

FOCAL POYNTZ



Iron Acton

WINTER 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 December
14th December
11th January

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
St James the Less Church Christmas Fayre	
Northavon Auctions	
Northavon Auctions	

In the Parish Church

15th December

Advent Carol Service

At Iron Acton School.

16th December
17th December
18th December
19th December

Christmas Concert Matinée 2.30 pm
Christmas Concert Evening 7.00 pm
End of Term Party
Term ends

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 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

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Winter &

EDITORIAL

ISSUE NO 43

Traffic problems, it seems, are endemic and Iron Acton has not been spared. Years ago the difficulties in the High Street were eased by the creation of the by-pass. Come to think of it, though, the High Street traffic can still be a problem with speeding cars and inconsiderate parking - but maybe even horse-drawn vehicles caused a nuisance in their day. The current dilemma exercising the minds of some local folk is the difficulty of leaving the village and making right hand turns from the various junctions on to the by-pass. It is felt by some (even to the extent of threatening - I hope not seriously - a "lie-in" on the by-pass) that we really do need traffic lights - probably at the Wotton Road junctions. Not everyone agrees with this, of course; some feel there are already too many "lights" in the village. It would be interesting to learn what our readers think about this!!

Apropos of hearing from readers - the editorial team would really appreciate hearing your views on any of the articles in Focal Poyntz, and would also welcome any contributions you could make. There are, for instance, many long-term (and life-long) residents who must have a wealth of information about village life of years ago; and what about "newer" residents - it would be interesting to have their views. We have a great deal of enjoyment in gathering, reading, editing, etc. - you should see us on "stapling" days when we drive ourselves dizzy walking round and round a table - and it would add greatly to the interest of the magazine if we could widen our net and have more contributors.

Congratulations to two of our regular contributors - Penny Percy and Geoff Dickes - who have recently had poems published by Arrival Press and Anchor Books, respectively. Penny's poem, "Fatman", is her very moving account of the effect on one family of the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, whilst Geoff's "Never the Twain Not Quite", conveys his ambiguity as both a motorist and a cyclist!

By the time you receive this edition of Focal Poyntz, you will probably be in the midst of your preparations for Christmas. We wish you an enjoyable time; we wish, too, for all of us, a happy and peaceful new year - how good it would be if at least some of the tensions in the world could be eased.



ANTHONY FRANCIS WAKER

RECTOR OF ST. JAMES THE LESS, IRON ACTON 1965 to 1996

Died 2nd November 1996, aged 66

When I came to Iron Acton in 1977 the first person to call was Father Tony Waker. I cannot remember much about that call as I think that I, as a somewhat lapsed Anglican was almost as withdrawn as Tony was shy. Over the months thereafter as I learnt more about Iron Acton and its priest and the quiet example that he set I came back to the church. For this I am grateful more than I can say to Tony.

Tony Waker came from a church family. His father was a priest in Stockton-on-Tees and later in London and he was therefore in the church from a child and imbued and endowed with the Christian spirit. St. John's School, Leatherhead in Surrey (a school founded for the sons of clergy) no doubt offered him the choice of the priesthood, yet he first went to train as a doctor at Kings College, London, exhibiting then his desire to help his fellow beings. This was not a success and after a year he left. For a short period he worked for Thomas Cook and then found his true love and destiny and went to St. Chads Theological College at Durham.

Tony was ordained Deacon in the Diocese of Oxford in 1957 and Priest in 1958. His first curacy was at Stokenchurch, high in the Chiltern Hills. There he became a volunteer fireman, which was and still is probably unique for a priest. A small girl had fallen into a water filled pit and the local fire brigade were not able to rescue her because of shortage of people on quick call. Tony immediately volunteered and was thereafter able to attend to quite a few incidents usually on his bicycle. After Stokenchurch he went to Summertown, Oxford and 1965 to Iron Acton.

There must have been some attraction about St. James the Less, the first bishop of Jerusalem, for here Tony Waker found his calling. He puts his heart and soul into the parish.

He celebrated mass every day and was passionately concerned that the spirit of God through the church and the sacraments should be there for all. Practical earthly matters always intruded. Frequently he was dealing with problems on the church building and always with the maintenance. I do not know how many times he climbed onto the roof, a task which I could not do. Some of those problems required family assistance, and certainly on at least one occasion he considered lowering one of his sons over the side on a rope. He always took a hands-on approach to any social activities of the church and insisted on running the magazine. Some people, and I am one, wished that these tasks could have been spread wider so as to relieve him of the administrative burden. But his hard work in all fields and dedication gave him an extraordinary understanding and knowledge of his parishioners, many of whom were surprised at his knowledge.

A parish priest is appointed and ordained to care for all the souls in his parish and by all souls this means saints and sinners alike. Tony was deeply conscious of this. He would not and could not compromise the Faith but his care for all was such that there are many people who do not come to church are grateful to him and for him. People have told me what a good man he was, with which we all agree; there are many who are in some eyes miserable sinners, have said that Father Tony saved them. That was part of his faith.

I have said that Tony was a shy man. That is well known. He was also a man of great courage in faith and works. It is not given to man to be above criticism and Tony knew that. Many times he and I, and probably many others had quiet individual chats. We also had criticisms and others did as well. All was taken in good spirit.

Tony was very concerned that the parish should continue and the new building by the Marshal Trust was very much his work. This building should be dedicated to him.

When he was at Durham he met Joyce who became his wife and partner for life.

The 32rd Article of Religion states that priests may "marry at their own discretion as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness." That is the Church's way of saying they lived happily ever afterwards. There can be no doubt that in all his work for God and the Church, Tony was supported to the full by his wife and family.

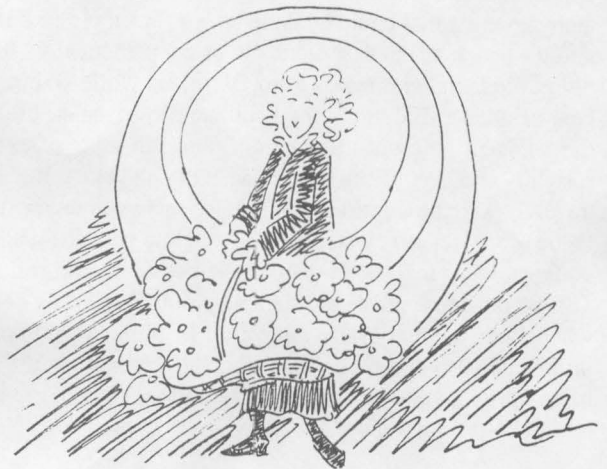
We have all lost a friend, a priest, a minister and a kindly man.

ACTONIANS

November sees a myriad of colour and song in Iron Acton with the production of *My Fair Lady*, a classic musical. Your very own Felicity Bate plays Eliza, the Covent Garden flower girl who receives elocution lessons from Professor Higgins (Bob Allen) assisted in military style by Colonel Pickering (Barrie Wright).

My Fair Lady is full of memorable singalong tunes - Wouldn't it be Lovely, On the Street where you Live and who can resist Eliza's father, Alfred Doolittle (Gerry Millward) in *I'm Getting Married in the Morning?*

My Fair Lady runs from November 21st - 23rd and 27th - 30th in the Village Hall, curtain up at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are available now £4.50/£3.50 conc.) from Mr H. Aplin, Clove Hitch, High St. , Tel. 228243.



