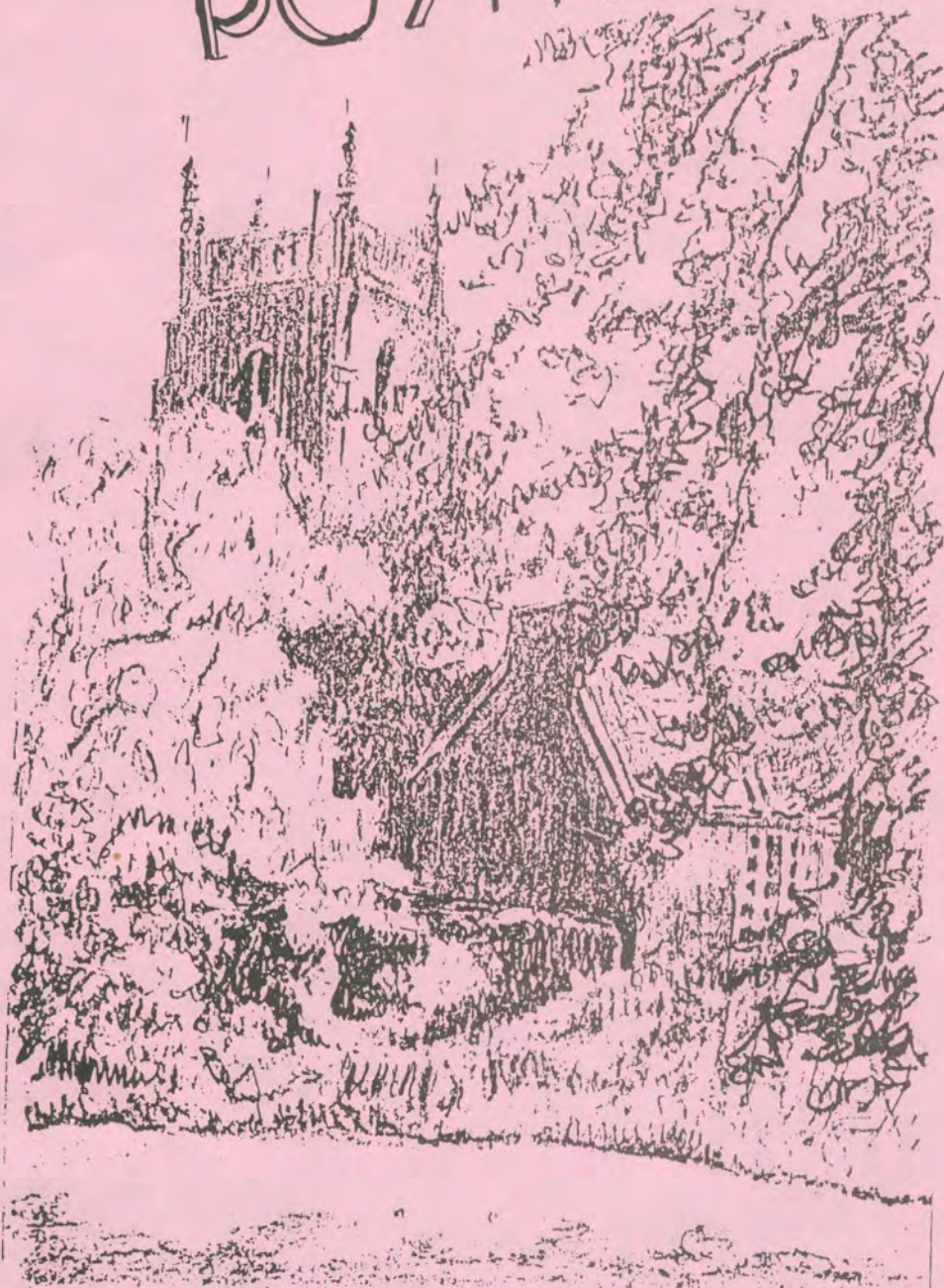


FOCAL POYNTZ



ST. JAMES THE LESS.

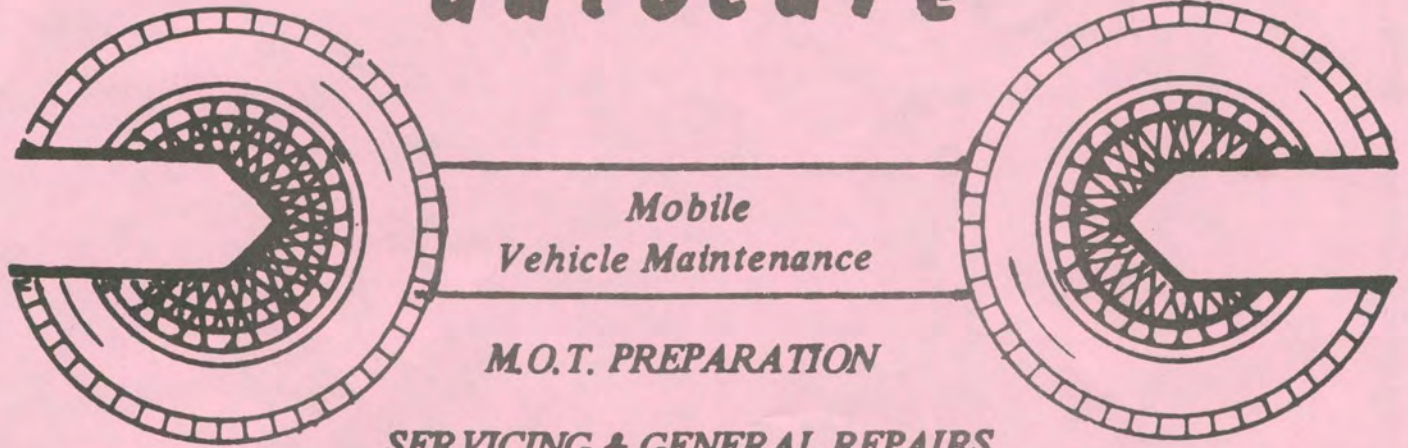
WENDY DOWDING.

