

FOCAL POYNTZ



Iron Acton

July 1996

ENMR

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
7th September
21st September
19th October
16th November
21st-23rd November
28th-30th November

Nursery School	9.00 am
Elizabethans	2.00 pm
Junior Actonians	6.00 pm
Actonians	7.30 pm
Women's Institute	7.30 pm
Parish Council	7.30 pm
Whist Drive	7.30 pm
Knitting Group	1.30 pm
Horticultural Show	
Northavon Auctions	
Northavon Auctions	
Northavon Auctions	
Actonians Production of "My Fair Lady"	

In the Parish Church

22nd September
7th December

Harvest Festival
Christmas Fayre (in Village Hall)

At Iron Acton School.

3rd September

Autumn Term begins

At the Rose & Crown

1st Thursday in the month

Acton Aid - 8.00 p.m.

We hear that the flag day for St Joseph's Home raised a total of £110.64. Congratulations to Mr Jouxson and his helpers.

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 Mr L. Alsop (228400).

John Percy 228339	Charles Wilkins 228254	Jo Voss 228674	Lionel Alsop 228400
Jean Dickes 228609	Hazel Dron 228509	Lynne Blanchard 228566	Maureen Blake 294381

Our new cover this month has been drawn for us by Betty Parker. We are very grateful to her for it.

<p>This issue of FOCAL POYNTZ has been printed for the Editors by Gerry at GEMPRINT</p>	<p>Please telephone 0117 940 9696 for competitive prices on <i>Invitations, Letterheadings, Business Cards, Invoices etc.</i></p>
<p>Eos House · 145 Staple Hill Road · Fishponds · Bristol BS16 5AG</p>	

SUMMER

ISSUE NO

42

EDITORIAL SUMMER 1996

Betty and Godfrey Cook

The last edition of Focal Poyntz contained a brief note telling us of the death of Betty Cook. Sadly this time we now have to record the demise of Godfrey too.

But in a way it is right and fitting that we should remember them as a couple. Theirs was a particularly blessed and unique partnership that enhanced and enriched village life.

Godfrey will be remembered for his warm hearted, and cheerful enthusiasm. Betty for her hands on pragmatism that patiently saw the fruition of many good causes and refused to bow to the grinding wheels of bureaucracy. They both had a keen sense of humour, and delighted in the absurd - who else would live in a house called Neksdore?!

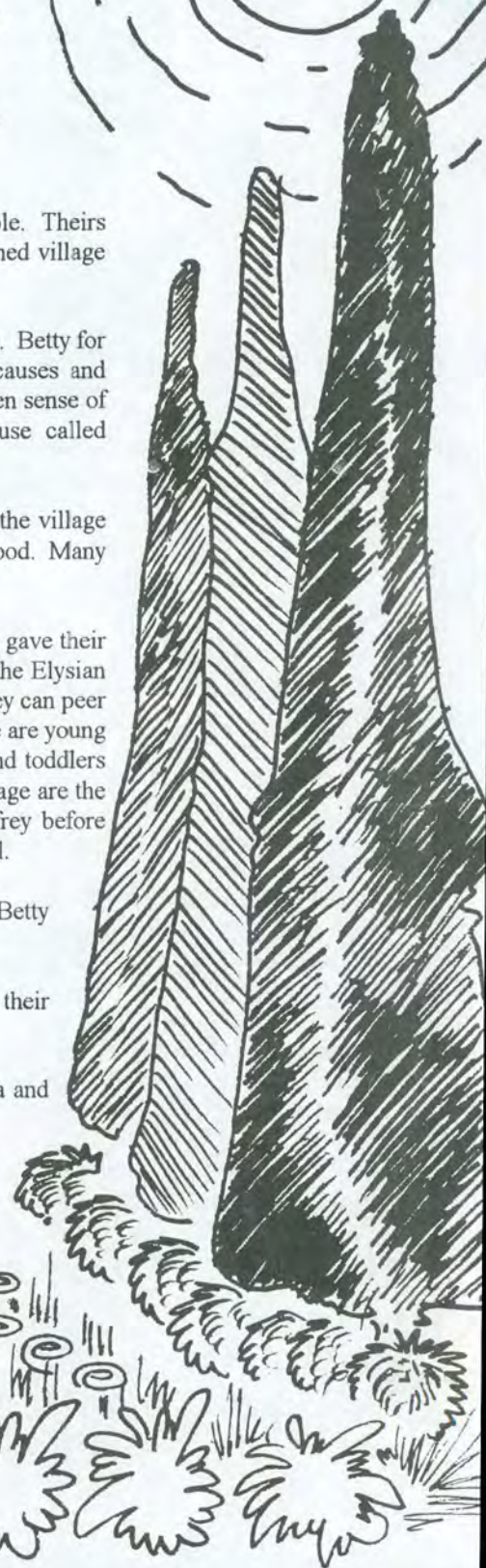
Betty and Godfrey cared passionately about the welfare and well being of the village and its people. They worked tirelessly behind the scenes for the common good. Many recipients of their kindness did not know who their benefactors were.

It would be impossible to catalogue all the many good causes to which they gave their support and how they would hate it if we did! Let us hope as they pace the Elysian fields together, reunited with their former dogs scampering at their heels, they can peer through the clouds that separate us and see the results of their labour. There are young people playing on the tennis courts in the parish meadows and mothers and toddlers having a relaxing time in the children's play area. Many gardens in the village are the proud recipients of Cook plants, raised and cherished by Betty and Godfrey before finding their way to plant sales, raising money for the Church or Village Hall.

Last and not least, Focal Poyntz was brought into being by Godfrey and Betty working together with their friends Dotty and Charles Wilkins.

We record our grateful thanks to Betty and Godfrey. We are poorer for their passing but richer for having known them.

We send our love and sympathy to Theresa, Butch and Meryl and Emma and Victoria.



SILVEY BALLOON RACE VILLAGE DAY 1996

Thomas Silvey, the local oil distribution company, had a very enjoyable May Day selling helium filled balloons in aid of Project 2000 and as a result was able to hand over £162.00 towards the day's proceeds.