Our 1997 season begins with Jim Sinkinson turning from writing to directing for Alan Bennet's *Green Forms*. A wickedly funny one-act, there'll be one performance only on 22nd February so look out for more information in the New Year.

Perhaps some of you reading this will be studying English Literature at school or college and possibly you're bored to tears by the obligatory Shakespeare. Well, in May next year Actonians will be producing *The Tempest* and our designers are really going to town to give William Shakes-boring a boot into the present day. The play begins with a fierce and terrible storm and don't be surprised to see Madonna or Elvis at the feast. For purists among you, you may like to know that *The Tempest* was written in 1611, the shipwreck scenes were based on real events which took place in the Bermudas in July 1609 and it's the second shortest of Shakespeare's plays!

We'll publish details of concessionary ticket and party booking rates nearer the time. Tell your teacher!

Do come along and support your local drama group, we always welcome new members. If you enjoy acting or can help backstage, particularly with set construction or costume making prior to a production, please get in touch.

Membership secretary:
Junior membership (8-16 years)

Gaynor Clark Tel. 01454 776779
Sarah McMahan Tel. 01454 329821

* * * * *

An Irish priest, teaching his class Divinity, offered a shilling to the boy who could name the greatest man in history.

"George Washington," said one.

"Christopher Columbus," said another.

"St. Patrick," shouted a little Jewish boy.

The priest gave the Jewish boy the shilling and asked:

"Why did you say St. Patrick?"

"Well," replied the Jewish boy, "Of course I know the real answer is Moses - but business is business."

IRON ACTON W.I.

I was feeling decidedly geriatric as I headed to the September meeting. This was somewhat appropriate as our speaker was going to enlighten us on Beauty for the Mature Woman. Was there anything that could be done for me? I should've known better; two hours later I didn't know whether to laugh hysterically or cry pathetically. It was bad enough trying to imagine doing the facial exercises to stop wrinkles while waiting for the red light to change at the Cross Hands traffic lights and I could easily visualise the shocked face of the lorry driver in the adjacent lane but then we got onto the topic of exercise classes. Our speaker (very sprightly and beautifully groomed) explained she felt it sometimes took too much effort to travel to exercise classes and suggested there were many things that could be done round the home (don't get too excited!). Her example was that while waiting for the kettle to boil you could raise your foot, keeping the leg straight, and rest your toes on the kitchen worktop. This would cause me a considerable problem as I only boil a kettle first thing in the morning when I can scarcely raise an eyelid, let alone a smile or anything else, and when the co-ordination is so dodgy that both feet need to stay on the ground to enable the maintenance of an upright stance and what would those doughty ladies of the W.I. markets division think about such unhygienic practices?



In October our speakers chosen topic was Getting Ready for Christmas. I can't tell you anything about this 'cos I'd sneaked off to Devon for a week's well earned frenetic activity (no foot on the work surface for me). However, an extreme miracle will be needed if our motley bunch are anywhere near ready for Christmas by the due time. I know there's always a first time but no, I can't really see this speaker being successful it would spoil all their fun!

Our Birthday Party in November will take the form of a Skittles Evening. We decided on this course of action earlier in the year as, when looking at the results from our previous matches (well most of them anyway), we felt that the only way we would win would be if we played ourselves. Following on from this combative spirit, an intrepid quartet has entered the County Quiz competition - hoping that the questions will be easy and won't all be about crafts and cooking.

We wind this year's outings off with a trip to Tintern Abbey for their Carol Service on Monday 16th December. We have a coach from the village to the Abbey, enjoy the torch-lit procession and Carol Service and then adjourn to the Anchor Hotel for a nice warming supper, returning to the village at approximately 11 p.m. We've usually got some spare seats; if you're interested in joining us the coach fare is approximately £4, you put what you like into the collecting tins at the Abbey and you choose how much or how little you eat at the Anchor. Ring me on 228566 for further details.

Lynne Blanchard.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL

My grateful thanks to all who helped in collecting for this annual appeal, and to all those within our parish who so generously donated to the fund.

I am pleased to say that once again our total this year has increased, reaching a sum of £816.86.

Once again, thank you.
D.White

IRON ACTON CRICKET CLUB

The Iron Acton Cricket Club has completed its first season, during which we played three evening matches: won 1 and lost 2. Our exuberance and enthusiasm on the field were unfortunately not tempered by experience and responsibility and particularly by respect for the opposition's bowling!

However, we all greatly enjoyed ourselves and plans are in hand to make future seasons more successful.

At the recent AGM a committee was elected and our fixture secretary will be spending the winter months putting together a more extensive fixture list for next season. We have decided to play our home fixtures on the Rangeworthy recreation ground, and any supporters would be most welcome.

We now have a nucleus of a competitive team but are looking to strengthen our squad so if anyone is interested in playing, or supporting, please contact either Simon Cross (Captain) 228291, Chris Wiggins (Treasurer) 228696 or Rob Taylor (Fixture Secretary) on 326592.

DISCOVERIES IN THE COUNTRY

For those of us who are able to ramble and stroll around our lanes and across our fields and along our footpaths we can find much pleasure in what we see, what we find and whom we meet. Even, when like me, you cover the same area frequently, each visit is different, the weather, the wildlife and the changing views. The seasons as they come and go, all give something special of their period towards our enjoyment. There must be many who envy our lifestyle and our surroundings.

However, the discoveries I sometimes make are not always pleasant. It quite saddens me to find refuse and unwanted items abandoned and thrown away and left in the hedgerows of our lanes and in the gateways to our fields.

Recent discoveries have been Max Bygraves, Jim Reeves and Alan Freeman, their records lying in a field gateway surrounded by children's clothing, toys, and topped off with a television set. Across the field into a lane and there, a burnt out car. Someone's pride and joy, a few hours earlier possibly now just a blackened shell, no seats, no trim inside and just the wires left showing the outline of the tyres.

What's this around this corner? Oh no! a tractor-full of boulders, rubble, bricks, stone, broken timbers - such a common occurrence.

The dog's interested in something along this track in the hedge, what's he doing - eating something - hope its not poisonous. "Leave it - Leave it" I shout and then rush along to find someone has left a quantity of fried cold fish and a pile of scraps from a fish and chip shop or van, but at least this will disappear quickly.

I wonder what the reaction would be if one discovered the names and addresses of these fly-tippers. Then, the same as them - unseen - return their refuse to them and leave it on their doorstep. It may make them think twice about leaving their rubbish in our surroundings, but I doubt it. I'm a realist. We have an excellent facility with the Amenity Centre at Yate where household items and the like which are not needed can be taken. Large items can be removed using the Council Refuse team themselves.

I just wonder what else I will find next time I go walking, which will be when I finish this article, which is, right now.

L.A.

* * * * *

Q.C. to Judge: "My Lord, I'm sorry, I appear to be running out of time."

Judge to Q.C.: "Mr Smith, you have already run out of time; now you are trespassing upon Eternity!"



MANY A GOOD TUNE?

What will you do when you retire? This question was asked of me by so many people I began to have to take it seriously. My idea had been to lie in bed till late, saunter down to study the papers, the odd knock at golf, a bit of gardening and that was that. The idea that I had to "do anything" came as a shock. In order to quieten my critics, I thought of what I was capable of - nothing much apart from one's job and that was over. Then I had a brainwave; I remembered in my youth attempting to learn the piano and feeling that had I concentrated I might have been some sort of a genius. I had forgotten I only did it because it escaped additional maths at school and the teacher was the school organist whose daughter I greatly admired from afar. Alas I was thwarted both by the teacher who accused me of not practising and the daughter who wouldn't allow me to, so I gave it up.

