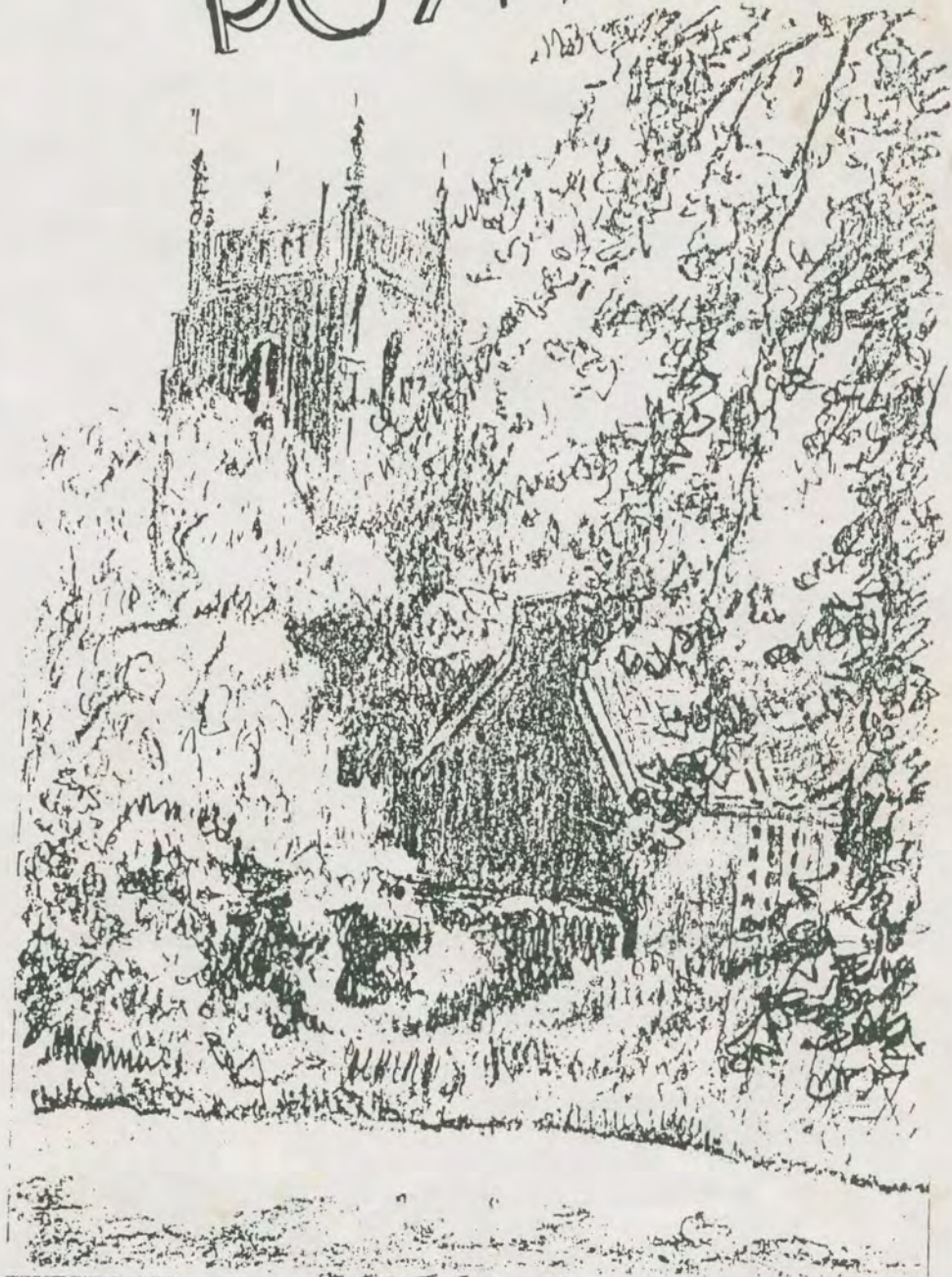



# FOCAL POYNTZ

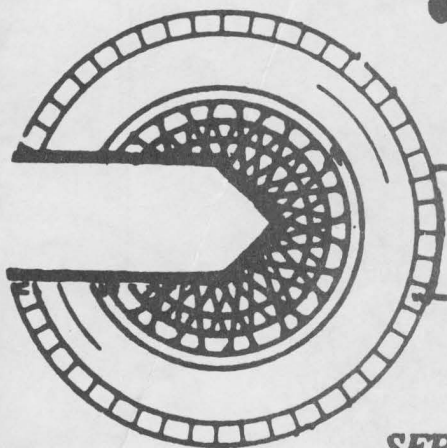


ST. JAMES THE LESS.

WENDY DOWDING.

