

# Focal Point



A magazine for Iron Acton





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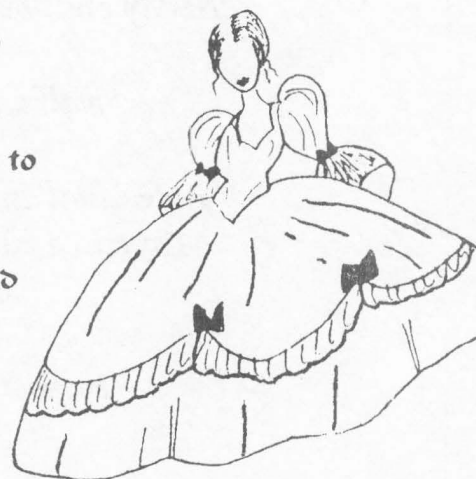
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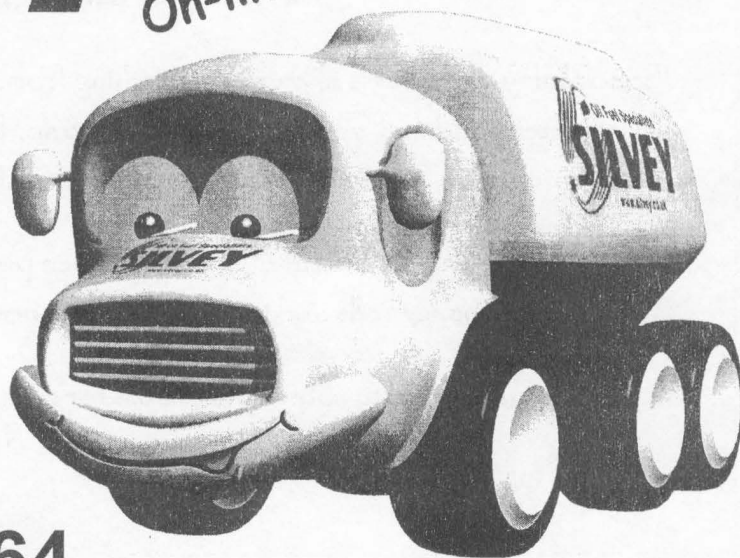
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# Winter

ISSUE

(69)

Focal Poyntz would like to give a very warm welcome to Mark Handley, the new Headteacher at North Road School. We hope he enjoys a very happy and long stay - you'll read (and definitely enjoy) his first report within these pages and we look forward to many more in the future!

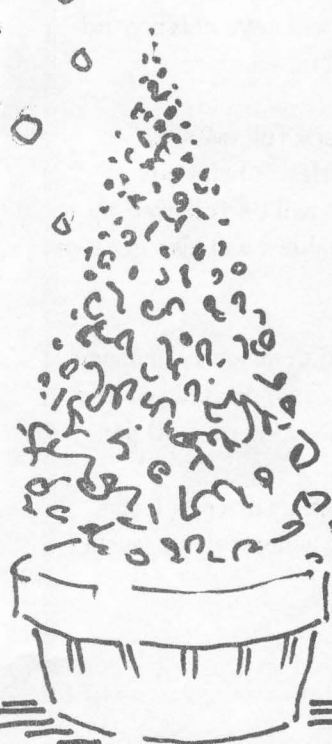
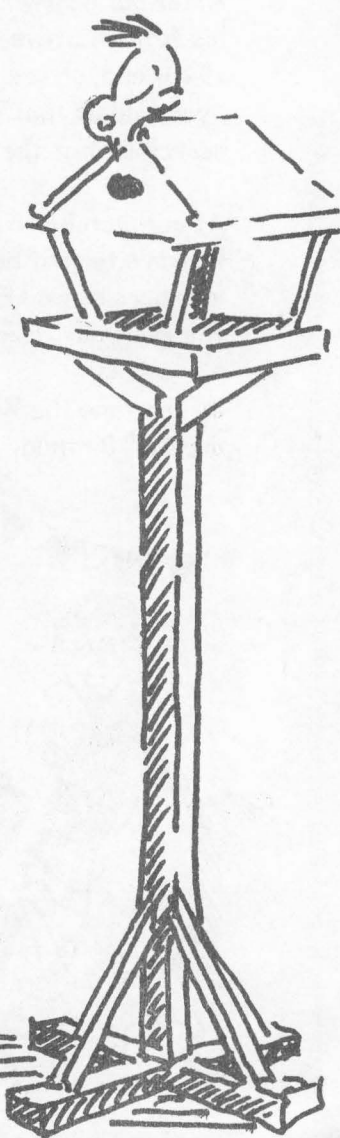
We would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for supporting Focal Poyntz.

We value the contributions from our village organisations who provide the backbone of the magazine and we are grateful to all those people who deliver the magazine to each far flung corner of the parish and in all weathers. They are our invisible heroes.

We would be lost without Maureen Blake's contribution as we would have a very staid magazine without her wonderfully quirky drawings. Neither could we function without Oldbury Deckers Youth Club who produce all the copies of the magazine at such an economic price, to deadline and with compassionate efficiency.

We like to think that Focal Poyntz reflects the values and opinions of Iron Acton residents so, please, let us have your contributions and help us to continue to produce a magazine that appeals to all interests and is relevant to all age groups in our community.

Finally, we wish everyone a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.



## FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

The autumn term has started as a very busy and exciting one for the school. Firstly the children in Class 2 came back after the summer holidays to a totally (and much needed) refurbished classroom with new paint, carpet and IT suite. Many thanks to Acton Aid and Jayne McIver's family who helped with this transformation.

Secondly the term began with the completion of the conservation project and the digging of the wildlife pond.

The children were involved with the whole process the highlight of which was filling it up with the help from a large, red fire engine! Thank you to everyone who has supported or helped at Friends' events over the last year - I'm sure the local children will enjoy the pond, woodland and wildflower areas for many years to come.

The table top sale held in the Parish Hall on Saturday, 12 November proved to be very successful with all proceeds going towards a much needed interactive white board.

Finally, don't forget our Christmas Fayre on Saturday, 3 December. 11.00 am to 1.00 pm in the School Hall!

Tracey Lynton-Jenkins / Secretary



## NORTH ROAD LADIES

After our summer break we met again on 5 September for an absorbing evening listening to Tim Ryan and his father, Steve, telling stories about the Aust Ferry. They had been given a cine-film taken in the late 1940s and, on seeing this, several of our members recalled the times they had used the Aust Ferry. Steve Ryan told us that he wasn't a stranger to North Road as during the war he had been in charge of the searchlight at the end of North Road near Parnall's Factory.

At our October meeting Andrew Young, from the Avon Archaeological Unit, came along to tell us about the Roman site that had been found at Hall End Farm, Wickwar. This was of particular interest to our members as Hall End Farm is in the area where many of us live. Mr Young showed slides and also explained the everyday tasks of an archaeologist.

By the time the Winter Issue of Focal Poyntz is distributed 40 members of our club will have celebrated our 38<sup>th</sup> Birthday (on 7 November) with an evening meal at The Globe in Frampton Cotterell.



