

THE ACTONIANS

We'd like to start this report with an URGENT appeal for NEW MEMBERS as we really are in need of some fresh, young blood - or, for that matter, any old blood who would like to join!

We meet each Wednesday evening in the Village Hall; Junior Actonians from 6.00 pm to 7.30 pm and Adults from 8.00 pm onwards.

We produce a Spring Play, an Autumn Production and also enter the One Act Drama Festivals. In fact, there's always something going on and there's always something for everyone to do! So if you are interested in helping out on-stage, backstage or front of house, with lighting, sound or scenery, come and have a go, we'd love to see you!

By the time you read this we will have had our Supper Evening on Wednesday, 20 February when we will perform the One Act Play that will be this year's entry into the One Act Drama Festival (hope we can keep the Cup again this year).

The Spring Production is "Voyage Round My Father" by John Mortimer (who also wrote the Rumpole of the Bailey books) on 15, 16, 17 and 18 May at the Village Hall. It's produced by Ann Aplin and should be a real humdinger!

Apart from the drama side, we do have numerous social events, barbeques, days out, workshops, etc. In fact, we are a very friendly lot - as you'll find out if you come and join us!

Finally, be sure not to miss the Junior Actonian's production of "The King's Dream", which has been specially adapted by Penny Percy, in the Village Hall on Monday, 6 May as part of our contribution to the Village Day for Focus on Iron Acton.

Rona Wright
Secretary

FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

The winter months are a quiet time for us as far as fund raising is concerned with the School's preparations for Christmas, etc.

We held our Bring and Buy 50/50 sale in October and raised about £100 and, of course, we held our second skittles evening in November - this time at the ARC Club (we have found this to be an excellent location and so further evenings will be held there). The amazing amount of £126.60 was raised, partly due to the efforts of Liz Woodman and Dave Desborough who managed to persuade almost everyone in the ARC Club that night to buy raffle tickets! Many thanks to those who donated the raffle prizes. The next skittles evening is planned for Saturday, 16 March, tickets £2.50.

Besides paying for various memberships and licences the remainder of the funds will go towards the Adventure Playground. We are gradually getting closer to the target but still need to raise more money.

Our annual Jumble Sale will be held on Saturday, 23 March and the Friends are also hoping to have a White Elephant Stall on the Village Day for Focus on 6 May. The Summer Fayre (our main fund raising event) has been booked for Saturday, 6 July.

Watch the notice board outside the school for further details and we look forward to seeing you at our forthcoming events.

Karen Hillier

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

In the Summer Holidays I hurt my right leg. I did this whilst running the 800 metres at school, so my Dad took me down to Frenchay Hospital where I had some X-rays and was told that I had broken my toe (my big one). So off I hopped to the plaster room where I was plastered up from my toes to just below my knee! All that just for a toe!! After two weeks of that, (two whole weeks of the summer holidays taken up already!) I had my plaster taken off, and had to walk on my crutches. But after a few days my right leg became hypersensitive, so off we trudged to Frenchay hospital, (waiting in there for over 1 hour!!!) The Doctor advised me to keep off it for a few days and see what happens! so that's what I did. But after another few days my left leg also became hypersensitive, so we phoned the doctor and asked for a house call. When the doctor came he immediately admitted me to Bristol Children's Hospital!

A few days went by with only a few visitors, as it is quite away from Iron Acton. I had a lumbar puncture which hurt quite a lot!!! A lumbar puncture is where they remove some fluid from the spine which they will send off for tests for certain things!!! A few days after that a big shock came to the ward. The ward which I was on was to be turned into complete and utter chaos! Simon Mayo and Sarah Green were meant to be coming in to film the series 'LIFE ON ONE' and we were meant to be dotted around the ward trying to look as natural as possible!!!! I thought they were just mucking around. But no sure enough at 7.00 a.m the next morning in came all the technicians with wires, lights etc. turning the place into chaos. Nobody was allowed to move off their beds in case they did something to the equipment!!! If we wanted the toilet we had to have a bed pan!!! YUCK!! They are the most awkward things to use!!!!

By 11.30 a.m. they were near enough finished! There was one good thing about it - we didn't have to have Hospital School! At 12.00 Simon Mayo arrived: he was late because he had to do his breakfast programme in the morning on RADIO 1. He came in and said "Hello" to us all and was really nice, but, then Sarah Green came in. She was a real 'flirt' - she was polite but when we were just about to go on air she said,

"Oh Roger, darling I think my make-up isn't quite right, maybe a bit more blush!" so in rushes Roger and sorts out her make-up! Simon said he thought she chose the wrong clothes as they clashed with the curtains in the background!!!! In rehearsal he wore jeans and a jacket with a yellow T-shirt underneath. I know it's live but the amount of rehearsing they do is amazing! they only had one camera and we were allowed to have a go on it. It is really easy to use!!!

At 7.00 p.m. a lady came round putting up helium-filled balloons with 'LIFE ON ONE' written all over them. A group of us were chosen to go next to Simon and play Trivial Pursuits. We played it so often I'm surprised we didn't know the questions off by heart!!!! I was chosen to go on the outside right next to Simon Mayo. At 8.00 we went on air. It went really well - no mistakes whatsoever!!! At the end when all the credits came up Simon came over and answered some of the questions on Trivial Pursuits with us. He managed to answer them all but one that one was WHAT'S GOT 365 DIMPLES?????? ANSWER. A GOLF BALL!!!!!!

When they'd all gone one of the nurses got a balloon down and breathed in the helium! His voice went all squeaky and bubbly!!! Later on the camera crew remembered us and brought us down some food and drink from upstairs where they'd been celebrating!!! The next morning Simon mentioned us on the radio; he said a special 'Thank you' to certain people (I was included) and said he enjoyed meeting us all!!!! About a week after that some people came down from the television programme 'THE LOWDOWN' In this one I played a major part - I had to ask this person lots of questions and ring up a pizza place and ask for a pizza. Later on we got a pizza but I was in Physiotherapy when it came, so there wasn't any left for me. I had to settle for lentil casserole.

