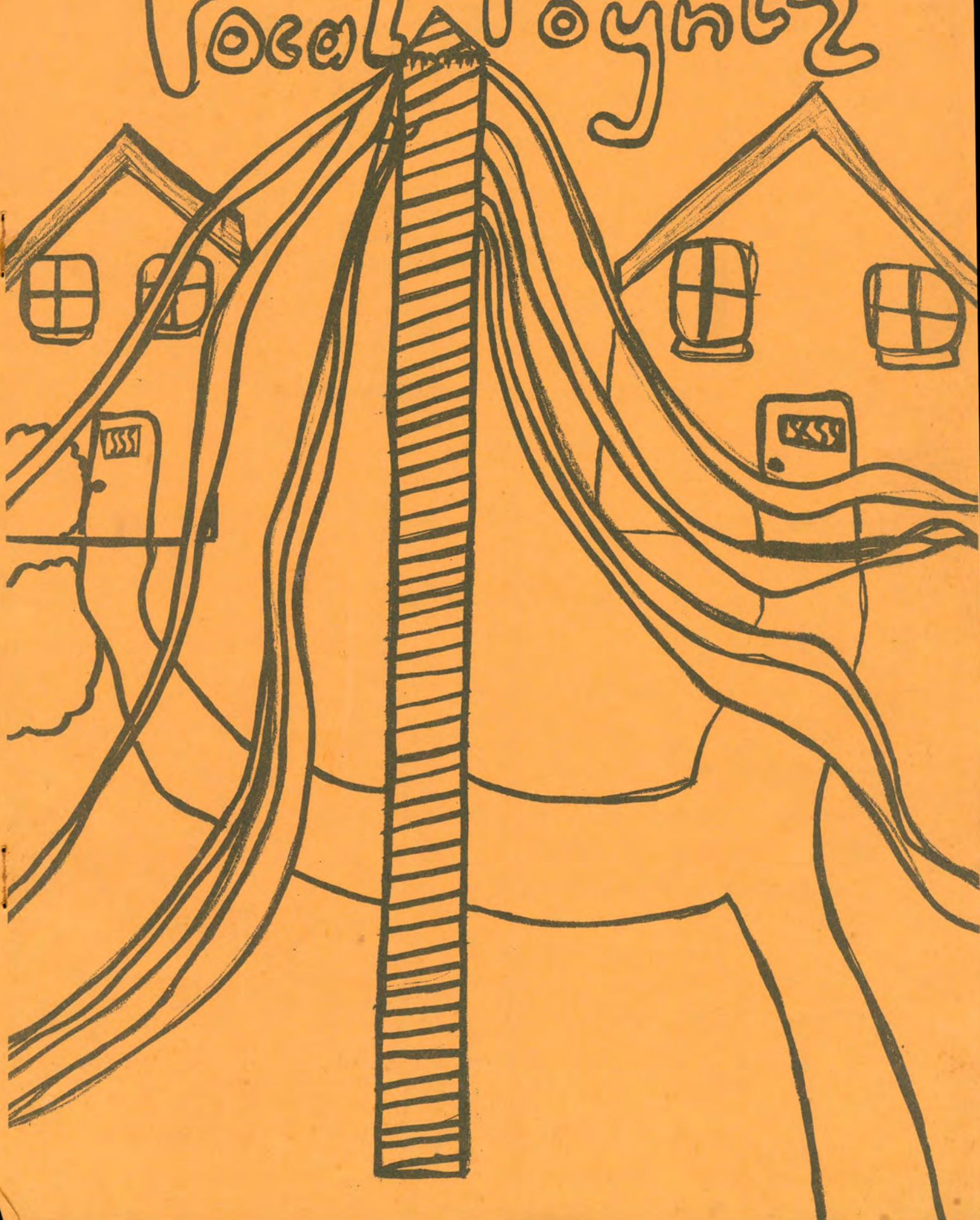


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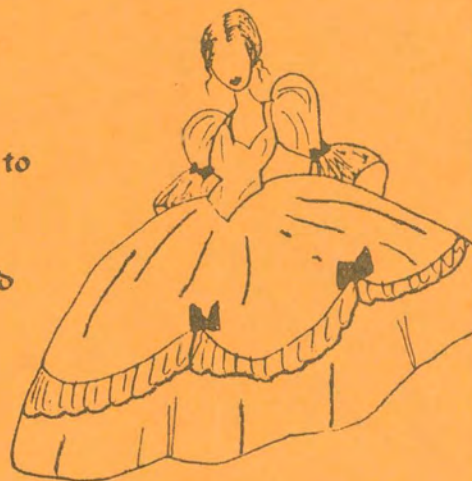
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SUMMER

ISSUE NO 56



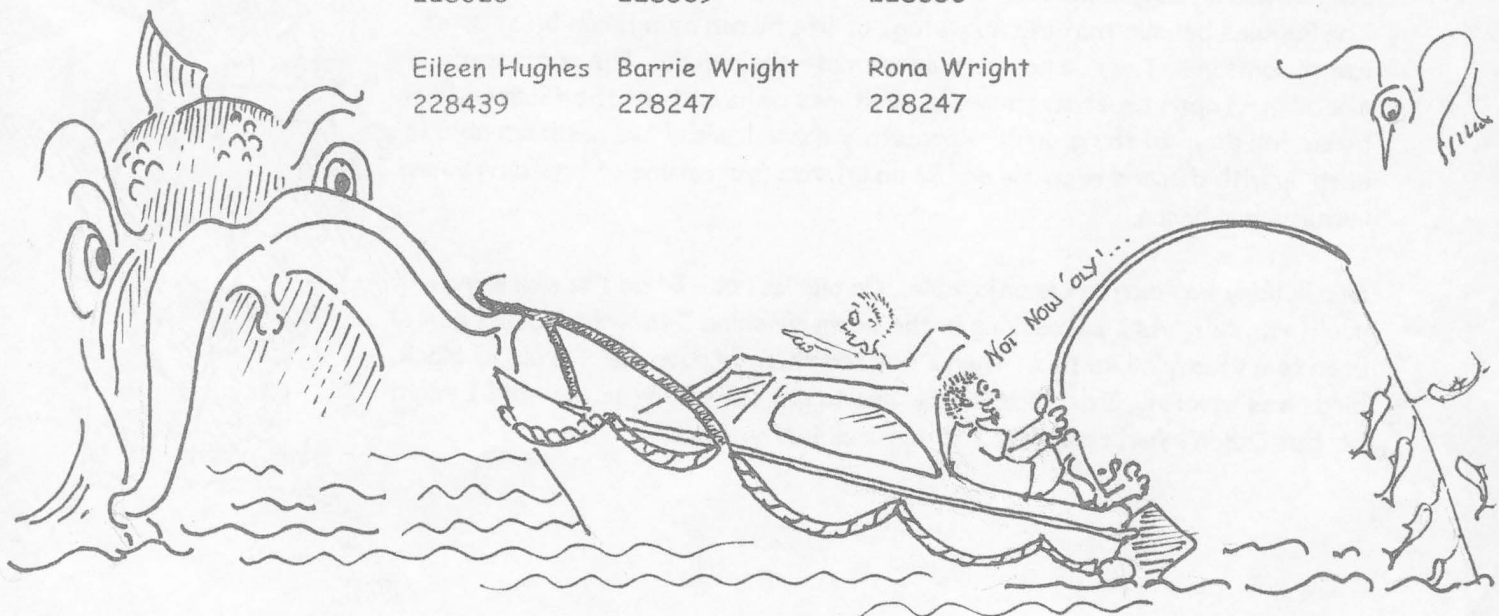
With the Summer trying to gather pace, we'd like to wish you "Happy Holidays" whether you travel or stay at home.

