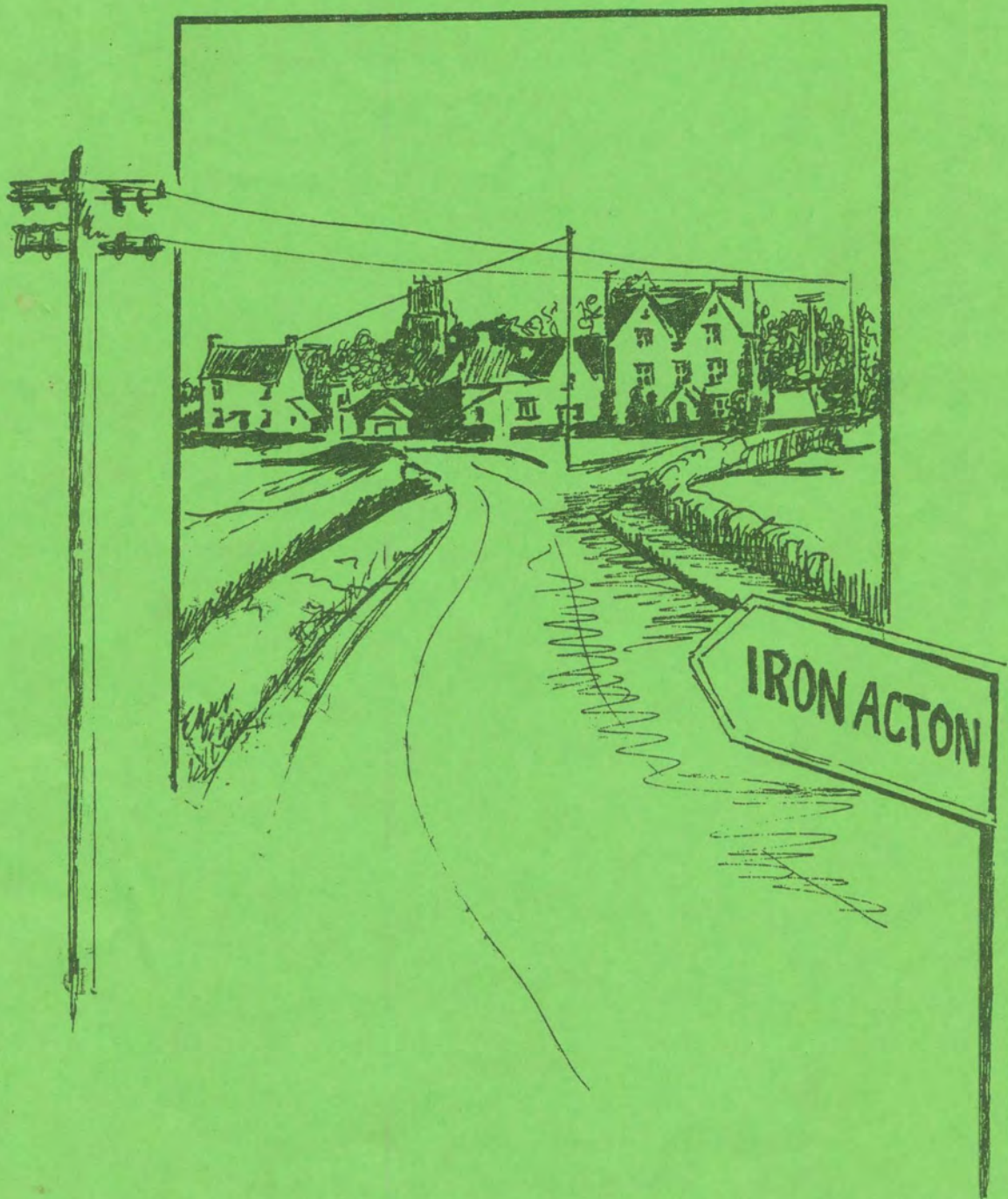


71  
**Focal**



**Poyntz**

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# Summer

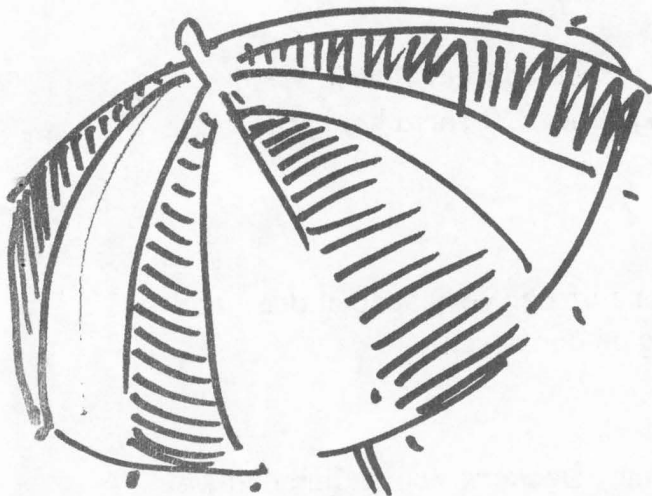
ISSUE No: 71

Welcome to the latest edition of our magazine.

Focal Poyntz, as we never tire of saying, relies on your contributions to make this into a relevant magazine for the parish of Iron Acton. Please continue to keep your articles flowing ..... and if anyone has an idea for an article for future issues please contact one of the editorial team - who will welcome you with open arms!

Our next edition is due out towards the end of November and should contain details of all the Christmas events that are being planned by our local organisations.

However, in the meantime, we hope you enjoy our latest offering.



## 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  
Lynne Blanchard  
The Bradley Family  
Hazel Dron  
Elizabeth Edwards  
Andrew Gowen  
John Griffin  
Chris Heal

Roy Hubbard  
Ashley Mee  
Sue Shepherd  
The Smith Family  
The Walters Family  
Pete Wedgewood  
Mike Wheeler  
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:

Our thanks to Mrs Betty Parker who kindly produced our cover ..... way back in 1985 but we thought it was too good to assign to history and have brought it back 21 years later!

## THE GURKHA WELFARE TRUST

Acton Aid recently made a contribution to the Gurkha Welfare Trust in memory of Melville Dron who died suddenly at the end of October last year.

Melville became a trustee of the Gurkha Welfare Trust when he retired from practice in 1994. He joined a group of senior army officers, most of whom had served with the Gurkhas, and his role was primarily to reorganise the financial affairs of the trust whose purpose is to provide pensions and welfare for retired Gurkha soldiers and their widows who had insufficient service to be eligible for a British army pension.