After 3 weeks I was finally discharged!!! I was diagnosed as having RELAX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY SYNDROME!! I still don't know what it means so, if anyone can tell me it would be very helpful! After I was discharged I was in a wheelchair as I couldn't walk. At the moment I am depending on a T.E.N.S. machine it sends electric impulses to my feet which kills all the pain. I am now walking with the aid of this box!!! So that was this year's summer holiday - I spent most of the time in hospital, but what is strange is I went through the same illness at the same time last year! so will it happen again next year? I hope not!!!!!!

Felicity Bate - 12 years old.



RYOANJI ROCKS, October 1990

Pushing, chattering, careless throng,
Urban migrants, fleeing the city's frenzy,
Seeking solace in the shaded sekitei
The lightening liberty of winging spirit
The strange healing of Ryoanji rocks!

You must endure the microphone's banality,
As it expounds an ancient philosophy
In a few concise, official sentences.
You must wait patiently, unquestioning
Passivity and emptiness precede enlightenment.

Enigmatic emblems, precious Ishigumi, naked
And unashamedly exposed to the elements. Indifferent
To the merciless scrutiny of a million eyes -
Their dignified silence speaks a noble defiance.
Gently the washing waters whisper 'peace'

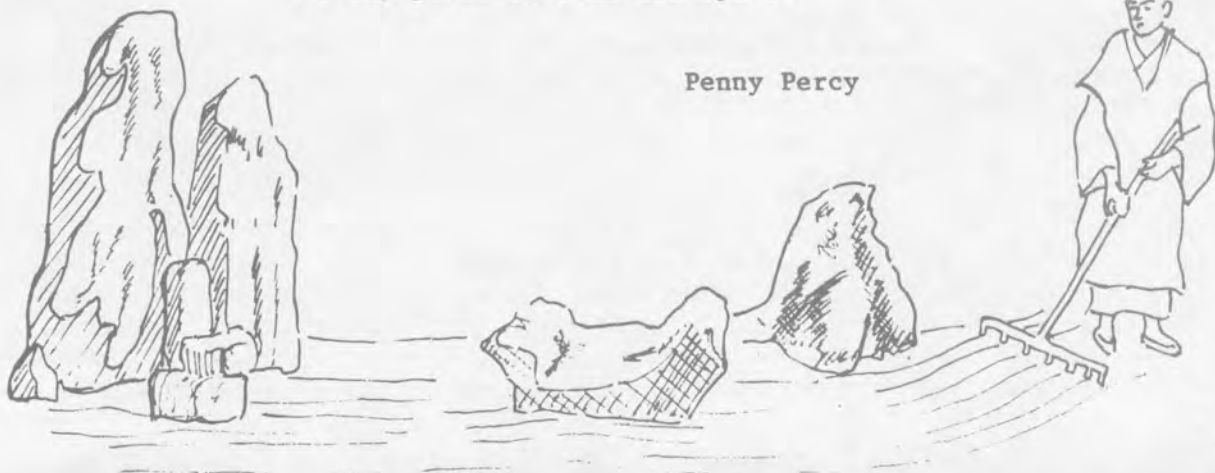
Explanation: The rock garden of Ryoanji temple in Kyoto, sums up the quintessence of Zen art. Similar gardens, known as Sekitei, were developed in the Muromachi Era (1392-1575) in Japan. Ryoanji Temple rock garden is world famous and was thought to have been laid out by Soami, a painter and gardener, who died in 1525. It measures 30 metres from west to east and 10 metres from south to north. It contains 15 rocks arranged to represent islands. Wave-like patterns are drawn in the surrounding white sand with a rake.

The heart of the garden is its combination of rocks called ishigumi. Designers of Zen garden spend much time searching for exactly the right shape of rock.

Edmund Blunden wrote of this garden:-

'Let me like many others pause
By these mysterious forms of stone,
Which seem to speak eternal laws
Truths which must not become unknown
At any point in time and space!'

Penny Percy



NOTHING TO DO WITH TWINNING (! ! !)

It seemed such a good idea when we first heard about it, a 4 day trip to Reims organised by Avon Federation of Women's Institutes, but at 6.30 am on a relatively cold, cheerless, October day while waiting for a lift to the coach collection point (when all my body craved was a return to my nice, warm bed) I began to have doubts.

But it was too late! And so it was that Pauline Hill, Viv Parker, Valerie Evans, Mum, Rona Wright and me found ourselves with a variety of people outside Tesco's at Eastville (not the most awe inspiring of places) at ten to seven on a Friday morning!

Our little group had got onto the coach, found our seats, and were ready to play that lovely little game of "who've they sat next to us then?" when we saw them. A group of ladies resplendent in Fred Perry teeshirts, all emblazoned with the WI county crest and the letters AFWI across one bosom. These were the sort to bound out of bed, fresh as daisies, prepared to take on any poor unsuspecting male who dared cross their path. I groaned inwardly, closed my eyes and sank down in my seat.

They say things get worse before they get better - this is true! While still on the M32 our "merry neighbours" were discussing cysts - location of, size of, treatment of and contents of, in graphic detail (I kid you not) and by the time we'd reached the M4 they were loudly discussing where their ashes were to be scattered. Early starts do not agree with me (as my nearest and dearest will confirm) and by this time I was muttering peevishly that if they didn't shut up they'd get real practice at ashes scattering, but never mind, one cup of coffee later and I saw the world in a different light - honest!

The ferry crossing was wonderful - mum hadn't seen my chameleon act before! The wind blew, and blew and blew. It was difficult to get outside so I just found a convenient piece of floor and sank down and prayed for France!

The journey to Reims was memorable as the area we passed through was where many major First World War battles were fought. Vimy Ridge is the site of the Canadian War Memorial. 11,000 (not a typing error) men died and each is remembered with a tiny, white headstone and row upon row of tall, straight trees. An awe inspiring sight which will live with me until I die.

Once at Reims our intrepid six decided to find somewhere to eat as soon as we could. We struck gold on the first evening. The restaurant was small, incredibly friendly and where the locals ate (always a good sign). Part of my masochistic self would love to know what the staff thought of these crazy Englishwomen (whoops, sorry Valerie) and one Welsh lady who's custom they were to have for 3 evenings. Most of the time they wandered around with bemused expressions (I could understand why) and it took us ages to get the "no garlic" (all Rona's fault) point across.