The race itself was a great success with entries from many villagers as well as visitors from foreign parts - Birmingham, Exeter and even Norfolk!

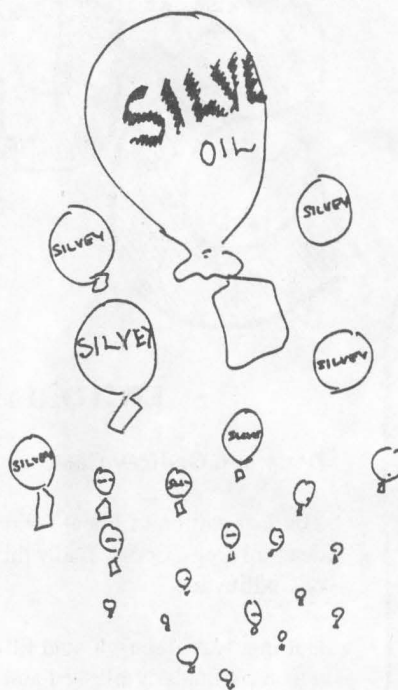
Twenty one race cards were returned, predominantly from a south westerly direction between Frampton Cotterell and Oakford, near Tiverton, though one card received after the closing date was declared to have been found in Tunbridge Wells, Kent - a cynic might have questioned its validity!

Winner of the Open Category and £20 vouchers for Showcase Cinema and £25 vouchers for Deep Pan Pizza Restaurant is the Clark family of Watch Elm Close, Bradley Stoke, whose balloon travelled the furthest, found in Oakford, Nr. Tiverton.

Winner of the 'Special Heating Oil User Category' and the Oil Watchman remote oil tank gauge is Mr John Wright of Algars Mill whose balloon reached Weston-Super-Mare.

Winners of £5 Marks & Spencer Vouchers for the returners of the winning race cards are Allan Woolley of Cheriton Bishop, Exeter, and Mrs Gwen Cox of Weston-Super-Mare.

The most notable failure was that of Chris Heal who despite purchasing and attaching five balloons to his race card failed to secure a prize - who knows, perhaps it's still out there on its way to the States!



IRON ACTON CRICKET CLUB.

Following a successful inaugural meeting, the I.A.C.C. has been formed and comprises almost entirely residents of the village.

We played our first fixture on 26th June against a well established local solicitor's team, at the Bristol University ground; a date that unfortunately clashed with the Euro '96 football semi-final against Germany.

After winning the toss Iron Acton batted with such flair and aggression that their innings closed on 81 after only 16 of the allotted 23 overs. Skipper Simon Cross led the way with 38 with important contributions from Stephen Neill (18) and Chris Wiggins (16).

The bowling was expected to be our main problem, but an impressive opening spell by John Shepherd and Roger Averis restricted the opposition to 29 for 4, after 10 overs. With their most dangerous batsman dismissed, Darren Pullman quickly removed pads and wicket keeping gloves to bowl a dangerous spell and Phil Glover bowled exceedingly tightly at the other end.

With 3 overs left, our prime bowlers now rested, and only 16 runs required, Steve Neill and Chris Wiggins took up the attack. The tension was palpable and they responded splendidly, keeping the runs to a trickle. The excitement continued to the end with Jamie McIver taking a stunning catch a cover point in the dark and 3 runs being required for victory off the last delivery.

A 'dot ball' from Chris Wiggins and a famous victory was ours, and just in time to watch extra time in the football before returning to the White Hart for a muted celebration.

Our next fixture is at Hambrook C.C. (Whiteshill Common) on the evening of 24th July (6.00 start), and if anyone is interested in playing or supporting, they should contact Simon Cross on 228291 for more details.

IRON ACTON PARISH COUNCIL - JUNE 1996

At the Annual Parish meeting in May Cllr Bob Shepperd was re-elected Chairman and Cllr Peter Wedgewood was elected Vice-Chairman.

The Parish Council were sorry to hear of Betty Cook's death. Betty had served as a Parish Councillor for sixteen years. She became Vice Chairman and then Chairman before retiring. She is sadly missed and the Parish Council would like to hear from anyone with an idea for a lasting memorial to her.

Parish Meadows

The Parish Meadows were a favourite place in the village for Betty and it is appropriate that we are planning improvements there this year. The planned play equipment with approved safety surfaces has been found to be more expensive than first thought. Grants have been applied for but the new equipment will not be in for this summer as were originally planned. A grant from Rural Action does mean that we can go ahead with fencing the play area to make it dog proof. This will involve removing the slide temporary but it will be re-sited hopefully within a new structure.

Pride of Place Village Sign

Many of you will have seen the village sign either on May Day on the Village Green or at the Village Hall. The sign is part of the Pride of Place project to celebrate the birth of South Gloucestershire Council. Workshops were held in the Bristol Playbus and Cll Baker's kitchen with Steve Joyce an artist allocated to us by South Gloucestershire Council. The sign is made in fibre glass by Steve but it is hoped the final sign will be in cast iron. An appeal has gone to the Lottery to make permanent signs from all the Parishes in the scheme.

Questions have been asked about what the sign means. This is the official version.

- The fibre glass is coloured to look like Iron.
- The hands represent the workers from the iron and quarry industries.
- The poles either side the Maypole.
- The acorn on the left pole from the origin of the name Acton.
- The Preaching Cross on the right pole from the Church.
- The clenched hand at the bottom is from the Poyntz family crest.

The Parish Council would like to thank all those who took part in this venture especially the Bourns family (Edward modelled the acorn) and we look forward to seeing a more permanent sign in the future.

