

Focal Point



A Magazine for Iron Actors

FOCAL POYNTZ INFORMATION:

Your Focal Poyntz Team is:

Lionel Alsop
228400

Lynne Blanchard
228566

Maureen Blake
294381

Hazel Dron
228509

Roy Hubbard
228356

Barrie & Rona Wright
228247

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Elizabeth Edwards
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John Griffen
Chris Heal

Roy Hubbard
Ashley Mee
Sue Shepherd
The Smith Family
Laura Walters
Pete Wedgewood
Mike Wheeler
Barrie & Rona Wright

ARTICLES:

If you've got any news or articles that you think we'd like to receive please contact any of the people on the numbers given above. We would love to hear from you!

ADVERTISING:

If you would like to place an advert in future issues please contact Barrie Wright, our advertising "whiz", on 228247 (£20 for a full page and £10 for a half page - invoices can be provided).

ARTWORK:

We are very grateful to Maureen Blake for some more of her very special drawings to complement the articles.

PRINTING:

As always, our printing has been undertaken by Oldbury Deckers Youth Club and we say a big "Thank You" to them.

COVER:

We would like to a sincere "Thank You" to Marilyn Wright for our beautiful cover showing Acton Court.

Summer

ISSUE No: 62

Oh! To be in Iron Acton now that Summer's here. Those famous words were composed in a time when each season was recognised for what it was, not, as is now, when every quarter seems to have flattened out and gone topsy turvy. Never mind, remember March, we could all do with a June to September being somewhat similar. Of course, overnight only, rain for gardeners is a prerequisite.

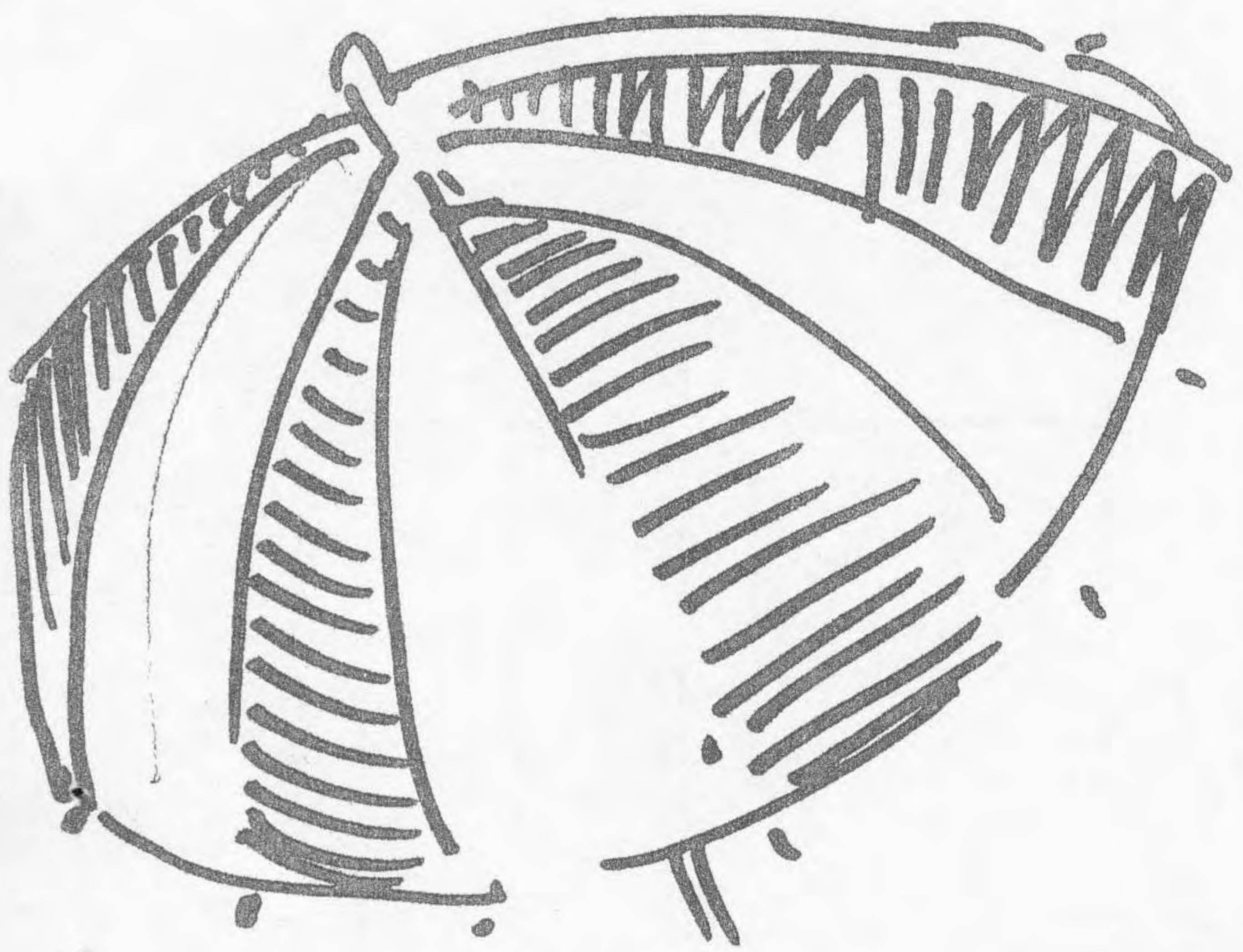
However, do not let these thoughts disturb your gardening or holiday plans, go with the names of the months on your calendar and have a great time.

Talking about thoughts, what does anyone think about keeping our rural countryside as green as possible and maintaining our ancient Parish environment? How do you feel about the possibility of a mini concrete jungle in our midst, taking us towards a suburb of Yate Town and thereby creating an irretrievable loss of our village community.

Please write in to Focal Poyntz and we will publish the most interesting replies.

Good luck to all school church and other organisations holding their summer fund raising activities with good weather shining down on you all.

Other new ideas, letters, articles and personal help would be much appreciated in order to keep this simple publication as a purely local magazine to be enjoyed by us all.



HORTICULTURAL SHOW

Yes, the Show is fast approaching and the date **6 September 2003** should be in every Iron Acton gardeners' diary!

We have decided to follow the same format as last year - except this year we will be accepting entries of non-perishable items on Friday, 5 September, between 4.30 pm and 6.30 pm at the Parish Hall. Hopefully this will alleviate the rush of entries we had during the later part of the morning last time.

As you will see from the schedule included in this edition of Focal Poyntz (thank you FP Team), we have added a few extra classes and taken away a few that were not so well entered.

We would be very grateful if all the trophy winners would be kind enough to return their trophy to either Meryl, Paula or Rona by the end of July.

The Horticultural Committee looks forward to seeing you all on the day with your nurtured and well-cared for entries. "May the best gardener win"!!!

If you have any queries about the Show please feel free to call

Meryl Cook (228405)

Paula Evans (228419)

Ann Aplin (228243)

June Schofield (228760)

Rona Wright (228247)

Paula Evans - On Behalf of the Horticultural Show Committee

HAVE YOU GOT A
CUP OR ROSE BOWL
ANYWHERE?



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE UNITARY AUTHORITY ELECTIONS

At the elections held on 1 May 2003 for the South Gloucestershire Unitary Authority, **Howard Gawler** became the representative for the Laddenbrook Ward (this covers Bagstone, Iron Acton, Latteridge, Rangerworthy and Wickwar).

Howard has lived in the parish of Iron Acton for the last 30 years and, out of the 3 candidates who stood for election, was the only one who actually lives within Laddenbrook Ward.

If anyone needs to talk to Howard about any issues you can ring him on 228510 or write to him at:
Shale Cottage, Wotton Road, Iron Acton, Bristol, BS37 9XE

Stop Press!

Howard has also become Chairman of the Public Rights of Way Committee for South Glos Council.

BRISTOL SPEAKERS CLUB - A CLUB WITH A DIFFERENCE

Ways to boost your confidence when speaking in public

(We include this item as we already have one parishioner who belongs to this organisation and perhaps there are more of you out there who would also like to join)

The thought of having to stand up and speak in front of others is, for most of us, a nerve racking experience. Whether we are asked to give a vote of thanks, speak at a social gathering or make a formal presentation then most of us will avoid this if we possibly can.



Bristol Speakers Club is an interest group with a difference. Members have the opportunity, on a fortnightly basis, to practise and participate in a range of speaking activities in front of like minded people. Through the regularity of speaking, with helpful feedback in a supportive environment, they find this improves their confidence and capability. At the same time the aim is to have an entertaining evening. This is best illustrated by members' personal comments:

"I had been asked to be the best man at my friend's wedding. Bristol Speakers Club has enabled me to overcome my nerves and has given me the chance to practise a best man speech before the event."

I do voluntary work for a charity and get involved in fund raising. The club has given me the confidence and techniques to help me promote the charity in the best possible way."

"I knew that if I was to get the job I wanted then at the interview I was likely to be asked to make a presentation. Speakers Club has helped me to overcome my fears and anxieties through practising public speaking in a supportive environment. I was encouraged to follow a discipline and received helpful feedback throughout. I am pleased to report that I did get the job I wanted."

From September to April the Club meets on alternative Monday evenings at BAWA Health and Leisure Centre in Southmead Road, Filton. Our new season starts on 8 September 2003.

Newcomers are always welcome and can, without commitment, come and sample what we do.

For more information please telephone:

John Hart on 0117 924 7595 / Keith Rogers on 01454 414737 / Eddie Harding on 0117 950 7407

NORTH ROAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Curriculum

- * Class 3 had visits from Zebra Finches, a Harris Hawk and a hot air balloon as part of their work
- * Class 1 visited the Zoo and Tortworth Garden Centre.
- * The Learning through Innovation Project Training has had a real impact on the use of ICT across the curriculum for Classes 2 and 3.
- * North Road School featured in a display on the History of Local Schools at the Yate Heritage Centre.
- * All the children were given a book The Heart of the Parish. Bob Sheppard presented the books on behalf of Iron Acton Parish Council.
- * Class I (and others) gave a display of Country Dancing at Iron Acton's May Day Celebration.
- * The Chef at Tortworth Court and 2 fitness experts have worked with Classes 3 and 4. These have been really useful sessions.
- * Year 6 organised a Plant Sale and raised enough money to visit Drayton Manor.
- * The 2 days with the Life Skills Bus were of great value. The teacher was excellent with all age groups.
- * The Skipping Team Display was wonderful - the playground is full of skipping ropes!
- * "Wear Red" Mufti Day raised £66.65 for the British Heart Foundation.
- * Giovanna Fuoli, our Italian teacher, continues to teach Italian to all pupils.

