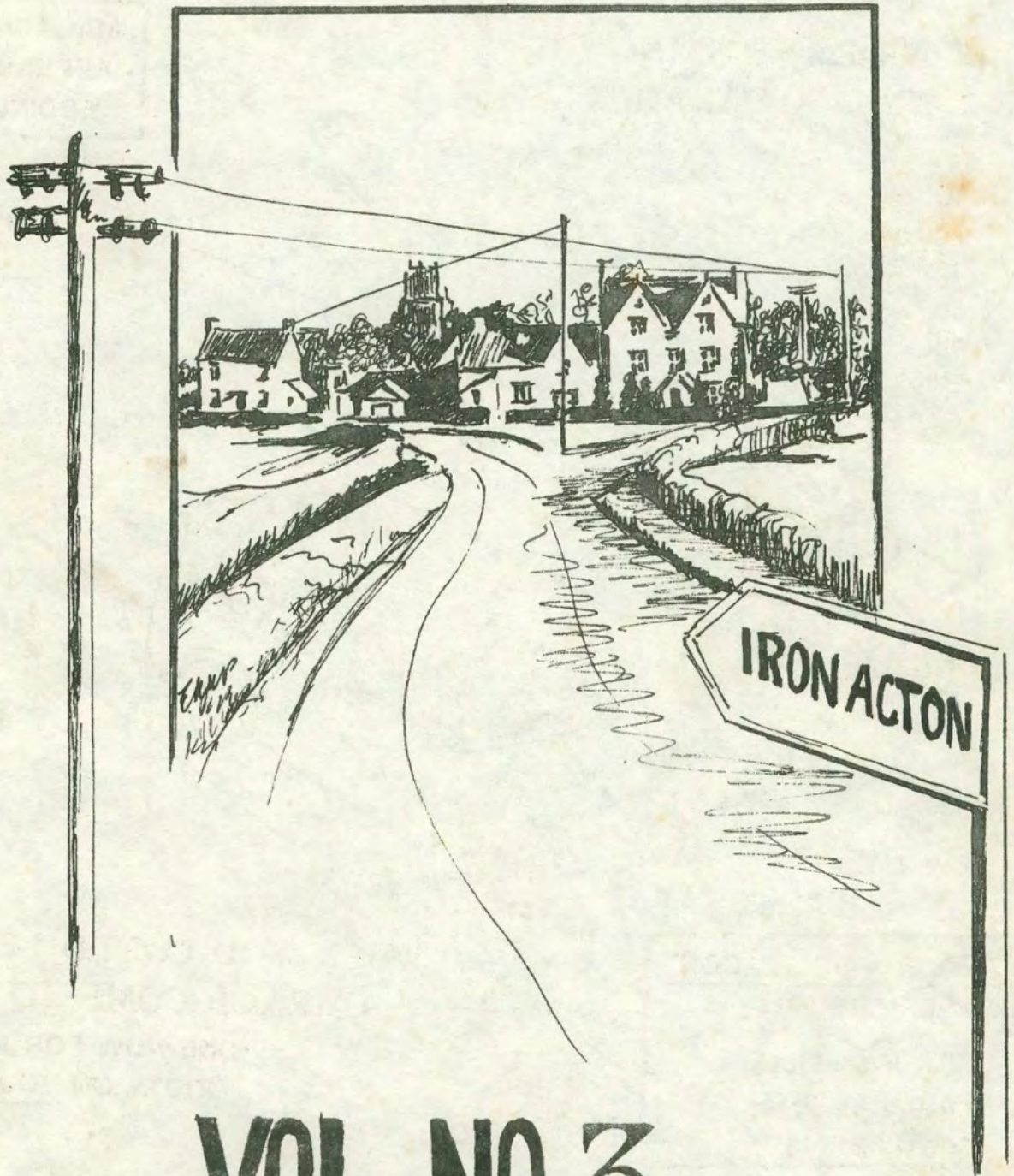


FOCUS ON



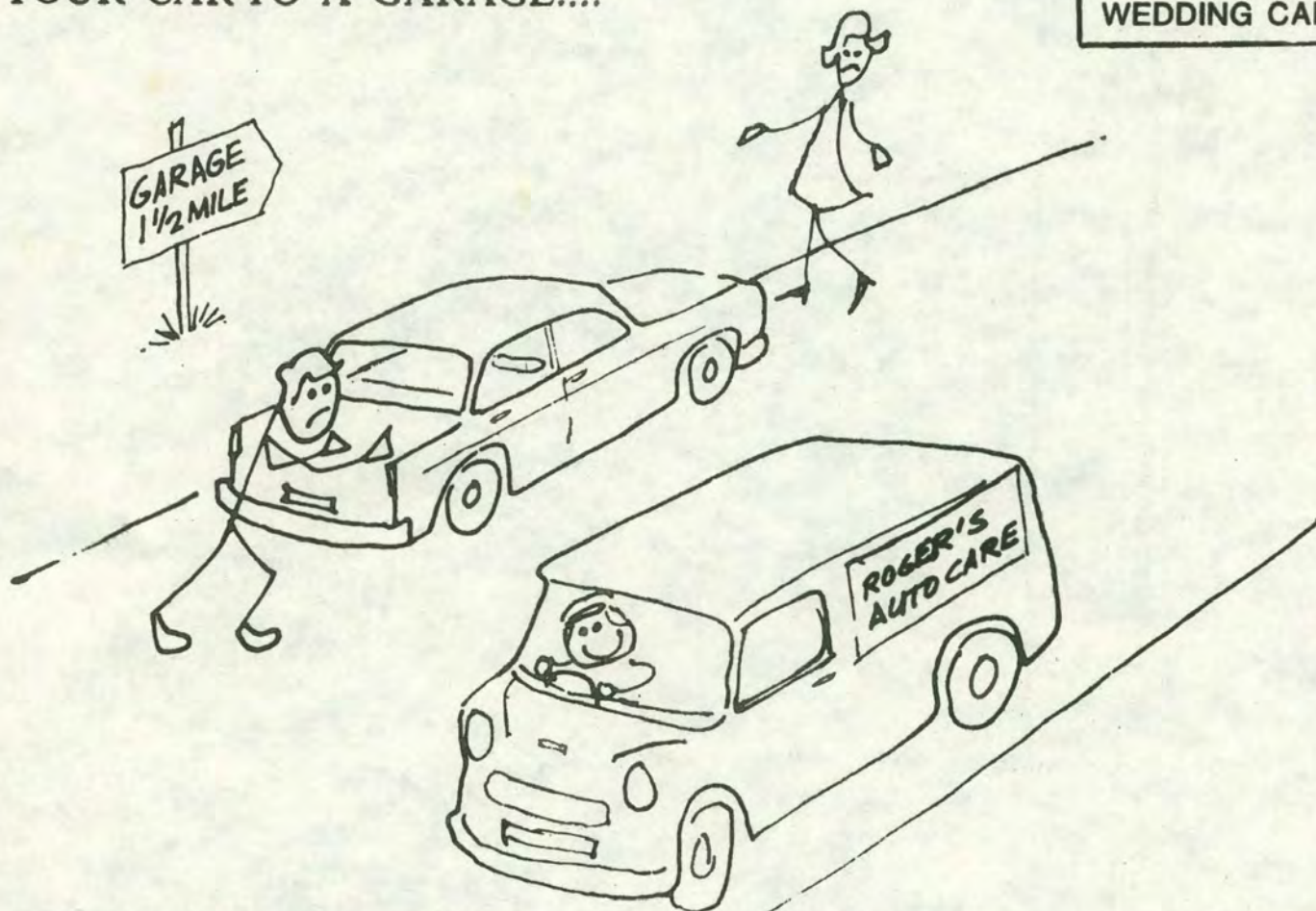
VOL. NO. 3.

roger's autocare



ISN'T IT A DRAG TAKING
YOUR CAR TO A GARAGE....

ASK ABOUT
OUR UNUSUAL
WEDDING CARS



EXAMPLE: FORD ESCORT
FULL SERVICE inc:

Oil, & Filter, Plugs,
Points, Air Filter.
only £35.

WHEN YOU COULD LET THE
GARAGE COME TO YOU !

PHONE NOW FOR A
QUOTE ON YOUR CAR

M.O.T. PREPARATION
SEVICING & GENERAL REPAIRS
NO JOB TO SMALL

CHIPPING SODBURY

TELEPHONE (0454) 321631

NO. 8

SPRING '85

EDITORIAL

There was some doubt that this and future issues of Focus would appear at all. We have lost our privileged rate of printing and now have to pay commercial prices. As we did not want to make a charge for the magazine we have had to investigate many ways in which we could continue to produce three issues a year. Now, thanks to our advertisers and a generous donation from Acton Aid we are able to continue for the time being.

In order to produce an assured income we propose to open a list of PATRONS of those prepared to make a subscription of whatever they can afford, and whose names could be published as members of "FRIENDS OF FOCUS".

If you feel able to help in this way, please send your contribution to Charles Wilkins.

It would be good to know if our efforts are worthwhile, so how about some letters to the Editor? Tell us what kind of articles you like to read, - do you try our recipes? - have you got some better ones we could use? - can you write a paragraph or two that we could print in our next issue? (any subject you like, except politics) Please write to us - - - - - sometimes we wonder if there is anyone out there at all.

