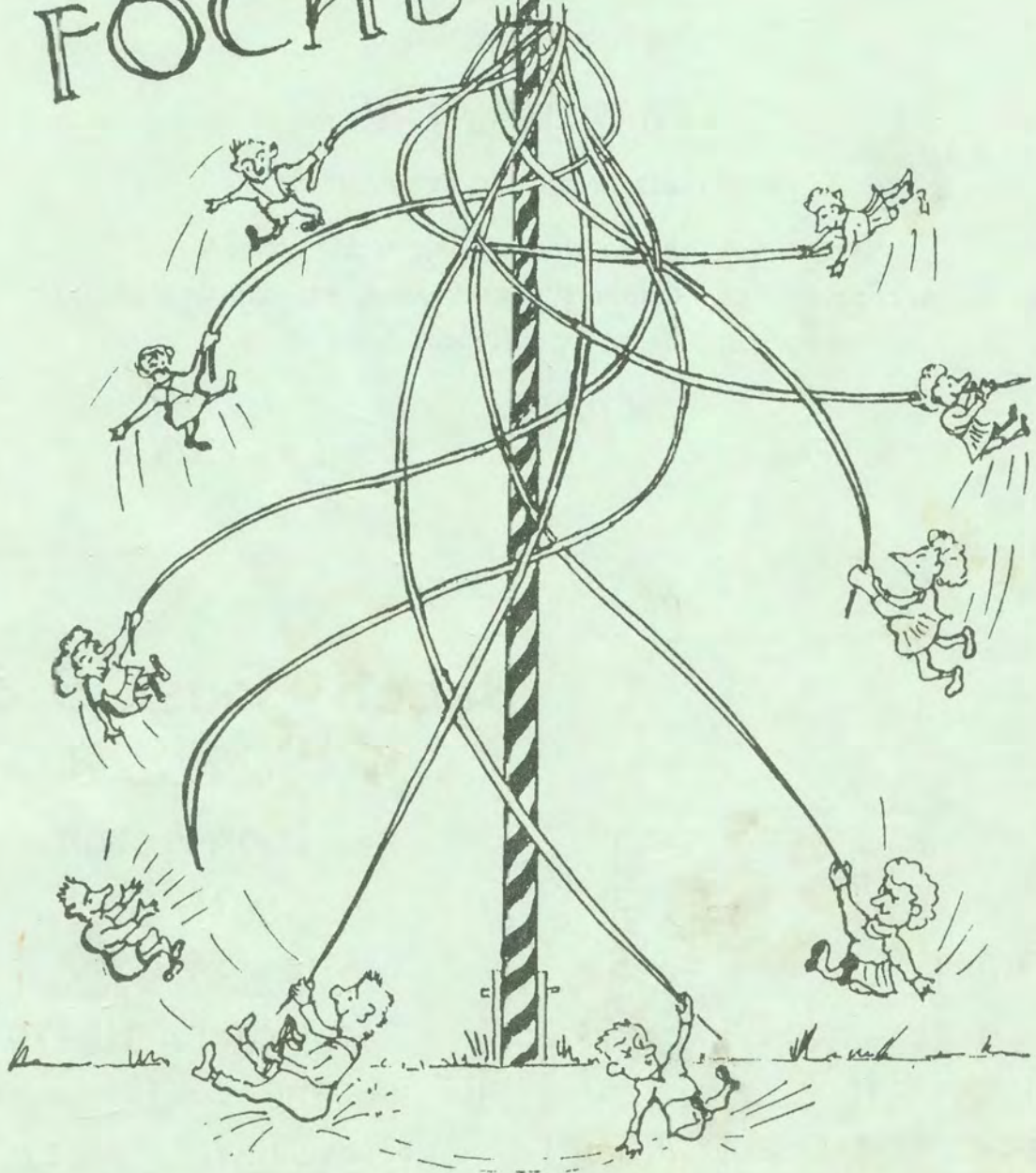


# FOCAL POINTZ

MAY DAY



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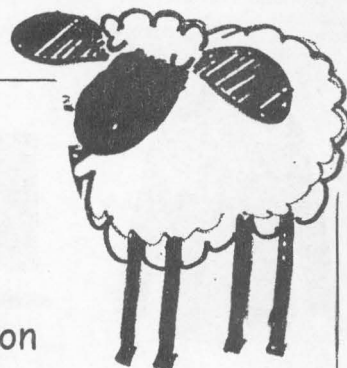
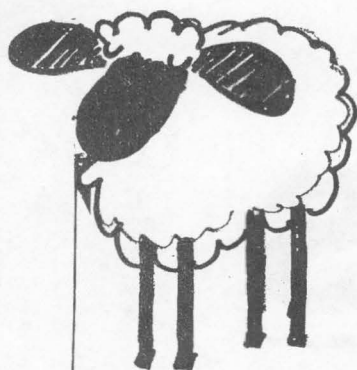
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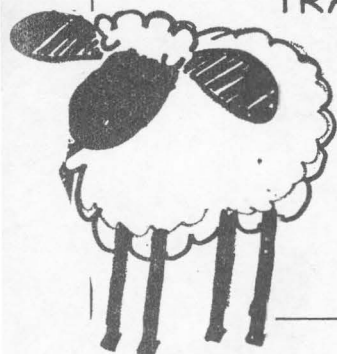
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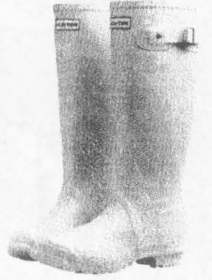
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# SPRING

ISSUE NO. 85 2011

Welcome to the 85<sup>th</sup> edition of Focal Poyntz.

Spring has sprung, the weather's so much kinder that it was this time last year and perhaps we will enjoy a "proper" spring where everything comes to life in its own time and doesn't have to rush to catch up because it's been held back in the frozen ground, not daring to venture out.

In this edition we have some great articles from our organization contributors that are perfectly captured in Maureen's drawings - look out for the rabbit on page 13 - whilst the prevailing theme seems to be frozen pipes and water leaks.

We have been so pleased to receive not one ..... not two ..... but three special, one-off articles from Roy Hubbard, Peter Huise and Pam McCoy and each one, in its own way, gives an insight into the lives and activities of people that would probably pass unnoticed by the greater population of Iron Acton.

With special things to look forward to (Easter, a Royal Wedding and May Day Celebrations) and numerous enjoyable events that have been arranged by local organizations we hope your next few months are fun filled and happy.

The Focal Poyntz team wishes you a very joyous Easter.





## DOUGLAS ALFRED CHARLES HUNT

There is a simple black marble headstone in Iron Acton village cemetery, just behind the church, marking the final resting place of the above gentleman and his loving wife, Doris. Nothing particularly significant about that, you might think, until you look closer and see that he was "One of the Few" - a Battle of Britain Spitfire pilot.

Dougy, as he was affectionately called, was born on 1 June 1918 in Bristol and lived at Eden Grove in Horfield with his parents and younger sister Pam. After attending Eden Grove Primary School he then progressed to the fairly new establishment of Kingswood Grammar School, Bristol where he excelled as an athlete, becoming County Long Jump Champion.

He left school in September 1934, following his father's footsteps, to start an apprenticeship with the Bristol Aeroplane Company based at Filton where he studied aero engine fitting and testing. He attained his technical qualifications over a 5 year period at the Merchant Venturers' Technical College in Bristol.

