



THE SAMB INN

(Iron Acton)



Accommodation

Your Hosts Dave & Yvonne

.....

Stay at the same Inn as William & Mary of Orange, who slept here in 1690 En route to London.

The commemorative Coat of Arms is still visible in the Olde Bed Chamber.

Bed and Breakfast from £12.50 per night. With T.V., Tea and Coffee facilities.

.....

Sunday Lunch

Traditional Roast Topside of Beef, Yorkshire Pudding and Vegetables.

Childrens portions available.

+++++



IRON ACTON BIRD FARM

CAGE AND AVIARY BIRDS

BREEDING ACCESSORIES BULK SEED

DWARF RABBITS

OPEN TUES & WED 12.30 to 9pm
 THURS & FRIDAY 9.30 to 9pm
 SAT & SUNDAY 9am to 7pm

Tel: RANGEWORTHY 560



+++++

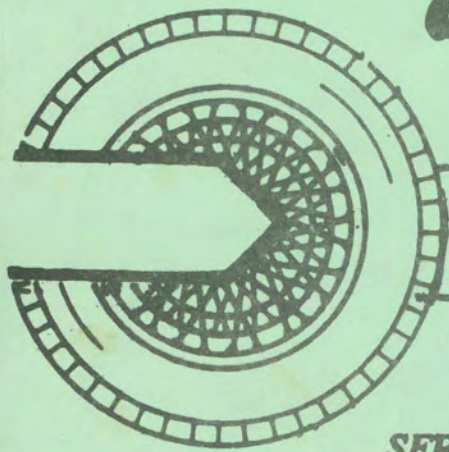
FOCUS

ON



IRON
ACTON

roger's autocare

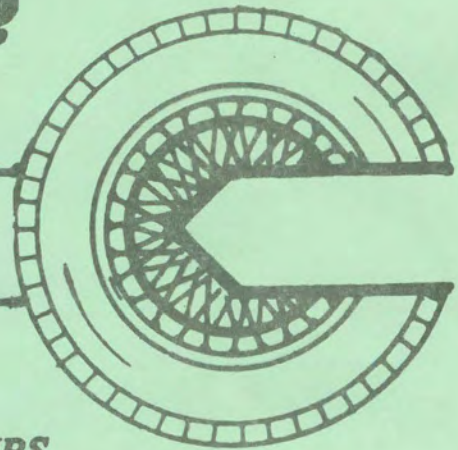


*Mobile
Vehicle Maintenance*

M.O.T. PREPARATION

SERVICING & GENERAL REPAIRS

NO JOB TOO SMALL



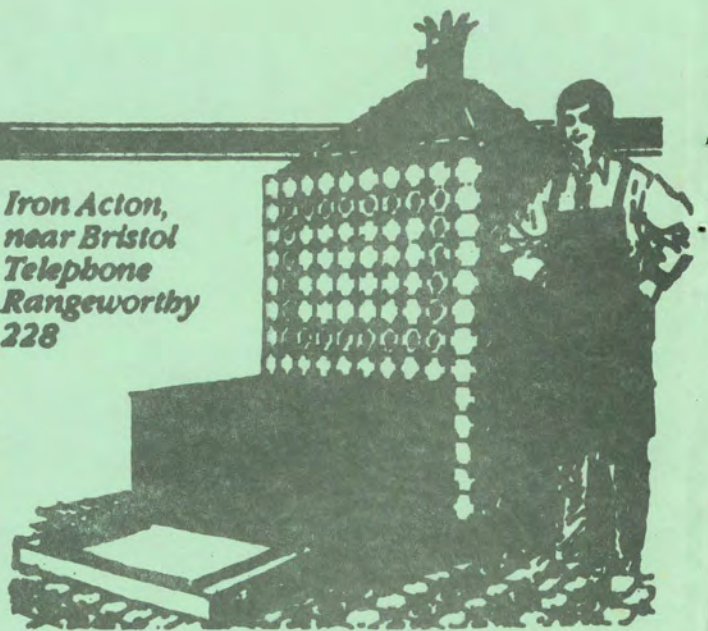
Roger Marsh, 127, Cherington, Yate, Avon. TEL: (0454) 321631

*The home of the
wood burning clay oven*

**THE WHITE
HART**



*Iron Acton,
near Bristol
Telephone
Rangeworthy
228*



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



SUMMER 91

n° 27

EDITORIAL.

Summer is here at last as I write - let us hope it is here to stay! The gardens certainly look a lot greener than last year, and the roses are splendid.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to make Village Day so successful and enjoyable. We are very grateful that you feel that Focus is worth supporting and that the various village organisations are so helpful. There is a full report on the day elsewhere in this issue, but we must congratulate and thank especially Bob Sheppard for his hard work in organising the events.

Focus now has more money than ever, and we have had to open a bank account to keep it in. We have enough funds to produce at least another three issues, as long as we can continue to rely on Ron's Print for our printing. When he was in some temporary difficulties last year, we looked around for another printer, and soon realised how reasonable he was - "more than competitive; - positively charitable!" was what was said at our meeting. We were most relieved when he was able to get working again, and are very grateful for his continuing "charity".

Charles Wilkins
228254

Betty Cook
228202

Joanna Voss
228674

John Percy
228339

Lynne Blanchard
228566

Peter Redman
228395



AUNT ET'S COTTAGE.

When we were 11, my friend and I both had bicycles to get to school. Ros lived a mile from the Village so she had her bicycle before me. Cycling to the new school 3 miles away became an adventure and seemed a long way especially on wet days, but with perfect timing we managed the journey in 20 minutes.

Having a bicycle meant we could travel far and wide, Ros had lots of Aunties, Uncles, Cousins and Grandparents and we called on all of them. All my relations were over the water and we only saw them in the summer holidays, so I made the most of my friends family.

Ros's parents kept a grocery store and also sold drapery and hardware and best of all sweets. The shop was small but beautifully clean; there was always a smell of soap and water; the wooden floor was scrubbed every morning.

We often delivered goods on our bicycles and we were rewarded with a chocolate marshmallow cone covered in hundreds and thousands, we then sat in the garden and made them last ages.

On Saturday afternoons we had jobs to do that took us on the same road out of the Village for about 5 miles. I had the unpleasant task of collecting rents and my friend had some goods to deliver.