Some months ago we had a letter (addressed to 'The Editor, The Chief Newspaper in Iron Acton' no less) from a lady in New South Wales, Australia, who was anxious to trace relatives. It seems she had names of people who had lived in this area two or three generations ago and wondered if there were any descendants still living here. We sent the letter on to the Gazette, (they do have a slightly larger circulation than we do) and recently we were pleased to have another letter from a delighted lady in Australia, as she had heard from a young lady at Cam, and had learned that a number of relatives were still around. It seems that many Australians, like Americans, are keen to trace their British roots.

Our grateful thanks to all contributors to this issue, if we have condensed your articles a little, please forgive us - - - - for reasons of economy we must keep strict control of the number of pages in each issue.

Thanks also to our advertisers and to Acton Aid. Most of all we would like to be able to say thank you to our readers for their letters, so please drop us a line or two.

Wishing you all you wish yourselves, and let's hope we have another lovely summer this year.

Betty Cook, John Percy, Pip and Joanna Voss, Charles Wilkins.

We would like to thank Mrs Betty Parker for the most attractive 1985 cover.

NEW VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

With fingers crossed it can be reported that the work being undertaken by the Community Building Project should be completed during April. The old store and committee room will then be carpeted to provide increased facilities from the kitchen with additional servery for all purposes and a comfortable venue for small meetings. There will doubtless be some criticism about what has been done and whether the cost and inconvenience over the past ten months has resulted in worthwhile benefits. If the benefits are to be realised it is essential that all regular users keep their things in the space behind back stage line.

