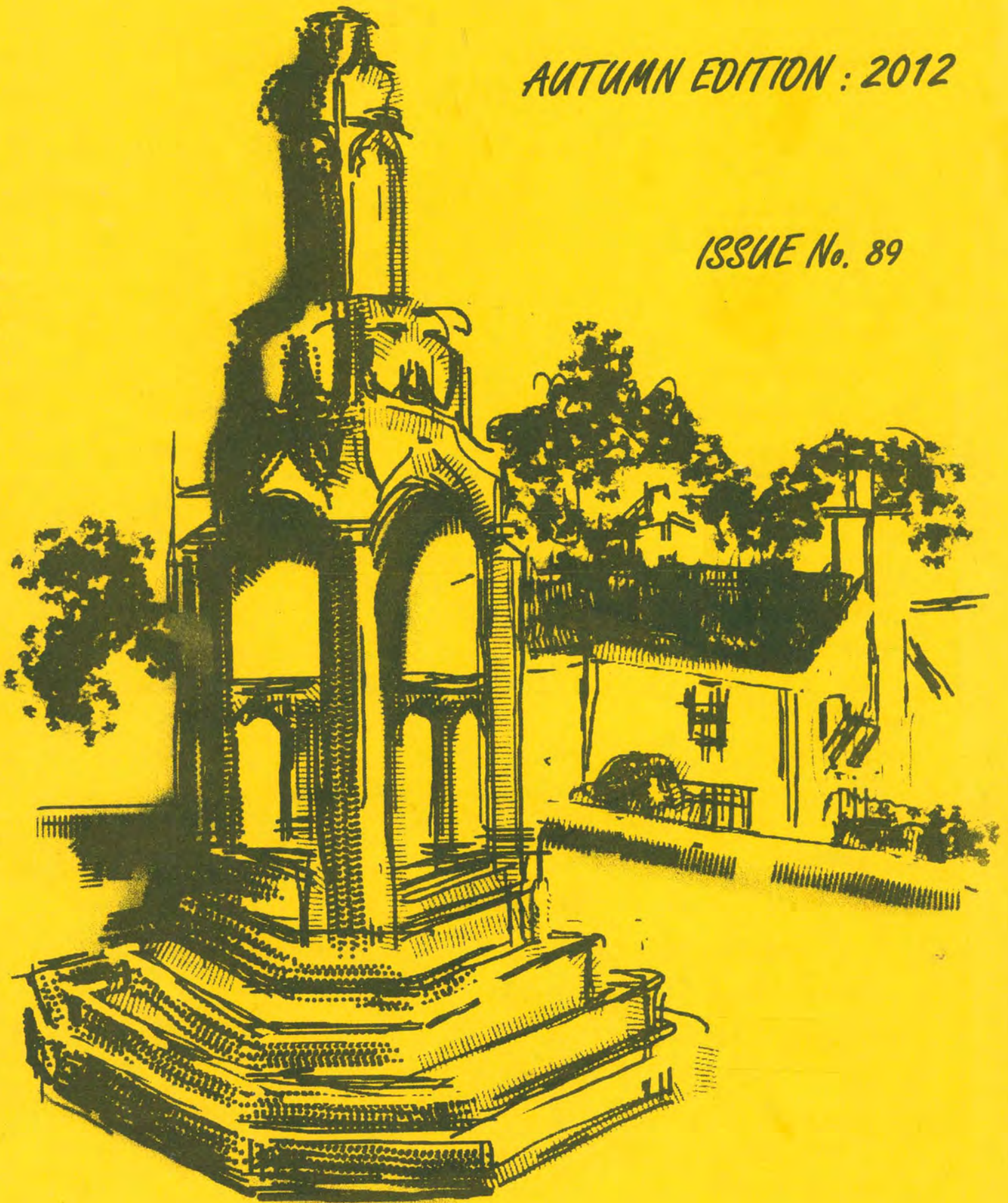


FOCAL POINTZ

AUTUMN EDITION : 2012

ISSUE No. 89



FOCAL POYNTZ INFORMATION

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Amanda Scott
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 - 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 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 beautiful cover was drawn by Maureen Blake

NEXT ISSUE SPRING 2013

Contribution Deadline 27 January 2013

Distribution 23-24 March

Hopefully!!!!

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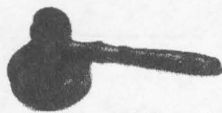
THINK
CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

THINK
ORIGINAL & UNIQUE BEAUTIFUL WOOD

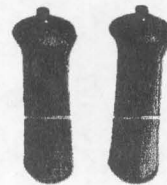
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FOR EVERY OCCASION
From the inexpensive to the expensive,
from mostly native timbers by a local craftsman



fruit bowls
salad bowls
bud vases
twig vases



herb cutters
salt and pepper grinders
table lamps
mushrooms
platters



lazy susan table centres
cheese boards
candle sticks



furniture repairs and restoration
special commissions welcomed

Contact Barrie, Eynsford Cottage, Wotton Road, Iron Acton

01454 228247

bjw.ironacton@gmail.com

Christingle - Sunday, 9 December at 4.00pm at St James the Less

Following on from last year we will be hosting a social gathering after the Christingle.

The Christingle starts at 4.00pm and generally last about 45 minutes - 1 hour.

There will be mulled wine and mince pies, carols with hand bells, biscuits and soft drinks for the children and a general, congenial hour.

Hopefully the weather will be better than last year, when it was blowing a gale and raining. So, weather permitting, we will be outside the church.

Please come along and join us.

There will be no charge.