We piled the groceries into the baskets on our bicycles and off we went.

Our first call was to a lady who lived in a lonely cottage; she made us feel very welcome and invited us inside. The room was full of cats of every colour, black, tabby, white, ginger, patchwork, they were on every chair and surface and lined up in front of the fire. They were very happy and contented and purred loudly, we could hardly hear ourselves speak, she said she had 15. It was a good thing that tinned cat food hadn't been invented - we could never have coped; she offered us tea but we declined and beat a hasty retreat.

We continued our journey to the cottages to collect the rents, which varied from 1/6 to 3 shillings (old money) per week. I took the money signed the book and listened to all the complaints and left with showers of abuse - this was the most unpleasant part of our afternoon. We saved the best part till last. This was our visit to Ros's Aunt Et (short for Ester); her cottage was delightful and we called there on our way home.

There was a short path to the front door, the plum tree nearby was laden with golden fruit. Aunt Et lived here with her husband Uncle Isaac: they were always so pleased to see us and we stayed to tea with them. She wore a flat knitted cap, long clothes and a beautiful white apron nearly down to the ground.

The cottage consisted of one room up and one room down with a lean to on the side. The downstairs room was very cosy; the walls were all white; the fire grate was black and shiny and the fire glowed; the big black gleaming kettle stood on one side steaming away ready to make the tea. On the floor was a big rag rug of many colours.

Uncle Isaac sat on one side of the fireplace in a tall wooden armchair, he wore a black velvet cap and a big black cardigan and trousers. He had a big broad nose and his skin was like orange peel.



Ros and I sat on chairs by the table and Uncle Isaac told us lots of stories about his youth - he said he walked to work 8 miles every day across fields and back again in the evening. After tea he did the garden, there was a lot of it around the cottage - it was very well kept and they grew all their vegetables and some flowers. There was a sunny space around the front door for sitting in the sun.

Aunty Et sat on the other side of the fireplace quietly sewing, as soon as we arrived she started to get the tea. The table was laid with a snowy white cloth starched and edged with lace, she did her cooking and washing and ironing in the lean to at the side of the house. She brought in home-made cake and thin bread-and-butter and home-made jam - plum and blackberry-and-apple were our favourites.

There were no shops anywhere near them; everything was delivered to their doorstep, milk, bread, coal, oil for the lamps, and the butcher called twice a week. They walked to chapel on Sundays 2 miles away.

Every now and then a clothes man called with a huge case with all sorts of garments for sale. They could buy boots and shoes from the oil man. Their best suits for wearing to chapel were tailor-made; he called to the cottage measured them and came back with the finished garments. They lasted for years.

When we left to go home we were loaded with flowers and apples.

They both died during the war.

A little while ago the cottage was for sale, it looked dismal and uncared for, the garden was overgrown with several old cars parked on it. Passing there the other day the cottage had gone and a new big house is being built in its place. No doubt the garden will be landscaped without vegetables, but I shall never forget the charm and comfort of visiting Aunty Et.

M. Beasley.

* * * * *

NORTH ROAD LADIES

Did you know that for the last 20 odd years we have been meeting every month on a Monday evening in the school at North Road?

We are a group of ladies of varying ages and we have speakers on a variety of topics. We also arrange outings, play skittles and have an annual charity to support. We are very informal and would welcome anyone who cares to join us. The remaining programme for this year is:-

Sept 9th	Mrs Gill, Bristol Hippodrome
Oct 7th	The Chaplain, Leyhill Prison
Nov 4th	Birthday party, "Swan" Tytherington
Dec 2nd	American Supper/AGM/Social

If you would like to know more please contact either Jo Powell 228009, June Broom 228596 or Ann Johnson 228507.

* * * * *

We are grateful to Jonathan Wright, Algars Mill, who drew our new cover. If you would like a pen and ink drawing of your house, suitable for notelets etc., ring Jonathan on 228373. Reasonable terms!

* * * * *

If you are visiting London during the school holidays do try to fit in a visit to the exhibition on Henry VIIIth at the National Maritime Museum until August 31st. A fascinating look at life in England 500 yrs ago, and it contains a big feature on Henry and Anne Boleyn's visit to Acton Court in 1535. Many of the artifacts found there are on display, including the sundial by Kramer.



Iron Acton CEVC Primary School
Wotton Road
Iron Acton
Bristol BS17 1UZ

Telephone: Rangeworthy (0454 228) 322

Iron Acton School

The number of children on roll at Iron Acton School has now risen to 56, which is the comfortable capacity of the school. There are still two places available for the Infant Reception (4 yr olds) next September and any interested parents should contact Mr Dowding as soon as possible. School 228322, home 228340.

We welcome Hannah, Sarah and Jonathan Darton, and hope they will be very happy with us

Since Easter, Mrs Julia Edwards has added an extra 2/10 to her teaching time, and Mrs Julie Lovell's General Assistant time has been increased to 8 hrs per week. We were very sorry to lose Beryl Woodward as our Road Crossing Patrol after many years loyal and devoted service. Christine Phillips held the lolly on Beryl's retirement but had to leave to take up a part time job and we are currently waiting to appoint her successor.

Congratulations go to:-

- 1) The children who raised money for Comic Relief: they collected £100 plus, through a variety of events, selling a special edition of the Iron Acton Times, a sponsored work-in on Red Nose Day (Sadie Pitman, Claire Gainey, Ben Harding), a sponsored three-legged race (Bradley Hillier, Russell Hunter, Bryonie Cook, Juliet Spare), and collecting cans for recycling.
- 2) The netball and soccer teams who took part in the Small Schools Tournament at North Road and Iron Acton. The girls (in their new kit) won two matches and drew one, while the boys who entered in their own right for the first time, drew two matches but lost the last one. Thanks go to Mrs Edwards for refereeing the soccer tournament as well as helping train our team.
- 3) Sadie Pitman and Lara Sutton who won prizes in the Puffin 50th Birthday competition held by Young Waterstone Bookshop of Bath. Hundreds of children entered and Iron Acton won two of the six prizes! The girls were presented with autographed copies of Dick King Smith's "The Toby Man" by the author himself and received a piece of Puffin birthday cake.
- 4) To the winners of the Best Kept Village posters, Laura Giddings 1st, Richard Desborough 2nd, (7 & under) Michelle Hollyman 1st, Camilla Spare 2nd, (8 to 12).