Revised hire charges have been established for the year beginning 1st April. They have been rationalised and simplified with minor overall increases from which it is hoped we can obtain returns to cover basic running and maintenance costs. If we can get away from the hand to mouth existence it is hoped that fund raising events will truly be used for improvements rather than wear and tear.

At the moment funds are needed to pay for carpets and curtains in addition to decoration of main hall and lavatories. With your support money will come from the auction sale on Saturday 30th March and a soiree planned for the evening of 19th April. We have been offered facilities to provide and make profits from teas at Algars Manor on open days - 8th April and 26th May. A donkey derby will be organised for a date to be announced in July.

The horticultural show and village day has been fixed for 7th September. Please make a note in your diary of this popular and long standing event. A lot of organisation is involved which is deserving of a big response with your entries on the day.

Finally, the AGM will be held on Wednesday 3rd July in the Hall at 8 p.m. This meeting is usually poorly attended. You do not have to be drawn into any commitment but your presence, views and encouragement would be helpful.

For your diary:-

Auction Sale	Saturday 30th March at 10.30 a.m. Entries Friday 29th March.
Algars Manor	Open days 8th April and 26th May.
Soiree	Friday 19th April at 8 p.m.
A.G.M.	Wednesday 3rd July at 8 p.m.
Donkey Derby	July - date to be announced.
Horticultural Show	Saturday 7th September.

GOLDEN GREETINGS:-

Congratulations (a little late perhaps) to Kathleen and Reg Wheeler who celebrated their Golden Wedding last Boxing Day. Mr & Mrs Wheeler whose home is at 27 Chilwood Close, have lived in Iron Acton for 46 years. They have three children and six grandchildren, and Reg, who spent 40 years as a long-distance lorry driver and afterwards as a painter and decorator, retired from work seven years ago.

We wish them both a very happy time for many years to come.

ACTONIANS, YOUNG AND OLD.

Medieval Miracle Plays would not appear to be an automatic choice for juniors. Doggerel verse with many archaic phrases and meanings does not always lend itself to the young. But the Junior Actonians, under the direction of Penny Percy, performed three of these plays and performed them well. 'Noah's Flood', 'The Shepherds' and 'King Herod' were displayed with much successful activity and were greeted by the audience with enthusiasm and rightly so.

'Noah's Flood' can take as many actors as you have masks and animal costumes available. The animal heads came by kind permission of Redland High School, the actors by kind permission of Iron Acton. There were parts for everyone who wanted a part. The play was entered for the Avon One-Act Festival, and on February 27th Penny Percy with all her helpers transported 30 children plus ark and all the rest to Hanham Folk Centre. The strange and unknown stage did not daunt our young players and 'Noah's Flood' was a great success. The adjudicator awarded them the Denning Cup for promise and encouragement, and two members of the cast were mentioned in the list for the best actress of the week award. Well done Junior Actonians.

Not to be outdone in the Festival stakes, the older half of the Actonians presented 'The Rape of Bunny Stuntz'. This play, an American play adapted by the cast for an English audience, calls for an enormous effort by one actress, with careful and accurate support from two others. Presented at Filton Folk Centre on the first day of the Festival, it was a great success with audience and adjudicator alike. The adjudicator, Peter English, whose helpfulness and kindness throughout the week was apparent, described Ann Aplin's performance in the lead as a tour-de-force and rightly placed her among the contenders for best actress. With able supporters in Pat Stimson and Peter Wylie the play is now entered for the Bath One-act Festival in May.

The immediate future now holds a production of 'Lock Up Your Daughters'. Producer Jane Levan, with many successes at Appollo Players, Court Players, Avon Association of Drama, is hard at work turning the Actonians into an 18th Century bawdy musical group. The Actonians are just beginning to understand that a first class producer has hit them and are flat out to make this good play with its good producer a success.

The Pantomime in December was a great success and a sell-out. Many people who enjoy Actonians productions were unable to see this because they were too late for tickets. Make sure you book early for the next production. The dates are April 25th, 26th and 27th. Sec. Ann Aplin, Rangeworthy 243.

* * * * *

Notice on Market Stall under the shadow of Salisbury Cathedral
"Desecrated Coconut"

* * * * *

Notice in Lancashire Evening Post

32 year old male wishes to meet
lady with car in return for love
and affection; would appreciate
photo of car.

* * * * *

ACTON AID.

Acton Aid began another year on 7th February, when the AGM was held at the Rose & Crown.

The outgoing Chairman, John Wright, thanked the members for their considerable support during 1984, a year in which Acton Aid very successfully funded the increased expenditure required to support the programme which comprised the traditional Christmas parcels for the OAP's, an outing and a Christmas Party for the children and an outing and concert for the old folk. Donations were made towards Brownie and Guide activities, holidays for the handicapped children in the Parish and financial help was also given to the Playschool.

The usual round of social events was enjoyed by members, the most notable of these being the very successful Christmas Party, the Barbeque and the Scrabble Evening.

In 1985 under the Chairmanship of Geoff Dickes, Acton Aid is looking forward to an even better year, with the most important event on the fund raising calendar being Sunday 9th June - the date of the Annual Horse and Dog Show. Other fund raisers will be arranged amongst them being a Clay Pigeon Shoot. Dates for this and other events, both social and fund raising, will be announced in due course.

The Services Committee will also be working hard at the programme of services to the community.

John Naish of Algars Manor, has volunteered once again to arrange transport for those of you who have difficulty in visiting relatives who are in hospital.

Acton Aid is always looking for new members, so please come along to the meetings held every first Thursday in the month at the Rose & Crown at 8 p.m.