Pam McCoy



Iron Acton Village New Years Eve Party

Parish Hall 31 December 2012 7.30pm - 12.30am

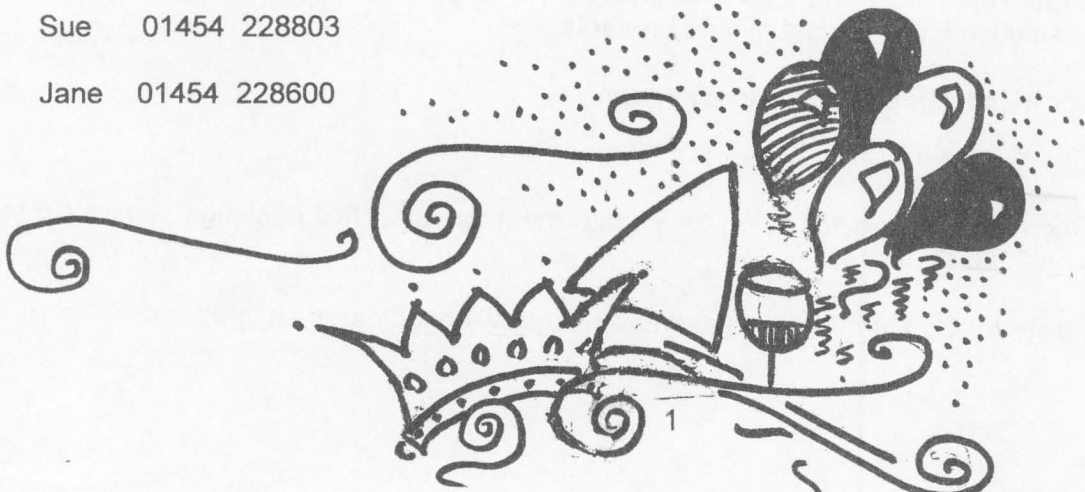
Come and join us for a village celebration to welcome in the New Year

Bar, food, disco, quiz, fun for all the family

Tickets will be limited again so please contact us asap or look out for the flyers in the village.

Sue 01454 228803

Jane 01454 228600





ST. JAMES THE LESS CHURCH

FUND RAISER

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

SATURDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2012

IRON ACTON PARISH HALL

2 'til 4



CHILDREN CAN MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS



ADULTS PICK GIFTS AND PRODUCE FROM A
RANGE OF NEW INDEPENDANT STALLHOLDERS



PLUS ALL THE OLD FAVOURITES:
TOMBOLA, BOOKS, GAMES, RAFFLE,
REFRESHMENTS CAKES & LOTS MORE

This year there will be new stalls and games which it is hoped will appeal to all age groups. Along with the traditional visit to Father Christmas we are hoping to run a 'Secret Santa Room' where the younger children can pick a present and have it wrapped as a surprise gift for Mum or Dad.

It is also hoped that some local traders will be plying their wares for the first time at this event and may provide the solution for those last minute presents.

Please bring your friends for an enjoyable afternoon.

The Marshall Room is available for hiring for private meetings etc. For bookings please contact Mrs Sally Aries on 228037.

Try our new website for Community News and Events - www.ironactonparish.info

St James the Less Church

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

- Sunday, 9 December 2012 **4pm** "All Age Christingle Service"
(Collections from this Service to go to the Children's Society)
- Sunday, 23 December 2012 **6.30pm** Carol Service and Readings by Candlelight **
- Monday, 24 December 2012 **6.00pm** Crib Service (Collections to go to the Children's Society)

Christmas Day

- Tuesday, 25 December 2012 **9.30am** Family Eucharist **

** Collections from the Carol Service and Christmas Day Service will be donated to "THE NEPALI CHILDREN'S TRUST"

The Nepali Children's Trust (started by a lady in Bristol) was formed in 2004 to support children in Nepal with physical challenges. Nepal is an extremely poor country where there is much prejudice and no state help for people with disabilities which severely limits their opportunities and quality of life. The main focus of the fund-raising has been to provide the **Disabled Newlife Centre** with a new residential home that offers medical treatment, education and a loving home for up to 40 children in Kathmandu.

On November 5th 2011 the Nepali Children's Trust held a ceremony to hand over the new building to the Disabled Newlife Centre.

Donating to the Nepali Children's Trust will allow them to expand their efforts on more specific needs.

Services throughout the year

- Holy Communion Services are held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 9.00am
"All Age Service" on the 2nd Sunday at 9.30am
Evensong on the 4th Sunday at 6.00pm
Midweek Morning Prayer or Holy Communion is held on a Wednesday at 11.00am



Iron Acton C of E VC Primary School

A huge welcome to everyone who has joined our Reception class and Ben and Alice who have joined the school. We welcome Miss Allen our new teacher in class 1. We hope you will all be really happy here.

We are very happy that Mrs Lyall has returned after her maternity leave and send congratulations on her wedding during the Summer holidays.

Now the pupils would like to share some of the exciting things that have happened so far this term.

Gardening club by James and Chloe

This year in the Horticultural Show we won four 2nd prizes and four 3rd prizes for our sunflowers, carrots, tomatoes and onions. It was quite hard to grow food this year as there was a lot of rain and hardly any sun. The best things we grew were the sunflowers.

Class 2 brass band by Isabel

It is really fun having brass lessons every Tuesday, it is the best subject. So far we have learnt the note C. I play the trombone. We can read music and make a buzzing sound.

Learning through the outdoors The wild flower group

In September 2011 we were invited to Richard Cornock's farm to reseed a hay meadow with wild flowers. The aim was to increase the biodiversity and provide a wide variety of plants for butterflies and bees. Back at school we chose 3 areas of the school's grounds to improve. I expect many of you saw the beautiful wild flowers at the front of the school. We have lots of exciting ideas for 2012-13.

Now we would like to share our knowledge of wild flowers with other groups within the community. If you have a patch of communal grass we would love to give you some wildflower seeds to plant.

New sewing machines

Jessica - A few weeks ago Friends (a group of people that help to organise all our parties, fairs and some of our learning equipment) allowed Mrs Jones (class 3 DT and ICT teacher) to buy 4 new sewing machines as our old ones sadly broke. I am really enjoying using them and they will be really useful for our textiles topic in which we are making aprons.

Tiana - As part of class 3 we have been using sewing machines. I would like to thank the Friends for letting Mrs Jones buy 4 new sewing machine for us to make aprons. It is very cool to use a sewing machine. I was personally a bit scared at first but when I got on it I was so happy to have them thank you very much Friends for the machines they are the best.