On Saturday morning we visited the Pommery Champagne Cellars. These, surprisingly, are under the city of Reims. Originally hollowed out from the chalk pits whose contents were used to build the city, the 20 miles of roomy galleries are situated 100 feet below ground level and reached by descending 116 steps which form a magnificent stone stairway. 25 million bottles of champagne are stored here where the temperature remains 50 °F all year round, regardless of the outside temperature. No-one believed us when we got back, but it's absolutely true that we didn't even get a taste of the golden nectar given to us!

The rest of the day was ours to spend as we wished and we made the most of it. Reims Cathedral was beautiful and memorable as we saw Leon Britton wandering around - if they ever want an understudy for Colombo's mac they can borrow his! We also found (eventually) the room where the Second World War Surrender was signed. The room is preserved as it was on 7 May 1945, although the entrance rooms are now laid out as a museum and small film theatre. I thoroughly enjoyed the visit but was stunned to learn that by the end of World War II the allied forces had taken 4 million prisoners of war.

Sunday was the day we were looking forward to. A whole day in Paris - Gare D'Orsay here I come! We hadn't bargained for the weather. It was raining at 7.30 am when we got up (not your nice gentle English stuff either) and it was still raining when we got to Paris at Midday. Our half hour Paris coach tour was extended threefold, but it was still raining and then we were turfed off the coach for 3 hours! We had one aim, to find a cafe with slow service. We succeeded, and fortified with crepes flooded with

Cointreau and Grand Marnier we made our way back to the coach. It was still raining when we got back to Reims, only stopping at 10 pm that evening, by which time we were in our favourite restaurant and totally past caring!

Made my day though to hear the "Fred Perry" mob had been in a Paris Cafe when they'd been surrounded by fully armed French Military Police, in armoured vehicles, who were looking for a Libyan terrorist cell (President Gorbachev was due the following day).

Monday and I had the ferry crossing to look forward to and my first visit to a French Hypermarket - it was just like Carrefour used to be at Cribbs Causeway, I was most disappointed! The crossing took 30 minutes longer than scheduled (it was raining and blowing again) but I managed to keep my "dignity" this time and the rest of the journey was uneventful.

I'm going to finish by saying that if our little six hadn't got on so well the weekend would have been a total disaster, but it wasn't because all the hassles were faced with humour and I couldn't have wished for a nicer, friendlier group of companions. All I can say is, where are we going next and when!

PS Who's husband was it who got the coach collection point wrong and had to be woken up in the early hours in his car at Anchor Road by a nice policeman who explained he should have been at Eastville and that his wife had been at home for hours?????

Lynne Blanchard

NOT SO YOUNG FARMERS

28 February '91, transcript of an interview with Joe Slurry to Shortun Curley of BBC Points Less

SC Now, Mr Slurry, thank you for being with us this morning to give the reaction of the Gloucestershire farming community to the news of the ceasefire in Kuwait.

JS Arrrrgh!

SC I imagine folk will be celebrating in Gloucester Market today?

JS Well, see, same as I sez, you got t'agree that that there Sad 'am got a lot to answer for. Why, price of tracker fuel almos' doubled afore Christmas, and that diddun do no good to Christmas market, neither.

SC So your farming friends feel that this war was justified?

JS Dunno bout that. If them at Minisree Agg can prove that that there Mad Cow Disease came from Iraq then I reckon we got some proper compensation coming.

SC So what makes you think that?

JS Well, stands to reason dun it? That there Sad 'am ee'm bloody mad ain't he? Well I do believe if they reckonz humans can catch Sam an Ella from good clean eggs then our cows can catch that madness from them dafties out there; and if Ministree ain't goen to pay then ee should. Same as I say, like.

SC But what our viewers would really like to know is what the farming community is thinking at this moment in time when the rest of the world is rejoicing at the triumph of the United Nations and the rule of international law.

JS Well, that 'pends like. Some do say that the calf trade be goen to get stronger while there's others do reckon that price o' grass keep goen to be reelly not worth putting the fizz on for. If them politicians up Lunnon an Brussels could get 'im to pay so we getz our tracker fuel straight out of 'is oil wells, like, then I dun mind stannin you a pint up Gloucester Market, but I dun reckon to do no ree joycing unless I do see there's a shilling in it for me.

SC Well thank you very much, Mr Slurry. I'm sure that your views on the dramatic events unfolding in the Middle East will be of great interest to those watching.

JC Arrrrrrgh!

A Roving Focus Reporter

ONE HUNDRED AND TEN YEARS AGO

The Post Office Directory of Gloucestershire 1879 (kindly lent to us by Mr Albert Gifford) describes us thus:-

IRON ACTON is a village and station on the Midland railway, and including the hamlet of LATTERIDGE and the tithing of ACTON ILGAR, a parish, 1½ miles north west from Yate Station, on the Bristol and Birmingham railway, and 3½ miles west north west from Chipping Sodbury, 9 miles north by east from Bristol and 111½ from London, in the Western division of the county, Grumbalds Ash and Thornbury hundreds, Chipping Sodbury union and county court district, South Hawkesbury rural deanery, Bristol archdeaconry, and Gloucester and Bristol diocese, situated on the road from Bristol to Stroud; the river Leaton flows through the parish, and the river Frome forms the southern boundary.

The church of St. James is an old stone building, and has a lofty tower with 2 bells, erected by Robert Poyntz: it contains chancel, nave and aisles: in the church there is the helmet belonging to one of the Poyntz family, who lived in the reign of Henry VII; there is also an ancient mural monument of Mr John Trewhan, dated 1686: in the churchyard are the remain of a very handsome stone cross, but much disfigured by time: the church was thoroughly restored in 1879. The register dates from the year 1570. The living is a rectory, yearly value £714, with residence, in the gift of Christ Church, Oxford, and held by the Rev. Henry Lewis Thompson, M.A. late student of Christ Church.