In August 1937 he joined the RAFVR as an Airman u/t Pilot (740548), carried out his flying training at 2 EFTS, Filton and was awarded his flying badge in November 1938. He was recalled to full time service on 3 September 1939 and attached to the Fleet Air Arm at Donibristle, Scotland where he undertook a deck-landing course in Gladiators on the aircraft carrier HMS Furious. On 30 November 1939 he went to 12 Group Pool, Aston Down and converted to Spitfires, joining 66 Squadron at Duxford on 8 December with his Service No 11976.

[As an aside, 66 Squadron was originally formed at Filton in June 1916 serving throughout Europe during the First World War flying Pups and Camels until it was disbanded in October 1919. It was reformed in July 1936 at Duxford from C Flight of No 19 Squadron, firstly as a coastal patrol unit flying over Dunkirk and then continuing mainly in the role of bomber escort duty for the rest of the Second World War. It was again disbanded in April 1945 but reformed in September 1946 replacing Spitfires with Meteor jets. In 1949 the Squadron was transferred to Yorkshire converting to Sabres in 1953, Hunters in 1956 and then disbanded yet again in September 1960. However it was reformed for the last time in September 1961 when it moved to Singapore in 1962 providing transport in Malaysia until finally being disbanded for good in March 1969.

The motto for 66 Squadron was "Cavete praemonui" meaning "Beware, I have warned" and its badge was a rattlesnake - typifying aggressive spirit and striking power.]

On 2 June 1940, whilst on an early morning patrol over Dunkirk, Sgt Pilot Hunt was hit by return fire from a Ju 88 but successfully managed to bale out. He was taken to Dunkirk by the French, handed over to the British and taken out by launch to a waiting destroyer which arrived in Dover at 2.00 am the next morning.

On 31 August he shared in destroying a Co17, on 2 and 11 September he shared an He 111 and on the 15<sup>th</sup> he claimed the destruction of another He111.

He remained with 66 Squadron until October 1941 when he went to CFS, Upavon for an Instructor's Course. Commissioned in November 1941 he was on the staff of a number of flying schools: 5 FTS, Term Hill; CFS, Upavon and 3 FIS, Castle Combe and Lulsgate Bottom. In January 1946 he did a 4 months course at the Empire Test Pilot's School at Cranfield and then went to the RAE, Farnborough as a test pilot. Squadron Leader Hunt retired from the RAF in October 1958, not relishing the prospect, as he succinctly put it, of "flying a desk" and retaining the rank of Wing Commander.

As you can well imagine after such a distinguished service career, especially during this period of total world upheaval, Douglas joined W & E Moore, a specialist lifting gear engineering company, as a technical representative. This was to prove a difficult period in his life because, as you can imagine, it was such a vivid

contrast to what had gone before. He lived, with his wife Doris and 2 sons Martin and Geoff, in Ickenham within the London borough of Hillingdon and his company supplied various engineering solutions to such projects as the 600 Group, Pinewood Studios for the James Bond movies and the BBC for Top of the Pops sets.

After 20 years at W&E Moore and with some ensuing health problems, Douglas and Doris decided to move back to the Bristol area and settled in North Road where he obtained a position with Strachan and Henshaw until his retirement.

Never one for the limelight, Douglas kept in touch with his close RAF friends but, for example, avoided Squadron reunions - however he and Doris did enjoy the day when they were invited to attend the film premiere of The Battle of Britain.

In conclusion, having much enjoyed researching this project, I would personally and on behalf of millions of others, wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to a man, who, as his son Martin pointed out, would flinch at the title of hero for helping him to save our country.

"Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few".

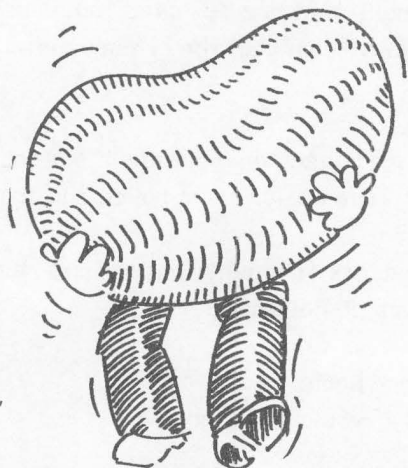
Roy Hubbard

### HORTICULTURAL SHOW - SATURDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2011 IN THE PARISH HALL

As your support of the 2010 show was, yet again, first rate we are hopeful that 2011 will see the number of entries at least matched and hopefully exceeded!

Detailed below are the list of vegetable and fruit classes from the General Section to give you a head start and food for thought!

- |    |   |    |                                   |
|----|---|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1  | Collection of vegetables                    | 16 | 2 cabbages - any 1 variety        |
| 2  | Collection of salads                        | 17 | 2 marrows                         |
| 3  | Collection of fruits                        | 18 | Heaviest marrow                   |
| 4  | Collection of gourds, squashes and pumpkins | 19 | 3 courgettes                      |
| 5  | 4 potatoes - any 1 variety                  | 20 | 2 cucumbers - frame or greenhouse |
| 6  | 3 long carrots                              | 21 | 6 cherry tomatoes on the vine     |
| 7  | 3 short carrots                             | 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 dessert apples                  |
| 12 | 6 runner beans                              | 27 | 4 culinary apples                 |
| 13 | 6 french beans                              | 28 | 4 dessert pears                   |
| 14 | Longest runner bean                         | 29 | 4 dessert plums                   |
| 15 | 2 peppers                                   | 30 | 4 culinary plums                  |



A full schedule, detailing all classes, will be in the summer edition.

If anyone has any queries or questions about the show, or would indeed like to lend a helping hand, the ladies of the Horticultural Committee would be delighted to welcome you.

Paula Evans

## PARISH COUNCIL

### District and Parish Elections - Thursday, 5 May 2011 - Polling Station = The Parish Hall

Anyone interested in standing as a parish councillor for the Iron Acton Ward or the North Road Ward should contact South Glos Council by telephone on 01454 863030, by e-mail on [electoral.services@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.services@southglos.gov.uk), in person at Thornbury Council Offices in Castle Street or by downloading the forms from the website on [www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk).

#### "Handy Van"



A new Handy Van scheme has been launched by South Glos Council which offers a combined subsidized minor household repairs and adaptations service and free home safety and security service.

The free home safety and security checks can be made on request or referral for all homeowners and private tenants who are over 60 or of working age with disabilities but is not available to housing association or private landlords. The work is carried out free of charge and to British Standards and insurance industry requirements. The service is funded by SGC and supported by Avon and Somerset Police and Avon Fire and Rescue Service.

The aim of the minor household repair service is to enable people to maintain their independence in their own homes. It is restricted to jobs of less than 3 hours at a subsidized rate of £10 per hour and would typically cover such jobs as small building repairs (eg fitting of curtain rails or shelves), small plumbing jobs (tap washers, leaks, blocked sinks), small carpentry jobs (internal door repairs, flat pack building) and gutter cleaning, cracks in paths and small plaster repairs.

View the poster on the Parish Council Website News and Information page ([www.ironactonparishcouncil.com](http://www.ironactonparishcouncil.com)).

#### 2 New Alerts Issued by Trading Standards

Scamnesty 2011: Every year 3.2m adults (1 in 15 people) across the country fall victim to scams involving deceptive unsolicited mail, phone calls or e-mails that are designed to con people out of cash. Scamnesty 2011 invites people living in South Glos to deposit any scam mail they receive into designated bins in most One Stop Shops and libraries.

They are NOT from the Waterboard: There has been an increase in distraction burglaries committed by people claiming to be from the local water company. The advice from police and trading standards is as follows:

- 1 Treat all unexpected callers with suspicion, ask for identification and check authenticity with the company.
- 2 Never allow anyone into your home that you do not know.
- 3 Install and use door chains.
- 4 Do not keep large amounts of money in your home.
- 5 Remember it's your front door so close it if you are not happy!