Year 5 residential trip to the Robert Jeffrey centre at Abergavenny with pupils from Rangeworthy school by Alicia

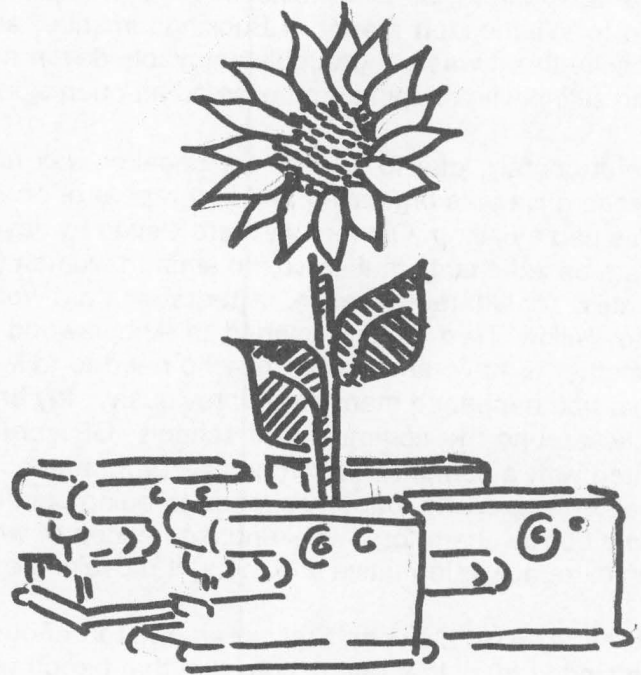
Year 5 camp was incredible- we had so much fun. On the first day we were split into two groups for some competitive games. We played three games and my team won two, so we won overall. After that we climbed the Blorenge mountain – the view from the top was fantastic. The next day we did the waterfall challenge. I did all 5 steps so did my friends. Then we lit some fires and went to the swimming pool. On the last day we went to the Big Pit, which is a coal mine. We wore helmets with lights and had to carry the battery packs. People tried to scare us by jumping out. After that, we had lunch and then it was time to come back to Iron Acton again.

Charity event by Lilly

Me and my friends did an after school ice cream sale for Rainbow. We sold ice creams, teas, coffees, children's cocktails and biscuits. We also sold bracelets. We were really excited. We raised £211 – it was great.

Rainbow is a place where children enjoy themselves and get over their fear of talking to people you don't normally talk to. Rainbow is fun and I enjoy going. It has completely changed me and my mum. We love it there.

Jill Bendeaux.



St James the Less Toddler Group

Our group had a bright start to the new term with a lovely sunny Friday morning which meant the children were able to play outside, this slightly made up for our Summer trip out which unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the weather!

We have welcomed three new babies who were born over the Summer and some lovely new mums and toddlers who have joined us. We are also very glad to hear that those who left to start school at Iron Acton Primary have all settled in well.

As Christmas will soon be upon us, we have arranged for Sarah from Jazzy Jamboree to join us on 14th December for a festive sing-a-long and we are hoping for another visit from Father Christmas too!

If you are interested in joining this friendly Toddler Group please contact Katie Curtis (228997) or Ann Mora (228994). We meet every Friday from 10.30am until 12pm in the Marshall Room.



Iron Acton Women's Institute

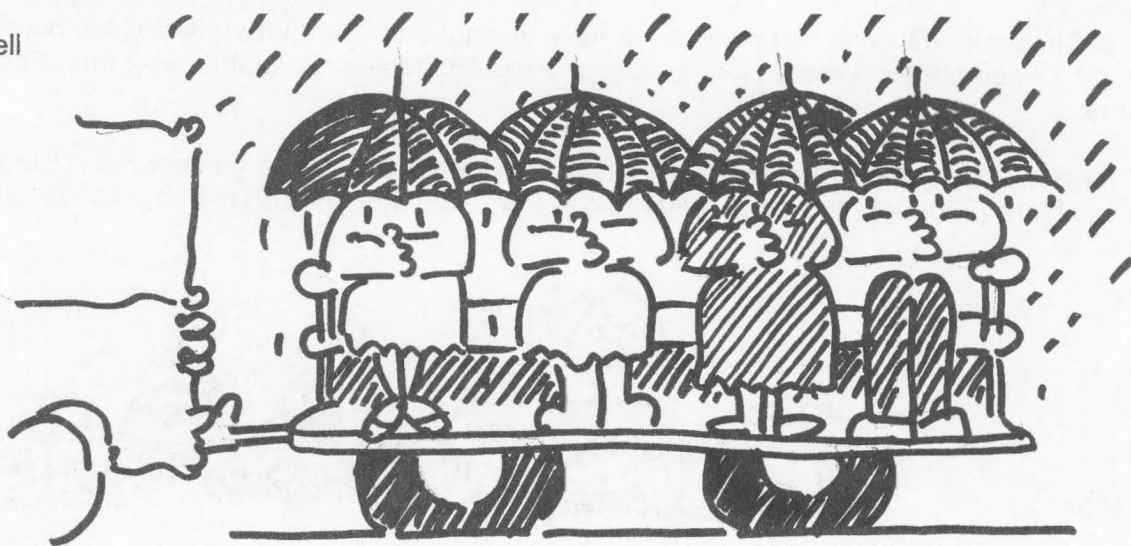
We don't usually meet as a group during the summer but this year in August Geraldine allowed us to her house and garden for a bring and buy sale. The weather behaved for part of the evening but later on it was "take cover" time. We had a stall at the school fete in July to sell some of the items accumulated in anticipation of May Day and anything over found its way to Geraldine's. Despite the now familiar disappointing weather, we had a lovely evening and Geraldine's granddaughters, as joint hostesses, contributed magnificently. Four of us went on the Avon WI trip to Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire, also in August. It rained practically nonstop but despite this it was a thoroughly enjoyable day in a beautiful setting and it's surprising the fun to be had sitting with dripping umbrellas on an open sided 'train' being pulled by a Land Rover!

Unfortunately, due to illness, our speaker was unable to attend in September so an impromptu beetle drive was organised and in a repeat of one held earlier in the year, an entertaining evening was had by all. In October we were visited by Joy and Diana from the Willow Tree Trust. This is a Yate based charity that serves to support women (and men) who have been affected by the loss of a child, for whatever reason. After much hard work fundraising and organising volunteers, in 2004 the Willow Tree Centre opened in Abbotswood to counsel those who may be agonising over whether to have an abortion or who need to talk about miscarriage or stillbirth, possibly an event that had happened many years previously. Joy brought along some of the 'virtual babies' that they take around the community to schools, GP surgeries, prisons etc. These very lifelike dolls are fitted with a computer which can be programmed in various ways to imitate the patterns of a real baby. The crying 'baby' responds to being comforted (or abused) and gives many young people who borrow them for a weekend, some idea of what having a baby in the home can mean. It was an extremely informative and thought provoking evening.