IRON  FACTOR

# roger's autocare

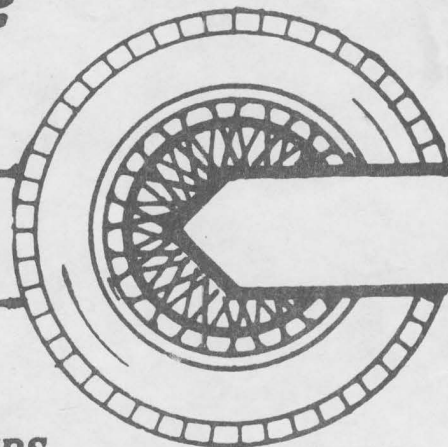


*Mobile  
Vehicle Maintenance*

*M.O.T. PREPARATION*

*SERVICING & GENERAL REPAIRS*

*NO JOB TOO SMALL*

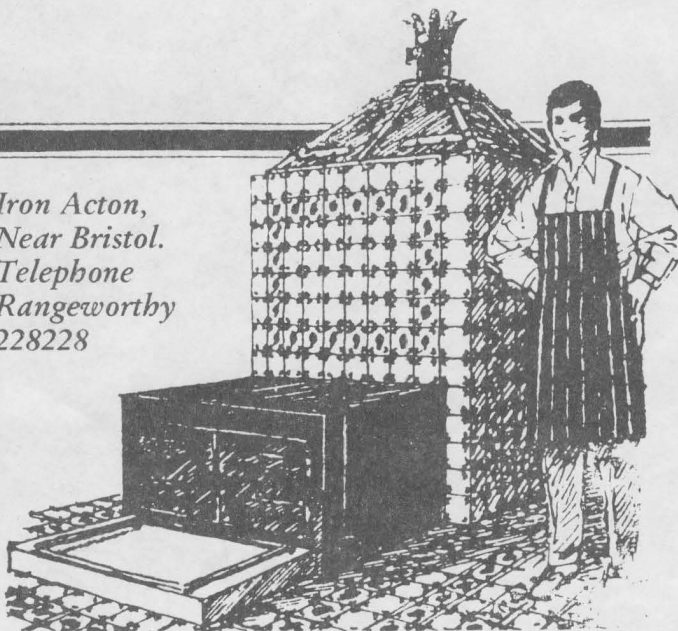


*Roger Marsh, 127, Cherington, Yate, Avon. TEL: (0454) 321631*

*The home of the  
wood burning clay oven*



*Iron Acton,  
Near Bristol.  
Telephone  
Rangeworthy  
228228*



# CHRISTMAS

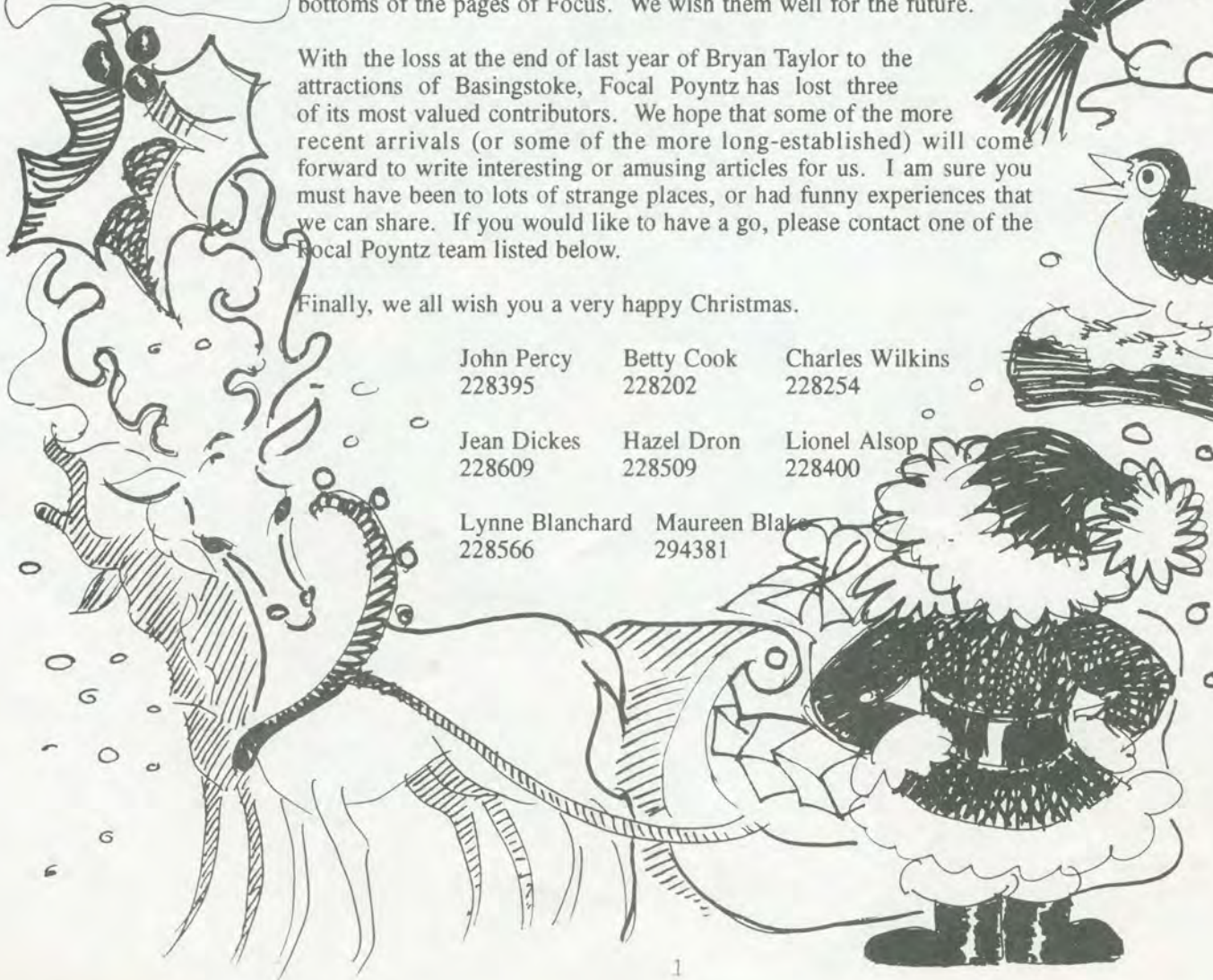
Another year comes to an end. We seem to have seen a lot of personality changes in the village this year; a lot of new people in the village and goodbye to some old friends. We were particularly shocked by the death of Mai Beasley (remembered elsewhere in this issue of Focal Poyntz), because most of us had not realised how ill she was. She had always seemed the same, from the time that she was running the Post Office, and we were surprised to find that she was 70. May was a regular contributor to Focus (now called Focal Poyntz), both articles and drawings.

We shall also miss Mr and Mrs Singleton, who have moved to live near their son. It was they who supplied many of the little 'funnies' at the bottoms of the pages of Focus. We wish them well for the future.

With the loss at the end of last year of Bryan Taylor to the attractions of Basingstoke, Focal Poyntz has lost three of its most valued contributors. We hope that some of the more recent arrivals (or some of the more long-established) will come forward to write interesting or amusing articles for us. I am sure you must have been to lots of strange places, or had funny experiences that we can share. If you would like to have a go, please contact one of the Focal Poyntz team listed below.

Finally, we all wish you a very happy Christmas.

John Percy 228395	Betty Cook 228202	Charles Wilkins 228254
Jean Dickes 228609	Hazel Dron 228509	Lionel Alsop 228400
Lynne Blanchard 228566	Maureen Blake 294381	



## W.I. News.

I'm sure you have all heard of "Booze Cruises" to France. The ladies of Iron Acton W.I, being a little more circumspect, gathered outside The Rose & Crown one sunny evening in July, before boarding a coach bound for the Three Choirs Vineyard at Newent, where they each purchased 2 or 3 bottles of fine English wine, but not before they had spent a very enjoyable 2 hours being shown the presses and the vats and sampling five different wines, from dry white to a sweet dessert wine. The tour finished with a splendid Ploughman's Supper in the restaurant overlooking the vines and the hills beyond. I forget to mention that most members brought their partners with them (to pay for the wine I suspect).

A week later we all went to prison - not, I hasten to add, because of riotous behaviour on the return journey from Newent but to visit Leyhill Open Prison. This was a very interesting follow up to the talk given by Geoff Groundrill at our January meeting. We were shown round the grounds by Mr Lennox, the farm manager, who began by telling us that Leyhill had been used for the training of secret agents during the last war. We also learnt that Leyhill was the produce centre for the prisons in the South West area and the Midlands. Here all vegetables are grown and then taken to the spotlessly clean processing room, where they are either frozen for storing, or packed ready for transport. Apparently it is very important that the prisoners are given good meals, as poor food can cause discontent and lead to greater problems amongst the inmates. We ended the tour with a walk through the lovely arboretum.

In September, John Partridge, a zoo keeper gave an interesting talk on zoos in general. He stressed that amongst the many important roles of zoos was to provide a good environment for breeding and for the general welfare of the creatures and for this cleanliness and good quality food, with vitamin supplements, was provided. Education is also a prime role of zoos - an area is provided where children can touch some animals and learn about their natural habitat. Many of the accompanying slides gave us a good impression of what goes on behind the scene at zoos, and prompted some interesting questions from W.I. members.

In October, Mrs Faithful a florist, demonstrated to us how beautiful Christmas decorations could be made by using only natural materials. One of the pieces was a door hanging made from a circular wire frame, covered initially with moss, then fir twigs, a couple of Coxes' apples, some Kumquats, nuts, limes, mandarins and dried grapefruit slices - the effect was spectacular. A champagne bottle was decorated with a floral spray of cream roses and carnations. Finally, Mrs Faithful made a beautiful floral table centrepiece. Some of us were not convinced that our attempts would look as attractive as Mrs F's, but she certainly inspired us to at least try in December.