Music

- * We continue to receive teaching in brass, violins and harmonica. the Harmonica Group performed at the Colston Hall on Friday, 27 June.

Sport

- * We had a good gymnastics display from the King Edmunds Gym Club.
- * Pupils have participated in 2 netball tournaments, a football tournament (where we scored 19 goals in the earlier 3 rounds and then lost in the final) and a cricket tournament (where we won all 3 games but didn't have enough points to go through to the next round in Cheltenham). Our thanks to Mr Kitzinger for running the Cricket Club.
- * 3 pupils are to swim for South Gloucestershire in a Western Counties Gala.



Camp Week

- * We enjoyed a very good Year 6 camp week in Pembrokeshire with Rangeworthy, Tortworth and St Andrew's schools.

School Council

- * The School Council organised an excellent Easter Egg Treasure Hunt.

Students

- * We have had one Final Practice Student in Class 1 and three Year 2 Students in Class 4. They have all made really useful contributions to the school.

Friends of the School

- * The Friends of the School Duck Race proved to be a good fund raising event.
- * A fashion show and dance display from Red (Brimsham Green School) raised a considerable amount for the Friends of the School.

Current Initiatives

- * We are hoping to submit our application for an Active Mark before the end of term.
- * Site visits with Axa Sun Life and HSBC have arranged for a mural to be painted onto the wall next to the ramp. We anticipate this work will be carried out during the last week of term.



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

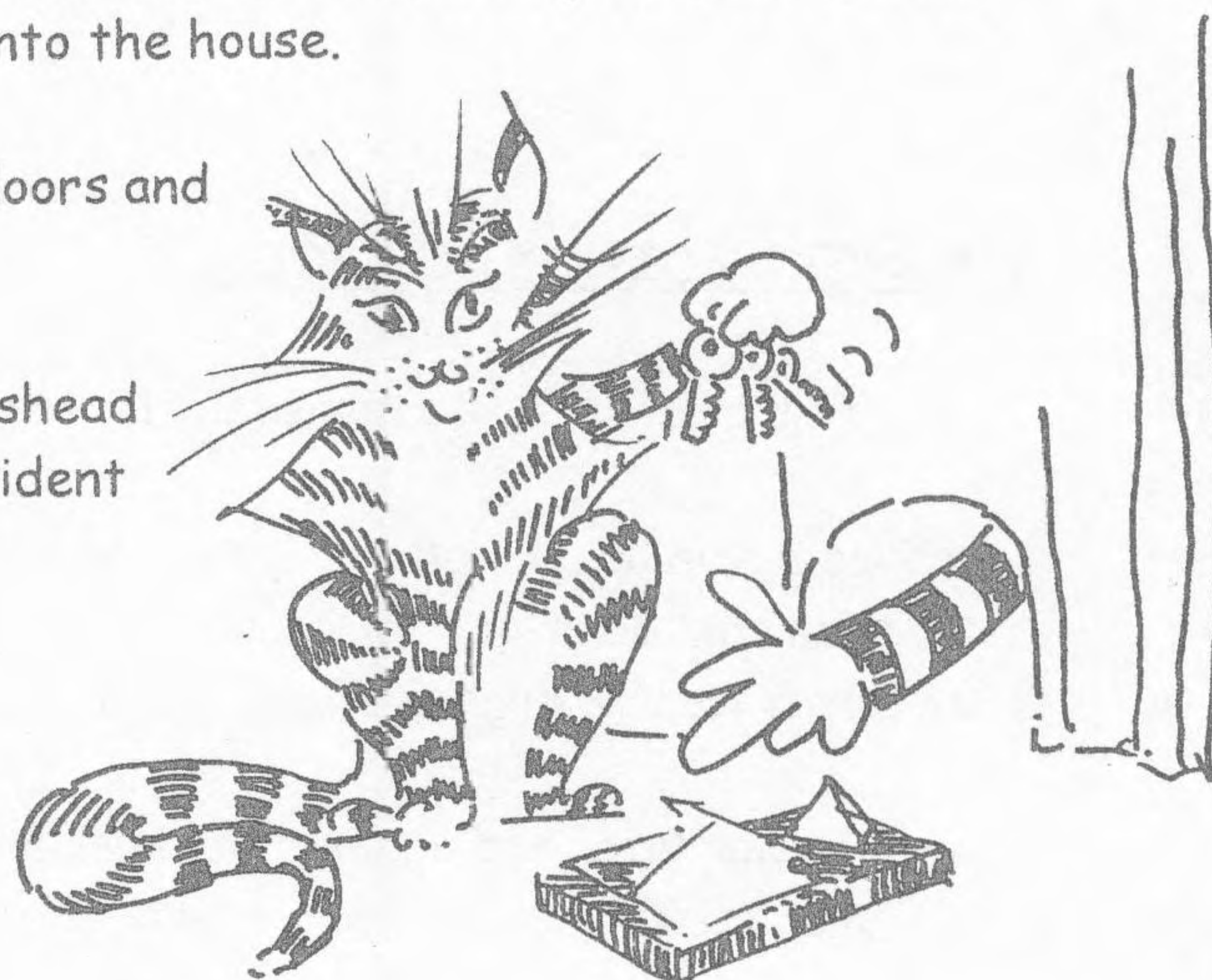
Crime stats for Laden Brook over the period 1 April to 15 May show a total of 7 crimes, 2 assaults and 5 burglaries. Not a huge number but one is too many!

These stats do not list "cold callers". This type of crime is on the increase and everyone should avoid doing business with these people and on no account let them into the house.

At this time of year it is particularly important not to leave doors and windows open if they are not within your sight.

Do remember to ring 999 if a crime is being committed, Portishead Police Headquarters on 01275 818181 to report an unusual incident or Crime Stoppers on 0800 555111.

Peter Wedgwood / Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator



IRON ACTON PARISH COUNCIL

In the May elections 2 Parish Councillors retired. Carolyn Baker and Jackie Ross worked tirelessly throughout their time as Councillors in order to protect the interests of Parishioners. We are sure that the Parish as a whole wishes to thank them for their hard work and dedication.

As a result of the retirements, a vacancy arose in each ward of the parish. To fill the Iron Acton West Ward vacancy Rona Wright has been co-opted as a Parish Councillor. Rona is a well known person in the parish and involved in many other organisations such as Focal Poyntz and the Actonians. We would like to welcome Rona into her new role.

There remains a vacancy for a Parish Councillor in the Iron Acton East Ward. If anyone is interested in filling this vacancy please contact the Clerk, Rachel Weldrake, (on 01454 321362) before 17 August. Basically you need to have an interest in the Parish, be able to commit yourself to 12 meetings a year and be prepared to take an active interest in all Parish issues.

List of Iron Acton Parish Councillors

		<u>Tel</u>	<u>Fax</u>
<u>East Ward</u>			
Bob Sheppard	200 North Road, Yate, BS37 7LQ	228515	228188
Ann Aplin	The Clove Hitch, High Street, Iron Acton, BS37 9UG	228243	
Bob Lomas	185 North Road, Yate, BS37 7PT	228327	

West Ward

Paula Evans	Gorlan, High Street, Iron Acton, BS37 9UH	228419	
Dave Taylor	26 Chilwood Close, Iron Acton, BS37 9US	228714	
Peter Wedgewood	Audley, The Green, Iron Acton, BS37 9TQ	228532	
Peter Bellis	1 Fairview Terrace, The Green, Iron Acton, BS37 9TQ	228065	
Rona Wright	Eynsford Cottage, Wotton Road, Iron Acton, BS37 9UZ	228247	

Clerk to Iron Acton Parish Council

Rachel Weldrake	5 The Brake, Brimsham Park, Yate, BS37 7QW	321362	327401
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THE NEXT EDITION OF FOCAL POYNTZ

Is due to be delivered to homes in the parish on or before Sunday, 24 November.

Could we put in a small plea to organisations to submit their items by the date we suggest - items delivered later than this don't get to Maureen for drawings to accompany them in the finished magazine. This means that for at least 2 organisations it's the same couple of drawings time after time after time.

PS No slur intended against the Parish Council - we realise there isn't a drawing on this page but we suspect that even Maureen would be hard pressed to do a "relevant" drawing!!!

FOOTPATHS IN IRON ACTON

South Gloucestershire Council is promoting a number of "Parish Trails" by publishing a guide booklet which should be available at the end of this year or early next. The trails are designed to use existing footpaths and, wherever possible, be easily accessible to less agile walkers who still wish to enjoy a country walk.

The Parish Council is working with South Glos on our Parish Trail. A circular route has been chosen and the next stage is to contact various landowners where the existing stiles or gates are a problem to walkers. South Glos has a range of items such as self closing kissing gates which they are able to install if the landowner agrees. One item, in particular, which is very useful is known as a Bristol Gate. This is a full width 5 bar gate which can be locked to prevent animals escaping or unwanted visitors using vehicles. However, set within the gate itself is a self closing pedestrian only gate so that the footpath can still be used.

