moreton Road.

**Highways :** The Clerk advised that 5 Potholes were reported in April and all 5 were fixed. Anyone wishing to report Road or Footpath issues can do so using the WNC App or FixMySteet.Com. Anyone wishing to check maintenance work in WNC can do so by visiting [www.WNC.ai/wise](http://www.WNC.ai/wise)

**Freedom of Eydon:** Nominations were received to bestow the Freedom of Eydon Award on Judith Watson and John Grindlay, and Alan Watson and David Kench posthumously. All were accepted unanimously and the Council will arrange an Awards ceremony in August.

**Other Matters:** A full set of minutes for the council are available from [EydonParish.Gov.Uk](http://EydonParish.Gov.Uk).

Anyone wishing to receive news updates about Eydon should request to be added to the Village email/Whatspp alerts list by contacting [Clerk@EydonParish.Gov.Uk](mailto:Clerk@EydonParish.Gov.Uk)

**Next Meeting:** 9 June at 19:30 in the Village Hall, all welcome.

**Keith Simmons, Chairman**

## EYDON LADIES



On Wednesday 20th May 2026 Eydon Ladies were entertained by Lewis and Kevin from Pinnock Distillery. The Pinnock Distillery is a small batch craft distillery based in Kineton, named after the cottage where it was originally produced, now relocated to Radway Tower at The Castle, Edgehill. With a passion for purity, they use crystal clear spring water, locally sourced honey and botanicals which are added after the gin has been distilled.

Pinnock Distillery also runs a Gin School where you can make your own gin with the botanicals supplied. Recently it has become part of Freespirit Pubs, which encourages each of the pubs in the group to create their own individual personality and complement the area they serve.



Lewis and Kevin brought with them three award-winning gins for us to try and Lewis explained how the use of tonic water expands and enhances the flavours. We sampled Dry Gin, 42% ABV, which is distilled with honey and went down well. We tried it neat but then appreciated the difference by adding Dutch Tonic water; next was Rhubarb and Strawberry Gin, 40% ABV which was light and summery and lastly Sloe, Damson and Honey Gin, 30% ABV, a winter gin but with added double Lemon tonic makes a nice long summer drink. At the end of a very successful evening, we were pleased to be able to purchase the gins we had tasted.

Our next meeting will be in the village hall on Wednesday 17th June 2026 at 7.30pm. Our speaker, Ken Bryan, will give us an illustrated talk on the 'Life of Claire Hollingworth'. Claire was the first war correspondent to report on the outbreak of WW11. She was an extraordinary journalist; our speaker knew her and is keen to share his knowledge.

The evening will finish with refreshments and a raffle. It is an open evening to which everyone is welcome, so please bring along partners, friends and neighbours. Guests pay just £5.

**Ann Lane**

### Eydon Plant Fair

To everyone who supported the plant sale on 16th May. To those who baked delicious cakes; grew and donated plants, acted as plant advisers; moved tables; served cake and washed up and helped in any way

**THANK YOU!**

To those who came and bought those plants and ate the cake **THANK YOU!**

You are all wonderful and reminded us yet again that this is a special place to live.

As well as being a very happy and fun morning we also raised much needed funds for St Nicholas Church, a little over £1000 in fact! This makes a significant contribution towards heating, insurance and maintenance of our ancient village church.

All down to your generous support.

**THANK YOU!**



### Village Design Statement Revision

As many of you may be aware the village has a design statement - available on the Parish Council website - this is part of the planning system and approved in 2011.

West Northants Council has now published its draft Local Plan to which the PC has responded, but now is the time to update our document as part of this process.

The point of this article is to call for volunteers to sit on a sub committee of the Parish Council to work through the document and submit it to West Northants Council for approval.

Some villagers have already kindly volunteered and I will be contacting them directly, but if you have an interest in our historic Village and preserving its character whilst recognising the modern world we live in please contact me.

**Keith Simmons ,  
Chairman Eydon Parish Council  
[keith.simmons@eydonparish.gov.uk](mailto:keith.simmons@eydonparish.gov.uk)**

## GALLERY IN THE GARAGE

### Supporting Our Air Ambulance

Lizzie Coulter is opening the doors to her husband Steve's garage once again — this time transforming it into a pop-up art gallery to raise vital funds for our local Air Ambulance service.