No matter, we had a piano and I could still remember a bit of it, so I consulted Yellow Pages to find a teacher. No one was very keen to take on someone of my age, but at last I found a nice gentleman who said in a somewhat bemused voice that it would be "a bit of a challenge", so off I went.

My life is now changed forever. I am obsessed with scales, arpeggios, Italian terms, timing, pitch, etc. Whilst I walk the dog I go round muttering darkly to myself about different scales and musical terms, instead of admiring the lovely views and the stimulating companionship of other canine exercisers. My teacher is the kindest man but frightens the life out of me because he is so good at music. I suspect he must think I am some kind of a deaf mute when it comes to exercising my skills. One does not only have to play the piano, but stand upright, hand behind the back, to beat the tempo of music he plays, identify notes, clap time sequences and sing notes in tune.

Whilst away on holiday recently, I was practising my note singing in the bedroom with ear phones, from a tape, when I noticed my wife having convulsions on the bed, waving her legs in the air and apparently choking. When I naturally asked what was wrong, I was told I was being so funny I had given her the best laugh for years and she steadfastly refused to believe I was of serious intent.



In order to improve my knowledge of musical theory, I have started evening classes at the University. We are a mixed bunch: One lady sleeps through the whole thing, another takes notes of every word said, and the rest of us sit there in varying degrees of bemused silence. The teacher has not yet worked out how the blackboard and marker work, so faint and complicated pieces of music appear and are rubbed off with us all trying our best to grab it as it comes off the bat, but missing by a mile.

One of the annoying features is that whilst I am struggling to master such works as "I am a Bunny with a Carrot in my Tummy", and "Trotting up the Scales and down goes the Jolly Farmer", my poor dog lies on the settee with his paws over his ears, but when on our walk we pass the Mill House and hear beautiful piano music drifting on the air, the dog always stops to wag his tail - it must mean something.

Terrifyingly, I have an exam in December. I believe one is surrounded by small children who walk through it in between reading comics and laugh like anything to see these old dodderers come a cropper. I only hope the examiners don't behave in the same way as my wife. Perhaps I will break my arm before December arrives.

David McCoy.

P.S. I have lately solved all problems and started playing brilliantly - I have bought a pianola.

A Very Important Person was aggravated by what he considered to be very incompetent service from the new steward at his club.

"Do you know who I am?" he thundered.

"No, sir." was the reply, "but I will make enquiries and then come and tell you."

I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

Part of the popularity of the TV programme ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE is the frequently used exclamation by Victor Meldrew - "I don't believe it!" It is not an expression of an atheist but more a cry of wonder or disbelief about an item or incident.

When the news broke that a man had been shot into space, landed on the moon, went for a walk, took off again and landed back on earth, millions must have said "I don't believe it!" Similarly, when during a theatrical performance a mobile phone user whips it out from the waistband or handbag to answer a call, we can't believe the action, let alone the technological advance that makes this possible.

Can we really believe that the burglar who electrocutes himself when lifting the video from our front room is ultimately released from hospital whilst we are arrested for causing him bodily harm? "I don't believe it!" will be the only printable part of our reaction.

Heart transplants, by-passes and pacemakers are now relatively common, but cast your mind back to the time when Christian Barnard performed the first transplant. Incredulity was tempered with the thought that this man must be crazy or doing it as a gimmick. No so, as history now relates.

We often say "I don't believe it!" when we really do believe it but are perplexed or sardonically amused about what we have just heard. This can happen when someone tells you of a builder who has finished a job on time or of a plumber who will rush to see to your problem in an emergency. Even more amazing is an efficient and timely response from a local authority.

How many of you have been out walking in the countryside when you come across a field which is half barren and half covered in orange brown, dead vegetation. That is set-aside. "What is set-aside?" you ask. Well, as far as I can make out, "set-aside" is that part of the land which would be growing a useful crop, say wheat, except that there is too much of it on the EEC food mountain and so the farmer is paid to ensure that nothing grows on that land. "I don't believe it!" my grandfather says as he turns in his grave.

Try telling elderly people that they will soon be paying their bills with euros and not with pounds (shillings have gone in the last purge) and pence. You could get a Victor Meldrew response or worse!

The preferred moments when we use the expression are those of happiness and joy. Imagine the reaction of a mother giving birth to a son, having previously had six daughters or a teenager finding out that all "A" level exams taken have been passed and all with A grades. The reaction will be similar when a dear, but long-lost, friend turns up on the doorstep.

When you win the lottery you shout "I don't believe it!" partly because you have become a millionaire and partly because you never entered it in the first place!

Finally, even though he can't come down the chimney any more because it's against the Health and Safety Regulations, I trust you all still believe in Father Christmas!



EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF ALFRED STRANGE, JULY 1934.

Mrs Strange has sent us further sections of the diary of Alfred Strange, who died last year. Since this diary has been so popular with our readers, we are pleased to continue printing it. Mrs Strange has also sent as a biographical note about Alfred, which we will print next time.

A note at the beginning of this diary shows the names of the choir for 13th June

Organ side (decani):-

Men: D. Gibbons, Fred Fortune, Alf Strange.

Boys: Reg Balham Mervyn Pinnel, Geo Wallbank, Dun Moore, Ron Coates.

Pulpit side (cantoris):-

Men: Reg Elson, Verdun Cater, Jack Ellis.

Boys: Don Pullin, Jack Cobb, Stuart Newman, Gordon Kingscott, Don Elson, Roy Curtis.

Rector: Rev. S.J. Handover

Organist: Mr R. Hurcombe

Blower: Ken Huzzell

1st: Couldn't find my collar-stud, rode my bike to Church - late! I sat at the back. R.F. served at Holy Communion. Went home alone, then walked down to Acton and sat on a gate by Tonkins with M.P. and T.P. It is a heat wave; we walked down to Wallbank's and got ice-creams. I walked down to bell-ringing, and D.G. came down by bus. K.E. not in Church - I walked home by myself, VERY HOT. F.F. out in the road with Joyce Pinnell.

Side note: Wholesale executions by Hitler in attempted rising in Germany.

- 2nd. Witchell fetched tools. Mr Viveash (newly appointed assistant surveyor) arrived back after his honeymoon. (It was the day the board met) Captain came up with Luton, and went across to the board meeting - he got my rise through; after lunch, I got the unemployment insurance stamps at Yate, then went to Sodbury to cash my cheque. I got razor blades, and insurance stamp for G. Manning. I fetched unemployment insurance books from the Labour Exchange. Sent roller forms to Rawlins and Evans, etc. Went to Mrs Hall's shop, and then back down to Acton, where there was a Labour Party meeting on the Green.
- 3rd. I came up with K.E. I affixed and cancelled unemployment stamps, and checked pay sheets with time cards. Captain came up with Luton - letters to Col. S. re my rise (trying to get it refunded from April 1st) and re Major Pope's sign at Marshfield. Letter to Witchell to take down the danger sign on the Badminton-Luckington Road. Waited by Yew Tree for K.E. to come out of dancing class - had a little chat.
- 4th. R.F. came up with F.F. - she left - there's something in this! Mr Wilson came over and gave a map measurer to Mr. Viveash. Capt. had a "word or two" with Mr. Williams about the new road. I went up Mrs Hall's on the way home; when I got there Will Hickling was there with Auntie Ella and Trevor; later, Lomas called; Mr Viveash had gone down to measure the Frampton footpath. Letters to Wearing and Carter re laying tarmac on Hawkesbury Hill on Friday. Letter to Col. S. re footpath work done in the past year. Went round to C. Pullin's who said he'd have to send the back wheel of my bike away.
- 5th. Down North Road, round to Mrs Hall's, went home pressed my trousers, had a bath, etc. Down to Acton with D.G. to go to Weston on an outing; there were 5 charabancs from Clifford's, and we had a stop at Brockley Combe. At Weston I went about with D.G. and F.F. We went on a motor-boat and on the lifeboat, and had our lunch and tea in a café. I went to the Knightstone Baths with D.G. and we caught the last charabanc home - D.G. was all right with K.E, but I had a splitting headache and got home at 9.15. Stan Nurse's wife died.
- 6th. At Wimbledon, Perry (Britain) beat Crawford (Australia), in final of men's singles, and Dorothy Round (Britain) beat Miss Jacobs (U.S.A.) in women's singles final.