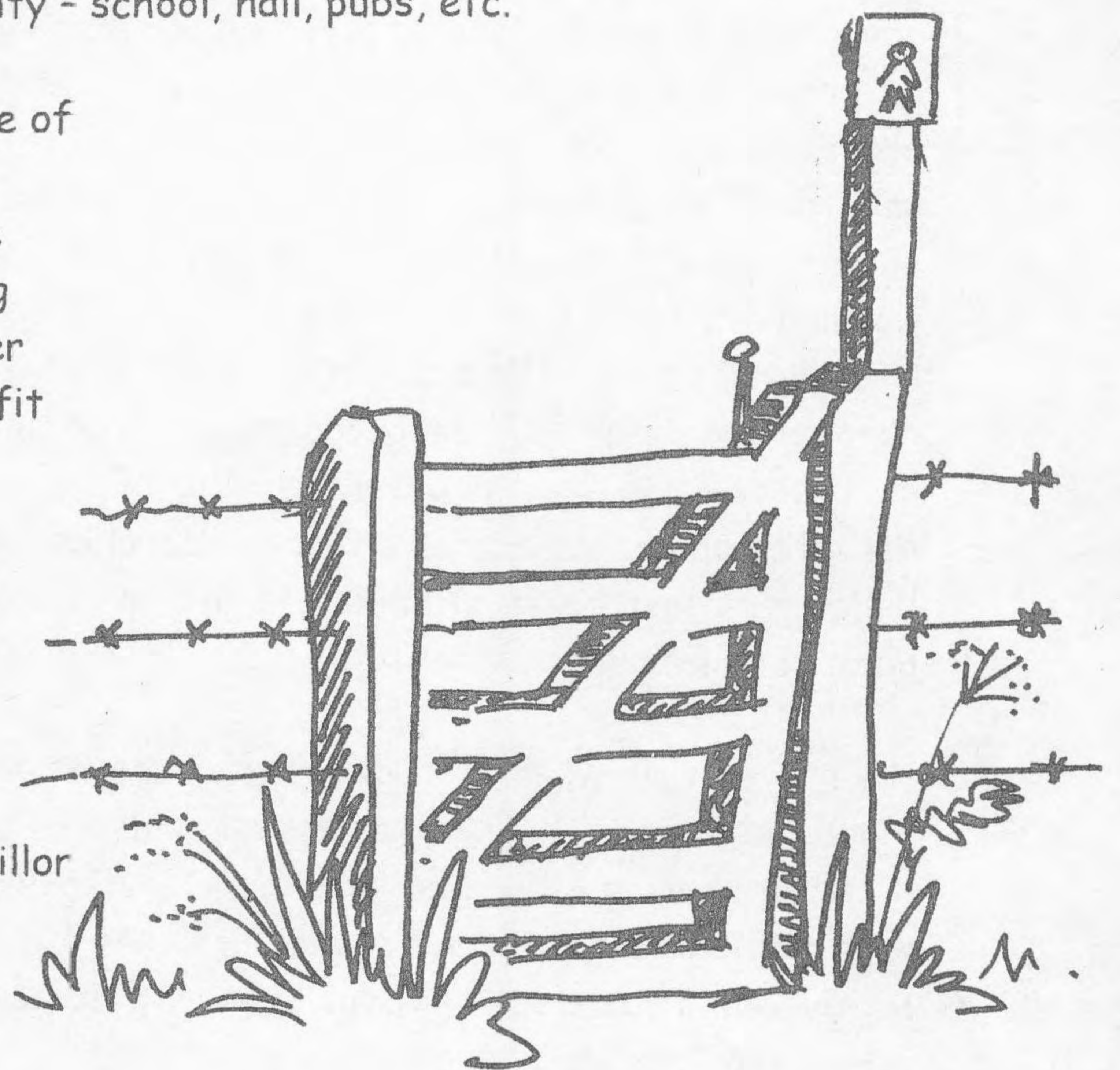
The Parish Trail will be good for walkers in Iron Acton and also good for Iron Acton itself as in the guide we can draw attention to those amenities in our locality - school, hall, pubs, etc.

As for footpaths in general we still have a programme of checking footpaths and, as resources allow, clearing overgrown ones. It is really the responsibility of the landowner to keep the paths clear, including removing overgrowth and maintaining stiles but we would rather work together with the landowners and for the benefit of the Parish.

If you are reading this and have a footpath on your land and would like to discuss any aspect of the footpath with us we would be pleased to hear from you and help in any way we can.

Please contact Peter Bellis or any other Parish Councillor or our clerk to discuss.

Peter Bellis



GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT GROWING OLD

- * Growing old is mandatory - growing up is optional.
- * Forget the health food - I need all the preservation I can get.
- * When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do while you're down there.
- * You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.
- * It's frustrating, when you know all the answers, but nobody bothers to ask you the question.
- * Time may be a great healer, but it's a lousy beautician.

KELLY'S COTTAGE

I made my way to Iron Acton to view yet another property. Was this one going to be home at last? I was living with Mum in Hambrook so knew the area quite well but it was time for a home of my own, well sort of, a home for me and my partner, Andy, to share. That property was, yet again, crossed off the list. I made my way home, taking a detour through the pretty village that wasn't to be home. Suddenly, a "For Sale" sign appeared. Excitedly I stopped the car and looked up at the slightly tattered looking cottage, or cottages as I first thought. Which one was for sale? Two front doors, was it the left or the right? I wasn't fussy, I liked the look of both. I rang the agent and arranged a viewing for the next day. They advised me it wasn't two cottages, it was one, even better. The agent showed me around, another family also attended. "It's creating much interest" the agent said (don't they always). I ran around the house, this one has got potential I thought. I rang Andy, he was working in Bristol that day, fate obviously! He loved it (well liked it) too. The prospect of months of renovations didn't fill him with as much excitement as me but he could see the potential. Our offer was accepted and after many months of searches, listed building officer visits and builders quotes it became ours on 14 February, Valentine's Day, 1997.

We stayed with Mum throughout the renovations (good old Mum). This was to test all of us, it's very difficult sharing a two bedroom lodge whilst dealing with difficult builders and council officers but we survived and came out of it fairly unscathed. Mum asked how long we intended to stay with her. "Oh, only a couple of months" I said naively.

The work didn't go exactly to plan (does it ever?) and I would often visit and find the builders shoulder deep in trenches chipping away at the buried stone. A digger came and took away 50 tonnes of earth to expose the buried back wall of the cottage. Andy and I helped move tonnes of stone into the many, many skips. Friends and family would visit and shake their heads "Haven't you taken on a bit much?" "It will look lovely one day, won't it?"

Builders, plumbers, carpenters came and went, so did the money! We were lucky that the Dyers, who owned it previously, had left most of the original features intact. Shutters, flagstone floors, we were determined that the original character should be retained. After many months of council visits, builder disputes, missing workmen followed. "When will it be finished?" I'd ask. "Two weeks" was their standard reply. Floors came up and ceilings came down, windows were created at the back, light at last!! Much garden planning was done and every weekend we would dig and barrow, trying to create a lovely garden.

After months of blood, sweat and tears the day finally came to move in. 14 February - exactly one year later.



Everybody was so friendly; parties and barbeques galore. Many people in the village would ask where we lived and I'd reply "Vine Cottage". "Oh, I don't know that one, what road is it in?" "Wotton Road" I'd reply "You know, the old petrol station". "Oh, you mean KELLY'S Cottage". Kelly was the elderly man who lived here before. We'd met his nephew, Ivor. The Dyers had owned the cottage some 70 years and Ivor was born here. The cottage had been a petrol station until the seventies. Thanks to Ivor we have copies of photographs taken back then when people would drive through the bustling village and stop to fill up. We also found an old sign in the garage "Vine Cottage - Car for hire. Cycle Repairs" which we proudly displayed in one of the rooms.

So, was it worth all the hard work? Of course it was, the cottage is beautiful.

Vine Cottage is its name but it will only ever be known in Iron Acton as Kelly's Cottage.

Melanie Newman / Kelly's Cottage (aka Vine Cottage)

PS Since originally writing this Andy and I have been joined by our two children, Olivia and Louis. As the family has grown, we felt we needed a bigger house and fortunately Hillside (the house next door!!) came up for sale. We moved in at the end of 2001 and, being gluttons for punishment, we are currently in the middle of major renovation's

Vine Cottage is now owned by Sally and John and we hope they will be as happy as we were whilst we lived there.

The drawing that accompanies this article is one of the best examples of why Maureen is so important to Focal Poyntz. For those of us who remember going to Mr Dyer's (that's Kelly's dad as even after the age of retirement he still kept an eye on things) for petrol Maureen's got the drawing spot on; a perfect image of Kelly and, yes, as far as I recall, they were shell pumps!!!