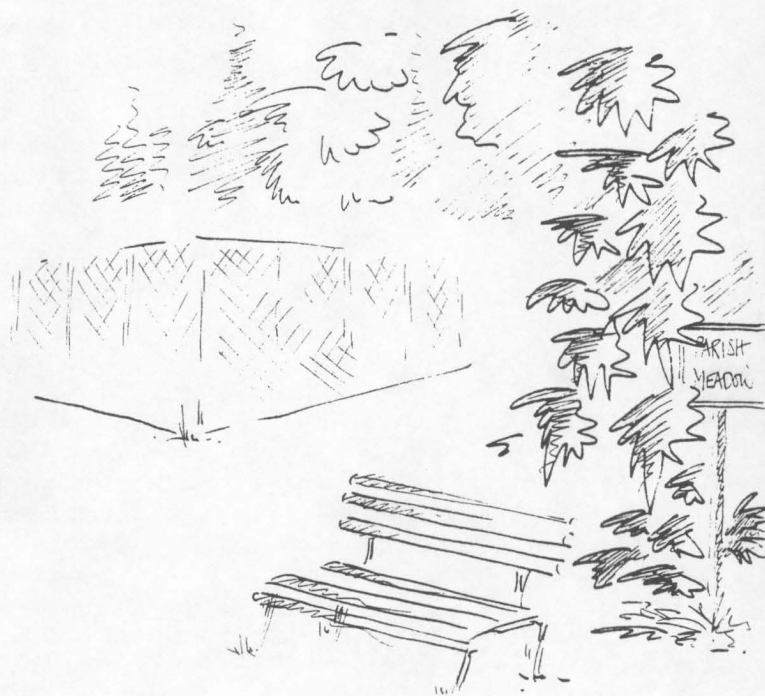
The Parish Council meets at the Village Hall, Iron Acton or North Road School (see notice boards for venue) on the 3rd Monday of each month. Parishioners are always welcome to come and listen. We set aside time at the beginning of each meeting for Parishioners to have their say. So if you have a problem we can help with do come along.

Cllr Sue Gawler.

A boy walked into a pet shop and said, "Do you sell wasps?". The man said, "Sorry we don't". The boy said, "Well you had one in the window last week!"

Why do some teachers go cross-eyed? *Because they cannot control their pupils.*

What is the difference between a sailor and a soldier? *You can't dip a sailor in your egg.*



IRON ACTON CEVC PRIMARY SCHOOL

A very busy time in the school's life is approaching, coupled with the many events in the school's Summer Term, Governors and Staff are having to prepare for the school's OFSTED Inspection in October. In the meantime, we shall endeavour not to let these preparations get in the way of the many activities which are held for the children of the school and the local cluster of schools during this term.

The children are now preparing excitedly for the Isle of Wight visit with preliminary project work. The younger members of the school are studying different aspects of our local community and you may have seen them, accompanied by parents and teachers, venturing into the village, to visit people and places. Mrs Howat, our Humanities Co-ordinator, has, with your help, amassed an impressive array of resources concerning Iron Acton Village and its past, which the children can use for their studies. Thank you, all who contributed.

Recently some of the children entered a competition run by the Euro '96 Football Championships Governing Body. The children had to design a poster or artifact which reflected the European nature of the competition for which they all received a certificate.

The school is indebted to Mr C. Halliday for providing the school with a new football strip. The boys and girls concerned are going to organise some fund raising event during the next half term to go towards its cost.

We shall be welcoming this September, only 4 children to our new Reception Year. However, with the shortage of school places generally in the area, this could rise by the beginning of the Autumn Term.

A new venture this year is the holding of year 6 leavers activity evening at Iron Acton School. The activities that the children will be able to participate in will range from trampolining to archery. This will be held on the 17th July from 5 - 7 p.m.

The school house development is now well on the way. The electricians have completed their work. At the time of writing the joining doorway into the school hall is being created and towards the end of term parties of volunteers will be needed to help to decorate the house from top to toe. We should be ready by September 1st.

The end of the school's year holds many events for all the school community. This year we have the school sports afternoon on the 24th June to which you are invited commencing at 1.15 p.m. Just over two weeks later on Wednesday 3rd July, the Cluster Sports at Iron Acton where schools from Tortworth, Cromhall, Rangeworthy and North Road Yate will be competing.

Our end of terms Concerts are being held on the 15th and 16th July. The first, a matinée and the second, an evening performance.

Finally, this year Iron Acton bids goodbye to one of the largest year 6 groups for some considerable time, the Leavers' Service this year will be conducted by the Rector and take place during the afternoon of the last day of term (19th July '96).

School re-opens on Tuesday 3rd September as Monday 2nd September is an in-service day.

Happy Holiday,

R.H. Larter, Headteacher.

The pilot felt a gun sticking into his back, and a voice hissed in his ear. *"Take me to London."*
"But we're going to London," said the pilot.
"I know. But I've been hi-jacked to Cuba twice before, so this time I'm taking no chances."

Teacher: What is a skeleton?

Pupil: It's a man with his outsides off and his insides out.

GODFREY AND BETTY

We had, of course, bitten off more than we could chew, as our outspoken paternal aunt assured us, when we moved to Dean Lodge in 1975. But it was August and in our new garden we picnicked on the grass and drooled among overblown white roses and rampant Russian vine and drank coffee and cider and made plans.

We quickly discovered the difference between Iron Acton and the rural suburbia we had come from three miles down the road. In this place, people approached newcomers. Betty and Godfrey wandered over to the low dividing wall between the gardens sometime during that first few days, I forget when. There were Grouse and Muffin too, one old labrador, one young. Their garden was of course glorious but I couldn't see any point in being daunted by that as we were never going to compete. We did admire though, the perfect emerald lawn which it was Godfrey's delight to cut twice a week, sitting square and sturdy in shorts and shirt, on a ride-on mower. If anyone in my family cast envious eyes on Godfrey's mower, I explained to them that a walk-behind mower is extremely good for the circulation and the building of character.

Plants came my way soon, polygonums, anthemis, Michaelmas Daisies, offered casually by Betty, who also offered her gardening experience but modestly, so I never had the feeling of being dictated to, I, who knew nothing much about plants beyond a few petunias in a tub. Betty knew about growing but was never afraid to admit her failures, never saw herself as an expert. She was constantly learning new techniques, trying new varieties, going to talks and demonstrations. The garden never stood still and Betty was emotionally involved with it. I remember how sad she was when one of the two huge beech trees by the gate had to come down.

If we had a drink with the Cooks, it was always an enormous drink, white, very chilled wine usually, that seemed to go with a summer garden. They offered us a brace of pheasant sometimes in winter, and showed us how to deal with them. Probably I'm romantic but I don't think I've ever bought a pheasant in a shop to equal a Cook hen pheasant.