The Congregationalists, Baptists and Wesleyans have each a chapel here. The charities are of £11 yearly value. Fairs are held on April 25th and September 13th, for cattle, horses, sheep and pigs.

In 1828 the remains of an ancient oak stood in the grounds of Acton House. and the tradition is that a forest existed here originally; and from the quantity of iron ore dug here also, the place was called "Iron Oak Town", corrupted to the present Iron Acton. Walter Long Esq., is lord of the manor. The principal land owner is Rev John Mayer, and there are several small landowners. The soil is clayey; subsoil, principally coal and limestone. The chief crops are wheat, barley and roots. The area is 2,802 acres; rateable value, £6,051, and the population in 1871 was 1,189.

Acton Ilgar is a hamlet.

Latteridge is a hamlet, 1¾ miles north west.

Parish Clerk, John Fugill

Post Office, John Fugill, postmaster. Letters arrive through Bristol at 9 a.m. box closes at 3.45 p.m. dispatched at 4 p.m.

The nearest money order office is at Frampton Cotterell.

Police Station, John Davis, police constable.

The National School was erected in 1873-4 by subscription, on a site given by the late Rector, the Rev. John Salter; James Heddon, master; Miss Elizabeth Heddon, mistress.

Railway Station, Andrew William Clutterbuck, station master.

Conveyance, Omnibuses daily, from Wotton-under-Edge, pass through Iron Acton to Bristol.

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IRON ACTON PARISH COUNCIL

As before, it's been decided to enter the main part of the Village in the Best Kept Village Competition and we hope that everyone will do their best to help with this in any way they can. We will also be entering the Best Hanging Basket and Container Classes for the main village (prizes of £5 in each class). The Best Garden Competition is open to the whole Parish.

Please remember that if you want to enter the Best Garden Competition your name must be given to Betty Cook (Neksdore, High Street/Rangeworthy 202) by 1 July 1991!

The poster competition is open to all children in the Parish on a "Keep Our Village Tidy" theme. There are 2 classes: 7 years and under and 8-12 years, there's a £5 1st prize and £2.50 second prize in each class. Posters should be on A4 paper and have to be with Betty Cook (Neksdore, High Street/Rangeworthy 202) by 7 June.

John Riddle has been doing a great deal of useful work tidying many eyesores in the Village. This is much appreciated by us all.

Don't forget that you can book the tennis courts at any time through Mr Carter, 9 Chilwood Close, Iron Acton. The charge is 50p each.

Some allotments are available at Nibley Lane - please contact Mr Carter for details.

We are grateful for an anonymous donation of £20 towards new maypole ribbons, and also to Mr Don Elson and family for agreeing to make up the shortfall, in memory of their mother who taught the children maypole dancing at the time of George V's Silver Jubilee in 1935.

Northavon are holding a Spring Clean Weekend from 19-21 April. The aim is to make us all more aware of our responsibility to the environment and to increase appreciation of our surroundings. If you can help, in any way, to make and keep your area tidy contact your Parish Council. More information can be obtained from the Community Work Co-Ordinator on (Thornbury) 416262 Extn 4219. There will also be an Environment Week from 11-19 May.

The Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) now have an Office at Poole Court. It's manned each Monday and Thursday from 10 am to Midday. Messages can be left at Poole Court or letters written to: CPRE, Hooper Room, Poole Court, Yate, BS17 4PR. All questions and enquiries will be answered as quickly as possible.

LOCAL ELECTIONS will be held on Thursday, 2 May and for the first time Iron Acton will be split into 2 wards: Iron Acton will elect 5 Councillors and Iron Acton East will elect 4 Councillors. The new ward is called Iron Acton East because it's in the east of the parish at North Road School (yes, we know that sounds pretty Irish!!) and it will cover North Road, Engine Common, Dyers Lane, Chaingate Lane, etc. Candidates for the election will have to be backed by 2 electors so watch the local press to see how to get your forms. The present Councillors are:

Charles Worsley, Lodge Road
Robert Sheppard, North Road
David Edwards, Nibley Lane
Donald Elson, North Road
Cedric Harries, North Road

Roy Curtis, Yate Road
Geoff Gale, High Street
Betty Cook, High Street
Elsie Blanchard, Latteridge Road

HARDLY MATCH OF THE DAY

Q Who said "He's never done that before!"

A A neighbour of Paul Gascoigne's after the footballer threw a pan of soup over a Daily Star reporter who had taken to waiting outside his house!

DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

In the Village Hall

Every Tuesday	Brownies	6.00pm.
Wednesday	Elizabethans	2.00
	Jun. Actonians	6.00
	Actonians	7.30
Every 2nd Monday	Women's Institute	7.30
Every 3rd. Monday	Parish Council	7.30
Every 4th. Monday	Whist Drive	7.30
Every 3rd Thursday	Ch. Sod. Knitting Group	1.30
April 9th.	NAvon Bus Tokens	2.00 to 3.00
April 12th	Conservative Ass.	
April 20th.	Auction Sale	
April 22nd.	Whist Drive in aid of Focus funds	7.30
May 6th	Junior Actonians play	
May 11th	Acton Aid social evening	

LOCAL ELECTIONS MAY 2nd

Polling Stations at North Road School and at Iron Acton Village Hall.

GARDENS OPEN

Algars Manor and Algars Mill
April 14th & 15th. and May 26th & 27th. 2-6 pm.
Teas Available.

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We are grateful to all our contributors and advertisers. Without you we could not continue to produce "FOCUS". If you have any contributions please contact any of the people listed at the foot of the editorial page. For advertising please contact Betty Cook, (228202) or Charles Wilkins (228254).