We would be pleased to see new faces, so why not come along to the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on the second Monday in January?

\* \* \* \* \*

Does anyone remember learning this rhyme at school in the days when children were expected to know the Kings of England? Have we remembered it right?

Willy, Willy, Harry Steve  
Harry, Dick, John, Harry 3  
One, two, three Neds Richard 2,  
Henry four, five, six - then who?  
Edward four, five, Dick the bad  
Harry twain then Ned the lad  
Mary Bessie, James the Vain  
Charlie and Charlie James again  
William and Mary, Anne Gloria  
Four Georges, William four, then Victoria  
Eddie seven and George the fifth  
Then Edward eight and abdicate  
His brother George the 6th came next  
And at his death Elizabeth.

## Village Hall/Project 2000.

As well as the usual fund raising activities to cover such things as roof repairs, drainage problems, the increasing deluge of Health & Safety regulations etc., the Village Hall Committee has embarked on a major new initiative code - named **PROJECT 2000**.

The objective of **Project 2000** is to plan major improvements to the Hall in aesthetic and function terms, and to raise the necessary finance to achieve the improvements.

**Project 2000** is a joint venture between Acton Aid and the Village Hall Committee, with representatives from both organisations on the Committee, as well as Bob Sheppard lending his experience from the sharp end of both Village and Parish Council life.

Initial plans have been developed which provide improved toilet and kitchen accommodation, a larger hall area for major functions, increased storage, and more flexible meeting areas. In addition the plans cater for major improvements to the elevations of the later 1940's building to enhance it's aesthetic appearance.

Over the next few months these plans will be developed in more detail, both for planning purposes and for costing so that we can determine the fund raising target for **Project 2000**. Copies of the preliminary plans will be available shortly, and will be circulated to the various Village organisations and the Parish Council for their comments. We would also welcome comments on improvements from individual parishioners.

Once we have established the overall cost we will then set about raising the necessary funds. To date around £2,000 has been raised towards **Project 2000** through various activities, including the recent very enjoyable German Night in the Hall. Our short term target is to raise £5,000 by early summer 1995 towards the first phase of the Project. We will also be approaching various charities known to us who provide funds for Village Hall improvements, as well as North Avon District Council and the Parish Council, who have both been very supportive financially over the years.

Hopefully, with their help and the support of you, the Parishioners, we can propel the Village Hall into the 21st Century for the benefit of all of us.

Our next major fund raising activity is the Christmas Party in the Hall, featuring a live band, and this takes place on Saturday 17th December 1994. It will be a great night - tickets will be on sale soon - please support your Village Hall and have fun at the same time.

ROGER HUGHES

\* \* \* \* \*

From a report in the "Poole Advertiser."

An enterprising vicar, whose cat had got stuck up a tree, was unable to reach the moggie by ladder so attached one end of a rope to the bough on which the cat was stuck, and the other end to his car bumper.

While driving slowly away, thus lowering the bough for the cat to jump down, the rope snapped with a terrible force and the cat was propelled into the stratosphere.

At that moment however, a mother and daughter were apparently picnicking on their lawn nearby and the girl said "Mummy, I'd like to have a cat."

"You'll have to ask Jesus for one" said Mum as a flying moggie came hurtling through the air. It landed on the lawn and has stayed with them ever since. Who said the silly season was over?



## LOOKING FORWARD TO CHRISTMAS

We have received stories with this title from all the older children at North Road School. We are very grateful, and enjoyed them all. Unfortunately, we cannot print them all (or show you the pretty coloured borders to many of them). We have therefore drawn five of them at random from a hat and print them herewith. Thank you all very much, children.

### Getting ready for christmas

One day Mum me and Dad were getting ready for christmas. I went into the loft to get the christmas tree and all the other things. I have a baby sister from hell because she's always throwing the ball's around the place. Dad was out shopping but told Mum that he was at Bob's. Mum was hovering my bedroom then Dad got back but Mum was suspicious with Dad. Then Mum went to work. So Dad and me got the presents then I got the wrapping paper. Luckily the sister from hell was a sleep we were half way through then it woke up but she went back to sleep. Soon it was time for bed the next morning. *it was christmas!*  
\*The End\*

R.S. North Road

### Looking Forward to christmas

It was christmas and my birthday was 2 days before christmas. We went to a pig show and there was little pigs big pig's and fat pig's. The pig show was for my birthday treat. We went home and we went to bed. Two days later it was my birthday my Mum got me a baby pig. My pig was pink and had a black tail his name was honey. We got honey some food he eat it. I went to bed and the morning came and Father christmas gave me a bed for my pig we put him in his bed and he liked it. We put some food in his bed and we put some water in it. We went out to get some food for the christmas dinner and are friends will come to christmas. When they went with me I gave honey crisp and we played game's we went home and we open the presents from the tree and honey had some present too. The End

by Lucinda

### Looking forward to christmas

Two months before Christmas. I ran downstairs expecting to find my parents and brother downstairs. But they weren't. I ran upstairs and they weren't there either. Then in my parents room I noticed some paper. I was curious so I read it. This is what it read.

To Emma  
didn't bother to wake you gone  
christmas shopping  
from Mum Dad and Chris. xxx

"huh thanks, just what I wanted, oh well" I went back to bed. When I woke up the second time I got dressed then went down the stairs.  
"Come on lazy bones" said my dad.  
"were you asleep?" "No" I said  
sarcastically "oh no" I said "I forgot"  
"DANCE" "Come on" said Dad  
"get your kit ready"

So I got my leopard and leggings and got in the car. "Come on Dad lets go" I said. That's when it happened. We went past a bridge and some trees blowing in the wind. I started shouting out orders on where to go left right turn here  
Screach! Bang! crash!  
I woke up I was in hospital. A nurse ran away, shortly she returned with a doctor. "How do you feel?" He asked. "Where am I?" dad. Mum. "We are here" said dad.  
"you'll be able to go home tomorrow" said the doctor "now I think you'd better get some rest."  
So Mum Dad and Chris went away. The next day Mum brought my clothes in then I went home. "Whats the date" I asked. "October the second" the reply was. I'm recovering now and  
Looking Forward to christmas.

By Emma E. Age 10

## Looking Forward to Christmas.

It was the 24th December. We were all putting up decorations because we were having a Christmas Eve party. There were ribbons and bows everywhere.

The Christmas tree was standing in the corner of the room with the lights shining on it. We would have to be quick because our guests would be coming at 7:30pm and it was quarter to 7 at the moment.