They were hugely tolerant. I am sure there were many occasions when the noise from our children, playing, fighting, later having ghastly teenage parties, very likely felt like a minor earthquake next door. I know several times they would have been justified in complaining, but they never did. If ever I apologised, it was gently turned aside as if such things could never affect their lives.

Dean Lodge, East and West, has a flying freehold and low boundary walls. It would have been disastrous if as neighbours we had fallen out. Godfrey and Betty made sure from the beginning that this wouldn't happen.

For me, the people I most appreciate are the ones you learn from without realizing you've learnt, who don't attempt strong influence but somehow subtly suggest alternative attitudes to life, and who probably aren't even aware that they are so influential. We moved on, of course, they next door and me, later, to Church Cottage. But my former and lovely neighbours have often popped back into my mind with suggestions or opinions, when I'm gardening or walking out in the country or trying fairly inefficiently to identify a wild bird, or drinking cold white wine. I hope they go on popping in.

Jo Voss.

BETTY COOK

Above all I remember Betty for her ability as a gardener. Whether it was vegetables, flowers, trees or shrubs. She knew so much about them, the varieties, their common and botanical names, how small, how large, how short, how tall, where they should be positioned to perform at their best and how they should be cared for.

The way she would come over the road from her home to the plant sale held each year at the Rectory carrying a box or two laden with pots of this and that, clumps of foxgloves and other perennial plants. In many instances the plants labelled so we wouldn't forget what we, who bought them, were putting in our garden.

Again as a keen enthusiastic sales person on the plant stall on Village Day cajoling us to buy, and when I look around our garden I see many plants that have come from these two events and Betty's efforts in horticulture.

I just hope there is someone out there who can take over from her, I need all the help I can get with my gardening.

L.A.



A NEW HISTORY OF ANCIENT IRON ACTON

Jean Manco, a Bristol historian, has just published a very interesting paper in the Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society CX111 (1996) pps 89-96 on the ancient history of Iron Acton. Her paper is entitled: "Iron Acton: a Saxon nucleated village".



The main thrust of Jean Manco's paper, which is too detailed to be summarised satisfactorily, is that Iron Acton existed as a divided village in Saxon times. The eastern part was linked by manorial rights to Wickwar and was mainly in the Hundred of Grumbald's Ash whereas the western part - also known from the 13th century onwards as Acton Ilger - was in the Hundred of Thornbury. The Giffards held the manorial rights of this part during the 13th century. One of them, Maud, was suspected of murdering her husband and her uncle, Ellis Giffard, undertook to ensure that she would enter a nunnery. There were no free holidays accompanied by a social worker in those days! Acton Ilger fragmented at this time and the De Mariscos of Bristol and the later owners of Lundy Island had a manor house in Acton Ilger known as Marreysplace which, according to a documentary description of its surrounding fields, was the Chillwood Farm which later came to be known as Algars Manor in 1900.

The family of Acton who controlled the eastern half of the village in the 12th and 13th centuries took their name from the place, but the united manors of Iron Acton and Acton Ilger passed from Sir John of Acton to his nephew, John Poyntz in 1364. The main manor house of the Poyntz family was Acton Court which they continued to own and live in until 1683 by which time Johan Crowther and his descendants were well established in the new house above the mill on the Frome which was built about 1610 and known until 1900 as Chillwood Farm and thenceforward as Algars Manor.

If any one in the village is sufficiently interested, please apply to John Naish for a photocopy of the reprint which Jean Manco has kindly provided.

ACTON AID

Most of Acton Aid's efforts at present are going to help Project 2000 with the development and improvement of the Village Hall. It is good to see the first fruits of our endeavours in the new roof over the stage, the new windows, and I am sure that we will all appreciate the extra wall insulation there next winter. The next phase of the development is much bigger, involving the expansion and re-roofing of the main part of the hall, so considerable fund raising, much help from the Parish Council, and possibly a contribution from the National Lottery will be required.

We have had two fund raisers recently, a Barn Dance, and the 'Bootleg Regatta'. The Barn Dance was a 'Cheap un Cheerful' event, much enjoyed by those who went, but those were not enough to make a large profit - only about £200. A lot of work goes into even small events, so it is disappointing when there is so little reward.

The 'Bootleg Regatta', held in the garden of Algars Mill was much more successful. The organisers realised that after two years of good weather for this event, this year was bound to be unlucky. They therefore invested in hiring a much larger marquee than previously. How wise they were. Frequent showers in the days before the event, and a very heavy hail storm as it was about to begin left us very glad of the extra cover. Nevertheless the rain held off while the races took place on the river, and a lot of money changed hands in the betting on the winners. This was followed by an excellent supper, with plenty of bootleg spirit, provoking a surprise visit from the Mafia. A profit of about £1,800 made it all worthwhile. Our thanks go to our hosts for the evening, John and Marilyn Wright.

Two further events coming up are a *Seafood Soirée* at Tim and Jane Spare's house on 16th August, and a *Barbecue* at Barry and Rona Wright's house in September. We hope to see as many people as possible at these occasions or at our regular monthly meetings on the first Thursday of each month at the Rose and Crown

NORTH ROAD COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

We have had yet another busy year at North Road School and I am sure that the next six weeks will prove no exception.

Children

The children in Years 2 and 6 worked extremely hard with the SATS and we were very pleased with their results. During the year we have all benefitted from visits from the Old Vic Theatre Company, a puppet production and musical "interludes." We have visited local farms, the Fleet Air Arm Museum and Swansea Leisure Centre and together with Cromhall and Rangeworthy, have had an extended visit to Swanage. We have participated in Country Dancing demonstrations, the Colston Hall Concert, three football and one netball tournaments to name but a few of our outside commitments.

Parents

The Parents of North Road have worked hard to raise money for the school through the usual Bonfire event and equally successful Promises Auction. We also had great fun at a family disco. The recent fund raising has helped us to purchase many additional items for school and to spend approximately £1,500 on updating our Library. We also had great fun at an Arts Curriculum Evening with parents and children working alongside each other. There is a day trip to Bournemouth for families organised for later this term - let us hope the day stays fine!