Painter called round with new waggon - a 4-tonner. I called to see the Rector about finishing in the choir, then went to North Road, but there was no football meeting, so I went home.

I had a game in the road with M.P. with the ball Tony bought from Weston, and we burst it! Chipping Sodbury Hospital Fête today.

- 8th. D.G., F.F. and I went to Church, and D.G. told us his brother fell off the 'Noah's Ark' at the fete yesterday, and was in hospital with concussion. I saw K.E. and we had a little chat; I gave her back the card she sent me; we talked it over, and she said she didn't want to finish; she said she would see me on Wednesday. Everything O.K. at home; I went to Yate to get the whisky.
- 9th. I made out lorry returns, and Painter called to say the air strangler in his lorry had broken.

Notes down the side of this page: HEAT WAVE!

Mrs Dyer (Bert Dyer's Mother) died of cancer;
(and beside 9th) Mrs Dyer buried.

Grannie gave me £3.10s. today to pay for my book-keeping course.

- 12th. Postman called with Brain's time-card - 2d. to pay on it!
Home and to choir; I stood in Wallbank's porch with T. Fletcher and saw K.E. go in to Girl Guides, and later watched her come out again; Ernie Baker from Yate went up the road with P. Cook. I went home and mended the puncture in C. Pullin's bike.
- 14th. "Olympia Circus" at the Crown, Iron Acton. Letter to C. Hendy (Doynton) re accident at Abson Hill due to chippings on the road. Wickwar Quarries rang re birophalte, and Mr. Reid rang re bonus to lorry drivers. Mr P. rang up Butler's and ordered Aquatar for Monday to Chase Lane, Wickwar; I called at Lomas' with cork washers for Mr. Reid, went home, then to get a haircut at Dick Skuse's.
- 14th. (side note) M. Pinnell has got a new Hercules bike.
- 15th. Walked to Church with G.K. and served at Holy Communion with F.F. I went to pay the club money at Dyer's and G.K. came with me. Later, there was a service taken by the Bishop of Bristol - we had to meet him outside Church, and it rained. I saw K.E. but we didn't speak.
- 16th. Mr Viveash is doing tracings of the new roads at Stoke Gifford and Chipping Sodbury for classification. Mr. Pritchard fetched the insurance stamps; I took the insurance cards to the Labour Exchange, and got a stick of Germolene shaving soap at the Chemists. I affixed the National Health Insurance stamps and cancelled them; I forgot to take a note to J. Cullimore's, Engine Common, so I went back up with it after tea. I went in to Gregg's (evening classes - Great George Street, I believe - B.S.) and saw K.E. going to dancing.
- 17th. Letter to Bristol Mineral and Land Co. re footpath at Yate.

Called in Mrs Hall's - Nora came down with the milk; M. Turner showed me his new cricket bat, the one with Jack Hobb's signature on it. Jack Elson is in the Infirmary, he has had cartilage taken out of his knee. M. Turner won the News (unreadable) cricket bat for his bowling performance for C.S.G.S.
- 19th. I haven't had a chat with K.E. this week - hope everything is still O.K.
- 20th. NEW MERSEY TUNNEL OPENED BY THE KING.

John Tyndale remanded at Chipping Sodbury on Friday for alleged arson - he tried to set a shop on fire.

I came down the road from Yate station with K.E, then to choir, and afterwards in Wallbank's porch with J. Cobb: I went round to Mrs Hall's, and Reg and Miss Smith called with the car.
- 21st. Raining - school sports at Rangeworthy; Rangeworthy beat Stapleton Gas Works at Cricket. I went to Yate to get the whisky and met S. Aldom.
- 22nd. JOHN DILLINGER, AMERICA'S PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE SHOT DOWN AND KILLED IN CHICAGO.

Thunder. I took the collection at 8 o'clock Communion, and was in the choir for Matins. In the afternoon I walked down to Acton, and R.E. brought P.C. and J. Lomas down in his car; they said K.E. had gone for a walk with Miss Smith, so I went home, lay on the grass outside the front gate and read 'The People'; I saw D.G. go past on his bike - I can guess where he has been! I walked to Church at night, and waited by the railings in Tonkin's Hill until 6.15: D.G. came into church just ahead of K.E. and Miss Smith. The service was taken by a Rector from Bristol, and the mourners for Mrs Stan Morse were in Church.

- 23rd. K.E. came with the milk: she is leaving school and has a job at a hairdressers in Bristol; she said she would see me on Saturday. I went to Downend and saw Mr Whale (packman) about a new mac. I went home and had a little game of cricket by the Lamb.
- 25th. I went round to Mrs Halls and K.E. called with the girls; she wanted me to ride her to Girl Guides, but Nora came with her bike. I went to a football meeting at Acton. Crowds of people are visiting Bitterwell Lake to see a chap called Skuse from Kendleshire acting as 'Tarzan' in the trees.
- 28th. I got a haircut at Dick Skuse's, did some book-keeping and had a bath etc. I just missed K.E. along Kings fields; she had been round with Mabel, Jack's girl; I saw P.C. and told her to tell K.E. I would see her tomorrow.
- 29th. I went down at 8, but K.E. was not there, so I came home; walked to Church and served at Holy Communion; I took my new mac. Afterwards I had a little chat with K.E. after Sunday School, and told her I was thinking of finishing; she said she would see me on Wednesday. I rang chimes for Roy Curtis at night; D.G. came up - I am not very friendly with him since he went out with K.E. last Sunday afternoon.
- 31st. AU REVOIR, K.E!
Navy blue mac from Mr. Whale 39/6d.

* * * * *

ELIZABETHAN CLUB

We continue with our meetings on Wednesdays at 2.30 in the Village Hall. My pleas for new members go unheeded despite the fact we still continue with our outings and other social events and offer friendship to anyone who cares to join us.

In July Mrs Brown became our new Chairman (Woman/person) but other officers were re-elected. Also in July we visited Burnham and Weston, and Dartmouth. In August our travels took us to Lynton and Lynmouth and in September we went to Woolacombe and Barnstaple. In October we attended Leyhill's Drama Production and everyone returned home safely.

We celebrated Mrs Turner's 90th Birthday in July and we welcomed Mrs Pilbrow back to the Club in October after her hip operation.

We have booked our Christmas Dinner at the Rose & Crown at Rangeworthy.

Mrs Riddle will give her usual Flower Arrangement Demonstration at the end of November. Leyhill Pantomime will receive a visit from us in December and we shall end the year with a small party.

The Elizabethan Club would like to wish a very Happy Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year to all Focal Poyntz Readers.

