

# History of the Dunsden Pancake Supper

As this is our first ever virtual Pancake Supper, using Zoom, we thought it would be good look back at the history of this event.

## Suppers in the Sixties

The first Pancake Supper was started by Jo Cutler, who was the wife of the Rev. Herbert Cutler Vicar of All Saints Dunsden 1964 -70. Jo was Canadian and full of ideas., these suppers in the Sixties just involved the Young Wives group and were held in the Dunsden Vicarage, which at the time was a small modern house next to the original Victorian Rectory. This house was sold in the late seventies and is now called “Not the Vicarage”!!



## Suppers from the 70's - 90's

At this time what is now the Village Hall was the village school, which closed in 1973. From 1970-1990 the parish get-togethers happened around Harvest Suppers and themed fetes. When the parishes of Shiplake and Dunsden were combined the Harvest Supper was run for the two parishes at the Shiplake Memorial Hall.

## Restoring the Dunsden tradition

In 1994 members of All Saints decided to revive the idea of a Pancake Supper to raise money towards the “Organ Restoration Fund” as well as a social occasion. So on Shrove Tuesday 1994 sixty people gathered at the refurbished Village Hall for an evening of traditional food and family fun with the **Beetle Drive!** That night we were very pleased to have Jo Cutler with us. Thus the suppers have run now for 26 years, one break in 2005, and of course a very new version this year.

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*“There is  
hardship in  
everything  
except eating  
pancakes”*

*Charles Spurgeon*

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*“’Tis better to  
have eaten a  
pancake than  
never to have  
eaten a pancake  
at all”*

*Alfred Lord Denny’son*

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*“No matter how  
flat you make  
your pancake it  
still has  
two sides”  
Daniel Tosh*

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## Supper staples

The basic plan for the evening has remained the same: home made soup and rolls, followed by pancakes with lemon and sugar or maple syrup. Entertainment was provided by the obligatory tossing of pancakes by the members of the clergy-who seem to be very talented at the task.

This is followed by a **Beetle Drive**, feared by some but all seem to enjoy it in the end! For the first 20 years the pancakes were cooked on-site, in very cramped conditions, four pans on the go, but now as age creeps on the cooking is done at home in the morning - still definitely homemade! And served in the lovely modern hall; but the format of the evening, which still seems to be popular, is the same. Oh, plus wine now!

So this year, it's pandemic pancakes, but not to be put off, we're meeting by Zoom instead. It's a case of 'bring your own' for the pancakes, but that means the possibilities for fillings are endless, sweet or savoury, hot or cold. We will have pancake poetry, a 'face-off' on fillings and **Bingo!** instead of the **Beetle Drive** because it's just not the same being in our homes instead of the hall.



## Pancake Poetry

This is a poem written by Christine Bland for a report in the 1995 Belfry Magazine.

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*“Pancakes don't  
make the world  
go 'round.  
Pancakes are  
what makes the  
ride worthwhile”  
Frankfurterlein P Jones*

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The Village Hall was full of good cheer  
As we all sat down in the spring of the year.  
It was time for the Pancake Supper, you see,  
And the folk sitting down numbered over sixty.  
The ages were seven to ninety one  
And all ages present were looking for fun.  
Barbara, Yvonne, Angela and Pip  
Had set up the food so that was a snip.  
Hot homemade soup warmed cockles of the heart  
Then up the pancakes flew, not one fell apart.  
Martin (the strong one) then got us into teams,  
And the beetle drive began to the sound of merry screams.  
Prizes were awarded to the highest and the low  
And at the end £110 to the organ fund did go.  
Thank you to those working behind the scenes that day,  
May our fellowship continue as we go on our way.