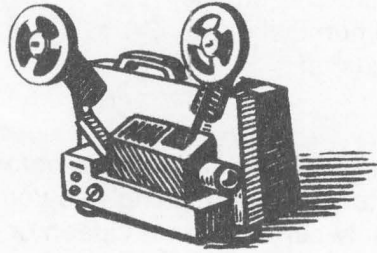
At our AGM in October, Stella read a report of our past year's activities and it was interesting to be reminded of all that had occurred in that period with a variety of talks, trips, fundraising and social occasions. We were given a taster of next year's programme which looks to be equally varied and have a good mix of speakers, to include practical demonstrations, as well as outings. The leading officers and committee were happy to continue in their roles for a further year and were duly voted in.

We are looking forward to our birthday party next month with a meal at the Tortworth Farm Shop and the American Supper Christmas party in December. Our secretary, Stella Taylor, can be contacted on 01454 228417 for more information on our activities and our meetings which are held in the Parish Hall on the second Monday of the month.

Sylvie Powell



EXCITING NEW VENTURE



Fishing and Pirates in Iron Acton: Iron Acton Community Cinema

Inspired by the success of The Electric Picture House Cinema in Wotton under Edge, Acton Aid has decided to investigate the level of support there would be for starting a regular film club in Iron Acton available to the whole village.

A quick Google search led us via the British Federation of Film Societies to the Bath Film Festival who offered their support and have kindly offered to hire us their professional standard equipment (projector, screen and sound system) for an initial meeting to see how many people would attend such a venture.

We are therefore holding our first meeting on **SATURDAY 15 DECEMBER IN THE PARISH HALL.**

We have arranged for 2 films to be shown: one for a family audience in the afternoon, with the main feature (12A) later in the evening.

The afternoon film will be 'The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists!' (U Certificate)

The latest production by local, award winning, Aardman Animations.

Voiced by Hugh Grant, Salma Hayek and Jeremy Piven.

A Pirate Captain sets out on a mission to defeat his rivals Black Bellamy and Cutlass Liz for the Pirate of the Year Award. The quest takes Captain and his crew from the shores of Blood Island to the foggy streets of Victorian London.

The main feature will be 'Salmon Fishing in the Yemen' (12A)

Starring Ewan McGregor, Emily Blunt, Kristin Scott Thomas and Amr Waked

A fisheries expert is approached by a consultant to help realize a sheik's vision of bringing the sport of fly-fishing to the desert and embarks on an upstream journey of faith and fish to prove the impossible possible.

Depending upon the success of this initial meeting, we hope to show films regularly (perhaps monthly), in the Parish Hall including contemporary and classic pictures where the whole village can come together and enjoy a relaxing evening.

The timetable for 15th December will be as follows:

3.30pm Doors Open for showing of "Pirates"
4.00pm Pirates spring into action
5.30pm Pirates overboard and hall empties
7.00pm Doors open for Salmon Fishing
7.30pm Salmon Fishing casts off
9.15pm Film ends

We will be selling a few sweets for our younger audience before the showing of "The Pirates", and the bar will be open before and after "Salmon Fishing", so you will be welcome to take a drink into the film with you (which you certainly can't do at an Odeon or Vue!) or enjoy a chat about the film afterwards.

We are keeping entry prices as low as possible for this initial meeting, so we will be charging
£2 each for "Pirates"
£3 (£2 under 18s) for "Salmon Fishing"

Tickets are now available in The Lamb or can be purchased on the door although, with capacity limited, you would be well advised to buy your tickets early.

If you are unable to attend this initial event, but would like to support the idea, please call me and I can include you in the supporters.

Simon Cross
01454 228291
simon@laburnumhouse.fsnet.co.uk



North Road Community Primary School

Summer seems but a distant memory now but the Autumn term has started with some new faces to North Road. I would like to welcome Mrs Sarah Stillie to our team, she is teaching in Mars Class, and Mrs Katherine Jenkins who is teaching in Pluto on a Friday. We also have lots of new families who have joined us over the summer. In Pluto class we welcome Evie, Sam, Franklin, Eve, Libby, Luke, Cameron, Sophia, Charlie, Mia, Imogen, Isabelle, Charley and Thomas.

In Mars class we welcome Ruby and Leo, in Neptune we welcome Isaac and Chloe and finally Sky and Kayleigh to Jupiter class. This now means we have 93 children on roll, with only a few places left in KS2. As you can see, from those of you who know us, we have renamed all our classes and rooms in school. We have a planet theme across the school and even have a astronaut called Neville who is helping us learn some core learning skills. These change every term, from now and to Christmas we are concentrating on 'learning together'. This means we are learning how to work as a team, negotiate, cooperate, compromise and how to share responsibility. We feel these are important life skills and are vital for our learners to become successful in their lifelong learning adventure.

We are already looking ahead to September 2013. If you have a child who is due to start school and you would like to come and visit us, please give us a call on 01454 867788.

This term we have welcomed Les Fry who came to work with our KS2 children. He was a Head in South Glos and has spent a year in Kenya providing local schools with a link to a Kenyan school. We are one of the lucky schools who has developed a link with Mzambarauni Takoa Primary in Pemba, Kenya. The school is very different to ours, it has 20 classes and over 900 pupils but they still have the same high expectations and ambitions for their pupils as we do our own. A group of children will be invited once a term to write to the school and in return the Kenyan school will write back to us. It is a wonderful opportunity for our children to learn about a culture very different to our own. I will keep you updated on the correspondence.

September saw the launch of our new curriculum. This year our curriculum is a topic based approach where all the subjects are linked together. This means learning is more relevant and fun to the children. Each class has a great topic, bright Sparks, all about me and mysterious materials, we are already seeing children more engaged in lessons and more enthusiastic about their learning. I will let you know about future topics although a complete overview can be seen on our website.

Our Macmillan coffee morning was a huge success which raised £223.16. As well as being well supported by our parents we also welcomed many local residents. It was great to hear their stories of North Road and find out how things have changed over the years. We have also supported the Jean for Genes charity this term by wearing our jeans to school and the Send a Cow to Africa charity by selling our Harvest produce.