At 7:15pm we had finished and the room looked really nice. We were all proud of the job we had done. Soon after that the door bell went ding dong. Our first guest had arrived. I ran to the door with a big smile on my face but that big smile soon went away when I saw that it was my Aunt Splodge. She said to me "How is my wonderful niece today then?" At the same time she pinched

my cheeks and said "what chubby cheeks you have"

Soon all the guests were here and there was loud music playing and my Fat Aunt Splodge was stuffing her face with cake jelly and ice-cream. It was quite embarrassing really. Soon after that there was a ding dong at the door. "Who could that be?" said Mum. "I bet I know" "Who?" answered Mum "I rang up someone to be Santa at our party and this must be him." Mum opened the door and said "Hello" Santa said "Ho Ho Ho" Mum said to Santa "you must be Santa as I can see by your nice red suit and black wellies and most of all your big red and white hat with a bobble on the top" "yes I am" Santa said. "Well come on in then" Mum asked. "Right then" Santa shouted at the top of his voice. "Let's start by giving out presents!" There were big and small presents. It was really exciting. There were some extra gifts left over so Santa put them under the Christmas tree. Soon after Santa had to go so he said bye to everyone and went. Then I went to bed. Mum took me to bed. She said to me "Are you looking forward to tomorrow?" and I said "yes" then Mum switched out the light and <sup>said good night.</sup> <sub>The end.</sub>

## Looking forward to Christmas

Name: Jamie Selwood

Jeremy James first met father Christmas. One Sunday morning in a very enormous shop. Well there is enormous red curtain there is ~~there~~ a little gap. I look through. I see about 5 dwarfs in there. They got a red small hat on each dwarf. "Come on, come on," I have been waiting for ages at last I'm in. Well what can I do for you little one. Can I sit on your knee. Come on then. Father Christmas had a red hat on as usual and a nice red warm cloak. And black boots on. What's your name Jeremy James, know what would you like for Christmas Jeremy James. Well my best thing I want is a bike with 15 gears. And a nice looking saddle. 5 figures I would like Street Fighter figures, I will see. How old are you 10 year's old well have

you got 50p "What Jeremy James said. Father Christmas was mad. because he had to pay. He just ran away. Jeremy James said to himself that was real father Christmas he had blue eyes. Don't worry I will say sorry on Christmas day. It was night time I went up to bed in a sad grumble sound it became! o'clock in the morning I had two eyes open all night I seen father Christmas. I thought I was seeing things he had brown eyes I shouted your not father Christmas and you have not got black boots on. He ran down stairs as fast as he could.

THE END



## PARISH COUNCIL

Bulb planting has continued through the autumn, so next spring should be very colourful.

Unfortunately we had to abandon the plan to "Beat the Bounds" as it was felt to be too complicated, and too dangerous in present traffic conditions, to have large numbers of children going from point to point around the parish boundaries. But the commemorative mugs have been ordered and will be presented to the children of both schools on December 5th. This will be at North Road School, because they have a bigger hall. We also hope to have an exhibition of the village history and to make this available to the public.

At last we have a footpath map which includes Engine Common and all the present boundaries. The schools will each have one and we hope to have one on permanent display outside the village hall. If the Post Offices are agreeable, they will also be available there, but if you are desperate to have one, contact the clerk or Mrs Gawler.

After Christmas we plan to arrange a public meeting about Neighbourhood Watch. The date has not yet been fixed so watch the notice boards and please do your best to come. If you don't turn up it will seem as if no-one is interested and the idea will be dropped once again.

Parking has always been a problem in the corner of the village green but it would help if everyone parked carefully on the same side of the road - and remember it is against the bye-laws to park on the green itself (even if only one or two wheels) and subject to a fine.

For various reasons Barry and Malcolm have not been able to do so much work in the village this year - and it shows! Is there an able bodied man or woman who takes enough pride in their village to undertake a few hours work each week (paid of course) to keep it tidy? If so please contact the clerk and offer your services.

Meetings on the third Monday of each month.

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

\* \* \* \* \*

## NORTH ROAD COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

It is already half term and I am sure that Christmas preparations will soon be upon us!

Our Christmas Sale will be on Friday, December 2nd and visitors are welcome from 2.00 p.m. onwards. It will again be similar to an indoor Car Boot Sale where tables may be booked at a cost of £4. If you would like to hire a table from which to sell items please contact Mrs Hart, at the school, on 228398. If you would like to browse, or visit Father Christmas in his grotto, we look forward to seeing you.

Monday December 5th (10.30 a.m.) sees a celebration of the establishment of Parish Councils. Iron Acton school will join with North Road to mark the occasion. Old log books will be available and you will be welcome to share any early memories you may have concerning Parish celebrations, events etc. Please contact Mrs Anderson on 228398 or Mr Larter 228322 if you wish to participate.

Our Christmas Concert performance will be at 2.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. on Wednesday December 14th. Local visitors from outside the school would be welcome to attend the 2.00 p.m. performance.



## CHURCH NEWS

### Handbell Ringers

The Iron Acton Handbell Ringers hope to be going round the Parish as usual on the eight or nine nights before Christmas, hoping to bring some cheer, and to raise money for cancer research and the Parish Church. Our dedicated young people gladly give their time on those busy pre-Christmas days and work very hard whatever the weather, and they are very grateful for the warm welcome from the people whose houses they visit. Some people, especially in the outlying parts of the parish are afraid to open their doors on dark evenings, so this is just a warning to let you know that some visitors have only good intentions. If you would like us to call at specific time please ask, if you would prefer us not to call at all, please say so and ring the Rectory 228412. If anyone would like to learn to ring the bells also ask at The Rectory.



We have had an emergency appeal from the Imperial Cancer Research Fund explaining that their income has fallen this year and they face a serious shortfall in funds, so we shall have to work extra hard to try to help.

**CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAYRE.** Village Hall. 2.3 p.m. December 10th.

### **SAINT JAMES THE LESS, CHRISTMASS SERVICES.**

Service of Advent hymns, carols and readings at 6.30 p.m. December 18th.

December 24th. **CHRISTMASS EVE**

6.30 p.m. Crib Service.

This short service has become a firm favourite with all generations, so that now the only problem is to come early if you want to find a seat. Both children and adults carry gifts to the Crib and these gifts will be given to Barnardos who always thank us very enthusiastically for the donations.

Another charity asking for our support this year is CHICKS - Camping Holidays for Inner City Kids - who do great work among deprived children. The Parochial Church Council thought it would be a good idea to send them the collection taken at the Crib Service.

11.15 p.m. Mattins of Christmass (a chance for quiet preparation before) -

**12 MIDNIGHT** Midnight Mass.

December 25th **CHRISTMASS DAY**

8 a.m. Holy Communion

9.30 a.m. Sung Eucharist (A Family Service for all members of the Family whatever their age)

4 p.m. Evensong (said) The Church is closed after Evensong.

\* \* \* \* \*

A woman going into a posh wedding was stopped at the church door by an usher. "Excuse me, are you a friend of the groom?"

"No", she replied. "I'm the bride's mother."

## NORTH ROAD LADIES CLUB

Following on his talk earlier this year when Jeff Goundrill issued an invitation to view the gardens of Leyhill Prison, we took him up on this offer and visited at the end of June. We had a good turn out supported by many friends and relations. Everyone admired the gardens planted with many hundreds of flowers in full bloom.

From there we moved on to view the workshops and huge greenhouses situated beyond the arboretum which formed part of the original Leyhill Estate. Those of us who weren't able to get along too well were transported in the Prison coach! The greenhouses were a delight with peppers and tomatoes cropping for a greater part of the year. Much to our joy we were able to buy some of the flower plants also grown there and came back home loaded up with our bargains. We were surprised to learn that potatoes, carrots, swedes etc. in addition to salad vegetables were processed at Leyhill and distributed daily to various Prisons throughout the country.

Our annual trip was to ancient Penhow Castle. This Castle was very interesting with twisting staircases, nooks and crannies. It had been carefully restored to its original state by its owner, who also lived there. From the Castle we went on to enjoy a meal at the nearby hostelry. All in all, a most enjoyable trip.

