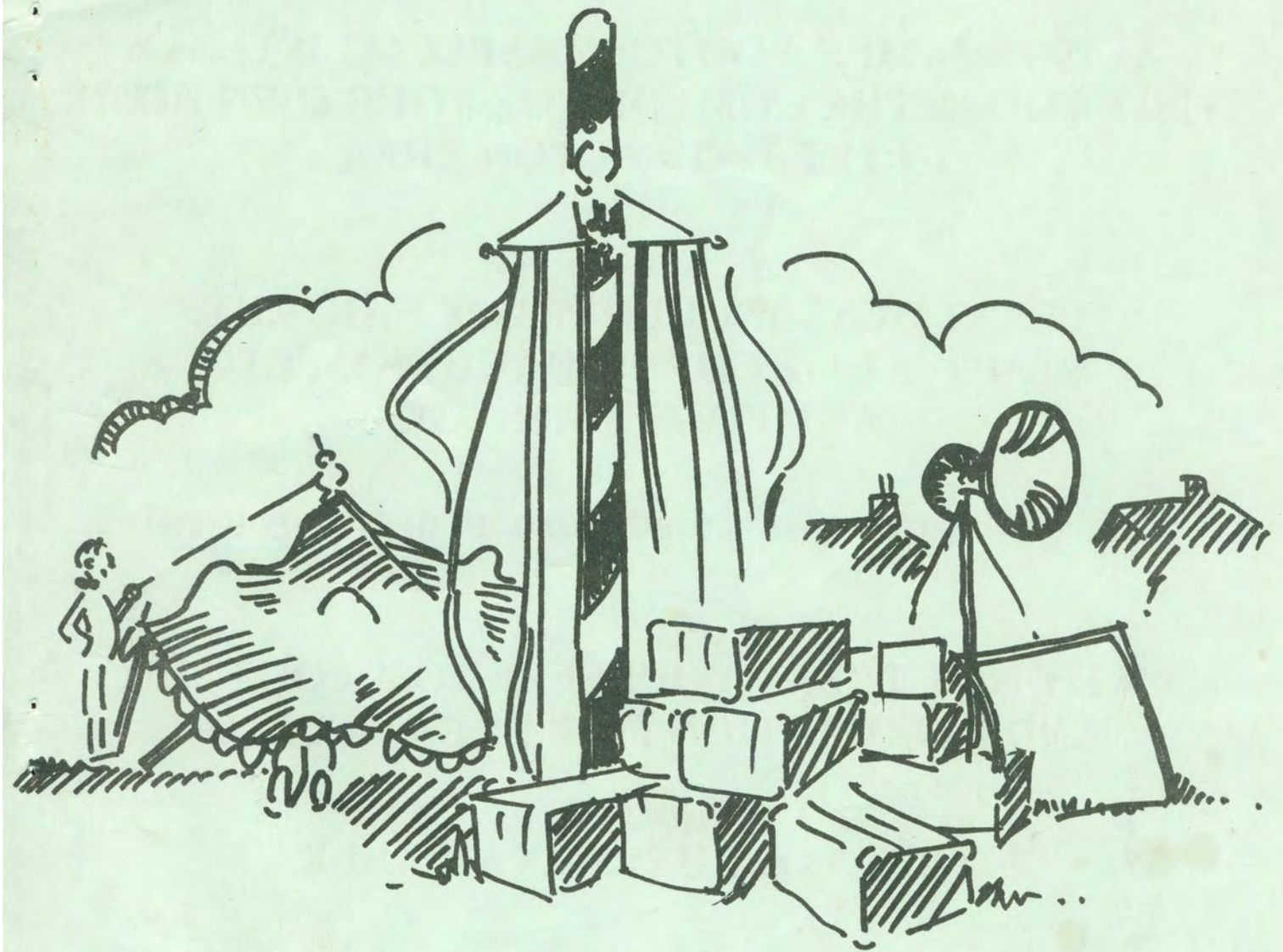


82

Focal Poyntz



The Magazine for Iron Acton

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SPRING

ISSUE NO. 82 2010

Christmas trees, Victorian evenings, turkeys and carols seem as though they disappeared long ago; with every day, week and month speeding by like, no sooner is it Monday but a Friday just waiting to happen.

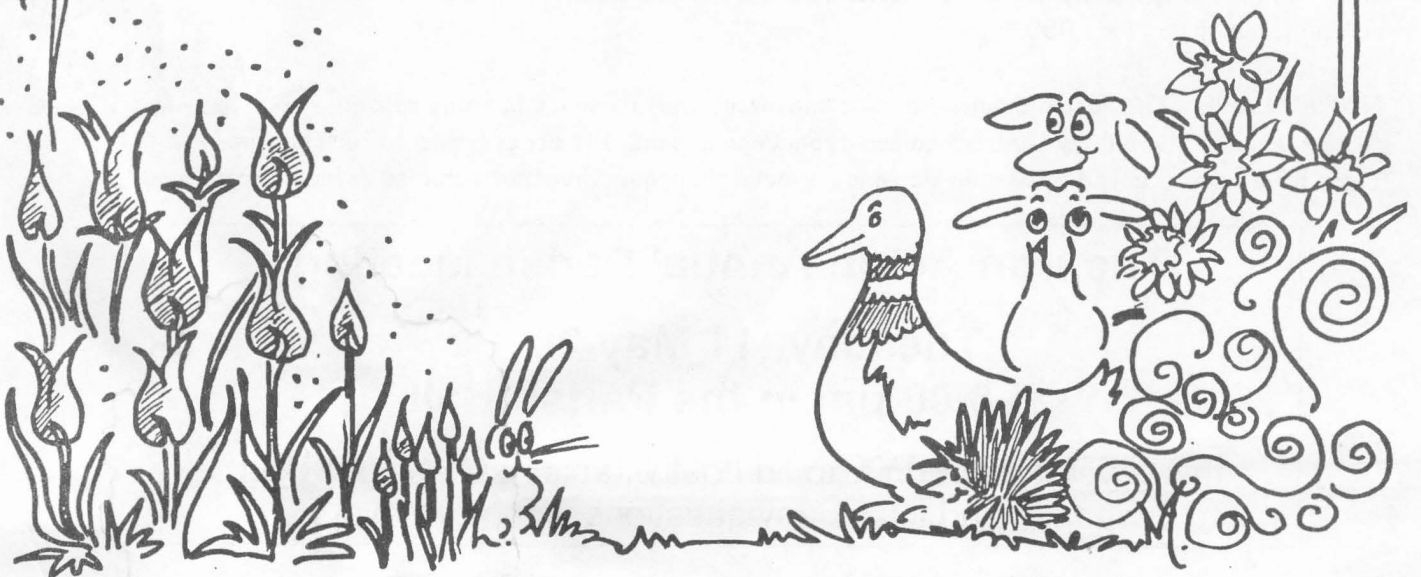
So, enough of the past, let us try and slow down the process by looking forward instead. Already, in spite of the sleet and snow, we see the tops of slumbering bulbs poking their sleepy heads above the parapet hoping for a joyous spring - just like the rest of us. A little early warmth will do us all a power of good and set us up for perhaps a more enjoyable summer than of late.

However, living in such a delightful village as we do, let us not forget those who do not or cannot enjoy our experience or those brave souls who are acting on our behalf to help maintain our status quo.

Enjoy each season as it comes. In spite of the fact that in Iron Acton we only seem to have 3 as such according to Focal Poyntz.

Keep a rough journal of your travels so that you can send us in reports of your strange experiences or wonderful holiday jaunts and many thanks to everyone who already contribute on a regular basis.

Enjoy 2010 to the full for, don't forget, Christmas is just around the corner.