#### Police Beat Officer

PC Ian Matthews will be leaving his position as our Beat Officer and moving to the Filton Response Unit. The vacancy has been advertised and we will be notified of the successful applicant in due course.

Paula Evans / Clerk to the Parish Council



## BREAKFAST - IN AID OF ST PETER'S HOSPICE - SATURDAY 11 JUNE

St Peter's Hospice is....

Bristol's only adult HOSPICE

FREE OF CHARGE to patients and families

Caring every year for over 1,800 people with incurable illnesses

Supporting over 5,000 people every year

Dependent on hundreds of volunteers

Funded almost wholly by the Bristol and District Community

St Peter's provides.....

Day Hospice care

In-Patient care

Hospice at Home

Adult bereavement care

Family liaison & grief support for children



These are some of the reasons why we would like your support for .....

**The Family Breakfast in The Parish Hall  
on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June, 8am - 11am.**

We need a team of willing helpers on the day - but most of all we need hungry people to buy tickets!

Realising that the time of recession may be touching everyone's purse we have decided to keep the ticket price as low as we sensibly can - £6 for adults, £3 for children under 12.

If you are able to help or would just like to come along and enjoy a freshly cooked breakfast, plenty of good coffee and a browse through the newspaper then let me know - bring a party and have a fun morning!

Di Heal (228498)

### ST JAMES THE LESS PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP

Toddler Group had a lovely end to the year last term with a fun Christmas party and presents delivered by Father Christmas. The cookie stall at the Village Christmas was a great success and thank you to all the mums for baking such delicious cookies to sell. We are now looking forward to participating in the village celebrations for the Royal Wedding at the end of April.

Unfortunately we had a delayed start to Toddlers this year due to a burst water pipe at the Marshall Room but, thanks to Sally Aries, we were able to salvage the toys and we are now back in full swing.

Sarah at Jazzy Jamboree joined us last week and, as usual, the children loved the singing, playing instruments and story time. We are really pleased to be able to make this a regular feature and look forward to seeing Sarah again next term.

If you are interested in joining this friendly Toddler Group please contact Katie Curtis (228997) or Ann Mora (228994). We meet every Friday from 10.30 am until 12.00 pm in the Marshall Room.

Katie Curtis / 228997



# ***The Lamb Inn***

Iron Acton Village, South Glos.

Telephone 01454 228265



- A Genuine Free House -

16th Century Historical Inn

*A warm welcome from Brendan , Tracey and their team.*

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5 LARGE EN-SUITE BEDROOMS**

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**LARGE FUNCTION ROOM AVAILABLE  
THE PERFECT VENUE FOR**

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**CONFERENCES  
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**ROOM INCLUDES  
BAR, DANCE FLOOR, MUSIC SYSTEM, DISCO LIGHTS**

**LARGE ENCLOSED BEER GARDEN - BBQ and PATIO AREA  
FRIDAY NIGHTS HAPPY HOUR 5-7 SELECTED DRINKS £1**

**OPEN ALL DAY FOR FOOD AND DRINK**

**Now Available at**  
**THE GAZELEY CLINIC**  
**High Street, IRON ACTON**

**With Christine Lamont**

**Complementary Therapist  
& Baby Massage Instructor**

**£5 off**  
**1<sup>st</sup> treatment**  
**with this Advert !**

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**www.relax-ology.me.uk**

## Reflexology

Using specific massage and pressure techniques on your feet, this aims to treat the whole person - Body, Mind & Spirit, to induce a sense of Balance and Harmony, and stimulate your body's own natural healing process.



**Can help many conditions including:**

Stress related conditions, Insomnia  
Hormonal problems, Fatigue,  
Arthritis pains, .....

*It is a very relaxing treatment*

## Reiki

A 'hands-on' therapy given while fully clothed, sending healing energy, to be used where your body needs it most.



No pressure or manipulation is used.

It can benefit physical & emotional problems enhancing your body's own healing process, and reducing the time it takes to feel better.

*It leaves a feeling of peace, relaxation, security and well-being.*

## Indian Head Massage

**A Powerful Stress Reliever,**  
**leaving you with feelings of**  
**Relaxation and Well-Being.**



**It can relieve:**

- Headaches and eyestrain
- Neck & shoulder stiffness
- Sinus problems
- Mental fatigue, promoting clear thinking
- Emotional stress and anxiety
- It can also improve hair growth and condition

**Most of all it feels really good!**

**Why not give it a try?**

## Hopi Ear Candles

**To relieve Ear, Nose, & Sinus problems.**  
A lit 'candle' is held in each ear, and allowed to burn down. The warm herbal vapour soothes & gives relief. This is followed by a relaxing face massage

**Can help:**

- Excessive ear wax
- Glue ear
- Sinusitis / Rhinitis
- Tinnitus (ear noises)
- 'Popping' ears ....



**Soothing and Relaxing**

*A gentle alternative to ear syringing*



**Baby Massage Classes - held locally, or in your own home.**  
**Lots of wonderful benefits for you & your baby.**  
**Gift Vouchers available.**

## NEWS FROM NORTH ROAD SCHOOL

The pupils of North Road School have been working very hard to help the governors appoint a permanent head teacher at North Road Community Primary. I am delighted to announce that I will be staying and can continue to be part of this community.



Over Christmas we experienced some burst pipes which caused some flooding in some of the classrooms. This meant that the children had an exciting start to the year having to be re-housed in new areas around the school. Lots of parents gave up their New Year's Eve morning to help move furniture into the new classrooms and, after 2 weeks, we were all back to normal.

Our new website was launched in January and includes all of our news including work and photos from the classes. You can find us at [www.northroadprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.northroadprimaryschool.co.uk).

We celebrated Chinese New Year with a Chinese lunch, tried prawn crackers and sweet and sour and ate with chopsticks! The Foundation Stage pupils also performed a dragon dance for us and their parents and told us all the things they now know about China.

We love to support local charities - especially when the children come to me to ask if they can raise money. Katie, in Year 5, wanted to run a toy, book and cake sale to raise money for children with Cerebral Palsy. She organised the collection of toys and books, spent hours baking delicious cakes, got her friends to help and arranged advertising. All her hard work paid off as she raised £118.90.

After half term the children are going on many trips; these include the Fire Station, Yate Health Centre and the Sikh Temple in Easton. We then start our celebrations for Easter, May Day and the Royal Wedding. Fingers crossed for some lovely spring weather!

Jo Williams / Head Teacher

## NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY 2010 IN IRON ACTON PARISH HALL

Our New Year's Eve "Night Out with the Stars" was a brilliant evening, much enjoyed by everyone. The youngsters had a great time with Sue and her assistant in their own party/activity room whilst the grown-ups danced the night away until midnight when we saw in the New Year in the traditional way. David and Lisa Hatherill were voted the most glamorous couple and the More Changers Needed team outshone the rest of us to win the quiz.



Thanks to Brendan and Tracey at the Lamb for organising the bar and Spencer at Bon Appetit for the lovely food. Many thanks also to Lizzy Gadsby for her hard work in selling raffle tickets and to everyone who donated a raffle prize - including Brendan and Tracey, Iron Acton Garden Centre and Pinkers.

If there are any more volunteers who would be willing to form an organising committee for next year there is a small kitty and various decorations/bits and bobs to get you started. For more information please contact Jane Conlon on 228600, Sue Gadsby on 228803 or Caroline Huish on 228861.