The 5 December meeting will be a very full evening. David Brace will be giving a talk entitled "Christmas Steps; Origins and Traditions". This will be followed by our AGM and American Supper. Members will also receive the programme for 2006.

Our meetings are held in North Road Community Primary School and usually take place on the first Monday of the month (during term time only), commencing at 7.30 pm.

If anyone feels they would like to join us at any of our meetings, please do come along - you will receive a warm welcome.

June Rycroft / Secretary



CHRISTMAS AT YOUR PARISH CHURCH

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT ST JAMES THE LESS - CHRISTMAS 2005



|  |             |          |                           |
|--|-------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Sunday   | 18 December | 6.00 pm  | Carol Service             |
| <u>Christmas Eve</u>                                 |             |          |                           |
| Friday,  | 24 December | 5.00 pm  | Crib Service              |
|  |             | 11.30 pm | Midnight Mass             |
| <u>Christmas Day</u>                                 |             |          |                           |
| Saturday,  | 25 December | 9.00 am  | Family Communion          |
| <u>Please remember the earlier time Crib Service</u> |             |          | <u>5.00 pm this year!</u> |

You will be welcome to join in any of our Christmas services this year as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, Son of God.

IRON ACTON HORTICULTURAL SHOW

Well, weren't we lucky with the weather on the day?

Thank you to everyone who took the trouble to enter the Show this year. Although we were a little down on the number of entries the standard still remained extremely high. The children's section was somewhat down on last year, mainly due to the fact that the schools had not returned from their summer break, and a lot of folks were still on holiday. Again, we were complimented by the judges for the quantity and quality of entries.

We hope you found the new procedure for booking in your entries a little easier. We certainly didn't have as many queues as last year! You may have noticed that this year we computerised the entry method for the Homecraft Section? This worked well and made judging and scoring much easier. Our thanks to Mark for creating the spreadsheet to do this.

The weather during the growing season did its best to thwart the efforts of the gardeners of Iron Acton - badger raids on the sweetcorn (again!), squirrels stealing plums and apples, rabbits nicking the carrots, not enough rain, too much rain - the list of troubles goes on and on. A gardener's lot is not a happy one.

Lastly, our apologies for anyone expecting to see their names in the Gazette. Unfortunately they omitted to print the list of winners, even though we did send it to them.

PS Have you seen the size of the pumpkin in the Lamb? A gigantic 352 lbs to be precise. News of the extraordinary specimen made the local newspaper and Radio Bristol. A couple of slightly less weightier examples are on show in the pub and a competition to guess their weight will be raising funds for the Siblands Centre.



Paula Evans / on behalf of the Horticultural Committee

## BIDE AWHILE AND SMILE

We think that many of you will have seen the beautiful seat that has been placed in the churchyard and faces up towards Hillside in Holly Hill and you will have read the poignant article by Lisa Hatherall in the summer Focal Poyntz following the sad and very untimely death of Mel Newman. Now her husband (Andy) and children (Olivia and Louis) have arranged for the seat to be a permanent memorial to Mel. They hope that we will all be able to enjoy their gift in memory of a wonderful and loving wife and mum.

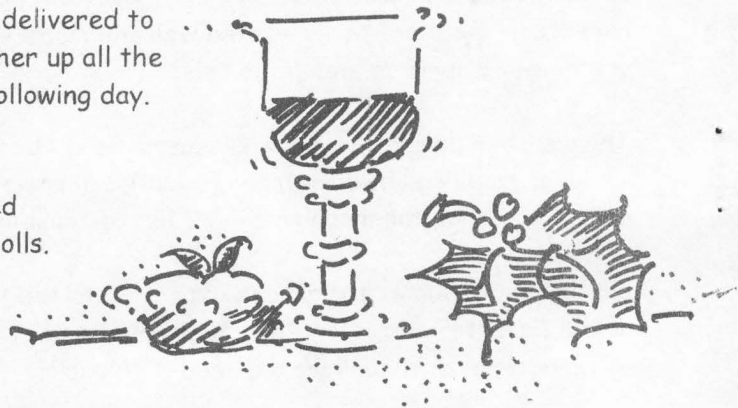
## IRON ACTON WI

We deliberately didn't have a speaker at our September meeting - many people had been on holiday when we'd gone on the "wine" walk around Bristol in July and we never have a meeting in August which means that we hadn't had an opportunity to catch up on all the gossip for 3 whole months ..... so a speaker's a waste of time ..... we'd rather use the time to natter!

In October we started our Christmas preparation early ..... or thought we would ..... by inviting Pat and Julie Faithful to come and show us some flower arrangements. In the space of an hour they created some beautiful displays for a table centre, a candle arrangement, a door wreath, an arrangement of fruits in a glass container and then put a flower display on the top and finally, a beautiful little arrangement on the outside of a wine bottle. Boy did they make it look easy! We were allowed to ask questions and one lady asked how you make a florist's bow. Julie immediately rustled one up (took just a few seconds and there it was uncreased and remarkably perky). She invited us to have a go, and there, after many, many minutes was a motley array of unsymmetrical, creased, manky specimens ..... that you'd never use in a month of Sundays! This led to Pat and Julie suggesting they return in 2006 for a session when we try to do some arrangements and they try to help us (as well as being very creative they are truly brave!)

In November we have our Birthday Party. Usually we find a local hostelry where our reputation hasn't preceded us but it's time for a bit of a departure this year. We'll be gathering in the Hall and have asked a local caterer to provide a 3 course meal which will be delivered to the Hall and then we just have to serve it and then gather up all the containers afterwards for collection and washing the following day. A bit like an up-market meals on wheels I suppose ....

Our year ends in December with our AGM, supplemented by mulled wine and home made mince pies and sausage rolls. We've discovered over the years that you get a more superiormulled wine if you put hardly any water in with the wine and spices ..... However, this year we will have one big problem ..... we have to find another secretary as the irreplaceable Judy's had enough and would quite like to come to meetings and enjoy them rather than talke notes and arrange things and she's also finding that the loads of free samples arriving at her home from a host of companies that she drags to meetings have done wonders for her muscles but not too much for her spine!. We'd all like to say a big thank you for everything she's done over the last 3 years.



Finally we want to wish you exactly the sort of Christmas that you dream about .... and a happy New Year too.

Lynne Blanchard / President - 228566



## VIEW FROM NORTH ROAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Just as we're in our final planning stages for our Harvest Festival Service, so we enjoyed a late Indian summer this Sunday and the first signs of Christmas have this week appeared in the supermarkets. Let us hope our seasons do not start blending and overlapping in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Harvest is always a special occasion in the school calendar, bringing back happy memories for the parents who are invited into school for our service and emphasising to the children that not only is it a time for saying thank you for our food but as a time for giving. This year we are again raising money for the people of Genieri in the West African Republic of the Gambia and the children will be giving gift baskets to the elderly in the local community. I read with interest that the first claimed Church Harvest Festival was held in Cornwall in October 1843.