PARISH COUNCIL

NEW BUS SERVICE - Iron Acton Parish Council is delighted to announce that the village will be getting a new bus service as from 6 April 2010. This new service will be the number 88 and will be a 16-seater bus shuttling between Chipping Sodbury, Yate and Iron Acton. The 88 will run hourly on Monday through to Friday, and best of all IT WILL RUN DOWN THE HIGH STREET! We believe it will enter the village at the bottom end of the High Street, stop opposite the Parish Hall and then continue up to the Lamb before turning right at opposite the Garden Centre and continuing to Yate. The exact route of the bus is not yet known, however we do know that it will be stopping at Yate Shopping Centre, Cranleigh Court, Yate Railway Station and the new South Gloucestershire Council offices.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on **Tuesday, 11 May 2010 at 8.00pm in Iron Acton Parish Hall**. This is an opportunity for all parishioners to come along and meet your Parish Councillors and discuss any issues. Unfortunately the 2009 Annual Parish Meeting was very poorly attended, therefore the Parish Council had decided to break with tradition and hold the meeting on a Tuesday night. The Parish Council hopes to be able to tempt you along to this meeting with the offer of some light refreshments (sorry, tea and biscuits only!) We are also hoping to have a display board from the Yate Oral History Society on their Four Manors Project. The Annual Parish Meeting is an opportunity for you to come along and take note of what has been happening in your parish over the previous 12 months. It is also an opportunity for you to address the Parish Councillors on issues and problems that affect you.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT REVIEW - As reported in the summer 2009 article, the Parish Council is pleased to inform you that £5,000 worth of funding has been allocated to a Traffic Management Review of the High Street. It is hoped that South Glos Council will undertake this Review during the next financial year.

SAFTER STRONGER SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE MEETING - The Frampton Cotterell, Coalpit Heath, Westerleigh and Iron Acton SSCG meeting on 16 February in the Parish Hall was extremely well attended. Of the subjects discussed during the evening, 2 items were considered to be a matter of priority that needed to be addressed. The first was the issue of HGV movements on the Latteridge Road and the damage and disturbance that this is causing residents, and the issue of anti-social behaviour and vandalism within the Parish, particularly around the Parish Meadows. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 7 April 2010 at 7.30pm in Westerleigh Village Hall.

DOG FOULING - It has been reported to the Parish Council that there has been an increase in the incidents of dog fouling, particularly on Wotton Road by the traffic lights - despite the fact that there is a dog bin provided in the area. This has been reported to the South Gloucestershire Dog Warden who has promised to keep an eye on the problem. It is an offence to allow your dog to foul in a public place, and although most responsible dog owners clear up after their pet, those who do not, are risking fines of up to £1,000.

NIBLEY LANE - The Parish Council has become aware that nuisance is being caused to residents of the Nibley Lane bungalows from vehicle using the access road to turn around. Signs have been erected by Merlin Housing Association requesting that vehicles refrain from doing this.



The Iron Acton Annual Parish Meeting

**Tuesday, 11 May 2010
at 8.00 pm in the Parish Hall**

this is your opportunity to find out what is happening in your parish and to ask any questions you may have

MAY DAY - MONDAY, 3 MAY 2010

May Day will soon be here and hopefully the weather will be kinder to us this year! The celebrations are a wonderful village event that raises a good deal of money for the charities represented on the committee. These are: North Road School, Iron Acton School, St James the Less, the WI, Acton Aid, the Victorian Evening, Parish Hall and the Actonians.

The May Queen procession will leave the Lamb Inn car park at 10.45 am on Monday, 3 May and will make its way around Algars Drive before heading down the High Street to the Green. This year's May Queen is Chelsea MacIver (aged 10) and her attendants are Olivia Cowell (aged 9) and Katie Nash (aged 8). Once the May Queen is crowned we start the entertainment proper with traditional May Pole dancing (courtesy of Iron Acton School) followed by traditional Country Dancing (courtesy of North Road School).



The whole of the Village Green will be taken up with stalls selling everything from greetings cards and jewellery to beef burgers and hot dogs - as well as the obligatory ale to wash them down! This year there will also be miniature train rides, pony rides, fairground attractions and traditional children's games. We are also lucky to have a display by the Dog Obedience Group, Fly Ball, TaeKwon-Do and Miss Kathryn Hurley's Dance Academy. The Hawk and Owl Trust and local Beekeepers Association will also be in attendance and, as with last year, the Art Display will be held in the Parish Hall.

Can we just make you aware of one thing Park Steet will be closed to ease traffic congestion and to increase the safety of pedestrians.

We look forward to seeing you all on the day.

Tracey Byrne - Secretary

ST JAMES THE LESS TODDLERS

Firstly a warm welcome to all our new members. It's great to see so many new faces and we hope you are enjoying our Friday morning sessions.

The run up to Christmas was a very busy time for us. We spent a long evening making sweets for the Victorian Evening (thankfully washed down with the odd glass of wine). The die-hards then manned the stall on the Saturday afternoon. Thank you to Natalie and all those who helped her. The children had a great time at the Christmas Party - including presents from Father Christmas, Carols and the customary half pound of sugary treats (and the grown-ups enjoyed them too!).

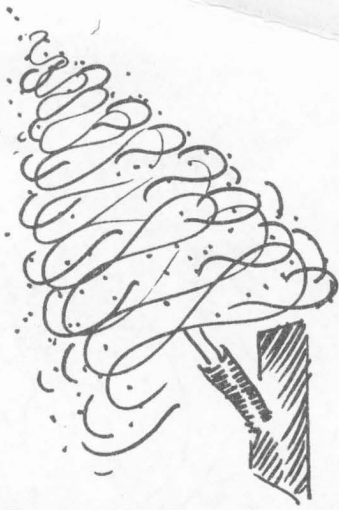


As mentioned in the last issue, our group is currently full. However if you would like to join our waiting list please contact Anna (on 07801 101796) or Natalie (on 227397). We would love to hear from you. We meet every Friday during term time at 10.30 am in the Marshall Room (behind the Church).

If you are keen to meet other parents as soon as possible you might like to contact one of the other excellent local groups: North Road Toddler Group meets on a Thursday afternoon at North Road School (the contact is Karen on 227179) and Rangeworthy Toddler Group meets on a Tuesday afternoon in Rangeworthy Memorial Hall (the contact is Emma on 228116).

Anna Webster / 07801 101796

THE VILLAGE CHRISTMAS COMMITTEE



Many thanks to all of you who participated in making the village look so wonderful last Christmas. We were delighted to see so many houses decorated and once again the Chilwood Green tree was magnificent. The eagle eyed ones amongst you may even have noticed the new star on the maypole next Christmas though we plan to use brighter lights!

This year we will be offering brackets and trees for the village green area; namely Park Street, the Green and the northern end of Station Road.

A date for your diaries this year's Christmas event is to be held on Saturday, 18 December with lots of new ideas and we plan to ring the changes but more of that next time.

If you fancy getting involved, you'd be most welcome. Please drop us an e-mail from the village website.

Rob Taylor

FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

As we head towards St Valentine's Day Christmas seems a happy but distant memory. We had lots of fun at our Christmas Fair and school Christmas Party. My thanks to everyone who helped to make both occasions a great success.

Since then the children have enjoyed several snow-filled, school-free days ... but just as the thoughts of the Friends started to turn towards our spring events more of the white stuff has been seen! Needless to say the chilly weather did not deter the children from enjoying our Valentine Disco held at the Parish Hall - our resident DJ, Noel, was with us and the children had a great time.

The funds we have raised through these recent events are contributing towards improving the tyre play area in the school field. The children on the School Council asked whether this area could be extended and so more tyres will be added, including vertical tyres to climb through and wobbly tyres to balance on. These should be in place soon and we know that they will be put to good use.



We are planning our annual school Easter Egg Hunt and a Friends' social evening before the Easter Holidays.

Following the holiday we will be holding our AGM - this is scheduled for Wednesday, 28 April at 7.30 pm in the School Hall. As a registered charity we are legally obliged to form a full committee and, at the moment, we are short of volunteers for some of the committee roles. So if you've ever thought that you might be interested in getting involved with the Friends now is the time! We understand that for all parents time is precious but any help you can offer, as little or as much as you like, will be gratefully received.