Our cover has been designed by Jackie Rothwell and we are very grateful for her lovely design.

Focal Poyntz, as we never tire of saying, relies on your contributions to make this into a relevant magazine for the parish of Iron Acton. Can we make a polite plea to those organisations whose contributions appear to have ceased to make an extra special effort for the Christmas Issue - and to then continue the good work so we receive their news each time?

Your Focal Poyntz Team is:

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Lionel Alsop 228400 | Lynne Blanchard 228566 | Maureen Blake 294381 |
| Sue Cowley 228323 | Hazel Dron 228509 | Roy Hubbard 228356 |
| Eileen Hughes 228439 | Barrie Wright 228247 | Rona Wright 228247 |



UNCLE GUY

"I think madam is a very old lady", observed the Rickshaw Man as he helped me into his bone-shaking vehicle. My family was unable to let this ungallant remark pass by without challenging it. "Madam is not old" they said firmly. "She is not yet 60, she is still young". The Rickshaw Man did not seem convinced but he smiled politely to humour us. In India grey hair is not regarded with favour. As soon as silver threads appear both men and women dye their hair. Anyone like me without the energy to do the same is regarded as ancient. I refused to let thoughts about the ageing process spoil the afternoon. We had stopped off at a bird sanctuary on our way to Agra. We saw black and white kingfishers, green cockatoos, herons and a scorpion's nest. It was all part of a special holiday.

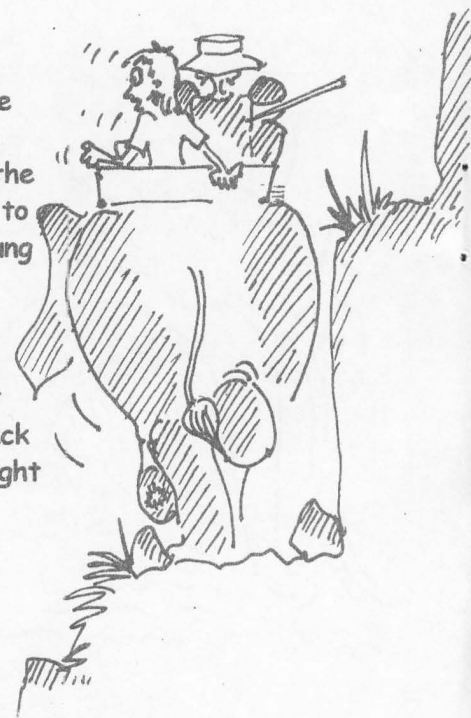
My family's links with India go back to my great-grandfather. He worked in the Indian Police Force. His son, my great uncle Guy, was a Don at Calcutta University. I still have his book "The Script of Harappa and Mohenjodaro and its connection with other scripts". This work, which is a study of Neolithic writing, must surely be of interest to someone but I am afraid lies unread on my shelves. I owe my existence to Uncle Guy. It was while staying with him that my mother met and married my father, a soldier in the Indian Army. Their courtship lasted all of 3 months. Their wedding day was 12th September 1939. Marry in haste, repent at leisure was not true for them. Their marriage, which was very happy, lasted for over 50 years.

I had always hoped to return to the land of my birth. The Rickshaw Man's words confirmed my own suspicions that I had left it rather late. However, in spite of advancing years and disablement, I managed to have a good time. The first week of our holiday was a guided tour organised by British Airways. We saw Delhi, Jaipur and Agra. It all went very well apart from an elephant ride in Jaipur. When I saw the steep narrow path taken by the elephants I told Hamish McTaggart, our rather improbably named Indian guide, that I would sit this one out. "You may never get another chance to see Amber Fort again," he argued reasonably. "Don't worry, you will be quite safe". It didn't feel safe. There were 4 of us in a wooden box. We were told not to touch the wooden bar in front of us as it might fly open. As the animal lurched heavily about, I clung desperately to the side, as much as my diminishing strength would allow, and prayed that the land that had seen my beginning would not witness my demise. Hamish was right, Amber Fort was very special. The views were stunning, the Hall of Victory with its sparkling mirror ceiling was very impressive. It is a splendid example of Rajput architecture. Best of all, the way down was by jeep.

The second week of our holiday was spent in Poona and Bombay. Our purpose here was to forge new links with an Indian family, a romantic alliance promises to extend the ties between the 2 countries even further. Poona was a very attractive town in the hills. I had been there before, when I was 2 but unfortunately couldn't remember any of it. Bombay was a huge metropolis with a population of 18 million people. We enjoyed the shopping and eating out but it was very hot and humid. A boat trip to Elephant Island exploring weird ancient sculpture made a pleasant diversion.

We noticed a funny smell in Bombay. There was a sinister reason for this. The Parsees believe that in every stage of life human beings can be of some use to someone. They do not bury or cremate their dead. The corpses are placed in an open tower on the walls. Vultures come and eat the flesh and the bones fall down to the ground. Apparently the vultures have not been able to keep up with demand recently and so an intense programme of breeding young vultures has begun.

Our holiday was extremely enjoyable. On our last day I had the swimming pool to myself. As I lay basking in the warm sunshine I thought I could get used to a lifestyle like this. Then I noticed them. Above me a circle of black birds was hovering, I decided it was time to get out of the water - old I might be, but I didn't feel ready for the vultures just yet!



NORTH ROAD LADIES CLUB

Our outing on 4th June to Whatley Vineyard and Herb Garden proved to be a most enjoyable evening. We were given a tour of the vineyard and herb garden, followed by a slide show illustrating the various stages of growing, harvesting and pressing the grapes in readiness for making into wine. We then assembled in the cellars for wine-tasting, after which we appreciated the delicious ploughman's supper, served with a salad containing unusual herbs and flowers, followed by a home-made pudding and coffee.

We are now preparing for another outing on 2nd July to Hunt's Court Garden, North Nibley and then on to The Black Horse Inn for supper.

Our programme until the end of 2001 is as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Monday, 3 rd September | "Humorous Talk" by Mrs Pat Ollerenshaw |
| Monday, 1 st October | Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust - talk and slides |
| Monday, 5 th November | Our 34 th Birthday Party at The Lamb Inn |
| Monday, 3 rd December | AGM, American Supper and Entertainment |



Our membership has risen to 39 this year, but visitors or new members are always most welcome to join us at any of the meetings. Our meetings are held in North Road Primary School, commencing at 7.30 pm.

June Rycroft / Secretary

IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

Hi folks! I'm Trixie and I'd like to tell you about my sister Lucy, who lives with me in this lovely countryside. I love her dearly, but she's a bit of a bully and soon pushes me aside if she thinks anyone is going to make a fuss of me. She rather thinks she's the cat's whiskers, but sometimes pushes her luck a bit too far and lands in the doghouse, like she did one day last summer.