I have just finished my fifth week as the new head teacher of North Road Community Primary School and a very busy but enjoyable 5 weeks it has been too. The staff, children and parents have made me feel very welcome and I aim to build upon the unique family atmosphere of the school which Mrs Anderson so successfully nurtured in her 18 years as head. The school has a very strong Friends' association who organise everything from subsidising school trips and theatre visits to school discos and games evenings and, of course, the Christmas Fayre (Friday, 2 December at 2.00pm!). The Friends have also taken on the project of modernising the school hall, a major application of paint and new curtains for the windows which, with the purchase of a projector, will mean we can show the children PowerPoint presentations and DVDs onto a wide screen. For my part, I'm buying the screen with the £301 that was kindly donated by our parents who sponsored me to run in the Bristol Half-Marathon on 2 October.

Now, that was an interesting adventure! Very possibly my first and last - although I amazed myself and completed the "run" in 2 hours and 47 minutes. I hoped to use Scooby Doo as my pacemaker but he soon showed me a clean pair of heels and, after the 9 mile marker when 2 fairies overtook me, chatting away merrily on their mobile phones, did the horrible realisation dawn on me that I should have done some serious training. Still I survived it and can make my small contribution to our hall project.

The teachers and school secretary are demonstrating their commitment to the extra-curricular life of school and this year we are offering the children the opportunity to attend football, cricket, badminton, history, music, chess and ICT clubs. We also have 3 peripatetic music teachers who visit and offer brass, violin and harmonica classes.

We were very pleased to welcome Steve Webb MP recently. He came to present the school with a certificate and cheque for coming second in a school gardening competition and he seemed very pleased to be presented with a bottle of chutney (made by the children from an age old secret recipe) which used ingredients grown in our garden.



Half term is rapidly approaching and with my son booked into one of the ever popular soccer school weeks in Yate it could be very difficult to resist the temptation of coming into work to give my office a lick of paint or sort and organise a few files and folders, etc, etc. However, I will leave the last weekend free as I take on board Prince Charles' recent advice for people to re-embrace the rhythms of nature and relearn the art of silent reflection in a world determined to go even faster.

Mark Handley / Headteacher

## HISTORY OF MEDICINE III

### THE SPECKLED MONSTER

The 18<sup>th</sup> century in Britain was the age of epidemics. The Plague raged, decimating populations in various parts of Europe, including Britain but, as the Plague receded, smallpox became the most lethal epidemic disease affecting Europeans. The "Speckled Monster" as it was known, devastated Europe, becoming responsible, in bad years, for a tenth of all deaths. It was no respecter of persons and caused the death of Queen Mary II of England, Emperor Joseph I of Austria, King Louis I of Spain, Czar Peter II of Russia, Queen Ulrika Elenora of Sweden and King Louis XV of France. This dreadful disease, not only had a high mortality rate (about 30%) and left those who survived scarred with pock marks which, since they were most marked on the face, were particularly disastrous for women. It was known, however, that a non-fatal attack conferred immunity from further attacks and advertising for servants in newspapers often stated that the advertiser would only hire those who had previously contracted and survived the disease.

Although this property of acquiring immunisation from a previous attack of smallpox was well-known, it was not exploited until the observations of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762), wife of the British Consul in Constantinople. Lady Mary reported how a Turkish peasant woman held smallpox parties at which they routinely performed "inoculations". Describing this procedure to a friend in 1717, she wrote:

*"Apropos of distempers, I am going to tell you a thing that will make you wish yourself here. The smallpox so fatal and so general among us is, here, entirely harmless by the invention of engrafting which is the term they give it. There is a set of old women who make it their business to perform the operation every autumn in the month of September when the great heat is abated ..... They make parties for the purpose ..... the old woman comes with a nutshell full of the "matter" of the best sort of smallpox, and asks what vein you pleased to have open'd. She then immediately rips it open ..... and puts into the vein as much smallpox "matter" as can lie upon the head of her needle.*

Back in England, Lady Mary had her 5 year old daughter inoculated in 1721. The technique was given royal approval when the Prince of Wales (later King George II, 1683-1760, had his 2 daughters inoculated. The technique spread slowly to the continent and, in 1768, Catherine the Great (1729-96)



of St Petersburg sent for the London Surgeon, Thomas Dimsdale, to inoculate her and her family. For these services Dimsdale was awarded £10,000 and a Russian barony, Voltaire, with whom Catherine had a regular correspondence and reported that she had been inoculated with less fuss than a nun taking an enema.

Worldwide spread was slow but in North America the preacher, Cotton Mather, was a champion. He knew about suffering, having had to watch as 2 wives and 13 of his 15 children succumbed to the disease. After 1750 efforts were made to achieve mass inoculation and Robert and Daniel Sutton, 2 humble surgeons, claimed to have inoculated around 400,000 persons in a period of 30 years. Though inoculation was a highly successful means of providing immunity, it was not without its risks and some of those inoculated, occasionally developed a serious attack of the disease and died. It was against this background that Edward Jenner of Berkeley in Gloucestershire came on the scene. Jenner, a clergyman's son, was an English country doctor who performed inoculation.

To appreciate Jenner's contribution it is necessary to understand the difference between inoculation and vaccination. Inoculation involved taking some "matter" (pus) from a smallpox pustule of a patient and transferring it, through a scratch, into the patient to be inoculated. This induced a, hopefully, relatively mild

attack of the disease in the recipient but provided subsequent immunity. Vaccination, on the other hand, involved injecting a small amount of "matter" from a milder but related disease (in this case it was cowpox), which then conferred immunity without submitting the patient to the risk of developing smallpox.

Jenner had learned that among the country folk of his native Gloucestershire it was known that cowpox, a cattle disease that was occasionally contracted by humans and particularly milkmaids, conferred immunity against smallpox; but cowpox was a mild disease. Jenner thought it might be possible to inject some of the "matter" from a cowpox pustule into a human, thus providing immunity from smallpox in a much safer way than by inoculation with smallpox matter. He sought the advice of his former teacher, the famous London surgeon John Hunter, who responded, "Why just think? Why not do the experiment? And so, on 14 May 1796, Jenner inoculated 8 year old James Phipps with some matter taken from a cowpox pustule of a milk-maid called Sarah Nelmes. Six weeks later, he inoculated the boy with smallpox matter. There was no effect whatever and Jenner concluded that the earlier cowpox inoculation had provided the boy with immunity. Further experiments confirmed his conclusion and he published his momentous findings in 1788 in a paper called "An Inquiry into the Causes and Effects ... of the cowpox". The end result was that in 1840 inoculation with smallpox became illegal. But acceptance of the benefits of vaccination were by no means universal. William Tebb was a political radical who wrote 2 books attacking what he perceived to be the evil of vaccination and, in the USA, an anti-vaccination society was founded. However, in 1853 the Vaccination Acts were passed and vaccination became compulsory. Tebb commented that "a more wretched and obnoxious edict has not been foisted on the English speaking race since the Fugitive Slave Law". Tebb had a great deal more to say in the same vein, extolling the virtues of improving sanitation over those of vaccination as a means of reducing infectious diseases. Nevertheless, compulsory vaccination became law and children of the writer's generation and earlier were vaccinated in infancy against smallpox and will have a small scar as evidence as, indeed, does the writer. Ultimately, and despite Tebb's views, vaccination proved to be so successful and so safe that it eventually led to the disappearance of smallpox which has now been declared by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to have been eradicated.