Since the early nineteenth century the British army has recruited from these fierce, brave soldiers from the state of Gorka in North East India, now known as Nepal, and they have participated in all major campaigns including both world wars. They are famous - and feared - for their close combat weapon the kukri, a curved sharp knife which is greatly effective in the face of the enemy.

Nepal is a small country wedged between India to the south and Tibet and China to the north. It has a population of about 22 million and is considered to be the fourth poorest country in the world. Because of the natural barrier of the Himalayas most social and trading contact is with India. The main religion is Hindu but there are now a large number of Buddhist refugees from Tibet in Nepal. The country is beautiful, mountainous with deep ravines and long rivers but suffers natural disaster such as earthquakes and floods frequently. There are no natural resources and in the hills, where the only transport is on foot, subsistence farming is the only means of survival. Medical services barely exist, the average life expectancy is 53 and the infant mortality rate is 10%. State education is limited and those children who are able to go to school often walk very long distances over mountainous terrain to get there.

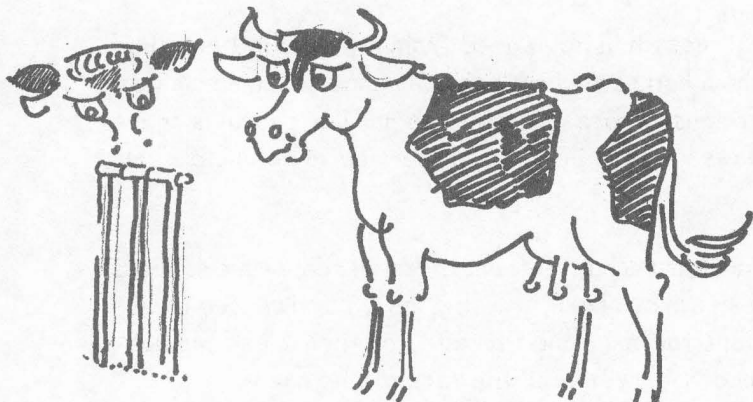
The Nepalese people are proud to be associated with the British armed forces and there is much rivalry among the village boys when recruiting takes place. It is considered a great honour to have a member of the family in the Gurkhas and there is also financial benefit to the families as the Gurka soldiers send part of their salaries home. These days Gurka soldiers serving a term of 15 years are entitled to a regular army pension but there remain many short service men from World War Two and subsequent campaigns who do not qualify and who often suffer disability and live in poverty. The Gurkha Welfare Trust exists to pay a small monthly pension to such old soldiers, several of whom were awarded the Victoria Cross for valour. They receive this from the welfare stations also set up by the Trust and often being carried in baskets on the backs of their sons or grandsons so that they can "make their mark" on receipt of their meagre allowance.

Today Nepal is in the grip of civil war with the Maoists controlling large rural areas of the country. They often prey on Gurkha families as they know they are likely to have money which is confiscated at gunpoint. As a result of the unrest there is much corruption and major disruption caused by the recent assassination of the royal family has resulted in distrust of the present monarch.

Melville enjoyed almost 10 years working with the Trust during which time he visited Nepal and was able to observe the living conditions and lifestyle of these cheerful and courageous people who are so proud of their association with Great Britain. Through their bravery and sacrifice they gave much to this country so it is therefore fitting that in their time of need we can help to make their hard lives more tolerable. Melville would have been delighted to know that Iron Acton continues to support the Gurkhas in this worthy cause.

## IRON ACTON CRICKET CLUB

We're over halfway through our season and, due to playing in extremes of weather (including the odd pollen tornado), we've only lost one match to the weather and neither Duckworth or Lewis have had a look-in.



As he manages to do every year, our fixtures secretary has added a new game to our short summer programme with the inclusion of Almondsbury CC. We were looking forward to playing on a surface that might best be described as, though perhaps not totally appropriate for a cricket pitch, a cut above our usual standard. However a herd of adventurous cows put paid to that and we had to relocate to a nearby artificial pitch.

This year we are playing in our 10<sup>th</sup> season since the club was founded and so we are looking to celebrate this anniversary by holding an "ancients versus moderns" cricket match where we would like as many former and current Iron Acton cricketers to take part. Arrangements are currently in progress and we hope to send out invites to as many people as we can track down but there may be a few names that we miss. The date has been fixed for Sunday, 10 September so if you have played for us at any time in the past or are considering playing for us any time in the future and haven't yet received an invite then please get in touch.

Oh, I don't think I've mentioned any results yet? Well ..... as often appears to have been the case in these last few years ..... we won our opening game!

Chris Bradley - Chairman / 228559

## FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

The children have had a very busy couple of months starting off with maypole dancing earlier this year. The children have made links with another school called Hannah More which is in Bristol. It is a multi-cultural school with some of the children from Somalia. The children from Iron Acton, Tracy Byrne and Katie Mansfield have been involved in teaching them maypole dancing and the children all danced together on May Day on the Village Green. Acton Aid has donated funds to enable the Hannah More School to purchase their own maypole. As a thank you, some children from Iron Acton spent the day at Hannah More learning about African dance and drumming.

By the time you read this the children will have held their Summer Fayre which, this year, had a football theme (of course). I hope some of you were able to come and join in the football fun and games. We hope to have a police helicopter land on the school field as the star attraction!

Our next main fundraising event is a barn dance and pig roast on Saturday, 23 September at the Parish Hall. Please come along - it should be a great night out.



Posters should be displayed soon with all the details and the proceeds from the event will go towards updating one of the classrooms - which is in desperate need of a facelift - to make it a much better environment for the children to learn in and the teachers to work in.

Thank you for everyone's support over the last few months. As a result we were able to purchase an interactive whiteboard for the school. This was great news as it was well ahead of schedule - we did not anticipate we would have enough funds until the end of the school year.