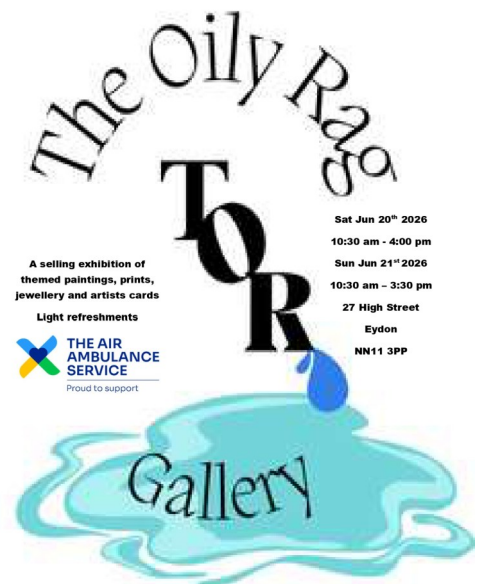
Over the years, our village and surrounding countryside have relied on this incredible team. Watching their pilots manoeuvre into the tightest of spaces is nothing short of remarkable. Now they face one of their biggest challenges yet: with Coventry Airport — their current base — closing this year, they've secured a new site in Northamptonshire and must custom-build everything from scratch. It's a mammoth undertaking, and they need our support.

Come along and browse a wonderful collection of:

- \* **Original paintings**
- \* **Hand-pulled etchings, lino prints & collagraphs**
- \* **Greeting cards**
- \* **Sterling silver & semi-precious stone jewellery**

There will also be refreshments, Air Ambulance information and merchandise on the day.

Every purchase makes a real difference. Come along, bring a friend, and help keep this life-saving service flying.

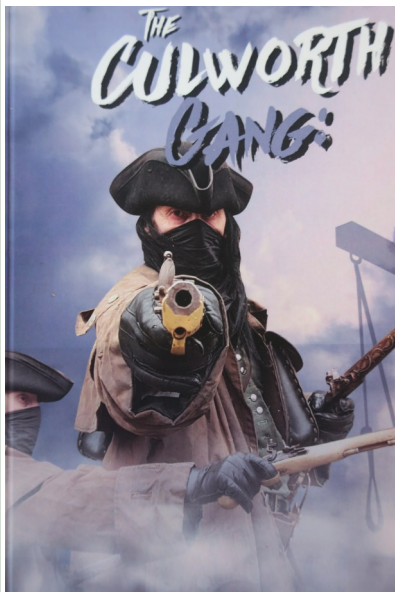


## FIRST WEDNESDAY CLUB

### The Culworth Gang

Our speaker in May was Richard Blacklee, who has made a study of the group of desperados, robbers and highway men, living in and around the village of Culworth in the late seventeen hundreds. They were known as the Culworth gang, and for over twenty years they were the scourge of south Northamptonshire, north Oxfordshire, and even on occasions north Buckinghamshire and parts of Warwickshire.

This was the time of the enclosures. Many villagers who had relied on the common land to graze their animals, that gave them a living, were thrown into desperate poverty with the loss of these rights. One reason the Culworth gang had remained active for so long was that they would act as Robin Hood and use some of their ill-gotten gains to help those in need. For this reason, although many people in the Culworth area knew who the members of the gang were, they kept their secret.



Their modus operandi was to raid isolated farms and houses or waylay travellers at gunpoint. Their disguise was inevitably smocks and black masks, which in the end led to their downfall. Putting up in an Inn in Towcester, the landlord became suspicious of two men and the bundles they carried, and when the opportunity arose, took a quick peak inside. There he discovered the smocks and masks known to be the favourite disguise of the now notorious Culworth Gang. He informed the constable.

On his own was reluctant to tackle the men at the inn, but he made sure the men were kept under observation. When another robbery took place, soon after, the constable led a posse to arrest the men, and they were taken to Northampton for questioning. Under intense examination at Northampton Gaol, they confessed and gave the authorities the names of other members of the gang, some of whom had been thought of as good and upright citizens. After their trial the two were hanged on Northampton Racecourse observed by over five thousand onlookers. This was not quite the end of the gang's activities; those members still at large continued a life of crime, but now the authorities had a lead as to their identity they were soon brought to book and either hanged or transported. After which the villagers and travellers in the area could rest a little easier.

## SAVE THE DATE: The Solstice Swings!

Celebrate the longest day of the year by dancing well into the shortest night!