The principle officers this year are:-

CHAIRMAN	GEOFF DICKES
SECRETARY	JOHN SMALLEY
TREASURER	GERRY MILLWARD

* * * * *

GUIDE & BROWNIE SUPPORTERS GROUP.

On February 15th we held a wine and cheese party at the Village Hall, and though numbers were down on previous occasions due to the very cold weather, a profit of £91 was made. This will go some way towards paying the Capitation Fee (which this year has been increased to £3.50 for every guide, brownie and guider) which must be paid every year 50p to County, and £3. to National Headquarters.

Our other main fund raising event, a Coffee and Gateaux Evening, which is usually held in June, has been postponed to later in the year, and instead there will be a Barbecue on July 9th.

GARDENER'S PATCH.

At the time of writing the snow and ice have just gone, except for patches under walls and hedges where the drifts were deepest. Crocus, aconites and snowdrops look quite untouched by the snow, and daffodils are well advanced. Hopefully, by the time you read this the soil will be warmer and dry enough to get on with planting and seed sowing. Traditionally the day for planting early potatoes was Good Friday, which is rather odd as that could be any time from late March to late April.

The Flower Show this year will be on September 7th - - - - - don't forget to sow a few sunflower seeds (take them out of the wild bird food) there were only two entries last year, most disappointing.

OPEN GARDENS.

The gardens at ALGARS MANOR & ALGARS MILL will be open on Easter Monday, April 8th and again at the Spring Bank Holiday, Sunday May 27th and Monday May 28th. And on July 7th and 8th the five gardens which originally made up the garden of DEAN LODGE will be open. The plan is to enter at one end, walk through all the gardens and out at the other end. Of course we shall be hoping for good weather for all these open days, as it makes such a difference to the number of visitors.

We wish you all a successful gardening season, and hope all your crops come up to expectations. Vegetables cooked straight from the garden taste so delicious it makes you feel quite sorry for people who have to rely on the greengrocer.

COOKERY CORNER.

Chicken Parcels. Two fresh chicken thigh joints for each person, and the same number of streaky bacon rashers. 4 ozs. of washed and chopped mushrooms. Skin the chicken joints and de-rind the bacon. Place a piece of chicken on each slice of bacon, sprinkle with mushrooms, add salt and pepper and roll up neatly. Place all the parcels in a well buttered casserole and sprinkle over any remaining mushrooms, put on the lid and bake for an hour at 375F. Keep the parcels warm while you make a sauce with the juices, adding some white wine or stock, or even cider, and thickening with a roux of butter and flour. Finally add a little cream and pour over the chicken.

* * * * *

Bare-faced Charity:-

Mr Bryan Taylor, of Latteridge Road, decided, after fifteen years of wearing a beard, to have it shaved off in grand style. So, at the Lamb Inn, he invited all who were prepared to pay 50p. to watch him being shaved by Mr Paul Townsend, the Frenchay Hospital Surgeon.

By the end of the evening he was able to raise the sum of £148 for the Ethiopian Famine Relief Fund. Well done, Bryan, and thank you, David and Yvonne, for the use of the Lamb.

POWER AND PRECISION.

Celebration at Frenchay Hospital.

Consultant Plastic Surgeon Paul Townsend welcomed many old friends to the opening of the Micro-Surgery Training and Research Unit on the evening of March 1st.

Prominent among those attending were members of Acton Micro-Surgery Appeal Committee who had raised over £3,000 to purchase equipment for the Unit.

A tasty cold buffet and wine had been laid on at the entrance to the reception - and wise were those who ate and drank before looking at the exhibition. A raw placenta - 'seen in the flesh' and much magnified - and pictures of limbs before during and after refixing to their owners were not for weak stomachs! The exhibits did though provide an exciting and enthralling glimpse of the fantastic work now being done by the micro-surgeons, from replacing amputated limbs to complete muscle and tissue reconstructions. Not the least of this fascination was in the equipment used in these remarkable operations. The newest microscopes showed a phenomenal power of magnification coupled with the capability of television projection. But perhaps even more intriguing were the precision instruments used in micro-surgery - tools of such delicacy that they must be made of titanium and given cutting edges of diamond slivers. The Training and Research Unit will use its new equipment both to train more surgeons in the demanding skills of micro-surgery and to push towards the boundaries of knowledge.

Although the 'Bionic Man' is still far from being a reality to some extent the micro-surgeons can now say "We have the technology - we can rebuild you"! And what greater tribute to their skills than the words of one past patient. When asked what the micro-surgery unit meant to him, he said simply "Everything, they gave me back my hand".

We wish the Unit, its staff and patients every good fortune in a successful future.

Eric Kinder.

* * * * *

NEW ARRIVALS

We extend a hearty welcome to all newcomers to the village including:-

Mr & Mrs. Brunt, Verdun House, Wotton Road.
Mr & Mrs Dowding, Fern Cottage, High Street.
Mr & Mrs Drage, Eastview Cottage, Nibley Lane.
Mr & Mrs Evans, One Pool Farm, Wotton Road.
Mr & Mrs Hillier, Park Cottage, The Green.
Mrs Wills, 17, Algars Drive.

and hope they will have a happy time in their new home.

* * * * *

GET WELL SOON.

We all send our prayers and best wishes for a speedy recovery to health to Mrs Ann Cullen (nee Waker) from her injuries following the recent motor cycle accident.

IRON ACTON WI.

The time since the last edition of 'Focus' has been filled with very mixed emotions for the WI.