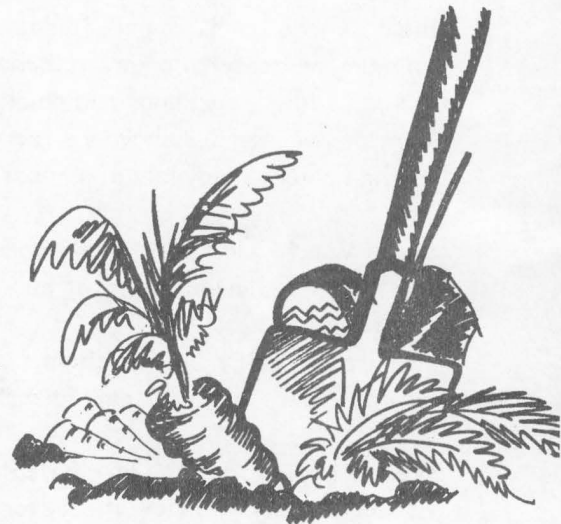
Finally the end of the summer term brings much excitement as the children look forward to the whole school trip, sports day and the long summer holiday ahead. However, this is always tinged with sadness as we say farewell to the children in Year 6. From everyone in the Friends we would like to wish Sadie Perks, Harry Huish, Ioni Bellis and Michael Evans lots of luck in moving on to their new schools in September.

Tracey Lynton-Jenkins / Secretary

### HORTICULTURAL SHOW

Saturday, 9 September is looming ever closer and the weather appears to be just about right for the keen gardener. We have had plenty of sunshine with the odd deluge of rain to keep things going. Mother Nature never ceases to amaze me when I watch the beautiful blossom on our apple trees set into tiny green apples.

Just outside our back door we have a magnificent redcurrant bush that always produces a bumper crop of currants each year. In previous years we have fought a running battle with the local bird and mouse population and even the presence of our cat did not deter those determined creatures. So this year we have put a net completely over the bush - which seems to have done the trick. However we now appear to have a problem with Gooseberry Sawfly that is munching its way through the leaves but every cloud has a silver lining - with the lack of leaves the currants appear to be ripening earlier than usual!



You should have received a copy of the Horticultural Show schedule through your door by now. If you have any queries or need further entry forms please get in touch with one of the committee members.

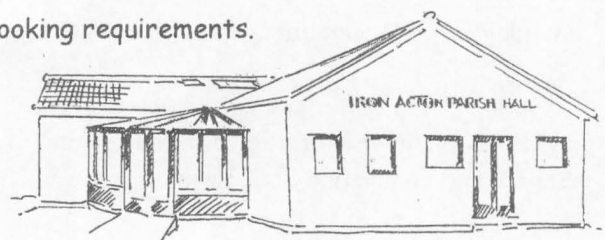
Paula Evans / 228419

### IRON ACTON PARISH HALL

Don't forget that Iron Acton Parish Hall provides a wonderful venue for parties, wedding receptions, conferences, etc. Preferential rates available for parishioners. Now looking even better with beautiful new curtains, a brand new cooker and much of the internal paintwork now gleaming!

Please contact Meryl Cook on 228405 to discuss your booking requirements.

Angela Guest - Secretary

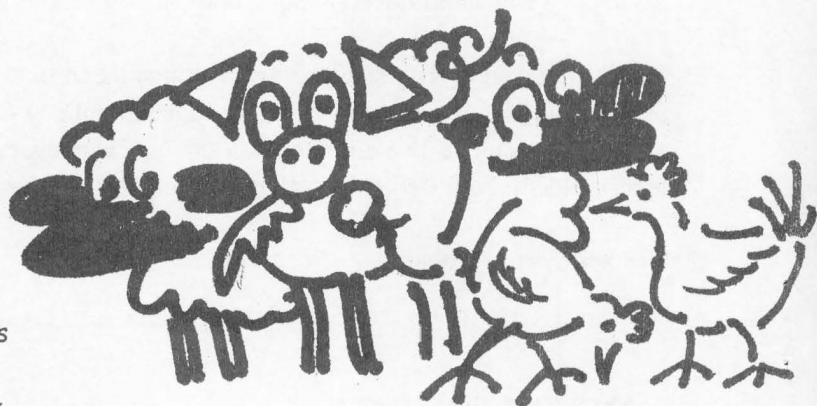


## NORTH ROAD LADIES CLUB

Since our last report in Focal Poyntz we have welcomed 2 new members to our club.

Our March meeting was very well attended when Bernie Holton gave a most interesting demonstration on felt making and many articles were for sale.

In April Pauline Dixon came along to explain how she and her husband had moved from Epsom to Inglestone Common to start organic farming. They keep pigs, sheep, chickens, geese and ducks (many rare breeds) and also keep bees, grow vegetables and have a farm shop. They both still work in London as well as running their 15 acre farm. Pauline told us they have an open day on Easter Monday afternoon when lambs can be cuddled, ducklings and chicks held, etc. Many of our members have visited their open day and had a very enjoyable afternoon.



Susan Marshfield had us in stitches from the beginning to the end of her talk at our May meeting when she told the hilarious story of her family's adventures during their first time aboard a yacht.

In June Mr V Bland spoke about how he first became involved with cider making. He brought tasters of his own ciders and also some French cider - the French cider is made by his son who now lives in France.

We are hoping that the lovely weather will continue for our evening coach trip in July when we will be visiting Beachley to view the Severn Princess and have our supper at the Old Ferry Inn.

Our 2006 charity bring and buy stall is always well supported each month and the proceeds will be donated at the end of the year to Yate Opportunity Group" (for children aged from 6 months to 5 years).

### St Peter's Hospice - Tea at Three

On Friday, 9 June people were invited to take part in Bristol's biggest tea party in aid of St Peter's Hospice. North Road Ladies Club participated in this event and tea and cakes were served between 1 pm and 5 pm in the garden at 341 North Road - along with a bring and buy stall and raffle. The weather was perfect for a garden party and £290 was raised for St Peter's Hospice funds.

A very big thank you to all those who supported this afternoon by coming for tea and cakes or making donations so that the contribution could be made to a most worthy cause.

Our programme for the remainder of 2006 is as follows:

Monday,	4 September	Slimbridge Soaps - Mrs Robin Williams
Monday,	2 October	Deep Sea Diving - talk and slides by Judith Goldsmith
Monday,	6 November	Our 39 <sup>th</sup> Birthday Party at the Codrington Arms, North Road
Monday,	4 December	Crafty Ideas - try your hand at making gifts for Christmas with Jean Drew - followed by our AGM and American Supper

Visitors are most welcome to join us at any of our meetings - which are held at North Road Primary School and commence at 7.30 pm.

June Rycroft - Secretary / 228668



## MAY DAY 2006

Well, didn't we have a good one this year?