Buildings

We are still awaiting construction, at the expense of South Gloucestershire, of a new cloakroom area. We have already converted the old art area, with money from a variety of sources, into a second cloakroom. It is hoped that, when all the building work is completed, the Head will have something more than a broom cupboard in which to meet with parents! We have been grateful to Parents and Governors who have come along to school to help with repair work in order to keep our costs to a minimum. We also feel that special mention should be made of Mrs Hinder who was not only responsible for the construction of our pond and garden area but who maintains it on a regular basis. Thank you Sally!

Staff

We are very sad to have said goodbye to Mrs Child this term as she is expecting her third child. She was my first appointment at North Road and so I, personally, am very sad to see her go.

We also will be losing another very popular member of staff at the end of term. Mrs Hart, our Deputy, has been successful in her first attempt to become a Head - we always knew she was something special! We, of course, will be extremely sorry to see her go but know that she will make a wonderful job of being Headteacher at Highcroft Juniors in Frampton Cotterell.

Governors

The Governors of North Road School under the guidance of Mr Jeffries, have worked extremely hard throughout the year to ensure that pupils, staff and parents have been helped, advised and supported in all that they have done.

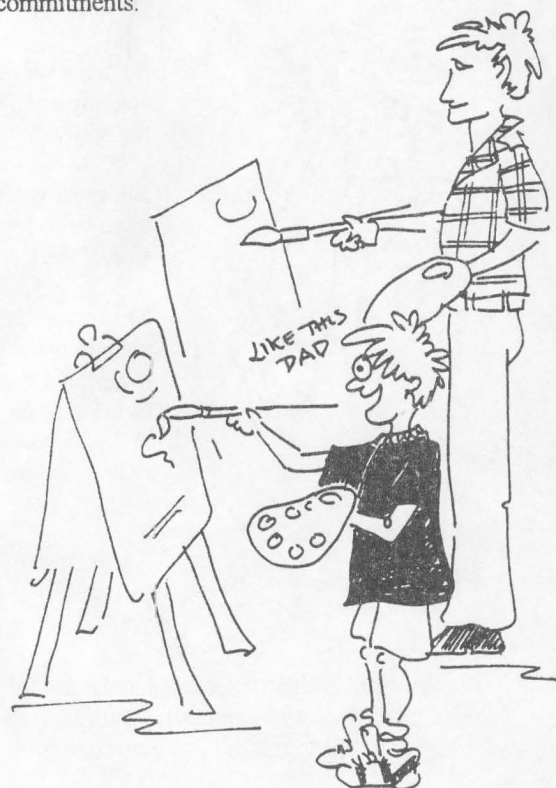
A big "Thank You" to everyone!

Glenys Anderson - Headteacher

Boy to girlfriend "I dreamt about you last night."

Girlfriend "Did you?"

Boy "No, you wouldn't let me."



A GOOD THING IN THE POST

I've always looked forward in anticipation to the delivery of our post, indeed I feel somewhat neglected if none arrives. The sound of the letters dropping through the box has conditioned me to immediately stop my work and collect the mail, carefully checking the envelope for signs of something that might prove interesting, useful and to my benefit. But many times its correspondence I could well do without. Bills, of which there seems to be an increasing number, circulars inviting me to consider new windows, kitchen or bathroom.

However, occasionally there is something that falls into the something good category, takes my imagination and encourages me to do something I've wanted to do for some while. Such a letter arrived back in March offering 50% saving on certain airfares to Cities in Europe and one such City being offered was Budapest - Capital City of Hungary, sitting astride the mighty river Danube.

So here was the catalyst I needed to make arrangements to visit this City, of course accompanied by my wife. So with guide and phrase book to hand we sent out for a five day visit.

Budapest is a tale of two or even three cities. Until 1873 Budapest did not exist. There were three separate entities of Buda, Old Buda and Pest. Buda and old Buda to the west side of the River Danube and Pest on the other, the east side.

The history of Hungary has seen it characterized by invasion, occupation, revolution and war and the people of Budapest have seen their City emerge from these disasters and then fall time and time again. Hungary twice in this century entered world wars and twice was on the losing side. In 1948 Soviet rule was imposed and a popular uprising in 1956 was severely crushed. The Iron Curtain started to be eased in 1989. With this easing leading to the fall of Communism, Hungary had the first free elections for 43 years. Today it is an associate member of the E.C.

Arriving at Budapest Airport our first task was to get to the Hotel Erzebet in Pest. This proved quite easy as the Airport Authorities organize an Airport Minibus to transport you and your luggage to your hotel at a very reasonable cost of 1,000 Forints, about £5.

We used public transport for the rest of our stay, with tickets costing the equivalent of 25 pence for use on bus, metro, tram and some local train services, only using another ticket if you changed from one bus service to another or from bus to metro or to tram service.

Because of the central position of our hotel most of our sight seeing was done on foot, Budapest is made for walking, crossing the Danube, back and forth a number of times, utilising 6 of their superb bridges. Needless to say with temperatures in the seventies, refreshment stops were often necessary.

The grey green Danube cuts straight through the City separating the old cobblestones of Buda from the late 19th century boulevards of Pest. The Buda side is for those who love antiquity, and for the shopper and night life person Pest will definitely oblige.

Castle Hill on the Buda side is probably the most picturesque and peaceful in Budapest, with spectacular views across the river and towards Pest. It gives a clue to how the medieval City once looked. Entire streets of beautiful old buildings are concentrated here and almost every other house bears a plaque telling its history. However, the district has suffered destruction after destruction in the past and many places have been re-built at least once. This area was severely damaged by Allied attack towards the end of the last war as the Germans had formed this castle area into a considerable fortification.

We met an older lady who as a child lived at Castle Hill. She left Hungary just before the start of the second world war and now lived in New York. During her childhood in the court yard of her home grew a young sapling Chestnut tree with a trunk about 4 inches across. This home was completely destroyed during the war. On her return some years after the war had ended she could see that her old home had been re-built, in a similar style, but the small sapling as she remembered it had withstood all that the opposing forces could throw at each other and now stood tall and upright with a trunk some 12 inches across. It had survived it all - she was so very pleased.