As I write this we are already thinking of Christmas and are starting to learn our Christmas Carols. Our Christmas Fair this year is being held on 30th November 2-4pm. We have Father Christmas, refreshments as well as a raffle and a variety of stalls selling Christmas gifts. You are all more than welcome to come along and start your Christmas shopping or if you would like a stall please contact us on 01454 867788 or via the school website www.northroadprimaryschool.co.uk.

Jo Williams
Head Teacher
North Road Community Primary



Friends of North Road School

The end of the last academic year saw the departure of one of our most long-standing and active members of the Friends of School, our Chair, Heather Tillotson. Over the years she has organised fairs, attended May Day meetings, waded in the river Frome chasing elusive ducks and generally given up a lot of her free time to ensure the success of our various fundraising activities. She has always been keen that the children do fun things and the money raised by the Friends of School over the years has helped fulfil this aim.

Unfortunately with Heather's departure, and probably because she is such a hard act to follow, we have been unable to fill the role of Chair and therefore the Friends of School cannot continue in its current form. We are however extremely fortunate that our Head Teacher and staff also understand the need for fundraising to enhance the children's learning experience and they have already started the fundraising program for this term, getting input from parents via our new Parents' Forum.

By the time you are reading this we will have had a car boot sale, Halloween disco and a "Bags to School" collection all of which should have raised much needed funds. On 30th November we will be holding our Christmas Fair, which will be an ideal opportunity to purchase those last minute stocking fillers and we are also doing a film night on 19th December providing a further opportunity for parents to "hit the shops" while their children enjoy a film at school. Next year we have many events planned including a Valentine's disco on 7th February and our Summer Prom on 12th July.

I would like to thank all past members of the Friends of School, especially Heather, for all their hard work and fundraising efforts which over the years have contributed significantly to the school. We hope that our fundraising activities continue to be as successful and we welcome any local residents to come along and support us. We would love to see some new faces!

On behalf of everyone at school I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Kate Clarke



Extracts From How I Started National Service - 1960 - 1962

Part 2

A tough-looking teddy-boy in our group sobbed his heart out after his considerable loss! Smoking was allowed while we waited, the ashtrays being lids of Cherry Blossom boot polish, nailed to the window ledges. One recruit dropped some ash on the floor and was told by the Corporal to pick it up - 'Every bit of it lad'. The last remnants of ash were picked up using a wet finger and scraping the moist ash on the rim of the polish lid - the first hint of army discipline to come.

The next port of call was to the medical centre for a rapid body reconnaissance, followed by simultaneous jabs to the left bicep (against every disease known to man) and right forearm (Schick Test for testing susceptibility to diphtheria). Our allotted Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) a keen 19 year old marched us to our two storey billet, which was to house forty of us for the next six weeks. We were given a bare bedstead and a small locker each and marched to the Quarter Master's Stores. (The words and tune in my head referred to my eyes being dim and being unable to see because I had not brought my specs with me). Here, we were issued with most of our basic kit and bedding, including a denim two-piece (trousers and blouse which were worn most of the time), the same in wool (battledress or BD), greatcoat, shirts, tie, green drawers, braces, two berets, two cap badges, two pairs of black boots, two belts, gaiters, socks, PE kit, helmet, china mug and eating irons, mess tin, water bottle, pen knife, bullet pouches, lanyard, RAOC flashes, ground sheet, backpack and associated webbing, needlework kit and a kit bag to pack up your troubles in! There and then, we tried on some of the kit - very little fitted, except the boots. The shirts were very hairy for a delicate soul like me (my wife kept washing one shirt for me so that it became almost white, which caused perpetual consternation among the 'powers that be').

At tea-time, we were marched to the cookhouse for an evening meal. The first five of us were drafted to help serve the fish, chips and peas. We were given three minutes to eat and to drink the dark brown fluid, called tea, before being called outside to be marched back, but not before 'cleaning' our mugs in a trough of dirty brown water. After the first experience of sludgy army tea, we were convinced about the rumours that bromide was added to suppress sexual desires, which were unwelcome in the Army.

In the billet, the ten of us on one half of the ground floor were named Squad 5 of 2 Platoon, A company. We had a demonstration on how to make up a bed and more importantly, how to fold up the bedding in the form of a block, an arrangement of bed linen encased by a blanket, so that the whole represented a compact slice of grey and white Battenberg cake. This was done every morning and dissembled to make the bed at night.

After this, we were marched to the NAAFI shop and 'strongly advised' to buy boot polish, boot brushes (I still have them), Blanco, (perversely, green for the RAOC), soft dusters, brasso, hard brush, sandpaper, a candle and matches. These items came to 10/6 out of the weekly wage of 15 shillings, to be paid to us every Thursday. I was, ostensible, immediately out of pocket, since I had to promise to send my wife 5 shillings a week to supplement her was wives' pension of £2.12.6.

It is against Queen's Regulations to mutilate or damage Crown property, which includes goods and chattels on loan to a soldier. Immediately breaking these Regulations, we were shown how to burn off the unwanted lacquer on the cap badges. Each badge was placed in a boot polish lid containing brasso, which was ignited. The badge was then vigorously brushed to simultaneously clean and polish it. The second mutilation involved removing the pimples from the boot toecaps. This entailed heating the back of a dessert spoon in a candle flame and continually pressing it on the pimples.

The next lesson was the bulling of the boots. Polish is applied with a duster to the toecaps, working it in in tiny circles. After each layer has been put on thickly, water is rubbed in and this alternating process is continued. Several hundred applications are necessary to obtain a satisfactory brilliance. One of the hazards of this process is that it is possible to build up too heavy a layer whereby vigorous stamping can cause the whole lot to come away!

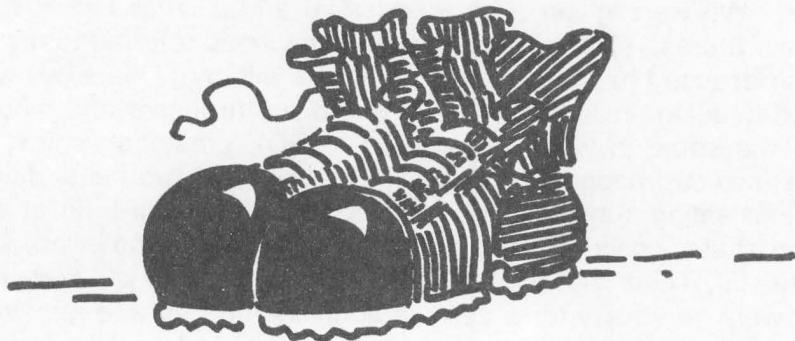
The third mutilation was slitting the beret to insert the cap badge. Also, the bow at the back of the beret had to be undone and packed out of sight.