Firstly, a big thank you to all the residents of the village and parish who helped make the day such a success. As a committee we are well aware of the disturbance and sometimes inconvenience that the day causes but we believe that the enjoyment and pleasure and the coming together of the parish far out-weigh the trouble.

The committee is delighted to announce that we raised in excess of £6,000 this year - with your help, of course. All these monies will be ploughed back into the parish in one form or another to help the organisations continue their causes.

This year the organisations involved in arranging the day were:

- \* Acton Aid
- \* St James the Less Church
- \* Iron Acton C of E VC Primary School
- \* North Road Primary School
- \* Actonians
- \* Parish Hall

We would also like to pass on our thanks to Simon McCoy who did a splendid job of crowning our May Queen and attendants. The photographs that appeared in the local newspapers the following week were delightful and Rob Pardoe from the Actonians did a sterling job as MC for the day, despite trouble with the microphone!

Paula Evans - Secretary

## NEWS FROM THE PEWS ..... DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday, 16 September

An Autumn Walk

- when the Outreach Team invites you to join them and walk the Iron Acton/Latteridge Circuit. Leaving the church at 10 am, following the footpaths to Latteridge for a welcome lunch break and then continuing back to Iron Acton. Further details from Di Heal on 228498

Saturday, 30 September

Harvest Supper and Barn Dance in the Parish Hall, commencing at 7.30 pm

Thursday, 19 October

An Autumn Concert

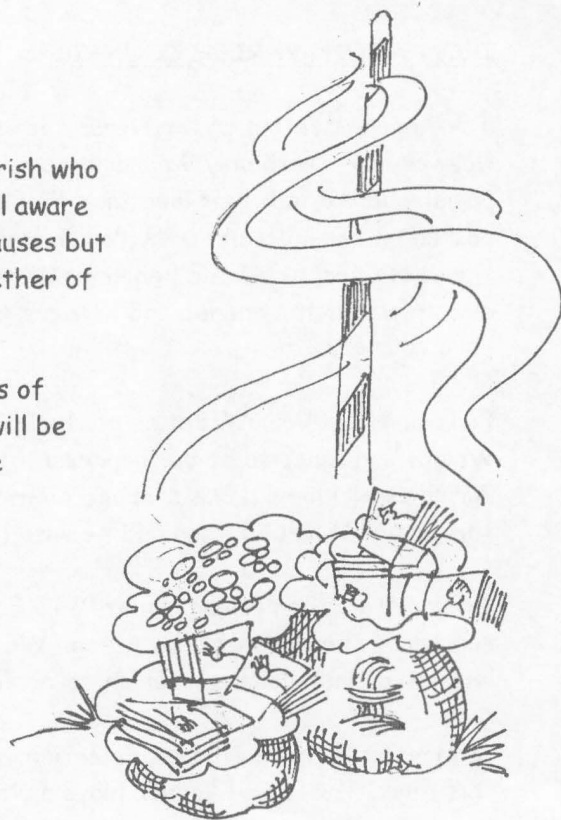
- Church opens at 6 pm for light refreshments, concert begins 7 pm. Featuring local talent: Samba Band and Gospel Choir from the Castle School, Jazz Band from Brimsham School, singers from Iron Acton School. Price: Absolutely **Free!!**

Sunday, 5 November

Roly the Clown is coming to town!  
4 pm in the church

Saturday, 18 November

Christmas Fayre in the Parish Hall commencing at 2.30 pm



## IRON ACTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Meeting of the Parish took place on Friday, 28 April 2006 in the Marshall Room. Attendance was very poor with only 9 parishioners being present. The Parish Council would welcome more input from parishioners at all their meetings. We would like to remind you that the agendas for all meetings are posted on the notice boards (Parish Hall Car Park and North Road School) and in the porch of St James the Less Church. At the beginning of every meeting there is time set aside for public participation. Please look at the agenda and if there is an item that interests you feel free to attend the meeting and have your say.

Following the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council Bob Sheppard continues to act as Chairman and Rona Wright continues to be our representative on the Parish Hall Committee. Peter Wedgewood remains a Parish Councillor but has stepped down from the office of Vice-Chairman. Peter Bellis has now taken over the role of Vice-Chairman and we wish him every success in his new role.

Arising from the resignation of Paula Evans earlier in the year there is a vacancy for a parish councillor to represent the ward of Iron Acton. We would like to thank Paula Evans for her years of service. Anyone interested in becoming a parish councillor should contact the clerk.

In May 2007 there will be an election and it is likely that more parish councillor vacancies will arise at this time. The Parish Council plays a vital role at local level by providing a link between parishioners and South Gloucestershire Council. It is also responsible for the cemetery, allotments, parish meadow and village greens. If the Parish Council is to continue then new prospective councillors must come forward when candidates for the election are sought early next year.

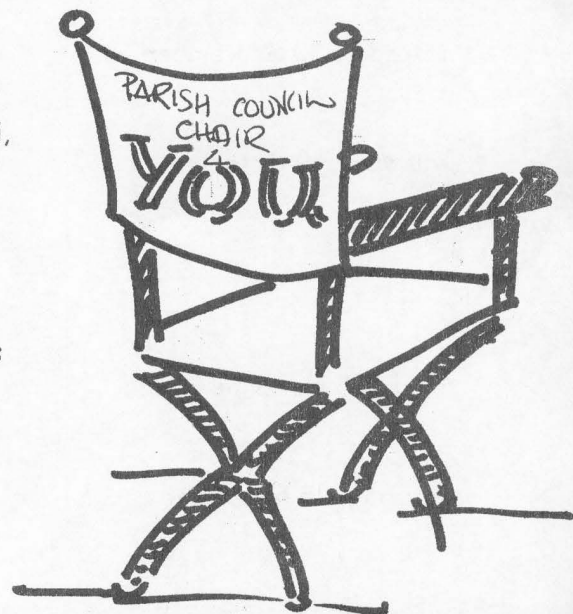
There is currently a vacancy for a parish council representative on the Board of School Governors for North Road Community Primary School. If anyone is interested in taking up this role please contact the clerk.