IRON



ACTION

roger's autocare



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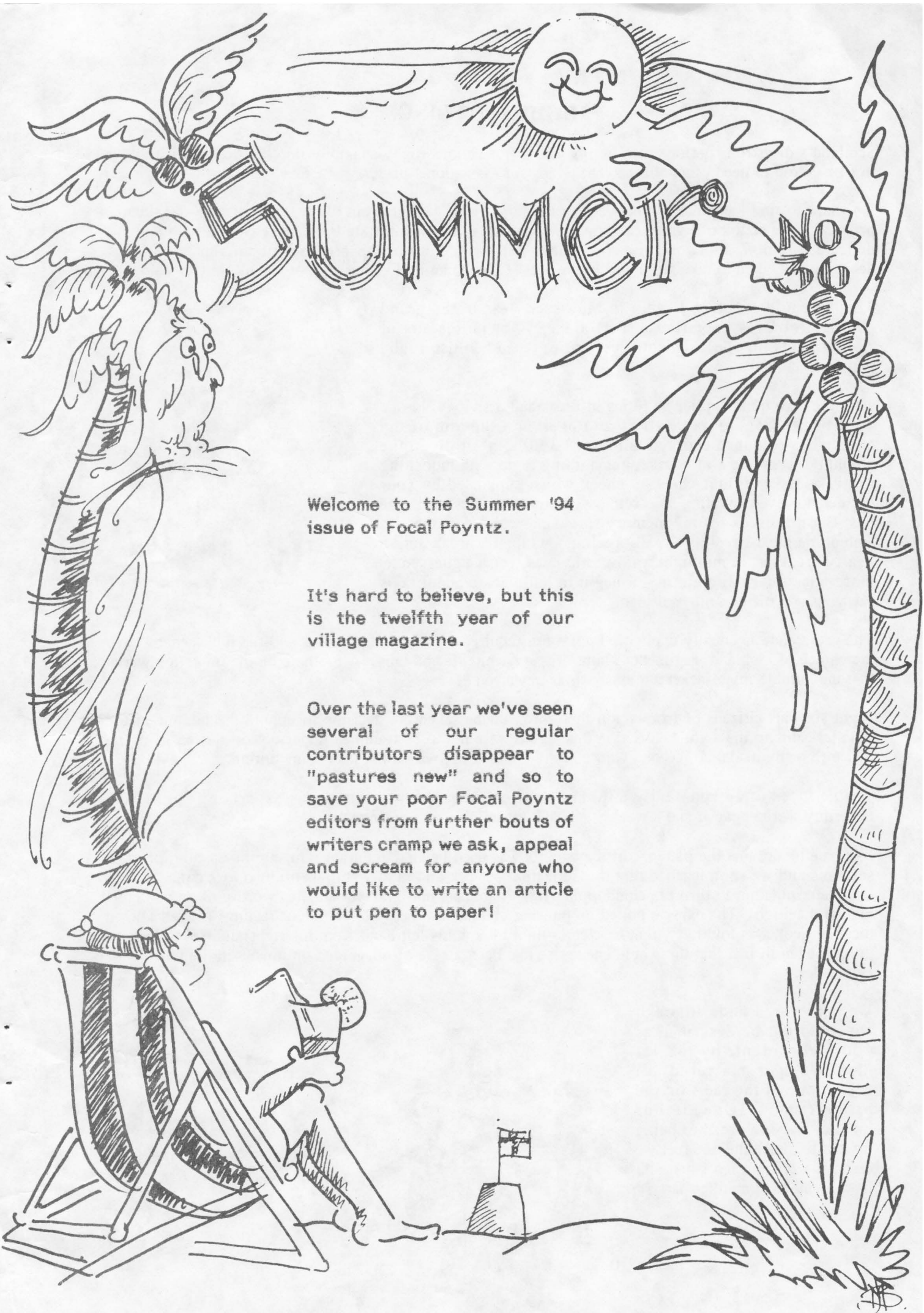
Roger Marsh, 127, Cherington, Yate, Avon. TEL: (0454) 321631

*The home of the
wood burning clay oven*



*Iron Acton,
Near Bristol.
Telephone
Rangeworthy
228228*





Welcome to the Summer '94
issue of Focal Poyntz.

It's hard to believe, but this
is the twelfth year of our
village magazine.

Over the last year we've seen
several of our regular
contributors disappear to
"pastures new" and so to
save your poor Focal Poyntz
editors from further bouts of
writers cramp we ask, appeal
and scream for anyone who
would like to write an article
to put pen to paper!

HIGHLAND FLING

Scotland's disastrous performance in this year's five nations rugby championship left the Scottish lobby in Iron Acton in need of an alternative therapy for the national pride.

It is hard to find a comparison between beating the living daylight out of the opposition in the squalid privacy of the scrum or lightly combing an opponent's face with the studs of a size twelve boot and the delicate, rhythmic footwork of a strathspey, but, in spite of the apparent lack of suitable material, a decision was taken to take an 'eight' to the 1994 Caledonian Ball - the 146th of its ilk.

This splendid function is held in May each year in the grand ballroom of Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W1 with the aim of raising funds for specific Scottish charities (aged Scottish rugby players excluded).

The rules are quite explicit in terms of dress and activity. No-one goes to the Caledonian Ball as an observer - the aim of the exercise is to dance energetically until 3.30 a.m. or die in the attempt. 'Dancing', of course, has nothing to do with mooching gently round the floor cheek-to-cheek whilst supported by your partner nor even gyrating solo round your handbag as seen in the best Bristol discos - if my memory serves me. No, dancing a la Caledonia means reeling - really reeling - without a break until a hearty breakfast at midnight followed by, yes, you've guessed it, more non stop reeling until you begin to hallucinate about taxis carrying you off to a nice soft bed.



The dress code is equally explicit. Ladies are required to wear long dresses and the lucky chaps have the choice of highland, regimental, hunt dress or white tie and tails. A footnote on the invitation warns that the humble inner jacket and black tie is unwelcome.

Eight stalwart citizens of Iron Acton therefore, having taken the decision to uphold the honour of the village, came to the awful realisation that, if we were not to be trampled underfoot or ejected from the dance floor by disdainful reelers whose sets we fouled up, we should take some tuition.

The services of an apparently mild and courteous couple, well known as experts by the reeling fraternity were engaged and a weekly schedule of training was arranged.

