



The Chronicle.

ASTON ABBOTT'S PARISH MAGAZINE.

SEPT 88

ISSUE 60

Editorial

Nothing to say other than hope there is someone out there who would be interested in taking over the position of Editor. While I enjoy the task it does take up time that should be used in other ways, and the likelihood is that publication will become increasingly erratic. So if there is someone who is interested in taking over please let me know and I will gladly explain what is involved.

Graham Parker.

PEOPLE PAGE STOP PRESS

WELCOME TO Gordon Smith, Caroline Lane and their daughter Sarah, who have just moved into Church Row.

OUR BEST WISHES to Mrs Rickard who is in hospital.

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that we announce the sudden death of Mrs Chandler of Bricstock.

DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE IS 24th SEPTEMBER, PLEASE.

HOW TO PASS ON ARTICLES/INFORMATION FOR "THE CHRONICLE"

1. By telephone to Graham on Aylesbury 681325.
2. By dropping a note through his door - The Cloisters.
3. Leave a note in the Village Shop or at the Post Office.

Published by Graham Parker.

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Distributed free to all households in the Parish of Aston Abbots. If you would like extra copies please inform the Editor.

INFO

WHAT'S ON IN SEPTEMBER

- THURSDAY 1st SEPTEMBER : COUNTY SHOW AT WEEDON

N.B. THE LINES HILL ROAD TO WEEDON WILL BE
 CLOSED TO THROUGH TRAFFIC

- SUNDAY 4th SEPTEMBER : CAR BOOT SALE RECREATION GROUND 10a.m. - 2p.m.
 RAMBLING CLUB MEMBERS MEET AT WOBURN TOWN
 CAR PARK AT 2.00 p.m.
- SUNDAY 18th SEPTEMBER : ST.JAMES HARVEST FESTIVAL
- WEDNESDAY 14th & 28th : MOBILE LIBRARY - THE GREEN 2 - 2.30p.m.
 - LONGMOOR 2.35 - 2.50p.m.
- THURSDAYS 1st; 15th & 28th : WHIST DRIVE : CHURCH ROOM : 8 p.m.
- WEEKEND 23-25 SEPT : SKIP FOR MOAT LANE/LINES HILL.
- FRIDAY 30th SEPTEMBER : PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 8 p.m. CHURCH ROOM.
- SUNDAY 1st OCTOBER : RAMBLING CLUB MEMBERS MEET STOCKGROVE PARK
 [FUNGI HUNT - EVERYONE WELCOME] AT 2 p.m.
 : CUBLINGTON HARVEST FESTIVAL.
- MOWING ROTA (AMENDED) - Week ending 2/9 John Whyte; 16/9 John Ford;
 30/9 Richard Speakman; 8/10 Colin Higgs.

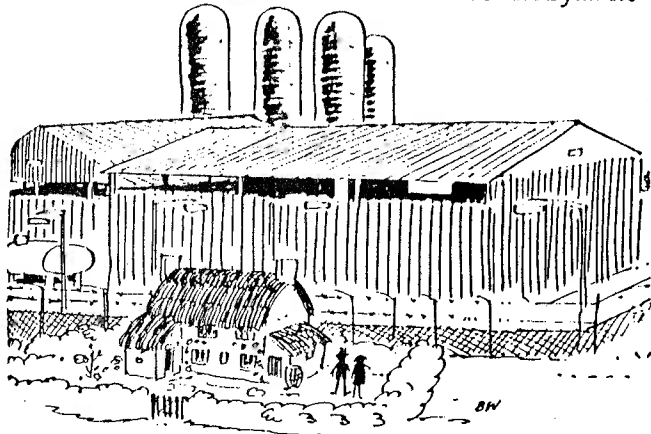
ASTON ABBOTTS & CUBLINGTON

LADIES CLUB

The autumn session starts on Thursday 6th. October at 2.45 p.m. The speaker will be Mrs Kay and her subject 'Embroidery'. New members will be very welcome.

MORE ADVICE TO NEWCOMERS

from Brian Walker of The Countryman.



... become better informed about (i) planning permission; (ii) EEC - 3 - grants; (iii) modern farm buildings, ...