All issues of FOCUS ON IRON ACTON are printed for the Editors by

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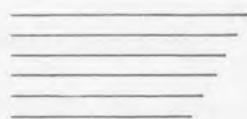
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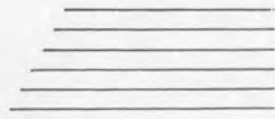


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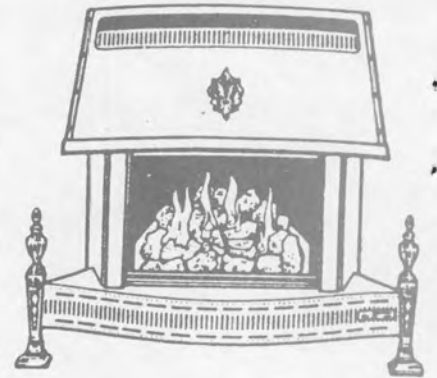
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The Actonians Present

A VOYAGE ROUND MY FATHER

(A PLAY BY JOHN MORTIMER)

16/17/18 MAY 7.30 PM VILLAGE HALL

TICKETS: £3 (Concessions £2)

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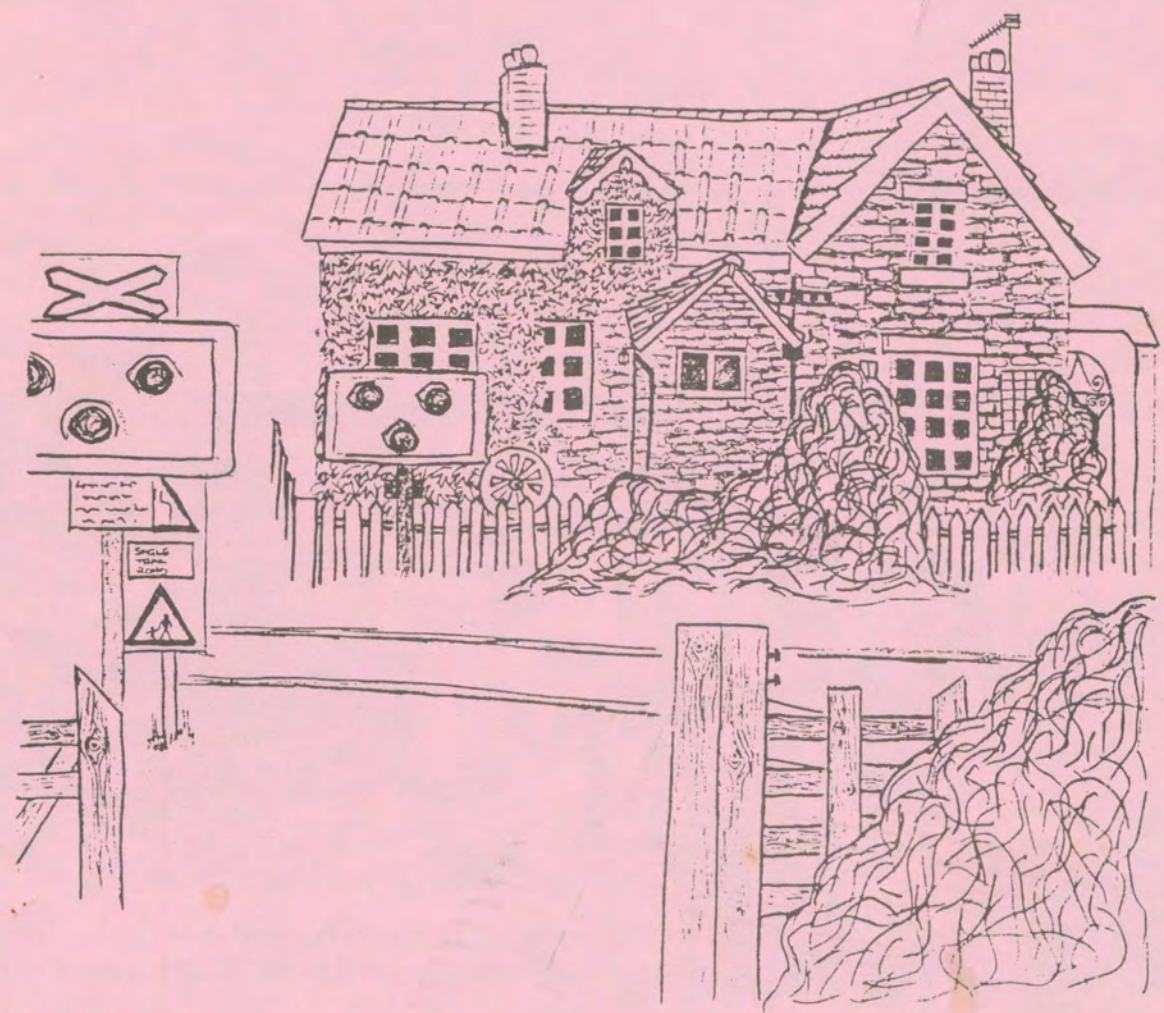


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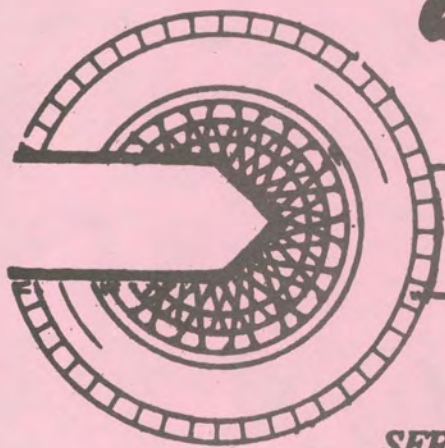


FOCUS on

IRON ACTON



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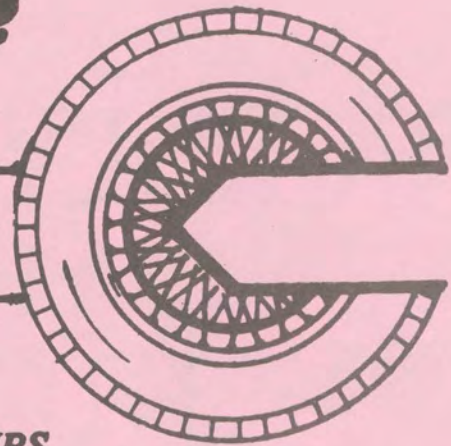