Sue Gadsby

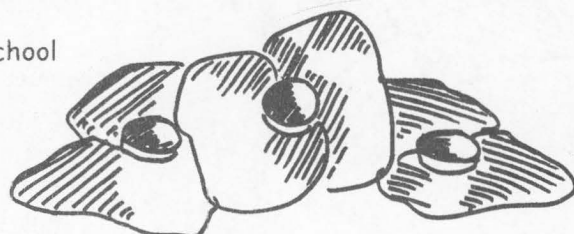
## POPPY APPEAL 2010

Once again the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal was a huge success and I am so happy to tell you that the magnificent sum of £2,562.54 was donated by the people of Iron Acton - which is an increase of 24.8% from last year. Thank you to EVERYONE for taking part and making it such a success.

The new enamel poppy pins were particularly popular and John, from North Road Post Office, and several house to house collectors could have sold many more but sadly my supply ran out. This year I will order considerably more.

2011 is the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal British Legion and a concert is being arranged to celebrate this event. The proceeds from the concert will further boost the amount raised in this year's Poppy Appeal. The date is Friday, 20 May, at 7.30 pm, in Chipping Sodbury Town Hall. The Avon Fire and Rescue Service Band and children from Colston's School will be performing ..... so please make a note in your diaries!

Sue Greenwell / Poppy Appeal Organiser for Iron Acton



## IRON ACTON CRICKET CLUB

Having recently been informed that our first fixture of the 2011 season, a Sunday fixture away to Portishead, is on 1 May, summer can't be far away and we can plan how to improve on the success of the previous season.

With none of us getting any younger we have to look to cunning and guile to give us the edge on our generally younger opponents. This is especially true for our "fast" bowlers. One of the tricks of the fast bowler is to bowl 5 fast balls and then to throw in a slower ball somewhere in the over to confuse the batsman. With the years galloping by, our most senior "fast" bowlers have adopted a new cunning strategy. In a twist to the single slower ball theme (and to conserve energy) they instead bowl 5 slower balls and then, here's the cunning bit, they disguise the fast ball by bowling it at exactly the same speed as the slower ball!



The indoor season is nearly over and, yet again, it looks like Tortworth will walk (or rather run) away with the spoils! We currently lie in second spot and have one more chance to upset matters when we play our final game against Tortworth - but we will need to win by some margin to overhaul them.

As usual, we are always looking for new players and so, if you're interested in playing a few friendly games, mainly on Wednesday evenings, don't hesitate to contact me on the number below.

Chris Bradley / Chairman (228559)

## MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS - MONDAY, 2 MAY

It's that time of year again and May Day planning is in full swing. This year, in recognition of the Royal Wedding, we will have a May King and Page as well as the Queen and her 2 Attendants. Our theme will be red white and blue and we are hoping to run a Best Dressed House in the Parish competition so don't forget your bunting ..... and why not put a flag in your Christmas tree holder?

Our aim each year is to have a well balanced day of events with charity run stalls that don't cost a fortune, to "have a go" activities and entertaining ring events. The Dog Fly Ball will be back again this year, as well as some new ideas and the Art Display will be in the Parish Hall and, of course, we will have the traditional Maypole Dancing by the Children of Iron Acton School and Country Dancing by the Children of North Road School.

If you'd like to have a stall, advertise in the programme or get involved please contact me.

Tracey Byrne / [tracey@byrne.eu.com](mailto:tracey@byrne.eu.com)



## IRON ACTON WI

The last few months of 2010 were busy as usual for the group. We had entered the WI skittles tournament and had our first match against Old Sodbury. It was a closely fought contest, played with great humour by both sides, but unfortunately the "Iron Ladies" lost to the "Old Sods"!

The Avon WI walk in October was organised very successfully by Elizabeth Edwards and fortunately took place on a gloriously sunny autumn day. The walk took a circular tour from Westerleigh village through some lovely countryside and many stayed to have lunch in the pub afterwards.

November was our Birthday Party which was held at The Swan at Nibley. We had a very enjoyable meal and were well looked after by the staff. Most members didn't take much persuading to have a dessert! The December meeting found us celebrating with a Christmas Party. A buffet and mulled wine were followed by a few rounds of charades and the always

popular Secret Santa. Geraldine's guessing of what was inside the packages, with a little squeeze here and there, proved, as always, to be remarkably accurate. How does she do it??!

Several members met up at Geraldine's to make table decorations to sell at the Village Christmas. The oasis bases were left under a covered area overnight but still froze solidly in the sub-zero temperatures. This made inserting the foliage the next day quite difficult. However the intrepid group overcame this difficulty and the excellent results sold out during the course of the evening. Other members ran a refreshment stall and although it was bitterly cold, even snowing at one point, the village looked so attractive with all the lit up Christmas trees it was good to be part of this now traditional village event.

The first meeting of the year featured Lorraine Shergold speaking about quilting and she gave us a whirlwind tour around the world with countless beautiful quilts and pieces of work she had produced to represent the countries she spoke about. A competition was also held where members were asked to take along their favourite Christmas card. A variety of cards were displayed and it was interesting to see that many members had chosen cards from children and grandchildren (often handmade) which were obviously very precious.

Our small group of planners has come up with a varied programme of speakers for the coming year. Some of those we are looking forward to hearing are on wine tasting, humorous reflections from a retired police officer, tips on taking photographs and a magistrate's presentation of a trial with role play. There will also be competitions, a bring and buy sale and the summer outing is to be an evening cruise from Bristol Harbour on the Matthew. We will also, once again, be running a stall at the May Day Celebrations.

Our Secretary, Stella Taylor would be pleased to give details to anyone who would like to join us at our meetings (held on the second Monday evening of each month in the Parish Hall. Stella's telephone number is 228417.

Sylvie Powell



## CELEBRATING THE ROYAL WEDDING IN IRON ACTON

Arrangements are taking shape to celebrate the Royal Wedding in Iron Acton on Friday, 29 April. Organisations within the parish are working together to ensure a memorable celebration for all. Look out for further details closer to the time.

Jason Haselhan / [jason.haselhan@btinternet.com](mailto:jason.haselhan@btinternet.com) (228791)

## FRIENDS OF NORTH ROAD SCHOOL

A rather belated Happy New Year to all Focal Poyntz readers!

2011 started well for all of us at North Road School and we were delighted to hear that our stand-in Head, Mrs Jo Williams, has now been appointed as our full time Head Teacher. She has been very supportive of the Friends of North Road School and has attended every meeting we have had. We are looking forward to the future that lies ahead of us and excited to be back on track after several rather unsettled months.

Christmas seems in the dim and distant past now but we had a lovely Christmas Fair and raised almost £600! The children all had a lovely time going along to the pantomime.

This year we are aiming to raise funds to buy playground equipment and, having looked into the costings, it looks likely that we will be having a very busy year!

By the time you read this we will have held our first event of the year ..... A Valentine's Disco on 16 February. It's an evening of party games and dancing the night away!

Each year we take part in a fund raiser called Bags 2 School. Basically it's an opportunity for us to turn out our old clothes, shoes, bags, bedding and soft toys and then we get paid per kilo. This usually raises between £90 and £120 and we do it twice a year. This edition will arrive too late for our March event but I'll try to give more advance notice next time.

Our Easter Service will take place on Friday, 8 April and this year it will be followed with an Easter Egg Hunt for the children and a coffee afternoon for the parents and carers. We'll be serving hot cross buns and drinks and this will be a lovely chance for everyone to have a natter over a cuppa. Too often we're rushing out of the school gates and don't have a chance to catch up. We're also going to have a pet corner where the children can cuddle the rabbits and small pets ..... so if you're travelling along North Road on this date look out for run-away rabbits!

We're looking forward to taking part in the May Day celebrations on 2 May. I believe this year we are hoping to work alongside Iron Acton School and do our activities together. It will be good to join forces and get to know the parents at Iron Acton School.