Our thanks go to:-

- 1) Slimbridge Youth Hostel who hosted years 5 & 6 for a field studies weekend over the last weekend in April. The children had a full programme of visits to Berkeley Castle, the Jenner Museum, National Waterways Museum at Gloucester, Gloucester Cathedral, Frampton On Severn (including the sailing club), Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust and a gliding club. Thanks also to Mr Bryant from Bristol Polytechnic and Mrs Edwards who gave up their time to staff the weekend with Mr Dowding.
- 2) The residents of Iron Acton who kindly allowed their homes to be invaded by the lower juniors for their walkabouts in the village - Marilyn and John Wright at the Mill, John and Barbara Naish at Algars Manor, Butch and Meryl Cook at Dean Lodge, Paul and Mary Townsend at the Malt House. The Rector for his help with the church study, Sue Pullen for the use of her garage as a lunch time stop, Val Pitman for first aid duties.

Thanks also to Pete Purnell, Albert Gifford, John and Marilyn Wright and Bunny Fursman who gave us valuable historical documents about the village.

3) Philip Jennings, for presenting us with the Domesday Book Collection. It will be most useful to us in our research into the history of Iron Acton village. John Wright told the 3rd and 4th years about the entry in the Domesday Book regarding the mill, and now we can see the actual entry in the folio volume.

Please can you help? We are hoping to follow up this work on Iron Acton in the September term. If you have any photographs or items of interest about Iron Acton, please contact Mr Dowding or Mrs Edwards and we would be grateful to receive them (and take great care of them!)

Reminder Next term begins on Tuesday Sept 3rd (new 4 year olds start on Wed Sept. 5th) Half-term Oct. 22nd to Oct 26th, and term ends on Dec. 21st.

* * * * *

BRYAN'S BIT.

In this issue of focus I am going to tell you, whether you like it or not my personal views on the most obscene four letter word in the whole of the English language "WORK".

We start our lives by 'having to go to school' - to learn? no, - to enrich our lives? no, - to have a greater understanding of a million things around us? no; we are sent to school at the age of 4 years onwards to 'get a job (WORK). From the age of 11 years we are 'schooled' to be interested in engineering or nursing or, the arts i.e. became a plasterer or a publican. What we are doing is becoming schooled in WORK to go through a whole regime of examinations not for a personal benefit of learning but to gain enough brownie points on the old employment scoreboard to be able to apply for a seat at the desk of a bank or at a drawing board at R.R., both of which intend to make vast profits on someone else's labour, i.e. yours. Having gone through the mill twice in fact, once through the state system and once through the private sector (H.M. Forces) I do feel qualified to have a knowledge of the system, and they are all a system of getting you ready for a job (WORK).

THINK?

The alarm rings very early in the morning; what is it you really want to do? Stay in bed? then become a bed tester for Slumberland or work as a Taxi Driver on nights, but do what you want to do. Your only real interest in life is the garden, no problem ask Dave and Viv Parker at the garden centre for employment. Work as a norm just gets in the way of everything and I do mean everything, even 'I do love you, but I have to be into work early in the morning' syndrome when the children want to play "I will catch you on my way back", missing all they wanted to tell or explain.

Work becomes a drug, becoming the greatest desire, not the success but the effort that goes into it. What a drag, like going for a swim in wellie boots just to make hard work of it.

The money I could earn from a £50 bet on people I know that 'can't get to the shops' because of the work, "sorry to be late, because of work, can't be there" "because of work" would love to join you" but can't get away", you've guessed it 'BECAUSE OF WORK', and yes it is genuine WORK that is preventing them leading the life they deserve to enjoy.

The answer, if there is one, is either to get others to do your work for you. I do not mean become an employer; rather, when the car needs a wash find some berk that likes to wash cars or paint walls or cut grass for nothing, and they are about.

As a male, my answer is to wait until I am 65 to become employed as a Lolly Pop man, or as a lady wait until my hair goes grey to become a model for a national hairdressing salon!

In the meantime I am thankful I have an enjoyable and rewarding employment (WORK) that provides me with enough money to own a typewriter and buy enough paper to write a few lines to my thousands of readers of Focus.

In the meantime keep **work** **ing!**

BALLOON PEOPLE

It was a lovely summer evening. Tom sat outside the cottage and breathed the warm air. He never got tired of watching the sun on the oak trees at the bottom of the meadow at this time of day, and seeing the old donkey foraging lazily. Long ago he'd allowed clover and buttercup to invade the field, so nowadays there were more flowers than grass. Suddenly, Teazel, lying at his feet, began to growl. Her muzzle was as grey as a badger but her ears were still as keen as when she used to round up the sheep with him. She stood up on shaky legs and barked more urgently and Tom heard the familiar whooshing sound once more, somewhere beyond the cottage.

It was them again. The balloon people. Teazel always barked furiously till the last one had disappeared beyond the river. Once they had landed in Long Meadow, just over the hedge and there'd been shouting, and Landrovers thumping over the field among the half deflated balloons, reds and yellows, giant bananas and clowns and cola bottles. Sometimes they scared the cattle into the stream. Often someone would leave a gate open after the Landrovers and trailers had accelerated away, back to town.

Tom stuck his lower lip out thoughtfully. The farming world had gone mad and he was well out of it. Balloons and new golf courses and down the road an old barn which the farmer had converted into an art studio. He'd heard that they had nude models posing there sometimes. His eyebrows shot up into his scalp when he thought about it.

But this particular balloon, shaped like a daft lop-eared rabbit, with grinning buck teeth often came over, so close that sometimes the basket almost scraped the rooftop. She was a young girl, with hair like blonde wire wool and a high voice. The man was older and usually had a glass of wine in his hand. Tonight, their sharp city voices pierced the air:

"There it is darling, our little dream cottage. One day when it's ours, we'll have a pool and a patio out there." She was pointing to Tom's chicken run, he realised indignantly.

"And take down those old sheds and build a play room for the kids!" The man added. Tom felt himself glowing dark red with outrage. His father had built that tool shed in 1911 and it was as steady as a rock. Soon his onion crop would join the flower pots and the bale twine that he always saved in great loops behind the door.