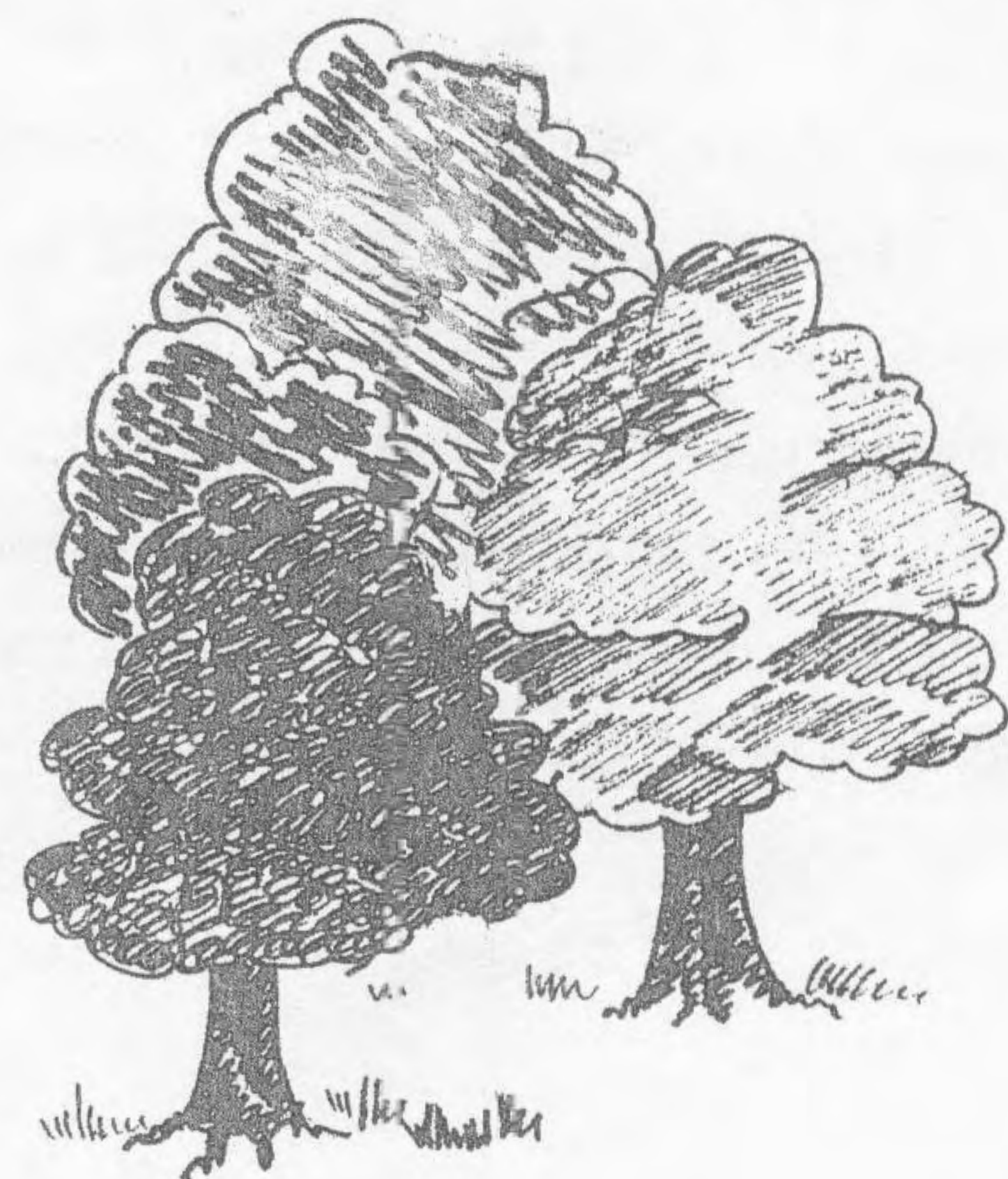
FRIENDS OF WESTONBIRT ARBORETUM

We think there's a fair number of Friends dotted about the Parish who all try to support the Arboretum as much as possible. Two events that we'd like to encourage you to put in your diaries are:

The Westonbirt International Festival of Gardens 2003: Chelsea this ain't but it runs from 6 June until Sunday, 7 September and brings together designers from around the world and blends contemporary garden design, art and sculpture in the natural setting of the Arboretum.

Westonbirt Festival of Wood and Sculpture 2003 (18-25 August - the Bank Holiday Weekend): The week of wood commences with teams of woodcarvers transforming huge limbs of fallen wood into carvings with chainsaw, chisel and sandpaper. Over the bank holiday weekend they're joined by hundreds of wood craftsmen who gather to demonstrate their skill and sell their wares. From giant bowls to baskets you can experience a range of ancient crafts which culminates on the Monday with the Grand Auction of Carvings at 3 pm.

Further details can be obtained from Westonbirt Arboretum on 01666 880220 or ring Lynne B on 228566 as she's got the publicity leaflet!



IRON ACTON PARISH HALL COMMITTEE

We had another amazing and successful Village Fun Day on May Day this year. Our thanks to all those who contributed, village organisations who give the day its variety and others who help behind the scenes.

This was the icing on the cake in terms of all the hard work and fundraising that has taken place over recent years. The Parish Hall accounts are now in the black following the completion of the extensive renovations. It is well worth it and we are very privileged to have such a useful building in the Parish, it is well used by various groups, giving a focal point to the village.

The Parish Hall raises its revenue from hirings and May Day. The hirings fees have to be set taking into account the fees at other similar venues within the nearby area. The income from May Day is a vital part of keeping our hall going as there are ongoing costs to be considered - such as general maintenance and projects such as bringing all the seating up to the same standard.

The Village Fun Day on May Day was originally thought of by the Parish Hall (then the Village Hall) Committee** as a means of fundraising for the Hall. Each year the Fun Day is organised by the May Day Committee of the Parish Hall Committee. A lot of hard work is carried out from about January onwards to make this day happen. The various stallholders do make their own profits as they agree a pitch fee with the May Day Committee which can be a flat fee or a percentage of their takings.

We sometimes hear comments along the lines of "why should the Parish Hall get the May Day profits? What about the School?" The simple fact is it is the Hall Committee that ensures the overall success of May Day - that is what our May Day was instigated for. **If there is a strong view that some of next year's money should go elsewhere that view can be considered, but only if people representing the other organisations to benefit come forward in January, join the May Day Committee and take a meaningful share of the work involved in making the day happen.**

If anyone has a strong view, or wants to get involved in May Day, please contact Roger Hughes (Chairman), Marion Hughes (Secretary) on 228562 or me on 228065.

Peter Bellis

** A little footnote from the FP Team

Having read this article, and feeling that perhaps some details have been lost in the passage of time, the FP team would like to add the following.

It is our understanding that the first May Day took place on 7 May 1990. It was the brainchild of Betty Cook and John Percy. Our editorial at the time read "This year on the morning of 7th May there will be a celebration to Christen the new maypole and to raise money for Focus" (Focal Poyntz used to be called Focus on Iron Acton) as in 1989 we had to obtain a donation from the Parish Council to enable us to continue. Our very strong feeling that we should be self sufficient led to Betty and John's idea of fundraising on May Day.

Up to and including 1993 the funds raised at May Day were split between Focus/Focal Poyntz and the organisations who supported us. In 1994 Focus was doing well enough financially to allow all the organisation who organised stalls, games, etc to keep all the monies they raised while FP kept the general funds from advertising in the programme and any stalls we actually ran and in 1995 we wrote "Thanks to support from all the organisations in the village and from parishioners this event has grown so that FP funds are in a reasonably healthy state (and so) the beneficiary (this year) will be the Village Hall Project 2000 Fund".



THE TUESDAY CLUB



The Tuesday Club took a little break during April and May but we are now up and running again and looking forward to the rest of the Summer Term. We still have a grand total of 24 children on the register with a number of children still on the waiting list.

Our recent experience with glass painting has proved very successful and the children are always very keen to show off their artistic flair! As the children have enjoyed this activity so much, the Hobbycraft store in Cribbs Causeway has been a frequent destination for us to search out new activities and ideas. But, as always, the results of the fairy cake decorating go down well.

Paula Evans, Alison Lovell, Sue Leydon

ACTON AID

Acton Aid has continued its valuable contribution to parish life in the second quarter. On 3 April our Chairman, Hayden Rickard, gave a fascinating talk on "The Ring of Fire". A crowded function room at The Lamb learned all about plate tectonics, the formation of oil and gas, and gained an insight into the geography of most of the world's oil producing regions.

May Day saw a diligent group of "burger burners" cater for the masses on the Green and make a significant contribution to the fund raising efforts.

Our main fundraising event of the calendar took place on 21 June when the Parish turned out in force to support "Midsummer Madness". Bristol band "Jusould" had us bopping in the Hall, whilst on the lawn we enjoyed good food, good company and ample drink (that is until the bar ran dry!) Whilst the accounts for the event are not finalised at the time of going to press it is likely to be a 4 figure sum that will be distributed between the Friends of the School, St James the Less and Acton Aid funds. Thanks to all who supported the event and specifically to David for tickets and publicity, Colin the ever faithful hog roaster, Mike the caterer and Chris & Di Heal for services to the pig!

The next event planned will be the fourth in our programme of talks on Thursday, 2 October at 8.00 pm in the Lamb. For more details of this event look out for circulars or give me a call on 228540. **All parishioners are welcome to attend this event.**

Following this we are hoping for a nice dry evening on Saturday, 8 November for the Bonfire and Fireworks in the Parish Meadow, followed by food and drink in the Hall. We have increased the firework budget this year so look out for tickets for a great evening.

Anyone interested in finding out more about Acton Aid is invited to contact any of the officers, or call in and join us at the Lamb at 8.00 pm on the first Thursday of each month. Meetings have the minimum of formality, with fund raising events and the distribution of resources discussed and planned over a pint or two.

Finally, if readers are aware of any parishioners who would benefit from the support of Acton Aid they are welcome to contact, in confidence, our Chairman (Hayden Rickard on 228540) or Secretary (Ashley Mee on 228540).

Ashley Mee / Secretary



NORTH ROAD LADIES CLUB

North Road Ladies Club continues to thrive, with more new members having joined since the last edition of Focal Poyntz. We now have 37 members - which is very pleasing considering our club is in its 36th year.

At our April meeting members gathered to listen to Mrs Lesley Coppin from St Luke's Church, Brislington describe her experiences when visiting Zimbabwe and how she came to help with the "Babygrow Project". Babygrow is a church sponsored charity to help babies and children in need and raises money for its work by collecting any money - British/foreign, notes/coins, new/old, which is then exchanged for sterling. Through this collection Babygrow has been able to supply an orphanage with a borehole and pump for water, a clinic has been built and a number of homes and child support projects have been supplied with equipment. However, most of the money now goes to buy the very basic necessities for life - food, clothing and medical supplies.



Mrs Jean Drew came along on 12th May to demonstrate her flower arranging skills. This was very much appreciated by our members, especially when the flower arrangements were put into our raffle.

Our June meeting included a talk and slides on Summer Gardening by Mr Don Everitt. He gave many useful gardening tips and brought along a large selection of plants which our members were eager to purchase.

Our evening trip this year takes place on Monday, 7 July when we will be visiting Iford Manor Gardens in Bradford on Avon. On leaving the gardens we will call in for refreshments at the Kings Arms, Monkton Farleigh.

We do not hold a meeting during August but our programme for the remainder of the year is as follows:

Monday, 8 September Talk and Slides on The Donkey Sanctuary at Sidmouth
by Mr Des Wakefield

Monday, 6 October Garden Birds Around the World
by Mr P Basterfield

Also on this evening representatives from Christmas Child Charity will be coming to collect our filled shoe boxes for Christmas in readiness for needy children overseas.