For a week or so we'd been watching a squirrel leaping about in a huge walnut tree in the front paddock. No way could we climb into that tree and join in the fun, and even when old "bushy-tail" jumped down, he ran away so fast it was clear he didn't want to play.

Anyway, as it was a nice day, the humans were busy in the garden, Lucy was digging away in one of the herbaceous borders, and I was having a quiet snooze on the lawn, dreaming about that squirrel and imagining what it would feel like to be high up in a tree. When I opened my eyes, I noticed the old apple tree, with its trunk leaning at a really crazy angle, instead of being upright like the other trees. I remembered I'd seen the children "walk" up the trunk and, in no time at all, I was on my way upwards. Trouble was, I soon realised that for someone my size, the ground seemed a very long way off, so I decided to get down.

Meantime, Lucy had got fed up digging her hole and came to see what I was doing. Sometimes I can read her like a book - and she was thinking "Anything you can do, I can do better" and up the tree trunk she went, higher and higher until she realised she couldn't turn around and came down. She looked so sorry for herself, but luckily there was a ladder handy, so our mistress was able to lift her down. Just imagine if they had to call the fire brigade like they do when cats get stuck up a tree! I mean, who'd ever believe it could happen to a dog?



Lots of Love from Trixie

IRON ACTON CEVC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Good news for the school in that it is beginning to grow in numbers. Several children have joined this term and we are looking forward to a full reception intake of 12 children in September.

A highlight of this term has been the launch of our school website. Please log on for all the latest news and lots more: www.ironacton-pri.s-glos.sch.uk

As ever, all classes have been hard at work. Class 3 visited a mosque as part of their RE curriculum and the Year Six group spent an afternoon at Brimsham Green working in the science lab.



Class 2 visited the Waterways Museum in Gloucester to study the Vikings and also attended Brimsham Green to watch a play by the "Travelling Light" theatre company. Class 1 has been collecting postcards and looking at different localities in the UK. Later this term they will be visiting Weston as part of their project.

As part of further school reorganisation we have a new PE shed, an outdoor display board, new playground markings, a landscaped area and plans for a reading scheme centralised area in the hall. An extension to the playground may also be on the cards later in the year.

The Year Six children are about to go on summer camp to the Isle of Wight and I am sure they'll have a great time.

The school is a thriving, successful and lively part of the community. If you know of any families who might be interested in joining us, please encourage them to get in touch. They would be most welcome.

Karl Joyce / Head Teacher

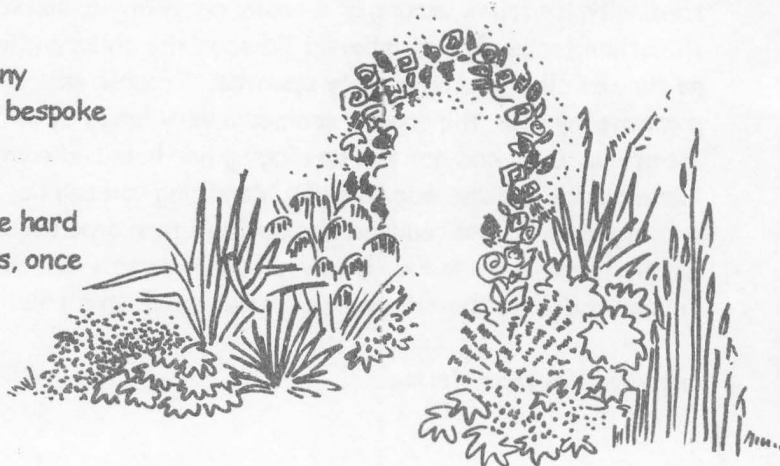
GARDEN TRAIL 2001

Sunday, 1 July saw an unusual amount of activity in the village as we enjoyed another Garden Trail in glorious sunshine. This year fewer gardens were open to the public which meant that visitors were able to spend more time admiring the skills of our keen gardeners - and asking awkward questions of those who had not been fully briefed by the experts! The church tower was open and proved a popular attraction for all those capable of staggering to the top - visibility was excellent and the view stupendous.

High quality refreshments were provided by many hardworking volunteers at The Old Malt House, bespoke sandwiches and homemade cakes enjoyed by all.

Grateful thanks to all the willing helpers and the hard working gardeners. The day was a great success, once again, raising £1200 for church funds.

Hazel Dron



IRON ACTON CRICKET CLUB

We are now halfway through this cricket season and it is, so far, a very successful one for the club as we have won almost as many games as we've lost!

The pitch at Yate is now recovering from the traumatic drainage works of last year and the new clubhouse facilities are superb. We are also lucky to have the use of Chris Perry's caravan for our home games - this makes it much easier for our dedicated team to prepare our justly famous teas.

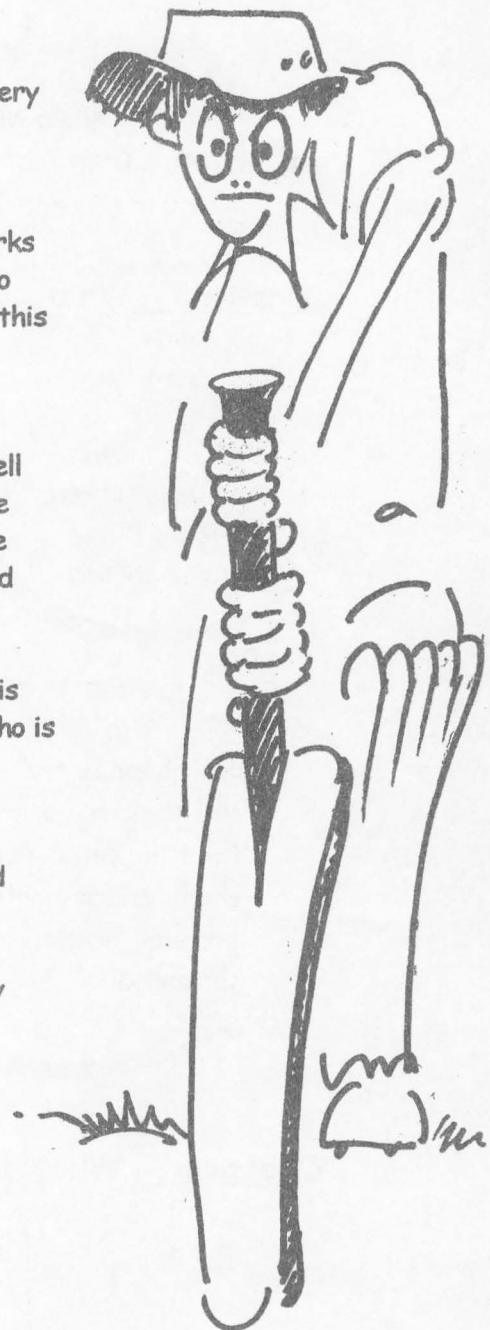
Under Captain Chris Bradley's leadership the team has performed well this year with one of our best results being the defeat of BAC in the first round of the Bristol and District KO Cup. Unfortunately, in the second round we came up against a very strong side from Hanham and they brought us down to earth with a bump!

We have managed to include a large number of new players so far this year, which is largely down to our new Team Manager, Chris Perry, who is none-the-less still keen to hear from even more new players (please contact him on 228798).

The Club's social side also continues to thrive with regular and varied social gatherings that often take place at The Lamb.