"He's an old bloke ... bound to want to give it up soon," hissed the girl.

"Sssh," said the man. "He's down there!" They floated across his cabbage patch like royalty, as if they had every right to trespass in his air and to make plans for his home. His heart, sometimes fluttery, beat angrily and when they waved, he raised his hand in reply but his fingers made a definite rude shape.

"Well, did you see that!" whispered the girl. "As common as muck and twice as thick!" She let the paper from a Bounty bar drift down to join the butterflies on his buddleia bush. A gust of wind suddenly blew the huge ridiculous rabbit towards him, and Tom lost all control.

"Thick I may be, but I've shot better rabbits than that!" he muttered as he picked up the gun.



She screamed. The man shouted a four letter word. The balloon hissed and began to deflate fast. Somewhere behind the hedge, he heard the basket thud to the ground. Then there were the sounds of both of them storming at each other, and later a red Range Rover roared over to rescue them. Tom laughed as he peered through the hedge. No one was hurt but faces were scarlet.

"Serve the pipsqueaks right! Marvellous what an air gun can do," he thought. Teazel waved her ancient stringy tail approvingly.

But in the morning, three people came to his house. He guessed the girl in dungarees and mud brown hair was a social worker. He'd seen them off before. The policeman he knew anyway. He was Ted Sanders' youngest. But the man in the suit with the brown briefcase worried him more.

"You say people often float over your house, talking about you?" He asked smoothly, unsnapping his case and beginning to write swiftly on sheets of lined white paper. It hit Tom all at once that this man was one of those head doctors. He grinned so that all five blackened teeth showed.

"Well, just saying what a pretty cottage it was. What a lovely garden and things ... And then blow me if this gurt magpie doesn't dive in my barn, after the swallow fledglings. So I picks up my airgun to frighten 'ee off! I'm really sorry about the balloon."

The policeman seemed to breathe a sigh of relief. The doctor looked suddenly distant and bored. The social worker said something helpful about meals on wheels. The fledglings had flown long ago, of course, but no one seemed to question that.

On the way out the policeman said.

"I shall have to make a report to my sergeant, Tom. That was dangerous!"

"I'll go to court, anything," growled Tom. "Just so long as that lot don't call again." He pointed at the departing doctor's back. "It'al be feet first when they take me away from here!"

He hoped the balloon people wouldn't be back either.

PARISH COUNCIL

The usual poor attendance at the Parish Meeting, and not even enough candidates to hold local elections. There was a special meeting to make up the shortfall of four members by co-opting from a group of volunteers, and the full council is now Chairman Bob Sheppard, N. Road; Vice-chairman Betty Cook, High Street; Elsie Blanchard, Latteridge Rd; Roy Curtis, Yate Rd.; Frank Davis, Yate; Don Elson, North Rd.; Geoff Gale, High Street; Sue Gawler, Wotton Rd.; Chris Heal, Latteridge.

A good number of entries again for the poster competition connected with our struggle to be Avon's Best Kept Village. As well as the winners listed in the Iron Acton School report, a special prize was awarded to Dean Wybrow, of North Rd School for an exceptionally good poster for a 7 year old. Many of the posters carried the message "Don't exercise your dogs where children play" (and one was much more explicit!) so please listen to the children, and clean up after your dogs.

Please keep on keeping the village tidy, - judging doesn't end until August.

In the autumn there will be a meeting in the Village Hall, held by SABRE, (Save Avon's Beautiful Rural Environment) about the possibility of opencast mining in the area. Watch out for posters giving details near the time.

Welcome to the new councillors; we hope they will enjoy working together, and thanks to those who have left us, for their work in the past!

Alfred Strange

Alfred Strange has sent us a Further extract from his Pre War Diaries, starting at Easter 1933.

- 1st. April Fools Day. Mr Huggin caught me out! Met Mervy and George Rowland with Stan Dyer on my way to Yate. Stopped at North Rd. to watch a schools match, North Road 2 Iron Acton 4. Afternoon. went over to Wickwar with Bert Dyer to watch a North Glos. Junior Cup semi-final. Wickwar 1 Barton Rovers (Gloucester) 5. The Ref was knocked out. Down to the Inst. in the evening.
- 2nd. Sun Rode to Church and served with D. Clarke .. In afternoon went to Tortworth Park and had a walk around by myself.
- 3rd. Over at Fimell's playing cards. Joyce had gone to a situation at Frenchay.
- 4th. Up to the Labour. Bought "Story of the Nations" magazine. Cycled along the Pucklechurch Rd. and stopped to have a look at it. Afternoon. to Rangeworthy for the Berkeley Point to Point Races ... Bert Dyer had seven bets - no winners! Large crowd there - cheapjacks, etc. Home at 5 o'clock. To choir practice and then to North Rd to collect soccer boots from Reg Elson.

Everest conquered by aeroplane - Houston expedition.
- 5th. Fetched meal (for pigs) from Bill Amos's shop.
- 6th. Called at Hobbs for haircut but Mr Hobbs not at home. Bought olive oil at Harford's.

Afternoon. Cycled to Sodbury. Played in goal for the Grammar School. Old Boys v The School - Old Boys 1 (Melville Turner) School 0 Mr Hone (English master) charged me and hurt my neck.
Hockey match. The School 2 Old Girls 2.
Mr Waters (Head) advised me to call at the Bristol Labour Exchange and promised he would write.
- 7th. My neck still hurts. I gave the cattle some hay this morning and then filled up the hedge where Kendall's sheep had come through.
- 9th. Sun Up early - My uncle C. wanted me to help take the cattle over to Latteridge but Jack Seymour arrived to help.
- 10th. Took my uncle's shoes to Morris at Tytherington for repairs. Pulled up turnips from the wide rudge and picked greens. M. Pinnell came out in the afternoon and we pulled up the rest of the turnips.

To Sodbury for Mrs Trott. M. Turner and Fred Fortune came with me. We watched the hockey match between C.S.G.S. and Yate Ladies. The school losing 5 - 0 at half time.
Evening. Went round to Kendall's field. Ken Prout - Powell and H. Hendy came out.
- 11th. Cycled to the Labour Exchange in John Street, where I had an interview. Walked to choir with M. Pinnell and Gordon Kingscott. I 'clouted' M.P. by King's (Two Pools) for cheeking me and he went back home crying.