On **Saturday 20 June**, the 15-piece **Al Ryan Big Band** invites you to mark the Solstice in the most stylish way - with an evening of dancing, rich with rhythm and big-band brilliance as they bring the golden age of swing back to life - expect Basie's bounce, Goodman's groove and Miller's unmistakable magic.

Whether you're a devoted dancer, a seasoned listener, or simply curious to experience the big band sound for the first time, this is a night for everyone! Dress sharp, bring a partner - or make new friends on the dance floor. Join us under the Summer moon for an evening guaranteed to put you 'in the mood'.



Tickets for the Midsummer Dance Party are available from  
Oboe Fine Wines or from Julie 07733 300447



## Centenary Celebration – Eydon Village Hall 1926 - 2026

The Eydon Historical Research Group's exhibition and launch of the booklet celebrating the centenary of the village hall in April was a huge success. The publicity generated by the Eydon Village Hall 100 team helped swell the number of visitors to the two-day event, with professional graphic designer Emily Banner, ably assisted by Sue Crofts, creating eye catching designs for posters and social media use.

The Eydon Knits team created a wonderful postbox topper which has been greatly admired and draws more attention to the hall.

Many people contributed towards the event, making cakes, serving refreshments and keeping everywhere tidy - thank you one and all. The exhibition itself was put together by Lyn Evans. She did a wonderful job, telling the story of the hall, the groups that have used it over the decades and really setting the scene about life and times when the hall was constructed.

Many thanks to David Fisher for the loan of Eydon and District Billiards League trophies and to Judith Watson for both the loan of Eydon Garden Society trophies and Eydon Players' photo archive folders which all added to the interest of the exhibition.

The unveiling of the centenary plaque, purchased by the Parish Council, which is now installed in the meeting room, was celebrated with fizz and delicious canapes made by Sue Crofts and Elaine Partridge.

We were lucky that three grandchildren of one of the founders of the hall, Eddie Russell-Wilks, were present and able to participate in the unveiling ceremony. It was very moving for them.

The booklet, Centenary Celebration – the History of Eydon Village Hall, is available to purchase from Eydon Historical Research Group. It is far more than the acquisition of a site and the construction of a building – it is almost the history of the village and the activities of its inhabitants. Please either go to our website <https://www.eydonhistoricalresearchgroup.org/> where you'll find details of all our publications, or contact Simon Evans on 01327 261164 or by email [lynandsimon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lynandsimon@hotmail.co.uk)

The exhibition, and the great party afterwards, were the latest in the series of events celebrating the centenary of the village hall. The next event is the Midsummer Dance Party on 20th June, you'll be able to dance to the sounds of the big band era with the Al Ryan Big Band. Watch out for more publicity about the dance - tickets are on sale now either online or from Oboe Wines at just £15 each.

Carrie Bedford

## CHEESE SNACKLES BY

LYN EVANS

Makes approximately 24

- 3 oz strong grated cheese
- 2 oz butter (or margarine)
- 2 oz self-raising flour
- 1 oz bran flakes crushed
- 1 oz porridge oats
- 1 tsp dry mustard
- Good pinch of cayenne pepper (I often use a cajun mix generously!)

Beat butter, cheese, mustard and spice together. Add flour, oats and bran and mix well. If very dry add a little milk.

Form into walnut size balls and place on a lightly oiled baking sheet.

Flatten with a damp fork.

Bake in oven 350F/180C(A little lower for fan ovens) for 12 -15 mins.

Allow to cool on a wire rack.

These are so simple to make; fun to cook with children; always very popular on their own or great used as a base for canapes AND they freeze well!

**MIDSUMMER DANCE PARTY**  
AT EYDON VILLAGE HALL

**FREE GLASS OF PIMMS ON ARRIVAL**

*Featuring*  
**THE AL RYAN BIG BAND**

**ENTRY TICKETS £15 ★ SATURDAY 20TH JUNE**  
**7:30PM - 11PM ★ WELL STOCKED BAR**

Book via QR code or <https://square.link/u/g8TXA0Ys>  
Tickets also available at Oboe Fine Wine.  
Enquiries: Julie 07733 300447

**DANCE TO THE SOUNDS OF THE BIG BAND ERA!**

Here are the results of the draw held at the end of April, congratulations to all the winners:

### Prizes

- 1st Prize: Fiona Reynolds
- 2nd Prize: Martin Jones
- 3rd Prize: Elsie Jones

### Bonus Prizes

- Jim Beaty
- Sue & Tom
- Tresham
- Andy Partridge



*Congratulations to all winners. If you missed out but would like to take part new participants are always welcome, please contact [elaine.partridge2@btinternet.com](mailto:elaine.partridge2@btinternet.com) for more details.*

## June Bin Collections



Tuesday 2nd June  
Black Bin



Tuesday 16th June  
Black Bin



Tuesday 23rd June  
Blue and Green Bins



Tuesday 9th June  
Blue and Green Bins



Tuesday 30th June  
Black Bin

*You will only receive garden waste collections if you pay for the service.*

Would you like a different place to walk?

One or two days every week?

Sell the fishing tickets at Canons Ashby Lakes and get some pocket money and FREE fishing

**CALL LINDA ON**  
**07751188483**

## Meet the People of Eydon

### John Grindlay

#### What did you do, or what do you do, for a living?

I started work briefly as a pupil at Humber Cars in Coventry, but that ended when Humber was absorbed into the Rootes Group. I then joined the family engineering business — somewhat reluctantly. My uncle and grandfather had both died suddenly, my father suffered a nervous breakdown, and I found myself at twenty effectively running an engineering business in Coventry.



We were mainly into plastic compression moulding and interior trim for cars. I persuaded a couple of friends to join me and we built it up together, eventually employing around five hundred people across four factories. I sold the business — by then called the CMS Group — at around sixty, to a PLC in East Anglia. Sadly they overstretched themselves after I'd gone and went under, but these things happen.

#### Where did you grow up and when did you come to Eydon?

I was born in a hamlet called Packington, near Meriden in Warwickshire. I arrived in the first months of the war and grew up with no running water, electricity or gas — primitive, though I didn't know any better. My mother worked as cook at the Italian prisoner-of-war camp on the estate.

I remember VE Day in 1945 vividly. My father had recently installed a second hand generator of which he was tremendously proud. During the party nobody could find him, and I was sent to look. I found him slumped over the machine with a bottle of American hooch in one hand and an oil can in the other — he'd gone to oil the generator and rather got the two confused!

In 1948 my family moved to Priors Hardwick, and then in 1968 Patricia and I got married and located to Eydon. I had driven through the village regularly on the way to a factory I'd bought near Westbury. We drew concentric circles around Coventry on a map and Eydon sat right on the edge. We bought what is now Oriel House — Trish liked the Oriel window and renamed it.

We had our two daughters at Oriel House — Carolyn in 1969 and Fiona fourteen months later. In 1972 we moved to Rectory Farmhouse, buying it from friends who suddenly relocated to Brussels. We stayed there happily until 1999, when one February morning snow blew in through the leaded lights and landed on our bed. By Monday I had an architect around, by Friday we had plans to convert the outbuildings, and we moved in that November to Rectory Barn.

**Were you involved in village life when you arrived?** Very much so. My first social activity was playing cricket — I came on as secretary or treasurer and we got some new friendly fixtures going. I was a right-arm spin bowler, for my sins. I served on the Parish Council in the 1970s after Tricia, and have been involved with the village fete for thirty or forty years.

I was also a magistrate for twenty-five years at Daventry, serving as Chairman of the bench. Every criminal case starts in a magistrates' court — we dealt with everything from parking offences to assault, passing anything more serious to the Crown Court. Entirely unpaid, but enormously rewarding.

**What are your hobbies?** Outdoor activities above all. I used to ride and shoot; these days it's walking and skiing — yes, I still ski! I went for a week this year, mostly snowshoe walking, which is every bit as energetic. I'm also a keen fly fisherman on a couple of local syndicate lakes, and for river fishing I travel to North Yorkshire where a prep school friend — we've known each other since 1946 — owns a stretch of the Derwent. I also have a counter-current swimming pool with a wave machine; most summer mornings I'm in it, if only for five minutes.

#### If you could have dinner with any three people, who would they be?

Noël Coward, circa 1971. Sir Edward Ford, shortly after retiring as Assistant Private Secretary to the Queen — he lived in Eydon Hall and had served both King George VI and the Queen from her accession. And Lesley Garrett, the opera singer, in her prime. My mother would cook — she was a superb cook but also an excellent pianist, and she once played for Coward at a Dorchester cocktail party in 1953. I remember him standing by the piano singing "Don't Put Your Daughter on the Stage, Mrs Worthington." So we'd have a wonderful evening with dinner and a private performance. What could be better?