North of Budapest is an area known as the Danube Bend and here we visited a small but picturesque village called Szentendre where the heart of the village remains locked in the 18th century and you find yourself caught in a time warp. Much in the way of crafts is practised here, particularly embroidery and art work.

As always, wherever we go we invariably meet someone who knows Bristol and its surrounding area. Here we met a Hungarian couple, the gentleman of which had worked for a few years in the Bristol Royal Infirmary as a Doctor



but was now back in Hungary continuing his medical work. He was keen to know how we were "doing" at home and what we thought of the progress Hungary had made to in past five years or so. Did I like "Smiles" beer he asked, as that was his favourite with so much flavour. A brilliant Bristol brewer.

Travelling to Szentendre was by boat along the Danube, returning by local train. On the outward trip we were surrounded by a party of Japanese visitors, who I feel are capable of doing a world tour in 24 hours and see all their vacation through a view finder.

Pest lies to the east of the Danube. Here is the pulse of Budapest, large hotels, museums, Government Buildings, shopping streets, night life and frantically busy boulevards.

This contains the centrepiece of Pest's pedestrian zone, the Vaci Utca, the first place to visit for shopping in the City. Here you will find the best fashion, art, cosmetics, books, jewellery and the best of Folk art.

This street leads to Vorosmarty Ter and one of Pest's favourite gathering places. Gerbeauds, famous since 1884 for cakes and coffee. Quite a place to take a break.

The five days went all too quickly and although we visited many places and buildings we still did not find time to locate and visit the other famous coffee and cakes establishment. The New York Café founded in the early 20th century and still apparently a great meeting place for actors, writers and journalists.

We hope to return to this bustling city, to again meet the very friendly local people, sample their interesting food and restaurants. But maybe for that to happen we need something good to arrive in the post.

Lionel Alsop

ELIZABETHAN CLUB

Four months slips by very quickly I thought when I was reminded another Focal Poyntz report was due. We continue with our weekly meetings and they are very well attended.

Our entertainment on February 28th by the Golden Age Choir was greatly appreciated and we hope they will make a return visit in July for our Birthday Celebrations.

In May we had a talk by the Rev. Warren from Frampton Cotterell. He invited members to participate and gave us food for thought.

Our outing to Trago Mills was very enjoyable, Worcester was not as good weather wise but we did see the sun on our way home at 7.15 p.m. before the Cotswold mists enveloped us again.

On June 26th we visited Weymouth and in July we have an outing to Weston and one to Dartmouth. In August we visit Lynton & Lynmouth.

I am sorry to have to end on a sad note. In May Mrs Sandy passed away and we shall miss her very much.

My telephone number is still the same 228566. If you are a pensioner and would like to join us please ring me.

Elsie Blanchard - Secretary.

Two young wives are talking. One says to the other, "Does your husband talk in his sleep?"
"No. He just grins. It's exasperating."



IRON ACTON W.I.

Our speakers have, yet again, been suitably diverse; Mr Murray who'd been a bodyguard to Sir Winston Churchill gave us a wonderful insight into his time with the great man, the people he'd met and the situations he'd witnessed; the lady from the Avon Badger Group explained the work undertaken with this much maligned animal. We were taught about their habitats and habits; their lives, the signs which indicate the presence of badgers and what to do if we find a lost one.

We also discussed at local WI level the resolutions voted on at the Annual Conference of all WI's (in Cardiff this year). The topics covered were; availability to all of NHS Dentists; the teaching of basic cookery and nutrition to all pupils up to pre-GCSE stage in secondary schools and the provision of a decent level of student grant to those students whose parents were not in a position to contribute to their child's education. The debate was always lively and on one or two occasions just a little overheated!

We raised funds thanks to the generosity of John and Barbara Naish who allowed us to provide teas at one of the Algars Manor Garden Open Days and we also provided one of the cake stalls on Village Day for Project 2000. A thoroughly enjoyable evening at Arlington Mill for WI ladies, family and friends took place on a slightly (!) damp summer's evening. However the small matter of needing webbed feet was in no way going to impinge on our enjoyment, the VE spirit of '95 was rolled out like a glorious red carpet.....and our WI secretary became mesmerized by some funny little balls which, if you hold them in your hand for a little while, glow brightly in the dark. With one of her wicked gleams lighting up her eyes she remarked to Jean Kethro's husband that it was a good thing that this didn't happen to the males of the species or we'd all know who was having the most fun.....and she quickly moved away before a suitable reply was forthcoming!

Things now wind down for the summer with the ladies returning with a vengeance when instruction will be given on 'Beauty for the Mature Woman' - no doubt the price of Polyfilla shares will increase sharply!

Rumour has it that, come the Autumn, we hope to attempt to make some blankets for Oxfam so if anyone has any Li ply or double knitting wool left over from a previous dexterous attempt or you might like to help us out with the knitting (and we're bound to need all the help we can get!!) please ring me on 228566.

We also think it's highly likely that a return visit to the Tintern Abbey Carol Service will take place in December.....we're bound to have a few spare seats so, as they say, watch this space!!!

Lynne Blanchard.

* * * * *

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Village Hall on the evening of Tuesday June 11th. The Chairman presented a resume of the past year's progress towards establishing a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in Iron Acton. The Treasurer reported on the healthy financial position and it was decided that there was no need to raise extra funds at the moment.

The following Committee was elected:

Mr Peter Wedgwood	Chairman
Mrs Sue Pullen	Vice Chairman
Mr Andy Garside	Treasurer
Mrs Carolyn Baker	Secretary

Unfortunately several co-ordinators are unable to continue so it will be necessary to ask others to come forward to fill the vacancies. If anyone living in the Algars Drive/Chilwood Close area feels able to take on such a role please contact Carolyn Baker on 228240 as soon as possible.

The final item on the Agenda was a talk on Security in the Home by Ex Detective Sergeant Tim Evans. This was a very informative and interesting talk and it was a shame that so few members were there to learn about such an important subject particularly as notice of the meeting formed part of the very recent Newsletter.