Late for evening service so sat at the back of the church with H. White and Jack Ellis. Service was for communicants. Later .. over at Pinnells playing cards. Joyce not well.
- 12th. Up at 8 o'clock..gardening..raking middle rudge ready for seed..dug up part of wide rudge and weeded it..then went on digging by Gowen's.
- 13th. More gardening..round to Bond's(Chaingate Lane) after having a lemonade at Trott's. Bert Aldom and Sid Evans came round.

No choir at evening service. I sat with V.Carter and J.Ellis in corner row.

15th Sat Helped Uncle C. plant potatoes..carried hay for his cattle and burned up rubbish. To Bill Amos' shop for a rake and to Acton P.O. for my grandmother's money (pension). Collect bullock's heart from Huggins and called at Fursmans.

Afternoon..football Iron Acton 3 (G.Wiggins S.Dyer 2) Corinthians Res. 2..Good sporting game.

Evening...over to North Road with B.Aldom with club money. To institute...I won third prize (Easter egg) in map competition.

16th Easter Sunday. Up early for 8 a.m. Communion .. went with Doug Gibbons .. good few there. served at 11 o'clock service with D. Clarke. Afternoon walked down round the millstream with B. Aldom - came back with E. Morgan. After the evening service we received our Easter Eggs from the Rector outside the Rectory. Later walked up to Yate and along North Road with the 'mob'.

17th. Easter Monday. Nobody about in Rangeworthy so I went down to Acton where I played for Acton against Mays Hill and Nibley XI. Iron Acton 3 Mays Hill and Nibley 1 (Geo. Wiggins 2 and Albert Sheppard scored). I had quite a good game but felt tired and stiff afterwards!

Iron Acton team : B. Taylor; E. Padfield, T. Taylor; A. Lane, R. Smith, E. Morgan; A. Sheppard, G.Wiggins, G. Hedges, S. Dyer, A. Strange.

Afternoon - to North Road, Reg. Elson's father wouldn't let him have a bike so I cycled to the Rovers ground with Griff Smith. Rovers 4 Q.P.R. 0. I came back with a lad named Trembling from Frampton.

* * * * *

BROWNIES

Well at last I am pleased to say that Liz and I have been warranted and we now have our cards to prove it. So with 7 new brownies joining us this term I was very pleased to enrol 5 of them - I don't know who was more nervous, the brownies or myself.

On February 22nd we celebrated Thinking Day when Brownies from all over the world think of one another. We made flags and Ron Dowding very kindly lent us a nice map of the world on which we were able to identify the countries of our flags.

Mother's Day and Easter were very close together, so for Mother's Day we made cards which were quite nice because we took photographs of all the brownies and they each stuck their picture in the card for their Mums.

For Easter we made nests from Shredded Wheat and chocolate and put eggs inside, also a card with an Easter bunny made of felt. We also decorated boiled eggs which was a disaster - paint was everywhere and several eggs landed on the floor but I think the Brownies enjoyed it.

We have done several more badges - Hostess, House Orderly, First Aid, Safety in the Home and Artist. I would just like to say that my daughter Cheralyn, who tests the House Orderly badge had a baby girl in January so I am now a grandmother.

We are busy planning and looking forward to Brownie Revels which takes place this year at the Collegiate School; also our sports which takes us to the end of term.

Jenny Cheese (Brown Owl).

* * * * *

HORTICULTURAL SHOW

We realised we'd hit a snag when we found out that Acton Aid's Horse and Dog Show had encountered problems with their August Date and had had to switch to the Horticultural Show Weekend. So at the twelfth hour we made the decision to switch to the previous weekend. But, having been told that 8th September was the only date they could get the field, I can appreciate that on this occasion there has to be compromise.

This created a problem in that neither North Road or Iron Acton Schools will have returned for the Autumn Term and so we, at the least, face the prospect of quite a depleted Children's Section.

Therefore, can all mums, dads and relatives help us by getting their offspring motivated during the Summer Holidays? As soon as those oft heard words "I'm bored" are uttered, give the magical response of "Horticultural Show" (or words to that effect!).

The viewing of exhibits has been put back to starting at 3 pm (for purely selfish reasons, I haven't had any lunch for the last 2 Shows) and the Auction, once again ably conducted by Dennis the Menace Mark II, will take place at 5 pm.

Please look through the classes and see what you can do. We've left the same photography classes as last year there must be some great shots of the Village Day in someone's possession or how about the knitting and sewing sections? Many ladies in the Village are beautiful exponents of these crafts and yet last year we had very few entries.

PLEASE ENTER THE SHOW AND MAKE THIS YEAR A YEAR TO REMEMBER

IRON ACTON HORTICULTURAL SHOW - CLASSES FOR 1991

ALLOTMENT TROPHY - Best Collection of Vegetables Grown on an Allotment

ASTER TROPHY - Best Entry, by Iron Acton Resident, of 6 Double & 6 Single Asters

GENERAL SECTION

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Collection of Vegetables | 24 | 6 Tomatoes |
| 2 | Collection of Salads | 25 | 3 Parsnips |
| 3 | Collection of Fruits | 26 | 3 Beetroot |
| 4 | 4 Potatoes (Any 1 Variety) | 27 | 3 Pot Leeks |
| 5 | 7 lbs Potatoes (Any 1 Variety) | 28 | 3 Blanch Leeks |
| 6 | 3 Carrots (Long) | 29 | 2 Sticks Celery |
| 7 | 3 Carrots (Short) | 30 | 4 Apples (Dessert) |
| 8 | 2 Cobs Sweet Corn | 31 | 4 Apples (Culinary) |
| 9 | 3 Onions (From Seed, Trimmed) | 32 | 4 Pears (Dessert) |
| 10 | 3 Onions (From Sets, Trimmed) | 33 | 4 Plums (Dessert) |
| 11 | 6 Shallots | 34 | 4 Plums (Culinary) |
| 12 | 6 Runner Beans | 35 | 6 Roses |
| 13 | The Longest Runner Bean | 36 | 1 Specimen Rose (Named) |
| 14 | 2 Peppers | 37 | Vase of Flowers (Quality) |
| 15 | 2 Stems of Calabrese | 38 | 3 Chrysanthemums |
| 16 | 2 Cabbages (Any 1 Variety) | 39 | 6 Pom-Pom Dahlias (Not over 2.5") |
| 17 | 2 Cauliflowers | 40 | 3 Cactus Dahlias |
| 18 | 2 Marrows | 41 | 3 Decorative Dahlias |
| 19 | The Heaviest Marrow | 42 | 3 Spikes Gladioli |
| 20 | 3 Courgettes | 43 | 9 Sweet Peas |
| 21 | 2 Lettuce (Cabbage) | 44 | Best Pot Plant (Foliage) |
| 22 | 2 Cucumbers (Frame or Greenhouse) | 45 | Best Pot Plant (Flowering) |
| 23 | 2 Cucumbers (Ridge) | | |

