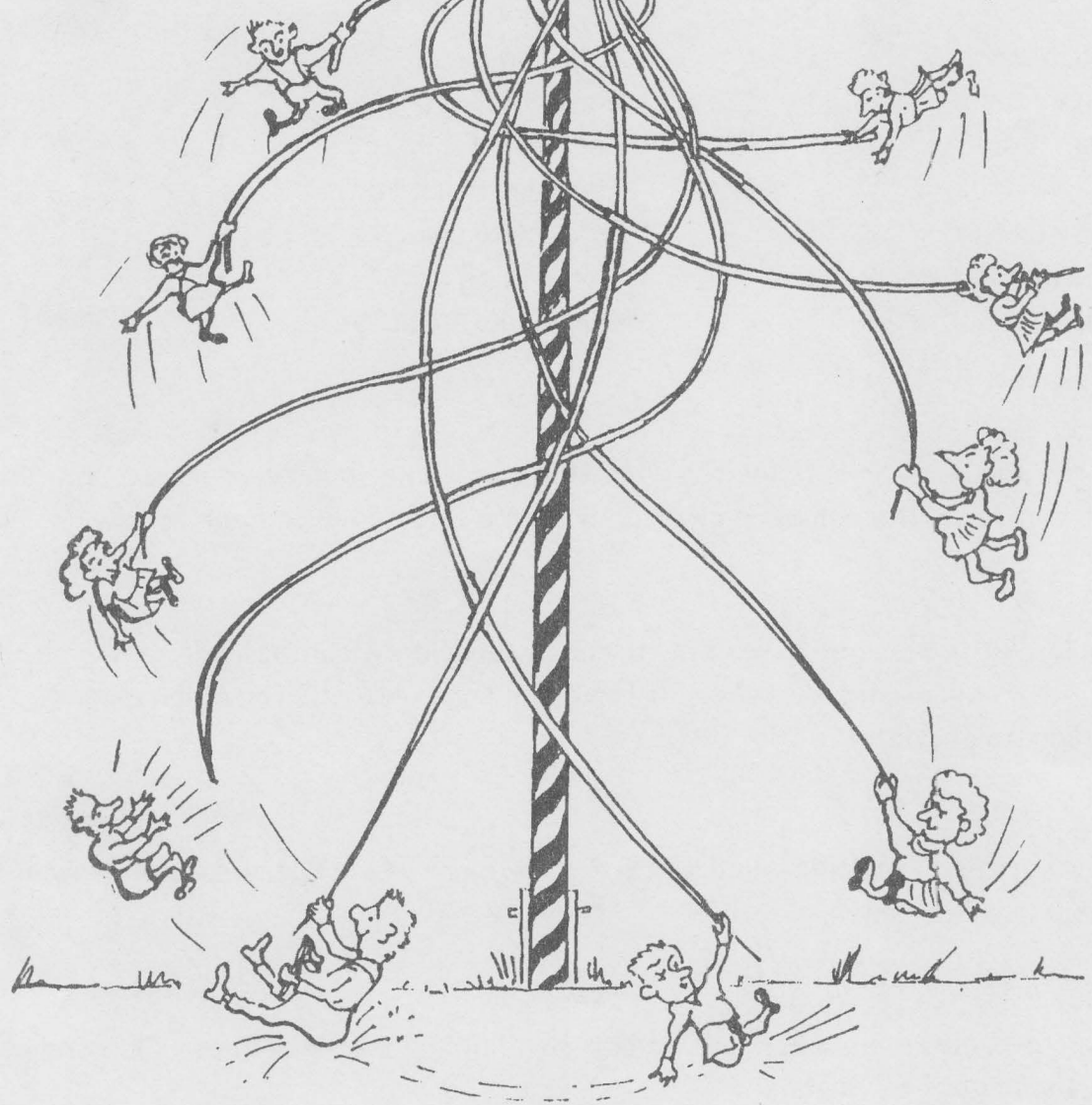


FOCAL POYNTZ

MAY DAY



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.

PRINTING:

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

COVER:

Our cover was drawn quite a few years ago by Pete Redman (who used to be a FP committee member and lived in Latteridge Road). We think it captures the essence of May Day beautifully!

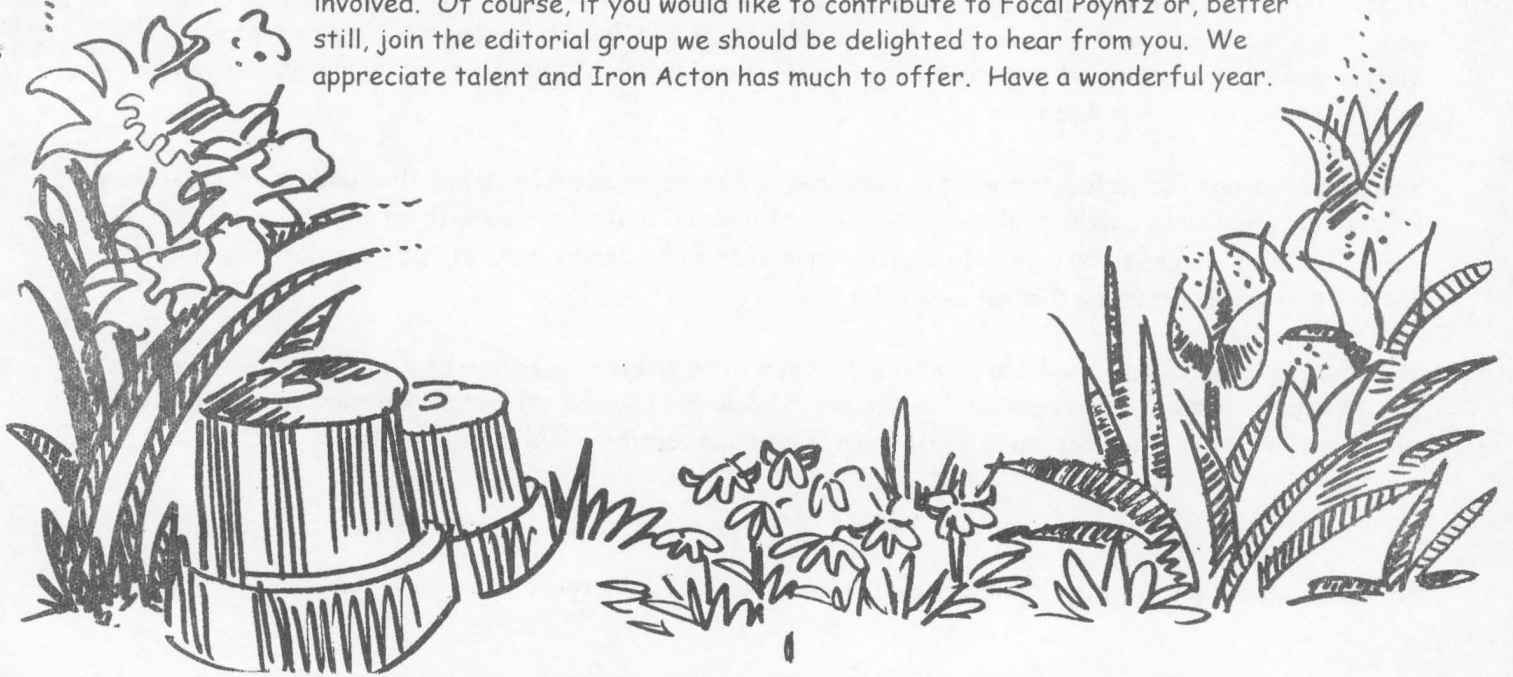
BRIMS

ISSUE NO. 73

I am writing this in a week when many of us will have been stargazing - or rather sky watching. The lunar eclipse on Saturday night was well publicised in advance but, having stayed up late to witness some spectacular celestial sight only to be disappointed by heavy cloud cover or rain of tropical dimensions I was not optimistic. However, a perfectly clear night allowed a superb view of the moon coloured orange in the earth's shadow as it passed in front of the sun. It was an amazing sight and made me grateful that we can still see the stars in the night sky in Iron Acton.