The junior coaching is on Thursday evenings (6-7 pm) on the Primary School field and is open to any children from the village from age 7.

Simon Cross / Chairman



REFUSE COLLECTION FOR THE AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY

Normal Day:

Monday, 27 August
Tuesday, 28 August
Wednesday, 29 August
Thursday, 30 August
Friday, 31 August

Revised Day:

Tuesday, 28 August
Wednesday, 29 August
Thursday, 30 August
Friday, 31 August
Saturday, 1 September

WINTER EDITION OF FOCAL POYNTZ

We're aiming to distribute this to the Parish on Saturday, 17th and Sunday, 18th November. The deadline for articles, both from organisations and individuals will be Monday, 8 October.

Can we add a plea to all organisations, especially those who haven't contributed anything to the last 2 issues (!!), to make a note of the date and to let us have an article. Focal Poyntz can only be an important instrument of parish communication if we have your support.

Village Small Talk!

Wise words from the wee folk at Iron Acton School

An amateur Iron Acton journalist recently had the privilege of interviewing the Year 2 pupils.....here are some of their thoughts.

Question: - What do you think Mummy does while you are at school?

Eats chocolate
and does school
work because
she is a teacher

She's lazy. She sits
around all day and
she works in a bank
and brings us lots of
chocolate money

My Mummy
paints and
she changes
beds in the
pub with
Daddy

On Monday and Tuesday
she goes to work and
then she can do anything
she likes! Play with my
brother, housewo-k, go
shopping....

Housework,
feeding the baby
and changing her
nappy.

She is a
doctor and
she does
housework

Question: - What does the Headmaster do in his office?

Lots of work

Works hard and helps
the secretary

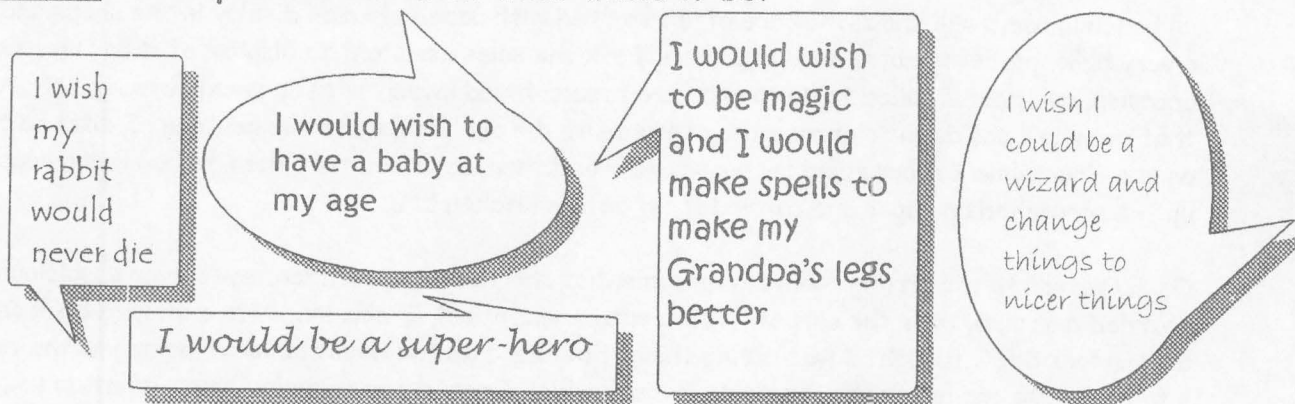
He sorts out what we
are going to do in
service and he rings
people to talk to
them

I don't know,
probably sorts
out things for
the children to
do and helps
the secretary

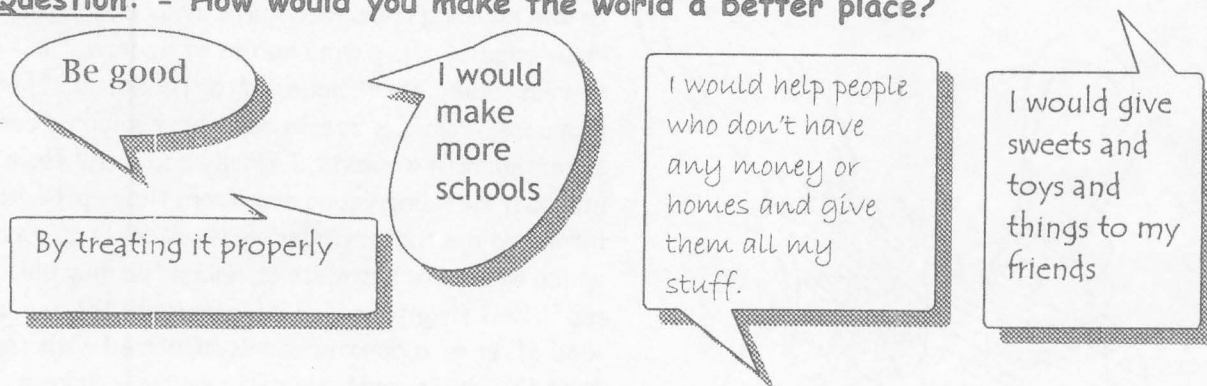
Well, I think he works
on his computer so he
can work things out.

I have no
idea!

Question: - If you had one wish what would it be?



Question: - How would you make the world a better place?



With thanks to Hannah 6, Alfie 7, Hannah 6, James 6, Nichola 6, Alistair 7, Richard 7 and Mr Joyce & Miss Godwin.

Lisa Hatherell, May 2001

CONGRATULATIONS

For several years now, Focal Poyntz has been printed by Andy Gazzard and Oldbury Deckers Youth Club. Andy was awarded the MBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. Also named in 2000 as one of the "Unsung Heroes of Gloucestershire", this award was extra special as he was nominated by the entire village of Oldbury on Severn (rather than by the more usual individual nomination).

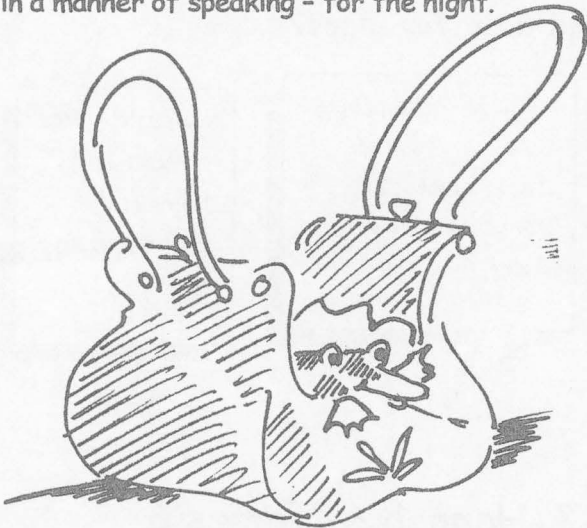
As well as running what amounts to a community printing service, Andy also runs the youth club (currently they have 70 children turning up every Friday), was responsible for converting a double decker into its mobile base (hence the youth club's name), is also chairman of the governors at the local school and church organist. He's a full time farmer and still only in his early forties.

Well done Andy!

THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT

Some weeks ago I decided that my handbag was inadequate for my needs and went off to buy a new one. As all handbag users will know, they are often stuffed with paper when on display in the shops and as this makes a very bulky parcel to carry around, I usually ask the sales assistant to dispose of it for me. On this occasion, however, I failed to do so and, as a result, found myself with an unexpected guest. After supper that evening I sat down to change the contents of the old handbag to the new one. I ditched the packaging on the floor while I rearranged my possessions and then, satisfied that the new bag was a success, scooped up the scrunched up paper and carried it off to the kitchen bin.

On my return to the sitting room I was somewhat shocked to see a lizard eyeing me suspiciously as it scuttled nervously over the carpet. The creature was about 13 cms long with a striped back and a salmon pink underside. I thought I was seeing things but there was no doubt about it, somehow the reptile had got into the house and my guess was inside the bag which I noted was made in China. What do you do with an alien lizard at 10.30 pm? After imprisoning it in a plastic box with a little dish of water, I rang the RSPCA who advised me to ask the zoo for advice. Not surprisingly, the zoo was not available at that time of night and, as I had a family party scheduled for the next day and needed my sleep, I had to put the lizard on ice - in a manner of speaking - for the night.



In the morning it seemed quite lively and, having no knowledge of the eating habits of lizards, I set about trying to find some expert help. After repeated efforts to get a response from the zoo, in between cooking, feeding and entertaining my guests, I finally had a call from a very pleasant sounding young man from the reptile house who informed me that my guest was probably an Asiatic Skink which was quite harmless although "he may give you a little nip if he's frightened". Unfortunately the zoo declined my kind offer of a donated skink so, armed with the knowledge that the only acceptable diet was live crickets, spiders or flies, and I was right out of flies that day, I continued my quest for a home for Soloman as he had become known. Did

You know there is a Reptile Rescue Service? Along with many other things that I didn't know about reptiles I discovered this fact. Suffice to say, Soloman eventually went to a welcoming home where I was assured there was an abundance of live crickets and that was the end of my brush with my illegal immigrant.

I later discovered that the packaging in which the lizard stowed away had been in transit in a container ship bound for Dublin out of Hong Kong for at least 2 months, after which the merchandise was distributed throughout the UK. The distributors were very concerned to hear about the stowaway. How the poor creature managed to survive without food or water is a mystery. So, next time you buy a handbag, give a thought to what might be lurking in its depths and make certain you leave the packaging in the shop!

Hazel Dron

NEWS OF MATTHEW TAYLOR

It's always nice to pass on good news and we've just heard that Matthew Taylor, youngest son of Bryan and Dusty, has been promoted from pilot to captain, flying Cessna F406's on Fishery Patrol duties. Matthew, who served for 8 years in the RAF as an operational radar operator, continued as a radar operator for a private company when he left the RAF some 3 years ago. He was subsequently appointed a pilot and obtains his captain's credentials at the end of July, having passed his exams and interviews at the beginning of July. Congratulations to Matthew!

IRON ACTON WI

This year, our speakers have reflected a diverse range of topics and interests. At the beginning of the year we started with reflexology, courtesy of Jane Giddings, who never fails to enlighten and entertain. We then had a superb talk and slides on the Bristol Blitz. Although it's part of our local, and fairly recent, history it was shocking to find out how little most of us knew. It was quite a sobering evening looking at the beautiful old buildings before and after the devastation and listening to recordings of residents recounting their lives and trying to imagine how frightening it was, and how close the war came to being lost. March saw us trying "Arabian dancing". Not a sight for the faint-hearted, but great fun and very relaxing. Pity this was the night that both our organisation and the line dancers had cars broken into (and pity, too, that no-one had bothered to let us know that this had happened the previous week to another group of hall users!). April saw us on another tangent when we were shown a series of beautiful underwater films, accompanied by a brilliantly fitting musical soundtrack. May saw us discussing the resolutions for our annual National Conference. This year we decided to try and press the government for the return of the good old "School Nurse" and that all people who are paid to work with the elderly or vulnerable people (at home or in care) should undergo some training.

Things went on a downward slant in June when our speaker got hauled off to talk to lawyers and in July when our planned trip to Algars Manor gardens was rained off with almost monsoon like conditions. We have a well deserved break in August and then come back with a vengeance in September with a talk from the Barn Owl Conservation Trust (rumour has it, that if we're lucky, our speaker will be bringing an owl). October is a talk by a Cotswold Tourist Guide on Wool and Stone - the history of the Cotswolds. Our annual birthday party takes place in November and our AGM, followed by mulled wine and mince pies, finishes the year in December.

On the fundraising front, a strawberries and wine evening should have taken place at Anna Tillotsons by the time Focal Poyntz is distributed and tentative plans are being made for a car boot sale in the Avenue Field in late September.

"The Parker Factor" has done it again and yet another innocent visiting the Garden Centre has been lured into venturing into one of our meetings. This time the lady in question had belonged to a WI before and my heart sank. You see, our meetings and members don't exactly fit into the stereotyped WI image and this can be quite a shock, both to the new member and to us. However, on this occasion, the lady is more than happy to return. So, if anyone else out there is feeling intrepid and adventurous why not give us a go? Second Monday of the month (not August) in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm. Just don't get confused and end up in the line dancing!

Finally, in December, we're all looking forward to a trip to Penhow Castle on the Friday before Christmas. It's been several years since we last visited and the lure of the mulled wine and the mince pies served during the course of one of their Christmas tours has proved irresistible. It should make a wonderful prelude to the festive season, a little oasis in the chaos that always manifests itself no matter how organised you try to be!

Lynne Blanchard / 228566

STOP PRESS:

The WI will be organising a car boot sale in the Avenue Field, weather permitting on Saturday, 22 September. Car boots will cost £5 each - a good way for organisations to make money from unwanted items. Further details from any WI member.



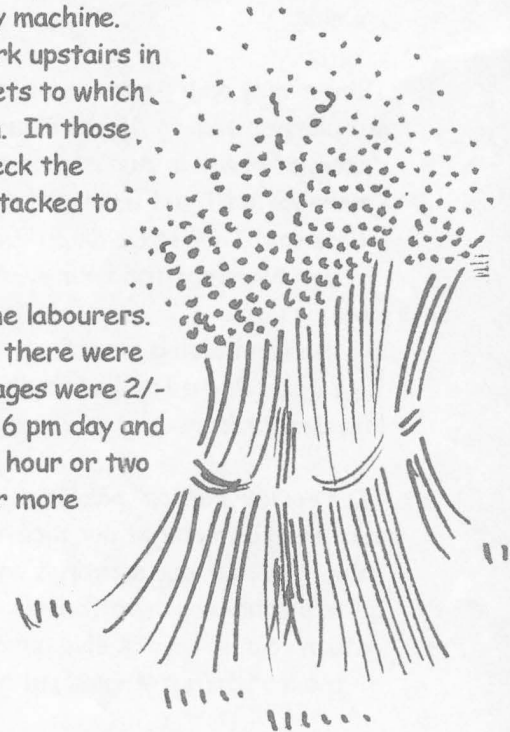
SCHOOL HOLIDAY WORK CIRCA 1947

In about 1947, when I was still at school, the long summer holidays were a time to find a holiday job and earn a bit of money. At the time, I was living at home in a village near Winchester and I found employment on a nearby farm, helping with the harvest. I think it was a bit different then from today.