In September, Glenys Hale demonstrated Quilling. We all tried our hands at the seemingly difficult task of rolling the paper strips into small circles and then creating our own designs by sticking them artistically on cards. The result was quite pleasing so I guess we will be making our own Christmas cards this year.

Three ladies from the charity B.U.S.T. gave us an insight into the work of the Charity at our October meeting. The Charity is based at Frenchay Hospital and aims to help women with counselling. It also carries out fund-raising for much needed equipment.

This year we held our Birthday party at the Golden Lion, Frampton Cotterell. Later in November we are paying a visit to the Hippodrome to see the B.L.O.C. production of 42nd Street.

We end the year with an American supper, including fondue made by our guest speaker, Kate Fielder, of "Cheeses of Switzerland." We look forward to that.

Our calendar for '95 includes a revival of Skittle night, a talk by Innes Blair on Bristol Blue Glass and a visit from the people at Crimestoppers.

We will, as always, be pleased to welcome new members.

**DOROTHY DENNING (228442)**

\* \* \* \* \*

### WHAT IS A SENIOR CITIZEN?

A senior citizen is one who was here before the pill, TV, frozen food, credit cards, ballpoint pens, jet engines, supersonic flights, and the moon was for courting under not for walking on.

Timeshare meant togetherness, chips were eaten from newspaper, hardware was hardware and software did not exist. We were here before tights and drip-dry clothes, dishwashers were husbands and we had hot water bottles not electric blankets.

We got married first, then lived together - how quaint!

We were before Batman, vitamin pills, disposable nappies, pizzas, instant coffee, take-aways and supermarkets.

Soap was for washing with, grass was for mowing, pot was for stew and dumplings.

Aids meant beauty cream for women and trusses for men. To be "gay" was to be the life and soul of the party.

How lucky are we older folk, and worth a fortune with silver in our hair, gold in our teeth, stones in our kidneys and lead in our feet!

We lively old girls always have two men who never leave us alone. There is Arthur Itis who comes to bed with us every night, and Will Power who gets us out of bed every morning.

When one thinks of how the world has changed, what a hardy bunch we are .....

## NORTH ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

Over the past months we have had visits from friends from Chipping Sodbury Baptists as well as the young music group from that church to help in our services.

The Chippenham Evangelical Male Voice Choir have conducted a service of praise and on 4th December we are being joined in worship by Richard and Cynthia Huddleston who will be explaining the work of M.A.F. whom they have joined as missionaries. This organisation can best be described as "Flying Soul Doctors" bringing the Christian message to almost inaccessible parts of Africa and other parts of the world, and providing medical ambulance and emergency aid as well. They will be showing a video illustrating their work.

Our carol service will be held on Sunday December 18th at 6 p.m.

On March 12th '95 at 6 p.m. the Northavon Branch of Gideons International will be conducting the service and bringing an update on their efforts to spread the Christian Message to particularly the young people.

We have tried to show practical Christian love - "Showing Caring by Sharing." We had a special collection in support of Tear Funds Rwanda Appeal. We also sent our Harvest Collection to Tear Fund and our harvest gifts to Manor Park at Frenchay.

We express our thanks to all the choirs, lay preachers, young people and friends who throughout the year have brightened and strengthened our witness.

We wish all our friends and all your readers a blessed and happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. A warm welcome is extended to anyone who would care to come and share worship with us.

\*\*\*\*\*

### HOW TO BE HAPPY

1. Make up your mind to be happy. Learn to find pleasure in simple things.
2. Make the best of your circumstances. No one has everything and everyone has something of sorrow intermingled with the gladness of life. The trick is to make the laughter outweigh the tears.
3. Don't take yourself too seriously.
4. You can't please everybody. Don't let criticism worry you.
5. Don't let your neighbour set your standard. Be yourself.
6. Do things you enjoy doing, but stay out of debt.
7. Don't borrow trouble. Imaginary things are harder to bear than the actual ones.
8. Since hate poisons the soul, do not cherish enmities, grudges. Avoid people who make you unhappy.
9. Have many interests.
10. Don't spend your life brooding over sorrow and mistakes. Don't be one who never gets over things.
11. Do what you can for those less fortunate than yourself.
12. Keep busy at something. A very busy person never has time to be unhappy.



DON'T TAKE YOURSELF TOO SERIOUSLY.

We have had this article for some time, and have tried in vain to persuade several Ladies to provide us with a similar Data Sheet for men so that we could publish them together. Perhaps one of our readers would like to have a go. We would be delighted to publish it next time.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DATA SHEET: WOMEN**

### **Analysis**

Element:	Women
Symbol:	WO <sup>2</sup>
Discoverer:	Adam
Atomic Mass:	Accepted as 55 Kg but known to vary from 45 to 225 Kg
Occurrence:	Copious quantities in all urban areas with trace elements found in most others.

### **Physical Properties**

1. Surface is usually covered in powder or painted film
2. Boils at nothing; freezes for no reason
3. Melts if given special treatment
4. Bitter if incorrectly used
5. Found in various grades ranging from virgin material to common ore
6. Yields to pressure applied gently to selected points.

### **Chemical Properties**

1. Has a great affinity for Gold, Silver, Platinum and most precious stones
2. Absorbs great quantities of expensive substances
3. May explode spontaneously without warning for no reason
4. Softens and takes on a rosy glow when soaked in hot water
5. Activity greatly increases with saturation in alcohol
6. Most powerful money reducing agent known to man.

### **Common Uses**

1. Highly ornamental - especially in sports cars
2. Can be a great aid to relaxation

### **Tests**

1. Pure specimen turns bright pink when discovered in its natural state
2. Turns green when placed beside a better specimen.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DATA SHEET: MEN**

How about it, Ladies?

From The Gazette on 4th November "93 - and still going strong!"

Knitting fanatic Beattie Wallbank celebrated her 93rd birthday this week with a special family party, birthday cake - and plenty to drink!

Great-grandmother Beattie, who lives with her daughter Betty Hall in Dovecote, Yate, has lived in the area all her life.

She was born in Iron Acton and kept the village store opposite the church until 1962, when it was taken over by daughter Betty and her husband.

Beattie has three children, eleven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, some of whom were at the party on Sunday afternoon, including daughter Mary, who flew in from Canada to join the celebrations.

A keen knitter, Beattie completes an average of four woollen blankets a week for the "Small and Cutes" Ward of the Bristol Hospital for Sick Children and has recently knitted blankets for Oxfam's Rwanda Appeal.

And although Beattie is now slightly deaf and has to use a wheelchair occasionally, daughter Betty says her mother still loves going out on day trips - so far this month she has already visited Swindon and Cwmbran! She also enjoys the odd tipple.

"She will drink anything," said Betty, although she usually has a gin at mid-day, a glass of sherry at supper-time and whiskey and water before she goes to bed. There's plenty of life left in her yet."