E. Blanchard - Secretary.

* * * * *

There is only one ideal after-dinner speech - and it consists of just five words:

"I will take the bill!"



NORTH ROAD SCHOOL

A new school year is well under way at North Road School and many changes are to be found.

Mrs Hart has taken up her new appointment as Headteacher at Highcroft Junior School and Mrs Williams is acting Deputy until a new person will, hopefully, be appointed for January. Mrs Child has left us following the birth of her third child and Mrs Ellery is sharing Class 2 until after Christmas; Mrs Partridge has joined us, for one term, to share Class 4.

Mr Jefferies has decided not to continue as a Governor at the end of his term of office. Mr Jefferies has been a Governor for twelve years and Chairman for the past seven years. He has led the school through many changes and worked hard to support and encourage Staff, Parents and Pupils. Everyone here is sad to see his leaving and realise that we have been fortunate to have had his strong leadership for so long.

We have just had a new cloakroom added to the back of the school and now hope to improve both the Head and Secretary's offices.

We had an exciting visit from Ollie Faye earlier in the term. Ollie was in Yate as part of the Yate/Generi link. She is responsible for 120 children aged 2-6 in the Day Care Centre in Generi in Gambia, and only has a couple of helpers! As she has to give the children their lunch we have decided to send £100 from our Harvest Service to assist Ollie in purchasing seeds for her garden.

Many staff and parents attended the funeral of Mrs Ruth Burrows this week. Ruth was a teacher with us for four years but, unfortunately, had suffered from cancer for the past two years. She will be remembered for her fighting spirit and great sense of optimism.

Glenys Anderson.

* * * * *

Scones are a favourite standby of mine, in all their variations - plain, with dried fruit, with cheese, herbs or ham for a savoury variety. They also have the virtue of freezing well and not taking too long to defrost. The following "Tiny Cheese, Onion and Olive Scone" recipe from Delia Smith's Christmas collection is ideal for drinks parties and she suggests that frozen scones are defrosted and reheated in a hot oven for four minutes before serving. Her recommendation for spreads on the scones include herb cheese or a creamy blue Italian cheese like Cambazola.

6 oz. (175 g.) self-raising flour	1 medium onion, diced
1 tablespoon olive oil	half teaspoon salt
half teaspoon mustard powder	half teaspoon cayenne pepper
freshly milled black pepper	1 oz. (25 g) butter
1½ oz. (40 g) Parmesan cheese, grated	approx. 2/3 tablespoons milk
1½ oz. (40 g) strong Cheddar cheese, grated	1 size 1 egg
6 black olives, stoned and chopped	



You will need a baking sheet, lightly greased and a 1¼" (3 cm.) plain pastry cutter. Pre-heat the oven to gas mark 6, 400°F (200°C).

Fry the onion in the oil over a highish heat for about 5-6 minutes or until it's a nice brown caramel colour and darkened at the edges. Keep it moving about so that it doesn't burn. Transfer to a plate to cool.

Take a large mixing bowl, sift in the flour, salt, mustard powder and cayenne and add a good grinding of black pepper. Rub in the butter, toss in the cooled onion, the olives and two-thirds of the grated cheeses, forking them in evenly. Beat the egg and pour this in, mixing first with a knife and finally with your hands, adding only enough milk to make a soft dough - it must not be too sticky. Turn the dough out on to a lightly floured surface, knead it gently until it's smooth, then roll out to about ¾ (2 cm.) thick, being careful not to roll it too thinly. Using a 1¼ (3 cm.) plain cutter, stamp out the scones. Lightly knead together and re-roll any trimmings. When all the scones are cut, brush with milk, top them with the remaining grated cheese and bake near the top of the oven for 10-12 minutes. Remove to a wire rack to cool.

CASUALTY

The Residents
Iron Acton

Dear Residents,

On Tuesday 3rd and Wednesday 4th December we will be filming in the village for the current series of Casualty and I am writing to advise you of our activities over those two days. Without giving away the story line the episode revolves around a villager excavating an old well that he has discovered in someone's garden.

Early on Tuesday morning we shall be filming a short scene in the High Street itself and for safety may need to hold any traffic whilst we are actually recording. We will be assisted by the local police for this purpose and it may mean asking you to wait for a minute or two at a time. We then move to The Lilacs on Station Road, home of Alan and Paula Wakeham to film the bulk of our story in their garden.

On Wednesday morning we shall be filming in the car park at the Village Hall. During the previous day we will have constructed a "set" on the tarmac outside where we will film the sequences "inside the well" itself. We then return to The Lilacs to film our Emergency Services arrival and rescue and will depart soon after 17:00.

As the story is set during the day we will be starting early and working until mid-afternoon on both days. I do not anticipate that we shall cause much disruption, although in such a small village you will of course be aware of our presence due to the number of extra vehicles and people involved.

If you anticipate any difficulties or have any worries regarding our visit then please contact me on Bristol 995 2526 or any of the above numbers. You might like to know that we shall be making financial contributions to the Village Hall and Parish Council to show our appreciation. In the meantime we very much look forward our visit.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Ross
Location Manager

I AM FINE THANK YOU

There's nothing the matter with me
I'm as healthy as I can be
I've arthritis in both my knees
And I talk with a bit of a wheeze
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin
But I'm awfully well for the state I'm in.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits
Pick up the paper and read the obits
If my name is still missing I know I'm not dead
So I get a good breakfast and go back to bed.

The moral of this, as the tale I unfold
That for me, and you, who are now growing old
It's better to say "I'm fine" with a grin
Than to let folks know the shape we're in.

How do I know that my youth is all spent?
Well, my "get up and go" has got up and went
But I really don't mind when I think with a grin
Of all the grand places my "get up" has been.

Old age is golden, I've heard it said
But sometimes I wonder as I get into bed
With my ears in a drawer, and my teeth in a cup
And my eyes on the table until I wake up
Ere sleep comes o'er me I say to myself
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf.



ODE IN AUTUMN - With apologies to Dylan Thomas.

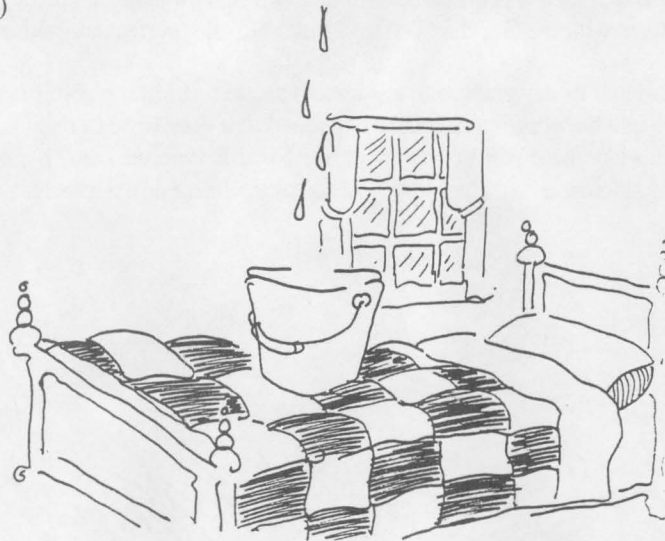
Especially when the October wind
With frosty fingers creeps beneath my door
I put an extra sweater on
Recall a suitor long since gone
Who triumphant from a car boot sale
Attacked my door with glue and nail
And yards of insulating strip
At twenty pence it was a snip
For this kind act I thanked him but,
Since then the door has never shut

Especially when the November rain
Drips on the spare room bed again
I run to fetch my garden bucket
Whispering low once more "oh blow it"
Remembering when, (perhaps hoping to seduce)
He told me that I had a roof tile loose
And clambering bravely up to do this chore
He deftly fixed the tile, but broke three more.