John Zorab

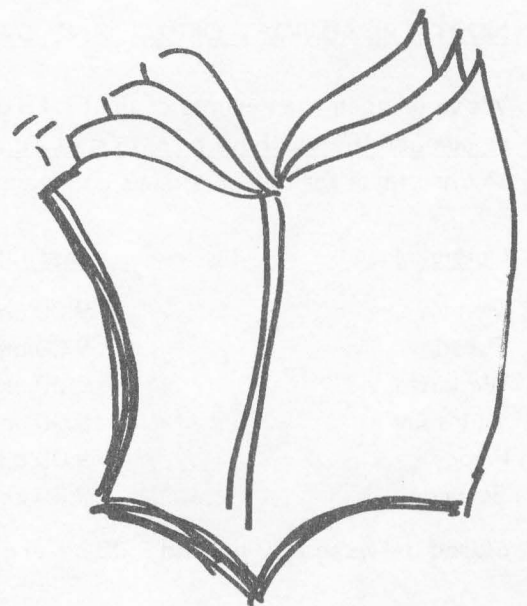
### COOKING THROUGH THE SEASONS IN IRON ACTON

There's 20 shopping days to Christmas ..... But don't panic!

It's not too late to order a copy or two of everyone's favourite cookbook to pop in your stocking or under the Christmas tree.

The initial run has sold extremely well and a second is underway.

Copies are available to order from Fiona Bourns (228993), Alison Lovell (228100) or the School Office (228322) and will also be on sale at the School Christmas Fayre being held on Saturday, 3 December from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm.



## THE ACTONIANS

This issue should hit the streets of Iron Acton just in time for late-comers to book their seats for the Actonians' production of *The Cherry Orchard*. Checkhov's marvellous, poignant, comedy. Russian plays are often thought of as "all doom and gloom" - but this one isn't. I have fond memories of watching Lesley Phillips perform in a production at Bath.

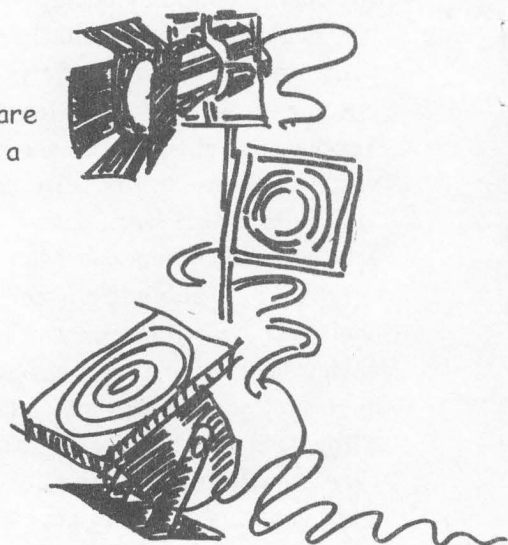
John Adams and Lesley Keetley have been driving over the bridge from Newport twice a week since mid-August to direct it and with a fairly large cast we have all been very much involved. It's not only the actors on stage who resemble ducks gliding over the water while a crowd of maniacs are paddling away back stage; working on design, construction, props, lighting, sound, etc, etc, etc. I've been in charge of costumes - which isn't always easy as the Actonians seem to breed tall men! Mike, David, Ray, Matthew, Steve, Rob ..... and talking of Rob Pardoe (the tallest of the tall), in October a crowd of us travelled to Weston Super Mare for the "West Country Oscars" (otherwise known as The Rose Bowl Awards") as he was nominated for the third consecutive year. This time it was for Best Supporting Actor as Stanley in *Run for your Wife*.

Although we seem to be attracting a steady stream of new members, we are always happy to welcome more! If anyone is interested please do give me a call (on 228243) or turn up on Wednesday evenings at the Parish Hall.

Another way of looking at what we do is by visiting our website at [www.actonians.co.uk](http://www.actonians.co.uk). Ray Bulmer does a brilliant job and you can see photos of nearly all previous productions as well as our current project. Yes.... Some of us have "matured" a little.

Enough of the past! 2006 starts off with Simon Carney's production of *Seven Women* by JM Barrie for the festivals in Chipping Sodbury and Cheltenham in February and March. This will be followed by Margaret Bulmer's production of *Trivial Pursuits* by Frank Vickery on 18, 19 and 20 May.

Ann Aplin



## NORTH ROAD POST OFFICE AND STORES

We've all seen the reports of Post Office closures, can we please ask all inhabitants of Iron Acton parish to remember that we have a Post Office and Stores and that we should all be using this, especially in the run up to Christmas for all our stamps and mailing. Why not tear out this slip and pin it onto your notice board?

| <u>Opening Hours</u> | <u>Post Office</u> | <u>Stores</u>     |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Monday               | 9.00 am - 5.30 pm  | 6.00 am - 5.30 pm |
| Tuesday              | 9.00 am - 5.30 pm  | 6.00 am - 5.30 pm |
| Wednesday            | 9.00 am - 5.30 pm  | 6.00 am - 6.00 pm |
| Thursday             | 9.00 am - 5.30 pm  | 6.00 am - 5.30 pm |
| Friday               | 9.00 am - 5.30 pm  | 6.00 am - 5.30 pm |
| Saturday             | 9.00 am - 12.30 pm | 6.00 am - 6.00 pm |

Closed between 1.00 pm and 2.00 pm and also on Sundays.

*If you're new to Iron Acton, and live the Bristol rather than Yate side and are unsure where to find the PO, head towards Yate, at the roundabout past Q8 garage turn left, at the first set of traffic lights also turn left - you're now in North Road. The PO is along on your right (just before the school).*

## CHRISTMAS FAYRE

At Iron Acton Parish Hall  
Saturday, 19 November at 2.30 pm

Children's Corner  
Home Produce  
Tombola  
Cakes  
Gifts  
Books  
White Elephant  
Refreshments



Come and See Father Christmas!

In Aid of Church Funds

### FOCAL POYNTZ 2006

We've already set the distribution weekends for Focal Poyntz in 2006, these will be:

**Saturday 25/Sunday 26 March**

**Saturday 29/Sunday 30 July**

**Saturday 18/Sunday 19 November**

The aim is to have the magazines distributed, at the latest, by the dates given above. We hope that by printing them now it will give our contributors an idea of the time frame to include when compiling their reports ..... and we also know that people and organisations like to be able to advertise their events in the magazine so by printing the above now it will give greater advance notice to enable this to happen.

Letters reminding organisations that their contributions will be required should be sent out by 22 January.

Our meeting to review this winter issue and to review the contributions and articles received will take place on Thursday, 16 February (we need this fairly early as photocopies of the articles are taken to Maureen to do the drawings to accompany the articles).