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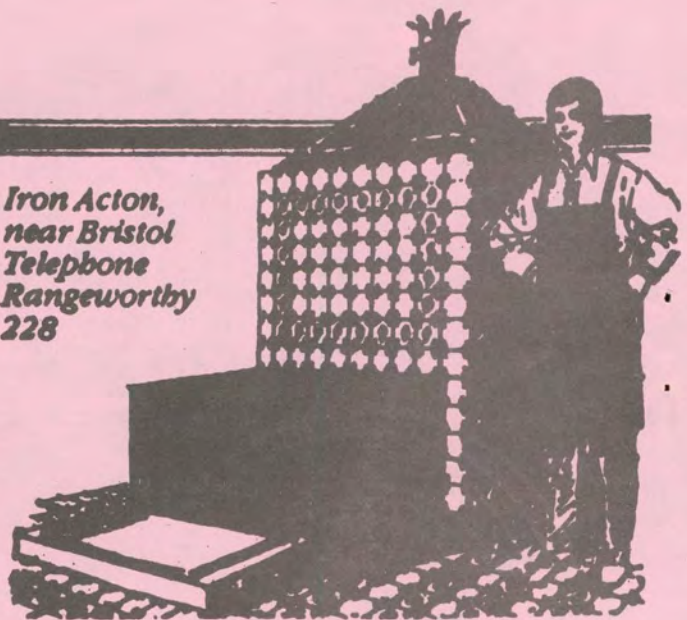


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Rangeworthy
228*

**THE WHITE
HART
INN**



**YOUR OLD FAVOURITES STILL AVAILABLE
PLUS NEW DISHES WE HOPE YOU WILL ENJOY**

No 26

SPRING 91

With this issue we begin our 9th year of publication. In looking back at our first timid issue of March '83 we discovered how much some things have changed whilst others remain the same.

In the outer world our editorial in '83 made reference to the Ayatollas of Iran, in this issue it's Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Locally, 1983 saw reports from the Girl Guides, the Folk Club and the Young Communicants - all of which have sadly faded from view, but the other bodies are still flourishing, though we don't always get to hear of their activities in time for publication!

If we are out of touch with your Club or Society, or you've changed your Secretary/Press Office please ring 228254. We'd like to hear from you!

1983 was the year in which we first won the Best Kept Village Competition, so let's try to do so again this year.

1991 sees the Parish Council Elections, which we all ought to take an interest in (as perhaps we should with all the other events which take place in the Village).

Let's make 1991 the year in which we all join together for the community.



Charles Wilkins
228254

Betty Cook
228202

John Percy
228239

Jo Voss
228674

Pete Redman
228395

Lynne Blanchard
228566

IRON ACTON C OF E SCHOOL

Our school numbers now stand at 53, which is close to the comfortable capacity of the school building. We are still hoping to be able to incorporate School House into the main building and use it for small group teaching and extra administrative space.

One effect of the increased numbers has been our ability to increase staffing under Local Management of Schools (LMS) where each school has a budget which is closely linked to pupil numbers. Therefore, we have gained to the Staff:

Mrs Julia Edwards (4/10 part time teacher who is assisting me with Class 1 Juniors).

Mrs Julie Lovell (who has joined Mrs Blackmore and Mrs Hillier as a General Assistant). We now have GA help in Mrs Hatt's infant class for the whole week. Mrs Lovell is a qualified nursery nurse (NNEB).

We were sad to lose Joyce Seymour as our faithful, long serving caretaker/ cleaner. We wish her all happiness in her retirement and welcome Pat Taylor, Joyce's replacement.

Beryl Woodward has told us that she wants to give up the post of Road Crossing Patrol from Easter when her husband retires. Beryl has been a good friend to many of the children at Iron Acton School, they look forward to a good chat with her first thing in the morning, and a cheery word on the way home.

Beryl and Joyce have been outstanding members of that great army of public service workers which has served the education industry so well.

We would like to say "Thank You" to:

- * Halifax Property Services who helped us acquire our infant playhouse.
- * Alex Williams from the Bristol Reading Centre for organising two "Big Book" days (which resulted in 12 new Big Books for Mrs Hatt's Class).
- * Everyone who contributed to our Harvest Festival - the proceeds of which were split between the continuing sponsorship of our Indian boy and the Bristol Royal Children's Hospital.

And "Congratulations" to:

- * All who took part in our Christmas productions of Baboushka and Aladdin.
- * The Carol Singers at the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party and the Elizabethans Christmas Sing Song.
- * The Electricity Poster Competition winners at the Nat-West Bank, Yate.
- * Samantha Parkhill for being the poster prize winner at Mr Minit, Yate.
- * Juliet Spare for gaining a place at Red Maids School.
- * Bradley Hillier for winning the Music Scholarship at QEH School.

Dates for your Diaries:

End of Spring Term	Friday, 22 March
Summer Term Begins	Monday, 8 April
In Service Day	Friday, 24 May
Half Term	Monday, 27 May (to Friday, 31 May)
End of Summer Term	Friday, 19 July
Autumn Term Begins	Monday, 2 September

FOR BETTER OR WORSE (! ! ? ! ? ?)

With the approach of Spring and the wedding season it might amuse you to read of a wartime wedding. They say every bride likes a wedding day to remember and this one was certainly unforgettable!

The couple, we'll call them Jack and Jill because that's nothing like their real names, grew up in Clevedon. Jack joined the RAFVR in 1939 and immediately war broke out he went into the RAF as a trainee pilot. They became engaged at Christmas that year.

By the summer of 1940 Jack had gained his wings and was posted to "somewhere in Gloucestershire", teaching other young hopefuls to fly twin-engine planes. When news of a week's leave in December came through it was decided to get married then because no-one knew what the future might bring.

Jill busied about making the arrangements; booking the church, buying the ring (she actually managed to get the last gold ring in the town) and persuading a friendly local baker to find enough ingredients to make a single tier cake that was properly iced (although the almond paste was probably ersatz).

Enough rations were scraped together to provide a reception for about 20 people - many friends and relations would be unable to get leave anyway. Jack would wear uniform of course, and Jill decided (time, clothing coupons and money being in short supply) to wear a dress she had worn as a bridesmaid a month before.