Monday, 3 November Our Birthday Party - venue yet to be decided

Monday, 1 December Remembering Christmas with Mrs P Clements and also our AGM and American Supper

Visitors, or new members, are most welcome to join us at any of our meetings - which are held in North Road Community Primary School commencing at 7.30 pm.

June Rycroft / Secretary

IRON ACTON CRICKET CLUB

As the cricket season nears its mid point we can report another successful year with some excellent results against our local rivals. May was almost completely washed out, which was particularly disappointing after the fine cricketing weather of March and April so we only really got started in June and have registered fine performances against Old Sodbury and Kingswood. There have obviously also been a few setbacks, including a very enjoyable game at the wonderfully picturesque ground at Sherston that was filmed by the BBC for a wildlife series (why?). The only fly in the ointment is that we batted first and, in true Iron Acton cavalier fashion, were dismissed for 56 in less than 20 overs and so, in spite of some spirited bowling and fielding, they knocked off the runs for the loss of 2 wickets and the game was over before tea. We were, however, congratulated by the camera team for our "enterprising" approach to the game and that they didn't have to hang around until 8 o'clock!



We've been having trouble raising enough players again this year - which places quite unreasonable demands on the time and sanity of our excellent Captain, Chris Bradley. On paper we have at least 30 active members, so finding 11 who would like to turn out on a Sunday or Wednesday shouldn't be that hard. I think the problem is that many of us can't play as often as we would like and so get out of the habit of telling the skipper that we could be available, if selected.

May I take this opportunity to ask some of our "dormant" members to make ourselves available for the occasional game - and tell Chris well in advance. You all know who you are out there, and no-one will think badly of you if you only play once or twice a season. One of the great joys of a club like our's is renewing friendships from past seasons.

We have recruited a few new players this year, but the biggest threat to most village clubs is the apathy of the membership that places unacceptable demands on the few stalwarts, who then give up. So, if you care about your club, come and play.

Simon Cross / Chairman

ST JAMES THE LESS PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP

We've had a busy season including new families in our group. We would have liked more days outside by now but Friday seems to be a wet day this year! Instead we're trying to be more creative in occupying our older members with stories, puzzles and dressing up (them not us!).

Five more of our group leave this summer for school, some with us since babyhood and we wish them all the best (and their teachers too!).

We finish at the Marshall Room on Friday, 11 July - although we continue to meet in the Parish Meadow throughout the school holidays (weather permitting) and older children are also welcome.

Our first Friday back will be on 5 September, 10.30 am to 12.00 pm, in the Marshall Room.

If you're interested in joining our group please contact Lisa on 228725 or Chris on 228065.

Chris Bellis



SPEED AND ROAD SAFETY

The issue of speeding traffic and how to deal with the problem is always foremost in people's minds. Despite efforts by local police there are simply not the resources available to tackle the problem as a single agency - hence the introduction of Community Speed Watch.

Community Speed Watch

The concept of CSW grew from an idea that began in the village of Ash in Somerset. This small village had a persistent problem with speeding vehicles and, despite the efforts of the local police, the situation failed to improve. Residents were equipped with a speed detection device and, following safety and operational training, undertook to monitor the traffic and report back to the police with details of offending vehicles. Follow up action then took place by the local officers with the result that the local community noticed a remarkable slowing down in the speed of vehicles using the village roads.

How can I help?

To be successful this concept requires locals with the time and inclination to be trained as operators, and someone to oversee the system by managing timetables, records, etc. The unit can be as active as the operators want it to be.

Interested?

If you would like to know more about this concept please make contact with me at Chipping Sodbury Police Station. I would be available to speak at length to individuals or groups and have a selection of booklets and a video explaining the scheme in more detail. Contact me through 0117 945 5926

WPC 1269 Bainbridge

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS OF NORTH ROAD, YATE AND SURROUNDING AREA

This book is due to be published at the beginning of July. Written by a former resident, Glenys Hale (nee Townsend), who was born locally and whose parents and grandparents were also local. It describes her childhood and teenage years after World War II. The book also looks back on new developments in the 1960's and later, and ends with changes at the beginning of this new century.

The book contains photos of the old tin chapel, new 20th century building and its closure in 2001, as well as events that took place there. The school is photographed from the early 1900's and In Jubilee Year 2002.



Also included in the leisure section are photographs of the Yate Juvenile Players Drama Group, North Road Football and Rangeworthy Football Teams.

Memories of residents who have lived in North Road and whose families have lived there for generations, and those of others who have not lived there for long are also included.

The book is available from the author at a cost of £8.50 - by telephoning 01454 774279.

FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

Things have been a little quiet on the fund-raising front recently (the lull before the storm, so to speak).

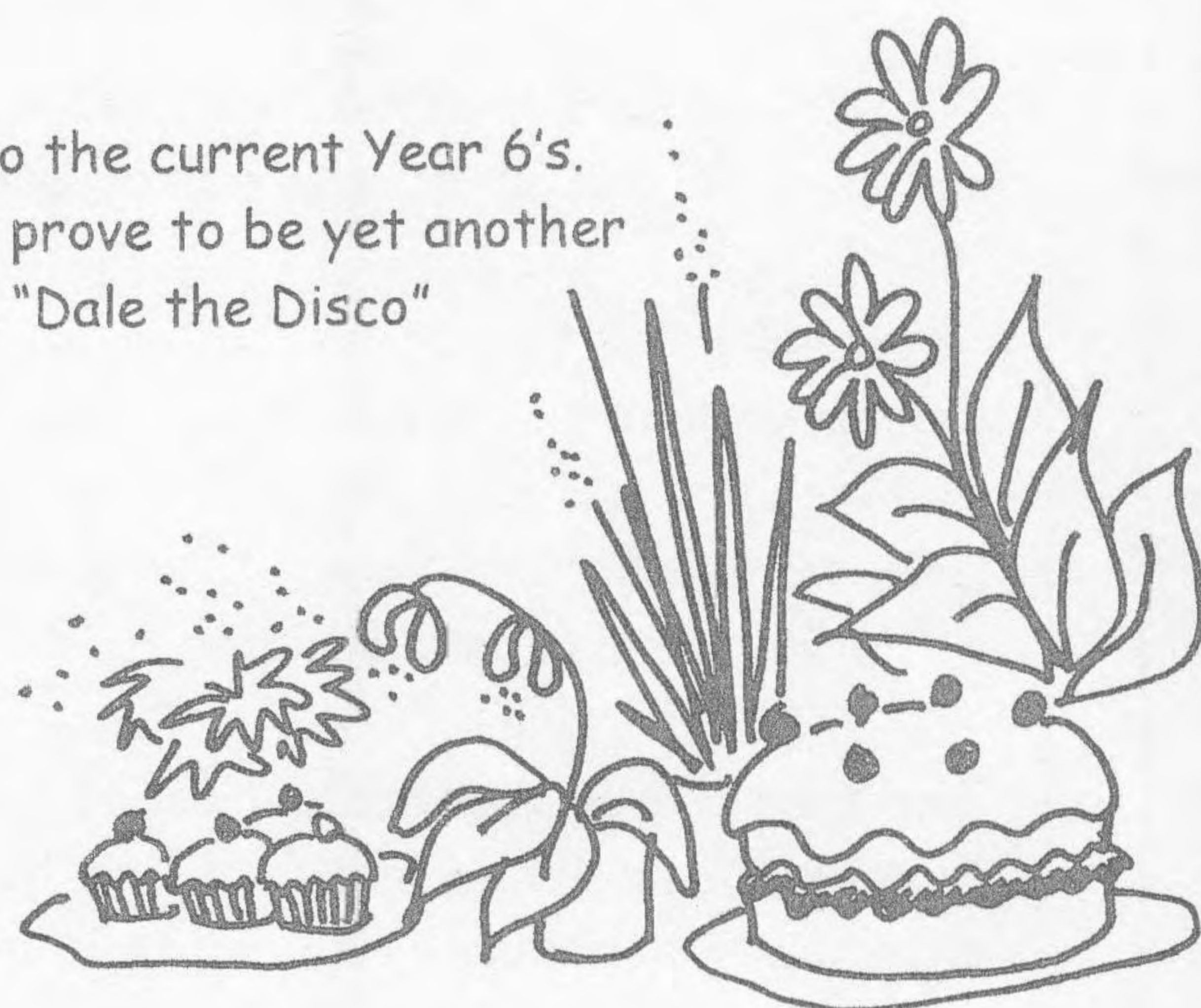
We held a Plant and Cake Sale at the beginning of May with all profits going to St James the Less Church. We were thrilled and delighted with the donations of plants and scrumptious cakes. Thank you so much to everyone who helped, donated produce or just came along to enjoy a cup of tea.

May Day proved to be another success this year with cakes, biscuits, cups of tea, coffee and squash, pickles, pickled onions and jams for sale. Our Maypole Dancers did us proud again this year and a big thank you goes out to Katie Mansfield, Tracey Byrne, Chris Bellis, et al who did a grand job showing them the ropes (or ribbons, as the case may be!).

The end of term looms nearer and we will have to say a sad farewell to the current Year 6's. However, plans for our End of Term Disco are well in hand and should prove to be yet another enjoyable evening for children and parents alike. We look forward to "Dale the Disco" doing us proud once again.

We also have our Summer Fair to look forward to. This year has an "Out of this World" theme and a very enjoyable evening should be had on 4 July.

Paula Evans / Chair - The Friends of Iron Acton School



IRON ACTON CEVC PRIMARY SCHOOL

As yet another year draws to an end and we say goodbye to our Y6 children I would like to reflect on a couple of interesting facts.

Firstly, when they do leave on Friday, 18 July the Y6 pupils would have attended school for approximately 280 weeks. Secondly, they would have taken part in around 1400 assemblies or acts of worship - staggering facts but proof of how important a good education is to our children. This is what we constantly strive for at Iron Acton. Setting high standards and expectations and in a strong partnership with the community of Iron Acton.

This link was highlighted recently with our contribution to the May Day Celebrations; providing the May Queen and dancing around the maypole. I am always impressed by the huge crowds who attend this event. This is great for the community overall and a sign of how important the old traditions still are today.