The final proof reading meeting will take place the week commencing Monday, 6 March and it's ready to go to the printers that weekend ..... All the copies will be collected from Oldbury and taken to all of the distributors by Sunday, 19 March ready for distribution by the end of the following weekend.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

There have been several distraction burglaries in South Gloucestershire recently. The offenders have pretended to be water board officials to gain entrance to the victims' property. The offenders are believed to be 2 white males, 30-50 years old, clean shaven and may have an Irish accent. It's believed they may be driving a Ford Escort with the registration number ending 03UVX.

There has also been a spate of dwelling burglaries and breaks to sheds and garages in the Laden Brook area. The majority have been through insecure rear doors and windows and the hinges of the sheds have been targeted. The offenders are believed to be a white female and a white male, late 20's to early 30's, the male is stocky with a swallow tattoo on his neck. They have been seen in a K reg white Rover.

Please tell neighbours and friends (especially vulnerable, elderly residents) these offenders are in operation.

Always check the identity of callers and always use the doorstep code: STOP, CHAIN, CHECK.

If you see a vehicle similar to or matching either description please call the police immediately on 999.

## ICE - IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Following on from the item in the last edition where people were advised to key the word "ICE" into their mobile phones and then follow it with the details of the person or persons to contact in an emergency, could I give the following additional hints to ensure that the system is used to its best advantage:

- 1 Make sure your ICE partner has a list of people to contact on your behalf - including place of work.
- 2 Make sure your ICE number is one that's easy to contact, eg no good using a home number for someone who works full time.
- 3 Make sure your ICE partner knows of any medical condition that could affect your emergency treatment, eg allergies or current medication.
- 4 If you're under 18 your ICE contact needs to be a parent or guardian authorised to make decisions on your behalf, eg should you need a life or death operation.
- 5 Should your ICE contact be deaf then prefix the number with ICETEXT.

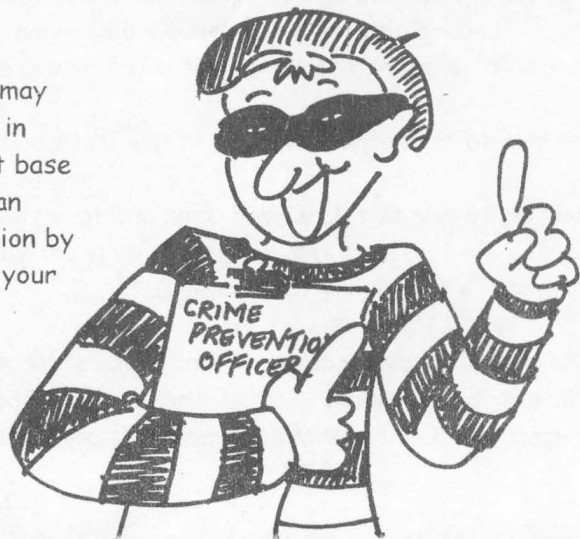
## SOME INFORMATION ON WHEN TO DIAL 999

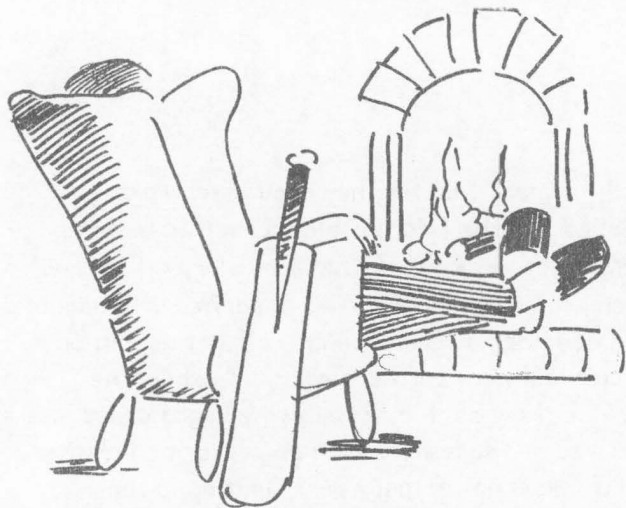
- A If there is a danger to life or risk of injury being caused; such as a serious road accident or assault.
- B If a crime's in progress, eg robbery, burglary or theft and the offender is still at, or has only just left, the area.
- C If the immediate attendance of a police officer is necessary - such as someone acting suspiciously and about to commit a crime.

Please remember that if you dial 999 from a mobile you may end up with the call being answered by a police operator in another part of the country (this is due to the different base stations used by the phone companies). If you do make an emergency call from a mobile please begin the conversation by telling the operator where you are phoning from so that your call is dealt with by the appropriate force.

Finally, if you have an enquiry that isn't an emergency, contact the Police by telephoning 0845 4567000.

Jack Russell / Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator





### IRON ACTON CRICKET CLUB (WINTER 2005)

It may be mid-winter when you're reading this, but what a summer it was for cricket! Who will forget those nail-biting edge-of-the-seat finishes .... and the result! Such was the excitement and intensity of the matches that people were ringing up friends and relations from afar to marvel in the outcome. If you've no idea what I'm talking about then you've clearly never witnessed a match between ourselves and local rivals Tortworth. This was one final win that capped a short, but excellent, season.

The winter indoor league has started again and we got off to a roaring start in our first game. Unfortunately the opposition got off to an even more roaring start when it was their turn to bat and they piled on the runs for what turned out to be a comfortable victory for them in the end.

Whether you prefer fast-paced cricket in the confined space of a school sports hall or whether you like to enjoy a slightly more relaxed game outdoors on a warm summer's evening then Iron Acton Cricket Club has a place waiting for you.

Chris Bradley / Chairman / (228559)

### THE FRIENDS OF NORTH ROAD SCHOOL

The Friends of North Road School would like to say a very warm welcome to our new headteacher, Mr Handley who took over the post in September this year. He's already made a great impression on the school and has many ideas for improvements that he would like to make. These include a total revamp for the school hall - including painting the walls, having curtains or blinds made for all the windows and a projector board which can be used for PowerPoint presentations to the children. Mr Handley ran in the Bristol Half Marathon in early October in aid of the school and raised over £300 in sponsorship. He completed the run in just under 3 hours.

The school will be holding their annual Christmas Fair on Friday, 2 December. This will take place from 2.00 pm in the School Hall. There will be lots of things for all the children to make and do and people from the local community are welcome to come along. There will be tea, coffee and home made cakes available - as well as local produce to purchase.

The Friends of the School will be holding a quiz evening on Friday, 3 February in the School Hall. Doors will open at 7.00 pm with the quiz starting at 7.30 pm. Entry for a team will be £5.00 - which can include up to 4 adults and there's no restriction on the number of children in each team.

If you would like any details about the Friends of North Road School, or further information on any of our events, please feel free to contact Julie Robinson (secretary of the Friends) on 01454 850210.

Julie Robinson / Secretary - 01454 850210

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Friends of North Road School  
Christmas Fayre  
Friday, 2 December at 2.00 pm  
In the School Hall  
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.....