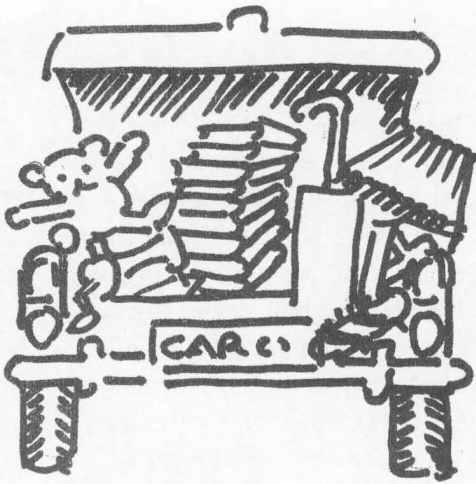
Regrettably very few parishioners attended the Remembrance Service at St James the Less Church last November. For those who were there it was apparent that the current war memorial is showing its age. The officiating minister had great difficulty reading the names inscribed on the wooden plaque which have faded over time. The Parish Council (subject to the approval of the PCC/diocese) is considering replacing the current memorial with a marble plaque in keeping with other memorials in the church. The likely cost of such a plaque will be in the region of £5,000. The Parish Council would like to hear your views on the above proposal.

The Parish Council has received a number of requests from parishioners who wish to see improvements to the facilities for children and young people in the Parish Meadow. The Parish Council would like to hear from any teenagers in the parish about the facilities they would like to see. The Parish Council is also considering purchasing some play equipment for younger children.

Finally, the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 gives parish councils the power to issue fixed penalties for litter, graffiti, fly posting and dog offences. The number of complains received in respect of dog fouling has increased considerably. Problem areas appear to be the cemetery, churchyard, allotments and Cassey. New signs have been ordered for the cemetery and allotments and a request has been submitted to South Gloucestershire Council to site a dog waste bin in the cemetery. Please pick up after your dogs otherwise you may find yourself being served with a fixed penalty notice - you have been warned!

Rachel Weldrake - Clerk / 228674





## FRIENDS OF NORTH ROAD SCHOOL

The Friends of North Road School have made a major start in the project to revamp the Main Hall in the school. The walls have been painted blue and yellow and we have had blinds made for the large windows. We would now like to purchase some new storage cupboards to really complete the hall. This has been a big project for the Friends - probably our largest to date.

Five mums are currently in training for the Bristol Half-Marathon - you may have seen them running along North Road or the surrounding area. Claire Witts, Paula Ford, Helen Blakeley, Heather Tillotson and Amanda King will be raising

funds for the friends by getting their families and friends to sponsor them at the event which takes place on Sunday, 17 September at 9.30 am, all supporters along the route will be gladly welcome or if you'd prefer to show your support by offering to sponsor please ring the school office on 01454 867788 or just send your sponsorship into the school office. All support will be gladly and happily accepted!

The Friends are also planning to hold a car boot sale on Sunday, 24 September. Set up time will be 8.00-8.30 am, with the event kicking off at 9.00 am. The charge will be £5 per car. We also hope, weather permitting of course, to have a tea and coffee stall and a BBQ. If you are interested in coming along please look for signs with details along the side of the school or, approximately 2 weeks before the event, there should be further information at the traffic lights at the end of North Road.

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 me (details below) or ring the school office on 01454 867788.

Julie Robinson - Secretary / 850210

## MUSIC FROM THE WAR YEARS

Come and join us on a nostalgic journey! The popular Radio Bristol Orchestra (many of you will have heard them at the Proms in the Meadow) will be playing, with Stella Jennison as soloist, in a concert at the Shireway Community Centre in Yate on Friday, 3 November 2006.

The proceeds from this event will be added to the money raised by the people of Iron Acton through the door to door collection for the annual Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal because, in spite of the great generosity of many people, last year's total was lower than we collected 2005.

You know about the event, find your 1914-1945 outfits (although not essential!) and participate in what will be a superb concert. Tickets, very reasonably priced at £8, are available from Dave White on 228005 or B Gallett on 228542 ..... tickets are already being reserved ..... so why not ring and reserve your's now!

Friday, 3 November 2006 .... Shireway Community Centre ... 7.30 pm  
... in aid of The Poppy Appeal  
.... and featuring the Radio Bristol Orchestra  
..... with Stella Jennison as soloist

Dave White / 228005



## NORTH ROAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

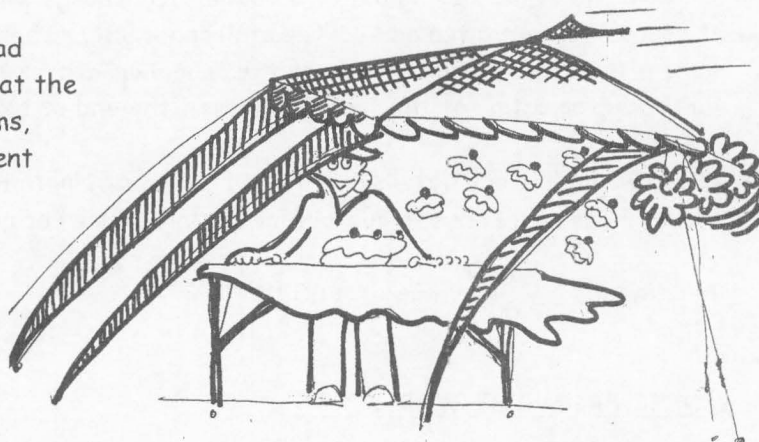
Our Year 6 children enjoyed a fabulous week away with children from Rangeworthy School. Their visit to a PGL Adventure and Study Centre at Barton Hall in Torquay was a really unique experience. We were blessed with glorious weather (well, we were on the English Riviera) and the children thoroughly enjoyed the challenging and exciting range of activities on offer at the centre. They abseiled, developed their archery skills, took control of a quad bike, learnt camp craft skills, were hauled 10 metres into the air on a giant swing and even climbed a 6 metre pole AND dived off to catch a trapeze bar, amongst other similar challenges, all supervised by trained instructors, who taught the children the necessary skills to participate safely in the multi-activity week. I was designated official photographer and camcorder man so was unable to take a full role in all the exhilaration (well that was my excuse), but it was extremely rewarding to watch the children find the determination and courage to complete some of the very demanding tasks and for them to develop their communication, discussion, leadership and decision making skills and promote their sense of independence. After a gruelling Term 5, with their SATS, preparation and tests it really was an inspirational start to Term 6 for our Year 6.