More up to date events at the school include the Y6 PGL camp at Hillcrest near Ross on Wye. They have just returned from an exhausting but excellent week. During the time they mixed with 2 other schools from Liverpool and Peterborough and took part in activities such as archery, abseiling, dragon boating, climbing, rifle shooting, fencing, kayaking and quad biking. We all returned much richer for the experience.

Our annual school enrichment day will be to Longleat in July and the Leavers' Service will be on Friday, 18 July in the Church.

Our Summer Fayre has an "Out of this World" theme and is on 4th July between 6.00 pm and 8.00 pm.

As ever, if you have any enquiries about school, please do not hesitate to phone on 228322 or e-mail us on Head@ironacton-pri.5-glos.sch.uk.

Karl Joyce / Head Teacher

YOUR COUNCIL TAX - WHAT IS IT FOR (IRON ACTON SPECIAL EXPENSES)

Questions have been asked about the issue of the special expenses charge on our Council Tax bills and in response the Parish Council wrote to South Gloucestershire Council for an explanation.

The special expenses amounts to £2172 - which means South Glos plan to spend this amount in Iron Acton on things which are not covered by either the ordinary Council Tax or on things that Iron Acton Parish Council is doing itself. This works out at £4.25 for a Band D property.

We were as surprised as anyone to receive a timely reply from South Glos, not only that, but the answer makes sense and appears to be reasonable.

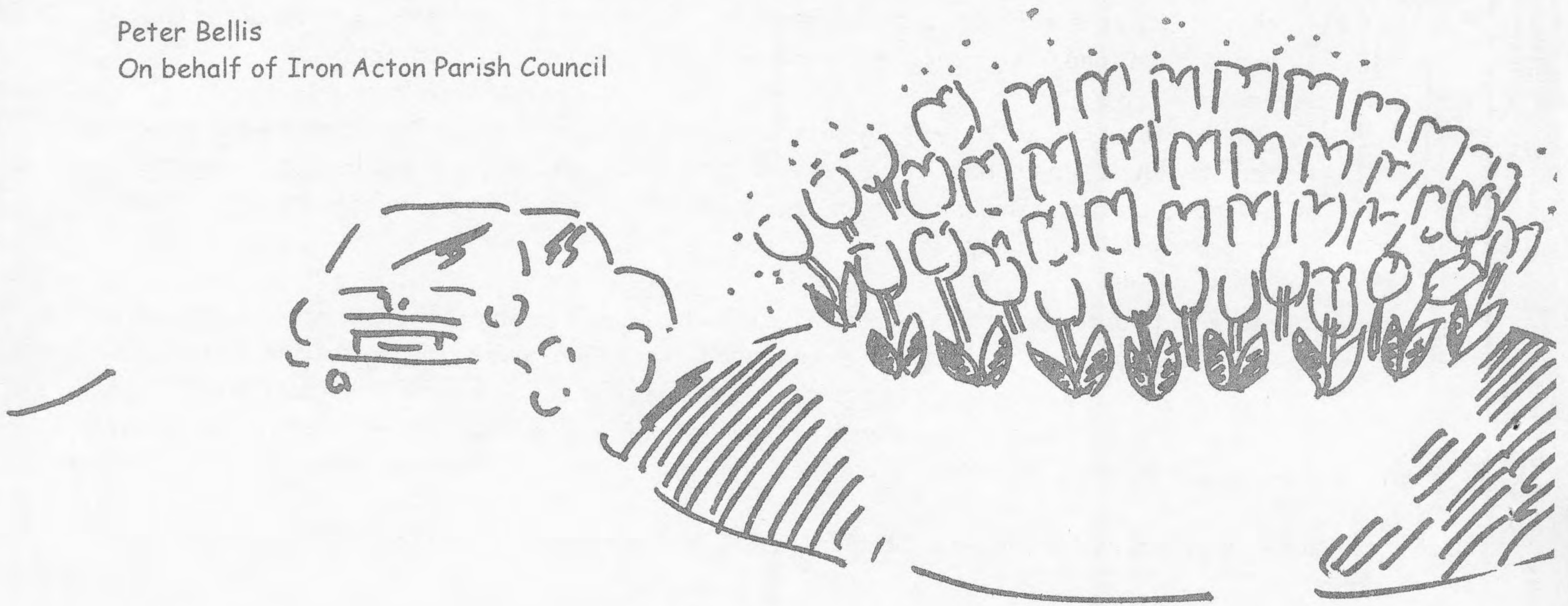
The only things that special expenses can be raised for are: allotments, closed churchyards, bus shelters, Christmas lights, community centres, open spaces, play areas, playing fields and public conveniences. None of these are provided in Iron Acton by South Glos except open spaces. The open spaces in question are the Green in the middle of Chilwood Close and the bulb planting on the roundabout at the junction of Iron Acton Way and Stover Road.

The special expenses are not for the normal upkeep of the roundabout - that is paid from the Highways budget. Some of you may feel that having bulbs on the roundabout is an unjustified luxury. If that is the case then you should write and tell South Glos. The best approach would be to your new-South Glos Councillor Howard Gawler. Theoretically, at least, Iron Acton Parish Council could make a case to South Gloucestershire that we could cut the grass in Chilwood Close ourselves. The cost for this would then be added to the parish precept (which at £35.23 for a Band D property is down 35% from last year).

However, we don't think we could actually get it done for as good a price - based on the amount we have to pay for grass cutting in the Churchyard, the Parish Meadows and the Village Green.

So, shocking as it may seem, the special expenses are, in our opinion justifiable and reasonable.

Peter Bellis
On behalf of Iron Acton Parish Council



Did you know

- * Months that begin on a Sunday will always have a Friday the 13th
- * Apples are more efficient than caffeine at waking you up
- * No piece of paper can be folded more than 7 times

IRON ACTON WI

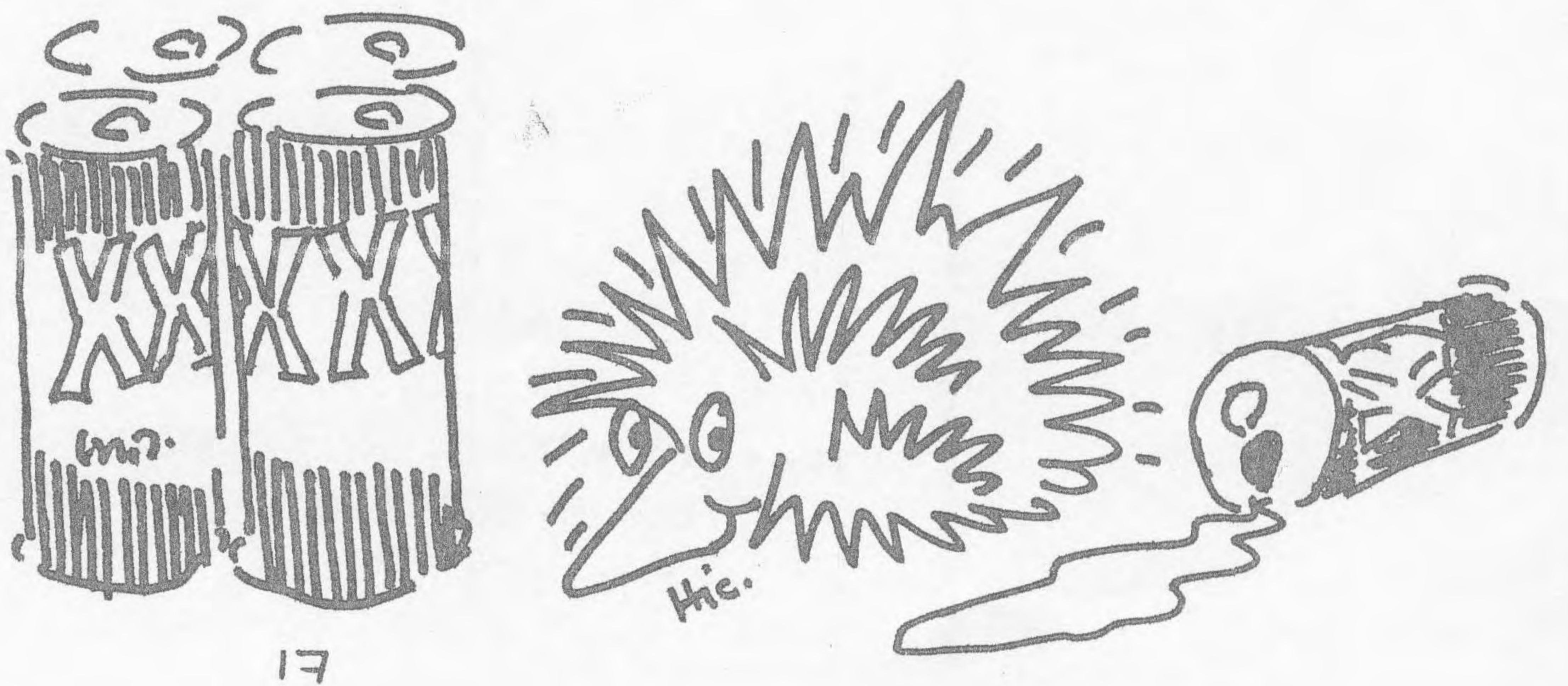
We decided to get "headucated" in April when we invited one of our WI Advisors to come and tell us about the history of the WI - about time too as some of us had been in the WI for over 20 years and still had only a vague idea about its origins. Very enlightening it was and I learnt things I never knew before - I just can't remember them now!

By May education gave way to pure enjoyment as we went around the gardens at Algars Manor. As written last time, we've had to cancel this on at least 3 previous occasions due to the Almighty wielding his watering can. The day dawned bright and clear, the forecast said "only isolated showers" and I allowed my spirits to rise in anticipation. We made it through the day and I began my journey home - all in bright sunshine. Once through the traffic lights by the Western Coachhouse I spied, with some trepidation, a grotty black cloud on the horizon. Back home within 30 minutes some rain was falling but then it tailed off. The telephone rang and I could hardly hear Geraldine who lives in Nibley Lane. She sounded as though she was standing on a runway. The noise, she assured me, were very large hailstones bouncing off her conservatory roof. What were we going to do? By now it was within 60 minutes of our intended arrival. I took a deep breath and said "we're still going ahead"! This was probably the rashest, least thought out decision of my life and I was still regretting it as we drove down to Algars with the rain still falling. We stepped out of the car, the sun came out and that was the way it remained until long after we'd left that evening. We all had the most wonderful evening; the rain seeming to bring out the fragrance of the flowers so that as we were walking around we'd suddenly hit a wall of scent that left the senses reeling. We are truly indebted to John and Barbara Naish for giving us such a memorable evening.