Jack arrived home the day before the wedding and the Best Man had also managed to get leave and was due to arrive that evening. However, by midnight there was still no news of him and Jill went home to get some beauty sleep. It happened that the Best Man - we'll call him Harry (because that was his name) - had arrived at Temple Meads in the middle of a very bad air raid on Bristol (this was the night that Wine Street and Castle Street were wiped out and when the old Dutch House was destroyed).

At about 2.30 am, having crawled most of the way from Temple Meads to Long Ashton on his stomach (as a Dunkirk veteran he was quite used to that), he managed to find a telephone in working order and got through to Jill's father, who then mounted his trusty bicycle and hurried round to wake up Jack. Jack then set off on his motorbike to pick up a somewhat shaken Harry and, arriving back too late to think of going to bed, they spent the time talking and eating a hearty breakfast.

The wedding ceremony and reception passed without any mishaps and the bride and groom were driven to Yatton where they planned to catch a train to Lynmouth. "No go" said the station staff "the line was bombed last night". Rather at a loss, Jack and Jill noticed a poster which said "Come to Chepstow". Could they get there? Yes, apparently that line was undamaged!

Arriving at Temple Meads they found the connecting line to Stapleton Road was kaput, so they had to make their own way through the devastation that had been the busiest part of Bristol. At long last they arrived in Chepstow and started to look for somewhere to stay. For some reason, the place was bursting at the seams and Jack and Jill trudged around every hotel and pub in the town until, tired and weary, they finally found one place that had a room, just a single room, very tiny with a single bed. Fortunately they both had a good sense of humour and the rest we must leave to your imagination! Perhaps you're wondering if this chaotic start have a derogatory effect on the marriage? Well, the score stands at 50 years not out, so I suppose that's a good enough reply!

Editors' Comment

We're leaving you with a little guessing game, that's why there's no name given. But there is a real clue the gentleman in question still enjoys his food and still enjoys a good natter/gossip/conversation (even tho' he's probably reading this comment and saying "Rubbish!"

NATURE NOTES

The birds have certainly appreciated the food and water put out for them during the cold spell, including a surprising number of redwing and fieldfare - I've never seen so many in the garden visiting the feeding station. Herons have also been very bold, coming right up near the house. They really must be hungry with so many ponds frozen over. I hope people haven't lost too many goldfish! When I was a child, magpies were not nearly so plentiful. We had a rhyme about them which went

"One for sorrow, two for mirth,
Three for a wedding, four for a birth"

Now it's not uncommon to see five or six at a time and having spent twenty years planting trees and shrubs to make the garden a haven for the birds it's pretty annoying to see magpies and jays moving in and robbing the nests of eggs or the young birds, but then it's nature in the raw and I suppose that everything depends on something else to survive.

Betty Cook

NORTH ROAD CHAPEL

If we were living before the birth of Christ I would still be wearing "Sackcloth and Ashes" in penitence for disappointing those who came to the church for the Carol Service. After publication of the last edition of Focus one of our Members requested a Dedication Service for a grandchild on the afternoon of the Carol Service to enable relatives on holiday from Australia to attend and as this would have resulted in our being without music for the evening service we decided to combine the Carol Service with the Dedication Service. We tried to ensure that everyone was told of the change but we failed and friends from Rangeworthy and Iron Acton arrived to find the church closed. We offer to them our sincere apologies. If they can let me have their names, addresses and telephone numbers we will be able to ensure that it doesn't happen again. My address is 344 North Road Yate and telephone Rangeworthy 228587

We were delighted in the New Year to be able to make Mr and Mrs Worsley a presentation and to extend to them our heartiest congratulations on their Golden Wedding Anniversary. We wish them many more happy years together and pray for God's blessing upon them.

On Good Friday evening at 7 pm the Whiteshill Male Voice Choir will again be providing the music for our traditional Good Friday Service. A warm welcome is extended to all who would like to join us. Light refreshment will follow the service.

Services for the next 4 months are as follows:

<u>March</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>
3 Pastor	7 Pastor	5 Pastor	2 Pastor
10 Mr M Turner	14 Dr G Phillpotts	12 Mr S Pabari	9 Mr R Keen
17 Mr K Moon	21 Mr S Bellamy	17 Mr J Pulin	16 Mr P Shortman
24 Mr R Butcher	28 Mr S Douglas	26 Mr H Obery	23 Mr A Bowden
31 N/Avon Branch Gideons Intl			30 Mr K Cherington

Mr J Merrick
Pastor

VILLAGE DAY FOR FOCUS FUNDS

Each edition of Focus now costs about £200 to produce, and while advertising and donations go a huge way towards this it's always nice not to have to worry about the last few pounds. Therefore, on Monday, 6 May we hope to hold another Village Day (similar to last year).

It'll start at about Midday with a procession to the Village Green, headed by the May Queen and her attendants. On the Green itself we hope to have Country Dancing (by North Road School), Maypole Dancing (by Iron Acton School) and Morris Dancing. We've also made enquiries about the Brimsham Band.

All of the Village Organisations have been asked to help and so far there's been a very good response. Below is a list of the proposed stalls. If you can help with any items please contact the relevant organisation:

Tombola	Hall Committee	Cakes & Flower Arrangements	WI
Plant Stall	Betty Cook	Bouncy Castle	Youth Club
Tug of War	Acton Aid	Raffle for a Special Cake	Ivy Worsley
A Surprise!	Football Club	White Elephant	Friends of Iron
Refreshments	Bob Sheppard's Family		Acton School

Finally, at 3.30 pm we hope to stage a procession to the Village Hall where, at about 4 pm, the Junior Actonians are staging "The King's Dream", an adaptation of "Alice through the Looking Glass" by Lewis Carroll. The play has been adapted by Penny Percy and the cast of 25 is being directed by Ray Bulmer.

This is the format so far, but please look out for the posters for final details (I think we've all had experience of the best laid plans being amended!!!).

If anyone would like to help or has got anything they'd like to do, please ring Bob Sheppard (228515), Betty Cook (228202) or me (228566). We'd love to hear from you!