Peter Wedgwood - Chairman



IN PRAISE OF MOBILE PHONES

During the last twenty years we have become accustomed to the intrusion into all areas of our lives of the mobile phone. At first this phenomenon seemed to be the preserve of the 'yuppies' of the '80's. No self-respecting upwardly mobile youngster would be seen in public without this vital appendage. More recently, sadly because of our increasingly lawless society, many people have taken to carrying a mobile for reasons of personal safety. Indeed, women who frequently make long car journeys alone are strongly advised by the police and the rescue agencies to provide themselves with this means of summoning aid without leaving their vehicles.

Nevertheless, to most people someone else's mobile is generally regarded as a nuisance especially if one is attempting to have a snooze or catch up on some reading on a long train journey only to be interrupted at regular intervals by the shrill shriek of a phone or the owner insisting on giving orders or propounding his (nearly always a he) views on every subject under the sun at the highest possible level of decibels.

So irritating is the mobile to large numbers of travellers that the Great Western service has recently introduced a mobile free zone in the last carriage of the Swansea to Paddington 125 service. This, I am sure has earned the gratitude of frequent travellers and appears to represent a very welcome concern for the comfort of passengers on this service.

However, apart from the obvious emergency situation, there are times when the mobile phone can save the skin - or reputation - of the user. The two following anecdotes seem to illustrate this.

The first concerns a trip to Edinburgh for the Scotland/England rugby international in March this year. By chance a ticket became available very late on the Friday evening preceding the match and this was promised to the husband of someone met en route to Edinburgh. An arrangement was made for the man to drive 300 miles early on Saturday morning and meet the owner of the spare ticket at 1 p.m. at Murrayfield. As these two chaps had never met an elaborate arrangement was made to meet at a specific point - an old wooden grandstand - the owner of the ticket wearing a Black Watch tam o'shanter. Foolproof arrangement you may think especially as half the Scotsmen in the 60,000 strong crowd would be wearing a tam o'shanter of some description.

The plan was thrown into confusion however by the fact that the old wooden grandstand had been demolished and its site was now part of a vast vehicle filled car park. Where do you begin to look for a stranger in a crowd of 60,000 with no available public address system - and time running out?

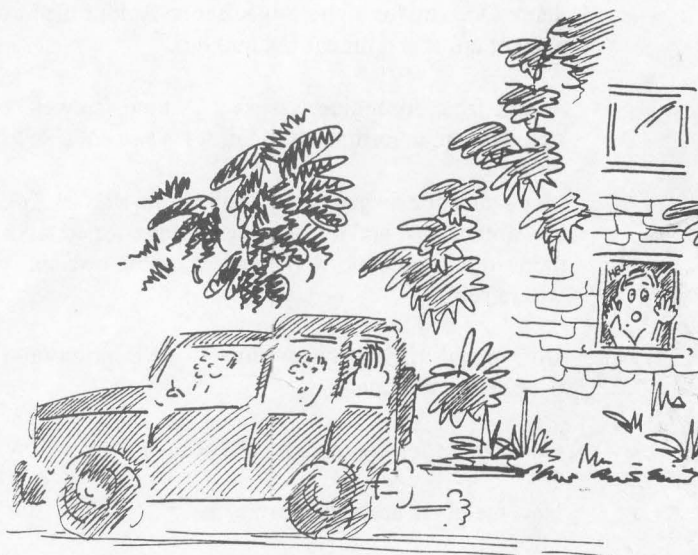
Mobile phone to the rescue! A swift call on a phone carried by chance by the ticket owner to the wife of the would be recipient established that he also was carrying a phone and by this means he was duly contacted, obtained his ticket and went home a happy man - a very happy man as he happened to be English!

The second incident happened closer to home and concerns a lady best known for her artistic bent and superb powers of organisational skill. Ten friends had arranged to have a meal together on a lovely summer's evening and met in the garden of one couple before setting off. In the interests of the environment it was decided that two cars would transfer the entire party to Bath where the party was to take place. Everyone trooped out and busied themselves with returning cars the short distance to their homes before setting off in one of the cars designated for the journey.

Just beyond the bounds of the village we were merrily purring along anticipating a happy evening when the dreaded mobile of one of the group rang. Like all responsible citizens and parents we experienced a moment's certainty that some disaster had befallen one of our loved ones. Then a plaintive little voice came through to tell us that our hostess whom we believed to be in the other car had in fact not only been left behind but was locked into the house. With visions of ladders and ropes we rushed back.

It was not necessary to play out Romeo and Juliet as our friend had managed to escape by the time we returned to pick her up and she was restored to a very red faced husband amid much jollity and speculation of what this misdemeanour would cost him.

Again, saved by the mobile phone, which seems to be proof that however much we loathe the intrusion into our lives, there are times when we would much prefer to be with them than without them.



Hazel Dron

ACTONIANS

Hello Iron Actonians,

Due to a reshuffle of our committee, this is my adieu to you and I am handing over to Donna Worrall for at least the next year.

Our production of "Survivors" went very satisfactorily and thank you to all those who supported us in this our very own production.

Coming up is an Evening of Entertainment on July 19th and 20th based on "Super People" a super evening all round one hopes so do come along and have a good time.

We are now looking forward to "My Fair Lady" which will be our winter production, lots of hand work and good fun we expect. Obviously tickets will be on sale in the village but not until closer to the date i.e. November, keep a date free.

That's all from me thanks for your time and now over to Donna.

Anne Chenery.

So, who's for "A Super Evening Out?" As Anne mentioned above we're putting the finishing touches to our next production which will include sketches by the well known Bristol based "Sparks" comedy group.

Supper will be served too, so for an evening of top class entertainment right on your doorstep contact Roger Hughes - 228562 or David Hatherell - 228725 for your tickets or simply call in at the Post Office.

If you'd like to be involved with any of our future productions - the next is the musical "My Fair Lady" at the end of November - let any of your local Actonians know or phone me on 228458. Extra hands are always needed backstage so if you can wield a screwdriver or a paint brush we'd love to hear from you.

Donna Worrall.

* * * * *

NORTH ROAD LADIES' CLUB

A big "thank you" to Dorothy Denning, who has been Secretary for three years at the Ladies' Club. All members thank Dorothy for all her organisation and for the interesting speakers she has arranged for the Club over the years. A lot of effort and time is put into this.