When the crop was ripe, the first step was that a machine called a "binder" would cut the grain, tie it into bundles and spew these bundles out as it went round the field. The next step was that a team of labourers (including me) walked round the field, picking up the bundles by hand and standing them up, leaning against each other, in what, in Hampshire, were known as "stooks" - 6 bundles to a stook. This was tiring work and very scratchy on the arms. After the grain had dried in the stooks came the third step. This was bringing out a horse-drawn wagon and the labourers, using pitch forks, would pick up the bundles and pitch them on to the wagon where another labourer would arrange them, ears outwards, gradually piling them up. The horse had done it all before and needed no more than a shouted "giddy-up" to move from one stook on to the next. Unlike a tractor, there was no need for a driver. When the wagon was fully loaded, it was drawn back to the barn where there was a thresher and grain drier - a large and very noisy machine. The bundles would be unloaded and fed into the thresher. I used to work upstairs in the grain-drying barn where the dried grain would pour forth from outlets to which were attached sacks - each capable of holding 2 hundredweight of grain. In those days, I could just lift the 2 hundredweight sacks on to the scales to check the weight. The necks of the sacks were then tied by hand and they were stacked to await collection.

It was all thoroughly enjoyable work with great camaraderie between the labourers. We would each bring a thermos of tea or coffee and a packed lunch and there were occasional breaks during the long days for sustenance and a rest. My wages were 2/- (10p) an hour and, when the weather allowed, I could pack in an 8 am to 6 pm day and earn the princely sum of £1 a day! On a really good day, one could do an hour or two of overtime into the evening. I am sure that combine harvesters are far more efficient, but I am equally sure that harvesting is a lot less fun.

John Zorab



ACTON AID

Since the last edition of Focal Poyntz, Acton Aid members have continued to meet regularly at The Lamb, on the first Thursday of the month, at 8 o'clock.

Although the opportunities for formal fund-raising occasions have been limited so far this year, Acton Aid is still enthusiastically supporting village activities and groups.

The members were industrious in organising an evening's entertainment featuring "Chantilly Lace" held in the Parish Hall on Saturday, 24th March. This event helped to raise £800 towards "refreshing" the stock of books in the school library. The cheque was presented early in May and was featured in the local press.

Regrettably the postponement of the May Day event prevented the "burger burners" from performing. They have been practising and rehearsing hard and hope to give their greatest performance to date, manning their hotdog and burger stall at the rescheduled Village Fayre in September. There was an evening garden event on 30th June at the Old Farm House, Holly Hill (by kind permission of Tim and Jane Spare) with the proceeds

being shared by the Church and the Cricket Club. This event included "live" music and a seafood buffet. A very successful evening was enjoyed by all.

Events later in the year include another "garden event" currently being planned for 15th September to replenish Acton Aid funds and details for this event will be published nearer to the event.

The aim of Acton Aid as a registered charity is to assist in the improvement of village life. To achieve this, we meet on the first Thursday of the month, at 8 o'clock in The Lamb. The ability of Acton Aid to support village activities is dependent

primarily on the enthusiastic efforts of the active members in organising the successful fund-raising events. New members are always welcome. If you would like to join us just turn up at one of the meetings.

Colin Smith / Secretary

WE ARE SURVIVORS (For those born before 1940)

We were born before television, before penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, xerox, plastic, contact lenses, videos, frisbees and the Pill. We were before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ball point pens; before dishwashers, tumble driers, electric blankets, air conditioning, drip-dry clothes and before man walked on the moon.

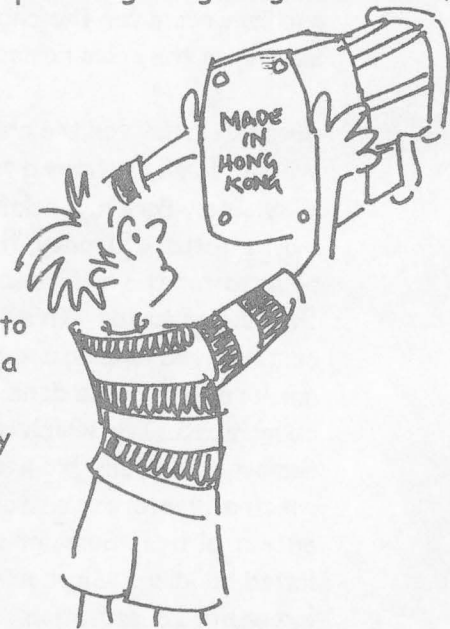
We got married first and then lived together (how quaint can you be!) We thought fast food was what you ate in Lent, a "Big Mac" was an oversized raincoat and "crumpet" we had for tea. We existed before house husbands, computer dating, dual careers, and when a meaningful relationship meant getting along with cousins, and "sheltered accommodation" was where you waited for a bus.

We were before day care centres, group homes and disposable nappies. We'd never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters, artificial hearts, word processors, yoghurt and young men wearing earrings. For us "timeshare" means togetherness, a "chip" was a piece of wood or fried potato, "hardware" meant nuts and bolts, and "software" wasn't a word.

Before 1940 "made in Japan" meant junk, the term "making out" referred to how you did in your exams, "stud" was something that fastened a collar to a shirt and "going all the way" meant staying on a double-decker to the bus depot. Pizzas, Macdonalds and instant coffee were unheard of. In our day cigarette smoking was "fashionable", "grass" was mown, "coke" was kept in the coal house, a "joint" was a piece of meat you had on Sundays and "pot" was something you cooked in. "Rock music" was a grandmother's lullaby, a "gay person" was the life and soul of the party and nothing more, while "aids" just meant beauty treatment or something for someone in trouble.

We, who were born before 1940, must be a hardy bunch when you think of the ways in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make. No wonder we are so confused and there is a generation gap today BUT By the grace of God we have survived Alleluia!!

Our thanks to CTT News for allowing to print the above which was printed in their village magazine (CTT stands for Cromhall, Tortworth and Tytherington)



A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF TWO IRON ACTON CHURCH TRUST FUNDS

The church of St James the Less and its surrounds has, over the past few years, had the appearance of a building site. The building of the Marshall Room, with services through the churchyard, the collapsed pinnacle in 1997, the new heating system, the re-ordering of the west end, repairs to the 14th century tower ceiling and redecorating have all led to restricted use of the church at times. But this is not the only time that the church has seen such extensive work.

A plaque on the north wall above the porch commemorates the reopening of the church in 1878 after much needed and necessary refurbishment. A gallery over the north side of the aisle and extending under the tower with an appalling external entrance was removed. The choir was extensively restored with many interesting features brought to light and the Jacobean pulpit was moved from the south side of the aisle to the north side. Full details are set out in the short guide to the church and in the Vestry book. There are photographs available in the church of "before" and "after".