**REMEMBER MONDAY 6 MAY
MIDDAY TO APPROX 4.15 PM**

It's such a worthwhile cause!!! So give us your support and bring your family and friends along!

ALSO The proceeds from the Whist Drive on Monday, 22 April are kindly being given to Focus, just turn up at the Village Hall for a 7.30 pm start. Big thanks from the Focus Editorial Team for this response to our appeal for help.

MAY QUEEN COMPETITION

The May Queen Competition is open to anyone who's 12 years of age or under and the winners (May Queen and 2 Attendants) will be chosen by ballot (we think this is the fairest way) and we hope to give framed photographs as prizes.

Please fill in the tear off slip below and return it to: Betty Cook (Neksdore, High Street, I/A), Ron Dowding (Iron Acton School) or Glenys Anderson (North Road School).

* * * * *

NAME TEL NO

ADDRESS DATE OF BIRTH

.....

.....

Please return this form by Friday, 19 April

(Please don't be shy, we need everyone's help on the May Day)

MAY QUEEN FORM

IRON ACTON VILLAGE HALL

The Hall has been used by Northavon Auctions for sales of furniture, etc, on 3 occasions since 17 November and, given a continued good public response, there is promise of these being held at 6 to 8 weekly intervals in the future. Northavon Auctions is a commercial enterprise and not to be confused with the annual auction sales run by the Hall Committee for fund raising. In the circumstances, the Committee has decided to hold back from staging any auction for the time being which might interrupt or prejudice the regular hiring. Should things change and a demand exists the position will be reviewed later in the year.

By the time this report is published a payphone should be installed in the entrance foyer for the convenience of hall users and to call emergency services. This will initially be for a trial period of one year.

A new wax cleaner has been purchased and for the moment this is being held under lock and key available only to the cleaner. It may be necessary to relax this tight use/control but from past experience open access has resulted in such rough treatment that a cautious approach to the introduction of this piece of equipment is sensible.

As a result of complaints and suggestions, work is in hand for the provision of a concrete ramp to front entrance doors to facilitate access by disabled persons in wheelchairs.

The kitchen and toilets have received a facelift and it remains for the lavatories to be painted. From the hygienic viewpoint the tiling of floors in lavatories must be seen as a big improvement.

The Elizabethans have managed to procure a replacement piano for use by all village organisations. It has been tuned and from all reports is in very good tone and working order. The old piano was clapped out, has been an eyesore taking up space for too long and has been consigned to the scrapheap. Thank you Elizabethans.

Enthusiasm to save electricity, usually warranting high praise, was resulting in night storage heaters being unwittingly switched off so key switch control has been installed to overcome this problem. On the subject of heating, the radiant heaters fixed to roof in the main hall are so effective that complaints of roasting are common. If possible, at reasonable cost, the automatic cut out control will be reduced from one hour to half hour but users are reminded that manual switching is always possible as an instant remedy.

The broadsheet diary of hall bookings displayed in entrance foyer is intended to help users on completion of their hire period in the sensible arranging or rearranging of tables and chairs to suit the next use. It is hoped that this information will be used to advantage in avoiding unnecessary fetching and carrying.

John Smalley
Secretary

EGGSACTLY SO

A prime cause of the poultry industry's five million pounds a year loss on cracked eggs was explained yesterday by Dr T C Carter, Director of the Poultry Research Centre in Edinburgh. Apparently some hens stand on tiptoe to lay, and consequently their eggs drop harder to the floor than those from hens who stand in the normal way!!!!

Our thanks to the Daily Express for bringing this gem of wisdom to our attention.

IRON ACTON FOOTBALL CLUB

We live in an ever changing world. No matter where one travels, near or far, change is all around us. It could be in the Gulf where the tyrannical Saddam Hussein is up to nothing but skullduggery, or at Anfield (home of Liverpool Soccer Club) where a change of manager has just been brought about by the surprise retirement from professional soccer life, of arguably their greatest ever signing, Kenny Dalglish.

Much nearer to home, and still remaining on the soccer front, the Football Club of Iron Acton has also undergone major managerial change. Whilst the Management Committee has remained stable and continues to provide a good foundation, the position of Team Manager has changed hands 3 times since Terry Northam resigned for personal reasons at the back end of last season. The current Manager is an ex-Actonian, Glyn Granger, and Glyn has appointed John Box as his Assistant.

The Club is still operating in an ambitious mode, with all efforts of the Club Members, whether on or off the field of play, directed towards the attaining of Gloucestershire County League status.

Ground improvements have taken place over the previous 12 months in pursuit of this improved status, although there is still a small way to go in order to fully meet the strict requirements laid down by the controlling authority.

Returning to the playing side, the second XI's boss is Mel Parker. Mel's playing career took in, amongst other clubs, Mangotsfield United. He has been particularly successful in bringing much needed youngsters to the Club who, hopefully, will progress to the First Team after serving their "apprenticeship".

Whilst undergoing this period of change and trying to set out our stall to bring success in the near future, the playing results have been somewhat disappointing. However, optimistically, it is the lull before the storm and we are sure a bright future is just around the corner.

A successful football club can provide a stimulus for the Village and the Club is always looking to improve its support. Consequently anyone strolling past the Rose and Crown Field at about 2.30 pm on a Saturday afternoon would be most welcome to come in and give us a look over and, who knows, somebody reading this article but isn't currently connected with the Football Club could have a vital part to play in achieving our goal of County League Football.

Bob Ford
Chairman

HONESTY WILL OUT!

Many of you will have seen the state of the ground on the village side at the top of the by-pass and probably wondered who the culprits were. I suppose honesty has to out and I have to admit that it was certain members of the Women's Institute! You see several of us were approached by the Young Farmers (them wot does it in wellies!) who challenged us to a rudge ploughing competition.

What you see at the top of the by-pass are the results of our first "effort". Some of you may have wondered what all those tractors were doing with "L" plates on them and now you know.

We apologise to anyone who has lost custom through the demise of the travellers (through no fault of their own) and hope that, in time, you will forgive us. The only good thing is that we've decided to decline the challenge and call it a day.

Lynne Blanchard
(one - four - one nine nine one)