FLOWER ARRANGING

- 46 An Arrangement incorporating Fruit and/or Vegetables
- 47 An Arrangement of Foliage
- 48 An Arrangement of 7 Roses

HEMOCRAFT SECTION

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 49 6 Chicken Eggs | 60 A Loaf of Bread |
| 50 6 Eggs (Any Other Variety) | 61 6 Chelsea Buns |
| 51 A Pot of Honey | 62 A Fruit Flan |
| 52 A Pot of Jam | 63 6 Savoury Scones |
| 53 A Pot of Jelly | 64 A Bottle of Red Wine |
| 54 A Pot of Marmalade | 65 A Bottle of White Wine |
| 55 A Jar of Chutney | 66 A Hand Knitted Article |
| 56 A Decorated Victoria Sandwich | 67 An Embroidered Article |
| 57 A Savoury Flan | 68 A Handicraft Article |
| 58 A Rich Fruit Cake | 69 A Machine Sewn Article |
| 59 A Coconut Cake | 70 A Painting, Sketch, or Drawing;
Framed or Unframed, Any Subject |

IRON ACTON WI CLASS

- 71 A Plate of Biscuits

PHOTOGRAPHY SECTION

- 72 Photograph of a Village Event or Outing
- 73 Photograph Depicting Wildlife (!)

1ST IRON ACTON BROWNIE CLASS

- 74 A Picture of Tawny Owl

CHILDREN S SECTION

Under 7 Years

- 75 A Picture Showing My Favourite Game or Outdoor Activity

7 - 11 Years

- 76 A Picture Illustrating My Favourite TV Programme

The remaining classes are open to everyone up to 16 years. Age will be taken into consideration. Therefore, please put your age somewhere on the item where it can easily be seen by the Judge (but not your name!).

- 77 A Miniature Garden
- 78 A Collage of a Butterfly
- 79 A Decorated Gingerbread Man or Lady
- 80 A Vegetable Animal
- 81 A Design for a Poster to Sell your Favourite Food or Drink
- 82 A Flower Arrangement in an Eggcup
- 83 A Craft Article made within the last 12 months

If anyone has any queries please contact me (228566) or Betty Cook (228202) Shedules and entry forms available from I/A Post Office, Rose and Crown, N/R Post Office and Parkers Garden Centre.

Lynne Blanchard

HYMNS AND HERS

A point that has been raised at PCC meetings is the provision of a service aimed at families with young children. This has been met with a generally favourable response. That was the easy bit! Next came what do we do ... and how do we go about it?

"Choice of hymns" was one comment loudly heard were they easy to understand, enjoyable to sing, etc? This then led to the suggestion that perhaps we look at using a different hymn book for this particular service.

Having found a book we all thought suitable (you see, miracles do occasionally happen!) the dreaded spectre of money, or rather the lack of it, arose. We decided to see how other churches have tackled the same problem.

We'd noticed that often when you go into other churches and open hymn or prayer books (if you're nosy like me) many have been donated for various reasons, but usually in memory of someone.

Talking it over amongst ourselves, several people said they would like to donate books for varying reasons: in memory of relatives or friends, to celebrate a wedding, a special wedding anniversary, baptism or confirmation, or even to commemorate a time when they'd lived in the village and they moved away.

We decided to put an item in the Parish Magazine, but I was then approached by someone who had heard about this on the "village grapevine" and who suggested I write something for Focus. This person was interested in the idea but didn't receive the Parish Mag and thought there might be several others in the same boat.

The book is called the Celebration Hymnal and each copy will cost £3.50. Please don't go out and buy the book in a book shop as we can get them at a much keener price and also make sure that the same edition is purchased.

We're looking at a tight schedule. We want to use the books for the 9.30 am service during Harvest Festival so if you feel that you would like to help us get this idea off the ground and at the same time provide a momento, of a special event or person, that will be lovingly used, or you'd like to hear more before committing yourself, or if you think it's a terrible suggestion and we ought to be shot then please contact either me on Rangeworthy 228566 or the Rector on 228412.

Lynne Blanchard - Churchwarden

ACTON AID

Since the last edition of Focus we have had the 50/60's evening, a Soiree and Seafood Extravaganza at Gill & Mike Sutton's, and the Summer Barbeque at Dusty & Brian Taylor's. The next event is a Jazz Night at Avenue House on 10 August, followed by the Horse and Dog Show in Mr King's field on the Wotton Road on 8 September.

The less young of the Parish will have been on a coach trip to London, with packed lunches provided by the members' wives and organised by Dusty Taylor. The young will have benefitted from the erection of play equipment in the School Playing Field. Acton Aid has donated £500 towards the cost of this, in support of the Friends' of the School who have raised one half of the required funds. Who says there's no community spirit these days? We look forward to seeing more of you (no connection with the 50/60's night!) at our future events and we always need more helpers, so any men out there who want to join us either tell a member or come to the Rose and Crown on the first Thursday of every month at 8.00 pm.

John Tillotson

The following somewhat one sided conversation was overheard in the Village recently:

Where did I go last Saturday? To the Village Hall, of course, Acton Aid had a 50/60's evening. I saw some goings on I never expected to see in this Village and that's a fact. Respectable married women old enough to know better, hem lines up to you know where, leaping around the dance floor in complete abandon. I'm glad I left 'im at home I can tell you. And their husbands well! Some you would have hardly recognised with their fancy clothes, stuck down hair, yes and DA's. Specially that nice Mr ----- what lives up Holly Hill, and him a Doctor too! If I'd known what went on in those days I'd have kept my lot at home at night!