Once again I must thank Acton Aid for their generous contribution to our school hall refurbishment. It is now complete and it looks very bright, cheerful and colourful and the blinds have enabled us to darken the hall and use the projector with our new large mobile screen to show DVDs, photographs and powerpoint presentations.

Our infant children were very pleased to have had the opportunity to perform their country dance at the Iron Acton May Day, helped along by lots of mums, and I know they enjoyed watching all the different dances that day. My son spent most of his morning there, repeatedly trying to score less than 20 with 3 darts!

We had a super week leading up to half-term because we played hosts to 7 visitors from Sicily and Poland as part of the Comenius Project that we are involved with. The visit

concluded with our summer concert for parents and VIP guests. We had planned for an outside concert but the torrential rain forced us inside - this didn't dampen spirits and we'd also laid on a large spread of Italian, Polish and English food, some of it prepared by our guests during the week, for all to enjoy, after performances from the children and an appearance by the Winterbourne Down Morris Dancing Group. Two members of staff will be visiting the Polish school in Sztum, which is near Gdansk, this Autumn and we will also be visiting the school in Monreale, near Palermo in Sicily, next May.



The Plant and Cake Sale organised by the Friends of the School was very well attended, despite the strong winds that virtually tore apart the gazebo on our playground which had sheltered quite a few of our plants and they sold almost as quickly as the cakes which "flew off the shelves". I was very happy with the 2 lovely hanging baskets I purchased, although my sunflowers have unfortunately withered already - slugs I can only presume. Our Year 6 children proved to be excellent waiters and waitresses, helping to sell the coffee and teas and were proving to be very persuasive young salespersons in the plant selling department.

We are sending a volleyball team to the Festival of Youth Sports Day at the Yate Outdoor Sports Centre and as we have been asked to represent Brazil the children have been busy making Brazilian flags and green, blue and yellow pom-poms for the opening ceremony. Our 2 football teams recently played Old Sodbury in football matches, winning both games despite the strong opposition and it was particularly rewarding to see a number of the younger children making their debut appearance for the school. The children were very disappointed that the Kwik Cricket tournament was postponed, as rain had stopped play, especially as they had trained quite hard for this event. Our netball team was delighted to take part in the recent 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Small Schools Netball Tournament.

The Yate based all girl band 3D was a real "hit" with the children on the last day before the Easter holidays. Their harmonies were excellent and their general standard of musicianship was very high. I had played in a band with the girls' dad, who is a guitarist, many years ago but he didn't last too long as he was simply too good for us! The Year 5 children are looking forward to taking part in a day of dance at Tortworth and a number of children who have been participating in a mummers' workshop will also get the opportunity to perform their mummer's play. We also have a number of students from the University of Bristol visiting soon to work with our Year 5 and 6 children in a music workshop and we have already booked a storyteller to come in for the day during the last full week of term. We have participated in wrong trouser day and are shortly to have a mufti day. By the time you read this we will have held our Summer Fair on Friday, 14 July and the previous week the children are taking part in an outdoor games evening and I have been assigned the task of preparing the obstacle course and our governors have already volunteered to show off their goalkeeping skills in a beat the goalie competition.

It won't be long before the Year 6 children visit their senior schools for their induction days and even the leavers' day is looming incredibly close now. Their transition to the "big" school must seem both an exciting and possibly daunting prospect but we hope they will remember many happy and enjoyable times in their 7 years at North Road School. Meanwhile we have already welcomed a number of this September's reception children and we are already looking forward to a number of events pencilled in for the coming Autumn term.

Mark Handley - Headteacher

### ACTON AID

Acton Aid continues to stage events to raise money for the good causes in the parish, as well as breaking all records on the May Day burger stall! By the time this issue drops through your letterbox we will have held the second Summer Proms in the Parish Meadow, this time with amplification for those in the gazebo circle!

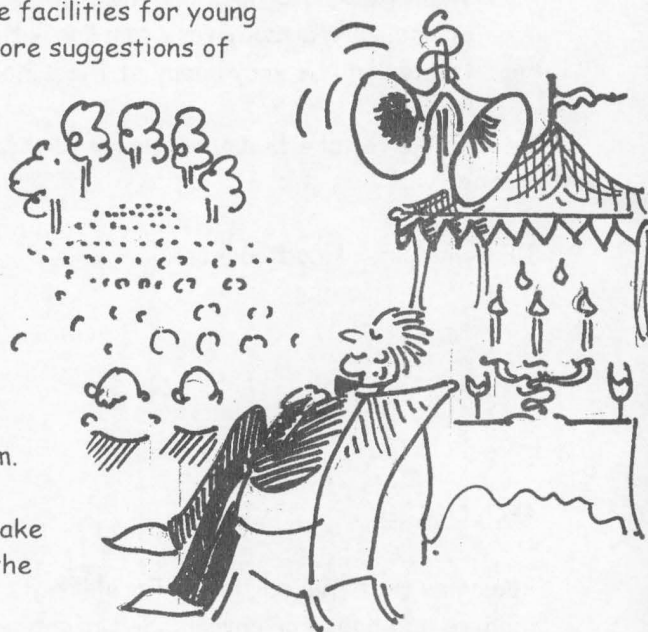
Chairman John Wright has been keen to extend our services to the youth of the parish during his year in office and we were particularly pleased to be able to provide facilities for young local bands to perform after the Proms. If there are any more suggestions of things we can do for this age group please contact John.

Our on-going programme of talks has continued with Paul Townsend giving us a fascinating insight into training Ugandan doctors in reconstructive surgery. He visited Uganda for a second time in late June and was able to take over £250 received in donations towards medical supplies. The next talk for your diary is on 8 September when Tim Spare will entertain us with his experiences in the Solomon Islands. Talks are now being held in the Committee Room of the Parish Hall and commence at 8.00 pm.

Whilst your diaries are at hand, Bonfire and Fireworks will take place on Saturday, 5 November. Look out for tickets from the middle of October.

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 pm on the first Thursday of each month. Meetings have the minimum of formality with fundraising 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).



## IRON ACTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

I can't believe another year has gone by so quickly. This term is packed full of exciting events such as picnics, cathedral visits, sports day and tennis festivals. The children are all looking forward to the whole school trip to the Cotswold Wildlife Park.

Following a year of very hard work the building and grounds are finally coming together. The whole school looks much brighter, tidier and more vibrant.