At last the nights and mornings are getting lighter and there is a sense of renewal in the air. The keen gardeners are already at work in spite of the waterlogged earth and the grass is growing soon we shall be thinking of May Day and the great summer social round in the village.

We are experiencing changes in the village as our priest-in-charge retires leaving the future of the village church uncertain. Familiar faces move on and new families are welcomed but we remain a unique community with much to offer. If you are new to the village or not familiar with any of the various organisations Focal Poyntz will provide you with up to date information about what is going on and how to become involved. Of course, if you would like to contribute to Focal Poyntz or, better still, join the editorial group we should be delighted to hear from you. We appreciate talent and Iron Acton has much to offer. Have a wonderful year.



THE FRIENDS OF NORTH ROAD SCHOOL

We would like to say a big "Thank You" to everyone who helped with our Christmas Fair. We had a fantastic turn out and some wonderful donations from Teddytext, Bank Chambers Natural Health and IRM Mobility to name but a few and managed to raise a staggering £1195!

The main focus for the Friends' fundraising this year will be towards buying new staging for the Main Hall as the old one is extremely rusty and very difficult to store and the amount raised from the Christmas Fair will certainly help us on our way to purchasing this. We are also looking to purchase some new goal posts and uniforms for those all important football matches.

The school has just purchased a Tyre Play Scheme which was installed on Wednesday, 31 January in our school playing field. Only 10 of these were on offer and we were extremely excited to get one. We can't wait for the children to see it.



We are very excited to be taking part in this year's May Day Celebrations and hope to run several stalls. We will be advertising this locally and hopefully lots of people from the North Road area will come and support us.

We also held an indoor games evening on Wednesday, 28 February for all the children. There were lots of different games in which the children can participate, as well as drinks and sweets available to buy. This is an event the children really love and it also raises much needed funds for the school.

If you would like any details about the Friends of North Road School or any of the events we organise please feel free to contact me, Maria Nash, on 852813 or the School Office on 867788.

Maria Nash / Secretary - 852813

A FOND AND GRATEFUL FAREWELL AND THANK YOU

With this issue we say a very fond, but definitely sad, farewell to Hazel Dron who has decided that the time is right to step down from the Focal Poyntz Committee.

Hazel joined the FP team in the spring of 1993 and through the intervening years we have valued her calm good judgement, hard work, knowledge of grammar, love of the English language, ability to capture in the written word the exact mood required at that moment and lastly, but not least importantly, has gently but firmly kept us on track and printed on time.

Yes, a true paragon of virtue, but in true, indiscreet FP style we should also say that underneath this very ladylike exterior lurks a deliciously naughty sense of humour that's coupled with an infectious chuckle - that is usually preceded by a twinkle in those blue eyes and a deadly accurate observation that hits the mark with greater accuracy than an Exocet!

We have also been aware how hard it must have been to raise even a glimmer of a smile at times over the last 18 months and have appreciated how she has tenaciously carried out her commitments to us (and a whole host of other village organisations) when the easiest option would have been to say "no".

Hazel, we will miss you.

PS We also dread to think how many inaccuracies she's already found in this article!

FROME VALLEY RAILWAY AND COUNTRY PARK

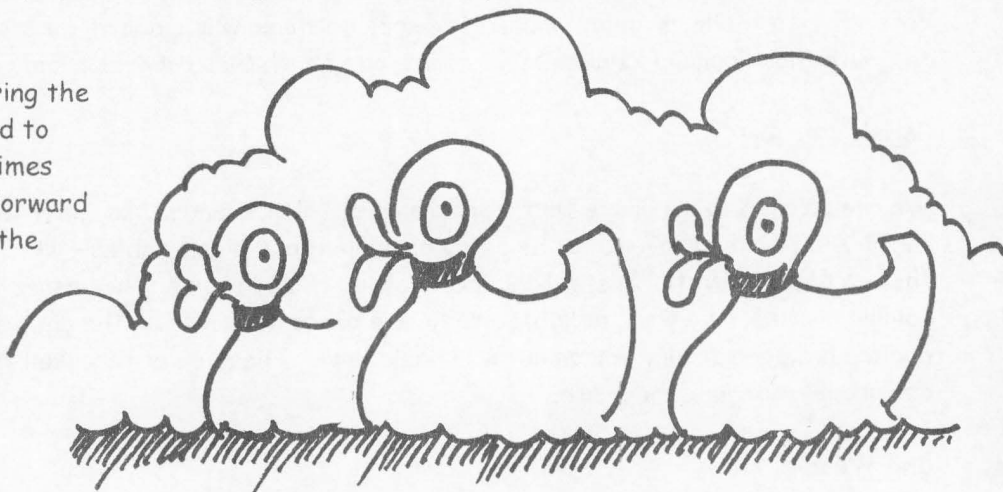
The Maciver family is in the process of developing a family dream which is a children's railway and small country park to be based at the Frome Valley Fruit Farm in Bristol Road, Frampton Cotterell. There will be trains for Jamie and Chelsea, animals for Izzy and Amy and children having good healthy fun for Jayne.

We spent the summer of 2005 laying the tracks and allowing them to bed in. These were thoroughly tested at our Halloween Event. The summer of 2006 was spent creating and building the railway and making a start on the Country Park. We opened most weekends and ran train runs whilst we were working. The track is now well bedded in and we have 3 engines ready and waiting to go, much to the delight of our train mad daughter, we have a blue engine called Tom who pulls 2 sit-inside carriages called Annie and Clarabell. In fact, if you happen to be on site in the next few weeks and see a yellow diesel running around the track alone, don't panic, I'm told it's cleaning the track. Eat your heart out British Rail, leaves won't stop our trains!

There's still a lot to do with the park. Jamie is busy building climbing frames and fences and the girls and I are ready and waiting with our paint brushes. The animals are all doing well; rabbits and guinea pigs all have their own runs (which have resembled swimming pools during the winter floods but are now drying out) and Poppy and Daisy (the goats) would give Houdini a run for his money as escapologists but we seem to have them fenced now. All our animals are children friendly and love company. Chelsea tells me she's head animal keeper but seems to do a disappearing act when it's mucking out time!

We have a large sandpit next to the playhouse so it's buckets and spades at the ready but if building sandcastles isn't your thing we have a small crazy golf course to drive everyone mad or you can just sit and relax and watch the children play on the climbing frames and trampoline. Café facilities are available in the Farm Shop.