Yvonne Cox, otherwise known as The Hedgehog Lady, came to talk to us in June. Not only could she tell us about the lives of hedgehogs, how we can help to maintain habitats that are friendly to them and what we can do to entice them into our gardens, she also explained about the hazards facing them. For example, those plastic rings that hold the tops of 4/6/8 packs of cans together are just large enough to trap an inquisitive hedgehog - this then eats into their flesh, bacteria and maggots ensue and the poor thing dies a slow, agonising and horrible death.

So, the last 3 months have given us a very diverse outlook. What do the next few months hold? In July we're hopefully being shown around by Geoff Goundrill at Leyhill. It's probably been 6 years since we last visited and he's led them to a host of gold medal winning exhibits at the Chelsea and Hampton Court Flower Shows as well as becoming involved in work in an African prison where yet more magic was spun. We're looking forward to hearing all about his exploits. August we have a well earned rest and are back into the fray in the Autumn with a talk and slides on the Orient Express in September (just thinking about it brings images of Hercule Poirot and all those wonderful dresses in the Albert Finney film ... not that dear old Albert was wearing the dresses he just starred), learning all about Salmon Fishing on the Severn in October (we had to reluctantly admit that there's quite a gap in our local knowledge), a Birthday Party in November (an opportunity, if one was needed, to let our hair down and just enjoy the friendships we've made) and a December AGM that culminates in mulled wine and home made eatables. Roll on Christmas!

