

45

Focal Point



A Magazine for Iron Acton

DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

In the Village hall

Every Monday, Thursday
Every Wednesday

Every Thursday
2nd Monday in the month
3rd Monday in the month
4th Monday in the month
Sat 16th August
Sat 6th September
Sat 20th September

Nursery School	9.00 am
Elizabethans	2.00 pm
Junior Actonians	6.00 pm
Actonians	7.30 pm
Line Dancing	7.30 pm
Women's Institute	7.30 pm
Parish Council	7.30 pm
Whist Drive	7.30 pm
Northavon Auctions	
Horticultural Show	
Northavon Auctions	

The Parish Church

Sat 30th August
27th -29th September
Mon 29th September

Barbecue at The Clove Hitch	8.00 pm
Harvest Festival Celebrations	
Sale of Harvest Goods	8 pm at the Rose and Crown Inn

At the Rose & Crown

1st Thursday in the month

Acton Aid	8.00 p.m.
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Village School

8th September

Start of New Term

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).

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SUMMER

ISSUE NO

45

Editorial Summer 1997



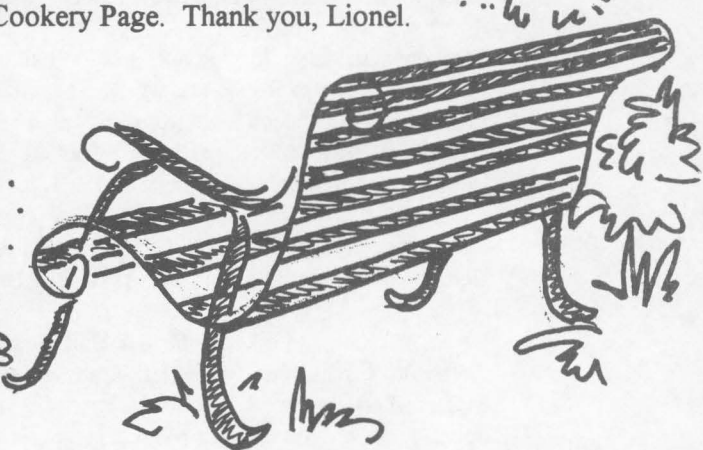
At last, with the school holidays starting, we seem to have some summer. What a disappointing Spring we had! At least it did not rain all day for Village Day, and we hear that a lot of money was raised for Project 2000. Just as well, because the performance of "As You Like It" that should have raised further funds for Project 200 was rained off.

Another disappointment for Project 2000 was the refusal of their application to the National Lottery for funding for the upgrade of the Village Hall. Apparently, it was not sufficiently radical a scheme to appeal to them.

Unless the Project 2000 committee can persuade them to change their minds, it looks as though we could be in for a long, hard slog to raise the money for this very necessary work. Perhaps we shall have to re-christen it "Project 2005"!

The *Focal Point* team hopes all our readers have a good summer holiday, and come back full of ideas for contributions for our magazine - remember that we depend on you for all our articles - please keep them coming.

Our new cover drawing has be done for us by Lionel Alsop, a man of many parts, who has also contributed our Cookery Page. Thank you, Lionel.



Extracts From the Diary of Alfred Strange

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 1934

AUGUST:-

- 2nd. Captain Henderson on holiday - Vizard called for cement for Summer Bridge, Bagstone - letter to William Jones re wages last fortnight - six shillings too much - letter to Col. Sinnott re unauthorised "danger" signs - called at Mrs Hall's - one of Walter's pigs got loose; we chased it out in the road and round the gardens.
PRESIDENT HINDENBURG DIES, AND HITLER IS PROCLAIMED AS THE NEW PRESIDENT.
- 5th. Walked to church and served at Holy Communion at 11 - Fred Fortune is away on holiday at Weston - I walked round Dyer's Lane and down Acton, in Wallbank's porch - K.E. came along, and we had a little chat - I wanted to give up choir, but she said she liked to see me there.
DROUGHT AT IRON ACTON - MR BROWN IS TAKING ROUND WATER AT SIXPENCE A WEEK; THERE IS A MEETING ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT RE THE SUGGESTED WATER MAIN.
- 6th. August Bank Holiday - I went in to the County Ground with Doug Wallington and L. Wookey - stormy on the way, but no rain when we got there. It was Wally Hammond's benefit match against Hampshire - Hammond made a stand with Lyon of 98, and he himself made 78.
- 8th. Letter to Col. Sinnott about reclassification 1934-5 (Folly Road), and putting white lines and "SLOW" on Stoke Gifford road - typed out list of telephone numbers. (The District Surveyor's office number was Chipping Sodbury 79! - B.M.S.)
- 11th. Had my hair cut round Dick Skuse's - Iron Acton "Buff" Show - Tug-o-War, Loch Ness Monster (Barn Hill Quarry men).
- 13th. Show in the field behind the "Crown" - Marcus Dowding, aged 9, fell 60 feet off the top of the quarry at Sodbury and broke an arm and a leg.
- 16th. Into Gregg's for bookkeeping class; I couldn't get my light to go on the Horsefair, had to buy new battery and bulb. Bitterwell Lake, Coalpit Heath, is closed to the public because of the rowdy and disgusting actions of young people from Bristol.
- 25th. Hendy called for hooks - none here - F. Britton called to tender for the old waggons at £5 each - G. Cotterell called for his compensation money - rang up Hatherell's with order for a dozen "S" hooks - Hobbs called and took two spades and whetstones for Witchell and Boulton - got enamel at Hobb's and did my bike over. I went down Dyer's Lane, and called at Mrs Hall's - K.E. came in and we went up the road together, she had the kids with her; she told me she is starting work at a Bristol hairdressers next Monday - met Miss Rich.