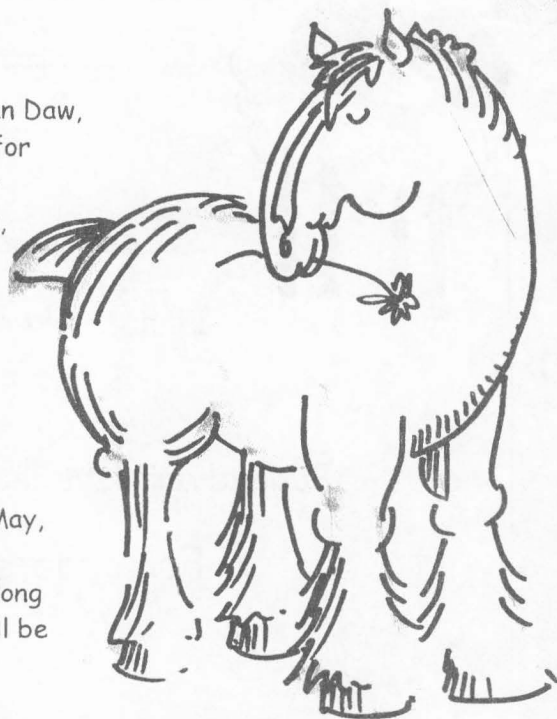
For more information about becoming involved with the Friends please contact Pippa Cook (on 228673) or Caroline Haselhan (on 228791).

Caroline Haselhan / 228791

NORTH ROAD LADIES CLUB

At our December 2009 meeting we were delighted to welcome Ian Daw, Macmillan Fund-Raising Manager, and present him with a cheque for £1290 for Macmillan Cancer Support. This amount was raised by North Road Ladies Club during 2009 by holding a skittles evening, a garden party and a beetle drive. We would like to thank all parishioners who came along to our Garden Party on a very damp, blustery Saturday afternoon last June and made the day such a joyful and successful event.

Our 2010 Charity is "Help for Heroes" - supporting our wounded servicemen and women. We are planning, as in 2009, to hold 3 fund-raising events; these will begin with a skittles evening in May, our Garden Party will be held on Saturday afternoon, 12 June at 341 North Road (so please put this date in your diary and come along to help raise funds for this worthy charity) and our last event will be a Beetle Drive later in the year.



Nineteen ladies braved the cold, frosty weather to attend our first meeting of the year on 4 January. They were not disappointed as Susan Marshfield had us in stitches with her talk entitled "You Can Choose your Friends". Just the right kind of humorous tales to start off the New Year.

We had a larger attendance at our February meeting when Mike Horler came along to tell us about his life with shire horses. He had some lovely slides of these magnificent horses.

Our programme until August is as follows:

Monday	1 March	Gardening - Container Plants for Summer by Don Everitt
Monday	19 April	Photographic Images Set to Music by John Parsons
Monday	10 May	Wildlife Art by Ruth Baker Walton
Monday	7 June	Quilting - A Trip Around the World by Lorraine Sherdold
Monday	5 July	Our Annual Trip - A Mystery Outing

A Garden Party

*To raise funds for
Help for Heroes*

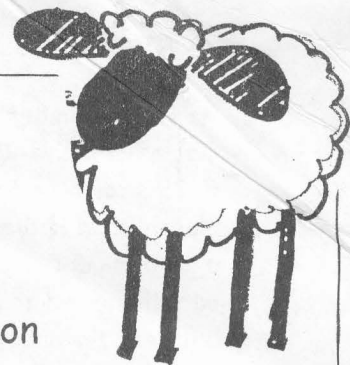
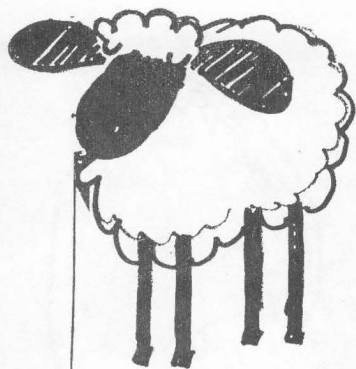
Saturday, 12 June 2010

341 North Road

Everyone Welcome!

Our meetings are held in North Road Primary School, commencing at 7.30 pm. If you feel you may be interested in any of the above evenings, please just come along and join us. Visitors are always made most welcome.

June Rycroft - Secretary



Nibley Lamb

Does your lamb taste as good as it used to?

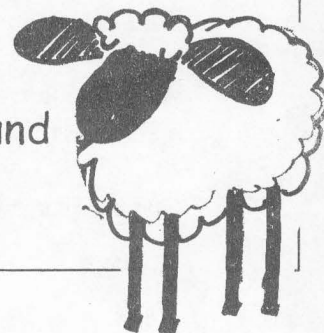
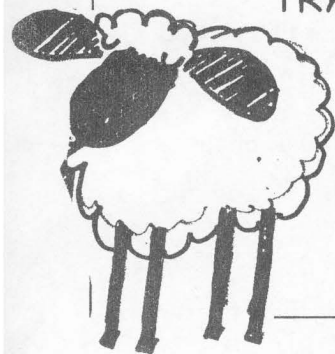
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A FIRST VISIT TO CHINA

Since the end of September last year my daughter, Jessica, has been in Chengdu in China. Firstly she has enrolled at the University there to study Mandarin and secondly she has been asked by the Chinese Theatre Company, Hua Dan, to work for a year in a consultative capacity with their project in the 2008 earthquake zone in Sichuan. This project is based in Chengdu and aims, through drama workshops and plays, to help children and young people to adjust to the aftermath of that terrible, devastating natural disaster.

I was very keen to see for myself where Jessica is now living so I decided to go out to Chengdu for Christmas, not as a tourist but to see this part of China through Jessica's eyes.

My first unexpected experience was on the taxi ride from the airport when Jessica had a fluent conversation with the taxi driver in Chinese! I was (and still am) amazed at the confidence and panache she exhibits when using her newly developed Chinese language skills and throughout my visit I felt safe in her hands.

Chengdu, with 10 million people, is the fifth largest city in China. At approximately 31° latitude the climate is temperate, no snow and rarely frost, whereas 3 hours west in the mountains of the earthquake area it is a different matter and it can get very cold. From the first day I was struck by the diversity of people - so many different faces, body builds and different dialects. The crowd of people gives a colourful impression. Their clothes now are in great contrast to the drab blue and green outfits of the 1960's and 1970's.

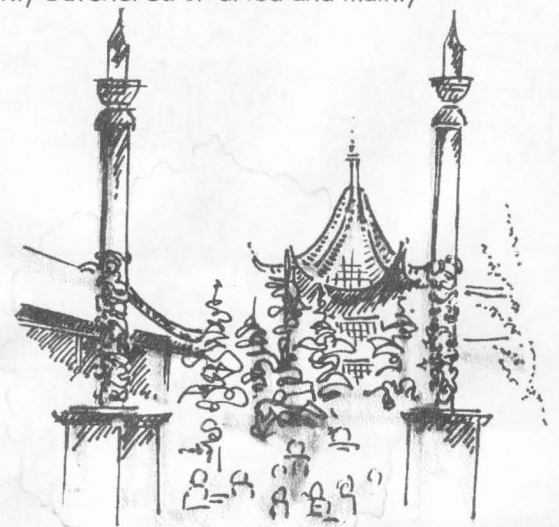
It was fascinating just to walk in the streets, which are often lined by trees, very commonly by Gingko trees. Everywhere in parks and gardens there are yellow clouds of winter sweet - a shrub well known to me from our own garden. It was wonderful to see this shrub in its country of origin. The scent was intoxicating.

The traffic is dominated by bicycles, mopeds and small motorcycles which are run on electric batteries. As they move along almost noiselessly it is quite tricky for pedestrians not to get run over. The main means of transport are buses (very frequent and very cheap). Most people have bus passes. I was impressed by the natural honesty of people. Buses are boarded in the front, bus cards have to be swiped or money put into a box next to the driver. If the bus is very crowded (and it usually is) one gets on in the middle. Fellow passengers will pass your bus card or money to the front. Your card will always be returned! The Chinese revere their elders and children and will invariably give up their seat on the bus for them. Not surprisingly, I, with my white shock of hair, never had to stand. Chengdu is well known for its cheap taxis which all run on gas. There hundreds and hundreds of them but never one when you need it.

It struck me that people in the streets are purposeful. There is little lingering and no drunkenness. In fact, I didn't really see anybody drink alcohol at all. People are friendly. They appear very relaxed and confident whether poor or better off. During the week the parks are dominated by grandparents who lovingly look after the one precious grandchild. The one-child policy is very noticeable. In the countryside a second may be allowed now.