For most of us winter means a time to sit at home and hibernate but we did listen to our consciences and turn out for a cheese tasting evening at our January meeting and the WI being the WI, we couldn't resist the 'odd' glass of wine. Mr Johnson came to us, in a blizzard, from W-S-M and brought with him about 50 different cheeses; cows and goats and with everything imaginable added - fun was had by all! February should have seen us receiving a talk on St. Peter's Hospice but the weather intervened and our speaker had to cancel so those of us brave enough to face the High Street - which was masquerading as the Siberian Wastes - huddled around the gas fire and gossiped. March sees us having a talk on Bonsai (rumour has it that this type of horticulture was invented to stop Chihuahuas getting inferiority complexes!). April leads me on to an invitation to all of you to:

A DEMONSTRATION BY THE POTATO MARKETING BOARD.

(also subtitled "you'll be surprised what you can do with a potato")

ON: Wednesday, 10 April 1985 (this is the 1st Wednesday after Easter)

AT: 8.15 p.m. (Doors open 8.00 p.m.)

IN: THE VILLAGE HALL

COST: 50p. - incredible value and includes the infamous WI refreshments!

ALL WELCOME

May will see us discussing the resolutions to be put forward at our AGM at the Royal Albert Hall, June will be a 'social gathering' at Lodge Farm and in July we hope to have a guided coach/walking tour of Bath.

We have already organised an enjoyable outing to the pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Bath and had a good old 'boo hiss' and we think that the old stage saying should be amended to never work with animal, children or Eric Sykes - you never know what any of them will do next!!!

My first sentence talked about "mixed emotions" and having been light-hearted I must now become serious. It was with regret and sadness that our members heard of the death of Pat Howes. Pat was an Ex-President and staunch member of the WI. In fact, she was President when I first joined. She always gave her best, working incredibly hard for us (and for many other charities who needed help). Completely unselfish and always to be relied upon, she always found something good in everyone and vindictiveness was not in her nature. I, as well as the rest of our members, feel privileged and proud to have known Pat and we send our thoughts and prayers to her family who's loss is so much greater than ours.

Lynne Blanchard
Secretary.

THE ELIZABETH CLUB

Life begins at sixty?

The winter months have proved a disaster as far as our meetings have been concerned - but what we have had we have enjoyed.

Our Christmas Dinner was up to its usual high standard, made all the more enjoyable by the Woodford Silver Band who played for our entertainment.

A trip to the play put on by the L.A.D.S. at Leyhill Prison was again very funny and enjoyed by all who went.

The Chipping Sodbury Lions Club invited us to the Town Hall to see the Pantomime on the 17th January, but due to the bad weather not many turned up.

At our first meeting in March Mr Price from Kingswood gave a very detailed and interesting film show on Scotland and Deeside bringing back happy memories to many of the members who had been there.

Our first event of the year will be the Bulb Show on 23rd March. Hopefully it will be as good as last year with items of interest for all ages. This will be followed by our Spring Sale on April 20th with all the usual stalls.

Our first Outing this year in May sounds very nice, it is a trip by boat up the Brecon and Abergavenny Canal.

Betty Hall.
Secretary.

* * * * *

A PAT ON THE BACK FOR YOUR MAGAZINE:-

Readers will remember that in our last issue we were pleased to announce that FOCUS had won an award. This was presented by the Avon Community Council in what is known as VILLAGE VENTURES, and is given for any kind of community enterprise. The awards were made at a ceremony at the Chapter House of Bristol Cathedral, where many villages gathered to claim prizes for different achievements, such as building children's play grounds, clearing field footpaths, renovating delapidated village halls, etc. or any project that involved voluntary community spirit and labour.

Of the several entries for village magazines, Focus was adjudged the best, and received a Certificate, and amount of Paper and a cheque.

We are very pleased that, once again, Iron Acton, leads the way.

* * * * *

From a Church Magazine:

After tea in the Church Hall the Vicar presented the traditional gifts of money to the twenty widows left by the late Colonel . . . "

RECOLLECTIONS OF A VETERAN.

Mr Frederick Thomas is now eighty three years old. He was born in 1902, into Edwardian England. He was born in Iron Acton as were his parents before him, in the cottage overlooking the Green where he still lives. He was married in Iron Acton Church and has three daughters, two of whom still live in the village.

Talking to Mr Thomas, the life of the village as it was between the wars became more clear. Transport at the beginning of the period was largely horse drawn until overtaken by the motor car. The road through the village, the High Street became increasingly busy.

Acton Fair was held twice a year. There were horses, cattle, pigs, poultry and all manner of animals offered for sale as well as stalls for farm produce and other agricultural needs. This fair was overtaken by the growth of the market at Yate. Conveniently at the corner of the Green was a blacksmith's forge and old cottages standing at right angles to the road. There were many more trees and in a gale in 1935 a large sycamore tree fell across the roof of the house now known as Two Wheels.

A butcher, a sweet shop, a saddler, two general stores the Post Office and a shoe shop carried on business in the High Street, in addition to another sweet shop on the Green run by the Misses Barrett. Iron Acton had a station and a coal yard. Services were operating to Yate, to Thornbury and to Bristol. The line was closed after the second World War and later re-opened to carry stone from the quarry at Tytherington.

The Iron Acton football club was started by Mr Jack Hall and Mr Thomas after the first World War. At first the club played other villages in any available field, but later joined the Suburban league and played in the field behind the Rose and Crown.