Especially when December raw
Spreads mud across the parquet floor
And, mopping once again, I wonder
Why the blocks were ripped asunder
Then put back in wild disorder
To make a very bumpy border
All done I know with good intent
But stuck I think with tile cement
So now, concealed by armchairs two,
Rise alps of white and rocky glue
'Neath skirting fixed with jubilation
In pieces three (miscalculation).

While some remember moonlit dances,
Or crashing waves, or secret glances,
An eastern cruise, Araby's perfume smelt
I think of crashing ceilings, roofing felt
And early morning after sleepless night
Finding the bills for work to put it right.
But cheerful as I am, ne'er cross nor rude
I see it as a lesson and conclude
(Borrowing much from several well known muses)
I think he lit my life, but blew five fuses!

JoV



PARISH MEADOWS

The Parish Council are pleased to announce that the new play equipment has arrived and been installed in the Parish Meadows. It consists of a climbing frame, and slide both of which have the new safety surface around. The old junior and infant swings are being updated with a safety surface under the junior swing. It just remains for the fencing and entrance gate to be erected to enable this to become a dog free zone to allow the children to play in safety.

This play equipment is very expensive and took almost a week to install so it was very disappointing to find that even before it was finished it had already been vandalised. The Police informed us that it would appear that some local lads are to blame and if caught the Council will prosecute.

I would also like to thank Sue Gawler, Caroline Baker and P. Wedgewood for their help in getting this project completed.

North Road residents are still concerned about the volume and speed of traffic using this road as a rat run. I will be arranging a public meeting in due course to try and find ways to put pressure on the highways people to help ease this problem and reduce the accident rate on the North Road/ Bypass cross roads.

Daffodil bulbs are now available and any residents wishing to plant these on verges around the Parish or outside their homes can contact me and I will deliver them.

We are also pleased to report that my fellow Councillor Roy Curtis continues to make steady progress and is out of hospital. We give him our best wishes and look forward to his valuable services around the Parish soon.



PARISH MEADOWS



Bob Sheppard - Chairman Parish Council.

"SETTLING DOWN - NOT YET AWHILE"

"Like the desire for drink or drugs, the craving for mountains is not easily overcome, but a mountaineering debauch, such as six months in the Himalayas, is followed by no remorse Having once tasted the pleasure of living in high, solitary places with few spirits, European or Sherpa, I could not give it up. The prospect of what is euphemistically termed "settling down", like mud to the bottom of a pond, might perhaps be faced when it became inevitable, but not yet awhile."

H.T. Tilman, When Men and Mountains Meet

At last my family thought I would settle down to the normal rhythm of life, married, good job with prospects, nice flat in Bristol But, no, the call of the wild took hold one day when I had completed another 8.30 - 6.30 work day and arrived home via Tesco's to cook dinner, write out cheques for today's batch of bills, clean the loo, and look regretfully at the ever growing pile of ironing. At last David returned home from work and I announced, wistfully, that we should give up our dull routine and go on an adventure. To my amazement David agreed and so before midnight a plan was formed.

Our original thought was to go travelling for a while and see the world until the cash ran out and then we would move to Canada where I could look at mountains from my kitchen sink and thus ease some of the yearning. Our bosses and families duly told, we started our plans. Now, any one who knows David and me will be aware that we are part of that breed unable to sit and do nothing, and must always be organising something and the thought of just visiting temple after bazaar, after pyramid after palace was not as appealing as we first thought. The thought and opportunity then arose for us to go and work as volunteers with the Gurkha Welfare Trust. This felt perfect and suddenly everything fell into place - this was meant to be.

Within a matter of days after our application we were speaking with Major Guy Glanville in Nepal regarding the projects on which we will be working. It just so happened that they were in need of someone with David's engineering skills and there also sounds like there will be plenty for me to do. Before we knew it the flights were booked, the jobs arranged. The last day of work suddenly arrived and now instead of counting down in weeks we're counting down in days and hours.



For the next six months we will be living and working amongst ex-Gurkhas and their families in the village of Besisahar in the Annapurna region of the Himalayas. We will be living in a welfare centre and be part of the local community as we will be the only Europeans in the team. Sustenance will come from the two meals of daal bhaat (rice and lentil sauce) each day and any water we drink will have to be purified first. The village is three days' walk from the nearest town called Pokhara (although there is a dirt track which only the bravest drivers of 4x4's dare to travel).

There are three main projects in which we will be involved:

1. The construction of a school in Besisahar
2. The implementation of rain water collection in Besisahar and hill villages.
3. The construction of a suitable community project in a village three days' walk north of Besisahar.

We will be there during the Himalayan winter with none of the comforts of home. So we are taking enough thermals and warm weather gear to open our very own "Damart" shop. In response to many written requests we have been fortunate to receive sponsorship from local charities and organisations as we are going as volunteers with only board and lodging supplied.

We'll be back in the early summer as we still plan to go to Canada for a few years but with any luck this experience will open up many new doors for us in all sorts of ways and settling down as H.W. Tilman said will be "not yet awhile". I very much doubt if the couple who return from Nepal next year will be the same couple that leave the country this Autumn. The thought of fulfilling one of our biggest dreams is an experience and opportunity of such magnitude that it is impossible to express both our excitement and anxiety. However, having heard of the generous nature and goodwill of the Gurkhas and the Nepalese people I am sure that it won't be long before we truly call the mountains "home".

I'll keep in touch - Namaskar

Catherine Kirby (née Heal)

THE OLD BAT'S BITS.

My belfrey's been disturbed (not before time some would say!) All you need after a long Saturday night flying around are the unfairylike footsteps of one Allan Didcott hurtling up to the top of the tower like Iron Acton's own version of a rampaging St. George - at least he doesn't take the dog with him. Is the cause of my distress becoming clearer? If I'm totally honest, it's really that David McCoy that I should be flapping my wings at. After all it was his idea to reinstate the flagpole (plus flag). He got the PCC to agree, not without some discussion (apparently St. George isn't English) but if he will make comments about Howard's choir he's got to cope with the consequences; then he sorted out the finances faster than greased lightening and finally got Allan to agree to erect, possibly fly is a better word, the flag (I wonder if it was the beer that was so good or what was the blackmail that was used?) Favourable comments have been heard from all around the Parish as the village looks even nicer when approached from Frampton direction and looks so patriotic and there's one other consolation, at least the flag's silent; my heart goes out to dear, lovable Roy Hubbard when they ring all those bells for a morning wedding, it makes me fly out of my tower so I suspect it can't do a lot of good for his head either!

Now that a sufficiently decent period of time has elapsed it's possible to pose the following question. What can reduce the likes of Melville Dron, Paul Townsend and John Wright to a quivering mass? No, the answers not the collective wrath of Hazel, Mary and Marilyn (who I hear is soon to be Queen of the Nile - can we have an article for next time please??) The answer is a lady (I use the term loosely) believed to be of Russian extraction who our illustrious band "encountered" at the Caledonian Ball. You may have read reports about New York females who, realising there are many more available females than males have become far more rapacious in their attempts to ensnare a mate? Our Olga could give the dollar dollies more than a few lessons! My friendly batlet, who imparted this information, says that the response of Olga to the trio's gentlemanly good manners (Jane Austen would've been impressed) was forceful enough to have them diving for cover. Vodka and tonic anyone?