The richness of the surrounding countryside is reflected in the many food markets, stalls and street carts. Food seems to be in great abundance; vegetables, fruit, eggs, meat (freshly butchered or dried and mainly pork and chicken). There are innumerable eating places from small, one-roomed places, where you can watch the food being prepared, to larger establishments. A great delicacy is chicken feet (which I didn't try). The variety of dishes is endless. There are many food stalls and snack bars in streets and public parks. A favourite snack seemed to be whole roasted little birds - quail!

But we didn't just walk the streets. We visited important temples too. Some had been destroyed in the Cultural Revolution but lovingly rebuilt. They are big complexes with surrounding gardens. The temples are the link to China's past history and ancient culture which are greatly revered. One gets the feeling that there is a



great urge to reconnect, after a long time, with their ancient historical and spiritual roots. Here people walk quietly, study inscriptions, paying their respect to the Buddha or other deities. Next to one temple is a huge public park where the mood was not so reflective as purely exuberant - with many, many families making the best of a little Chengdu sunshine.

The highlight of my visit was undoubtedly a 3 day trip to Mount Emei Shan in the foothills of the high mountains to the west. We had booked into a hotel at the foot of the mountain. In the afternoon we explored several temples hidden in woodland, where we even saw a couple of orange trees still bearing fruit. The next morning we went up by bus. Soon we entered deep wintery scenery with snow and ice. At the end of the road we decided to be good pilgrims, put iron under our boots to prevent slipping on the ice and climbed the path of endless flights of steps to the top of his sacred Buddhist Mountain. The summit of 3090 metres is crowned by a very tall golden Buddha looking serenely over the world below him. As we had booked into the summit hotel we were able to explore this amazing site all day, watching the sun set in the west and, in the early hours of the morning, the miracle of the sun rising above the sea of cloud below to the east. We were on top of the world and it was an unforgettable experience.

There was just one more highlight before I had to leave; we visited China's Great Panda Research and Breeding Centre outside Chengdu early one morning when the pandas were being fed and therefore very much alert and in action - for the rest of the day they are asleep.

I don't think we could have packed any more into these 17 days. We had a wonderful time and I felt that Jessica had given me a very good introduction to this part of China.

Whilst in China I read a very interesting and compelling book by Adeline Yen Mah entitled "A Thousand Pieces of Gold". This is an history of China through its many proverbs, with their significance and relevance for more than 2,000 years and even through to today. She is also the author of another book called "Falling Leaves". The other book (which is more lighthearted) that I would recommend is by Xinran, "Miss Chopsticks". It gives an excellent glimpse of Chinese life today. She is also the author of "The Good Women of China".

Barbara Naish

IRON ACTON CRICKET CLUB

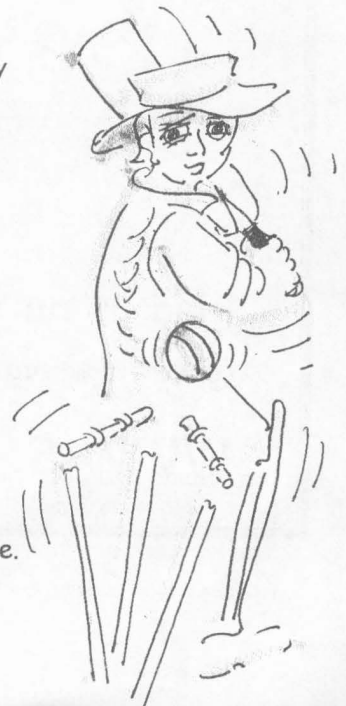
We are now halfway through the indoor season and, for the ninth year in succession, Tortworth look like running away with the trophy. The battle as far as we are concerned is now for second place where the 3 remaining teams are locked together with only a couple of points separating them and, when a typical game can result in 30 points being scored, you can see how close it is.

The annual IACC Christmas Meal and Awards Presentation evening was, as usual, very well attended. This provided the ideal opportunity for the Chairman to confront a number of members on their expense claims. Singled out for a special mention were the residents of Holly Hill - where it was more a case of what they hadn't claimed for. In particular, what they hadn't claimed for, despite substantial individual collections over the years, was a single duck house.

We will be looking forward to the outdoor season (which seems to start earlier and earlier every year). Last year we played just over a dozen friendly matches against local village teams though raising a full team proved somewhat of a challenge.

If anyone out there would like to help out on Wednesday evenings; either delivering balls down the pitch, collecting balls from the outfield or posting balls into the outfield then just please contact me on the number below and you'd be most welcome.

Chris Bradley - Chairman / 228559



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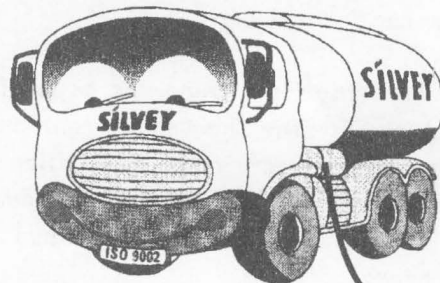


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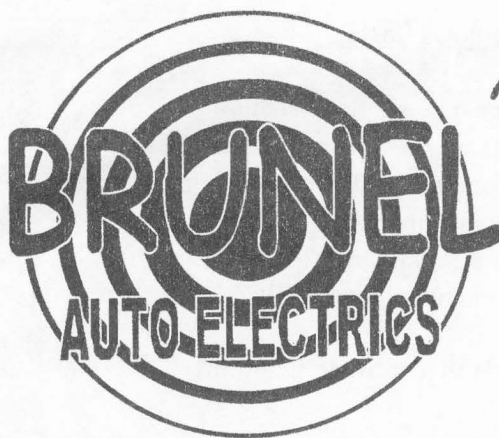
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Kirsty Haslam

Alex Farr

Yasmin Smith

The Thornbury Swing Band

Dave Bate

Kathryn Hurley Dance Academy

Stapleton School of Dancing

Saturday 10th July 2010

Tickets available at the barbeque on May Day and from The Lamb Inn.

Programme subject to change.

IRON ACTON POPPY COLLECTION 2009/2010

First of all I would like to thank the people of the Parish of Iron Acton for their generous support of this year's Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. My thanks also to all those people who supported me so strongly, in this, my first year as Organiser for this area. The total amount, raised from 2 specific areas, the house-to-house collection and the concert was £2052.03.

The house-to-house collectors brought in a total of £546.80

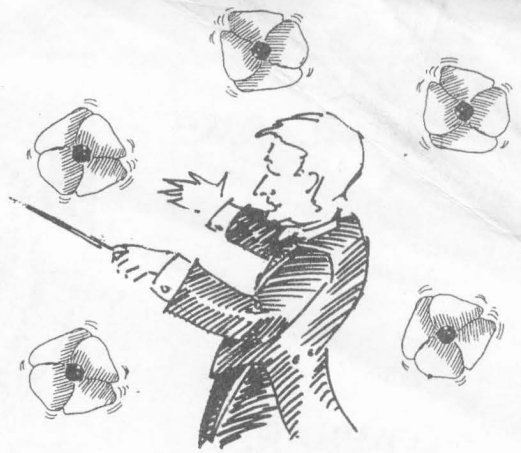
The concert - **A Prelude to Christmas** - took place in Chipping Sodbury Town Hall on 29 November 2009. This was a great success and despite the gruesome weather all but a few tickets were sold.

I was very grateful to Steve Webb MP for opening and closing the show and for drawing the Raffle and all other help on the evening was provided by people already involved throughout the Sodbury and Yate RBL area in the Poppy Appeal. For Iron Acton I would like to say a special thank you to Rose White for helping to sell tickets prior to the event and to Lynne Blanchard for selling programmes and front of house duties on the evening.

A lot of hard work went into the event but it was an extremely rewarding evening from both an enjoyment and financial perspective. Local organisations and councils made generous donations and local businesses donated some excellent raffle prizes and, as a result, £1181.38 was raised.

I now have just a couple of months break before I start to plan this year's house-to-house collections.