Friday, 20 May sees our first Pig Race Night. A few of us attended the Pig Race Night run by the PCC and had such fun we thought we'd have a go ourselves. We're hoping this will be a fun family evening and we are running a bar (always helps to get things going!) and serving bacon rolls! Good to keep the theme going! There will, of course, be a vegetarian option available too. If you would like tickets please do contact me.

We will also be holding our annual Duck Race - this is always a popular event with the children who love to wade into the stream to collect the ducks at the end of the race.

Half Term is fast approaching as I write this article and then, before we know it, Easter will be upon us so may I take this opportunity to wish all Focal Poyntz readers a very Happy Easter.

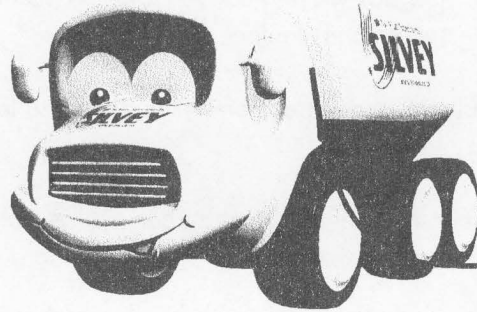
Heather Tillotson





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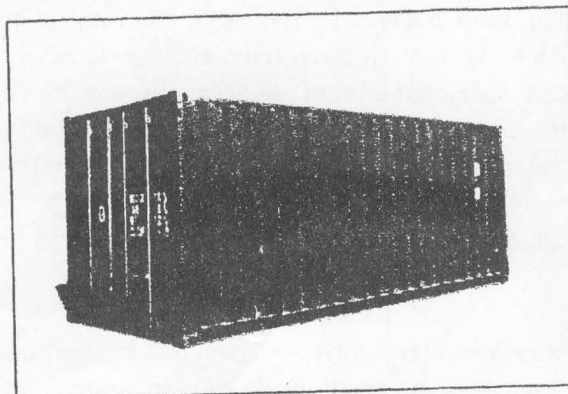
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## TO THE PAIN BARRIER AND BEYOND

It was August 2009 and I hadn't run for over 20 years when a friend mentioned he was running the "Paras 10" and invited me to join him the following month. He explained it is billed as the ultimate endurance race and is based upon the paratroopers' selection course at Catterick Garrison, a gruelling 10 mile multi-terrain race across the North Yorkshire Moors - and for those who found this a little too sissy the P Company Challenge race meant you ran in army boots with a 35lb back pack. Now, I admit, I can be a bit competitive but I just couldn't get fit in a month so I vowed to beat my friend in the next Paras 10 race in 2010.

Initially I leapt at any excuse not to train; I needed the correct clothes, then the shoes, I talked a lot about running but every time I thought I should venture out I looked out of the window and it was too wet or too cold. Eventually, in January 2010, I knew I probably had just enough time to get fit so I put on my running gear and took off. Initial runs were 1 mile - now I realized what a challenge it was as I was exhausted by the end of it. Red in the face and breathless, this was a mountain to climb as I approached my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Talking to colleagues I was introduced to Help for Heroes and discovered what a worthwhile cause it is. A charity that ensures every penny it gets is used to provide support for those who are injured in the service of our country.



By dedicating my running to H4H I could raise some money but also knew that once I'd made the commitment there was no going back, those mile runs had better become 10 mile runs as I couldn't let the people down who had sponsored me.

The miles started clocking up and running every second day became routine. Putting on a heavy back pack increased the challenge (and the back ache) until a twisted shoulder meant 2 trips a week to the physio and a clinical ban on carrying a back pack. Just to keep my interest up I had support from other villagers, including a couple of training runs with Mr Marathon Man, Jason Haselhan, and I ran with Peter Foote in the Frenchay 10k.

A creature of habit and having selected a few routes for my runs I stuck closely to these for week after week. I tried various music tracks but the only CD I could run to was Essential Clash from The Clash so I stuck to the same routes and the same music for every run.

Every week ..... more miles, with runs from 5 miles, 8 miles, then 10 and getting faster. As I approached August I knew the end was in sight. Then disaster! My heel blew up to twice its normal size; puffy and swollen. It looked as though someone had grafted a boiled egg to it in my sleep. Each step was painful and running became a question of mind over matter. It was cleaning day at Iron Acton Church so I trundled down and was fortunate to meet my neighbour and retired surgeon who suggested it might clear up with a steroid injection from either a local GP or a friendly vet! Thanking him for the advice I decided to see a specialist and, after several scans, he found a lump of bone growing where it shouldn't and this was rubbing and causing pain. Take my advice, if you ever get a pain in your heel never, ever, see a doctor a few days before a race. Why not? Well the first thing he's going to do is squeeze it to see what it is. That pain ran straight up my leg and now I didn't even have to run to feel it. He then banned me from running and booked me in for an operation to remove the extra bone (this definitely wasn't going to happen!).

With only a few days to go it was painkillers in the morning and beer at night that kept me going, with the running in between ..... same routes, same music, same determination.

The beginning of September arrived and off to Catterick Garrison. I didn't want the distraction of my wife there but I was fortunate that my brother turned up to cheer me on!

Early start, clock in for the race, then wait. What great camaraderie, with over 2000 runners mainly consisting of service or ex-service personnel. Nearly everyone was running for a specific charity and most for Help for Heroes. You could feel the team spirit but with so much testosterone you could almost smell the competitiveness.

We were divided into 2 groups; runners and runners with packs. Following my injury I couldn't carry a pack so I was in the first group. As the tension rose the race was delayed for half an hour and then another half an hour. As we eventually line up I look left and right to size up the competition - tough, yes, but if it wasn't then it wouldn't be worth it.

The start gun fires and we're off. As we climb the moorland with a brisk wind in our faces I realize this is harder than anything I have done in training. I've only gone half a mile and I feel sick and wonder if I can make it. Head up, grit your teeth and keep going. Dig deep, I'm running on adrenaline now as the painkillers aren't working. Some runners pull away and I have to let them go. This is going to be tough. I'd met a couple of serving Paras before the race and now I tag onto them. If I can maintain their pace I know I'll be doing okay but as we reach the 5 mile mark they pull away. Now the terrain is getting harder, we are running across ravines which are almost sheer and, at one point, I run down into a river bed and have to pull myself up the other side on all fours. "Encouragement" comes in the shape of the NCOs whose helpful screaming and references to my lack of manhood make sure that I'm not going to give up.

More ravines and water obstacles - you cannot pick your way through water, you just have to run, not knowing what is under the surface. The man in front of me went from waist deep water to neck deep in one stride and others went tumbling over. It's now 9 miles completed and somehow I've caught up with "my" Paras. Then it's one more push up the hill to the final straight and then ..... the finish line. With everything I had left I sprinted as fast as I could for the line to overtake just one more runner. Exhausted and proud, I've done it and with a time of 1 hour and 25 minutes I finish in 186<sup>th</sup> position out of 2,100 runners.

As I start to recover the last runner I'd overtaken came over to me, patted me on the back and said "Well done mate". It was only then I realized he didn't have a hand and he saw me looking at the stump. "Mine rash," he said, "Afghanistan". Humbled, I remember why I embarked on this journey and why it must continue.

Over £8,500 has been donated to me so far and it's still still climbing - even today I received an envelope in the post with a donation of £1,000. Help for Heroes really strikes a chord across the entire community.

My latest news is that, because of this, I have been asked to join the Help for Heroes team running in the London 10k on 10 July 2011.