SEPTEMBER:-

- 1st. In A. Dyer's car to football - High Littleton Res. 2, Iron Acton 1 - they had several of the Firsts playing - rough ground, dirty play - A. Harmer did not turn up till late - A. May played in long trousers.
- 3rd. Went up Sodbury to pay Granny's and Mrs. Bodman's rates to Mr Batley - home with Archie Mainstone.
- 7th. Went out mushrooming in the dinner hour - picked a good few - went down to football practice at Acton, then round to Mrs. Hall's - walked down North Road with F. Dickson, and met S. Cook and R. Elson.
- 8th. Went down to Acton, left my bike and football togs at Wallbank's, then went up Yate Road with chaps to the funeral of Mervyn Rowlands, who died aged 19 at Hambrook Hospital last Tuesday - lots of chaps there - Prewett Street Mission team joined in - changed down Mr Lewis's with R. Strange - Iron Acton 2 (S. Dyer, R. Batten), Prewett Street Mission 1 - not a bad game.
Bought off Mr Whale: pair black shoes, 12/6, 2 undervests 4/6, white shirt and collars 5/6.
- 10th. Start of week's holiday - walked round to Mrs. Hall's to arrange with Jack about going to Ilfracombe. Mr Bennett, the Thornbury Surveyor, is raising the road at Cog Mill because of flooding.
- 11th. Up at 5 o'clock and biked with Jack Hall to Hotwells, to catch Campbell's Pleasure Steamer "Waverley" for the trip to Ilfracombe. We left at 9, and got there at 1.30, having called on the way at Clevedon, Weston, Minehead and Lynmouth - glorious scenery, hot weather - we left at 5.45 to come back; it was cold, so we went down by the engine room; arrived at Hotwells at 10.30, and home at midnight.

- 15th. Round to Mrs. Hall's for the groceries, then down Acton and away to football - Long Ashton 2, Iron Acton 8 (S. Dyer 3, G. Wiggins 2, A. Sheppard, R. Strange, A. Strange) - I scored the first goal - poor pitch - we were winning 6-0 at half time.
- 21st. Captain Henderson called at 9.45; he had to go to Shire Hall at Gloucester, and took me along with him in his Austin 7; through Cromhall, Tortworth and along the main Gloucester Road, arriving at 10.45. He went in to Shire Hall to discuss the position of men over 65 still working for the department; I had a walk around, lunch at Palmers, and called in at Woolworths, we left at 1.30, and got back at 2.45.
- 22nd. Bristol Quarrying Co.'s outing to Blackpool - a train went from Iron Acton.
TERRIBLE PIT DISASTER AT GRESFORD COLLIERY, NEAR WREXHAM - 100 MEN CUT OFF BY FLAMES - ONLY 9 BODIES RECOVERED BY SATURDAY NIGHT.
- 23rd. **263 KILLED - IMPOSSIBLE TO RESCUE THEM.**
- 24th. Frank Smith (old C.S.G.S. boy) met with an accident on his motor bike at Winterbourne Down.
- 26th. Mr. Powell asked Evans, one of our roller men, to go and roll the football pitch at Winterbourne.
GIANT CUNARDER LAUNCHED BY THE QUEEN AT CLYDEBANK BEFORE 250,000 people - named "QUEEN MARY".
- 27th. Letters to the four men over 70 who work for the District Surveyor's Department about alteration of days and wages: I sent 2/6 postal order to the Mayor of Gresham's fund for the pit disaster.

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Do You Enjoy The Reminiscences?

It has always seemed to me that one of the reasons why the late Mr Alfred Strange's diary is of such interest is in the way he writes of both local and national events with much the same emphasis. He was obviously a young man secure in his environment, known to many and very interested in what was happening in the community. National and world events were noted but recorded in the same "laid-back" way he writes of the day to day happenings in his life.

Obviously, at the time Mr. Strange was a young man, there was no television and newspapers were not given to reporting in the sensational manner they adopt today. Maybe this is one of the reasons for the sense of "place", of stability and order imparted by the diaries. Because people did not travel the distances they do nowadays, local events in Mr. Strange's youth must have assumed greater importance.

In many ways, this way of life appears very attractive to some people nowadays (although many others regard it with horror). Nevertheless, nostalgia for the past is evident in many ways - not least at our Focal Poyntz editorial meetings! Lionel Alsop and I are "local" in that we were born in Frampton Cotterell and have not moved very far away from our roots. Our team members suddenly become very quiet and seem to develop large ears (could be boredom, I guess) when Lionel and I reminisce about our school days and recollect old friends or talk about events many years past! There is nothing particularly exciting in our recollections but until we are all called to order to attend to the business in hand, it is clear that some (at least) of the team are interested!

One event I particularly remember was the pageant produced as part of the Festival of Britain celebrations. To children growing up in wartime, lacking in the experiences of travel, theatre, etc., this was an important event. The pageant sought to represent and celebrate Great Britain through the ages - local people appearing on an outdoor stage and miming to words spoken by (amongst others) a gentleman called Irvine Robbins who organised the whole affair. I remember appearing on the stage as Alice in Wonderland and clutching a full size (but not real, thank goodness) pig, and, in another scene, being stuffed into a minute Victorian dress and dancing a very fast polka. Fortunately, both dress and I survived this ordeal. What these two things had to do with making Britain Great I cannot now recollect, but the production was very successful and seemed to involve the whole village in one way or another. I wonder how we will celebrate the millennium!



Jean Dickes

Iron Acton Goes Country



Whilst walking past the village hall any Thursday night you could be forgiven for thinking that you have stumbled upon a small piece of Nashville as the sounds of new Country Music fill the air. For those of you with an inquisitive mind just pop your head around the door and you will be met with an amazing sight. A hall full of people from the age of eight to eighty having the time of their lives dressed in cowboy boots and checked shirts, dancing to the newest and most exciting dance craze to hit these shores in over four decades.

It was nearly fifty years ago that the Americans gave us Bee-bop and the Jive, coming to our country via the young American Servicemen who were stationed here during the war. This time however it's the good old goggle box we have to thank for the arrival of this exhilarating new dance craze, that unless you've been asleep for the last twelve months you must have heard of. If you have not tried Country Line Dancing yourself yet, then you probably know of someone that has. If you have not ventured into a village hall, a back room of a pub or a school assembly hall to give this a try then now is the time.

Popular belief has it that Line Dancing started in the Mid West in about the 1830's. The gold and opal prospectors of that time would find themselves away from home for many months while they were mining. Living in an all male community these hard living and hard drinking men would get together in the evenings with maybe a fiddle and mouth organ, and having no women folk to hand, the men would stand in line and stamp out a few steps. Thus Line Dancing was born.