Sue Greenwell - Poppy Appeal Organiser



ACTON AID

Acton Aid invites you to "Come to the Dance" on Saturday, 10 July. Preparation is well underway for this year's Proms in the Meadow concert - which will celebrate the music of dance. The Bristol Millenium Orchestra will play a selection of classical dance music through the ages, including well-known pieces and local talent with 3 classical singers joining the orchestra. The Thornbury Swing Band and Iron Acton's own Dave Bate will kick-off the programme for the evening in style. What's more, the Kathryn Hurley Dance Academy and the Stapleton School of Dancing will be on hand to show you how it's done so put your best foot forward and join us on Saturday, 10 July. Tickets will be available on May Day at the barbeque and also from the Lamb Inn.

As always, Acton Aid is planning a busy schedule of events throughout the year and next up is the Chairman's Dinner on 26 February in the Parish Hall. This will see out-going Chairman, Ashley Mee, hand over to our new Chairman, Jon Aries. Jon Aries will be assisted by Gareth Wynne-Hughes as Vice Chairman. Peter Foote is clearing time in his diary ahead of an impending arrival and is stepping down as Secretary. Jason Haselhan has picked up the pen in his place. We wish Ashley and Peter a happy retirement from office (for the time being at least).

Since the last edition of Focal Poyntz we have been busy with the Firework Display on Bonfire Night, distributing gift boxes to pensioners at Christmas, providing the food stall at the Victorian Evening and, most recently, a port tasting hosted by Ashley Mee. We also welcomed Mark Frost as a new member

Acton Aid will be providing all manner of culinary treats from the barbeque at May Day, and look out for a new fund-raising event in June - cometh the hour, cometh Iron Acton Man!

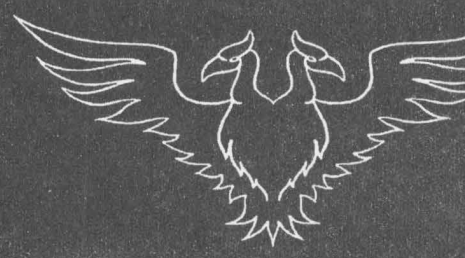



Any parishioner who wants to find out more about Acton Aid is invited to contact one of the officers or call in and join us at the Lamb Inn on the first Thursday of each month at 8.00 pm. Meetings have the minimum of formality. Fund-raising events and the distribution of resources are discussed and planned over a pint or two.

Finally, if any reader is aware of a parishioner who would benefit from the support of Acton Aid they are welcome to contact the Chairman (Jon Aries on 228037) or the Secretary (Jason Haselhan on 228791) in confidence.

Jason Haselhan - Secretary / 228791

ROXY MAGIC



ROXY MUSIC + BRYAN FERRY ... a tribute

ROXY MAGIC - FUND RAISING CONCERT FOR HELP FOR HEROES

You'll see in FP that North Road Ladies are supporting the charity Help for Heroes and have organised a series of fund-raising events, so we thought you might like to hear about another event for the same charity taking place quite close to home.

On Saturday, 19 June Roxy Magic, the highly acclaimed (and totally brilliant) Roxy Music tribute band is appearing at Thornbury's Armstrong Hall. Tickets are very reasonably priced at £10 and can be obtained from 01454 261464.

The band is fronted by Kevin Hackett who has past military connections and lives on the outskirts of Thornbury - hence his desire to help HfH and the choice of venue ... but please don't think this is some small, part-time band ... the following will give you some information more succinctly than I can.

Roxy Magic is a band of experienced and talented musicians who reproduce the diverse music and imagery of the hugely influential Roxy Music and pop icon Bryan Ferry. All the hits are performed with skill, style and verve to deliver an exciting and highly entertaining tribute.

Singer Kevin Hackett bears such an uncanny resemblance to Ferry, both visually and vocally, that you have to remind yourself that he isn't the genuine article and he has honed a stage presence which has received wide praise from fans of the original.

*Roxy Magic perform their set of best remembered Roxy Music hits **totally live**, believing this to be more dynamic than playing with the aid of backing tracks. Their show comes fully contained with stage lighting and sound rig. The show is a tried and tested hit, easily adapts to any sized venue and always produces a stunning performance that's not to be missed.*

So, fellow Iron Actonites, if you're looking for a totally enjoyable evening, with a talented and wonderful group of musicians and a great lead singer (with hearts in the right places) then look no further! A brilliant evening is ensured AND you're helping an incredibly worthwhile cause.

PS They're so good they've even been invited to perform at Bryan Ferry's birthday party!

PPS I'm totally biased

Lynne Blanchard

THE FRIENDS OF NORTH ROAD SCHOOL

First of all a rather belated Happy New Year to all Focal Poyntz readers! As you read this hopefully the first signs of spring will be apparent - after our snowy start to the year.

We had a successful and very busy Christmas Fair (which seems a long time ago now). Father Christmas made his annual visit, the younger children's faces are always a picture. The children enjoyed making their table decorations which I'm sure every home had on their table on Christmas Day. The Secret Santa Grotto was busy as the children made gifts to take home for parents, grandparents and siblings. We were really pleased this year to have made a total profit from the Fair, table decorations and Secret Santa of an amazing £752.



We had our first Friends of School meeting this term last week and it was lovely to see a few new faces. Our 2 projects for this year are:

- 1 The refurbishing of the Library area with new shelving, seating and some new books. The children have set up a small sub-committee and are going to help choose the furnishings.
- 2 To help fund a play pod for the playground. As most of you know, we have quite a small playground and we feel it is really important the children have lots to do at playtimes. We visited another school to see their play pod in use and the children seemed to love it and spent quite a lot of time in it.

We now need to start raising some money so this year we've got quite a few events planned. We're having a fashion show in April. The children love taking part and this year we're hoping to get some of the staff and parents modelling! We'll be holding our annual Duck Race at Easter - this always ends with the children getting very wet as we gather in all the ducks. We hold this at the Templar Road Bridge in Yate and it's quite a spectacle seeing 300 plastic mallards being dropped over the bridge to the finishing line a few yards downstream. The challenge is to catch all 300 ducks again! A few have escaped in the past and are somewhere on the River Frome. We have a tea party planned for July in the playground. The children do all sorts, including singing, dancing, joke telling, drama and instrument playing a few X Factor hopefuls I'm sure. A ladies night has been booked for September - when we are hoping to have various therapies and relaxing treatments over a glass of wine. If you are in the beauty industry and would like to have a stall please contact me on heathertillotson@hotmail.co.uk. October sees our first ever Barn Dance, we have a caller booked and are hoping this will be a fun evening. Other events we have planned but haven't got dates for are a Family Bingo Night, Plant Sale and a walk in Tortworth Woods.

We have a Working Party booked for Saturday, 15 May when we will repaint the gazebos, benches and anything else we're asked to do. The Friends will be on hand to dish up bacon butties and cups of tea. We hope this will entice volunteers out of bed on a Saturday morning.

It would be lovely to see you at any of our events - if you'd like any further details please contact me on 227419.

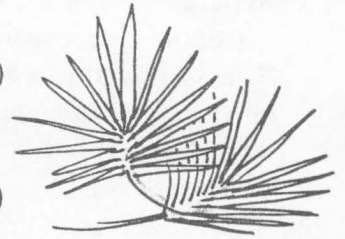
Happy Easter to you all!

Heather Tillotson / 227419

ST JAMES THE LESS CHURCH

EASTER SERVICES

Palm Sunday	28 March	9.00 am	Holy Communion (with hymns)
Good Friday	2 April	2.00 pm	Stations of the Cross
Easter Sunday	4 April	9.00 am 10.00 am	Holy Communion (with hymns) followed by Easter Egg Hunt



Services Throughout the Year

- * Holy Communion Services are held at 9.00 am on the first, third and fourth Sundays of each month.
- * An All Age Service (non-Eucharistic) is held at 10.00 am on the second Sunday of the month. Coffee and tea are served after the service and a Fairtrade Stall is available for goods to be purchased.
- * Mid-Week Holy Communion Services are held at 11.00 am every Wednesday. Please come along and be part of a growing and welcoming congregation in a very relaxed atmosphere.

Our Church Charitable Givings at Christmas Were:

- * £339.15 donated to the CHILDREN'S SOCIETY. This came from the collections at the All Age Christingle Service, the Crib Service and from Children's Society Candles.
- * £366.92 donated to the JULIAN TRUST (which works with homeless people in Bristol). This came from the collections at the Candlelit Carol Service and the Christmas Day Family Holy Communion.