The ground has been so wet during the winter that we have been limited to what we could do and it's sometimes felt like one sticky wellie step forward and 3 stumbles back. However the water did give us an idea of a large pond with bridges, fish, and maybe even ducks, all of which will be fenced for safety but accessible for duck feeding.



For the younger children we are making Telly Tubby statues that will stand on Telly Tubby Hill along with a pre-school climbing frame and slide. Jamie is in the process of building a small "drive your own train".

This is a "grow as you go" type of project so hopefully we will have all the things we've planned for our opening at Easter ... but watch this space during the summer as we do have lots of ideas spinning around in our heads.

This is a real family venture with everyone doing their bit, including grandparents and friends, so if you're interested in the railway, driving the trains, etc, you will be very welcome. Please contact Jamie on 228107 or mobile 07909 963192. All ideas and offers of help would be gratefully received. We will be at the Park most weekends and any spare time during weeks till opening on Easter Saturday, 7 April 2007 so if you're around, please come over and say "hello". We'd be happy to show you around.

Jamie, Jayne, Chelse, Izzy and Amy Maciver

Iron Acton Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting

Friday, 20 April 2007

8.00 pm

Iron Acton Parish Hall

Open to all parishioners

This is your opportunity to make your views known!

IRON ACTON PARISH COUNCIL

Mobile Telephone Mast

We had a large number of parishioners present at our February meeting to make representations about their objections to this application (near to Holly Hill). We unanimously objected to the application and made reference to the many points made. We applaud those who made their case, not just to us, but also directly to South Glos Council Planning Department, our South Glos councillor and to our MP, Steve Webb.

Parish Meadow

We are pleased to announce that a programme of improvements is under way. We are working together with Acton Aid for the provision of new play equipment and picnic tables - which we expect to be installed before the next Focal Poyntz. We will also be involving them in some other aspects of improvements over the coming months. We were delighted to hear a presentation from the children of Iron Acton CEVC School about what sort of play equipment we should have. Their ideas were well thought out and covered various age groups, not just their own.

Chil Wood

We are investigating ways to better manage this lovely wood. We expect to be able to improve such aspects as the inter-visibility through the wood, leading to a safer feel to the woods and the discouragement of anti-social behaviour. We want to restore the cave to a pleasant place although we recognise that changing some people's perception of what the cave is for is going to be long, hard work. Proper management of this fantastic parish asset should also encourage the return of the masses of bluebells which I'm sure many people will recall.

The "Everyday" Stuff

The rest of our business tends to be looking after the greens in Iron Acton and at Latteridge, the cemetery (but not the churchyard) and the allotments, commenting on planning matters and keeping an eye on footpaths. We need people to let us know what they think. You can speak to us individually or come to the monthly meetings (see the notice boards for details). If you don't tell us then we will use our commonsense - now don't be rude!

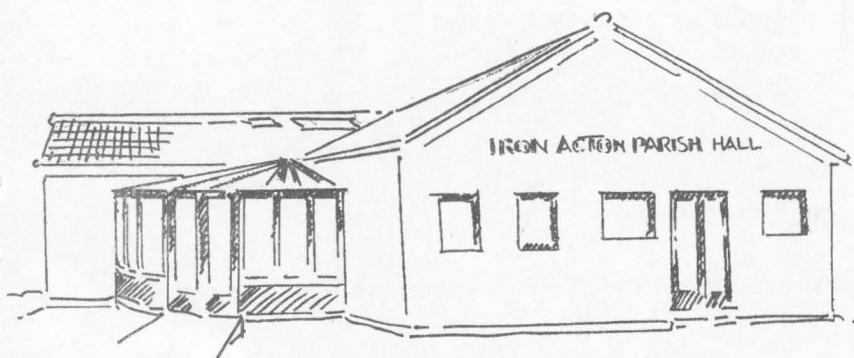
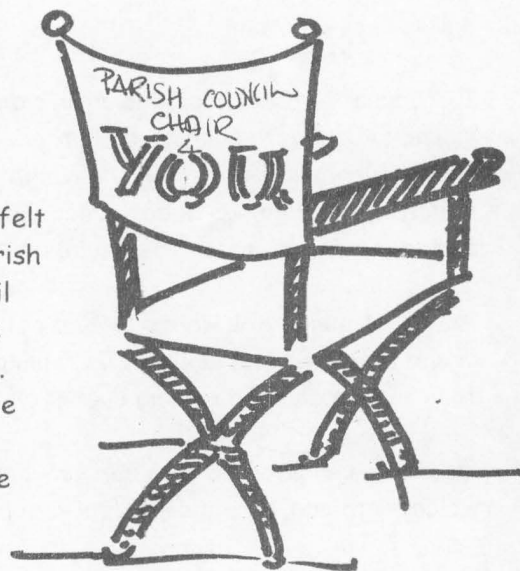
Clerk to the Council

We are about to begin a new era of the Parish Council as we will now have a new clerk. A big thank you and welcome to the role to Paula Evans who returns after taking a break from serving as a parish councillor. We also say a big thank you to our outgoing clerk, Rachel Weldrake. Everyone in the parish owes her our gratitude because there is a lot of detailed correspondence and accounting that our clerk does for us, often behind the scenes and we all benefit from it, whether we think we notice it or not. We hope we are not saying goodbye to Rachel because she is intending to stand for election as a parish councillor in the May elections.

May Elections

This is the year of the "once every 4 years" local elections. There are 9 councillors in the Parish of Iron Acton; 5 for Iron Acton Ward and 4 for North Road Ward. Of the existing councillors, Peter Wedgewood has announced his intention not to stand again. Peter has served us for so long he can't remember himself, but it's into double figures and for most of the time he has been the vice-chairman, so we extend our heartfelt thanks to him. If anyone is interested in serving this community as a parish councillor then nomination forms will be available from South Glos Council Electoral Services. If there are 9 nominations or less then those people are elected unopposed, if there are more than 9 then there will be a poll. We need people to be interested in the work of the parish council for the good of Iron Acton - you get the parish council you deserve and if you don't like what it does, or how it does it, you need to say so, either to the councillors at the time or by putting yourself forward.

Peter Bellis / Vice-Chairman



IRON ACTON PARISH HALL

The Parish Hall is busier than ever with the dancing classes proving a big hit. It is so nice to see the Hall being used by the whole parish; both young and the not so young.

Bookings are definitely on the increase but we still have lots of dates available so, if you think you'd like to use the Hall as the venue for your next party or event, please contact Meryl Cook on 228405.

The May Day Committee has joined up again to, hopefully, produce the best every May Day celebration on the Village Green. Make a note of the date in your diary Monday, 7 May Iron Acton May Day Celebration - must attend!

Finally, if anyone is interested in joining the Parish Hall Committee please contact Tony Pullen (the Chairman) on 228949.

Angela Guest - Secretary / 228980

ACTON AID

Acton Aid Facilitating the social life of the parish!

By popular demand we plan to hold our 4th annual Proms in the Meadow on Saturday, 14 July 2007. Please put the date in your diary and look out for posters with further details from May Day onwards. Once again, prices will be reduced for tickets purchased before 30 June.