Today it has had a rebirth with the invasion of New Country Music, which has hit the music scene mainly due to the Country Music Channel CMT on Satellite TV and adapted to suit men and women young and old alike.

At Iron Acton we have a village hall that is ideal for the purpose of Line Dancing. A nice square dance floor with a large stage where you can see the dance explained and danced through before you have a go at it yourself.

One of the many good things about Line Dancing is that it can be danced without a partner. Anyone can do it even if, like me, you have a husband, boyfriend, wife or girlfriend who doesn't want to dance, just come along stand in line and the whole room becomes our partner. It's a great way to make new friends and keep fit.

Over the past few weeks I have seen my class as Iron Acton Village Hall become enthusiastically involved and socially they have a wonderful time. There is nothing more rewarding than bringing people together to achieve a common goal, that of being one of the best Line Dancing groups around. So grab your boots and come along and Yee Ha with the rest of us.

Lyn Dyer - Line Dance Teacher

Every Thursday Beginners 7 - 8 p.m.

Intermediates 8.15 - 9.15 p.m.

Silvey Support for Project 2000

Following on from the announcement in the last edition of *Local Points*, stating that **SILVEY** would donate 0.2 pence to **PROJECT 2000** for every litre of heating oil purchased from them for delivery into the Iron Acton Parish, a cheque for £45.79 has been presented to the Treasurer, Mr Tony Pullin.

Manager, David Hatherell, explained it was due to a combination of existing customers re-ordering and several new customers buying as a result of the offer. "At this rate we could easily achieve £250.00 over twelve months" he predicted.

Anyone wishing to support this scheme should contact **SILVEYS** on 0345 125313.

BS17 Voluntary Link

BS17 Voluntary Link has funding to conduct a research project looking at the needs of rural carers in South Gloucestershire, and has appointed an experienced researcher from the University of Bristol to carry out this work on their behalf.

The research aims to listen to people who provide support to a dependent adult so that current services and projects, as well as future developments, can be informed by their opinions. We particularly want to look at the additional difficulties and costs faced by carers who live in rural areas. The research will produce a report by mid-June, and aims to provide a sketch of carers in all parts of South Gloucestershire, as well as more in-depth studies of three communities.

Jane Gilliard, the rural research worker, would like to contact as many carers in South Gloucestershire as possible, and ask them to complete a questionnaire. In addition, they will be asked if they are willing to meet her to talk in greater detail about their experiences and their opinions on how services could be organised to make them more accessible to people in rural communities. Confidentiality and anonymity is assured.

Anyone who is interested in finding out more, or who would be willing to complete a questionnaire is asked to write to Jane at:-

BS17 Voluntary Link
Yate Library
44 West Walk
Yate

or Telephone 01454 324102

Norman Carter.

OH, DEAR!

*Everything is farther away than it used to be.
It is even trice as far to the corner and they have added a hill.
I have given up running for the bus;
it leaves earlier than it used to.
It seems to me they re making the stairs steeper than in the old days.
And have you noticed the smaller print they use in the newspapers?
There is no sense in asking anyone to read aloud any more, as everybody
speaks in such a low voice I can hardly hear them.
The material in dresses is so skimpy now, especially around the hips and waist,
that it is impossible to reach one's shoelaces.
And the sizes don't run the way they used to.
The 12's and 14's are so much smaller.
Even people are changing.
They are so much younger than they used to be when I was their age.
On the other hand, people my own age are so much older than I am.
I ran into an old classmate the other day and she has aged so much
that she didn't recognise me.
I got to thinking about the poor dear while I was combing my hair this
morning and in doing so I glanced at my own reflection.
Really now, they don't even make good mirrors like they used to.*

YOU'RE NOT GETTING OLDER. YOU'RE GETTING BETTER.



IRON ACTON WI

For some inexplicable reason it only seems like yesterday that I was writing the last FP report and breathing a sigh of relief that it was finished, once again, for another four months! There are only a certain number of ways that you can start an article and I seem to have exhausted all those known to me.

We have had speakers telling us about pub signs and the stories behind them (it was felt that, maybe, we should take a few trips out to confirm and test the stories that we were told - purely on a fact finding mission, of course) and a lady telling us about her life working in a beauty salon in Bond Street and how she then opened up her own salons in Bristol and North Somerset. Her stories about the girls who used to pop in from the Raymond Review Bar for waxing of all sorts of unusual places made us wince but the most interesting part was the stories about her favourite, and not so favourite, people.



Originally our lady had met Countess Spencer when she had been called in to do her makeup on the morning of a previous marriage. Many years later she was summoned to Althorpe to see her as she and a colleague were to discuss the possibility of a beauty product being sold in the gift shop. Having been made to wait a considerable time after the due appointment time they were shown into the Countess's study. A huge portrait of the Princess of Wales hung on the wall behind the Countess so that visitors could not fail to remember the royal connection. The visitors were asked if they would like coffee and said yes. A servant arrived with a large silver tray, on which was the most wonderful bone china. This was dutifully placed by the Countess who then served the coffee into a bone china cup for her and proceeded to pour the guests' coffee into two well worn, earthenware mugs. However, the balance was restored when Barbara Cartland visited the salon as she was always perfectly charming, well mannered and always on time!

Another favourite was Diana Dors who inadvertently caused chaos in our lady's marriage. Diana would sometimes arrange an all day treatment and on arrival would ask just for her nails to be painted and would then disappear through the back door and into a waiting vehicle. Our lady left the salon to return to Bristol to live and Diana wrestled her new address out of the lady in charge of the salon. She returned home one day to find a much miffed husband who pointed at a huge bouquet of flowers that had arrived. The message on the card read "with grateful thanks for letting me use the back door. DD." It took a huge amount of persuading before he believed how innocent the message was!

Judy Park, our President, attended the Triennial General Meeting at the NEC in Birmingham where 15,000 women attended a two day conference to vote on this year's resolutions, to hear expert speakers on a range of topics and to catch up on all that has happened and will be happening to our organisation in the future. Women power you can't beat it!

By the time you read this we hope to have had a Coffee Evening at Anna Tillotson's home, a Car Boot Sale (weather permitting) in the Avenue Field and a meeting where the speaker will be from the Traidcraft Organisation.