Can You Help?

The Julian Trust is in need of blankets and men's clothing. If anyone is able to donate any of these items they can be brought into Church for us to forward to the Julian Trust.

And Finally

The Marshall Room is available for hire for private meetings, etc. Please call Mrs Sally Aries on 228037 for further information and to make bookings.

Why not visit our new web site for community news and events www.ironactonparish.info

Come and join all the fun at the

**St James the Less
Church Fete**

Saturday, 3 July from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm

In The Old Rectory Gardens, High Street, Iron Acton

**Cream Teas, Raffle, Displays, Stalls and Games
The Church Tower will also be open to Visitors**

NEWS FROM NORTH ROAD SCHOOL

After all the fun and excitement of Christmas, when everyone thoroughly enjoyed our Christmas Fayre and Disco, the concerts and Christmas parties, visits to the Bristol Old Vic and our very own North Road's Got Talent Show, the new year began more soberly for myself. Sadly, I lost my mum just after the New Year, although I was fortunate in that I was able to be with her every day over the Christmas holiday. It really hits home just how highly loved and thought of grandparents are and what a vital role they play in our children's lives.

We also had our Ofsted Inspection and although I was personally unable to be there for it as they came on the day of my mum's funeral, the inspection team reported lots of positives about the school. They commented upon how much the children enjoy school and how enthusiastic they are in all aspects of their learning. Of particular note were the observations made about the excellent behaviour of the children and how they make the most of all the enrichment programmes we have in school. Now we can build upon our many strengths and strive to continually move the school forward.

The Friends of the School have been busy bees as usual and have been planning the programme of events for this year; including the Party in the Playground, Summer Fayre, Prom Night, Ladies Evening, a Saturday School Maintenance Day, Fashion Show and, of course, the Iron Acton May Day Fayre. I have to say a huge thank you to Angela Guest, who has just stepped down after many years as Chair. Angela has been a most active, enthusiastic and supremely well organised Chair and we are so grateful to her for helping to raise literally thousands of pounds for all sorts of school projects - not to mention all the fun and happy memories we have of the countless events that she planned. The Friends are now committed to developing the school's library and to equipping the playground play pod.

We recently held a Design and Technology Week and all the children were engaged in designing, making and evaluating a whole range of products and contrivances. The junior children made "life-size" Anderson Shelters which were used as a prop for their assembly for parents. The older children organised a cake sale so they could raise money for internet wireless boosters in their classroom. We have just bought more gardening equipment with all the Morrison's vouchers that parents donated and which will all help with our efforts in trying to win back the Yate Schools' Gardening Competition Award.

The children requested that they wanted to raise money for the Haiti earthquake appeal so they organised a mufti day themselves and made over £200.

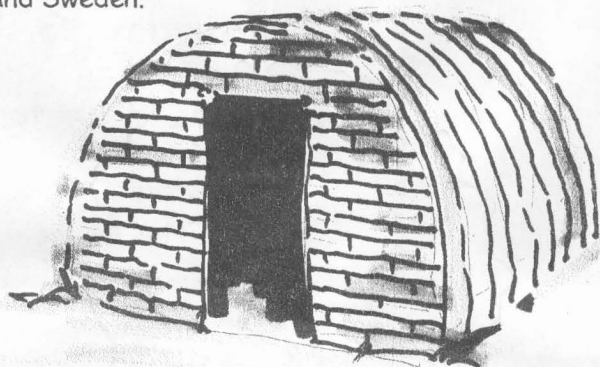
Turning to matters of children's safety, we recently held an e-safety evening for parents to raise their awareness of safety issues their children may encounter through the internet and other electronic media. We have also booked for road safety presentations for the juniors.

The older children will be in fine voice soon as they are having a programme of vocal coaching. The choir will be taking part in the Yate Schools' Music Concert at the Colston Hall and the infants can look forward to the yate and Chipping Sodbury Music Workshop. Both events take place in March.

Three of our teachers visited a school in Zoetermeer in Holland for the first phase of a new Comenius project - which will build links with schools in both Holland and Sweden.

Finally, our football team is already looking ahead to the annual Iron Acton Church Summer Fete football match against Iron Acton School and is already in training whilst Year 6 has already started talking about their PGL residential visit in June with pupils from Iron Acton and Rangeworthy Schools. Let's hope for a lovely warm and sunny spring and summer.

Mark Handley - Headteacher



IRON ACTON HORTICULTURAL SHOW - SATURDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2010

Last year Iron Acton residents did themselves proud with nearly 450 individual entries. Let's hope 2010 will be another record breaking year. The Horticultural Show is a self-funding event and has a number of expenses and the auction of produce, flowers and homecraft items at the end of the show is our main source of funding and unfortunately last year this was not very well attended.

In 2010 the running order for the show will be slightly altered with the auction brought forward so it takes place before the prize giving. Therefore, all entrants will need to indicate which exhibits they are happy to be auctioned and which they wish to take away. On arrival, you will be given an Exhibitor Number which is personal to you for all of your exhibits. You will then be given an Exhibit Slip, which is to be displayed with your exhibit. At this stage, you will then be given either a red Exhibit Slip to indicate you wish to take your exhibit away or a green Exhibit Slip which indicates you are willing to allow the item to be auctioned.

Listed below are the classes for the General Section for all the green-fingered gardeners.

1	Collection of Vegetables	16	2 Cabbages (any 1 variety)
2	Collection of Salads	17	2 Marrows (15" long x 22" in girth)
3	Collection of Fruits	18	Heaviest Marrow
4	Collection of Gourds, Squash & Pumpkins	19	3 Courgettes
5	4 Potatoes (any 1 variety)	20	2 Cucumbers (frame or greenhouse)
6	3 Carrots (long, tops trimmed to 3")	21	6 Cherry Tomatoes (on the vine)
7	3 Carrots (short, tops trimmed to 3")	22	6 Tomatoes
8	'Kinkiest' Carrot	23	3 Parsnips
9	3 Onions (from seed, trimmed)	24	3 Beetroot
10	3 Onions (from sets, trimmed)	25	3 Bulbs of Garlic
11	6 Shallots	26	4 Apples (dessert)
12	6 Runner Beans	27	4 Apples (culinary)
13	6 French Beans	28	4 Pears (dessert)
14	The Longest Runner Bean	29	4 Plums (dessert)
15	2 Peppers	30	4 Plums (culinary)



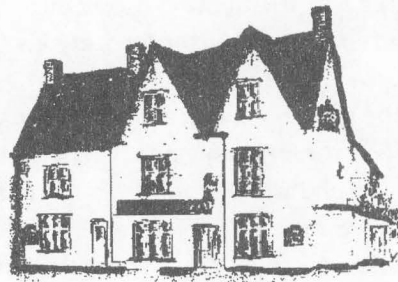
Some tips on presenting your exhibits:

- * Prepare vegetables carefully; make sure they are clean, use plenty of water; don't scrub; wash roots gently.
- * A judge will be looking for the following points and mark accordingly:
 - * Condition - freshness, cleanliness, tenderness and freedom from coarseness and blemishes.
 - * Size - not so overgrown as to be coarse or too small to be useful.
 - * Uniformity - size, shape or form, colour and maturity.
 - * Colour - attractive and naturally produced.
- * Apples - eyes and stalks intact, skins clear and unblemished with colour characteristics of the cultivar.
- * Beetroot - even sized, good even colour, small tap roots and smooth clear skins. Leaves removed leaving approx 3" of leaf stalk.
- * Cabbages - well shaped, fresh, solid hearts with surrounding leaves perfect, size according to cultivar.
- * Carrots - good, uniform shape, tender roots free from side roots, skins clear and colour bright.
- * Onions - uniform bulbs, firm, well ripened and of good colour. No thickness or softness in necks. Excessive removal of outer skins to be avoided. Tops neatly tied and roots neatly trimmed.
- * Potatoes - medium-sizes, good shape, skins clean and free from blemishes, Eyes few in number and skins should never be scrubbed.
- * Tomatoes - medium sized, ripe but firm, rich in colour with fresh calyx and stalk intact.