A talk from Josephine Carlisle, "A fond farewell to pets", at the April meeting was enjoyed by members who attended but, unfortunately, a fair few were not able to attend.

May's meeting began with a talk from staff at Toll House Clinic, Chipping Sodbury. A Physiotherapist and a Chiropractor gave varied talks covering sports injuries, back and neck pain, joint problems. A hot and enjoyable evening was had by all who attended the bar. £75 was raised.

Our annual trip on Sunday, July 7th to Bourton-on-the-Water should go ahead if a few more people can fill seats.

Our speaker for September is Geoffrey Poole, willow basket maker.

New members are always welcome.

Mrs Lyn Dyer - Secretary - Tel: 01454 - 228548

* * * * *

Why did the teacher have to wear sun glasses? *Because his pupils were so bright.*



THE OLD BAT IN THE BELFRY

The final Friday of June saw another great 'Jazz in a Barn' evening at Latteridge Green Farm. The proceeds from the evening, which saw over 500 people enjoying themselves without the remotest episode of trouble, went to the One Stop Breast Centre at Frenchay Hospital. At the time of writing the evening has raised over £6000. This is an absolutely staggering amount and is largely due to the tremendous efforts of Chris and Di Heal who, together with a small team of helpers, worked incredibly hard and efficiently to ensure one hell of an evening! Too often the response to the question 'Can you help?' is 'Why should I?'. Isn't it great to see people (who, additionally, don't have a great deal of empty hours) responding with a 'Why shouldn't I?' Three cheers and a blood orange at Christmas to all involved!

Congratulations, too, to Michelle (daughter of Joan and Albert Davis) who will be off to Leeds University to study Sociology in September. All those long hours of work are paying off and to Chris (son of Rona and Barrie Wright) who walked off with his Colleges' award, which had been donated by Surrey Federation of Women's Institutes, for the student making the best contribution to College life in 1995/6. Chris has been on the receiving end of a great deal of teasing about his mum's WI mates putting in a good word on his behalf. Luckily the same cannot be implied with Michelle's success!

Iron Acton's Cricket Team also had a successful first encounter. When asked the name of their opposition the Old Bat was told the name had been temporarily forgotten but they were a 'lot of solicitors'. T.O.B. also hears seriously, that anyone able to provide any form of sponsorship would be most welcome by the team and has also been dared, slightly less seriously, to print the plea that if anyone can provide any form of support, in the shape of surgical support for Roy Hubbard that this will be gratefully received!

The final point for this edition takes the form of a question. What is it going to take to get traffic lights on the Wotton Road Junction with the By-Pass? We all know how many near, and not so near misses there are and how frequently these happen and we are told there is, allegedly, no money available. Yet on one of my forays from the tower I was staggered to see a set of lights had sprung up almost opposite the Ridgewood Centre next to what was Chipping Sodbury Maternity Hospital. Do they foresee a massive increase in traffic volume? Have they been put in the wrong place? How can these be justified when compare to our situation? perhaps one of the Parish Council would be prepared to offer their body in return for a set of lights.....on second thoughts, possibly not. Or perhaps we could 'encourage' the WI and Acton Aid to stage a sit-in in the hope of encouraging national press coverage.....probably not as crane hire would be needed to get them back on their feet. And please don't anybody mention the latest 'traffic calming' episode. A brilliant example of so many men taking so much time and causing so much congestion to lay concrete (thank goodness they weren't hens laying eggs.....there'd be an egg shortage!). The only question requiring an answer is which psychiatric hospital is the instigator of this scheme in! Serious, or not so serious, solutions to this problem will be welcome and can safely be left with any Focal Poyntz member for delivery to the Belfry.

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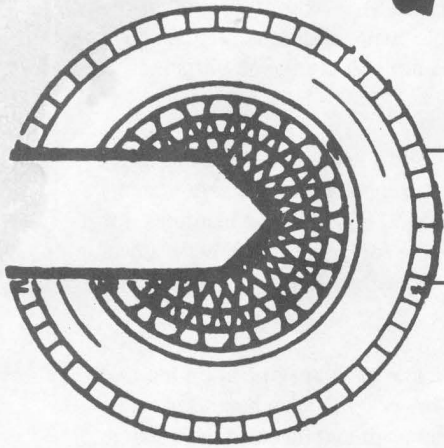
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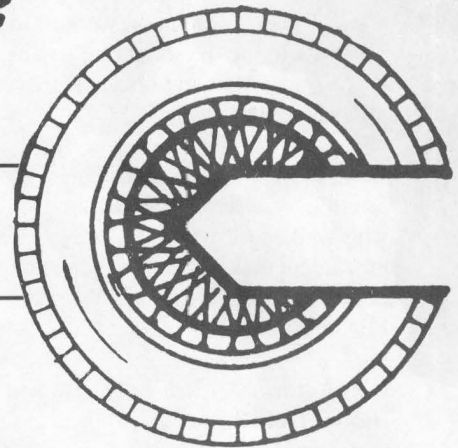
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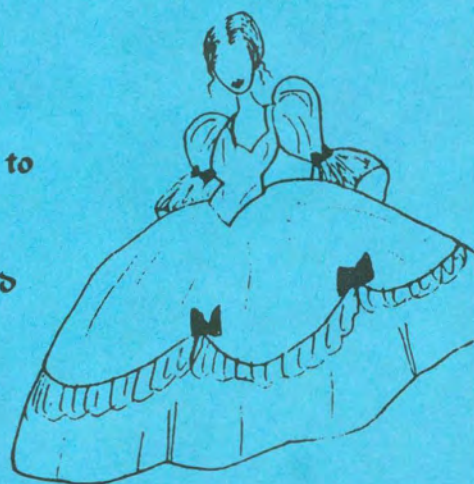
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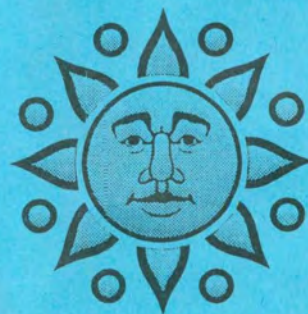
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