On the outings front a trip to Bath is planned for early July when we shall go on a Ghost Walk around the city with one of the tourist guides and a group of us (plus assorted hangers on) will be going to London on 30 August to see the State Apartments at Buckingham Palace.

And if all this isn't enough we are already starting to plan the programme for 1998! Suggested topics so far include backpacking grannies, making Christmas crackers, a talk by the RSPB on how to care for garden birds in the winter and a visit to the Chelsea gold medal award winning fuschia grower at Coalpit Heath! We hope to have the programme fully completed in time for the next edition of Focal Poyntz as we know there are a lot of ladies who have thought about joining the WI but haven't quite made that last little step to coming to our meetings. So watch out cos we're out to get you!!

Lynne Blanchard
WI Secretary (allegedly!)

BLACKBIRD HAS SPOKEN

Our garden is minute but a lot seems to happen in it - what with a resident hedgehog, a visiting sparrowhawk (well, twice it visited), an extremely bossy robin, fieldmice who managed to trap themselves in an empty dustbin (I shall not easily forget the eyes of those mice as they looked up at us), the occasional frog/toad, etc. etc. At the moment, however, we are being harrassed by nesting blackbirds. Why can't they raise their young quietly like other birds seem to? We first became aware of them nesting in a conifer in the garden. At nine o'clock one evening they started creating a terrible to-do; we rushed outside to see a cat stalking along the wall by the side of the conifer. Peace was eventually restored but early the following morning there was another commotion; this time the culprit was a magpie. This was driven away but returned an hour later and (we think) did 'murder' in the nest. The parent blackbirds were distraught and the brave male valiantly pursued the departing magpie.

Next, the blackbirds built their nest in a pyracantha bush beside the sitting room window - just where it is impossible for us to ignore them. They have worked incredibly hard to raise their young, continually flying into the nest loaded with 'goodies' and we began to think the young were never going to appear or that they were the unwilling 'parents' of a cuckoo. However, two young blackbirds did eventually make their debuts early one morning, but instead of making a discreet appearance, these nestlings frolicked in the open and we feared for them, rushing out into the garden ready to shoo away all intruders. A couple of mornings later the parent birds again woke us with their clamour. They were flying round the garden, dropping over the wall into an adjoining field, coming together on the garage roof for a tactical discussion, obviously be heard but not seen. Eventually we decided to 'assist' and to our horror discovered one of the nestlings had been accidentally locked into the garage the previous evening. We were mortified after all our efforts to ensure their safety but it seemed none the worse for its ordeal, although there was plenty of evidence of its overnight occupation in the garage!

The garden has become a wilderness during all this time because we have not been able to cut back rampant shrubs and bushes around the nest site. The young birds having left the nest we thought 'ah-ha', but those busy birds have beaten us to it: during the past couple of days they have been in and out like over-zealous spring cleaners and the cycle is obviously about to start again. Can our nerves stand it?

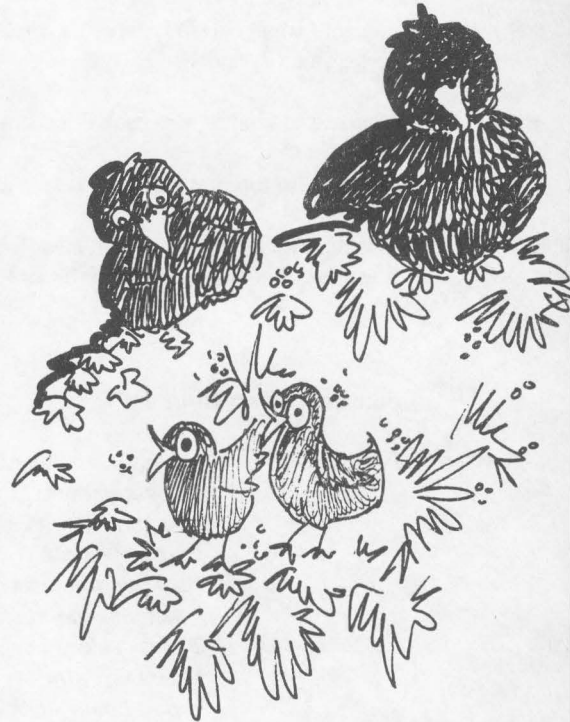
Jean Dickes

SILVEY BALLOON RACE - VILLAGE DAY 1997

Local oil distributor, Thomas Silvey Ltd., was pleased to report that despite unfavourable flying conditions 90 balloons were launched and unlike last year's south westerly directin this year's balloons all took off on a north easterly route. The proceeds of £70,000 have been donated to **PROJECT 2000**.

Fourteen cards were returned - local successes included Mr Lionel Alsop whose balloon reached Bourton on the Water and Mrs. Elsie Blanchard whose balloon reached Cheltenham. The two winning balloons were released by villagers - runner up reaching Nuneaton by Miss Rosalind Montague who wins the Oil Watchman remote tank gauge (guess what Daddy is getting for Christmas!) and winner reaching Kettering by Mrs Lesley Ponsonby who receives vouchers for the Showcase Cinema & Deep Pan Pizza.

We are also informed that a certain Scotsman desperate to take his wife to the cinema returned Hattie Cross's balloon from "Thomas's field opposite Backfield House"!



The Cooking Page

A starter with a difference - **Courgette flowers in batter.**

Pick and wash carefully large courgette flowers. Fill the trumpets with a mixture of sautéed onions, mushrooms and herbs, finely blended.

Make a light batter, dip each filled flower into it and fry in deep fat for one minute.

Don't worry too much about exact quantities of the ingredients required, and use the herbs you enjoy.

This next recipe is taken from a leaflet produced by the Potato Marketing Board which we acknowledge. I have now presented this dish a couple of times to members of the family and it has always been well received.

Summer Lamb Hot Pot (serves 4).

*Ingredients:- 1½ lb. Lamb cubed (Rolled shoulder trimmed of fat and skin gives excellent eating).
Salt and freshly ground black pepper.
1 oz. of plain flour.
1½ oz of butter
2 tablespoon olive oil
2 medium carrots finely diced
2 sticks celery finely diced
¼ pint red wine
¼ pint Lamb stock - use Lamb stock cube)
3 tablespoon fresh mint roughly chopped (but can be omitted)
2 bay leaves
2 teaspoon capers
1¼ to 1½ lbs new potatoes, scrubbed and sliced about ¼ inch or so thick*

Oven temperature 170° C.