## FASHION FOR THE RETIRED DOCTOR

Not long ago, a general practitioner, who was a good friend, retired. Meeting him soon afterwards I asked him how he was managing. "I suppose it's ok", he replied but the first problem I met was, what should one wear when one gets up? A suit seems unnecessary but weekend clothes look sloppy if it is not a weekend and would invite the comment "He didn't take long to go to pieces". This is particularly true of one's ex-patients. For his entire working life my GP friend had had no such problem. He got up, put on a clean, plain shirt, selected a tie (nothing flashy), put on a suit and went to the surgery. In short, he dressed in the way that his patients probably expected to see their doctor. Possibly he might dress less formally at the weekend - but that only came round once a week. There were certain prescribed clothes for golf, tennis, squash and fishing but they just look silly if one is not actually participating in the relevant sport. Similarly, one can get away with all sorts of outlandish gear if one has taken up painting - but only as long as one is actually sitting in front of an easel. Of course, tweeds, a Barbour, green wellies and even a cap are ok for country pursuits but these usually occupy a very limited time.

I found the same problem when I retired. Ever since joining my first prep school (aged 8), I had started the day wearing a shirt and tie with the appropriate jacket, trousers, socks and shoes. Throughout my school days and in the army, uniform solved all problems of what to wear. Habits, however, are deeply ingrained and, as a medical student, I continued to wear shirt, tie, jacket and trousers - although I would wear a suit for "occasions". The habit (in its literal sense) continued after qualifying. Apart from operating theatre gear, it was usually a shirt, tie and a suit but, daringly, there were times when the suit would give way to a blazer and cavalry twills but always a tie with a handkerchief in the breast pocket which, of course, should never, under any circumstances, match the tie. This is social death. Some of my continental friends, who are given to dressing very casually, have postulated that I was born with my umbilical cord around my neck and have never felt comfortable since without something around my neck. There is an element of truth in this.

Some of my colleagues seem able to discard the "doctor image" after retirement. I cannot, neither do I wish to. Whether it's a chance of an upgrade when flying or a matter of simple good manners in everyday life, I prefer to be regarded as properly dressed. I have never worn jeans or a T-shirt in my life. They may be ok for others but they are not for me and I am certainly not going to start now. So what should the retired doctor put on in the morning? For me it is easy. For the 77 years that have elapsed since the umbilical cord was removed from around my neck, I continue to wear a shirt, tie, jacket and trousers.

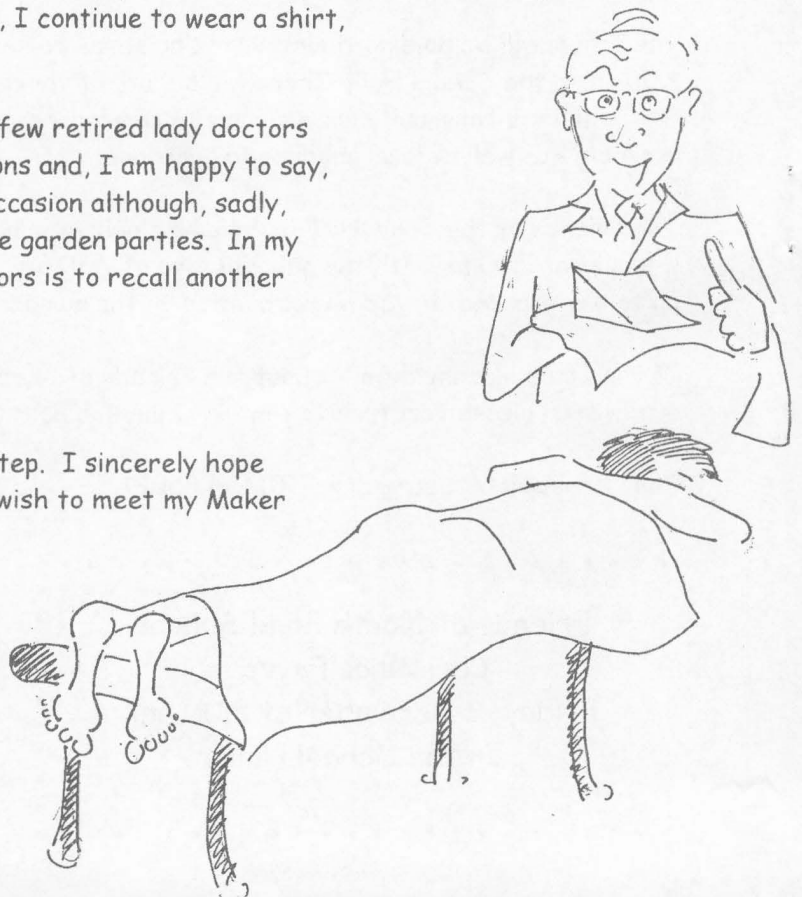
But, I hear you ask, what about the ladies? The few retired lady doctors that I know, I tend to meet only on social occasions and, I am happy to say, are always attired in a manner suitable for the occasion although, sadly, hats are rare except at weddings, Ascot or Palace garden parties. In my view, the bottom line for retired gentlemen doctors is to recall another Wilde quotation viz.

*A well-tied tie is the first serious step in life\**

That being so, it should also be the last serious step. I sincerely hope that I shall be buried wearing a tie. I would not wish to meet my Maker without being properly dressed.

John Zorab / Consultant Anaesthetist (retired)

\* Quotation is from the Importance of Being Ernest, 1895, by Oscar Wilde





'Earth laughs in  
flowers'

Ralph Waldo Emerson  
(1803-1882)



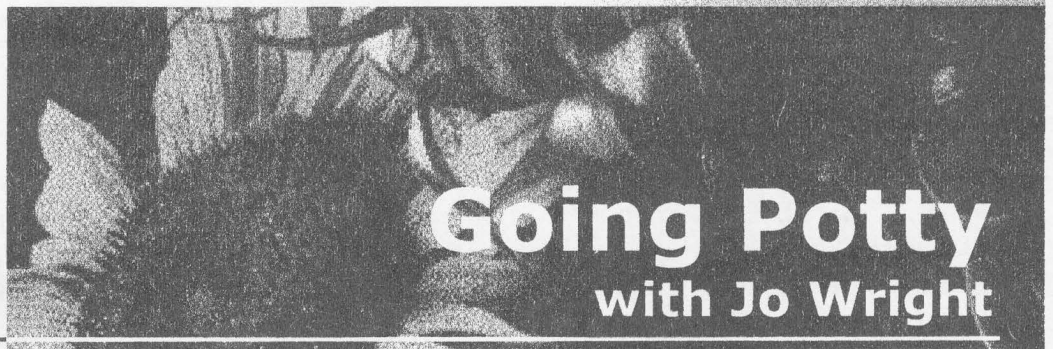
**A rose by any other  
name...**

Botanical names may be baffling at times, but with a little knowledge about their meaning, they can be quite useful

|                     |                            |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>bellus</i>       | <i>pretty</i>              |
| <i>dentatus</i>     | <i>toothed</i>             |
| <i>gracilis</i>     | <i>slender</i>             |
| <i>laciniatus</i>   | <i>fringe like</i>         |
| <i>mollis</i>       | <i>soft, tender</i>        |
| <i>nanus</i>        | <i>dwarf</i>               |
| <i>repens</i>       | <i>creeping, prostrate</i> |
| <i>sativus</i>      | <i>cultivated</i>          |
| <i>sempervirens</i> | <i>evergreen</i>           |
| <i>sinensis</i>     | <i>from China</i>          |