Another informant tells me that the Elizabethan Club had an interloper for their visit to Plymouth. Lynne Blanchard, who says in her WI report that she felt geriatric obviously took this one stage further. All I can imagine is that the Elizabethans were desperate for the coach fare! Anyway, I digress. I understand that Lynne had a wonderful day; she said that everybody was on time (unlike the WI!!) They were a really happy crowd of people who were obviously out to enjoy themselves but that the bag of sugar she won in the raffle on the journey down was "a real sod" to carry around Plymouth all day - although a mugger would've been felled at ten paces (providing her ladyship could throw it) and a bag snatcher would've been suitably hernia'd within a short distance. Finally, her admiration knew no bounds for the speed in which the local hostelrys were located (exocets was the chosen description) and for the way everybody studiously avoided the establishment that had dared to say they served the locals before any visitors - it's best not to repeat the comments before the 9 p.m. watershed.

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It's quite a few issues since we changed our name from Focus on Iron Acton to Focal Poyntz and, as far as my poor old brain can remember, we've never put into print our thanks and public recognition of the person who thought of the new name. Therefore, ROY HUBBARD, please accept our thanks for finding us such an appropriate new name and for saving all the F.P. Editorial mob from using up even more of their precious grey matter!

* * * * *

At long last it can be revealed why Geoff Dickes needs to carry such a large umbrella when it's raining. Originally it was thought it was to keep Spice (their lovely westie) warm and dry the other day Spice was wandering along outside the sphere of cover provided by the broolly but there was Geoff puffing away on this great cigar without any risk of the rain extinguishing it!

* * * * *

More Wedding Bells can be reported. Carol Hitchings, daughter of Vic and Olive, is now Mrs Paul Bewes. The wedding took place in Fareham in October and the Old Bat spent an enjoyable morning viewing the wedding photos and video. Paul and Carol are wished lots of happiness and on a similar topic I hear that Sue Sellick and Carol Smith have more to talk about than dog training since Sue (and Dave's) daughter Liz has become engaged to Carol's son Paul. Congratulations and much happiness to them both.

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DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN AIRLINE CAPTAIN

Most people have preconceived ideas as to what an airline Captain actually does. They vary from wrestling with the controls on a dark, dirty night and generally battling against the elements, to swanning about in a fancy uniform, earning lots of money and dating most of the cabin crew. The former is sometimes true, the latter is not. However, I have to admit to knowing some pilots that chat up the girls (not me I must add wrong sex!). The job of the Captain is to manage the entire operation of the flight from check-in to engine shutdown, safety and legality taking priority. He/she is responsible for everything from engineering/maintenance, status of the aircraft, route, fuel, weather, to baggage loading, catering and of course you, the passenger.

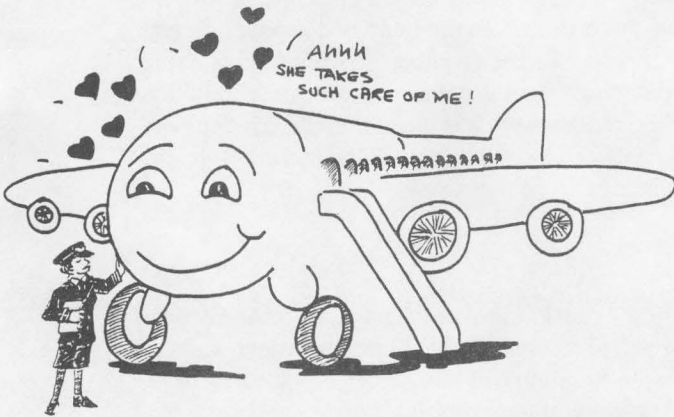
I am Captain with Airtours. Next to British Airways, it is the largest airline in this country, and as a charter airline we operate holiday flights throughout Europe, U.S.A, Caribbean, Far East and Australia.

I operate the European routes, known as short haul. I have done my share of long haul, and spent a lot of time away from home, thank you! My day often starts at some horribly early hour, or late evening (for a night flight). Therefore I have to plan my sleep pattern carefully - you don't want a tired Captain. Our report time is one hour before departure. Once in the crewroom, the First Officer (probably known to you as the Co-pilot - he has an equally important role) and I check numerous things e.g. our route, weather, fuel to be loaded, airfield status, crew complement, aircraft loading, departure time and possible delays, aircraft performance, take-off weight and speeds etc. Take-off speeds depend on aircraft weight, runway length, weather conditions and several other things - we do not simply blast off down the runway and yank the aircraft into the sky yelling "tally-ho". Speeds are critical and we have basically three.

VI. The speed up to which we can stop, if a problem occurs. After VI we are committed to continue the take off.

VR. The speed at which the aircraft can safely get airborne.

V2. The speed at which, should an engine fail, the aircraft can safely climb away, fulfilling all performance criteria.



Having done all this we go to the aircraft. The cabin crew check catering, bars, cleaning etc. whilst we run through numerous checks. When all is satisfactory the passengers board, doors close and off we go. Once airborne and established in the climb the autopilot is engaged. You are excused for thinking that we now put our brains in neutral and gaze out of the window. From here on we are constantly monitoring: navigation, aircraft systems (e.g. electrics, hydraulics, fuel etc), weather and communicating with Air Traffic Controllers, who watch our progress on radar screens. We are also in readiness to act quickly and efficiently with any problem. I am delighted to say that these days, flying the most modern aircraft, problems are very few and far between and those that do are only minor.

Our flight time varies from about two hours (Spain), to about five hours (Eastern Med.) and, with approximately one hour turn around our duty day can be anything from six to twelve hours. We are allowed to extend our duty day by up to three hours (two without reporting our reasons to the Civil Aviation Authority), and this we do when a delay is encountered. Obviously our priority is to get the aircraft round the route with the least disruption to our passengers. Let's face it, we the crew, have homes to go to, and want to get back as well.

Time spent in the cruise is generally more relaxed, and we are fed and watered by the cabin crew. A word here about food: provided by the same catering outfit who does the passenger grub. The Captain and First Officer are not supposed to eat the same type of meal, neither are we supposed to eat fish, eggs, mayonnaise or a whole host of other things, in case of food poisoning. Drinks are also very important, non alcoholic of course! Because of the air-conditioned atmosphere in the aircraft, dehydration can occur with all its associated symptoms; therefore our cabin crew are briefed to give us a drink every twenty minutes.

Eventually, we arrive at the top of descent. Now we get very busy planning our arrival. How is the weather at destination? Which runway are we to land on? Are there any delays, what is our fuel state depending on all above? How long can we hang around before needing to divert to our planned alternate if necessary. How many aircraft are there ahead of us? What speed do we have to maintain to assure adequate separation? All these things, plus many more have to be taken into consideration. Generally, I am pleased to say, life is easy, and we go straight in, fly a standard approach and land with ease and little hassle. Unfortunately, life is not always easy and sometimes I have to earn my money! Sometimes the weather is bad ... fog, low cloud, rain, strong winds etc. etc. A word here about adverse weather conditions ... you, the passenger understandably base your assessment of the pilots ability on whether the landing was smooth. Wrong! There are times, particularly when the wind is strong, when the best landing is a "firm" one. It may not be very comfortable down the back, but let me assure you that the most important

thing is to put the aircraft down at the correct point on the runway, at the correct speed and not to fiddle around trying to please the passengers! I never make any apology in such a case maybe I should for I know that the reaction of my passengers is "Women drivers ... I told you so."