- 1) Toss the Lamb in seasoned flour and fry in the oil until brown, transfer to plate.
- 2) In same pan melt ½ oz. butter and add carrots and celery and fry for 5 minutes.
- 3) Stir in the red wine and stock, then add the lamb with the mint and bay leaves. Bring to simmer point, stirring, then transfer to a casserole dish, cover and cook for 1½ hours.
- 4) Meanwhile cook potatoes until just tender.
- 5) After 1½ hours remove bay leaves and add capers, melt remaining butter and use to coat potatoes.
- 6) Arrange potato slices over lamb and increase oven temperature to 200° C and cook uncovered for a further 15 to 20 minutes to brown and crisp potato layer.

Serve immediately with a selection of seasonal vegetables.

The use of a shallower casserole dish helps in browning the potato layer.

Reduced temperature and times can be used if cooking in a fan assisted oven. This is likely to be a reduction in temperature of 10° C and a reduction of 10 minutes in the hour for cooking times.

Please consult your cooker manual.

HAPPY EATING

HMS GLORIOUS

Two men of our parish were killed on this ship on 9th June 1940 and their names appear on our Church War Memorial. I thought the following letter would be of interest to parishioners, especially those who remember Donald Moore and Sidney Cullum.

It was published in the May 1997 Saga magazine. With permission of the Editor I quote the letter.

Bill Coles, Bovey Tracey, Devon.

"I was serving in HMS Devonshire when we brought King Haakon, the Crown Prince of Norway, and his Government, back to the U.K. We knew almost immediately that Glorious was being attacked and the King asked that we might go back to her assistance as we were between 80 and 100 miles away, to the east. We were told that after contacting the admiralty we were instructed to remain on course for the U.K.

"A survivor from Glorious wrote a book "Carrier Glorious" by John Winton* which is very detailed. The whole ship's company of Devonshire were deeply sorry that they were unable to help."

*Published by Arrow 1986. ISBN 0 09 95880

Many people may also have seen the documentary on Channel 4 on 30 June about the sinking of HMS Glorious. I have a tape of the programme which anyone interested may borrow as long as they undertake not to copy it (for reasons of copyright)

D. White

ELIZABETHAN CLUB

The Elizabethan Club commenced its outings with a trip to Oxford in April followed by a tour of the Cotswolds in May. In June we visited Sidmouth not a very bright start but we managed to get a few spells of dry weather, the sun was shining at Burnham on the way home.

Our next trip will be to Teignmouth in July followed by Paignton & Torquay on August 6th, Swanage on 20th August and Poole in September.

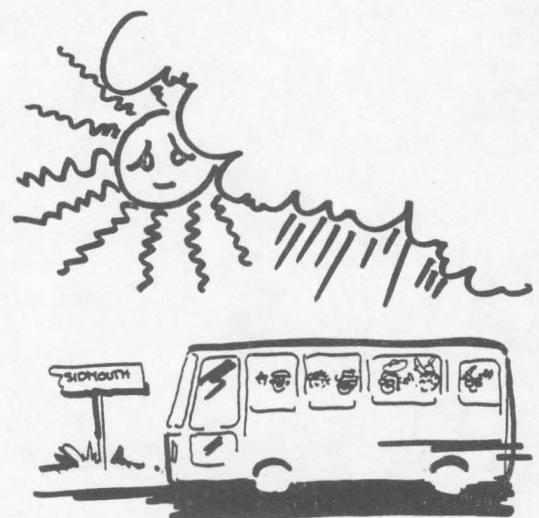
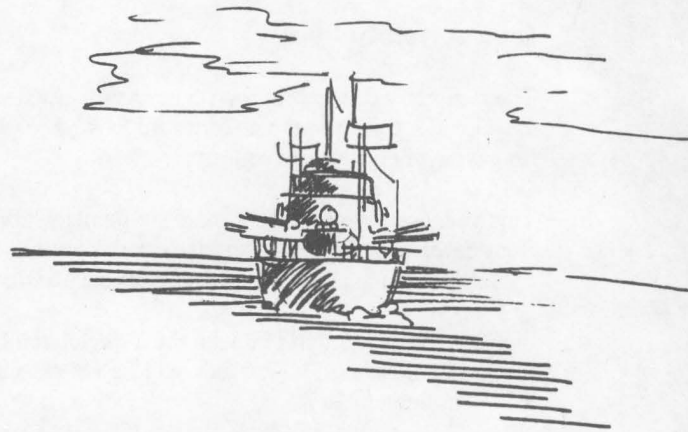
We celebrate our Birthday Party at the Hall on July 9th. Mrs Fletcher, Mrs Hall and Mrs Wallbank have resigned from the Club as Betty is no longer able to drive through ill health. We miss them and wish we were able to arrange transport for them.

We hope to attend the Autumn production at Leyhill and their Christmas Pantomime.

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

Once again if you are a pensioner and would like to join us please come along to the Hall at 2.30 p.m. on a Wednesday or ring me on 228566 and I will give you details of membership.

Elsie Blanchard.



Iron Acton School

The summer weather is now with us and the usual summer events re imminent. The school and cluster school sports are close at hand and the children are looking forward to these. The teaching staff are involved in the planning and practising of end of term concerts.

This year we say goodbye to only six pupils who move on to secondary school, yet we will gain twice as many in September - again increasing the number on roll in September. The school will be welcoming these children on induction mornings so that they may see the classrooms and get to know their teachers.

Our Yr6 children will join with the Yr6 children from the other cluster schools for an evening of outdoor activities at Cromhall School, where they will be able to mingle and meet other children who are transferring to their new school in September.

The school house has now been opened with a wonderful ceremony on 13th June 1997, where Mrs Waker, our guest of honour cut the ribbon and unveiled a plaque to commemorate the event. Many thanks to all who assisted with this.

This year the staff decided that class visits for the end of the school year would be more appropriate. Therefore, visits to Cirencester, Chepstow and Bristol have been undertaken to support the work in the class topics. With the children finishing school on a Monday we hope to organise a picnic in the parish meadows to complete our school year.