In the meantime, I'm still training around the village every second or third morning, still with the bony heel, still listening to The Clash, still proud and wanting encouragement - if you see me don't forget to wave!

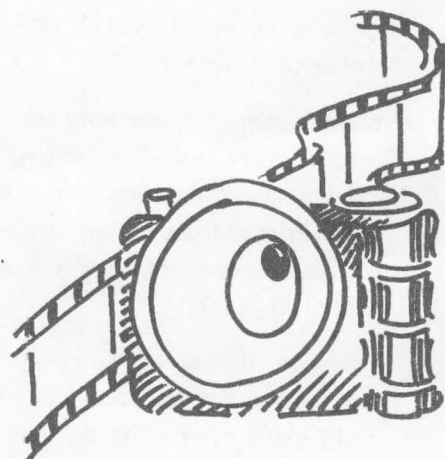
Peter Huish

### A PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB FOR IRON ACTON??

Are you interested in a Photography Club in Iron Acton? I am most definitely an amateur but would like to make more use of my camera and improve my photography. I thought about joining one of the nearby clubs but then wondered whether it would be possible to set one up in Iron Acton.

If you would be interested in joining a photography club to exchange ideas, obtain (or provide!) advice and participate in projects then please do get in Touch.

Jason Haselhan / [jason.haselhan@btinternet.com](mailto:jason.haselhan@btinternet.com) (228791)



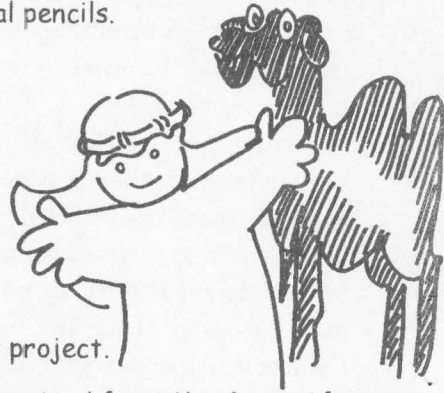
## IRON ACTON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

New Year's Day was certainly eventful this year as Mrs Taylor arrived at school to find water gushing from the boiler house. The water was coming from several burst pipes in our outdoor classroom. Fortunately after a week with humidifiers everything dried out and Class 1 returned to normality.

After filling ourselves with sweets and chocolates over Christmas the school has begun work on its Healthy School Plus Project. The School Council has been working with kitchen staff and governors to look at ways of encouraging healthy eating. Morning break has improved with the inclusion of different fruits and Fair Trade fruit juices. Healthy eaters have been rewarded with stickers and special pencils. Other pupils have been monitoring food choices waste at lunchtime.

Despite the wet and cold weather the field is progressing well. The spiral garden is taking shape with an impressive central stone feature. All we need now is the warm spring weather ready for the planting! Our plans to install new play equipment are temporarily on hold whilst we await local authority approval, conservation area consent and planning permission.

Mrs Burchell is enjoying life back in Guernsey with her family. She has been sending lots of photos and information back to Class 2 for their geography project.



Pupils were delighted to receive a donation from the WI from the money they received from May Day. After a lot of deliberation they decided they wanted a puppet theatre with puppets to help them tell bible stories.

Year 6 joined St Michael's School in Winterbourne for an excellent afternoon at Lifeskills. They explored the risks and dangers in various real life settings (railways, garden, kitchen, shop, road) and how to minimise and/or deal with them. Pupils also learnt about fire safety, first aid and how to properly make a 999 call.

This term we have run 2 new clubs. Play Rangers have been running 2 after school sessions working outdoors. Despite getting very muddy and wet the children have had a great time. Other pupils are learning energetic routines in our street dance club.

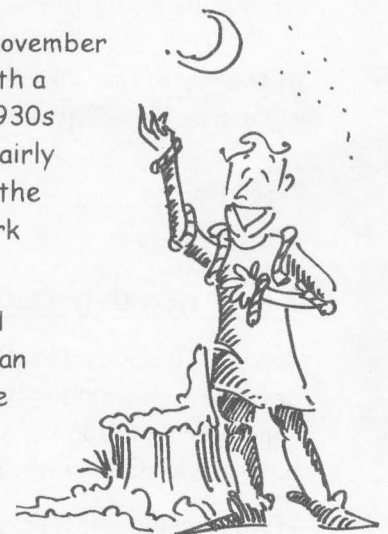
Next term will be very busy as we start practising our Maypole Dancing and for the Infant Music Festival. Staff are preparing to visit the Netherlands for the final visit of our European project. Classes will be visiting Broadway Infants School at Yate to compare housing. They will also be studying how Yate Shopping Centre has changed over time.

Jill Bendeaux / Head Teacher

## THE ACTONIANS

The Parish Hall was transported to the French rural town of Clochemerle in late November when we combined a minimalistic set (a few flats and a garden table and chairs) with a rich array of characters from Chevalier's original novel and brought rural 1920s/1930s France to the heart of Iron Acton. It was a splendid production which played to fairly full houses on all 4 nights. A large cast with a sprinkling of new members, enjoyed the experience and thanks go to Ann Aplin and all the cast and crew for their hard work and commitment.

We are currently working on a production of *A Fool of Creation* by Norman Holland for the Avon One-Act Festival. This has a cast of 12 and explores the trial of a man in an unnamed eastern block country in the 1960s. Occasionally humorous but more often thought provoking, it explores the folly of man with regard to his misuse of the world's resources. We hope that recent successes in One Act Festivals will be repeated in 2011.



Towards the end of May we present our first major production of the year - Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale*. One of the Bard's later romantic plays, is often seen as a problem play and which offers a mixture of tragic and violent events, lyrical love-speeches, farcical comedy, pastoral scenes and, finally, dramatic revelations and reunions. Tickets will again be available on-line and we hope many of you will come and support us in our

quest to provide high quality theatre at a very affordable price. On-line ticketing was a new initiative for the last production and we will continue to employ this in our quest to streamline the ticketing process. We hope it was a reasonably straightforward process for those who used it. If anyone has feedback on this process then do please let your contacts with the group know. We are keen to make it work and want to "iron out" any perceived difficulties if we can!

We are clearly still producing high quality and, on occasions, award winning work but there is an on-going need to encourage growth in membership so that we can retain that high quality. The demise of the Junior Section has removed the most obvious entry to the company for young players. Ideas on how we might reconnect with and encourage engagement of new members of all ages would be appreciated and it's not just playing members who are needed as our back stage expertise is held in few hands. It is important that that expertise is handed on and that we grow and develop new set builders and lighting and sound experts in order that the tasks can be shared around.

Please do pop along on a Wednesday evening to the Parish Hall and make yourself known to members there. We are regularly told that we are a very warm and welcoming group ..... why don't you come and find out!

Rob Pardoe / [robpardoe@gmail.com](mailto:robpardoe@gmail.com)

### ACTON AID

At the time of writing the hangover from Acton Aid's Chairman's Dinner is still fresh in the memory. The dinner took place at the Parish Hall on Friday, 11 February. Once again, Cherry Picked Catering served a delicious 4 course dinner. There were speeches from out-going Chairman, Jon Aires, and in-coming Chairman, Gareth Wynne-Hughes. There was also a photo opportunity with past chairmen of Acton Aid.

Jon presided over a bumper year for Acton Aid with record attendances, fund raising and donations. Throughout the last year Acton Aid provided much appreciated support to the Julian Trust. Gareth is looking forward to continuing the good work, ably supported by Peter Foote as Vice Chairman. The Chairman's Charity for the forthcoming year, which our members will actively support, is Action for Blind People.