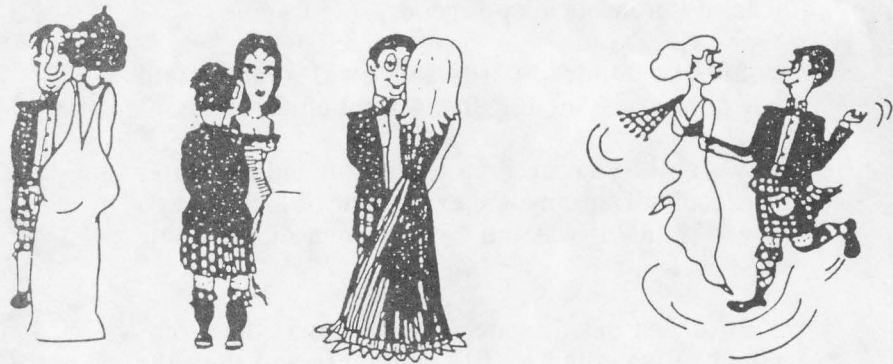
It is true to say that the patience of the experts was tried beyond endurance during the ensuing practice sessions and we soon learned that the delicate footwork and kindly smiles of our tutors concealed an iron determination to turn the clodhopping Iron Actonians into graceful athletes worthy of an authentic highland ceiligh! The experts pulled no punches and had no mercy on our finer feelings (a well known local surgeon was told tartly that he clearly didn't know his left hand from his right) and several of the group began to feel that the whole enterprise had been a case of misguided optimism on the part of the ringleader.

We persevered and, although we could not be described as 100% confident, by the 1st May we had mastered all except one of the reels on the programme. (One of our number lived in dread of being invited to dance the one reel we decided we could not cope with by a member of another party.)



May 5th arrived and we presented ourselves at Grosvenor House armed with crib sheets to be consulted between reels. The ladies, who had spent hours in the choice of ball gowns, were a credit to the village but the men were nothing short of peacocks in their finery. What sartorial splendour! What knees! (It is rumoured that one of the magnificent four was tipped by a fellow guest after helpfully pointing him in the direction of the ballroom.)

In spite of our misgivings, the evening was a great success and exhaustion aside, we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and are eager to repeat the exercise. And speaking of exercise, we are wondering if there would be sufficient support in the village for a regular Scottish dancing group during the winter months.



In spite of the misgivings of our tutors when they realised the uncoordinated and decrepit material they had to work with, they were really quite pleased with the way they managed to knock us into shape in a very short time and would be glad to take on a wider group of Iron Actonians if there is sufficient interest in having a regular social function in the village.

If you have done Scottish dancing in the past or re interested in learning and would like to explore the possibility of forming a group in the village, please contact Hazel Dron on 0454-228509.

* * * * *

MAY DAY

How lucky we were again with the weather on May Day! A perfect Spring day and people certainly turned out to take advantage of it - I have never seen so many people on the Village Green.

It was a financial success too. This year all organisations taking part gave 25% of their profit to Focal Poyntz, and to date we have banked £800.

The Parish Council gave £250 towards expenses, but we returned this with our grateful thanks as we had done so well. Of course had it been a wet day we would have been very glad to have kept it!

Sponsorships from various local firms and shops covered the expenses of the day which amounted to £157.25 for the Clog Dancers, The Yate Dragoons, the Majorettes and the head-dresses for the May Queen and attendants.

We were very grateful to every one who helped in any way, both to provide a good day out for the village, and to provide funds to keep Focal Poyntz going.



* * * * *

Did you hear about the Irish kamikaze pilot who was decorated after five hundred successful missions?

Come to that, did you hear about the Jewish kamikaze pilot who crashed his plane on top of his brother's scrap-yard?

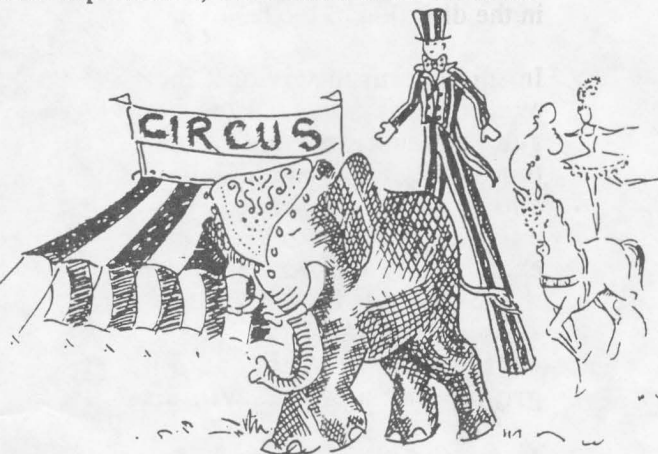
When the Circus came to town.

My family kept a general store (rather like Arkwrights' I suppose) and we lived above the shop. I spent many hours weighing butter and lard and blue bags of sugar. If the Child Protection lobby had existed then I expect they would soon have put an end to such exploitation, but I don't think it did me any harm - probably a lot of good.

A couple of hundred yards away was a large field where once a year the Big Top was put up for circus.

Today's children reared on television and computer games couldn't imagine the excitement of a circus to a pre-war child. It was the biggest event of the whole year.

We all turned out to watch the parade as the circus arrived, always led by the elephants and then the Liberty Horses, followed by the performers, and animals in cages.



Streams of children followed them to the field all anxious to help put up tents and stalls and run errands. The reward for this was a free ride on the round-about on the opening day.

If we were lucky we were taken to see the performance, and though I loved the horses and animal acts my favourite was the "Cowboy Rope Artiste."

For the rest of one summer I practised lassoing and could spin a circle and jump in and out of it as well as he could, (or so I convinced myself.) Something distracted me before I actually ran away to join the circus and whatever it was - perhaps the rigours of the eleven plus - I am very grateful to it because now I don't like circuses at all and am sure I would have hated the life.



B.C.

FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

In March the Friends held a sale in the school hall and a skittles evening at the ARC Club in Chipping Sodbury; whilst the latter was a social, rather than fundraising venture, coincidentally it raised as much as the former, proving that one can enjoy oneself in a good cause.

The skittles evenings, as with other social activities held by Friends, are famous for their great value, great food and great fun. There was a reasonable turnout in March, but there is always room (even if it is only standing room!) and a warm welcome for all parents, relatives, friends and villagers at our future functions.

Village Day, more fully reported elsewhere, saw the Friends raising funds for this magazine and the school with a popular coconut shy.

Our attention, as Focal Poyntz goes to print, is now turning to a Barn Dance and the Summer Fair in June and July respectively; more of these in next issue's report.

As the days shorten and winter closes in we will be planning for the exciting events to brighten up the autumn term - watch the noticeboards and make the effort to join in; the school is important to both its pupils and the local community and deserves our support.

Fiona Bourns.

Shikoku Pilgrimage.

When that Aprill with his shoures soote,
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote ...
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.

Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales.

This April we made a pilgrimage to the Japanese Island of Shikoku.
The purpose of our visit was to see our daughter, Fliss, now an ALT
(Assistant Language Teacher) at the Junior High School in Ikeda.