Iron Acton Court, recently sold for restoration, in the early days had an attractive frontage with flower gardens. The ballroom was often used for dances. At Holm Ray there were many social gatherings and tennis parties. The local lads enjoyed being ball boys.

Mr Thomas was postman for thirty years in company with Mr Blanchard and Mr. Dust. They used bicycles for delivery as far afield as Latteridge and Larks Lane. Mr. Thomas's mother had previously delivered in the same area, but in her day, this had been done on foot.

There are few people living in Iron Acton today who are Actonians, to cast one's thoughts back almost eighty years is difficult. We thank Mr Thomas for talking to us about the Iron Acton of former days.

* * * * *

A Sunday School teacher asked his class to draw a picture of the Flight into Egypt.

One child drew an aeroplane with four people in it and the teacher said "I can see that the little one is Jesus, the lady is Mary, and the man with the beard is Joseph, but who is that one at the front?"

"Ah" said the child "Its Pontius the Pilot".

HISTORICAL SOCIETY VISITS IRON ACTON.

It was a cool evening in early June, last year, that some thirty members of the Downend Local History Society were shown around Iron Acton by Mr Curtis, of Poplar Farm. It soon became apparent that Mr Curtis, a local man and Parish Councillor had a love of his village, and regretted that our modern age had altered it from a self-contained village, to one, dependent for it's needs, upon the car.

During our walk, we realised that we were reviving a previous connection that Iron Acton had with Mangotsfield - - - - Downend was once part of the parish of Mangotsfield. In 1537, in continuance of a family feud, Sir Nicholas Poyntz of Iron Acton and others " . . . riotously assembled at Mangotsfield and did break down the mill wall across Charnock's Stream and let out all the water from the pool and mill head".

We learned much of Iron Acton's past from Mr Curtis, including the derivation of it's unusual name. He also drew our attention to the many interesting buildings in the village, from the ancient Lamb Inn to the Poor House, which had been little used as such.

Perhaps the high spot of our walk was the visit to the church, where there was a great deal of interest. The party was intrigued by the lock-up in the church, which must be unique.

Unfortunately, lack of time prevented our walking to the River Frome, at Algars' Manor, which must be one of the oldest houses in Iron Acton.

All of the members had heard of Iron Acton; few had visited the village previously. All were agreed that it is an extremely interesting and beautifully kept village, and hoped that it would not be our last visit there.

* * * * *

PATRICIA MARGARET HOWES.

A shock wave ran through Iron Acton, and much further afield, when on February 19th we learnt of the untimely death of Pat Howes. We had all known how seriously ill she was but from the reports we received it seemed as if the treatment was succeeding. Then it was all over.

I think a comment by the Parish Priest of Bideford really sums up what should be said about Pat. He said he was astonished at the great number of friends Pat had made during her three years there.

And the first and most important memory one has of Pat is her great gift of friendship. Once we knew her a natural hope was that we would be numbered in her circle of friends.

The second memory is of her tremendous energy and enthusiasm in working for the handicapped and for any other good cause. Her main interests were St. Christopher's and the Camphill Trust, but she was tireless in her work for so many other good causes that I dare not mention any of them as I would surely forget some.

The third memory is of Pat as a mother and in her family. In so many families there are petty jealousies but Pat's character was such that there was no chance that they would develop in any family of which she was part.

Pat will be sorely missed by so many people, and especially by Colin, Clare and Linzi to whom, with her family in Iron Acton we extend our loving sympathy.

1st IRON ACTON GUIDE COMPANY.

At the present time our guide company is thriving. We have a total of 16 girls, 4 of whom are working towards being enrolled. With 1 more Brownie to fly up to Guides in May we will have a complement of 17.

This term we have been working for the First Aid and Challenge Badges and more badges are planned for next term.

This year is the 75th Anniversary of the Girl Guide Movement and a week of celebrations commence on Monday 24th June. On this day a candle will be lit in London. This light will then be taken all over the country. It will arrive in this Region by train. From there it will be taken to College Green, Bristol where each Guide Division will light it's own lamp from this one light. Our lamp will be brought back to Frampton Cotterell where there is going to be a large campfire for all the Guides and Brownies in the Division.

On Saturday 29th June there is a large anniversary rally at Ashton Court Park for all the Guides in the County. This will be an all day rally with a large number of activities for the Guides to take part in. Then on Saturday 30th June there is going to be a service in the Colston Hall, again for all the Guides in the County. This should be a very spectacular event with Guides marching from four corners of Bristol.

Our Guide Company has also been invited to a joint Guide Camp in August with the 2nd Frampton Cotterell Guide Company. Eleven of our Guides are going to attend. The camp is taking place at Keepers Piece, Badminton and I am sure that it should be a very enjoyable camp.

* * * * *

IRON ACTON MOTHER & TODDLER GROUP.

The Iron Acton Toddler Group was set up in September 1984 for the benefit of mothers and toddlers in the village. This was the first venture of its kind.

Donations were gratefully received from the Parish Council, Acton Aid and private individuals. A large number of local residents found a vast amount of toys, books and puzzles to help establish the group.

The Group has proved to be a valuable and much needed meeting point for mothers and their toddlers.

Initially it was well supported but recently numbers have decreased for a variety of reasons. If the Group is to survive, more regular support is desperately needed.

The Group meets every Thursday during school term time at the Village Hall, from 2 - 2.30 p.m.

New faces are more than welcome.