'Lights out' was at 2200, but before that we were instructed to write a letter home to Mum. It was suggested that we stated how happy and content we were with Army life. I was given special dispensation to write to my wife³ provided I also wrote to my mother.

We went to bed shattered.

To be continued

Geoff Dickes



The Actionians' Next Production

The 39 Steps by John Buchan

(Adapted by Patrick Barlow from the original concept by Simon Corbie and Nobby Dimon)

21 - 24 November 2012 7.30pm

Tickets £7 from the Box Office 07807 547 238 or on-line : www.actonians.co.uk

As we go to print the Actonians are deep in rehearsals for their next production, **John Buchan's, The 39 Steps** - the comedy version that is. The crew went to see the 'brilliantly funny West End Smash' in London recently and came away realising we had an equally good, if not better show in production.

For those of you who have seen the original films in black and white, we will conjure up the Scotch mist, brooding moors, spies, chases, handsome heroes and exotic heorines and sprinkle with a touch of frantic slap stick. It is a great family show that will appeal to all ages.

Of course while the adults are busy with their latest show, the Junior Actonians are meeting every week to hone their acting skills. So if you know of any other youngsters who would like to 'strut their stuff' on stage, just send them along on a Wednesday evening.

July 1st 1916 – The Battle of the Somme

At this time we think back particularly of the horrors of the Great War, and so a story has been penned in verse which tells of what transpired between July and November of that year, when over 1,000,000 men were slaughtered – a humble tribute to all who fell.

What greater sacrifice than this
When men walked through that black abyss,
To give their lives for freedom fair,
So homefolk once again might share
The thought that peace was imminent,
Only to find by strong intent,
That summer's day began so free
In those green fields of Picardie.

Towards the heavens in ignorance
Of five long months of turbulence,
When human life was thought so cheap
To leave it rotting in a heap,
When only flies and rotting things
Enjoyed the death of human beings;
A week, that's all it should have last ,
For Rawlinson's large khaki cast.

To overthrow the hated Hun
Who had wiped out the French Verdun,
So wrong the plans of aged men
Were to be witnessed by the same,
Entrenched along the saucered plain
Men cringed like ants as they in vain ,
Await the call to breach the top
When no man was allowed to stop.

In fear of being left behind
To face the steel from their own kind,
In droves they slowly sauntered on
Midst sheets of steel and lead and iron,
To be mowed down like ripening corn,
The Pals, the Chums, Oh! So forlorn,
Twenty thousand in the first hour
Lay young and old on earthly bower.

The rest agog in angered stupor
Amazed how they had failed to conquer,
What was supposed to be a game,
Ended that day in utter shame,
Perhaps the dawn would see the end,
Before the fray would further rend
The hopes, the fears, the plans, the dreams
Of others waiting in the scenes.

To take the place of those who fell
In death's black stench of living hell,
No-one would sleep that very night,
Or others yet, because of fright,
Who knew their time had come at last
To join the futile holocaust
Goodbye, farewell, chin-chin my love,
I hope my soul will as a dove.

Float high to God's wide open door,
So I may live forever more,
One million plus would never see
An Earthly age of history.
The gas, the shells, both took their toll
Of men from town and village hall
Who went to fight for good and right,
To stem the tide of evil might.

From all the corners of the Earth
Did men assemble without mirth,
At home wherever that may be
Were tears, so dry, as eyes did see
The inhumanity of man
For only seven short miles were won;
When will we ever learn to grasp
The nettle of such useless tasks.

For in the end the poppies came
To gently hide that year of shame
For those who grieved and wept at home
They, at least, would remember Somme.

Acton Aid

Acton Aid organised two events over what passed for the summer this year. Proms in the Meadow was held mid-July but one would have been forgiven for thinking it was October. The bad weather in the days (weeks, months) leading up to the event made setting-up and clearing away very labour-intensive as movement of vehicles on the meadow had to be limited. On the evening itself we were perhaps fortunate that there was only one short, sharp downpour.

We welcomed back Liv Cowell to open the evening, followed by the Castle School Panache Steel Band who performed at Proms in the Meadow for the first time. The Bristol Millennium Orchestra, joined by soprano Charlotte Newstead, then performed a programme to celebrate London 2012 and the Diamond Jubilee. Once again, the Kathryn Hurley Dance Academy and the Stapleton School of Dance performed during the programme. During the half time interval a bucket collection was held which raised £565.65 for improvements to the children's play area in the meadow. After the interval Fascinating Rhythm gave their debut performance at Proms in the Meadow and later joined the orchestra and Charlotte for the finale.

In September, following the success of last year's inaugural event, Acton Aid presented the Iron Acton Beer Festival in the garden of the Parish Hall. Fortunately the weather was much kinder than it was in July. Locally produced beers, ciders and wines were available, along with a hog roast. Acton Aid was proud to offer its very own cider produced from apples pressed at last year's event, though it proved to be an acquired taste. Punters were entertained by a shanty band and, back by popular demand, the Dixie Belles.