#### What three items would you take to a desert island?

One of my Eydon Storm Kettles. A case of fine English wine from David of Oboe Wines, with two good glasses — I'm sure I'd find company and couldn't possibly drink alone. And Maisie, my dog, for companionship and to warn me if anyone was approaching.

#### Who would play you in a film about your life?

A toss-up between Hugh Grant and Dustin Hoffman — ideally a mixture of the two. They would have to audition.

#### How would you describe yourself in one word?

Motivated. I've always enjoyed motivating people and I think it's one of the things most lacking in the world today. You have to be genuinely nice to people if you want to get things done — Mr Nasty doesn't work.

#### Who has been the biggest influence on your life?

My English master at prep school, Charles Stewart-Jarvis. Always encouraging, always pushing you a little further than you thought you could go, full of praise when deserved and only critical when it truly mattered. He was probably only in his twenties when he taught me, between 1946 and 1953, but the influence has lasted a lifetime.

#### Tell us something people don't know about you.

When I was very young I had the most awful stammer. At school, aged about five or six, I was cast as Mary in the school play — an all-boys school, so someone had to do it. They thought Mary only had to faint and I wouldn't need to speak. But I made quite sure Mary did have something to say, and delivering those lines across several performances gradually helped me find my voice. Remarkable, really.

## *A Personal View... June 2026*



### ***Do you have a hero, or heroine?***

Maybe there is a person, secret or otherwise, you've always admired, from fact or fiction. Could it have been James Bond, Winston Churchill, Roger Bannister, Queen Elizabeth (either), or even one of your grandparents?

Let me tell you about my hero. He was a real-life person, born in the late nineteenth century when Victoria (*not* one of my heroines!) was still on the throne. My hero was Canadian by birth, he came to England for school and university, enrolled in the Royal Flying Corps and at the outbreak of war in 1914 was a founder airman in the newly formed Royal Air Force. On April 1<sup>st</sup> 1914, the RAF was created by the merger of The Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Service.

My hero's flying skills were quickly developed in machines such as the Avro 504 and Bristol F2 fighter planes. He was in his mid-20's at the outbreak of war, and before the war was over, he commanded 267 squadron based in the Mediterranean. It was soon realised that my hero's skills were better re-deployed to intelligence with his command of languages and appreciation of European geography. So, when hostilities ceased my hero was posted first to Vienna and subsequently to Cairo. In passing, he "collected" a series of lady friends around Europe. In particular, in Geneva he befriended Renee the matron of the largest hospital in the city. In Amsterdam his close buddy was civil servant Kinke, and all the way from Cuba was Lydia who travelled the world as an author and translator. All these lovely ladies remained close friends for the rest of his life, although they didn't know and hadn't met each other.

He was second in command of No. 1 bomber group in 1937, by which time he had won his first Air Force Cross, and the OBE. At the start of W War 2, my hero was posted back to Cairo in intelligence, his combat flying days over. He concentrated on undercover work throughout the second world war, eventually retiring from the RAF on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1951, aged 61. On the way he had collected a bar to his AFC.

My hero then started to enjoy life even more. He installed himself in the RAF Club in Piccadilly. Went skiing for two months each winter, where he always took two simple rooms so he could install one of his many lady friends in the second room, always one at a time on a rota basis. It was on one of his ski trips I first met my hero, in 1954. He took up painting in water colours, I'm looking at one of his alpine pictures even now, and he never used any ski mechanisation such as ski lifts. He walked on skis everywhere.

In London, he took rooms in The Dorchester every autumn and hosted a string of cocktail party evenings. This is where he introduced me to the likes of Noel Coward and Air Commandant Jean Conan Doyle, daughter of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In fact, my Mum accompanied Noel Coward on the piano at one of these parties.

My hero retired to Cold Aston, near Bourton on the Water where he quietly died in 1974. His modest grave and headstone (below) can be found in Cold Aston Churchyard.

At his funeral, I was able to introduce four of his lady friends to each other as, of course, they had never met.

### ***John Grindlay***



***The picture shows my hero with Renee, the matron from Geneva***



**Air Commodore Archibald James Rankin, OBE, AFC and bar.**

**Born 10th October 1890, died 8th February 1974**