Congratulations, Beattie, and Many Happy Returns

\* \* \* \* \*

### "BOOZY BOILED FRUIT CAKE" (A very seasonal recipe)

1 cup butter	1 cup sugar
1 cup mixed dried fruit	1 cup water
1 tbsp brown sugar	1 tsp salt
50g walnuts	lemon juice
1 bottle whisky	4 large eggs
(wine may be substituted)	1 tsp baking power

Place dried fruit, water and half cup sugar in small saucepan. Boil for 15 minutes. Pour whisky into shot glass, sample to check quality. Get a large mixing bowl. Check whisky again. Pour 1 level cup and drink. Repeat previous step. Turn on electric mixer and beat butter in large fluffy bowl. Add 1 spoontea of baking soda and beat again. Resample whisky to make sure it's still whisky. Turn off mixer, break two eggs, add to bowl. Chuck in dried fruit. Mix on the turner. If fruit gets stuck in beaters, pry loose with screwdriver. Sample whisky to check consistency. Next sift two cups salt or something, who cares what. Check the whisky! Now sift the lemon juice and strain the nuts. Add one tablespoon brown sugar or whichever colour you can find. Mix well. Grease the oven, turn pan rack to 350 degrees. Don't forget to beat off the turner. Pour mix into cake pan and over the bench. Throw bowl out of window. Stagger to the laundry, put cake pan in washing machine, set to hot rinse. Continue sampling whisky till bottle is empty. Go to bed.

\* \* \* \* \*



## THE JOYS OF LIVING IN A COUNTRY COTTAGE

When we married (a good many years ago) we first of all lived in a very tiny, very basic semi-detached cottage - two down, one up: the one up was right on top of the stairs - no landing, no doorway. No drainage, no inside water supply so no bathroom, no toilet. It was in a deplorable state but with good cleaning and redecorating (aided by kindly Uncles), it looked very cosy and habitable, there was a big garden, and at least it avoided the problem of newlyweds of our generation of having to share parental homes.

However, we soon discovered that we were having to share our home with others.

### MICE!!!

The first indication was hearing them practising for mouse Olympics under the bedroom floorboards at night, but we eventually managed to reduce that problem with mousetraps and bits of tasty cheese (at least, we hoped, they died happily). But they are persistent animals and it takes more than a few mousetraps to completely rid a house of mice once they decide they like it there and were probably there before you were.

The final straw came when we had been away for some time on holiday. We returned to the house on a Sunday morning and followed our usual Sunday morning activities of those times - wife cooking the lunch, husband gardening.

Suddenly wife notices company in the kitchen - runs into the garden for help from husband. Husband to the rescue, kills intruder with a beer bottle.

Back to Sunday morning routine.

Again, company. Again, husband and beer bottle to the rescue.

Again, back to routine, wife by this time feeling somewhat edgy.

Once more, company. Wife by this time slightly hysterical. Throws herself down on a settee, crying "Can't stand this any longer", etc., etc. Husband tries to comfort wife, but suddenly insists she should go into the garden to calm down and he will see to things in the house.

After order has been restored, husband feels it's safe to explain to wife that as she was wailing on the sofa, he noticed (just a few inches from her head) a nest of mice in a coal scuttle" Imagine what that would have done to wife's hysterics if she had known!

We moved away shortly afterwards to a modern, mouse-free environment, with drains and inside plumbing etc, but, in spite of the many disadvantages of that first cottage, we still have good memories of our life there. And here we are again, happily living in a cottage - fortunately, mouseless - but aren't those woodlice a pain!

\*\*\*\*\*

### The Life of Mai Beasley.

Born of Irish parents in the Cottage Hospital (Chipping sodbury) in 1923 Mai (Dillon as she was then) grew up in Iron Acton. Life was very different then and it was not unheard of to walk the six miles to Chipping Sodbury for Mass on a Sunday. However, nobody complained either when a pony and trap was introduced into the house hold.

Going to the village school, family life was the farm where everyone did their bit. At eleven years old Mai went to Chipping Sodbury Grammar School cycling both ways in all winds and weather. She enjoyed school and found maths easy, and was reprimanded more than once "... will you stop doing your sister's homework ..."

It was in the latter school years that Mai's mother came breathless to the school with the news that the small shop across the road in the village was for sale, "Did she think she ought to buy it?"

Without hesitation she said "Yes" thinking of "all those free sweets!" And so the 'dream' of running the sweet shop when you got home from school became a reality.

War broke out and on leaving school she joined the Wrens (WRNS) attached to the Fleet Air Arm and was posted to Cornwall as a Bomb Range Marker. The war never worried her and she told many a fond story of those times, revisiting all the old haunts many years later.

In 1942 while she was in the Wrens her mother took on the Post Office as by now her father who was suffering from Rheumatoid Arthritis was less able. But he was able to run the Post Office. It was this illness which stopped Mai following up a career in nursing when she left the Wrens.

Her Father now needed nursing and so she came home to run the Post Office and helped to nurse him. She met Jim in 1948 on his return from the Burma Campaign. She confided in her best friend that "... he's a bit quite" But that obviously left plenty of room for her favourite occupation, talking, and after a two year romance they married. They settled down to General Farming (and the Post Office) with all the usual disasters of newly married life with farming combined.

Apart from rearing two children she was a very active and talented person. She enjoyed painting, sewing, pottery, creative writing and a passion for flower arranging, while also being a life long active member in the Gloucestershire Dairy Students.

After a very full life she retired in 1982 from the Post Office at the age of 58. And with Jim they built their dream retirement bungalow and together created a 2 acre wildlife garden.

Illness came two years ago and she soldiered on - not wanting people to know.

In June of this year illness took over and, having been nursed by "the best nurse she could ever have" Jim, on Saturday 1st October she was admitted to Frenchay Hospital and at 5.15 p.m. Monday 3rd October slipped peacefully away.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THOUGHTS WHEN WALKING MY DOG

When the red and gold leaves of Autumn swirl  
And sleep calls loudly to hedgehog and squirrel  
Then I walk my dog, wearing warm boots and a hat  
Dreaming of the fireside, where I would sooner be sat.

Ladened with worry of work-a-day care,  
I no longer have time to stand there and stare  
Or to look at the sky, in all its beauty above  
Fashioned by Gods hand in his infinite love.

To see clouds like waves, on tempestuous seas,  
or the scent of wood smoke, wafting in on a breeze  
The way we live now, is oh so wrong  
When did you last hear a bird in full song?

Cloaked in a mantle of greed and stealth  
Our own market forces chasing unquenchable wealth  
Oh just to stop and watch nature run wild  
And return once again that small wondrous child.

P.J.

## Acton Aid

Acton Aid are organising a party for pensioners on 4th December. This will be on Sunday afternoon and Bryan Haynes will show films of Bristol and the West Country just before and just after the war. All pensioners in the Parish should have been invited by a member of Acton Aid, but we are aware that our list of pensioners may be a bit out-of-date, so if you have been missed, please contact Richard May on 228282.



Our children's party will be on 18th December, when Bryan the Magician will be on hand as usual to entertain the children, and a visit from Father Christmas is expected.

We are holding a joint Christmas party this year with the Village Hall Committee. This will take place on Saturday 17th December in the Village Hall. A good band, excellent food and cheap drink are promised.

Recent events have included a Sea Food Soiree at John Percy's house, a Halloween Party for families, and another German Evening in the Village Hall. This last event was enjoyed by a large number of people who appreciated the great entertainment provided by "Karl Heinz" and his team.

Acton Aid meets on the first Thursday of each month at the Rose and Crown. All men living in Iron Acton are welcome, and will enjoy a pleasant evening.