Shikoku is famous as a pilgrimage island. In spring it is a common sight to see white garbed pilgrims travelling between the 88 temples. It is a round route starting at Tokushima prefecture, this is where religious awakening begins. The next district Kochi represents discipline, Ehime represents enlightenment, the final district Kagawa represents Nirvana. To complete the circuit, a distance of about 1500 kilometres, takes about 55 days on foot.

The pilgrimage celebrates the memory of a Buddhist monk, Kobo Daishi, who was born on Shikoku, 774 - 835 AD), it follows Kobo Daishi route round the island. Kobo Daishi founded the Shingon sect of Buddhism.

There are similarities between the Shikoku pilgrims of today and the mediaeval pilgrims of Chaucer's time. Mediaeval pilgrims believed that by suffering hardship, on a pilgrimage they could avoid punishment after death. Shikoku pilgrims believe their religious devotion will enable them to enter paradise more easily. They also offer prayers for deceased relatives and often carry a mortuary tablet of a family member with them. Certain temples on the route are famous as healing centres for the sick.

Chaucer's pardoner sold relics which were supposed to have special powers, e.g. part of the Virgin's veil and St. Peter's sail. Shikoku pilgrims buy charms at the different temples en route, these offer among other things, painless childbirth, success in examinations, and safety in traffic!

During our visit to Japan we sensed that religious feeling was strong.

Mr Matsushita, a local baker, and also Fliss's landlord, explained to us what he thought the difference was between our religion and his.

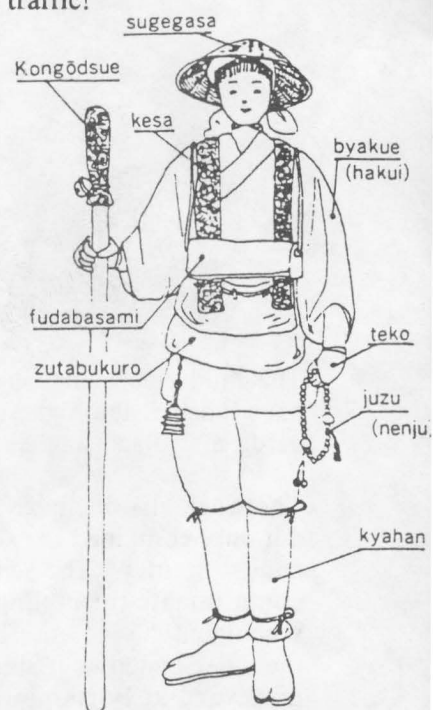
"European people try to lock God up in a church and bring him out for special ceremonies. Japanese people know that God is presenting every person and in the flowers and trees, they do not need elaborate services to reach him."

I did not tell him that many European Christians would share his philosophy, which had been famously expressed by William Blake.

"To see a world in a grain of sand
and a Heaven in a wild flower
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
and Eternity in an hour."

The important thing was that Mr & Mrs Matshushita lived their religion, it made them better people. They were personally very kind to John and myself. They arranged Shiatsu massage for me, from a relative to help my Parkinson's disease. They arranged for John to see a large house under construction so that he could see Japanese structural engineering first hand. They entertained us at a delicious family meal where the sake flowed freely and the laughter was loud.

The Matsushitas were typical of many hospitable and kind Japanese people we met on our journey. When your daughter is a long way from home, to know that she is living among decent, gentle people who take a personal interest in her, this counts for a lot.



IRON ACTON CEVC PRIMARY SCHOOL

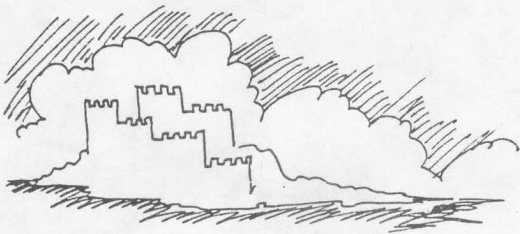
During the past three months the school has been extremely busy trying to secure a third classroom to accommodate the largest reception intake the school has experienced since before the time of Mr Brian Burgess's headship. The Governors have written letters to the education authority asking for further accommodation; resources department officials, planning personnel, education committee members and surveyors have all visited the school to see for themselves the less than desirable teaching conditions that prevail for a well equipped primary school. With a presentation made to the full education committee in support of the capital works programme for 94/95 the school acquired the funding for the project. This means subject to the appropriate planning permission the school will be organised into three classes from September 1994. The building will be erected in the school house garden area which will maintain the close family integrity of the school and also provide safer access to the school field by eliminating the necessity for the children to cross the school drive.

The school house was considered for this further classroom accommodation but was thought by all to be unsuitable; therefore, its original role, to provide resource areas, group teaching space, library, staffroom and cooking area will be followed through once the new classroom has been established.

As you can imagine, this is a very exciting time in the school's development, a time which will see the numbers in the classes fall to around twenty and consequently an improvement in the opportunities available for all in the school.

The children in years 5 & 6 had many wonderful opportunities last week when they attended a field studies visit for the week on the Isle of Wight. It was the first time some of the children had stayed away from home and travelled on a ferry! These experiences coupled with the social or recreational activities and the educational opportunities, are in my mind extremely important ones.

In my experience a maturing takes place, which prepares the children for their secondary schooling which is fast approaching, and again this seems to have been the case.



Whilst on the Isle of Wight the children visited land marks such as Osborne House, where Queen Victoria holidayed and eventually died; Carisbrooke Castle which is full of history surrounding Charles I and others from the history books. The children visited geological sites such as Alum Bay with the multi coloured sands and Shanklin Chine with its lush vegetation and its fuel pipeline which supplied the Allies in Normandy with petrol. Quite a topical point at the moment.

The children accomplished two walks, a coastal walk close to the hotel where they stayed and a walk to have lunch at the highest point on the Island. The recreational activities were a visit to the adventure gardens at Blackgang Chine and swimming one evening in a private pool with watershute and jaccuzzi.

The week also included social skills development as the hotel not only contained the school party but other families on their annual holiday. The school, and its children were paid many compliments throughout the week, which is a credit to the school and the individual children and their families. However, the week ended as it started with a visit en route to the Naval dockyard at Portsmouth. Here on separate occasions the children saw the Mary Rose and HMS Victory. All the children at some point on the return journey had '40 winks' such was the tiring nature of the weeks activities.



Recently some of the children in the school received awards for paintings entered for the competition run by North Avon for the cover of their new brochure on leisure activities. Becky Tanner came third and both Sarah Daton and Claire Desborough had entries which were highly commended.

During this term the school held its annual fete on the 2nd July, in the afternoon. Your support is appreciated as it aided the combined projects of the third classroom and the school masters house developments. It had all of the usual features and more.