By the time this edition of Focal Poyntz is delivered we will have enjoyed another of our series of talks. This time by our new community police-woman who we hope will be joining us in the Marshall Room on Thursday, 8 March at 8.00 pm.

In February we held our Chairman's dinner, when over 50 guests enjoyed a superb banquet courtesy of Conrad (of Jameson's fame) in a Parish Hall beautifully dressed by Marilyn Wright. The dinner represented the end of a successful year as Chairman for Mike Sutton, who has been succeeded by David McCoy. We also have a change of Secretary - with Peter Foote taking over from me on the keyboard.

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 (David McCoy on 228874) or Secretary (Peter Foote on 228674).

Acton Aid Christmas Parcels

For many years, Acton Aid has distributed a Christmas present in the form of a small parcel of festive food and drink to pensioners across the parish. We try to keep our distribution list up to date by word of mouth but this isn't always easy. If anyone knows of a pensioner in the parish who would enjoy receiving our parcel but is not on our list or, likewise, if you are currently on the list but would prefer not to receive a parcel in future, please contact our Services Secretary, Colin Smith on 228324.

Ashley Mee / Secretary (soon to escape!)

ST JAMES THE LESS PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP

We were very pleased with the success of our Christmas party at the Marshall Room - we think the children enjoyed it too!

We shall be making Mothering Sunday posies for all the ladies who attend church on Sunday, 18 March. This is also Rector Sue's last service and from all our past and present members we wish her a long and happy retirement. We would also like to thank her for the support she has given to our group over the last 7 years.

The group continues to thrive and, whilst we currently have a waiting list, we will be able to take on new members in September and so, if you have a pre-school child of any age, why not give our group a try?

For further information on our group please call Mel on 228701 or Amanda on 228301.



.....TO BE SURE OF A
TICKET.....



HORTICULTURAL SHOW - SATURDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2007

It's always difficult to know what to write at this time of year when it comes to an article for the Horticultural Show. For the amateur gardener, like most of us, it's always a quiet time of year, and if you are a fair-weather gardener (like me, yes I admit it) you don't really want to go out in all the wind and rain and snow. All Mark and I are able to do is to think about all the different types of vegetables to grow this year.

After visiting Parkers and looking at their bewildering array of seeds and potatoes, it's difficult to know where to start, and when to stop! We looked at a particular packet of seeds and ask ourselves just how difficult is it to grow strawberries from seed? Coming back to planet earth, you revert back to the tried and tested crops that you know will produce the goods.



Over previous years we have had very little success growing things like carrots and parsnips. During a visit to an uncle who is an expert grower and paying a visit to his polytunnel, we saw row upon row of cardboard toilet rolls, filled with soil. He saw the quizzical look on our faces and told us that they were filled with carrot and parsnip seeds. The idea was that the seeds could produce good roots growing in the lightly filled rolls, he would then thin them out and plant the tube in the soil, and of course the cardboard would rot down. We tried it last year and managed quite a good crop. Instead of the little usual stubby carrots and parsnips, we actually had vegetables that looked like they should do! I wonder whether anyone else out there has any handy hints that they would be happy to pass on. Please let me know.

The Committee met before Christmas to agree the schedule for this year, and you will be pleased to know the General Section's remained basically the same. Many of you will be delighted to know that we have brought back the heaviest marrow and we are keeping the collection of gourds as this section was so well supported. A preliminary schedule is included with this edition of FP. A final copy will appear in the summer issue.

So, happy planning and here's hoping that the Spring weather turns favourable for the gardener, fair-weather or hardy!!

Paula Evans - Horticultural Show Committee

FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

Thanks to everyone who came and supported the Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, 2 December. The children had a great time meeting Father Christmas in his grotto, having their faces painted and decorating gingerbread biscuits. The bazaar raised £365 - which will go towards updating Class 3. Thank you, also, to those of you who braved the fog and came, sang and made donations for refreshments for Carols on the Green on 22 December.

I hope that some of you were able to join us for our Quiz and Curry Night on Friday, 9 March. The venue was Iron Acton Parish Hall when we looked forward to an evening of traditional Indian cuisine and live music from a local band, the Taylor Brothers.

The year marches on, Easter will soon be with us and you may see the children on their Easter egg hunt at the beginning of April. The girls are already putting in their nominations to be May Queen or one of her attendants and the children will soon be practising maypole dancing ready for our performances on the Green on May Day!

Tracey Lynton-Jenkins / Secretary



Iron Acton Horticultural Show 2007

Allotment Trophy – Awarded for the Best Collection of Vegetables grown on an Allotment.

Golden Jubilee Cup – Awarded for the most entries in all Sections by any one family.

GENERAL SECTION

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Collection of Vegetables | 24. 3 Blanch Leeks |
| 2. Collection of Salads | 25. 4 Apples (dessert) |
| 3. Collection of Fruits | 26. 4 Apples (culinary) |
| 4. Collection of Gourds, Squash & Pumpkins | 27. 4 Pears (dessert) |
| 5. 4 Potatoes (any 1 variety) | 28. 4 Plums (dessert) |
| 6. 3 Carrots (long) | 29. 4 Plums (culinary) |
| 7. 3 Carrots (short) | |
| 8. 3 Onions (from seed, trimmed) | |
| 9. 3 Onions (from sets, trimmed) | 30. 6 Roses (assorted) |
| 10. 6 Shallots | 31. 1 Specimen Rose (named) |
| 11. 6 Runner Beans | 32. 3 Reflexed Chrysanthemums |
| 12. 6 French Beans | 33. 3 Incurved Chrysanthemums |
| 13. The Longest Runner Bean | 34. 6 Dahlias (not over 2½") |
| 14. 2 Peppers | 35. 3 Cactus Dahlias |
| 15. 2 Cabbages (any 1 variety) | 36. 6 Sweet Peas |
| 16. 2 Marrows | 37. Tied Bunch of Herbs (out of water) |
| 17. Heaviest Marrow | 37. Vase – "Cottage Garden Collection" |
| 18. 3 Courgettes | 38. Vase of Flowers (5-10 Stems) |
| 19. 2 Cucumbers (frame or greenhouse) | 39. Best Pot House Plant (foliage) |
| 20. 6 Cherry Tomatoes (on the vine) | 40. Best Pot House Plant (flowering) |
| 21. 6 Tomatoes | 41. Best Pot Grown Cacti or Succulent |
| 22. 3 Parsnips | 43. Largest Sunflower Head (displayed outside) |
| 23. 3 Beetroot | |

MECRAFT SECTION

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 44. 6 Chicken Eggs | 56. A Loaf of Bread |
| 45. 6 Eggs (any other variety) | 57. A Bakewell Tart |
| 46. 1 Pot of Jam | 58. Presentation Box of Homemade Sweets |
| 47. 1 Pot of Jelly | 59. MEN ONLY – A Victoria Sponge (3 eggs) |
| 48. 1 Pot of Marmalade | |
| 49. 1 Jar of Chutney | |
| 50. 1 Jar of Pickled Onions | 60. A Knitted or Crocheted Article |
| 51. A Chocolate Cake | 61. A Patchwork Item |
| 52. A Quiche | 62. A Kit Tapestry/Cross Stitch |
| 53. Fruit Loaf (1lb) | 63. An Original Tapestry/Cross Stitch |
| 54. Plate of 6 Biscuits | |
| 55. 6 Savoury Scones | |