BEEES

A gardener tall whose name begins with C
Once thought he heard the buzzing of a bee.
It stayed awhile and rested on his hat.
It then flew off and that, he thought, was that.
But louder grew the sound, not dimmer,
He thought his wife had bought herself a strimmer.
He looked around and noticed that the bee
Had settled in his favourite holly tree.
He scratched his head a bit, then said "I think
"I'll go and get myself a good strong drink."
For Twas not one bee perching on the leaf,
But half a million (noise beyond belief)
He turned and walked (scouts pace) towards the wall,
Intending to give the man next door a call.
"Your bees have swarmed," he cried, but all in vain.
The man next door had gone off on a train.
His wife was there (I think her name was Jo)
She said "To Leatherhead he's had to go.
His aunt, you see, is far from well.
Whatever shall I do? (Oh hell!)"
To catch a swarm you see is quite a skill.
She had no knowledge, confidence or will.
The day grew close (It was a long hot summer)
"I know," she said at last, "I'll fetch our plumber!"
The gardener frowned. He'd always had suspicion
This person's brain was not in good condition.
But plumber came. He kept bees by the ton,
In Wick and Aust and even Didmarton.
And, plumber that he was, he said: "We'll first
Find hosepipe long and give them a quick burst.
For if the bees think it begins to rain,
They'll cluster close and won't fly off again."
No ancient veil this stalwart man displayed
but space man's gear of see-through plastic made.
A ladder tall they all began to push
Into that creaking, vicious holly bush.
The plumber climbed the sharply prickled tree
(Not all four letter words begin with B.)
Then straightway gave the branch a hearty clout
And from the tree the swarm at once fell out,
Into a cardboard box he held quite near.

Then plumber said "There's something wrong I fear."
"The old queen's gone. Please don't mistake my meaning.
The queen bee's flown. We could be here till evening."
The swarm then followed to a raspberry cane,
Then to the churchyard, then up Nibley Lane.
And on the chasers followed, tree by tree.
When evening came they'd got to Westerleigh.
Through streams and ponds they plunged without galoshes
(The plumber wished he stuck to changing washers.)
There is above the railway bridge a batch,
A colony of bees too hard to catch.
The keeper of the bees returned that night
His eyes were clear, his voice was very bright.
"I've had a really lovely day," he said.
Then ducked a soup plate flying at his head.
The day of rest dawned bright and clear.
Out trooped the keeper, wife and glass of beer,
Deck chairs, sun oil, papers, books galore
(On Sunday, who could wish for more!)
No sound except the lazy hum of bees
(Apart from someone's chain saw slicing trees)
At cherry blossom soft and pink and warm
The couple gazed and saw - another swarm.

* * * * *

YOUNG COMMUNICANTS OF IRON ACTON

During our meeting on 21st February we made an outline programme for 1985 which, as many readers will know, is International Youth Year. The theme given for this is Race, Participation, Development. Being a small group we feel we can best carry this through by reinforcing that which we would be doing anyway. Peace, we feel, should be interpreted as Prayer and Personal conduct. Participation; most of our members play a part in the general worship in our Church as Servers, Bellringers and Choristers. They also hope to pull their weight at fund raising activities.

Development we see as helping outside our own environment and over two years ago we specially committed ourselves to work for Christian Aid. Their special week this year is from 13th to the 18th May with the theme "Charity begins with the Homeless". We hope to stage a small exhibition in Church and to hold another fund raising activity. There is another way in which we hope to raise money for this cause and that is by collecting used aluminium drink cans for their scrap value. We shall need a lot as approximately 113 are needed to realise £1. However, we ask your help in this. They must be aluminium (a magnet will not stick to this) and would you please rinse them out? Any of our members will receive them and you can let me have them at Faith Cottage, Latteridge Road. If you cannot bring them let me know and I will arrange collection. Should you live in North Road, please contact Christina Wheeler or Naomi Angell (house Nos. 339 and 268).

We sincerely hope you will support our efforts for this truly good cause and thank you in advance.

THE FUTURE OF ACTON COURT.

We are sorry that owing to lack of space we are not able to print the whole of this interesting article about Acton Court.

The people of Iron Acton must wonder who are these outsiders from Bristol who have bought the Court, so first I should explain that the Bristol Visual and Environmental Buildings Trust has for fourteen years spearheaded the campaign to save the historic buildings of Bristol many of which were under threat. Members of the trust work for nothing and carry the heavy financial and other responsibilities voluntarily.

Locally, the BVE group have campaigned to contain the urban sprawl into the countryside and strongly oppose the development of the Frome Valley and its villages, which have great amenity value and historic interest.

Acton Court is by far the most important old building in Avon. Indeed, possibly only Thornbury Castle competes in importance amongst early buildings. We have found that the north wing and the ground floor of the great east wing which stands up so conspicuously from the view through the gateway, are medieval. The first floor appears to have been thrown up in great haste as a lodging for Queen Elizabeth I when she came to stay in 1574. It comprises a great hall and a suite of rooms over the older ground floor, with cross passage. 200 years later engravings show it already supported by buttresses, so, even then, the new parts of the building were failing.

The Poyntz family left the court in 1680 and the building was then occupied by tenant farmers for 200 years. The Keedwells who farmed there until recently were locally famous for their love of horses and many people learnt to ride there when the stables were open.

Restoring the building will be extremely difficult. A huge amount of complicated work is needed to stabilize the structure and it seems likely that the walls at either end of the main cross passage will have to be taken down and rebuilt and possibly the north gable end. We thought hard about possible uses, other than housing, but it seems improbable that any commercial developer would take on such a huge building. Therefore, subject to planning permission we are proposing to convert the main building into three houses. Because restoration is uneconomic, we will, in addition, seek detailed planning permission to develop four houses on the sites of existing outbuildings, selling on these sites with safeguards. Most of the money borrowed for this will come from the Architectural Heritage Fund and we will have to have a limited appeal for funds for particular work, like restoring medieval wall painting or making an Elizabethan garden within the service court.