Acton Aid has a new event in the calendar that has been inspired by Gareth. By the time the spring issue of Focal Poyntz hits the streets the Counterfeit Beatles will have played the Parish Hall.

In April Acton Aid will contribute to the parish Royal Wedding celebrations. This is sure to be a busy weekend as 3 days later it's May Day when Acton Aid will be providing all manner of culinary treats from the barbeque.

Proms in the Meadow takes place on Saturday, 9 July when the Bristol Millennium Orchestra will take us on a "trip around the world". Joining the orchestra will be soprano Charlotte Newstead, the Bristol Pipe Band and the Thornbury Swing Band. The Kathryn Hurley Dance Academy and the Stapleton School of Dancing will also be appearing. The event will open with a performance from 11 year old Olivia Cowell from Iron Acton. Tickets will be available on May Day at the barbeque and from the Lamb Inn.

Since the last edition Acton Aid has been busy with a number of events. For once the firework display on Bonfire Night was not a complete wash-out and everyone enjoyed a fantastic display. Later in November Acton Aid members volunteered a second time at the Julian Trust Night Shelter, preparing and serving around 80 meals and in December we distributed Christmas Hampers to pensioners across the parish and provided the food stall at the Village Christmas. We also welcomed Chris Scott as a new member.

If you would like to find out more about Acton Aid either contact one of the officers or call in and join us at the Lamb Inn at 8 pm on the first Thursday of each month. Meetings have the minimum of formality. Fund-raising events and the distribution of resources are discussed and planned over a pint or two. Lastly, if any reader is aware of a parishioner who would benefit from the support of Acton Aid they are welcome to contact, in confidence, the Chairman (Gareth Wynne-Hughes on 228248) or the Secretary (Jason Haselhan on 228791).

Jason Haselhan / Secretary (228791)



Acton Aid presents

# Proms in the Meadow

*"A Trip Around The World"*

*The Bristol Millennium Orchestra*

*Charlotte Newstead*

*The Bristol Pipe Band*

*The Thornbury Swing Band*

*Olivia Cowell*

*Kathryn Hurley Dance Academy*

*Stapleton School of Dancing*

*Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2011*

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

*Programme subject to change.*

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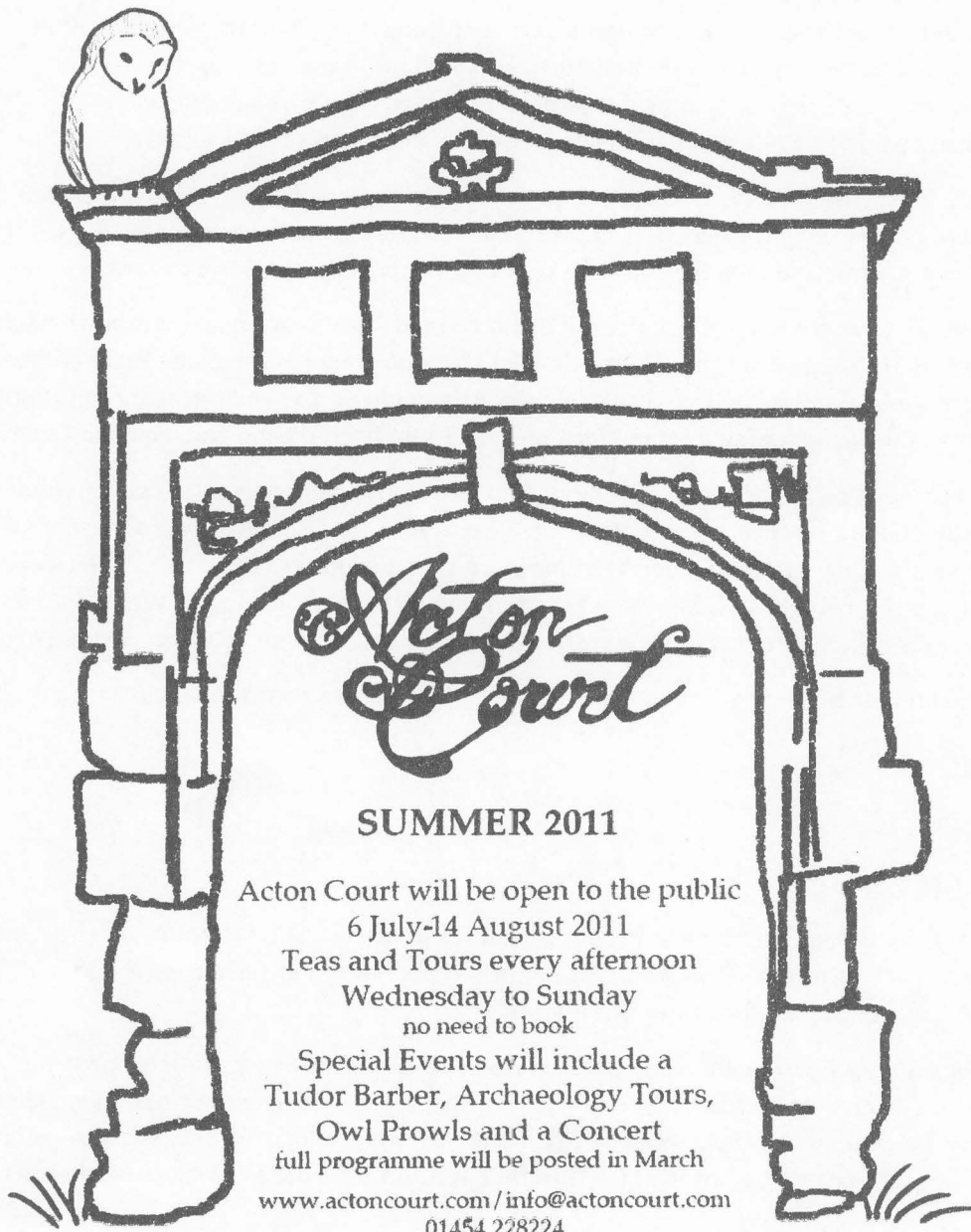


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**NEWS:** David Starkey will be giving a talk entitled 'Acton Court' at the Bristol Museum 10 March.

**English Heritage has upgraded Acton Court's listing:** as well as holding its status as an Ancient Scheduled Monument, it is now fully listed as Grade One, including the Tudor Gateway and flank walls. Acton Court is one of the most protected buildings in Britain thus recognising its historic and architectural importance.

## FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

As I write, we are nearly half way through the Spring Term already! Looking back on our events last term the many Christmas activities seem a happy but distant memory. The Christmas Fair and Party were great fun and thoroughly enjoyed by the children. We also held a Christmas Disco on the last day of term and this proved to be a lovely way to finish the term. DJ Noel got everyone in the festive spirit. Not to be outdone by the children, parents from the school also had a very enjoyable pre-Christmas meal at The Lamb. My thanks go to everyone who helped to make all of these occasions a great success. Christmas is such a busy time for everyone and to be able to count on the support of so many parents makes a real difference when organising these events.



As we approach Half Term the Friends are busy organising our Pig Race Night - supported by Yate Rotary Club. This should be a highly entertaining evening. I'm particularly interested to know which pig will triumph in the Teachers' Stakes! Watch this space and I promise to let you know the result next time.

The funds raised through recent events are contributing towards new play equipment on the school field. Requested on behalf of the School by the School Council this equipment will include balance beams, stepping stones, wobbly bridges and a spring board. We are currently applying for the necessary planning permission and we hope that the new equipment will be in place in time to be used during the summer term.

We will be holding our AGM on Wednesday, 4 May at 7.30 pm in the School Hall. Because we are a registered charity we are legally obliged to form a full committee. Last year we had a wonderful response to our appeal for volunteers to join the committee. I hope that many of these members will stay on. However, if you are not currently involved with the Friends and are interested in joining, 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 Donna Thomas (228086) or me.