This year we say a sad farewell to Mrs Karen Hillier who has been with the school for eight years. During her time she has made many contributions to the school as a General Assistant, Governor, Friends Committee Member and Parent. We wish her well with her forthcoming university studies.

The governors have appointed Mrs Beverley Jones to fill Mrs Hillier's role within the school. She is an experienced general assistant who can bring many qualities to the school and the staff are looking forward to working with her.

Dates:

School Concerts	14th July Matinée 15th July Evening Concert
Leavers Service	18th July
School Picnic	21st July
Start of New Term	8th September 1997

ACTONIANS

Our next production is at the end of November; Anne Chenery will direct a scintillating comedy, just the thing to cheer you up in the season of flu bugs and frost. The exact dates (and indeed, the final choice of play) are still to be decided. One thing for certain - it'll be cheerful, entertaining and just the job to take your mind off the rapidly decreasing number of shopping days left till Christmas. More information in the next issue.

There must be one or two brave souls out there who will admit to reading the Wickes catalogue from cover to spellbinding cover and who lovingly keep their tool boxes under their pillows (O.K, so if not under the pillow then at least very close at hand). Well, here's a project which "should only take a weekend" Come to the village hall and help me build the set for our next production. If you're new to the area then it's a great way to make new friends (just use the left-over timber and canvas and knock one together before you go home) So call me on 228458 if you've a couple of days to spare in the Autumn and know the difference between a screwdriver and an ironing board.

Donna Worrall.



Latteridge Prayer Group.

"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of" Tennyson.

For three years or so a group of Christian neighbours in Latteridge have been meeting regularly to pray for the neighbourhood and beyond. Although we all go to different Churches we are united in our love for Jesus. We meet every month and have also organised some social events in Latteridge.

Earlier this year we undertook an Alpha course together. Various guests joined us and we enjoyed a ten week course learning more about the Christian faith and discussing the various aspects which have probably puzzled people for hundreds of years; does God still heal? is Christianity untrue and irrelevant? who was Jesus? how and why should we pray? We felt our faith was strengthened and some felt it had been rekindled or awakened in a new way. This course started in an Anglican Church and is now run by many different Churches throughout the country - helping people to find out more about being a Christian and enabling groups to openly discuss doubts, fears and experiences. If you would like to know more do ring any of us - we would consider running another course if there were others interested.

So, what do we pray about? Anything! Nothing is too inconsequential or too complicated to talk to God about - we've prayed for young and old, babies not yet born and elderly friends and relatives. Normal family concerns; exams, interviews, relationships, sickness, business worries. We pray for our community and for the houses and farms here. We know that prayer is not in vain and we give thanks for answers.

We would be glad to pray for anything you wish to tell us about - better still, come and join us! There's no such thing as an expert pray-er - it's simply a conversation between you and Him. God hears all prayers.

"Pray without ceasing" The Bible.

For more information ring:

Bev & Helen Hope-Bell	228789
Pat & Christine Pinker	228416
Christine Corver	228377
Tricia Reynold-Williams	228720
Phil & Phyllis King	228681

* * * * *

Victorian Music Hall Evening

As we go to press, the Actonians Drama Group are offering to organise a supper evening to raise funds for Project 2000. We hope that this evening will take place on Friday/Saturday January 23/24 1998 at the Village Hall. Ticket prices will include supper and will be available just before Christmas. Anyone with a talent or partypiece that will fit into our theme is cordially invited to step forward and seek the spotlight and applause. You need not be an Actonian member or live directly in Iron Acton, but just wish to claim your fifteen minutes of fame. So if you can sing, dance, recite, play the spoons, toss the Caber, then ring Bob Allen (0117 976 1976) as soon as possible. The more acts the merrier!

* * * * *

Ever noticed that...

.... weekends are like rainbows? They always look great from a distance, but seem to disappear whenever you get up close.

.... you spend 18 months trying to get your children to stand up and talk, and the next 18 years trying to get them to sit down and listen?

.... the world is full of people who go through life running from something that is not chasing them.



Early Surgery & Surgeons

In the first half of the 19th century the surgeon's work was confined to a narrow field. He treated simple fractures and septic conditions. For complex injury and severe sepsis of limbs he performed amputations with dexterity but with a high mortality. (Nelson, on having his right arm amputated without any anaesthetic at the turn of the century complained that the most unpleasant sensation was the coldness of the knife as it cut through the skin - in future in the navy all amputation knives had to be warmed first!)

Abdominal surgery was almost unknown because of the fear of opening the abdominal cavity owing to the risk of sepsis. This fear persisted long after the introduction of ether and chloroform in 1846 & 47, which did not lead as might have been expected to a rapid development of surgery of the abdomen.

The unsolved problem of infection retarded progress and it was in the large metropolitan hospitals, where advance might have been expected, that the morbidity and mortality rates were high from this cause.

As early as 1847 Semmelweiss had demonstrated that fatal infection in post natal women could be almost obliterated if the attendant washed his hands when he came into the delivery room from a septic case or from the post mortem room. As the result of publishing this work Semmelweiss was ridiculed, reduced in rank and subject to such abuse that he eventually was admitted to a mental institution where he died.

It was not until Joseph Lister in 1865 applied Pasteur's discoveries and proved the isolation of wound sepsis and bacterial contamination that this condition began to be understood. Lister argued that if the germs in the wound could be killed, putrefaction would not occur. He chose carbolic acid for the purpose which he used to swab the skin, cleanse the instruments and sponges, and soon the surgeons hands, to their detriment, were soaked in carbolic.

A later development was carbolic spray which sprayed all over the operation site - a very uncomfortable procedure of which Lister later said "I feel ashamed that I should have recommended it." Lister always claimed his greatest development was to produce a ligature material which would dissolve and could be sterilized.

Within two years of his advocacy of the antiseptic method Lister was able to show in Glasgow that he had eradicated serious septic complications.

The majority of Lister's contemporaries failed through ignorance, complacency and jealousy to appreciate this work and it would be ten years before his ideas were widely accepted.