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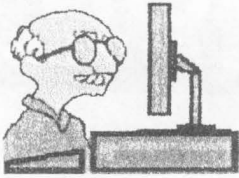
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01454 228494



INFORMATION FROM AVON FIRE AND RESCUE

At a recent Safer and Stronger Group Meeting, Steve Kendrick, who is the Station Officer at Yate Fire Station, asked if we would be able to include the following item into FP - and we are happy to oblige!



Spring Clean your Smoke Alarm

Avon Fire & Rescue Service is reminding people undertaking a spot of spring cleaning to take the opportunity to dust their smoke detectors too.

Working smoke detectors provide vital extra minutes to escape a smoke filled property in the event of a fire so when dusting or vacuuming smoke detectors, make sure the battery is working.

Just a couple of mouthfuls of toxic smoke can render a person unconscious so the sooner you are made aware of a fire in your home the quicker you can get to safety.

Sadly statistics show that older people are more likely to experience a fire in the home.

Tips on staying safe:

- * Never overload plug sockets
- * Make sure candles are placed in the correct holders, away from furnishings
- * Never leave cooking unattended
- * Make sure everyone in your home knows the escape route from your house, as well as where keys for windows and doors are kept
- * If you smoke, always ensure cigarettes are fully extinguished after use and never drop a used cigarette into a waste paper bin
- * Before you go to bed make sure all electrical items which don't need to be kept on are switched off,
- * Close all doors to prevent the spread of fire and keep door and window keys within easy reach.

Avon Fire & Rescue Service will carry out Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV), where firefighters visit homes to talk to you about fire safety, completely free of charge.

To find out more about HFSVs and fire safety advice visit www.avonfire.gov.uk and go to the 'your safety' pages or call Yate Fire Station on 0117 9262061 extension 8030



NEXT EDITION OF FOCAL POYNTZ

The summer issue of Focal Poyntz should be delivered to houses around the parish by no later than Saturday 31 July/Sunday 1 August 2010

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

2009 ended for us with mixed emotions. On the one hand we celebrated 90 years of the WI in Iron Acton and hosted a wonderful party in our Parish Hall when we invited many of our WI neighbours from the area as well as past members. The sadness was that our President, Vivienne Parker, who was such a personality within the group, had succumbed to her illness just a few days previously and was unable to join us. However, we like to feel she was there in spirit. The occasion was dedicated to her and the table decorations were of her favourite red roses. Balloons festooned the Hall and a beautiful birthday cake, emblazoned with the WI badge, was made by a past member, Dusty Taylor. The actor Chris Harris kept everyone amused with talks of his long and varied career in show business and the characters he had met along the way. With photographs taken by Ray Bulmer to mark the occasion it's presumably quite possible that in another 90 years time future ladies of the village will look back in amusement at their predecessors dressed in their funny clothes!

Our Christmas Party at the beginning of December was enjoyed with a buffet and mulled wine provided by committee members. As well as the usual Secret Santa presents there was also an extra gift for everyone to mark the group's special 90th birthday. A few party games were organised by Jan Darley which added to the feeling of festive fun (no doubt helped by the mulled wine)!

We had a stall at the Victorian Evening and sold hot refreshments and minced pies, as well as the Christmas decorations that some of our members had made in the preceding weeks. These took the form of angels made from fir cones and teasels, felt Christmas trees decorated with sequins and buttons, decorated eggs and other very imaginative creations. Needless to say, the stall proved both popular and profitable and, no doubt, together with all the other festive stalls, put everyone in a very Christmassy frame of mind.

The bad weather in January unfortunately meant we had to cancel the first meeting of the year but it was good to all meet up again in February with some new members who came along at the end of last year to meet us and have decided to join as members this year (honestly, despite what you might hear, these ladies join us completely voluntarily)! Hopefully they will enjoy the friendship, contribute some fresh ideas and participate in the activities that are planned for the coming year.



Our first speaker was Celia Zapata, who spoke to us about the benefits of the Aloe Vera plant, also known by various other names such as the healing plant, burns plant and medicine plant because of its known healing properties. As well as soothing skin conditions such as dermatitis, it is taken as a drink for severe gastric disorders such as Crohn's Disease and colitis. We tried some of the various creams and moisturisers and the sale of the products at the end of the evening was very popular.

The forthcoming programme is looking interesting with talks to include reflexology, the Willow Trust and a very popular raconteur, Susan Marshfield. A few competitions will be thrown in to add extra fun to the evenings and, as usual, there will be an outing in June (which, at present, looks as if it will be to Chavenage House in Tetbury).

Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month in the Parish Hall and new members are always made very welcome. Anyone who would like details of future meetings can contact our Secretary, Stella Taylor, on 228417.

Sylvie Powell

IRON ACTON C OF E VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

We certainly had an unusual but exciting start to the year with the arrival of the snow. The children had a wonderful time and were sad to see it go. It certainly must have been easier for the Head Master in the days when they lived in the school house and most of the pupils lived in the village and could walk to school.

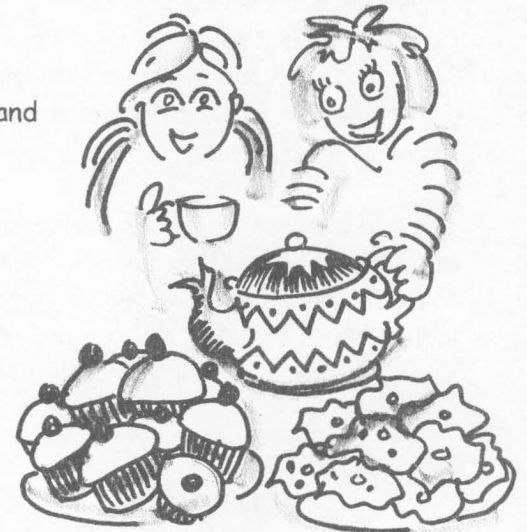
The Christmas festivities were as enjoyable as ever, with nativity plays, parties and a Christmas lunch. Our older pupils joined other South Gloucestershire schools at the Clifton Carol Concert and pupils sang 2 of these carols as part of the Christingle Service at St James' Church. We were pleased to be invited to join this special service.

To encourage tolerance and understanding towards people of different faiths pupils enjoyed a visit from a Hindu lady. Krishna led a workshop with each class explaining her beliefs and showing them artefacts. The children had great fun dressing up in saris and putting on traditional face decorations.

This term we all enjoyed a Languages Week; finding out about different countries of the world, singing songs, making flags, filling in their own passports and hearing stories in different languages. The pupils experienced a French lunch and a mid-morning break of croissants and chocolate milk. The week finished with dressing up day - which saw a colourful and creative array of costumes.

Thank you to all of the villagers who sent in donations towards Freya's and Elena's tea party for Haiti. They raised over £350 which they sent to Oxfam to send out to Haiti.

The more observant of you may have noticed the wall at the bottom of the hill is showing 2 bulging areas. It seems a wise move to rebuild the whole wall at the same time. After 10 months of endless form filling and countless site meetings our project manager is ready to submit our application for the planning and conservation area consent to enable us to rebuild it. We are also submitting plans to create 2 play mounds and a spiral garden in the field to provide better play and learning opportunities for the pupils. Hopefully the applications will go through and before long we will actually be able to start work.



We have extended the tyre play area by adding more horizontal tyres, vertical tyres to climb through and wobbly tyres to try and balance on. The children can't wait to try these out.

We have recently had several problems with water leaks and blocked sewers. I apologise if this has affected anyone.

In my last newsletter I reported our successful first Comenius meeting, when the school received visitors from Crete, Hungary, the Netherlands and Sweden. In March 3 staff will be going out to Crete. One of the projects is a recipe book of local recipes - does anyone have a local recipe (this can be either modern or historical). These can be e-mailed in or left at the school office.

Finally, I am often contacted by people researching the village or their ancestors. We have many fascinating historic school documents, including log books. These are stored at the Gloucestershire record office where they can be kept safely and in proper storage facilities. You can go on-line and see what is there.

Jill Bendeaux - Headteacher

RESPONSE TO OUR APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEERS

We had the most wonderful response to our appeal for delivery volunteers for the Green and Park Street Catherine, Jill and Carole will be sharing the duties for the Green and Park Street ... and we then had 3 other volunteers; Sharon, Amanda and Jill (on behalf of Iron Acton Primary School) whose kindness has allowed Barrie Wright to retire from his High Street duties. Our apologies to Rona as he will now be home a little more but when you reach such advancing years we felt it only right to treat maturity with respect!