FLOWER ARRANGING (ROSE BOWL TO WINNER)

65. Small Arrangement (not more than 12" high x 9" wide overall)
66. A Predominantly "Yellow" Arrangement
67. An Autumn Foliage Basket Arrangement
68. A Dinner Party Arrangement (including the candle)
69. Subject Arrangement – "My Fair Lady"

Classes to be confirmed

PHOTOGRAPHY SECTION (UNFRAMED, SIMPLY MOUNTED ON CARD)

70. Photograph of Sea, River or Lake
71. Photograph of an Outdoor Event

Classes to be confirmed

CHILDREN'S SECTION

Up to & Including 4 Years

72. 6 Decorated Fairy Cakes
73. A Painting (any subject)

Ages 5, 6 and 7 Years

74. 6 Decorated Fairy Cakes
75. A Miniature Garden
76. A Vegetable Animal
77. A Painting of "My Holiday"
78. A Junk Model

Ages 8, 9, 10 and 11 Years

79. 6 Decorated Fairy Cakes
80. A Miniature Garden
81. A model of "My Ideal Bedroom"
82. A Painting of "My Favourite Day Out"
83. A Computer Poster Advertising Next Year's Horticultural Show

Ages 12, 13 and 14 Years

84. A Computer Poster Advertising Next Year's Village Day
85. A Photograph of an animal, pet or bird
86. A Sewn Article
87. Painting, Sketch or Drawing

ART & CRAFT SECTION

88. A Wooden Item
89. A Hand-Made Card (any size)
90. A Miniature Garden (Adult Class) Maximum 12" x 8"

OPEN SECTION

91. A Scarecrow (any size – to be displayed at your home, visible from the road)
Entries for this class to be made by telephone by Thursday 6th September 2007 to any Horticultural Committee Member.

Merly Cook
Tel: 228405

Ann Aplin
Tel: 228243

Paula Evans
Tel: 228419

June Schofield
Tel: 228760

Rona Wright
Tel: 228247



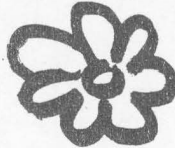
Plant and Book Sale

Saturday, 21 April 2007

2.00 pm

Codrington Arms (North Road) Car Park

(Proceeds to St James the Less Church)



NEWS FROM ST JAMES' - A Valediction from Sue

As I have been telling lots of people recently, I think it is important to recognise the top of the hill when you see it coming, and to quit before you get over it - the hill, I mean! Thus I made the difficult decision to retire in March this year - my final service at Iron Acton will be on Mothering Sunday, 18 March.

It has been a privilege in many ways to serve St James as Priest-in-Charge for the last 7 years. At its best, Iron Acton is a lovely community, there is a small core of devoted parishioners whose support to the church and its parishioners has been unwavering and selfless over my time here, the building is, as you know, spectacularly beautiful and has grown more beautiful in these years as we have managed to make improvements and modifications to the interior and, best of all, the outreach of the church to the community has been fostered by an enthusiastic group of lay people in the last couple of years.

Did you read a "but ... "in there somewhere? Yes, there are buts. Resources are limited in such a small church community - enthusiasm gets us so far, but does not provide us with the whole range of skills we need. This is a very community-minded parish, full of get-up-and-go, community initiatives, skilled and hard-working people. This parish is proud of its beautiful, historic church building, and often very generous in its financial support of it. Many describe it as the heart of the village and speak of how much it means to them to have it here. But where are you all on Sunday mornings?

The church is far more than its building - it is essentially a worshipping community of God's people. Without that worshipping community the building would be just a shell, a beautiful one, but a useless one - and not a heart at all. An unthinkable thought, don't you agree?

As for the future staffing of the parish - that is far from decided, yet. There have been discussions about it going on for the last few months but, at the time of writing, nothing has been settled. What is certain is that it will change. The link with St Peter's at Frampton Cotterell may or may not be retained. St Peter's will have to be linked with another parish or parishes but we don't yet know which parish or parishes. Other links are possible for St James.

Whatever is decided, it won't happen in a hurry, and meanwhile parish life will continue - our services will be maintained, mainly by our curate, the Rev Jane Tailby.

So, I bid you farewell. I have much enjoyed the friendship I have been given from both the church community and the parish, my links with the school and the parish organisations. I won't forget some of the social events we have attended in a hurry! I send you all my love and every blessing for the future.

Rev Sue Rushton

NORTH ROAD LADIES CLUB

We are pleased to report that the North Road Ladies Club's membership remains high and, since our last report in Focal Poyntz, we have welcomed 4 new members to our club.

2007 is a special year for us as it's our 40th Anniversary. In 1967 several ladies living in North Road got together and had an idea that it would be nice to start a ladies club, holding a meeting on the first Monday of the month in North Road School. This idea was put into motion and North Road Ladies Club was founded. As well as the monthly meetings we also had a summer trip. One such summer day to be remembered was our coach trip to Weston Super Mare where we erected our North Road Ladies Club banner on the beach and played ball games with the children. At that time many of us were young mums and a day out all together was quite a treat.

Now, 40 years on, we are still going strong with some members coming from Yate, Coalpit Heath, Frampton Cotterell, Winterbourne and Rangeworthy. So this year we are putting on our thinking caps for our Birthday Party Celebrations in November.

Our first meeting of the New Year on 8 January was well attended. The speaker was Rosemary Westgate who spoke about Wild Flowers at Westonbirt Arboretum, illustrated by some really lovely slides. This was a very enjoyable talk and we learned a lot about wild flowers.

Our Charity for 2006 was Frome Opportunities Group which is based in Cranleigh Court Road in Yate and is a pre-school group for children with special needs. We were delighted to present the chairman of the group with a cheque for £240. This amount was raised by holding a bring and buy stall at each of our evenings throughout the year, including a raffle at our birthday party last November. All of our members were in favour of our club continuing to support the Frome Opportunities Group and this will, therefore, be our designated charity for 2007.

Our 2007 programme until June is as follows:

Monday,	5	February	Springtime in Kerry - slides with music by Reg Porter
Monday,	5	March	Wild Owl - talk and slides by Ian McGregor
Monday,	2	April	Cotswold Canal Trust - talk by Bruce Hall, Chair of CCT
Monday,	14	May	Music and Verse - with John Osbourne
Monday,	4	June	The Art of the Magician - Tony Griffiths

Our meetings are held at North Road Community Primary School, commencing at 7.30 pm. Visitors interested in any of the above meetings can be assured of a warm reception and, of course, we always welcome new members.

June Rycroft - Secretary

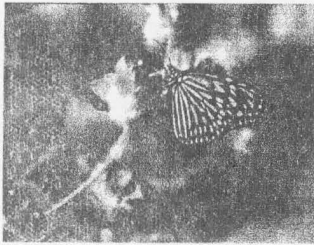
ACTON COURT OPENING DATES 2007

In 2007 Acton court will be open from 12 June -19 August (excluding Mondays and special event days. Contact 228224 for further details on this year's programme.