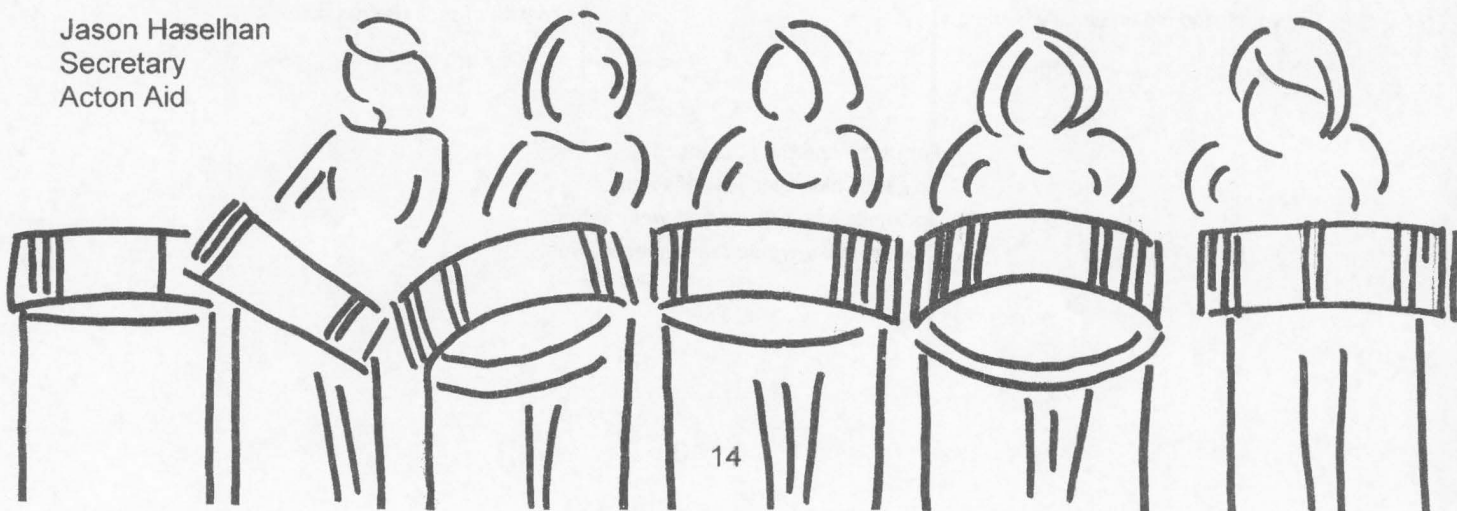
At the time of writing we are busy making preparations for the Bonfire Night firework display on the Parish Meadow which takes place on Saturday 3rd November. In December we will be distributing Christmas boxes across the parish.

Since the last edition of Focal Poyntz the membership of Acton Aid has swelled. We welcomed Jinx Johnson and Brendan Byrne as new members and welcomed back Richard Hunter following a trip around the world. Indeed the attendance at the October meeting was a record 25 members. We also celebrated the birth of Sophie, born to Rob and Rachel Taylor.

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 at 8pm 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.

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, Peter Foote on 228674 or the Secretary, Jason Haselhan on 228791, in confidence.

Jason Haselhan
Secretary
Acton Aid



North Road Ladies Club

At our September meeting Gill Suttle came along to give an excellent talk, illustrated with slides, entitled "Celestial Horses - travels in Turkestan". Gill had hired a horse named Kaan for her travels and after spending three months in Turkmenistan and seeing the situation of the horses there she resolved to buy Kaan and bring him back to England. It proved to take three years before Gill was able to finally bring Kaan to the UK. He demonstrated the fullness of his recovery two years later when he carried out a 500 mile ride for charity and he learned to jump, winning show jumping classes and competing with great enthusiasm up to Open Cross Country.

In October Pauline Kidner from "Secret World Wildlife Rescue" showed us some beautiful photographs of baby animals and birds which had been taken at their Rescue Centre. Watching the baby bird photographs was like a quiz as it was very difficult to identify which adult bird they would become. This was a most interesting and entertaining evening.

On 5 November we will be celebrating our 45th Ladies Club Birthday Party at The Farmer's Table, Tortworth Farmshop.

Our December meeting will take the form of the AGM, an American Supper and Social Evening. We will also be presenting a cheque to a representative from "The Special Baby Unit", Southmead Hospital, which has been our chosen charity for 2012. The fund-raising events for this charity have been a skittles evening, a Garden Party and Bring and Buy stall at our meetings.

We hold our meetings in Iron Acton Parish Hall, usually on the first Monday of the month, commencing at 7.30pm. Anyone interested in joining our Ladies Club is most welcome.

June Rycroft
Club Secretary



Iron Acton K9 Club - Gold Success

The club recently enjoyed our first successes at Gold Standard of The Kennel Club Good Citizens Award Scheme. Meryl Cook with Remy, Jackie Glanville with Dale, Sue Gadsby with Rosie, Karen Carnovale with Shya and Carole Spokes with Ziggy all achieved gold passes. It has taken lots of hard work and patience by the trainers, handlers and dogs to reach this standard – congratulations and tummy rubs to everyone.

Successful at silver standard were Tony Powell with Toby and Chris Moore with Harry. Toby and Harry should soon be having a crack at the gold test – good luck to all.

Some of our handlers with older puppies have achieved the bronze standard – Hayley Whittle with Mo, Ash Morris and Jess, Jenny Armstrong with Pollyanna, and Heather Blackwood with Spoons – well done everyone.

Puppy foundation passes were achieved by Louise Harper Bill with Doris, Julie Chubb with Rufus, Katherine Penny with George, Andrew Smith with Gigsy, Lisa Hatherell with Tally, Becky James with Badger and Emily Pratten with Maisie. Some of these are hoping to go on to achieve bronze standard.

A new group of puppies and handlers is enjoying socialising with each other and learning basic commands. A very busy and fun time for all our club members.

Our summer BBQ was rained off and re-arranged for the August Bank Holiday. Guess what??? More rain. Obviously dog owners are very hardy (or foolish) because lots turned out for a really wet but enjoyable afternoon. Our show judge Jill Chapman kept very busy. Rosettes were awarded to Oscar with Dot Glover in the Handsomest Dog Class, Daisy with Sam Iniesta Martin won Prettiest Bitch, Lexie with Paul Hampson won Best Condition and Waggiest Tail, Belle with Karen Carnovale – Most Appealing Eyes, Tia with Janet Drew – Best Veteran, Doris with Louise Harper Bill – Best Junior, Tia & Gypsy with Janet Drew – Best Brace, Red with Karen Carnovale – Dog the Judge would most like to take home.

Doris with Louise was judged the Best in Show and Shya with Karen was the Obedience Champion.

In the activity sections Tara with Sue Gadsby won the Agility event whilst Shya with Karen Carnovale had a brilliant afternoon and won the Scurry, Flyball and Fastest Recall to become the overall Activity Champion.

We all had a great day despite the weather and some even survived to enjoy the BBQ.

Many thanks to Jill our judge for braving the weather – the judge's job is always the hardest. Also many thanks to Amy Hampson for the lovely doggie cupcakes – much enjoyed by all.