The schools end of term concert will be held on Monday 18th July in the afternoon and in the evening of Tuesday 19th July. Tickets for these performances will be available nearer the time.

* * * * *

IRON ACTON W.I.

Have you ever wondered how you would cope with an egg-bound tortoise, or a snake having trouble shedding its skin?

At our March meeting we were enlightened by Mr Brian Hiddick-Smith, one of the vets from the Rowe Practice in Yate.

With the aid of slides, Brian gave us a very interesting account of a vet's work, which included treating Bristol Zoo's various creatures from elephants to guinea-pigs.

Apparently the biggest problem is examining the large and dangerous animals. These have to be anaesthetised first. One crafty orang-outang on recognising the dart gun, hid in a barrel, so the equally crafty vet used a blow-pipe instead. The monkey retaliated by removing the darts and throwing them back at the vet, but eventually succumbed to continual small doses of the drug.

On a wet and windy day in mid March, a few of our members, joined other W.I. ladies, on a visit to Winchester, where they were given a guided tour of the area surrounding the Cathedral, and learned a little of the early history of Winchester. Later, they were free to explore the shopping precinct and some came back with little green M & S bags, full no doubt of souvenirs of Winchester.

Our speaker for April was Mr D. Jackson, who gave an entertaining talk on Palmistry, which he stressed was not fortune telling, but a character reading of the palm's lines.

At our June meeting Mr Ted Starzec a second generation master shoe repairer, whose father learnt his trade in his native Poland before coming to England some years ago, gave us a fascinating talk on his subject. We were shown how moccasins were made of rawhide by American Indians, and how mediaeval shoes were made from tanned leather. Ted finished by demonstrating the hand sewing of new leather soles onto a pair of men's shoes.

On Friday June 24th Iron Acton W.I. members successfully celebrated their 75th Anniversary with a champagne and strawberry party in the Village Hall. I shall be able to tell you more about this in the autumn edition.

We are pleased to hear that Hazel Holloway is making a good recovery from her recent operation, and will soon be leaving hospital.

ANNA TILLOTSON

* * * * *

Did you hear about the man who for his 90th birthday was offered 'Super Sex'. To which he replied "I would prefer the soup!"

THE OLD WHITE MAC

This is not a racist article about a previous landlord of The White Hart, or even about advertising some new whisky-based concoction. It is simply a story about a common or garden raincoat bought in Bristol in the late 1950's.

It did not, of course, start its life as an Old White Mac - it was just that "life" and repeated washings made it this way (the same could be said of most of us, I suppose). It was a small, light-weight raincoat and was (as macs were in those days when I swear the sun shone when it was meant to be shining) carried on the arm in case of a shower when, say, we were queuing for a couple of hours outside the New Palace in Baldwin Street for the latest Humphrey Bogart film.

1960. War broke. At least for me it did. Her Majesty desired my help to defend the country and I found myself at an army barracks in Portsmouth. My old white mac enlisted too. Everything was peaceful - Aldershot, Uckfield, Loughborough, Uckfield again - when the call to arms came - "You vill go to Germany!" The night before embarkation I trooped with the rest of the squad down to the Railway Tavern. It poured with rain and so the old white mac saw action. After a decadent evening of darts, bar billiards, shove ha'penny and beer, we said our farewells to George, the landlord. The journey back to the camp was fine and 24 hours later we were part of B.A.O.R. at Bergelin on the Dutch border. It wasn't until a few weeks later that I needed the O.W.M. - but it was nowhere to be found. Eventually, after considerable exercise of the little grey cells, I realised it had been left at the Uckfield pub. A letter to a mate still in Uckfield, and a few days later the O.W.M. and I were reunited as it made its continental entrance in a brown paper parcel.



Having had a massive pay increase from 15 shillings (75p to you) to £2.00, we all found we could actually go out of the camp - the N.A.A.F.I. rum-and-coke and the Double Diamond at 4d a shot would be shelved for the more palatable pils at a Dutch pub just across the border. The O.W.M. came in very handy as a coat on chilly Autumn evenings until one night, rushing back over the border at 11.29 (the border closed from 11.30 p.m. to 5.30 a.m.), I was hauled into the Dutch police hut. A jack-booted policeman interviewed me in Dutch and I replied in English to the tune of "What am I doing here?" He minutely examined my O.W.M., my pockets and trouser turn-ups (maybe I should resurrect these trousers to be in fashion again). Then I was conducted to a cell, still in a state of bemusement as to what it was all about.

Eventually, word reached the camp about my predicament and the Duty Officer visited, only to say he couldn't help me because I was on Dutch soil. I had been "arrested", like a number of others that night, because someone wearing a white mac had been seen digging up pine trees in the nearby forest - the search of my clothing had been for pine needles or soil as evidence. Although no such evidence was found, I was then told I would be moved to the local jail in Roermond. Imagine my relief when I was released a few hours later - only to be charged for being A.W.O.L. from the camp!

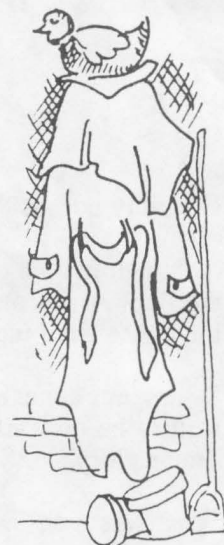
Six months later on my first leave, I was walking in innocent happiness through the Customs at Gatwick, when an officer rushed through a door and stopped me - not to examine my baggage, but - yes - you've guessed it - O.W.M. was to be given the third degree. Result? A dog-eared Agatha Christie paperback.

Back in civvy street, the O.W.M. enjoyed its freedom and had a useful, if uneventful, life, until it accompanied us on a tour of Southern Ireland - but forgot to accompany us home. The O.W.M. had again gone A.W.O.L. - this time on the banks of the River Shannon. Eventually we were reunited but by now the delinquent O.W.M. was somewhat dilapidated. I didn't want to lose such a sartorial friend, although I knew that fashion would dictate that our relationship couldn't go on. If there had only been counselling then, it might have stood a chance of staying in the fast lane - but no! It was retired to the garage and used as protection when I sprayed the roses, etc.

You wouldn't really say I was sentimental about that O.W.M., would you?

GJD.

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PARISH COUNCIL

1994 is the century of the formation of Parish Councils, and celebrations are taking place all over the country.

We are planning a modified version of the old custom of "Beating the Bounds", and children from both schools will be taking part. The event will end with possibly a tea or a barbecue, and the children will be presented with a souvenir, perhaps a mug or plate. This will take place in the second or third week in September, exact date not yet decided.