How 'green' are your gladioli?

The green revolution has taken some giant leaps forward in the past few months, particularly since the publication of the *Stern* report.



Consumers are being asked to make increasingly harder decisions on how to use their purchasing power.

The 'organic' label is taking over new territory as producers move into the non-food organic market.

'But why would I want to buy organic flowers?' I hear you ask.

Organic products are not just about consuming fewer harmful chemicals in our diet, they also promote sustainable growing methods that do less damage to our planet and consume fewer resources, such as energy.

Most people are beginning to ask where their produce comes from, and whether we can justify air freighting certain products halfway around the globe.



The majority of UK cut flowers are imported. The energy that is saved by not needing to use heat in the production of flowers in hotter climates is offset by the fact that they are transported through a 'cool chain marketing system' (i.e. refrigeration), which itself expends energy.

The use of pesticides fungicides and irrigation also contribute to what may be considered to be a potentially unsustainable product.

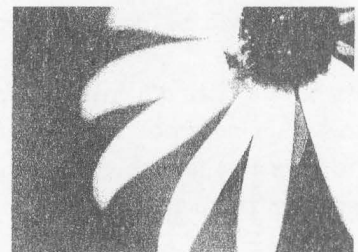


Organic Blooms is a new community business which offers an alternative option for those who care about their impact on the planet.

We grow seasonal flowers, locally and without artificial chemical treatment or unsustainable inputs such as heat or cold storage.

Our production areas in Frampton Cotterell and Almondsbury are 'under conversion' to organic status, and we are monitored by the Soil Association.

Aside from their low carbon footprint, we believe that our extensive range of traditional flowers that you just can't find in the supermarket will speak for themselves!



Come and visit us at Frome Valley Fruit Farm, Frampton Cotterell to find out more.

We will be opening for plant sales, 'pick your own' posy and horticultural and floristry work shops from May/June 2007.

Jo Wright
February 2007

FFI, contact Jo or Chris Wright on 01454 227458 or 07766 023921

Or by e-mail: organicblooms@ironacton.plus.com

THE ACTONIANS

Whenever I'm asked to write about our activities we always seem busy! Our autumn production of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* played to excellent houses - so excellent that we were scrabbling round to find tickets for some of our regular supporters who, in usual Iron Acton style, rang up at the last minute! So, in the spring, do book early!

Our Supper Evening in January was also well supported and a jolly time was had by all and a goodly sum added to our coffers. Supporters sometimes wonder what we find to spend our funds on, but every time we put on a play it costs us about £70 a night in performing rights for starters, let alone set, costumes, props, insurance, rehearsal nights whilst sound and lighting just eat up money.

The improvements we have made to our performance space and possibilities do pay dividends as was shown by the booking of the Parish Hall by the prestigious Actors' Workshop Company. The Friday night had a small audience but the word seemed to go round and Saturday had a very respectably sized and appreciative audience.

This week saw the performance in the Hall of *The Bet* - our one act festival entry which travels first to Weston Super Mare and then to Cheltenham for the festivals there. This adaptation by Miles Malleeson of a Chekhov short story has a team of 4 actors with 3 girls rushing around as maids changing the sets. Women's Lib obviously hadn't raised its head!

What about the future do I hear you ask? Well, I hope you do as I'm directing a new venture called *The Shakespeare Revue* - this involves writing by Fry and Laurie, Alan Bennett, Victoria Wood, J B Priestley, Noel Coward, Maureen Lipman and music by Cole Porter, Sandy Wilson, Stephen Sondheim, Dilly Keane, etc, etc. It should be colourful and enjoyable - both for Shakespeare addicts and those whose memories are of excruciating boredom and embarrassment at school. The dates are Wednesday 23, Thursday 24, Friday 25 and Saturday 26 May 2007.

We have exciting plans in hand for the future, a pantomime, *Aladdin*, this autumn and into 2008 a festival play, a spring production and a production of *Midsummer Night's Dream* at midsummer. This is obviously the time to think about "having a go" at this drama lark in Iron Acton (and yes, we will be involving young people in the pantomime and plans are ahead for starting up junior workshops in the summer).

So do get in touch with me if you would like to be involved in any capacity or drop into the Parish Hall on Wednesday evenings - you will be very welcome.

Ann Aplin / Secretary - 228243

STOP PRESS!!!

The Actonians returned excitedly from the Avon Festival in Weston with the news that Richard Stanway had won the Best Actor Award for his portrayal of *The Lawyer*.

Many readers will have seen Richard playing Murphy in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and realised what a good actor he is.

Congratulations!



IRON ACTON C OF E VC SCHOOL

The staff would like to thank everyone who supported our Christmas celebrations and made them such a success. I hope you enjoyed hearing the pupils singing carols around the village and watching our Mummer's play as part of Carols on the Green. It was good to meet so many of you at the concert at St James' Church. The pupils had a great time singing, acting, playing guitars and recorders. Our thanks go to Gill Holmes from the Castle School for organising this. I am sure you all know that Rector Sue will be leaving the village soon. The staff and pupils will miss her and would like to thank her for all of her hard work and support for the school.

The school is still working hard to find ways to make pupils even safer and healthier. Miss Baddeley has been working hard with parents and pupils on the school's travel plan. You may have seen pupils taking photographs, carrying out surveys and measuring footpaths. Their main concerns are the speed at which traffic travels through the village and parking problems. We are very grateful to The Lamb Inn who allow us to use their car park - otherwise the situation could be much worse. Finally, the cyclists would like secure, covered cycle racks for their bikes and more cycle paths.

Our thanks go to Acton Aid for providing curtains for Classes 2 and 3. Currently pupils struggle to see the interactive whiteboards on sunny days so the curtains will make life much easier. Thank you also to the members of Acton Aid who came and painted Class 2 and the ICT suite. It is hard to believe it is the same classroom.

Over the summer our school kitchen was transformed and meals are now cooked on site. Our new kitchen manager has settled in well and the school is filled each morning with tempting aromas.

The school is continuing to develop the outside areas. Jo Wright worked with groups of pupils to fill 3 planters in Val Pitman's memory. In our conservation area everything is growing well. Indeed some of it is growing too well so the pond needed quite a bit of maintenance to reduce the amount of weed and brambles. As a leaving gift, the Year 6 pupils gave the school a Hornbeam tree - which they recently came and planted in the school field. This is a wonderful gift and in years to come will provide much needed shade.

Jill Bendeaux / Head Teacher



South Gloucestershire Deaf Association

Annual Quiz

Saturday, 28 April 2007 at 7.30 pm

Iron Acton Parish Hall

Tickets £8.00 Per Person - Includes Hot Supper

Teams can consist of up to 8 people

For ticket information and further details contact:

Jan Darley on 313615

IRON ACTON WI

Our year began with Ian McGuire from the Hawk and Owl Trust (together with trusty owl) paying us a visit to tell us about the work they do and how we can help to improve the lot of our much put upon feathered friends. In February it was a different form of animal when we were told about the history of the teddy bear (accompanied by a whole host of the most beautiful teddy bears - all different shapes, sizes and hues ... we never knew there were so many). Whilst March saw us go in a different direction altogether when a lady from Backwell, and a member of the Thomas Hardy society, came to talk about the superstition and folklore found in Hardy's novels. It was incredible to realise how much the social life of village communities had changed in the relatively short time span of 100 years. She provided a very thoughtful evening.