Caroline Haselhan / 228791

## THE VILLAGE CHRISTMAS

The Saturday before Christmas was seriously cold with a lot of snow. The members of the committee gathered in the Parish Hall car park at about 10 am to start setting things out. Fortunately we had a lot of extra helpers and a team, including our grandson, began snow shifting.

Because the previous 2 years had been really cold we decided to put as many stalls as possible inside the hall. To that end, we utilised the committee room and the kitchen. Tracey Byrne provided some plastic sheeting to cover the carpet in the committee room. The WI and the PCC were allocated the kitchen - which seemed a sensible idea as they were providing hot stuff. This time we had a carousel which looked really good in the car park.

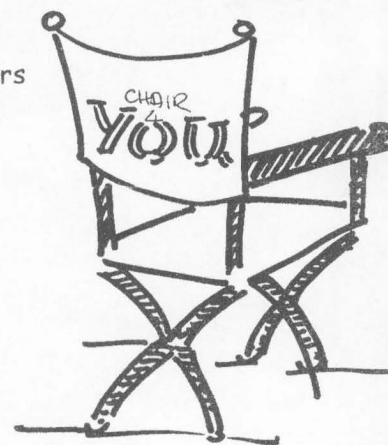
Everything was ready by 4 pm but jolly cold!

In the church David Harrex welcomed everyone and the children from North Road and Iron Acton Schools sang carols. People then walked along the High Street to the Parish Hall.

We had plenty of food and drink for everyone - and even though a couple of stallholders failed to show there was still a great deal to see and buy. Perhaps there were slightly fewer people but it was still a jolly good afternoon and we did make a small profit. The fact that we have the High Street, Wotton Road, Chilwood Close, Park Street and the Green lit up with Christmas trees makes it all worthwhile.

We really need some more people to join us on the committee to bring in more ideas so if anyone out there is interested please contact us. We are ..... Ann Aplin, Jon Aries, Tracey Byrne, Pam McCoy, Ashley Mee, Rob Taylor, Heather Tillotson, Rachel Weldrake and Rona Wright.

Pam McCoy





## CHARITY FLIGHT IN AID OF HELP FOR HEROES

I wanted to do something to raise money for Help for Heroes so in June 2010 an idea began to form and I started working on it. My idea was to take an Airbus A320 full of passengers to see the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights).

As a Captain for Thomas Cook Airlines working out of Bristol Airport I started by talking to the airport people. After many weeks of negotiating and persuading I managed to get almost everyone to donate their services, etc.

The only think I had trouble with was the fuel. It proved very difficult to get our fuel supplier to donate or rebate the fuel. I knew the cost would be about £6,000-£7,000 and that it would eat a big hole in the takings so I had to keep at them.

The date was set for 3 February 2011 and I started e-mailing everyone I could think of and more besides! I set the ticket price at £200 and waited. Ticket sales began in Mid November and by 28 December we had 25 seats (out of 168) unsold. I started to worry.

Alex Lovell, the Points West co-presenter, had got in touch with me in November and said she was coming on the flight. She also wanted to do a feature on the programme and we set a date for early January. I thought that would be good for selling seats.

Fortunately the Bristol Evening Post found out about my project and contacted me. They put an article in the paper after Christmas and all seats sold within 48 hours but I still needed to get free or cheap fuel. Various people contacted the fuel company but without success.

On 3 February the passengers arrived at Bristol Airport at 1815 hours to get checked in and gather for a pre-flight talk from the astronomers. Everyone boarded the aircraft and we departed at 2045 to set course north. The astronomers continued the commentary and all lights (inside and out) were extinguished to enable the passengers to get the best view of the night sky.

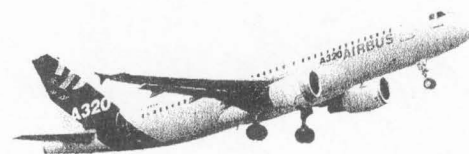
We kept tracking north in search of the Aurora but, sadly, it wasn't putting on a particularly good show. We were into Icelandic airspace and had about 30 minutes before we had to turn back for Bristol. It was important that everyone had a view so we made a "racetrack" pattern east/west. The passengers swapped seats and the astronomers continued talking. Time was up and we turned for home.

The cabin crew popped the champagne corks and I ventured back into the cabin. I expected to see a lot of quiet, disappointed faces. What I saw was quite amazing ..... it was like a big party with people standing up, drinking and chatting to each other.

I subsequently received many e-mails, phone calls and notes. It seemed that everyone had really enjoyed themselves - I certainly did.

The cost of the fuel was £6,300 and we managed to get a rebate of £500 ..... but the best news of all was that the event raised approximately £25,000 - I am still awaiting the bill from Iceland so until that arrives I don't have a precise figure.

Pam McCoy





## IRON ACTON K9 CLUB

Iron Acton K9 club is a recently formed club made up of 2 groups. We are Kennel Club listed and do obedience training following the Kennel Club Good Citizens' Scheme guidance and meet at Rangeworthy Village Hall on Monday evenings to enjoy basic reward based training for dogs and their handlers. This training aims to promote responsible dog ownership rather than competition based obedience.

The second group is registered with the British Flyball Association and meets in Iron Acton to enjoy flyball and agility training.

The obedience section has already enjoyed some success with a number of puppies achieving the Kennel Club Puppy Foundation Award. Remy with Meryl Cook, Shya with Karen Carnovale, Daisy with Liz Rowen, Dale with Jackie Glanville, Toby with Tony Powell and Priddy with Ian Kilgarrifff.

Some of the puppies have already started training for the bronze award and we are hoping they will be successful at the assessment planned for later in March.

The flyball/agility group also do basic obedience training as it is important for the handlers to be in control whilst the dogs work off the lead - especially as the dogs get very excited.

We are hoping to organize a short display for May Day and look forward to seeing you all then but if you would like to join us or spend some fun time with your dog please give us a ring on 228803 or 228891 - tummy rubs and bottom scratches all round!

Sue Gadsby / Karen Carnovale / Helen Case / Trevor

## NORTH ROAD LADIES CLUB

There was a very good attendance on Monday, 3 January for our first meeting of 2011. This meeting was held in Iron Acton Parish Hall, which is our new venue for future monthly meetings (with the exception of our May meeting which will be held in the Marshall Room, High Street, Iron Acton). Mr Peter Kirby was our speaker for the evening when he entertained us with a humorous talk about Banking.

It was agreed that our charity for 2011 will be the County Air Ambulance Trust. We will be holding various fund raising events commencing with a Bring and Buy Cake Stall at our March meeting.

Our February meeting was a laugh from start to finish with Susan Marshfield telling us all about her Canadian sister-in-law's visit to England.

Our programme until September is as follows:

Monday	4 April	Everyday life in Russia - Zoe Drew
Monday	9 May	Do they really bury their heads? - Paul Cook (Marshall Room)
Monday	6 June	Talk on the County Air Ambulance Trust
Monday	4 July	Our Annual Evening Trip - the venue to be decided

(no meeting in August)

Our meetings commence at 7.30 pm in Iron Acton Parish Hall (unless otherwise stated). If you feel you would be interested in joining please come along as a visitor. We are a very friendly club and you will be made most welcome.

June Rycroft / Secretary



## 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:

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Jill Johnson  
Sharon Kellett  
Ashley Mee  
Catherine Neck  
Amanda Scott  
Sue Shepherd  
The Smith Family  
Stella Taylor  
Laura Walters  
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 cover was also drawn by Maureen Blake.



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