Food? I should say so. As much as you could eat all included in the price. What? Cold meats, pie, cheese (more than in Tesco's) and such a lot of lovely salads! Drink? looked to me as though they'd bought too much, but these Acton Aiders and their friends are so obliging. They really worked so hard to make sure it all went!

Going to the next one? Of course I am, and the Horse and Dog Show. I do hear that that nice J---y C----r got the idea for her last book from the goings on at these sort of do's., See you on the Coach Trip - I'll tell you more then.

Anon

THE FRIENDS OF IRON ACTON SCHOOL

During February the Friends held another Skittles Evening at the ARC Club and this was, once again, a very successful and enjoyable evening. £174 was raised due to donations of food and the sale of raffle tickets.

Our first main event of the year was the Jumble Sale on 23 March. Plenty of support made it a very successful day raising £255.

The Friends AGM was also held in March. Mr Dowding as able to tell us that £1,529 had been raised during 1990. An excellent amount and we would like to thank everyone who contributed to and supported the various events.

All funds raised on the Village Day in May (where we had a White Elephant Stall) were donated to Focus [We are very grateful - Editors].

By the time you receive this edition we will already have held a Clay Pigeon Shoot on 23 June, the annual Summer Fayre on 6 July and also a Children's Disco at the end of term. I will report on these events later in the year.

The Adventure Playground Area has at last materialised and is due to be erected sometime during July. As well as monies raised from events we have had donations of £500 from Acton Aid and £200 from the Parish Council. We would like to thank them very much for their generosity.

Future events include an Adults Disco on Saturday, 5 October - all are welcome, and the usual Bring and Buy 50/50 Sale is also planned. Watch the Notice Board for details!

Thank you, once again, for your continued support.

Karen Hillier

The Actorman

The dull between productions gives everyone a chance to catch up on things - Do the housework which the last play left little time for - see your spouse (- other than by appointment)

Yes the drama group offers a wonderful way of escapism.

Perhaps that's why our numbers go up and down. People can only escape for so long before being drawn back to reality.

We are quite considerate on the demands we make on your time - between September and November is busy - the autumn production, and January to April doing the spring production.

It's all good fun - if you can paint then you are sure to get a part - and paint the scenery. If you just want a part that's fine. We are quite a jolly lot and I can't understand how so many of you at there - haven't been involved in some way before. But there is still time.

Our Autumn production 'Outside Edge' (a cricketing story!) is just asking for young talent or old or middle.

Talking of cricket - we won!



CROWN MEN'S DARTS - A TEAM

After finishing the winter season in the lower echelons of the league and struggling to stop the team from disbanding, things looked pretty miserable at the start of the summer.

However, after a busy time pre-season we managed to sign Merv "the swerve" Ricketts and his son Brian on a free transfer from the Cross Keys, North Road, Yate.

Relieved at having held the team together we were looking forward to our first game away to the Village Inn, Mangotsfield. Our optimism proved well founded as we won a close game 5-4 with John Davis relishing the pressure as anchor man.

Our confidence was soon battered though as we lost the next three games in a row.

And so it was away to the Swan Inn, Winterbourne, where for some reason that no-one can quite put their finger on, we all played well and won fairly convincingly 5-3. Our visit to Frampton Cotterell RBL also deserves a mention, because although we lost 5-2 John Davis played a fantastic game and scored his first maximum in a match (If anyone had had a camera, I'm sure he would have posed for photographs!)

With the results so far reading; played 7, won 3, lost 4, it is the best start we've made in a long time, and with our latest signing Terry Cotterell winning his first three games, it looks like we may have found the Eric Bristow of the West Country!

Who knows, if we carry on like this we may even finish the season over half way up the table! (But then again pigs might fly!).

* * * * *

Oscar's Big Day.

I was woken by the alarm at 6 a.m. Outside the rain was beating down and a force nine gale was blowing (or so it seemed from the warmth and comfort of my bed). It was at this moment that I began to wonder whether Oscar was really ready for his debut in the show ring today. These doubts were soon dispelled when I reminded myself of his inevitable place as Supreme Champion at Crufts and I set off downstairs to take him for a good walk before his car journey to Shepton Mallet showground.

Once there, Oscar, still clean and well groomed (despite his attempts, during our walk, to roll in "interesting" scents) quickly sensed the occasion of day and set about introducing himself to his fellow competitors and flirting with the canine ladies - should I go into the ring with him after all? Yes, of course I should!

It was whilst I was watching the Puppy Class being judged that I suddenly felt the lead go limp. I looked down to see a frayed piece of lead and nothing on the end of it. Then I looked up to see Oscar trotting into the ring to join the young hopefuls who were being presented with their rosettes.

I don't know whether he had sensed my indecision, and decided to enter on his own, but no lead meant no show for Oscar - not that he seemed too bothered. He had made some new friends and after all it had been a useful experience hadn't it?

Anna Tillotson.

* * * * *

LYNNE'S BITS AND PIECES

ST JOSEPH'S HOME FLAG WEEK

Michael Jouxson has asked "Focus" to say a big "thank you" to all those who helped him raise £52.39 in the Flag Week for St Joseph's Home.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ACTONIANS

For "A Voyage Round My Father". A totally wonderful production, well staged and cast, with some great John Mortimer one liners beautifully delivered. I really enjoyed my evening and look forward to the next offering.

DIY AT EYNSFORD COTTAGE?

It's nice to see that standards are being maintained. Rona, how many plates did you lose when the display shelf decided to collapse??? Still, I suppose we can't all be perfect at everything, and Jayne, Barrie and Chris did organise a wonderful Birthday Party for Rona's ** birthday.

GOLDEN MOMENTS

Congratulations to Pete (who does many of the drawings for Focus) and Iris Redman who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on 22 June. They're a lovely couple who deservedly spent the day surrounded by family and friends who enjoy their company and conversation.

LIFE BEGINS AT 80

I have good news for you - the first eighty years are the worst.

Everyone wants to carry your luggage, help you up the stairs. If you forget your neighbour's name, forget to keep an appointment or promise to be in two places at once or spell words wrongly, you just need to explain that you are eighty.

At eighty you can relax with no misgivings. You have a perfect alibi for everything. Nobody expects anything of you. If you act silly it's your second childhood. Everybody is looking for symptoms of "softening of the brain."