Now that the drier weather has arrived the playground markings are being done. Working parties of parents, staff and members of Acton Aid have ensured our younger pupils are taught in bright, colourful classrooms. The brave group also tidied the school (including the resources room) and managed to fill a whole skip with broken or obsolete equipment.

One of the benefits of being a small school is the variety of joint projects organised with other local small schools. Four of our older pupils have been joining pupils from the other schools to learn about mummer's plays, learning scripts, making costumes and props. The younger pupils have been learning country dances. Both groups have been practising hard and will demonstrate their skills at a dance day at Tortworth School.

Pupils from Year 5 and Year 6 have just returned from their residential visit to the Forest of Dean. The Year 6 pupils will soon be going to their new schools on induction days. We shall miss them all and wish them the best of luck for the future. Soon we will be meeting the new reception children (although most of them are already very familiar with the school as they have older brothers and sisters). We hope they will all be very happy at the school.

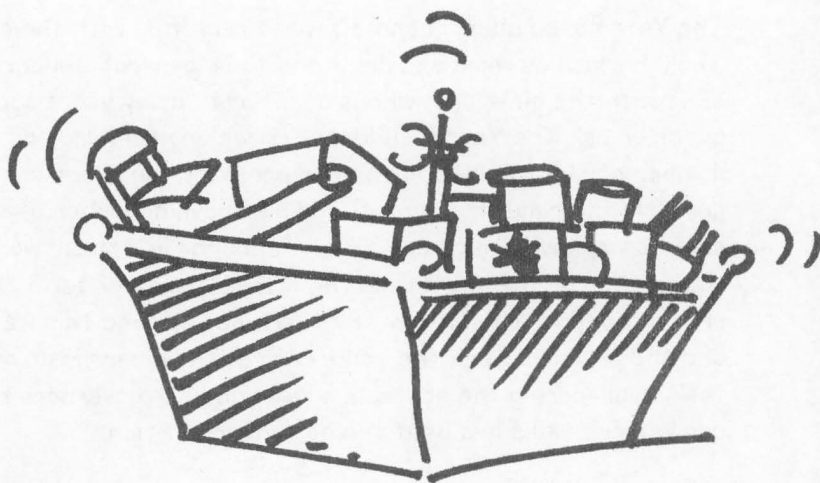
I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the village for their help and support during another year.

Jill Bendeaux - Headteacher

## APOLOGIES

Apologies that this edition of Focal Poyntz is later than we had hoped or envisaged. Unfortunately illness intervened and then holidays encroached.

However, it is our intention to have the next edition out, exactly to schedule, in November.



## ST JAMES PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP



It seems like only yesterday but it was, in fact, 10 years ago that I was at home with my first baby, Lucy, and actually feeling quite lonely. After the initial excitement of maternity leave and the first hazy months of trying to figure out exactly what Lucy wanted (still having trouble there!!) I was beginning to feel somewhat isolated as none of my friends had yet had babies. David took it upon himself to find me some "baby-friends" and successfully found Donna (now living in Holland) and Chris Bellis living in the village and so together, over quantities of tea, we hatched a plan to start a much needed toddler group in Iron Acton.

Initially we only numbered 6 or 7 and sometimes we thought it would never take off the ground but here we still are, some 10 years later and not only have I had to wave goodbye to Lucy going off on her first school camp but come September you might see a sobbing wreck as I wave goodbye to my youngest (I never said last, David) as she starts school.

Each of my children and probably most of all myself have gained so much from our Friday morning meeting in the Marshall Room. The children make such good friends that even if I am blubbering in September I am totally confident that Jessica won't even look back. The friendships I have made over the last 10 years are irreplaceable. We've shared so much together, laughter and tears and everyone knows that we are all just a phone call away if we need a friend. We are even providing post-toddler "counselling" for each other - so much so that I don't think there are going to be enough days to fit everything in so I'm sorry David but the ironing basket isn't likely to stop resembling the Himalayas!

I leave the group with some sadness but mostly with pride and confidence that the next 10 years will be as rewarding as the last as some very capable mothers are willing to continue organising everything. I wish them all lots of luck, fun and plenty of chocolate biscuits. I thank Caroline who has ably organised (most things actually) along with me for the last few years since Chris left. I'm sure she'll be in no better condition than me when Rosie joins Jessica in Class 1. Never mind, a cup of coffee and a shopping spree will soon put us to rights!

You may have noticed a horse chestnut tree newly planted in the Park (with thanks to Jo Wright for this). It has been planted as a result of donations made by members past and present in memory of our much loved and missed friend, Melanie Newman. We have also purchased a wooden bench to go around the tree and we hope that, in years to come, children will play with the conkers from Mel's tree and others will sit and be shaded by its branches and that it will become a much loved spot in Iron Acton.

If you would like to join this friendly toddler group please ring Amanda Scott on 228301. We meet every Friday in term time in the Marshall Room from 10.30 am to 12.00 pm.

Lisa Hatherall

## FAIRWEATHER BURGLARIES AND AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE NEWS

Now the warmer weather is on its way, thoughts turn to the summer holidays. During this period there is generally an upturn in the amount of house break-ins due to the empty houses and quieter residential neighbourhoods. If you are going away for the summer let your neighbours know and then they can keep an eye on your house and put your mind at rest. They could even pop round and put lights on and draw curtains to make the house look lived in while you are away. Other things, such as pushing post and papers through the letter box, will also prevent your house becoming a target for any house breakers.

A few points before you leave .....

- 1 Make sure you cancel any deliveries and check out your home. Check locks of ground floor doors and windows, especially at the rear.
- 2 Check that upstairs windows overlooking flat roofs have locks. It is also important to ensure that your patio doors have effective locks and that they cannot be lifted off their runners by a garden spade.
- 3 Make sure your shed and garage are locked when you are out and don't leave the burglar with a ready assortment of implements to allow him to break in.

**KEEP GROUND FLOOR WINDOWS SHUT  
... ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT.**

Good news .....

- \* Avon and Somerset Police say that burglary rates have fallen. Your risk of being burgled is now lower than at any time in the last 20 years.
- \* Despite this, the burglary rate is still too high but there is a lot you can do to protect yourself against burglary and it's mostly common sense.
- \* Nearly half of all burglaries happen when a home is empty, most are opportunist, around 2 out of 10 successful burglaries are through windows that have been left open or unlocked doors.
- \* In many burglaries it takes just 5 minutes to break into premises, steal property and leave.