Our very sincere gratitude to each of the 6 ladies who volunteered.

Lynne Blanchard

THE ACTONIANS DRAMA GROUP

We will have to work even harder in rehearsals now to overcome any noise or mess caused by the building work - but, like all the other Hall users, we are looking forward to the new, improved facilities.

Spring is always a busy time for us as we shed the winter blues and get into the Spring Production. This year we are presenting "The Cemetery Club" by Ivan Menchell and directed by June Cross.

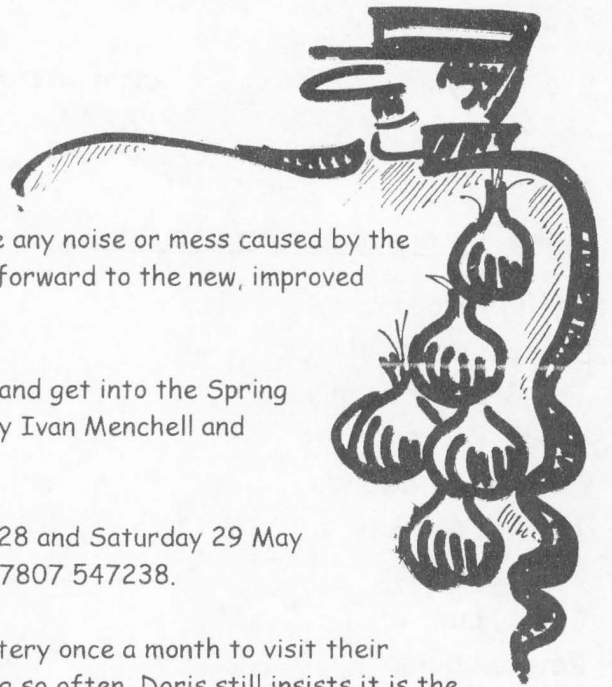
Performance dates will be Wednesday 26, Thursday 27, Friday 28 and Saturday 29 May at 7.30 pm and tickets are priced at £7 and can be booked on 07807 547238.

This is a story of 3 New York Jewish ladies who go to the cemetery once a month to visit their husbands' graves. Ida is beginning to think its time to stop going so often, Doris still insists it is the right thing to do and Lucille (the man mad one) only goes so she can tell her dead husband how she is spending his money. They meet Sam, the Playboy Butcher of Queens, and Ida and Lucille vie for his attention. The girls have been asked to be bridesmaids for Selma's sixth wedding - and that's when things start to go wrong. First Sam brings some other woman to the wedding (he has been warned off Ada by the other two) and then, when they come back drunk from the reception, the drink loosens their tongues and home truths abound.

We then move onto our autumn production. This is the wonderful period farce "Clochemerle" by Gabriel Chevallier and is directed by Ann Aplin. Performance dates are Thursday 25th, Friday 26th and Saturday 27th November 2010. Tickets will be available later in the year.

The year is 1925 and the place is Clochemerle, a small wine-growing village in Beaujolais. When the Mayor, Barthelemey Piechut (Socialist), decides that his town requires a monument that will extol the virtues of the Republic and his own administration, he ponders long and hard for something suitable. He follows the lead of the ancient Romans, famed for hygiene and noble edifices, and decides that the perfect expression of these 2 concepts would be a public urinal. Little was he to dream that this would lead to scandals that would shatter the peacefulness of the town and eventually have world-wide repercussions.

The festival production of The Bear, by Anton Chekhov and directed by Di and Robert Pardoe, for the Avon One Act Festival at the Backwell Playhouse, went tremendously well and the adjudication at the end of the evening delivered the Best Supporting Actor award to Jim Sinkinson, whilst Sarah Atkins and Matthew Godsell were both mentioned as nominees for the Best Actress and Best Actor awards. Whilst the adjudicator didn't quite see eye-to-eye with our interpretation of the work, the audience seemed to thoroughly enjoy it and the team was entirely satisfied with the performance and felt hugely proud of all those involved. Many thankis to everyone and congratulations to Jim, Sarah and Matthew in particular.



FOCAL POYNTZ INFORMATION

Your Focal Poyntz Team is:

Lynne Blanchard 228566	Maureen Blake	Roy Hubbard 228356
Stella Taylor 228417	Barrie Wright 228247	Rona Wright 228247

Deliveries are ably carried out by:

Sheila Alsop	Jill Johnson
Lynne Blanchard	Sharon Kellett
The Bradley Family	Ashley Mee
Carole Dickson	Catherine Neck
Elizabeth Edwards	Amanda Scott
Andrew Gowen	Sue Shepherd
John Griffin	The Smith Family
Chris Heal	Stella Taylor
Roy Hubbard	Laura Walters
Iron Acton School	Mike Wheeler

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 May Day cover was drawn by Maureen Blake.



Introducing the services of Yate, Sodbury & District Community Transport

Do you find it difficult to use the available public transport in the Iron Acton area, and do not own a car ? Then look no further.....we can help you!!!! *We have provided affordable and accessible transport to a wide section of the community for 20 years !*

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- *We also organise Day/Shopping Trips, & Pub Lunches**

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How much does it cost ?

If you hold a National Travel Card, then the service is free. If you don't, bus fares are charged.

When? Monday until Sunday from 9:00am – 10:30pm

I am very interestedWhat do I do next ?

Just complete and the form below to the address shown, or call us on 01454 228706 for more details!

Title :	Bus Pass Number:
Name:	Do you use mobility equipment: Y/N
Address:	
	Next of Kin:
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Tel:	Date:

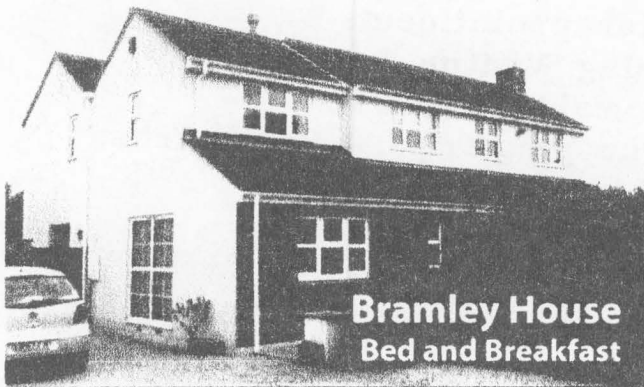
Please return form to **Yate, Sodbury and District Community Transport, The Yard, 390 North Road, Yate, Bristol BS37 7LW**. If you do not hold a national travel card, there is a £5 registration fee.

Yate, Sodbury and District Community Transport is supported by South Gloucestershire council, Yate Town Council, and Dodington Parish Council

Are you planning a special event, or just family and friends visiting for a while? Do you want somewhere special for them to stay?

We would be very happy to accommodate them on a bed and breakfast basis in our lovely home. Voted "one of the best" by several of our clients, we provide quality, modern facilities in generous sized rooms, all en-suite, with hostess tray, tv, wi-fi, hair dryer and ironing facilities. There's lots of room for parking. Full English breakfast, with a choice of fruit juice, yoghurts, preserves, toast, fresh fruit, using local produce where possible.

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Bramley House Bed & Breakfast,
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Tourist Office Approved

Tel: 01454 228093

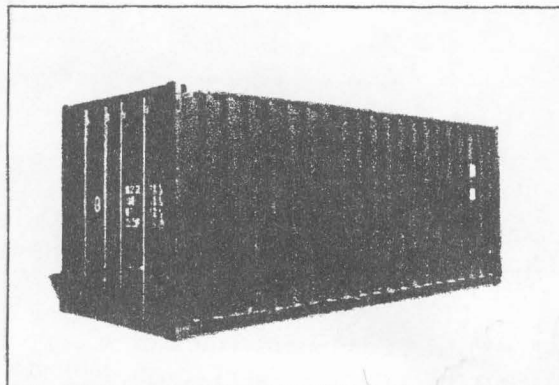
e-mail:

teresa@dunn1938.freeserve.co.uk

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