If anyone would like to join us please give us a call. Obedience Classes are on Monday evenings at Rangeworthy Hall. Agility, Flyball & Scurry on Sunday afternoons in Iron Acton.

Sue 228803, Karen 228891, Trevor 775501, Louise 227224, Helen 222732.



Horticultural Show

Once again a very big thank you to everyone who took the time and trouble to enter this year's show.

The awful wet weather during the course of the spring and summer obviously took its toll, as entries were down on last year. However a great day was had by all.

The Horticultural Committee would also like to pass on their extremely grateful thanks to all the helpers behind the scenes. You are too numerous to mention, but without your help and the extra pairs of hands (and younger legs for that matter!) the show wouldn't be what it is today.

The trophies for the 2012 Show were awarded as follows:-

Allotment Trophy (Vegetables grown on an allotment)	Mr Jim Seymour
Red Ribbon Cup (Best Exhibit in General Section)	Mr Jim Seymour
Hall Committee Rose Bowl (Highest Points – General Section)	Mr Jim Seymour
Gordon Powell Cup (Second Highest Points – General Section)	Mr Albert Davies
Flower Arranging Rose Bowl	Mrs Linda Boyce
Acton Aid Cup (Homecraft)	Ms Gilly Otlet
Photography Cup	Ms Gilly Otlet
Pre-School Cup	Todd Frise
Junior Cup (Ages 5-7 years)	Katie Aries
Parker Shield (Ages 8-11 years)	Tilly Aries
St James the Less Cup (Highest Points Iron Acton Resident)	Mr Albert Davies
Golden Jubilee Cup (Most Entries by a Family)	The Otlet Family

Iron Acton Horticultural Committee



Ladies' Dress Ring

A ladies' dress ring was found in the Churchyard recently just inside the front gate.

If anyone wishes to claim its return please telephone 01454 228356

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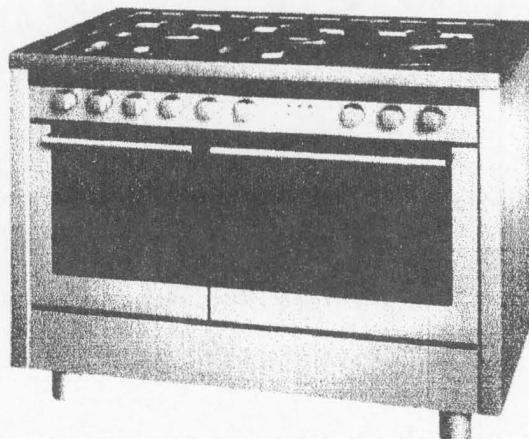
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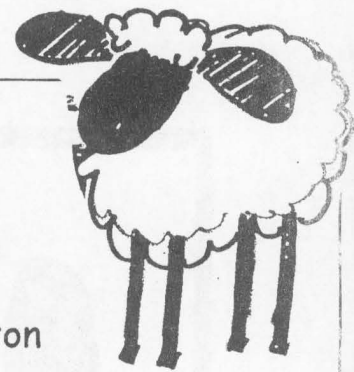
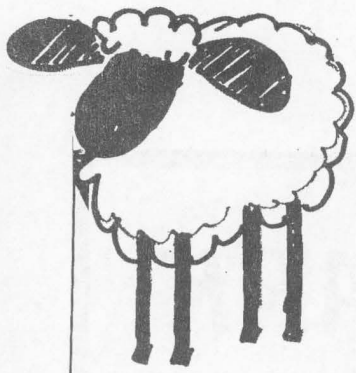
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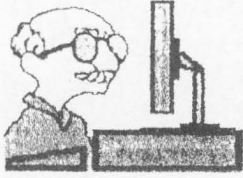
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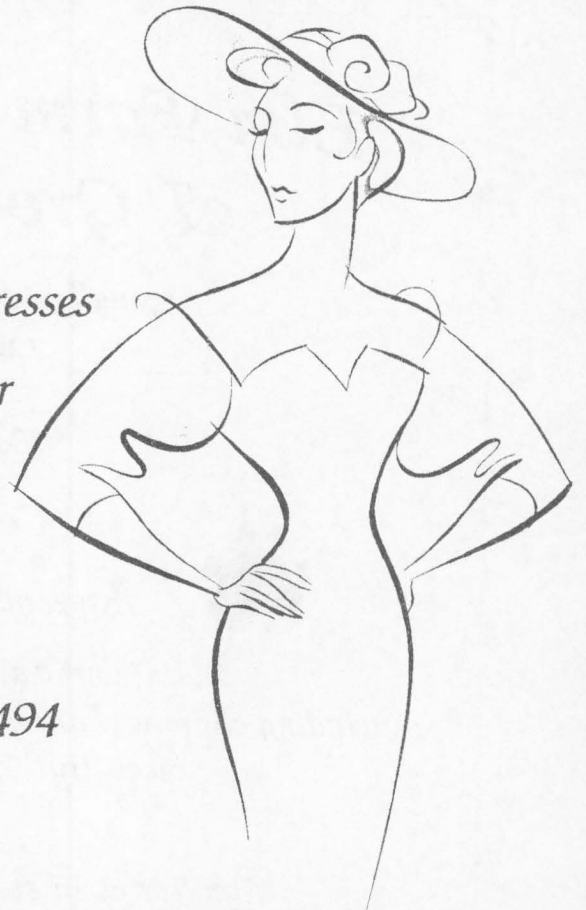
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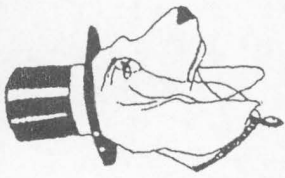
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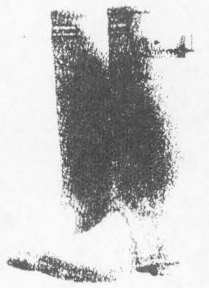
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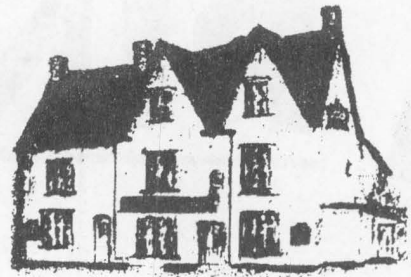
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