Jack Russell

### THE ACTONIANS

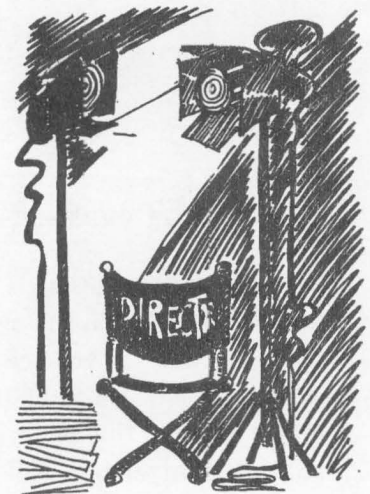
The Actonians, at the time of writing, are in the middle of our summer social activities when we meet on Wednesday at members' houses for play and poetry readings, quizzes, go for walks, boat trips, Indian meals, etc, etc. Some of us were in evidence at the Acton Court Museum Day in June, wearing Tudor costumes, not the coolest on that first of this summer's hot days, strolling around attempting to look decorative and if possible talking Tudorbethan English!

I have been involved in directing Avon Association of Drama's Touring Production of Imogen Stubb's "We Happy Few" about a group of real-life women who toured the length and breadth of England during the war years with the plays of Shakespeare. We didn't achieve quite what they did but starting with Iron Acton Parish Hall, proceeding to the Mission Theatre, Bath and ending up at a Backwell Playhouse, put on 6 performances over 9 days! Four Actonians were in the cast and others worked as tour manager, sound and music so our input was considerable. The tour may have been exhausting but a good deal of fun was had by all and friendships forged with members of other groups.

Our autumn production will be "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest" on 29 and 30 November and 1 December. It's a riveting drama which many of you will remember from the Jack Nicholson film. Andy Fisher is directing and auditions will be held in August.

If anyone would like to join a friendly and fun-loving drama group then please get in contact.

Ann Aplin / 226243





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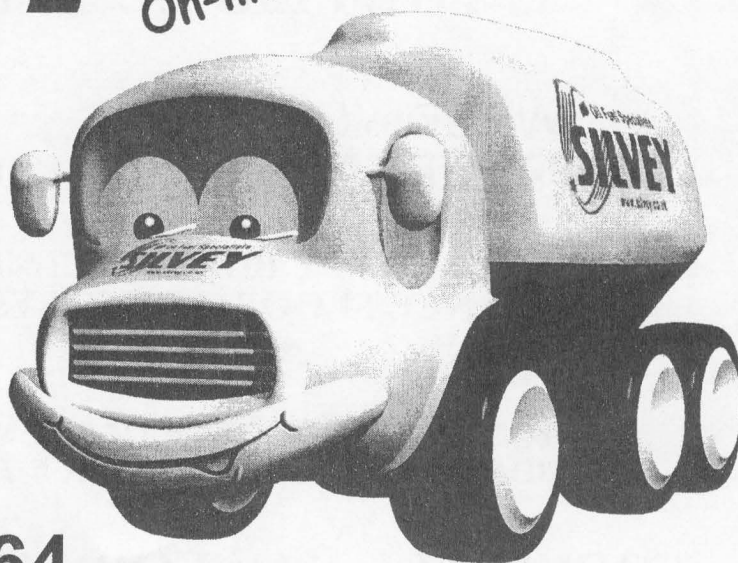
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# The Kathryn Hurley Dance Academy

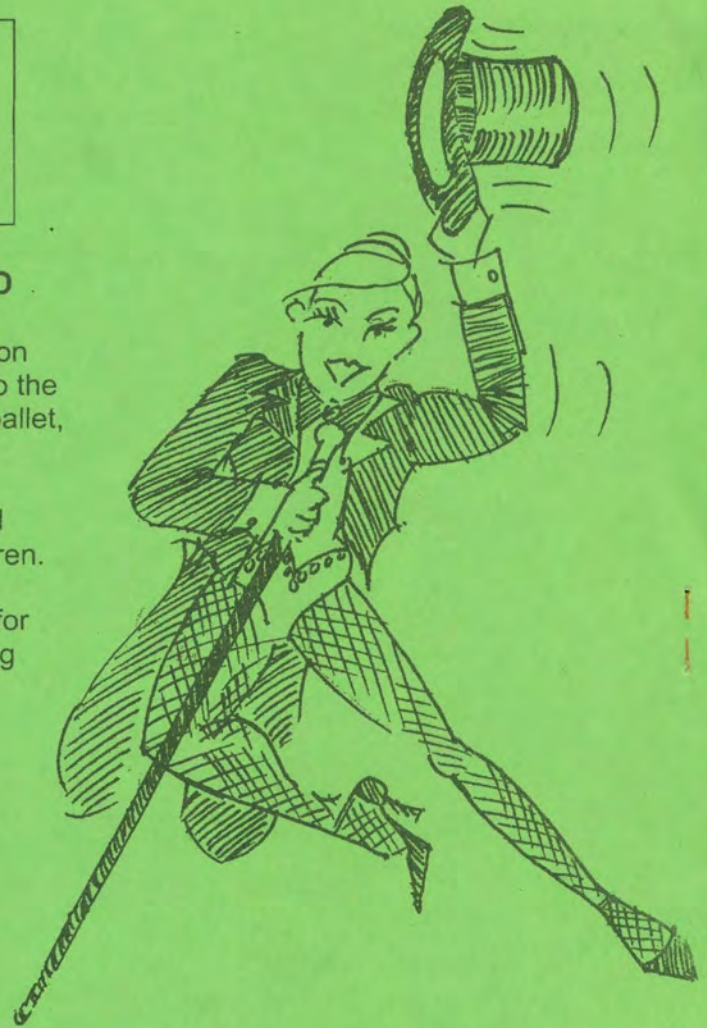
Principal: Miss Kathryn Hurley BA (Hons) AISTD

After a successful start to the Dance Academy in Iron Acton I am pleased to announce the addition of 3 new classes to the September timetable to compliment the existing popular ballet, modern and tap classes.

- 1 **Mini Tap and Modern:** a class to explore tap and modern for younger children.
- 2 **Street Dancing:** a non-examination class for children who enjoy moving to up-tempo music.
- 3 **Adult Jazz**

**Enrolling Now!**

If you would like further information regarding any classes please call Kathryn on 07968 378995



## ALL OCCASIONS

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