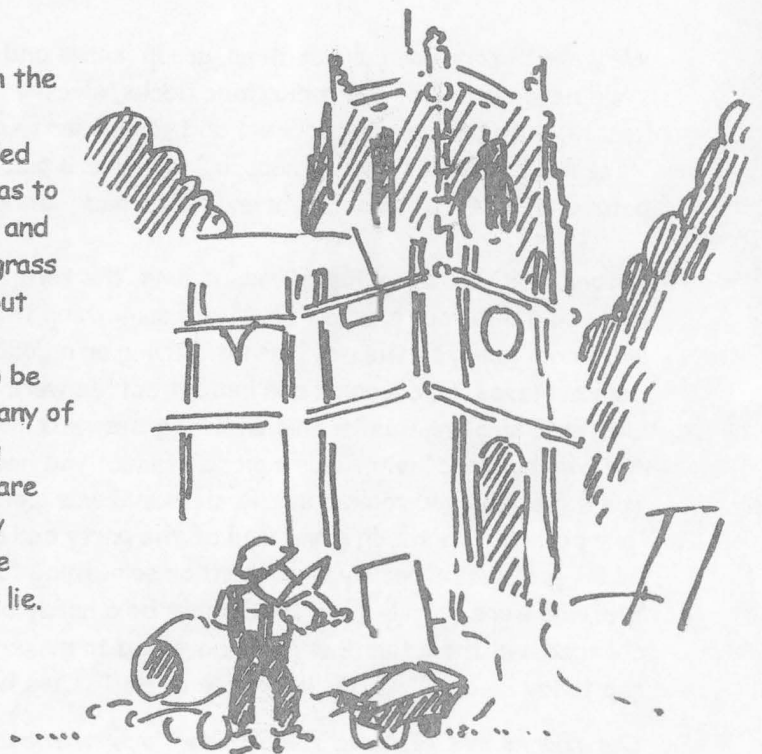
Perhaps one of the more interesting of the modern developments is the Marshall Room. Towards the end of the 19th Century Mrs Harriet Marshall acquired what are known as Church Cottage and Church House. Church House was described in deeds of that time as a former beerhouse and had apparently been called the "Live and Let Live". The barn, which has become the Marshall Room was described in 1870 or thereabouts as a barn "now in ruins". The 18th century print on the cover of the church history shows the east border of the churchyard was right against the church and there is a passage alongside the beerhouse and what looks like a sign on the wall.

By the time that Mrs Marshall became involved, the churchyard would have been extended up to Church House. Among the tenants of Church House were members of the Wollen family whose graves are immediately adjacent to the east wall of the churchyard. Part of the premises was used as a reading room and for the Sunday School and, in more recent times, the Girl Guides had use for their meetings. Part of the cellars of the pub which were under the drive still exist and are in the churchyard; a depression can be seen between two lots of graves where the cellar is.

Mrs Marshall put the property she acquired in trust for the Church and this Trust still exists. Although the houses have been sold, the fund has been put into the building of the Marshall Room as an ancillary room for the church. A memorial to Mrs Marshall can be found on the stone cross on the path leading to the room named after her.

Another Trust for the church is connected with the Woolen family referred to above. In 1992 Miss Cicely Parkin, a relative of the Woolens, died leaving a sum of money, the interest on which was to be used for the maintenance of the churchyard and the Wollen tombs. This fund has provided for grass cutting, tree lopping and general maintenance, but much remains to be done to the back of the churchyard. Ivy, which is a menace, will have to be removed carefully from all tombs and graves, many of which still interest visitors and families seeking ancestral ties. Some of the table tombs which are listed buildings will require careful and probably expensive conservation. A stone over one of the Woolen graves marks where Miss Parkin's ashes lie.

Howard Aplin



THE FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

Another term draws to an end and the Friends of Iron Acton School Fund-raising Committee gets to put their feet up for the summer holiday.

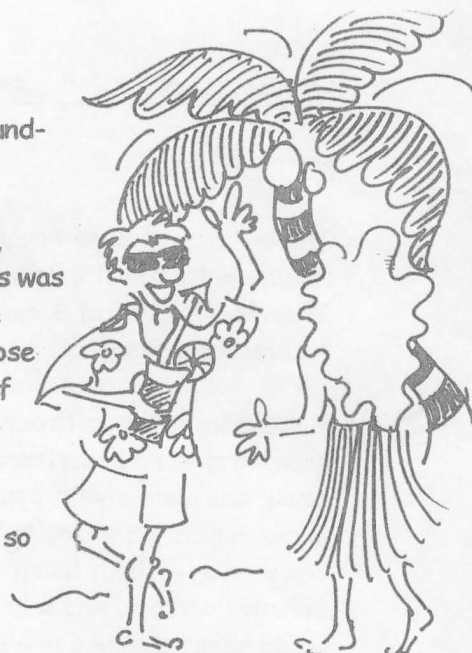
This year, instead of a Summer Fayre, we had a Caribbean Beach Party, which was a great success, the sun shone, the support from the families was excellent and all had fun. This term we also held a cake and plant sale which was also well supported, and a special thanks to Jill Redfearn whose continual supply of plants over the years, not to mention the donation of monies from the plants that she sells outside her house, have helped to keep our library well stocked.

A large "thank you" also goes to Acton Aid. Who would've thought that so much fun could be had whilst raising money. Chantilly Lace was a huge success and we are very grateful for the £800 raised.

We have one event left for this year and this will be held on Saturday, 21st July - our leavers' disco. We would also like to take this opportunity to invite the new reception children. If anyone would like to come, tickets are available from the school or on the night.

Finally, we would like to wish all of this year's leavers well and to say a big "thank you" to Trish Collier who is leaving the Committee this July - your home cooking will be sadly missed!

Tracey Byrne / Friends' Secretary



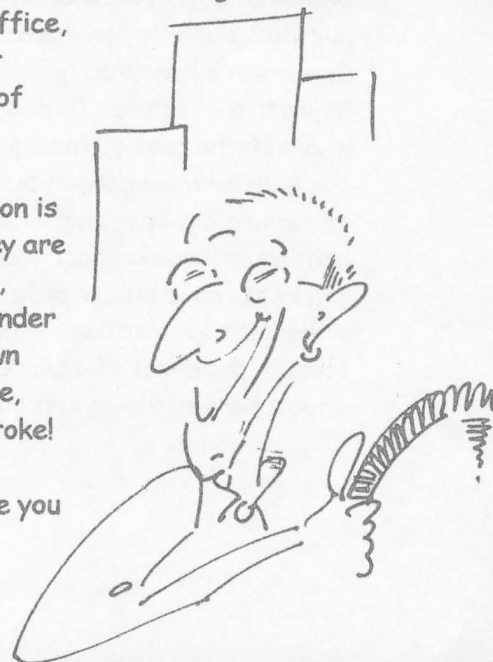
LETTER FROM BASINGSTOKE - OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT WRITES

Travelling from London to Southampton on the M3, Basingstoke appears, out of the mists of time, like an oasis in a sea of green hills. Three tall office blocks reach for the sky, a view similar to that of Miami, but there "ain't no beach".

Access to this metropolis is now barred by recently erected traffic lights, constantly changing colours from red to green, then to amber, and eventually back to green, if nothing else a splash of colour in this otherwise bland landscape. The planning fathers in their wisdom circa 1960's decided it would be amusing if the main road system around the town actually went around the town. Going around in a the traveller catches glimpses of where they want to get to; hotel, office, factory, or even friends, but with no indication of how the hell to get there. London taxi drivers have been known to refuse the challenge of Basingstoke, even at £110 for cash, from Heathrow Airport.

The amusement of the planners continues to this day - no road junction is allowed unless formed by a roundabout, with conservation in mind they are all mini, growing at the perpetual rate of one per month, every month, every year - the latest count is 86 and they're still appearing. No wonder the local population refers to the place as "Donut City" as looking down from an aeroplane it looks just like donuts cooking. Not to be outdone, foreign visitors have been known to tell that they've been to Boringstoke!