Lynne Blanchard



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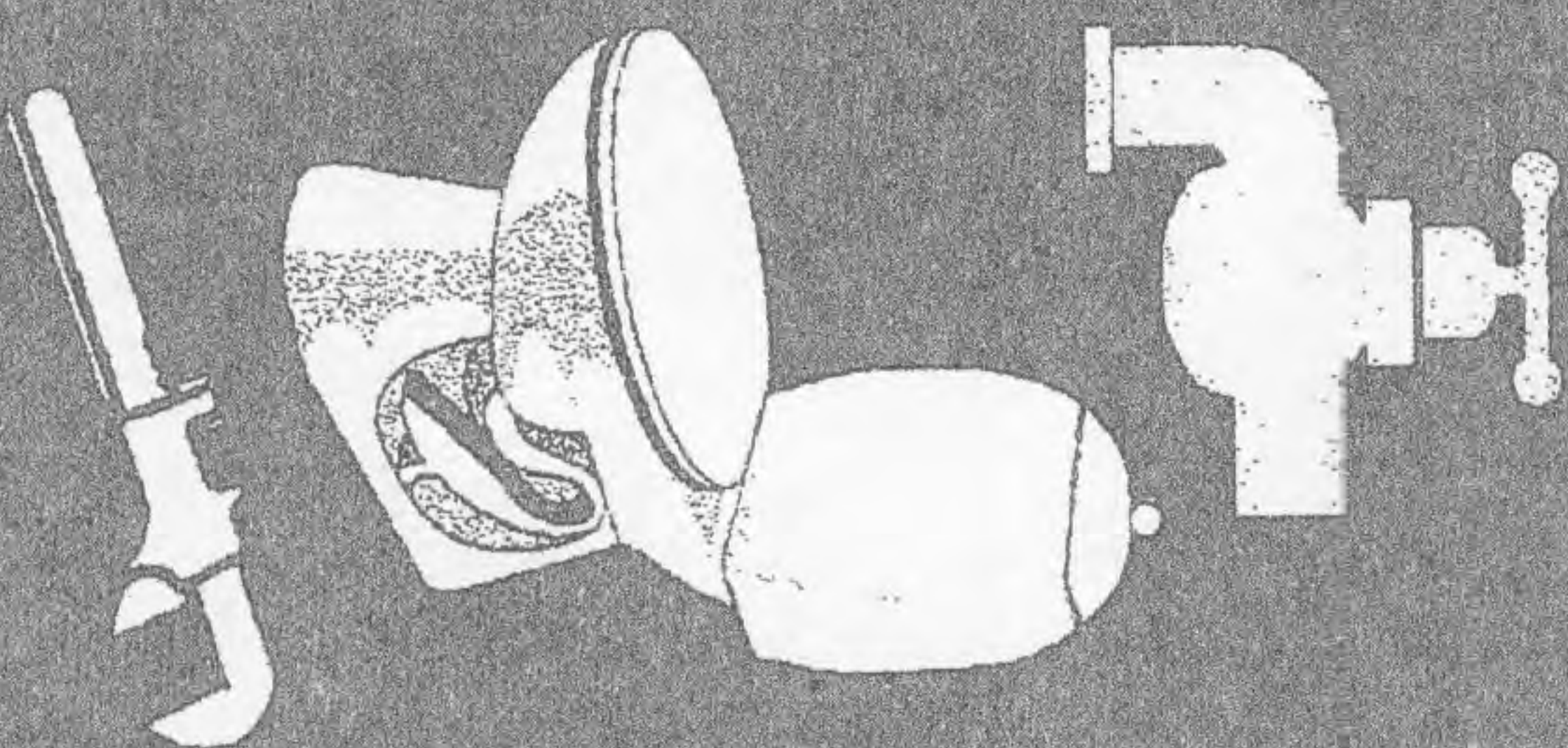
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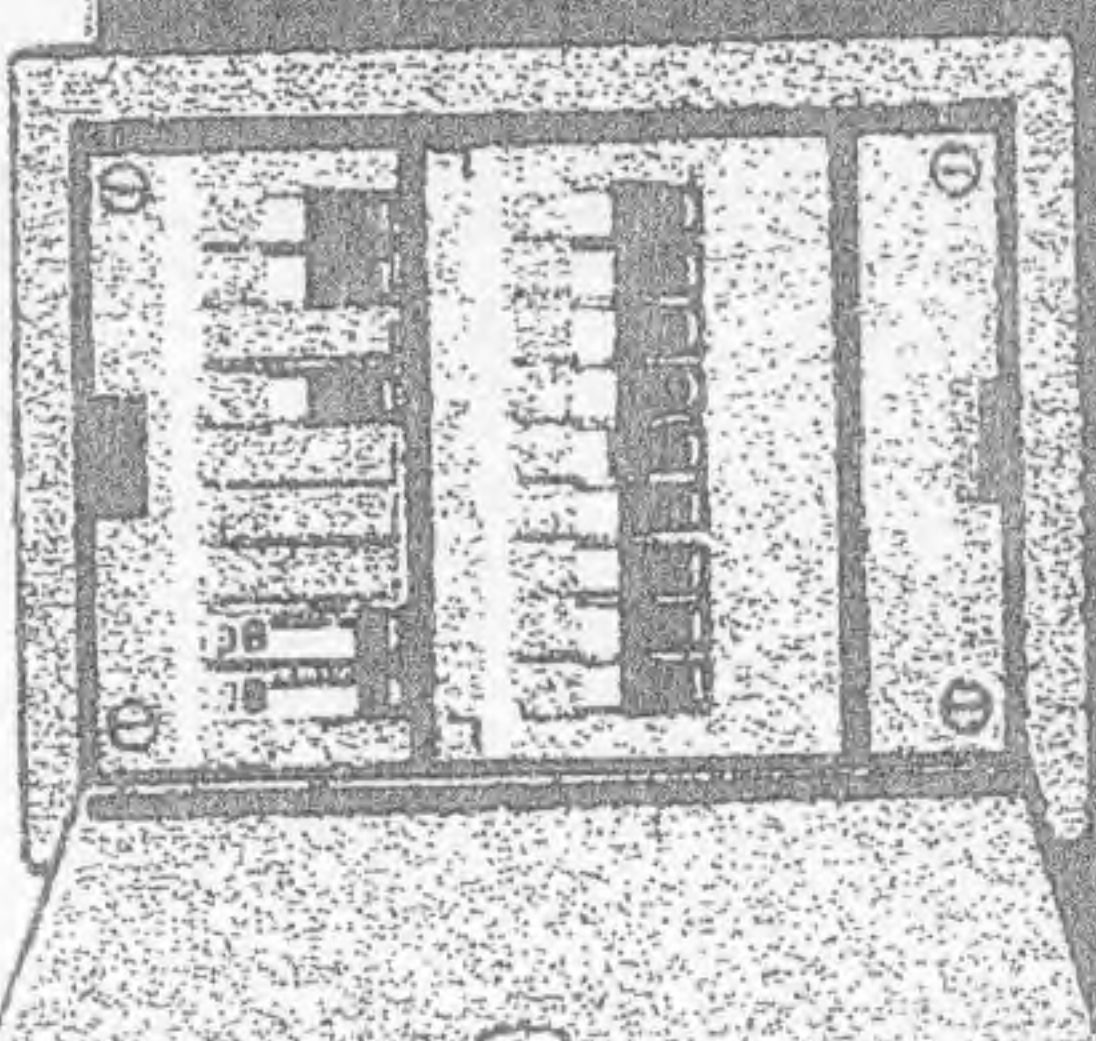
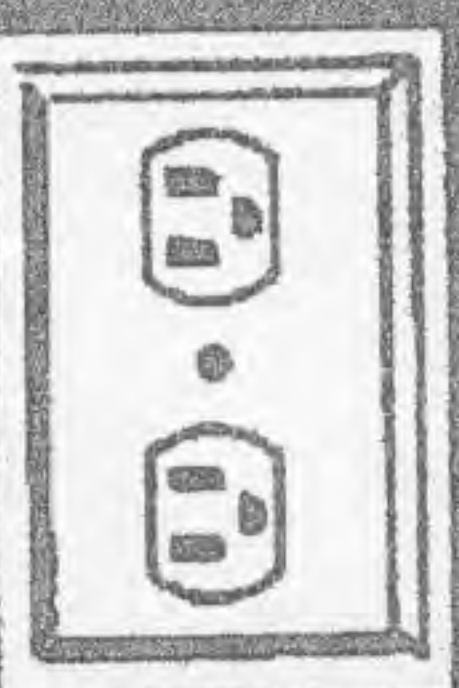
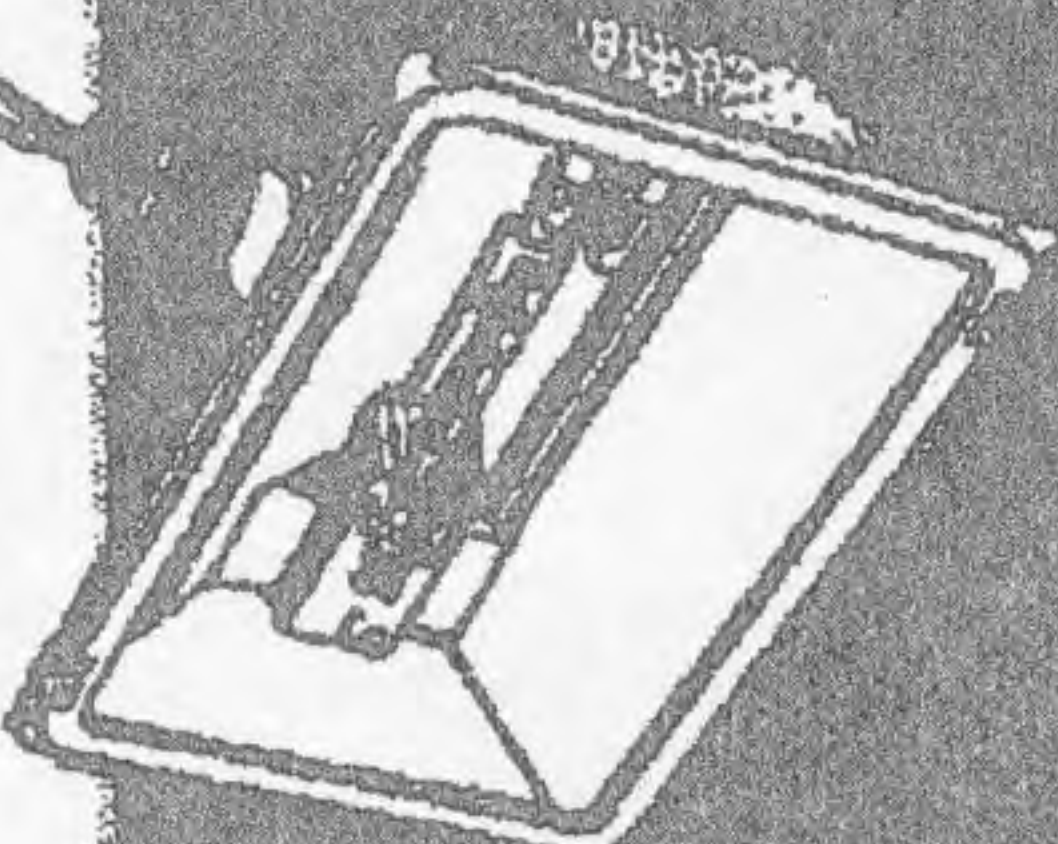
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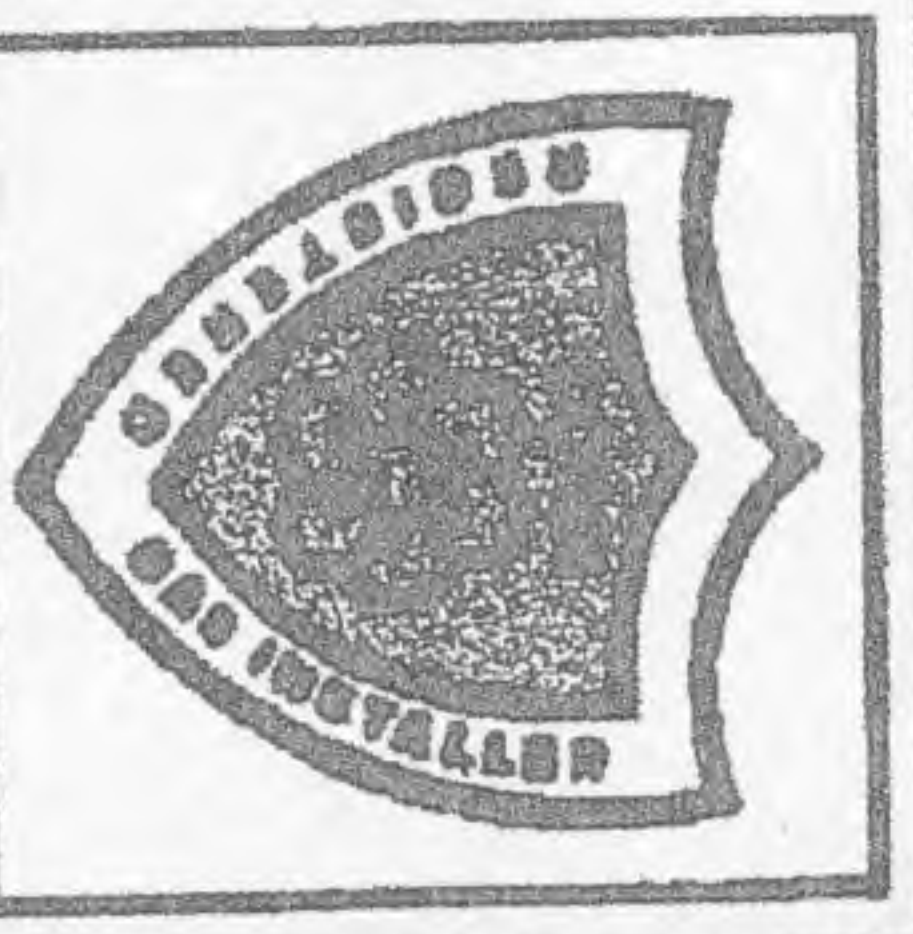
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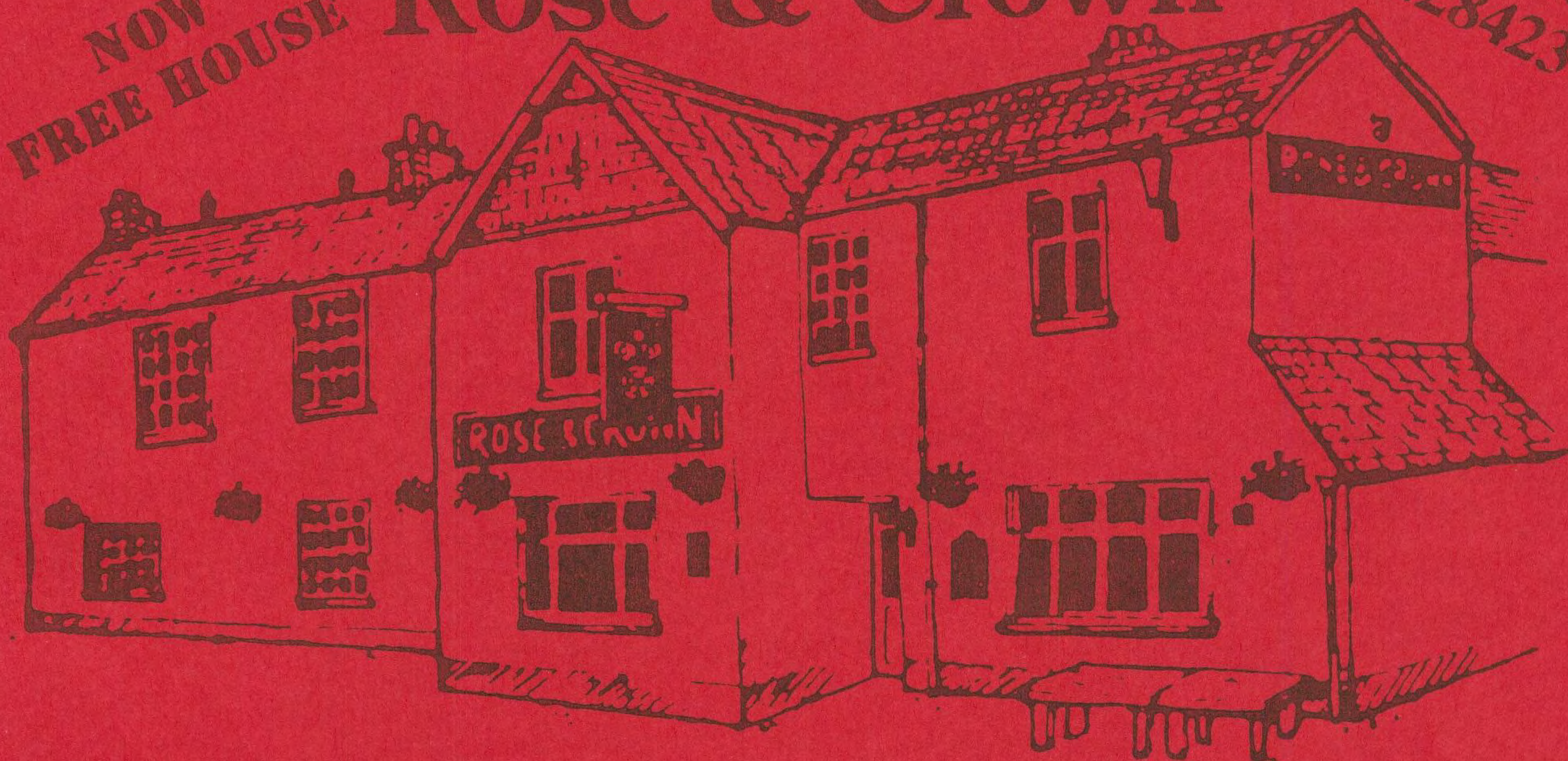
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