The following list outlines the plant origins of some of our modern medicines:

- Aspirin - Meadowsweet
- Atropine—deadly nightshade
- Morphine and codeine—Opium poppy
- Colchicine—for Gout - *Colchicum autumnale* (autumn crocus)
- Lignocaine—a local anaesthetic—barley
- Salicin - an anti-rheumatic - *Salix* (willow)



# Going Potty with Jo Wright

## The Garden Calendar

### December

Plant shallots, Japanese onion sets and garlic

Divide and plant rhubarb

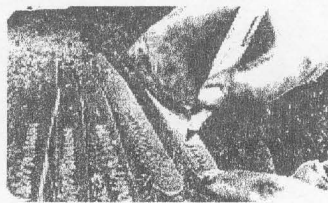
Sow an overwintering broad bean such as *Aquadulce*

For winter salad in an unheated greenhouse or under a cloche choose a 'cut and come again' mix or an overwintering cultivar such as Winter density

Prune currants and gooseberries after leaf fall. Use disease free prunings as hardwood cuttings

Continue to cut herbaceous perennials

Grass will continue to grow if temperatures are above 6°C. Raise your cutting height by 5mm at least



### March

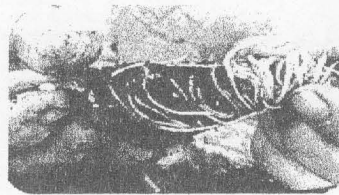
Uncover forced rhubarb crowns

Plant early potatoes towards the end of the month

Most vegetable crops can be sown from March onwards

Start planting herbaceous perennials

Finish pruning Summer or



### January

Prune apple and pear trees - removing dead, diseased and crossing wood

Mulch fruit trees, bushes and canes with organic matter

Place cloches over strawberry plants for an early crop

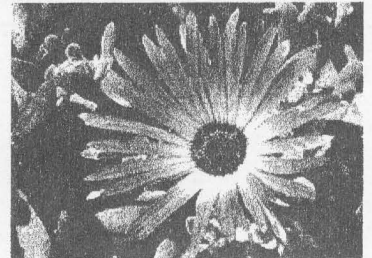
Start forcing rhubarb by placing a large bucket over the crown to encourage fresh, pink shoots

Did over heavy clay soils leaving the clods for frosts to break down

Ensure that straw or fleece is protecting tender plants overwintering outdoors

Sow seeds of *Begonia*, *Lobelia*, *Salvis* and *Pelargonium*

Check autumn sown sweet peas in coldframes for mouse damage



### February

Chit potato tubers in a light, cool, frost-free place

Divide bulbs such as Snow-drop after flowering

Prune *Wisteria*

Sow greenhouse-grown tomatoes and cucumbers in a propagator

This is the time to graft fruit trees

Continue to plant bare root deciduous hedging plants and trees



## IRON ACTON PARISH COUNCIL

### Message in a Bottle

PC Bembridge and Sgt Osbourne attended a recent Parish Council meeting to inform councillors of a police initiative that's been launched entitled "Message in a Bottle". The idea is that any household in South Gloucestershire can obtain a specially printed/market bottle into which they place information on whom to contact (with telephone number) in an emergency, details of any medical conditions, etc. Should the police have to gain entry, or if there's been a fire apparently the fridge would be one of the very last items to be destroyed, then they immediately know where to go to find the contact details, the information is very easily located and important time is saved. A sticker is also provided and this should be placed on the front of the fridge to alert the emergency services that one of these bottles is located inside.

50 leaflets explaining this scheme have been ordered by the Chairman of the Parish Council and he also has a store of the bottles at his home. Please contact him on 228515 if you require a bottle or want further information.

### Wotton Town Cinema

Ann Aplin has agreed to be the local contact person for the charity operating Wotton Town Cinema. She will be placing fliers on notice boards and can arrange for e-mails to be received regarding events, listings, etc. The grand opening takes place on Saturday, 12 November 2005.

### Help Required

The Parish Council is trying to trace the families of 2 people buried in Iron Acton Cemetery.

The first person is Esther Ann Lewis. Esther was living at 5 North Road, Stoke Gifford, Bristol at the time of her death. She was buried on 16 September 1966 and was aged 69 when she died.

The second person is Ada Helen Smith. Ada was living in Chaingate Lane at the time of her death. She was buried on 18 April 1958 and was aged 85 when she died.

If anyone has any information relating to these people please contact Rachel Weldrake, the Clerk to the Parish Council at Church Cottage, High Street, Iron Acton (228674).

## RECOMMENDED LAST POSTING DATES

### UK Last Posting Dates

|            |             |  |
|------------|-------------|--|
| Wednesday, | 14 December | Standard parcels and mail order return parcels |
| Saturday,  | 17 December | Second class                                   |
| Tuesday,   | 20 December | First class                                    |
| Thursday,  | 22 December | Special delivery                               |

### International Airmail

|            |             |  |
|------------|-------------|--|
| Friday,    | 9 December  | South & Central America, Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Middle East, Far East, New Zealand, Australia. |
| Monday,    | 12 December | Japan, USA, Canada, Eastern Europe   |
| Wednesday, | 14 December | Western Europe   |



..... Although the advice, as always, is don't leave everything until the last moment!

## ACTON AID

Acton Aid is delighted at the level of support from parishioners for its recent events. The second Summer Proms in the Meadows was a fantastic evening - with the introduction of amplification proving a sound investment! Our thanks go to all those whose help was essential in staging the event - particularly the members of the BBC Radio Bristol Returners' Orchestra whose skill and enthusiasm set the tone for the evening. We were also delighted with the generosity of the audience in contributing over £1350 to the bucket collection for the Frenchay Breast Care Centre, particularly as this sum was matched by a gift aided private donation!



Our Deputy Chairman, Mike Sutton, has declared his intent to stage a third prom next summer ..... so look out for further details in the spring edition.

By the time this edition lands on your doorstep we will have staged our usual bonfire and firework evening on 5 November and listened to Jo Wright give the latest in our series of talks. The previous talk, given by Tim Spare to a packed Marshall Room audience in September, contrasted the Spare family's 1970s tour of duty in the Solomon Islands with recent visits by Tim and his daughter, Ellie. Thanks to Tim for his excellent talk and to Ellie for the technical support (which saw the many superb photos presented in PowerPoint format - a first for Acton Aid). The retiring collection raised £140 which will be used to provide reading books for a school in the Solomons.

Any parishioner who wants to find out more about Acton Aid is invited to contact one 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, John Wright on 228373 or Secretary, Ashley Mee on 228540.