All is not lost as, in my next letter from this strange place, I will give you an itinerary for a holiday centred on Basingstoke.



National News

The build-up of Euro Army troops continues to amass in the east of Germany on their way to quell the latest conflict in the Balkan region. Unfortunately General Sir Richard Branson, who heads up the Transport Logistical Group, said that the British contingent might be a little late getting there due to technical problems.

A spokesman for Railtrack stated that, owing to an extraordinary influx of seagulls in the Ashford area, they were experiencing unusually high levels of signal failure. He went on to explain that the cause was excessive droppings on the signalling equipment approaching the Euro-tunnel. General Branson went on to say that a week's delay may be on the cards but has told his European counterparts to carry on without him if the need arises. According to a Downing Street spokesman, Prime Minister, Johnny Prescott, was said privately to be quite annoyed at the situation, saying that nothing like this would have happened in his day as Transport Minister and he was taking steps to bring matters to an expeditious conclusion.

International News

President Bush has declared a new national holiday to be inaugurated on the strength that he has just been re-elected for a third term. His previous popularity as leader of the USA has enabled him to amend the Constitution to allow any future president to hold the office for an infinite number of terms. He has said that if the nation sticks with him and his family, then he will declare an extra day's holiday for every further 2 terms he holds, and is quoted as saying that he thought his people would see at least an extra week before he finally hangs up his boots.

On the Australian Republic issue, it was announced in Canberra yesterday, that the recent national referendum has shown that the vast majority wished to return to being ruled by a monarchy. Adverts for the King and Queen vacancies are being placed in all the major national newspapers, the New York Times and on the internet. The outgoing Prime Minister said that no stone would be left unturned to find the right couple. He said that, at this early stage, he has not even ruled himself out and that even some peripheral members of the British Royal Family have been sounded out. He refused to be drawn on revealing any particular names, but word on the street has it that Andrew and Fergie might be interested in "giving it a go".

Sports News

Geoffrey Boycott has been recalled to open the England batting for the final test, as the national team has lost complete confidence in the current series against Bolivia. He said that both he and David Gower were honoured in being given the opportunity to represent the nation once again. A modest Boycott said that at 70 and 53 respectively, they were both confident of scoring more runs than the whole of the rest of the squad put together. Runners would be granted for each by kind permission of the Bolivian management but the offer was hastily dismissed. Both stated that they had no intention of running between the wickets as boundaries only would be their simple objective. Gower said that neither of them was daunted by the prospect of playing against the leaders of Division 4 of the World Cricket League but, if picked for the forthcoming return tour, would leap at the chance as he had often played at high altitude. However, cricket lovers back home must be prepared to sympathise with the team in the event of a whitewash, as the locals will have a definite home advantage in the rarified atmosphere of the mountainous pitches.

The England Football Team has been assembling for the latest Home Nations Championship. Their recently appointed Nigerian coach, Ntbg Ufunda, the seventeenth in the last eight years, was hopeful that they would finish somewhere in the top four and was not at all disappointed that England had been banned from entering both the European Championship and the World Cup Tournament due to such poor ratings over the last decade. David Beckham, the ongoing captain, now on £150,000 a day, said, with due respect, he couldn't care less about the team's results as he was paying loss bonuses to fellow players out of a trust fund set up by him and his wife.

The fast approaching rugby season should be the most exciting for many years according to inside sources. Andorra has at last been invited to join the new 25 Nations Championship having complained that they had been purposely overlooked for several years, despite having beaten England twice, Scotland once, Greece three times, drawn six of their seven outings against Denmark, and even got to within 20 points of Wales last season.

This will, of course, mean that the Premiership League Clubs will have to draw lots to see who their other two opponents will be during the hectic months ahead. All matches to be played on a strict home and away basis with some results having to be concluded on the toss of a coin in the event of any club not managing to field a full side.

Provincial league games and European club matches would be played every other week, starting in May and finishing in August. Adverse weather conditions such as too much heat or too much rain might mean that any postponements would have to be completed during the wee small hours of any weekday that did not have a "W" in it.

The England camp has vehemently denied rumours that they were dropping the services of their latest sponsor, Revlon, because the players were finding that their nail varnish was chipping badly, especially in the second row.

Weather Forecastr

The Met Office still say that global warming has nothing to do with some of our dried up reservoirs in various parts of the country being under four feet of snow during the month of August.

However, the first part of September should see temperatures of about 32 °C, particularly south of Birmingham. The north of England and most parts of Scotland will enjoy a respite from the recent monsoon like weather conditions with temperatures between 20 °C and 24 °C, although gale force winds from both the North Sea and the Atlantic will sweep across the land, converging on Stirling on Wednesday afternoon. Drivers in the area are being warned to use dipped headlights if it gets too cloudy.

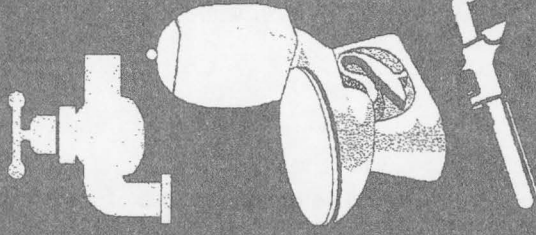


"The long range forecast is a bit difficult to predict at the moment", said someone at the Met Office today, "as we are waiting for Michael Fish to come back from holiday to sort out the cones".

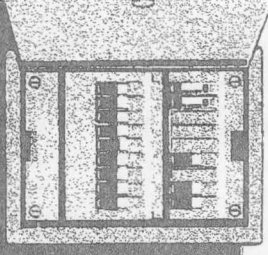
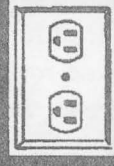
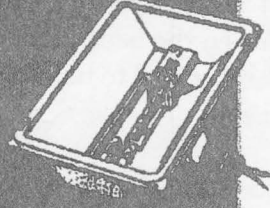
And that, is the latest news for the 9th of September
..... 2010

PLUMBING & ELECTRICAL

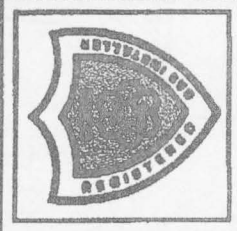
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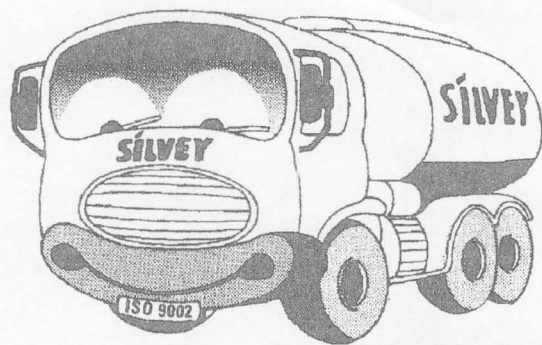
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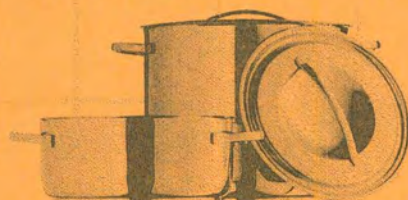
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