IF YOUR CHILD IS AGED 4 TO 11 AND DOES NOT ATTEND EITHER LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOL BUT YOU WOULD LIKE THEM TO RECEIVE THE SOUVENIR, PLEASE CONTACT BOB SHEPPARD, 200, NORTH ROAD, OR BETTY COOK, NEKSDORE, HIGH STREET, BY AUGUST 15TH AT THE VERY LATEST.

Work is still continuing on opening up the footpaths and erecting stiles and signs. We soon hope to have a map available showing all the paths, though this has been difficult since the parish boundary changes.

There must be people who remember when the Thornbury railway was a passenger line. Mr C.G. Maggs is writing a history of the line and would love to hear from any of you. His address is 8, Old Newbridge Hill, Bath, BA1 311X, Tel. 0225 421516. Please contact him if you can help.

Meetings still take place on the third Monday of the month, usually in the Village Hall, sometimes at North Road school. Parishioners are welcome to sit in if they wish.

Chairman	Bob Sheppard	200, North Road
Vice-Chairman	Sue Gawler,	Shale Cottage, Wotton Road
Councillors	E. Blanchard, B. Cook, R. Curtis, F. Davis, D. Hancock, C. Heal, D. White	
Clerk	N. Carter,	9, Chilwood Close.

* * * * *

They were good days when I was a boy. We were poor, mind. My mother used to send me down to the butcher's every Monday to buy a sheep's head. And I had to ask him to leave the eyes in, so that it would see us through the week."

A woman went to a seance in hopes of getting in touch with her late husband who, during his life, had been a waiter in a big restaurant. The lights were dimmed, the medium went into a trance and the table began to make knocking sounds.

"Fred, she said, "Fred - is that you? Speak to me."

"I can't," said a ghostly voice, "It's not my table."

GRAFFITI - A 20th CENTURY PHENOMENON?

Certainly not, as the Parish Council discovered on a recent visit to Acton Court.

Although not yet open to the public the Councillors managed to arrange a tour, guided by Mr R. Bell of the Bath Archaeological Trust. Both the outside of the building with its outbuildings and the inside of the house were included.

It may not appear so from the road but in fact much work has already been done and the building is said to be now structurally sound. However, much more work is needed to restore it to its former Tudor glory.

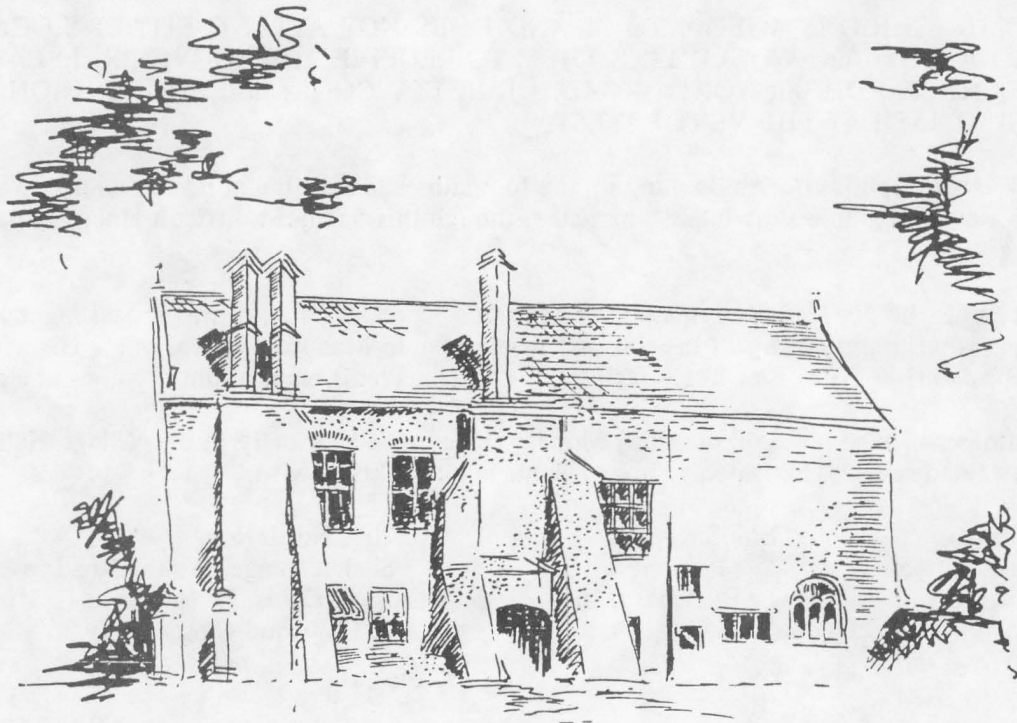
What was seen inside was mainly bare, damp drystone walls, collapsed ceilings and plenty of builders materials.

Of considerable interest were graffiti etchings of Tudor ships on some of the walls and in some places initials as well, indicating the Poyntz family's merchant shipping activities. This was also believed to be of help in dating some of the building.

It will be some time before the Court is open to the public as our local 'Stately Home,' but it will happen. Although Acton Court will then be privately owned, many rooms will be open for perhaps six months a year, with one room expected to be used as a museum for all the artifacts discovered.

Oh! Believe it or not, YES one day the scaffolding will come down.

D. White



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ACTON AID

1960's High School Prom was the theme for Acton-Aid's major event. It was held on a beautiful summer evening in the garden of Algars Mill, thanks to John & Marilyn Wright. Many people dressed appropriately and one party even hired a Roller to arrive in style. The band soon had everyone dancing to appropriate music, and delicious food was served in the huge marquee. Almost 200 people had a most enjoyable evening.

These things do not happen without a lot of hard work, and thanks are due to Chris Wiggins and his team, and also to Fiona Bourns and her team of cooks: also to John & Marilyn Wright for their hard work as well as allowing their garden to be used.

The money raised is to be used for a feasibility study to look at ways of altering/improving/re-building the Village Hall. A joint committee of Acton Aid Members, Village Hall Committee members and others has been set up to look into this and to commission a professional study. If it is felt that this is a feasible and worthwhile project, it will require a major effort from the entire village over several years to raise the funds needed. If you feel that you would be prepared to help organise this, please let the committee know. The secretary is Fiona Bourns on 228.

Forthcoming events for Acton Aid are

3rd September	Barbecue at Primrose Cottage, High Street
8th October	German Night at Village Hall
December	Christmas Party

* * * * *

NORTH ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

Prior to 1869 Members of the Baptist Church in Yate and Iron Acton had to travel to Chipping Sodbury and in those days this meant either using horse and carriage or walking.