The WI meets in the Parish Hall on the second Monday of most months. Our diverse speakers continue over the rest of the year with topics such as Chinese cookery, Slimbridge Soaps and Getting Crafty for Christmas. We also have our annual walk and birthday party to cram in somewhere between now and the end of the year.

If anyone is interested in joining us, please contact me, or any of our intrepid band of ladies - they'll be most pleased to give you some more information.

Lynne Blanchard - President / 228566

VIEW FROM NORTH ROAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

There is always so much news to write that it's often difficult to know where to start. Well maybe I should start by saying that we are delighted to have elected Margaret Marshall, the current Mayoress of Yate, to be our new Chair of Governors. We very much look forward to working with Margaret, who has always demonstrated her enthusiasm and willingness by coming into school whenever we have offered her an invitation to past events. We are also very pleased that more parents have taken the leap forward and joined the governing body, which is quite a commitment on their part and enables parents to play a significant role in driving the school forward and shaping its future direction. We have also recently reshaped the new school vision. Mrs Mugford, our new School Administrative Officer, started with us in December and she is already working miracles in the office.

We are very proud of our National Healthy Schools Status, which was awarded to us back in November at a special awards ceremony and which we now maintain for 3 years. It was given in recognition of the huge range

of initiatives and activities that we have actioned at North Road to promote healthy living and raise an awareness of the food the children eat and the way they feel about themselves.

We will soon be installing a new "tyre park project" on our school field which will consist of 20 unused large tyres embedded into the ground at different angles to each other. This will help to stimulate creative play and develop skills of balance and co-ordination and we are about to use our new Huff 'n' Puff play equipment for use on the playground.

I'm quite sure it must be having a positive effect on our footballers as we have now progressed through to the quarter finals of the South Gloucestershire Small Schools Cup. We might even be able to play a home fixture now that we have bought new goal nets with money given through an extended schools bid. The football squad is looking forward to a floodlit small schools "come and play, just for fun" session. Let's hope our healthy schools drive had a similar impact upon our swimmers who entered a schools' swimming fiesta at Kingswood Leisure Centre in February (but at the time of writing it has still to take place!). Badminton, netball and football after school clubs continue to be popular and it is encouraging to know that children still have a timeless fascination for sport and that the virtual world of electronic games has

not yet consumed their outside interests. A group of children were also enthused to take part in a "come and try" session at Yate Leisure Centre where the sports included boccia, new age curling, judo and t-ball! The lunchtime French club is running again and we expect the Mad Science club to start again after the mid term break and I also hope to start up a chess club very shortly.

The Christmas Fayre was a great success and so a big thank you to the Friends of the School for all the work that I know goes into organising such an event. As always, Father Christmas continued to be a big draw for the children and the older children had also designed and run their own stalls, which proved to be very popular. A number of parents were able to show off their cake making skills in our homemade Christmas cake competition. We raised well over £1100 - part of which is being spent on a performance in school of *Stig of the Dump*, a participation musical by the Image Theatre Company which, at the time of writing, the children are very much looking forward to. The Friends also organised the school Christmas disco which, for most of the children, is a not to miss event. Their next event for the children is an indoor games evening which, again, should guarantee virtually full participation. The concerts given by the children really inspired the Christmas spirit in everyone watching; the infants gave a performance of *The Very Hopeless Camel* and the juniors presented a lovely Victorian Carol Service.

The children were very enthused after our whole school visit to the panto at the Bristol Old Vic where the infant children saw *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, whilst the juniors were enthralled with *The Three Musketeers*. We all enjoyed a performance in school just before Christmas by the South Gloucestershire Jazz Quintet.



Many of the children are taking advantage of the brass, violin and harmonica tuition that we provide in school and we have now added guitar tuition, which is proving to be very popular. I am hoping to strum a few tunes with our budding young Django Reinhardts and Eric Claptons once I've had a second operation on my arm in January (which I am hoping and praying will allow me to play guitar again after not being able to play for over a year now). Our Class 3 children have made excellent progress on the recorder, as they have enjoyed specialist recorder lessons for well over a term now and our older juniors enjoyed the first session of the Small Schools Cluster Music Project with a focus on the theme of trees. We are just about to buy a whole new set of percussion instruments with money secured through the Rosemary Bugden Charitable Trust.

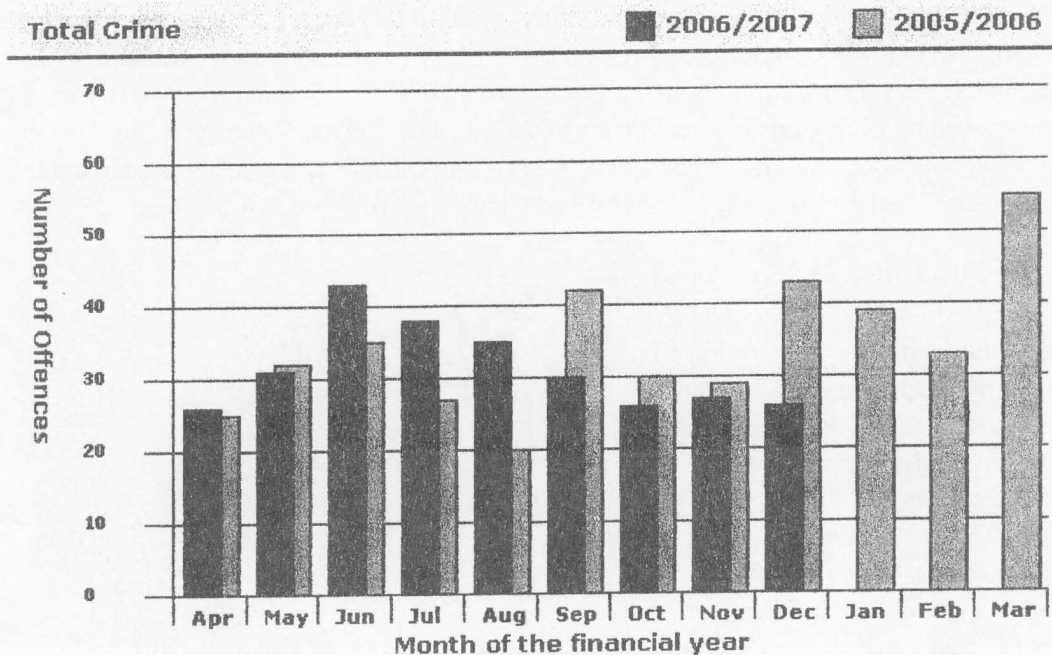
Finally, the children were recently very interested in following the progress of the Hunter-Gatherers, that's Richard and Christine Hunter, who were taking part in the Plymouth-Banjul Challenge. This involves driving over 3,000 miles to Banjul in the Gambia in an ex Belgian post office van (just like Postman Pat's) which they were auctioning once there to raise money for Gambian charities. The children had filled a suitcase full of cuddly toys and goodwill messages and cards which Richard and Christine took with them and have been handing out to some of the extremely poor children they met on their journey through Northern Africa. The children had been regularly informed of their progress in assemblies and through regular updates that could be found on their web blog. Hearing how the children's eyes lit up when they were given a small cuddly toy and hearing about the impoverished conditions they live in helps to remind our children of the millions of people throughout the world who live very different lives from their own. Richard and Christine will be coming into school after their return to talk to the children about their experiences and, hopefully, show them slides of their journey.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



Apart from the allotment thief (now convicted!) and the inebriated individuals who uprooted a number of plants, hanging baskets and a tree (and dumped them in my front garden) last October, I think that all has been quiet in our village. Have I spoken too soon?