David McCoy

A SICK NOTE

Dear Sir,

*I write this note to you to tell you of my plight
And at the time of writing I'm not a pretty sight
Me Body is all black and blue me face a deathly grey
I write this note to say why I am not at work today.*

*While working on the fourteenth floor some bricks I had to clear
Now to throw them down from such a height was not a good idea
The Foreman wasn't very pleased he is a awkward sod
He said I'd have to cart them down the ladders in me hod.*

*Now clearing all these bricks by hand it was so very slow
So I hoisted up a barrow and secured a rope below
But in me haste to do the job I was to blind to see
That a barrow full of building bricks were heavier than me*

*So when I untied the rope the barrow fell like lead
And clinging tightly to the rope I started up instead
Well I shot up like a rocket till To my dismay I found
That half way up I met the bloody barrow coming down*

*Well the Barrow broke me shoulder as to the ground it sped
And when I reached the top I banged the pulley with me head
I clung on tightly to the rope from this almighty blow
And the barrow spilled out half the bricks fourteen floors below.*

*Now when these bricks had fallen from the barrow to the floor
I then out weighed the barrow and so started down once more
I clung on tightly to the rope me body racked with pain
And half way down I met the bloody barrow once again.*

*Well the force of this collision half way down the office block
Caused multiple abrasions and a nasty case of shock
Clinging tightly to the rope I sped towards the ground
And landed on the broken bricks the barrow had scattered round*

*I lay there moaning on the ground I thought I'd past the worst
When the barrow hit the pulley wheel and then the bottom burst
A shower of bricks rained down on me I didn't have a hope
As I lay there bleeding on the ground I let go the bloody rope*

*The barrow now being heavier it started down once more
And landed right across me as I lay there on the floor
It broke three ribs and my left arm and I can only say
I hope you'll understand why Paddy's not at work today.*

To all Organisations and Parishioners of Iron Acton.

By now most of you will know that I have been asked to take on the Pastoral Care of the parish. I asked myself the question, "Where do I start???" We need to get things moving again. The Church, which should be the focal point of the village, is the House of God, a House of Prayer, it is there for every one, not just a few, it is a place where we can be refreshed, to be quiet, a place where we can thank God for all His Blessing upon us, and also to reflect on the Blessings we are missing by neglecting Him.

What could be a better time to refill the Church again than Remembrance Sunday 8th November (if possible before). At the 6.30 p.m. Service the Royal British Legion (Yate & Sodbury Branch) will be attending, I am also hoping that members of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes will also attend.

I have provisionally asked someone to play "Stranger on the shore", on their Clarinet, in memory of all those who died or were wounded on many shores, to which they were Strangers, I have also asked someone to play a piece on the Trumpet, as this is only provisional I cannot give names. I am hoping that members of the Parish Council will take part and also members of Acton Aid, The Actonians and W.I. These organisations I have not yet had time to approach, but hope to soon. I shall be calling at the School shortly to see the Head Teacher.

I would like to receive the names of anyone who would like to be Confirmed. I would also like to say that anyone who is ill and would like a visit, or receive their Holy Communion at home, please let me know so that I can arrange a time.

But please do remember I can achieve little without your support and prayers.

Dennis King (Lay Reader)

This report arrived on the day after our Spring issue went to press

DISPATCH FROM CATHERINE KIRBY

David and I are both thoroughly enjoying our experiences here in Nepal. I don't know where to start telling of our experiences as each day brings something new and wondrous. It took a while to be accepted into the village community especially as we are handicapped by our lack of Nepali language skills (but with over 50 regional dialects where do you start!) but after the initial stares, poking and prodding and asking strange questions we are now completely at home and have made good friends amongst children and adults.

The School building project is going well, both sides seem to be learning new skills, with 16 classrooms, a latrine block and water supply from a source approximately one mile away. The school is a private trust set up by ex-servicemen and the majority of children (approximately 650) are ex-servicemen's children (either British Army, or Indian army.) The planned opening is for the 16th May just 12 days before we return to England so the pressure is on. The buildings have been funded by the Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS) but the school will have to construct mud and bamboo kitchen and dining room for the 150 boarders until they raise the funds for more buildings.

I have found teaching English to 450 Children, Teachers and Governors (everyone wants to learn) both challenging and tremendous fun. We have found that Nepalis everywhere are helpful, enthusiastic, generous and friendly so teaching children who are so enthusiastic is a real joy. The school has nothing except chalk and blackboard, pencils and limited books yet they are happy and the level of education exceptionally high.

We've been lucky enough to go to weddings and funerals and festivals - which in hill villages follow ancient rituals and a bizarre jumble of beliefs but I would need to write a book As far as daily life goes. A diet of rice and lentils, no electricity, no hot water, going to bed when it gets dark and getting up when it gets light and only getting in a vehicle maybe once in three months when we go to the British Army camp in the nearby town (8 hours drive down a dirt track). It took a bit of getting used to but now we like this stress free simple way of life and won't a western, first world culture seem strange

David and Catherine Kirby returned to the U.K. at the end of May, both, in their own words, "thin but fit" after their experience of third world living. Their time in Nepal has obviously made a profound impression on both of them and they look forward to an opportunity to re-visit their Nepalese friends some time in the future.

For the present, however, they will be experiencing an altogether different life style in Canada. David and Catherine left for Vancouver on 16th June. We wish them happiness and success in their new venture and we shall look forward to receiving dispatches describing their life in the new world in due course.

HELP!

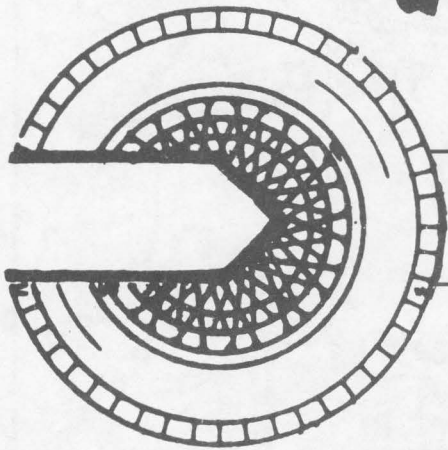
We are moving to Iron Acton and our Son Louis will be attending the Village Primary School, in year 1 from September - would anyone take him and pick him up from school on alternate days? If you have a child this age we would return the favour or else pay the going rate for child minding. Please phone Dr. or Mrs Thompson - 0117 9664132.

P.S. We also need a child minder/nanny for his brother Jules age 7 months on the same alternate days.