\* \* \* \* \*

## FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL:

### WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

A handful of us had tremendous fun as we dozy doed in the village hall in June and narrowly missed turning the barn dance into a profit making venture. The same could not be said for the Summer Fair which was a great success and raised over £600. We then went into the autumn term with a rounders and barbecue evening on the school playing field which was enjoyed by quite a crowd of parents, children and staff. Play continued until the risk of losing the smaller children in the gathering gloom drove everyone home.

The popular pre-Christmas flower arranging evening will have taken place on 24th November by the time you read this; you will know who attended as the skill and mastery of their door decorations will give the game away in the run up to Christmas - there may be the odd exception!

Looking forward there is a family quiz evening on 10th December at school and, in the new year, the return of the popular family disco on 11th February in the village hall. Do get your brains in gear and your dancing shoes on (as appropriate) and come along to either or both.

### AND WHERE DOES THE MONEY THAT WE RAISE GO?

Well you thought the school was the Victorian building on a small hill at the end of the village; in fact it's a monster with an insatiable appetite living in a big black pit. Whilst central funds take the edge off its appetite, Friends are able to lob in the icecream and chocolate sauce that make life there more rewarding and fun. For example (and returning to reality) over £1,100 was given to school in October to buy a role play shop front, a climbing frame, construction materials, a play mat, cooking equipment and over £600 worth of books.

Finally a big thank you to all who have given their interest and support during this year and here's to a successful 1995.



## Iron Acton C of E School

The term began in a very refreshing way due to the extra amount of space the school has in which to work. This has been made possible by the erection of the third classroom. The school has now been organised into three classes for the first time in nearly fifteen years. In addition to this, as the school house is brought into use, even more space will become available. The three classes have now been given names:-

Mrs Baxter's class	- Oak
Mrs Hatt's class	- Ash
Mrs Howat's class	- Elm

All of the children have settled well especially new children to the school and those now occupying the new classroom. Plans have been drawn up to make good use of the spaces around the new classroom for the benefit of the children.

At the beginning of October the children were invited to take part in a Kite workshop which was run by Mr Nick James. Mr James has been one of the organisers of the recently successful kite festivals held at Ashton Court. With his expertise, all of the children made a kite and, even with very little wind, managed to fly it. Some of the older children were given the opportunity of flying some of the spectacular kites which Mr James had brought with him. These kites, either very large or of a very unusual design, such as the seagulls or the pterodactyl, provided the children with an unusual sense of achievement. There were also the kite trains of rectangles or circles. A lovely day was had by all, children, parents and staff.

The school is at present waiting for the visit of the Bristol City Community Football Coaching Team. The children are looking forward to their visit and to picking up a few tips to help them win a few more school matches.

There are two other events that the children will be taking part in during the second half of the term. The first is the parish celebrations for the centenary, attending a special assembly at North Road School at the beginning of December. The second event is the Avon School's Cathedral Carol Service at Clifton. Here the Oak class have been invited to attend.

The Friends of Iron Acton school have organised two events between now and Christmas. The first is a Flower Arranging Evening to take place in the school hall on the evening of the 24th November, and a family quiz evening to be held on Saturday 10th December. If you should wish to attend any of these events in aid of the school please contact the school's office.

We are intending to organise similar events for Christmas for the children to enjoy such as the Christmas party, Nativity play, and a junior production. However, this year we hope to end our Autumn Term for Christmas with a Carol Service in Church on Friday afternoon of the 16th December.

Merry Christmas.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two old soldiers were arguing over the respective merits of their regiments. "Oh, ours was the best of the lot, Lionel."

"Not as good as ours, Rollo old man. We were the best drill squad in the world in those days. When we presented arms, all you could hear was "Slap-2-3-Slap-2-3-Slap". As one man."

"Oh, our lot was better than that, Lionel. When we presented arms, all you could hear was "Slap-2-3-Slap-2-3-Slap-2-3-Jingle".

"Jingle? What was the jingle?"

"Medals."



This article appeared in the Evening Post on 4th May, under a photograph of Norman Carter, Clerk to the Parish Council.

## LAST WORD ON VILLAGE LIFE

### Parish's record of 100 years.

One hundred years of village life have been captured in a unique record book in Iron Acton. The leather-bound register has recorded every annual parish meeting since it was formed in 1894.

This week veteran clerk Norman Carter wrote the minutes of the latest annual meeting - on the book's very last page. He has kept the tradition of writing about parish events by hand during his 22 years as Clerk.

He said: "It's a really fascinating document of village life. It's amazing that the 100th meeting used up the very last page of the book. I shall have to look for another book to start the next 100 years!"

The first meeting of Iron Acton Parish Council was held at the village schoolroom on December 14, 1894. Vicar the Rev George Rickards was named the first chairman. Now, 100 years later, present chairman Bob Sheppard has signed the latest minutes.

He said: "It is a real privilege and honour."

\* \* \* \* \*

## NEWS FROM ACTONIANS.

By the time you read this article our latest production - "Dazzle" a spoof space musical - will have assaulted the senses of Iron Acton as we try to bring the future to the village hall. "Dazzle" is a musical "send-up" of the highly successful Star Trek television series and has provided another challenge for the Actonian Drama Group. Just how do we bring the leading lady flying onto the stage? How can we show a time warp to an audience and worst of all how can we "transport" people from space to earth and back again? These are just a few of the problems still to be solved - but hopefully many of you will have seen the production and know the solutions. The usual good team spirit has managed to create another illusion in the village hall, this time under the direction of Mike Wills and musical management of Marilyn Wright. With a cast and crew of over fifty persons this has not been an easy job and has taken a tremendous effort from all involved. We hope the village will have enjoyed our space fantasy as much as our other performances this year. It says a lot for our group, and the local support, that in one year we can range from Arthur Millers "Crucible" and Penny Percy's "Pity of War" via Gerry Millward's "Roman Romps" evenings to end In Outer Space. Never let it be said that the Actonians do not provide variety!

Speaking of variety, as 1995 approaches, we are busy planning our season of offerings to Iron Acton. As we go to press we can confirm that the Spring Production will be a thriller followed by a Restoration comedy in the Autumn. These will be in addition to the One-Act Festival entries, both Junior and Senior, and the June evenings of entertainment - this year based on Hollywood Movies.

There will also be another of the enjoyable Quiz Nights to be held in the village hall during January/February and the spring will see further events hosted by Actonians for the enjoyment of the whole area.

I'll end by extending the good wishes of all Actonian members to those reading this magazine for a peaceful and Happy New Year.

**Bob Allen - Hon. Sec.**

\* \* \* \* \*

"Do you know, I'd only been in hospital a week when complications set in."

"Why? What happened?"

"The day nurse caught me kissing the night nurse."

## REMEMBERING GLENN MILLER

It is now fifty years since Glenn Miller met his untimely death but the sound of his legendary orchestra still lives on. This phenomenon cannot be plain nostalgia as most of the audience, today, is of a more recent generation.

On January 20th, at the Iron Acton Village Hall, there is to be a Glenn Miller evening at which the true Glenn Miller story will be told and, in addition, an unlimited amount of Miller records and tapes will be played.

The story will expand on the so called Glenn Miller Sound, the struggle to make Moonlight Serenade a popular number and the period when Miller was banned from playing Moonlight Serenade, - even though he was the person who wrote it.

All this and much more, plus loads of musical illustrations will be featured at the Iron Acton Glenn Miller evening. It should also be added that supper will be included, and doubtless there will be some informal dancing later in the evening, - especially after the wine has taken effect!