History and exercise

MORE than 60 people turned up for the Aston Abbots Rambling Club walk last Tuesday evening, held in conjunction with the Aylesbury Vale Holiday Walk programme.

The walkers met on the village green, where they were welcomed by Mr. Colin Higgs, who, before leading the walk gave a short history of of famous former inhabitant of Aston Abbots, Sir James Clarke Ross.

NORTH POLE

Born in London in 1800 Sir

James joined the navy in 1812.

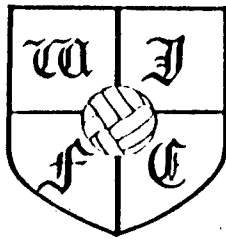
He discovered the magnetic North Pole in 1831 and crossed the Atlantic in 1836 to relieve a party of frozen whalers in Baffin Bay.

Ross was knighted in 1844 and then became Rear Admiral. He was a fellow of the Royal Society.

He lived in the Abbey at Aston Abbots (now a private home) and died in 1862.

Sir James is buried in the village churchyard.

Rambling club members visited his tomb and the abbey en route to Norduck farm, Whitchurch Brook, Badgers Brook and Moat Lane.



PRESENTS

FAMILY QUIZ EVENING

AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE ON

SATURDAY 15th OCTOBER



7.15 FOR 7.45 START OF THE QUIZ

TICKETS: £ 2.00 FOR ALL AGES.

HOT SUPPER INCLUDED LICENSED BAR

RAFFLE PRIZES IN MANY CATEGORIES.

COME ALONG AS A 'TABLE TEAM' [ANY
NUMBER FROM TWO TO TEN] JOIN IN A
FUN EVENING FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY.

THE WHOLE TEAM ANSWERS THE QUESTIONS -
ANSWERS WRITTEN DOWN - SPECIAL MARATHON
QUIZ - QUESTIONS ON TEN SUBJECTS.



TICKETS FROM: FRED MEGRAM, 6 NUP END LANE (681464); RON COOK, 50
NUP END LANE (681303); CARL SORACE, 58 WINSLOW ROAD (681129);
RICHARD KEIGHLEY, THE OLD VICARAGE (681235); GRAHAM PARKER, THE
CLOISTERS, ASTON ABBOTTS (681325); JOHN SCOTT, MEADOW VIEW, CUB-
LINGTON (681600); DAVID NEAVE, THE OLD BREWHOUSE, ROWSHAM (681551).

People

OUR MONTHLY COLUMN ABOUT VILLAGE PEOPLE
Edited by Bridget Brandon.

BIRTHDAYS

PIERS PARKER 4th SEPTEMBER.
FIONA WHYTE 6th SEPTEMBER.
JAMES DIXON 10th SEPTEMBER.
ADRIAN DIXON 30th SEPTEMBER.

WE HOPE

KEITH BIGNELL and DON WAITE are feeling better after a spell in hospital.

CONGRATULATIONS

STEVE & PERRI KENT on the birth of their daughter EMMA on the 25th July. Emma was born prematurely and at the time of writing is still in hospital. We wish her well.

WE WERE

very sad to hear of the death of Ken Rumens in August. Ken moved away from the village a year or so ago having lived here for 28 years.

MORE ADVICE TO NEWCOMERS

from Brian Walker of The Countryman.



... be prepared for the reaction to your question, 'What power or influence can the parish council have on the community?' ...

HELP LINE

In an emergency (a prescription needs collecting; hospital visit has to be made; form needs filling; a pipe has burst or whatever) please ring any of the following numbers for help:

Les Smith, 'Gatesgarth', Lines Hill (Tel:681368)
Peter Dines, 87 The Green. (Tel:681459)
Colin Higgs, 6, Wingrave Road. (Tel:681343)
John Whyte, 14 Bricstock. (Tel:681685)
Graham Parker, The Cloisters, Church Row (681325)
David Watts, 'White Wheels' (681376)
Rosemary Franklin, 3 Church Row. (681319).

Can we add your name to our Help Line list? If so just contact any of the above.

Beds and Bucks Observer, July 26, 1988

Loadsapresents as Brian says his goodbyes



IN 1966 the floor of Wingrave village school collapsed through old age and deposited the piano into a four-foot cavity during morning hymn-singing.