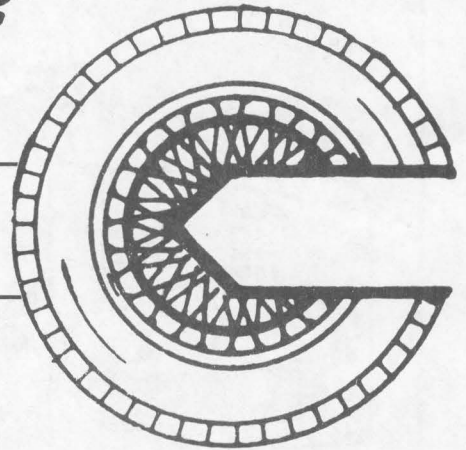
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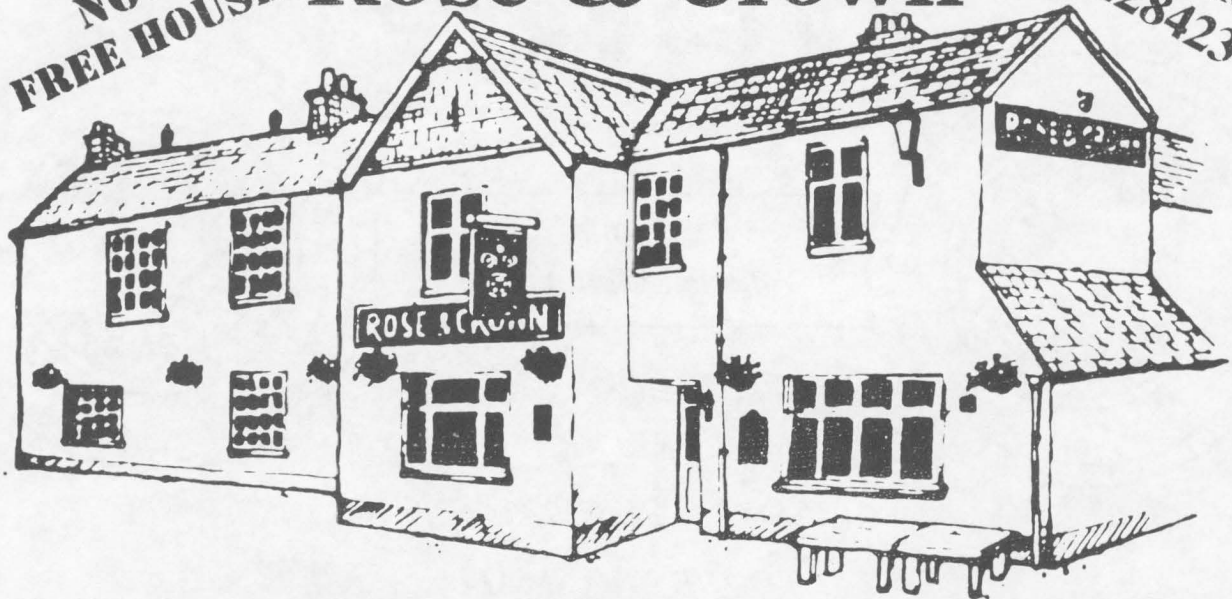
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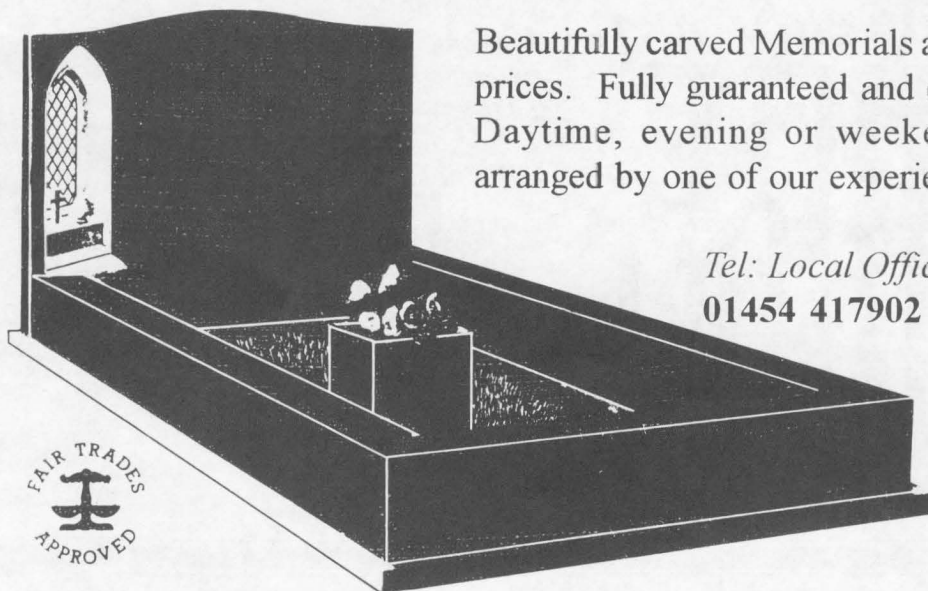
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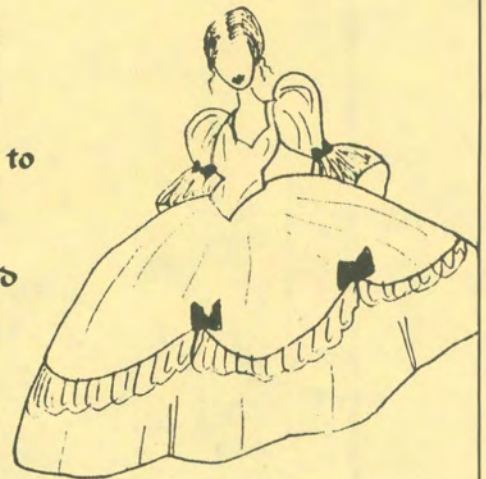
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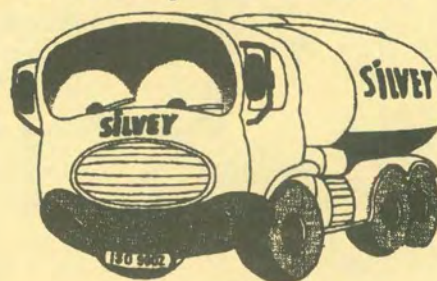
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