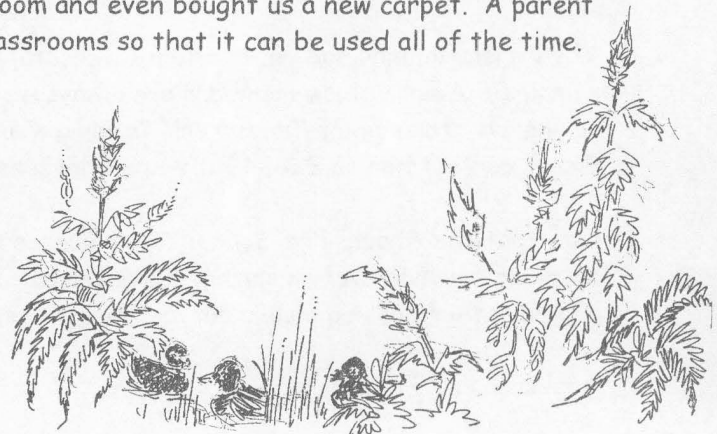
Ashley Mee / Secretary / 228540

## IRON ACTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

The weeks are flying by. The new Reception pupils are settling in well and everyone is busy preparing for Harvest.

Since I last wrote, the school has been transformed. The younger pupils have moved to the outdoor classroom and now have a safe, enclosed area to play and work in. During the summer holidays members of Acton Aid completely redecorated the largest classroom and even bought us a new carpet. A parent and grandparent moved the ICT suite into one of the classrooms so that it can be used all of the time.

For 2 weeks in September Jane's Ponds worked hard to change a scruffy patch of grass and mud into a beautiful pond area with plants and a viewing platform. On the final day the pupils and staff had an exciting morning "helping" the fire brigade to fill it up. The finishing touch is a wooden bench decorated with the carved signatures of the Year 6 pupils who left in July.



Jill Bandeaux / Headteacher

## FINALLY, WHEN CHRISTMAS IS ALL OVER, THE FP GUIDE TO RECYCLING ....

When you're left surrounded by all the debris of Christmas, but you want to do your bit for the environment or help organisations raise money, what do you do?

### Stamps

As always, if anyone wants to give used postage stamps to Lynne Blanchard (Rose Cottage, Latteridge Road) she is happy to forward them to Oxfam or you can take them to Oxfam shops in Yate or Thornbury.

Can you just remember to cut around the stamps leaving at least half an inch of envelope around the stamp?

### Christmas Cards

Take used Christmas cards to any Tesco Store or any W H Smith High Street Store across the UK. They are collecting them on behalf of the Woodland Trust.

All stores should have containers where you deposit the cards. These are then recycled. In 2003 43 million and in 2004 58 million cards were recycled. They want to do even better this time.

Just recycling 1 Christmas card saves enough electricity to allow 5 people to watch the Queen's Christmas Day Message!

**This scheme is only available: Monday, 2 to Tuesday, 31 January 2006**

### Christmas Trees

- \* Take them to a Sita "Sort It" Site at
  - Collett Way, Great Western Business Park, Yate
  - Station Road, Little Stoke
  - Carson's Road, Mangotsfield
  - Short Way (Off Midland Way), Thornbury

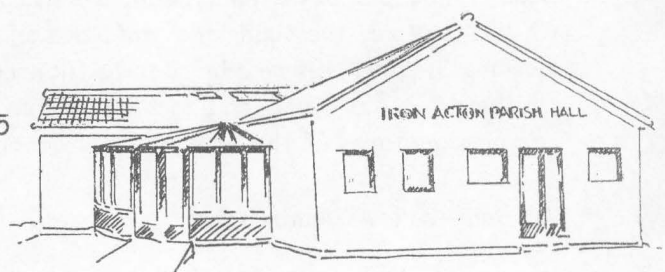
Further details can be obtained from the websites for South Gloucestershire Council and the Woodland Trust.

## IRON ACTON PARISH HALL

The Parish Hall has had yet another successful financial year and the Committee for the coming year remains the same. New members are always welcome - particularly anyone who would be interested in taking over the role of Treasurer! Training would be given by the outgoing Treasurer, Tony Pullen. Please contact him on 228949 if you are interested.

Now that the Abacus Pre-School has relocated the Hall is available for hire every morning. For information on this and any other booking please contact Meryl Cook on 228405

Angela Guest / Secretary



## FOCAL POYNTZ INFORMATION

### Your Focal Poyntz Team is:

Lynne Blanchard  
228566

Maureen Blake

Hazel Dron  
228509

Paula Evans  
228419

Stella Taylor  
228417

Barrie & Rona Wright  
228247

### Deliveries are ably carried out by:

Sheila Alsop

Roy Hubbard

Lynne Blanchard

Ashley Mee

The Bradley Family

Sue Shepherd

Hazel Dron

The Smith Family

Elizabeth Edwards

Laura Walters

Andrew Gowen

Pete Wedgewood

John Griffen

Mike Wheeler

Chris Heal

Barrie and 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 (228247) - our advertising "whiz" (£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 (and also for the drawing on our cover).

### PRINTING:

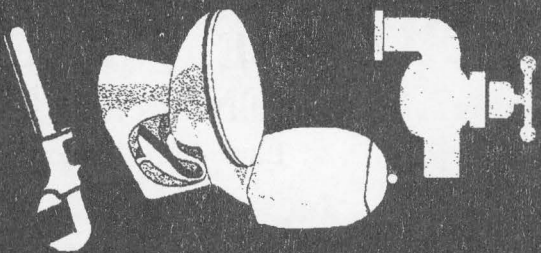
As always, our printing has been undertaken by Oldbury Deckers Youth Club and we say a big "thank you" to them.

### COVER:

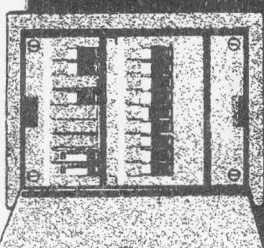
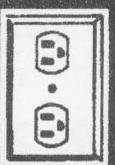
Eileen Hughes is the lovely lady responsible for our cover - which shows Acton Court with a distinctly Christmassy feel!

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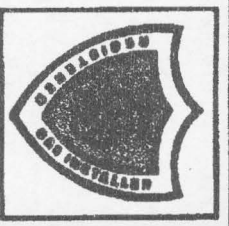


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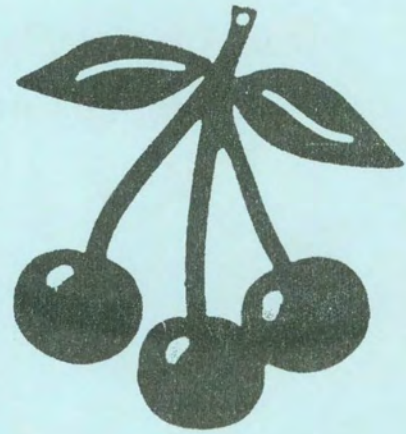
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THE

CHERRY



ORCHARD

BY

ANTON CHEKHOV

WED 30 NOV - SAT 3 DEC  
(7:30PM)

Tickets: Wed £5; Thurs - Sat £6



Contact Godfrey Laundry (01454-714822)