When we arrive at our destination, the passengers get off, aircraft is cleaned, catered and re-fuelled. The cabin crew check the cabin and we, in the flight deck start all over again, checking performance figures etc. and going through the same procedures as before. Hopefully we have no delays, passengers board and we blast off for home.

Sometimes we get difficult passengers. It may be due to a delay when frustration overtakes common sense and they want to vent their anger on someone. It is our poor cabin crew who usually get the hassle and have to deal with it. Sometimes we get drunken or unruly passengers, and these can be very difficult. If they do not behave, after several warnings, I send the First Officer back to speak to them (the Captain is not allowed to, in case a fight develops, it happened once and the Captain was knocked out!) The final resort is arrest on arrival! I have only had to do this once, fortunately.

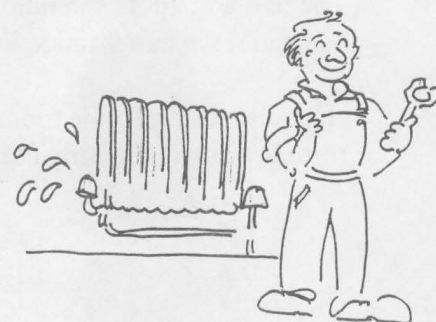
The day ends about one hour after landing back home. Usually it is uneventful and after completing a mass of paperwork we go home. It may be 5 a.m. following a night flight and I have another night to come. So when you see me driving through the village, in uniform, at 6 a.m. please excuse bleary eyes and don't come banging on the door I need my sleep!!

Pam McCoy.

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IRON ACTON SCHOOL

Since the school's last report to Focal Poyntz, work on the school master's house project has been progressing. However, due to the re-organisation of local government, work was suspended at the end of June not to re-commence until the beginning of October. Work is now proceeding and at the time of writing the central heating is complete with only the electricians to complete their work, followed by the plasterers to make good all the walls and then we can start the decoration. A new completion date will hopefully be Spring term 1997.



The school has been inspected by a team from the Office for Standards in Education; the report from them should be available at the end of term. I should like to thank all parents for their support of the school at this stressful time and particularly those parents who assisted in the classrooms during the time of the inspection. The school gardens and surroundings have never looked so good; much of this work can accredited to Mrs Murphy, grandmother of Jamie and Adam in the school. The children in Oak class will again be attending the Schools' Carol Service at Clifton Cathedral and Ash class are to attend a production of the Nativity performed by the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School at Cotham Parish Church.

The Christmas activities this year will take place during the last week of term. The school Christmas matinee concert will be on Monday 16th December commencing at 2.15 p.m; the evening performance will take place on the following day on the Tuesday commencing at 7.00 p.m. The end of term party will be on Wednesday 18th December, with term ending on the 19th December.

Early in the new year the school will attend a service in Church for Epiphany; the exact date of this has yet to be decided but everyone from the local community is welcome to attend.

Within the next few weeks the school will take receipt of a new school sign to replace the old Avon sign that exists at the moment. The school governors will also smarten up the notice board at the school gate, which has long been in need of replacement.

May I wish you all, on behalf of the school, a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

R.H. Larter, Headteacher.

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WANTED

HANDYMAN - to assist the Hall Manager in the general upkeep of the Village Hall and its surrounds. Would suit retired/semi retired person living in the village. Monthly retainer will be negotiated.

Please call: Roger Hughes 01454 228562
or Mike Wills 01278 751252

VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVE - to join the existing Village Hall Committee. We need one or two enthusiastic villagers to come and help us with the general running of this important local activity centre, and with the Project 2000 expansion plans.

No previous experience necessary - just enthusiasm and a pinch of community spirit.

If you think you can help us, call Roger Hughes on 01454 228562

USERS OF THE VILLAGE HALL - Although used by all the major village, and a number of outside organizations we still need to hire out the hall more frequently.

The hall and all its splendid facilities is available for hire at particularly attractive rates to village users and we can arrange licensed bars, catering etc. for particular functions.

If you or any of you friends or family are looking for a venue to hold a wedding reception, birthday party, meeting etc., why not call Meryl Cook on 01454 228405

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FRENCHAY CITY LIFE SAVER

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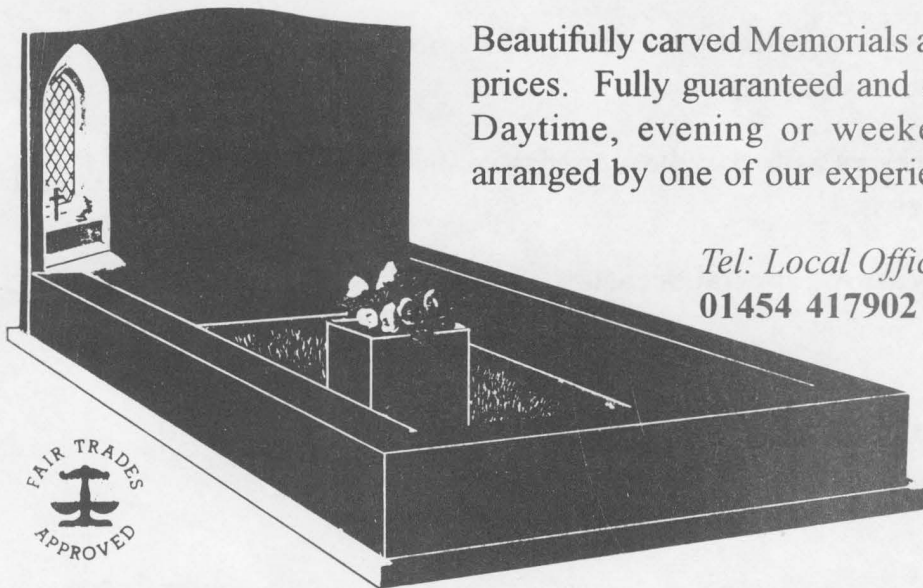
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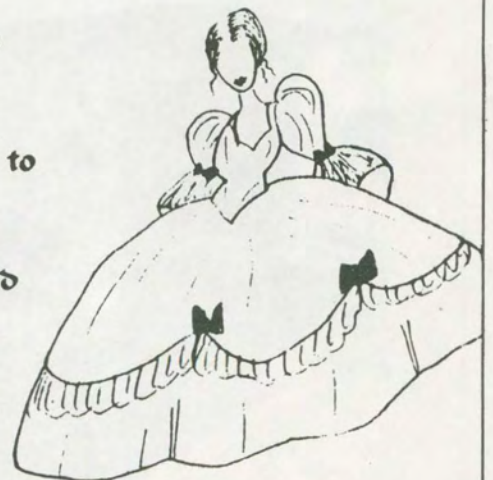
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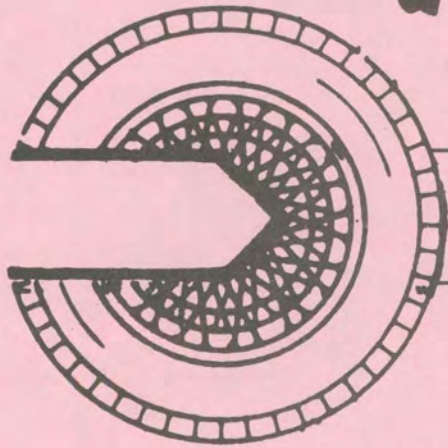
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