In 1869 a number of folk who lived in Acton Lane (Now North Road), Acton End and Engine Common suggested to members of Sodbury Baptist that it was time to open a Mission at Acton End.

Within a short while, using the services of an Evangelist, a Mission Station was started. They soon acquired a strip of land alongside the footpath from Acton Lane and purchased a galvanised iron building.

By 1909 this Iron Mission needed refurbishment and the members decided to erect a more permanent Chapel and the present building was erected and dedicated.

This Church has continued to proclaim the Gospel Message to this day.

Over the past couple of months we have been pleased to welcome Whitehall Male Voice Choir and the Weston Gospel Male Voice Choirs to join us in worship. The Young Peoples Music Group from Sodbury have also joined us on two occasions.

To help us celebrate our 125th Anniversary Rev. Tony Mallin and Friends from Sodbury Baptist are joining us for our Harvest Festival Service on the 25th September at 6 p.m.

This is most appropriate because after all those who worship here now are the fruits of the seeds first planted in 1869. At the same time they are sowing the seed which, God willing, will produce The Future Harvests.



We are planning other celebratory services throughout the year and are delighted that the Chippenham Male Voice Choir will be visiting us on the 20th November, to lead that evening's service which at their request will start at 6.30 p.m. instead of 6 p.m. as usual.

If any of the readers of Focal Poyntz are former members of our Church or of the Sunday School or the Bible Class or the Ladies Meeting would like to help us commemorate our 125th Anniversary, we would be pleased to welcome you at any of our services and particularly on 25th September at 6 p.m. and 20th November at 6.30 p.m.

ACTONIANS - SUMMER NEWS

Thank you to those who came to see 'The Crucible' by Arthur Miller, on June 9th - 11th. Hope you enjoyed the play; I found it very moving. Some of the audience were visibly crying after the last Act. It is sometimes good to produce a serious play - especially one of the calibre of 'The Crucible' - a play which the director, Bob Allen, has always wanted to do. Thank you to Bob for his hard work and dedication, and also to the large cast who performed the play so well. They were brilliant. Lastly, but not least, thanks to all the back stage crew who worked so hard behind the scenes in various ways. The play was entered for the 'Rose Bowl' Awards. The adjudication is awaited!

One-Act Play Festivals

Following the Avon & Malmesbury, One-Act Play Festivals, held in the spring, the Actonians were delighted to 'walk away' with seven awards.

The "Pity of War" retained the "Alan Peacock" Trophy (held by the Juniors) for Best Original Entry. It was awarded a 'Runners-up' Cup and Technical Award Cup and the 'Roberts Phare' Trophy for Design. Pat Stimson was awarded the 'June Rose' Trophy for Best Supporting Performance (she played Wilfred Owens Mother).

The "Pity of War" also had the honour of going forward to represent Avon in the Central Division Final in Frome. It didn't win, but was highly commended, and was an enjoyable experience for cast and crew.

The Junior Actonians retained the 'David Garnett' Shield for Best Youth Group, and Alan Davies regained the 'James Toogood' Trophy for Most Promising Person Under 21 years.

Congratulations to everyone involved and thank you to Penny Percy for arranging 'The Pity of War' and to Tim Pratt for directing it; to Jenny Pratt and Joyce Richards for directing the Juniors in 'Naughty Girls.'

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

July 16th - 17th The Village Hall Committee and the Actonians are combining again to present 'Roman Romps' - a Roman Theme and Evening of Entertainment, Food and Fun! See posters for details.

Sat. Oct. 22nd BARN DANCE (including supper) in the Village Hall. Please look out for posters with details nearer the time.

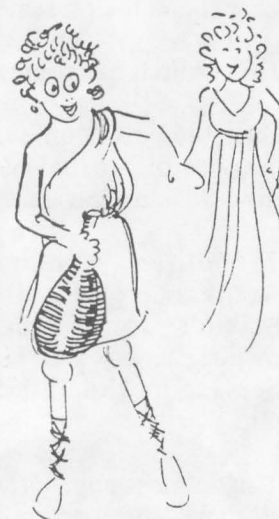
Thurs.-Sat.
24th - 26th Nov. The Autumn production - 'Dazzle' to be directed by Mike Wills (A Star Trek Spoof - full of action and music - hopefully!)

Following this year's A.G.M. Mike Wills will be standing down as Chairman. The Actonians would like to thank him for his hard work during the year presiding over the Committee. Thanks also to the present Committee for their involvement in organising productions, social, and fund raising events. Details of the new Chairman & Officers will be given in the next edition of Focal Poyntz.

Chairman - Mike Wills
Secretary - Gerry Millward

0272 754283
0454 228704

Gaynor Clark.



THE VILLAGE HALL

Fund raising continues to be a prime need in order to keep the Hall in good shape. Unfortunately, the committee has had to deal with yet another roof leak and major work has been carried out on the drains which were showing signs of wear and tear - they have been there a long time!! Thanks are due to the Parish Council for their financial help towards this work.



Acton Aid has expressed a desire to channel some of their funds towards improving the Hall. As a result meetings have been held to pool ideas and discuss an ongoing programme.

The committee has worked hard to arrange more events this year. The illustrated talk on Acton Court was very interesting and well attended. Four stalls were successfully run on Village Day. Committee members and others supported Algars Manor & Mill with tea and cakes on two open days.

Forthcoming events for diaries:-

July 15 & 16th	-	Roman Romps - jointly with the Actonians.
August 3rd	-	A.G.M.
September 10th	-	Horticultural Show
September 17th	-	Harvest Ball
January 20th '95	-	Glen Miller Evening

* * * * *

ELIZABETHAN CLUB

Our first outing to Merry Hill shopping centre near Birmingham on April 24th was planned in case we experienced our usual spring weather. Surprise, surprise, we had a lovely sunny day and some of us wished we were at the seaside. When we went to Tenby on 28th May, yes you've guessed, it rained and rained. Unfortunately there was little shelter only shops. The ladies were happy but the gentlemen not so happy but we stopped at Chepstow on the way home and a good time was had by all.

When you read this we hope to have visited Bognor Regis and on July 19th our venue is Weymouth when the Tall Ships will be there. We hold our Birthday Party on the 6th July and our Annual General Meeting on 13th July.

Our Xmas Dinner will take place in the Village Hall.

We have recruited another member from the Village and if you are over 60 we will welcome you to our meetings. Give me a ring on 228566.

Elsie Blanchard.



* * * * *

An old woman's talking to her husband sentimentally about their courtship. "Ah, do you remember how you used to nibble my ears?"