If you survive until you are eighty, everyone is surprised that you can walk. At seventy people are mad at you for everything. At eighty they forgive you for everything.

Remember, old folk are worth a fortune, with silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, lead in their feet and gas in their stomachs.

I have become a little older since I last saw you, and a few changes have taken place in my lifestyle since then. Frankly, I have become quite a frivolous old girl! I'm seeing five gentlemen a day. As soon as I wake up, Will Power helps me get out of bed. Then I go and see John. Charlie Horse then comes along and when he is here he takes up quite a lot of my time and attention. When Charlie leaves, Arthur Itis shows up and stays the rest of the day. He doesn't stay in one place very long, as he takes me from joint to joint. After such a busy day I'm really tired and am glad to go to bed with Vic Vaporub. What a life!

P.S. The preacher called the other day. He said at my age I should be thinking about the hereafter. I told him, "Oh, I do that all the time. No matter where I am, in the kitchen, upstairs in the bedroom or down in the garage, I ask myself, what am I here after?"

1087 - CENSUS - 1991

Having recently filled in my Census Form, thus assisting the State to assess the total of population and the value of property in the Land; it was a fortunate coincidence to have been able to browse into and peruse a copious volume with facsimile of pages from THE DOMESDAY BOOK - the first- ever census of England.

This census, ordered by William the Conqueror at his Christmas Court at Gloucester in 1085 (and completed in the remarkable short time of 21 months) was set in motion, as the Chronicler wrote, 'after much thought and deep discussion' ...

"he sent his men over all England into every shire and had them find out how many hundred hides there were in the shire or what land and cattle the king had himself in the country, or what dues he ought to have in twelve months from the shire. Also he had a record made of how much land the archbishops had, and his bishops, and his abbots and his earls - and though I relate it at too great length - what or how much everybody had who was occupying land in England, in land and cattle and how much money it was worth. So very narrowly did he have it investigated that there was no single hide nor virgate of land, nor indeed (it is a shame to relate though it seemed no shame to him to do) one ox nor one cow nor one pig which was there left out, and not put down in his record; and all these records were brought to him afterwards."

Thus the County of Gloucestershire (which boundaries remained almost unchanged from 1066 until 1974!) was divided into 'Hundreds', each normally containing 100 'hides', most of which were shared out among William's barons and bishops as tenancies, after first removing the Saxon holders. One of these was Bagstone Hundred which contained the 'vill' of Actune. A translation of the record in The Domesday Book is as follows:

"The Bishop of St-Lo holds Iron Acton and Ilgar. There are 2½ hides. In desmesne is 1 plough; and 4 villans and 5 bordars and 1 slave and 2 female slaves with 1½ ploughs. There is half a mill rendering 16d. and 10 acres of meadow and 1 furlong of woodland. It is and was worth 40s. Ebbi, a man of Beorhtric son of AElfgar, held this manor."

But another entry, perhaps a later or earlier date, says "The Queen gave Iron Acton to Humphrey the Chamberlain", for this record states"

"Humphrey holds Iron Acton. Harold held it, the man of Alwig Hiles, who could go where he would. There are 2½ hides. In desmesne there is 1 plough; and 3 villans and 3 bordars with half a plough. There are 2 slaves, and 1½ mills rendering 64d. and 5 acres of meadow. It is and was worth 40s.

- - - - -

Notes

- A 'hide' is the amount of land that could support a household.
- A desmesne is an area whose produce goes to the Lord of the Manor.
- A 'plough' is the area an ox-team can plough.
- A 'villan' is a villager, slightly better-off than a 'border' - a peasant.

- - - - -

The above extracts are from "Domesday Book" published by Alecto Historical Editions, of 46 Kelso Place, London W8 5QG to whom we acknowledge our appreciation; and from who the three-volume County Editions are available at £225 the set

and

We are indebted to Mr Philip Jennings for the loan of the Gloucester County Edition.

IRON ACTON VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

Thanks are extended to Dr John and Barbara Naish for once again so kindly allowing facilities to the Village Hall Committee for fund raising through provision of teas on garden open days in April and May at Algars Manor. Two days of hard work by volunteers raised £360 - some going!

The AGM will be held in the Village Hall on Wednesday, 7 August at 8 pm. All inhabitants of Iron Acton Parish aged 18 years and upwards are entitled to attend and to vote. The business of this meeting will be to receive reports and accounts and to elect a new committee for the ensuing year consisting of 6 or more village members and to receive nominations of representatives for village organisations, presently numbering 7.

The AGM is usually very poorly attended and we could be heading for a crisis in management if fresh blood is not prepared to come in and make some commitment. Such crises are, of course, part of the history of the Hall, which survives nonetheless, but they would not be necessary if just one or 2 people came forward each year to do a stint. It is essential to have some turnover.

Our Hall is a valuable asset /amenity. It belongs to us all and is free of outside bureaucratic or government control. This is vested, through the AGM, in the properly constituted committee of management.

Much has been achieved over the years to improve facilities, establish regular usage and to get things on a sound financial footing. Within some physical limitations much more might be done to enhance the simple concept of "Village Hall" which is gradually being lost to the bigger business of "Community Centre". What ought to be the priorities for improvements in any sphere?

Perhaps there are strong opinions that the road to "Community Centre" is the one to be followed and in this case the platform at the AGM should be used to project such arguments as well as the airing of views and suggestions.

PLEASE try to attend.

John Smalley

THE ELIZABETHAN CLUB

At the time of writing (11 June) it's raining, the wind's blowing and it's so very cold. We needed this rain badly but now, as usual, we've had enough. The gardening is behind and the recent frosts caused much damage. We must now hope for warmer weather and an Indian Summer.

On 28 June we visit Paignton for the day and on 1 July we have a Birthday Dinner in the Village Hall. Also in July we visit London on a trip arranged by Acton Aid.

We recently held a Whist Drive in aid of Focus which raised £80 [and much appreciated this was - Editors], and one for North Road Chapel which raised £100.

Our Christmas Whist Drive will be held on Monday, 25 November at the Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

Earlier in the year we acquired a piano and thanks to Mr B Sheppard and Mr C Worsley for getting it to the Hall, and to the Hall Committee for paying for it to be tuned.

Susannah Russell