These are the crime figures for the Ladden Brook Area (this covers us!):



Ever Heard of ICE?

The original concept, conceived by a Cambridge paramedic Bob Brotchie, involved putting the acronym ICE in front of your designated emergency contact on your mobile phone. Check out their website for more information: <http://www.icecontact.com/index.asp>.

It's a good idea and it works!

Mobile Phones: Switch off before you drive off!

New legislation to increase the penalty for using a hand-held phone whilst driving came into force on 27 February 2007. The current fine of £30 will increase to £60 and 3 penalty points will go onto your licence. Penalty points can mean higher insurance costs. If you get 6 points within 2 years of passing your test your licence will be revoked and you will need to re-sit the test. If the case goes to court you could risk a maximum fine of £1,000 - which rises to £2,500 for the driver of a bus, coach or heavy goods vehicle.

A driver can also be prosecuted for using a hands-free device if you are not in proper control of your vehicle when using the device. The penalties are the same - £60 fine and 3 points on your licence.

If you are an employer you can be prosecuted if you require employees to make or receive mobile calls whilst driving. It is an offence to cause or permit the use of a hand-held mobile phone when driving. It is also an offence to cause or permit a driver not to have proper control of a vehicle.

Jack Russell / 228115

MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS 2007

The May Day Committee has already started planning for this year's celebrations on Monday, 7 May 2007. Let's hope the weather is as kind this year as it was last!

We are again following the tried and trusted format, bearing in mind the age old theory of if it ain't broke, don't fix it. However, for those of you who have lived in the village for a number of years it must become very mundane to walk around the same old stalls, see the same old attractions, etc, etc. So, this year, we have put our thinking caps on and come up with some variations for the celebrations.

As far as food is concerned, we've decided to go a little "up market" with the addition of a pig roast, as well as the usual burgers. The beer tent will be just that - beer - from local breweries to whet the appetite, although there will still be some lagers available too for the "Philistines". Farmers' Market stalls will also be in attendance selling their wares.



This now brings us onto the May Queen and Attendants nominations. The nomination slip is attached to the bottom of this article. If we could remind you that the criteria for a nomination is that the young lady (sorry chaps) has to be:

- * Aged between 7 and 11 years of age
- * Be resident within, OR attend one of the 2 primary schools within, the parish of Iron Acton.

If you would like to submit a nomination form, please fill in the tear off slip below, pop it into an envelope marked "May Queen/Attendant Nomination" and drop it into the Lamb Inn by Saturday, 31 March 2007.

We need to have your contact telephone number as we will need a photograph of the successful nominations.

MAY DAY 2007 - MONDAY, 7 MAY

MAY QUEEN AND ATTENDANT NOMINATION

I would like to nominate: _____

Age: _____

School attended (if in parish): _____

Home address: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Signed: _____

Relationship to nominee _____

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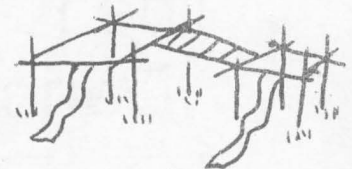
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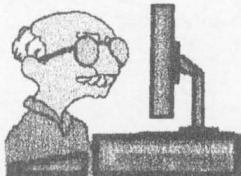
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Saturday & Sunday - July, August September

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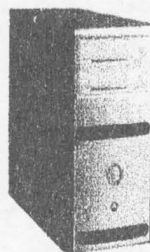
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- 2 **Street Dancing:** a non-examination class for children who enjoy moving to up-tempo music.
- 3 **Adult Jazz**

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ALL OCCASIONS

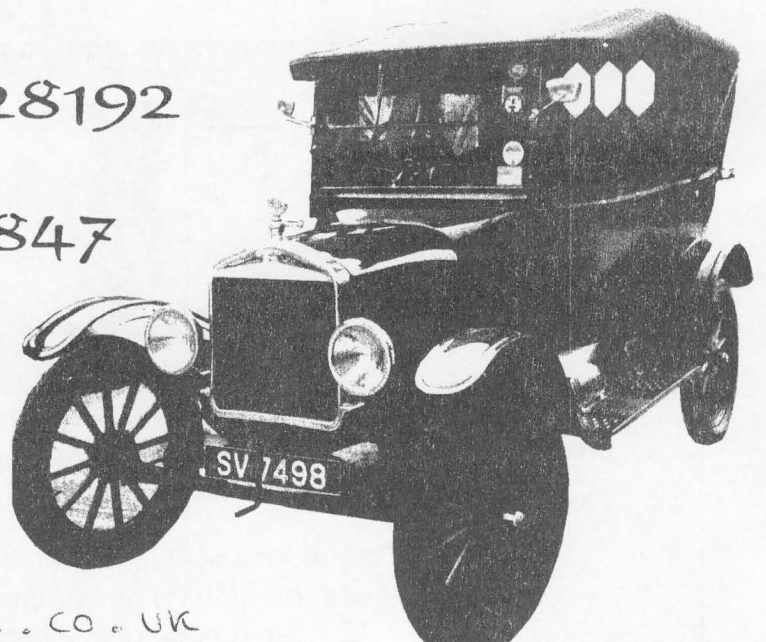
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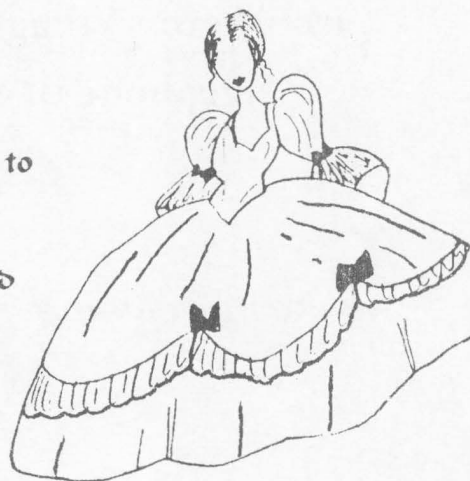
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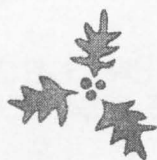
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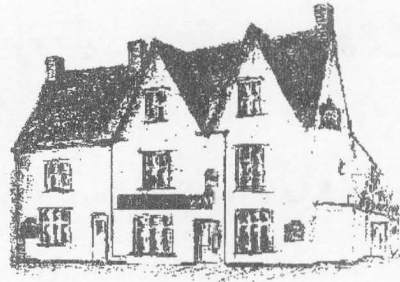
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