"Yes."

"You never do it nowadays."

"No, Well, by the time I've found my teeth, the urge has gone."

ALFRED STRANGE

We have received this letter from Alfred Strange.

I remembered reading in the Wiltshire Family History Journal perhaps two years ago that all the documents, records, etc. concerning the Long family of Wiltshire had been deposited with the Records Office at Trowbridge. It had been my intention to enquire whether there was any material there concerning the Manor or Iron Acton since the Manor had been in the possession of the Long family from 1712 to 1846.

I wrote to the County Archivist before going on holiday and was surprised to receive a reply upon my return setting out all the information the Records Office hold re the Iron Acton Manor Estate in catalogue form.

This is pretty extensive and I am wondering whether there might be someone in Iron Acton with the necessary knowledge and expertise to tackle the task of studying these documents and writing up an account! I can usually manage to read documents from the late 1600's onwards but those relating to earlier periods are much more difficult.

Perhaps a small group of interested people might get together and decide how best tackle this. I do feel strongly that it is an opportunity to fill in much of the history of the parish which should not be missed.. it needs to be done through voluntary effort .. employing someone professionally would prove much too expensive.. unless there is someone in Iron Acton with funds available!

I am attaching an outline of what has been sent to me just to show how comprehensive this collection is. I would be happy to forward photostat copies to anyone who has a special interest.

It will be very interesting to see whether there is any response.

"Letters patent granting Sir Robert Poyntz the right to hold two fairs annually at Iron Acton, 1663."

(The Poyntz family were Royalist supporters during the Civil War. I think Charles II made this grant to Sir Robert Poyntz after the Restoration)

"Extensive bundle of deeds and associated papers relating to an estate known as Brown Tenement, later known as Batten's Farm and sold as Two Pool Farm in 1846."

"a lease dated 1709 of a newly erected public house known as the White Hart"

later ... "invent of the contents of the White Hart public house at Iron Acton distrained by Mathias Rudland, steward to the Revd. John Long of South Wraxall for rent arrears unpaid by the tenant, Jacob Higham... dated 1746.

"Coaling lease of lands at Iron Acton to the proprietors on the Yate Coal Works by Walter Long, Lord of Manor of Iron Acton..."

Manoral Court rolls of the Manor of Iron Acton ... 1381 to 1578
Court papers showing list of tenants an residents ... 1713 - 1748
Account Rolls of the Manor of Iron Acton ... 1465 - 1538

The above are only examples ... there are seven pages of items catalogued.
Catalogue No. 947 .. serial numbers .. 1094 to 1131.

There are other references to the Manor of Iron Acton under catalogue Nos. 515 and 790.

DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

In the Village hall

Every Monday, Thursday
Every Wednesday

2nd Monday in the month
3rd Monday in the month
4th Monday in the month
3rd Thursday in the month
6th August
3rd September
10th September
17th September
26th September
1st October
8th October
22nd October

Nursery School	9.00 am
Elizabethans	2.00 pm
Junior Actonians	6.00 pm
Actonians	7.30 pm
Womens Institute	7.30 pm
Parish Council	7.30 pm
Whist Drive	7.30 pm
Knitting Group	1.30 pm
Northavon Auctions	
Northavon Auctions	
Horticultural Show	
Village Hall Committee Harvest Ball	
Elizabethans' Whist Drive	
Northavon Auctions	
Acton Aid German Night	
Actonians' Barn Dance (Provisional)	

At Iron Acton School

5th September
7th September
24th -28th October

Autumn Term Commences
Start Date for Children
Half Term

At the Rose and Crown

1st Thursday in the month

Acton Aid 8.00 pm

* * * * *

FOCAL POYNTZ is produced three times a year, usually at the end of March, July and November and is distributed to every house in the Parish. Contributions for publication are always welcome and can be sent to Mr John Percy, Primrose Cottage, High Street, Iron Acton. Advice will be given if required. Items ought to be submitted about four weeks before date of issue.

Advertisers wishing to take space in **FOCAL POYNTZ** should contact either Mrs B Cook (228202) or Mr L Alsop (228400)

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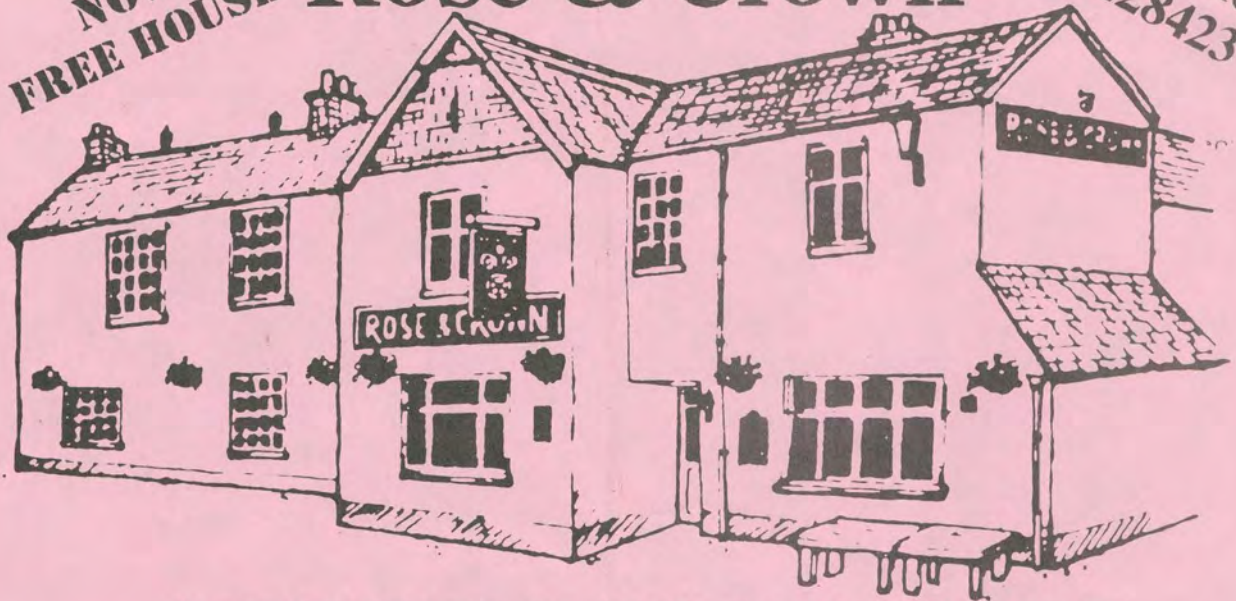
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