Because this is a very significant medieval site archaeological investigations will be carried out and when these are complete we should know much more about the history of the house. On 27th and 28th April and 4th and 5th May, for Environment Week it is proposed to allow the public into two rooms to see a small exhibition of local history and environment and show what we propose for Acton Court and on 15th May Bristol City Museum is conducting a walk, including the Court, where the archaeologists will explain something of the history of the site.

PARISH CHURCH.

Easter Services at St. James the Less.

31st March	Palm Sunday.	Main Service	9.30 a.m.
4th April	Maunday Thursday	Main Service	7.30 p.m.
5th "	Good Friday	Main Service	9.30 a.m.
		Hour's Devotion	2 - 3 p.m.
7th "	Easter Day	Holy Communion	7.0 a.m.
		Holy Communion	8.0 a.m.
		Sung Eucharist	9.30 a.m.
		Evensong	6.30 p.m.

- - - - -

Diary

Forthcoming Events.

At the Rectory:

20th April	Plant Sale	2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
	(Plants and Buyers needed)	

At the Village Hall:

Every Tuesday	Brownies	5.45 p.m.
	Girl Guides	7.00 p.m.
Wednesday	Elizabethans	2.30 p.m.
	Fencing Club	7.00 p.m.
Thursday	Mothers and Toddlers	2.00 p.m.
Second Monday in the Month	Womens' Institute	7.30 p.m.
2nd April	Distribution of Bus Tokens	
10th "	W.I. Potato Marketing Board Demonstration.	
18th "	Parish Meeting.	
19th "	"Soiree" in aid of Hall Funds.	
20th "	Elizabethans Spring Sale.	
25-26-27th April	Actonians "Lock up your Daughters".	
2nd May	Council Elections.	
3rd July	Annual General Meeting.	
7th September	Flower Show.	

<u>At the Rose & Crown:</u>	Every First Thursday.	Acton Aid.
---------------------------------	-----------------------	------------

<u>At the Lamb:</u>	Every Friday.	Folk Club.
---------------------	---------------	------------

<u>At Algars Manor & Mill:</u>	26-27th May	
	(Also Easter Monday)	Gardens Open.

<u>At Green Lane Farm:</u> (On the Bypass beyond Dyers Garage).		
	9th June	Horse Show.

<u>At Dean Lodge, etc:</u>	7-8th July	Gardens Open.
----------------------------	------------	---------------

<u>To be decided:</u>	9th July	Guides & Brownies Barbecue.
-----------------------	----------	-----------------------------

* * * * *

We are pleased to thank Mrs P. Ashmead for typing this issue of Focus.

IRON ACTON HORSE AND DOG SHOW.

SUNDAY 9 JUNE



Stamped addressed envelope for schedule (out May)

G. Dickes
The Keepings,
High Street,
Iron Acton,
BRISTOL BS17 1UG.
Rangeworthy 609.

*The home of the
wood burning clay oven*

*Iron Acton,
near Bristol
Telephone
Rangeworthy
228*



THE COLLEGIATE SCHOOL
WINTERBOURNE
(Girls 4-18)

Family Atmosphere Continuity
Really Small Classes
Bus Route

Traditional Standards of Courtesy and Hard Work
Good Facilities
Sixth Form A-Level and Pre-Vocational Courses

PATRICK PINKER (GAME FARM) LIMITED,
LATTERIDGE LANE, LATTERIDGE,
IRON ACTON, BRISTOL BS171TY.

'EVERYTHING FOR THE HORSE & RIDER'

Best quality horse & pony - fitting service available.
English Leather Bridles, complete, from £22.00.
BS approved 4472 Crash Skulls - all sizes in stock £25.00.
Velvet covered safety hats, £28.00.

Selection of Puffa Waistcoats & Parkas
Waxed jackets, Show & Hacking jackets and other Country Clothing.
Veterinary products including large range of wormers.

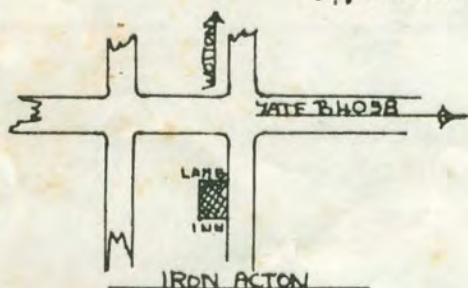
Eley & Winchester Cartridges.
Clay pigeons and traps.
Incubators and hatchers.
Polypropelene netting suitable for aviaries or fruit pens. 7m & 14m widths.
Dog Training equipment. Dummy launchers, dog leads, slip leads.

Please feel free to come over and browse around our shop. all enquiries welcome

TELEPHONE RANGEWORTHY 416/730.

+ THE LAMB INN +

+ PHONE RANGEWORTHY 265 +



+ FLOWERS ORIGINAL BITTER +

+ SAMPLE OUR SUPERB RANGE OF
HOME BAKED FOODS +

+ LARGE NATURAL SECLUDED
GARDEN +

+ OLDE WORLDE FRIENDLY
ATMOSPHERE +

+ ALL FUNCTIONS CATERED
FOR +

+ THE LAMB +
+ 1690 +