Watch out for the posters and don't miss out. Tickets will be available from Committee Members and from the Post Office in early '95. See you there.

Stanley Vant.



\*\*\*\*\*

### TEN YEARS AGO .....

#### Extracts from "FOCUS" - 1983

##### Not Quite World Cup!!

"International Football Tournament. (Chipping Sodbury - Cesson - St. Nicholas - Iron Acton.)  
Final Result. Iron Acton 1, Chipping Sodbury 2 (After Penalty Kick-off.)"

##### Best Kept Village Competition.

"This year you finally did it! Avon's Best Kept Large Village. Sir John Wills presented Trophy in the Village Hall. Well done!"

##### Acton Micro-Surgery Appeal.

"More than £3,000 for Frenchay Hospital Surgery Unit.  
This splendid sum has been raised in the village in six month's of varied events."

##### Without Comment .....

"During the last fifty years there have been regular meetings of Guides and Brownies in Iron Acton."

\*\*\*\*\*

Our Business has been established since 1850. We have been pleasing and displeasing people ever since. We have made money and lost money. We have been cussed and discussed, knocked about, talked about, held up, robbed, etc., etc., to the end of the chapter. The only reason we are staying in Business is to see what the Hell will happen next.

From the reverse of a business card,

O P E R A T I O N      C H R I S T M A S      C H I L D

BIG PLANE II CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX APPEAL 1994

BACKGROUND:

In September 1993 OCC launched a unique and innovative appeal to raise money and send aid to children in war ravaged Bosnia and Croatia. That appeal collected 125,000 shoeboxes and raised £100,000 in cash.

THE AIM FOR 1994:

To collect 250,000 shoeboxes and raise £250,000 in cash.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

Decide if your recipient will be a boy, a girl or young woman

WHAT SHOULD I SEND?

- \* Small toys such as toy cars, soft toys, puzzles, jigsaws
- \* Sweets and chocolates
- \* Pencils, crayons, colouring books
- \* Toiletries, hair brushes, toothbrushes, toothpaste
- \* A letter about yourself and a photograph

FOR TEENAGE GIRLS/YOUNG WOMEN THE FOLLOWING WOULD BE WELCOME:

- |                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| * Soap and deodourant | * Brush and comb  |
| * Tights or socks     | * Sanitary towels |
| * Small gifts         |                   |

ARE THERE GIFTS I NEED TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT?

- \* Ensure all parts of the gift are included (to only receive half a jigsaw is very frustrating!)
- \* Do NOT include any toy soldiers, guns or water pistols
- \* Do NOT include books - unless they are picture books
- \* Do NOT include drinks (one burst can ruins a pallet of gifts)
- \* Do NOT include anything easily breakable
- \* Ensure that all sweets/chocolates are securely wrapped
- \* Do NOT include cigarettes, alcohol or razor blades

HOW DO I PACK THE BOX?

Please feel free to cover the box with Christmas wrapping paper BUT PLEASE DON'T SEAL THE LID. Each box must be checked by OCC Staff in Wrexham and then sealed by them before shipment.

THEN EITHER RING LYNNE BLANCHARD ON 228566 OR THE RECTOR ON 228412 AND WE CAN DISCUSS DELIVERY/COLLECTION POINTS.

WE NEED TO KNOW BEFORE MONDAY 12 DECEMBER

## 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  
3rd December  
4th December

10th December  
10th December  
17th December  
18th December  
14th January  
20th January  
21st January

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  
Acton Aid Elderly Citizens  
Christmas Party - afternoon.  
Christmas Fayre - St. James the Less.  
Actonians Christmas Dinner  
Acton Aid Christmas Party  
Acton Aid Children's Party  
Northavon Auctions  
Glen Miller Evening  
Pantomime by Sodbury  
Ladies Circle - afternoon.

### In the Parish Church

10th December  
Christmas Services:-  
18th December

24th December - Christmas Eve

25th December - Christmas Day  
and at 9.30 a.m. -

The Church closed after evensong.

Christmas Fayre - Village Hall 2.30 pm

Advent - hymns, carols, readings  
6.30 p.m.  
Crib Service 6.30 p.m.  
Mattins of Christmas 11-15 p.m.  
Midnight Mass - Midnight  
Holy Communion - 8.00 a.m.  
Sung Eucharist - a family service for all  
of the family whatever their age.  
Evensong (said) - 4 p.m.

### At North Road School.

2nd December  
5th December

14th December

Christmas Sale - 2.00 p.m.  
Celebration of the establishment of the  
Parish Council - 10.30 p.m.  
Iron Acton School to join in this event.  
Christmas Concert 2.00 p.m. and 6.15p.m.

### At Iron Acton School.

10th December  
16th December

Family Quiz  
Carol Service in Church - afternoon.

### At the Rose & Crown

1st Thursday in the month

Acton Aid - 8.00 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*

**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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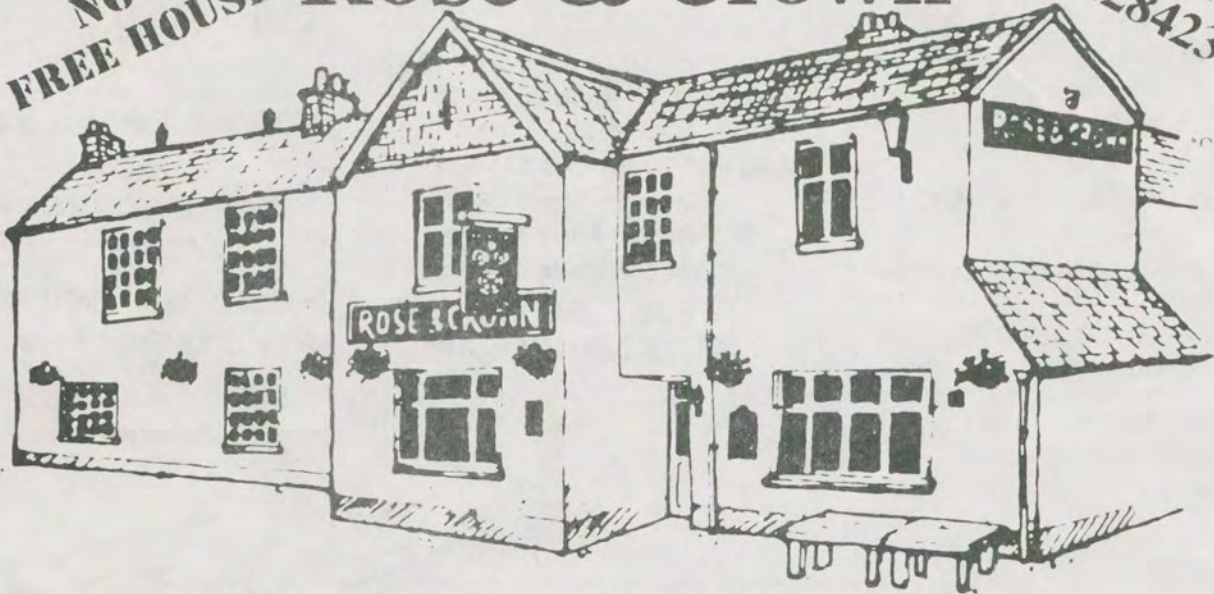
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