This was one of the many vivid memories recalled by Brian Ellis at a farewell party at the school held to signal his retirement after 22 years as head-teacher.

The original school, now much restored by the local Community Association, is used for village functions and the celebrations were held in the new C of E Combined School off Winstow Road, opened in 1974. During the afternoon the children held their own party and entertained Brian Ellis and his wife with songs,

sketches and singing. There were maypole dances to the traditional tunes and a hilarious sketch based on the annual school summer camp on the Isle of Wight, with nine-year-old Steven Clarke taking the part of Mr Ellis.

May Queen, Emma Clarke paraded with her attendants Melanie Biggs and Elinor Gravesson.

There was also an up-dated version of 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' with retired teacher Joyce Whipps as the Christmas Queen.

A mini-concert feat red children on clarinets and the recorder group. The upper school then

sang a rousing version of "Food, glorious food".

Chairman of the governors, the Rev. John Heffer, Rector of Wingrave, thanked Mr Ellis for all the good work he had done at the school over the years.

Gifts were presented to Mr Ellis by the children including a video-recorder and a very large card signed by all the children, a book of photos and cuttings about the school going back twenty years and a tape-recording of the

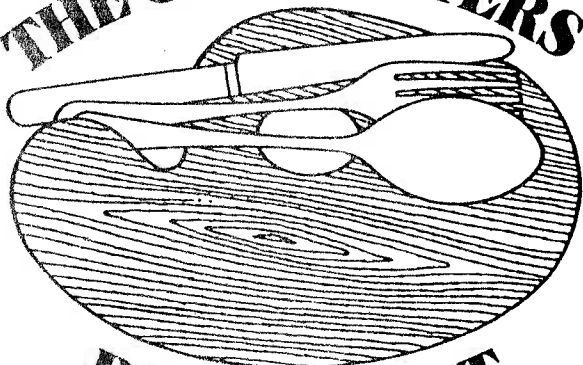
service of dedication when the present school was opened in 1974.

In the evening there was another farewell party at the school, this time organised by the parents of the School Association, at which Mr Ellis recalled that when he came in 1966 the total of pupils was 64 and it is now close on 200.

Several gifts were then presented: School Governors gave an inscribed cut-glass bowl; the School Association gave a Workmate; Wingrave Scouts gave a pen set; Kitchen staff, past and present gave cut-glass tumblers; school staff gave a drawing of the original village school by Wingrave artist Pip Watkins. Mr Ellis is to retire to Brighton.

End of 22-year era

THE OLD MASTERS



RESTAURANT

English and Continental Cuisine

Cublington Road, Aston Abbots,
Buckinghamshire.

Telephone: Aylesbury (0296) 681432

Lunch: 12.00 noon-2.00 p.m.

Dinner: 7.00 p.m.-10.00 p.m.

Closed all day Sunday and for Monday lunch

AMB. Painters

WHY NOT HAVE YOUR HOUSE
PAINTED, NOW?

HAVE YOUR WOODWORK
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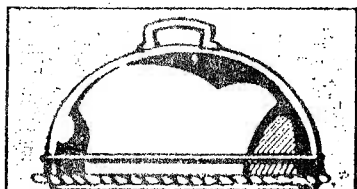
WEATHER THIS WINTER.

TIDY WORK
REPAIRS UNDERTAKEN

FOR A FREE ESTIMATE

JUST RING ME (ADRIAN)

CHEDDINGTON (0296) 668610



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Personal Caterer
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TIME TO SPARE?

WHY NOT VOLUNTEER?

Ring Aylesbury 81666

Aylesbury Vale Volunteer Bureau
Walton Parish Hall, Walton Street,
Aylesbury, Bucks. HP21 7GX

Festival fun-makers ignore the showers



ASTON Abbotts villagers showed true British grit last weekend when they supported the annual festival on the green, despite showery weather.

During the break in the rain, the crowds were entertained by the colourfully attired Aylesbury Morris Men and music from the Great Horwood Band.

After the opening of the festival by Nicholas

£750 raised for village

Murray, the varied stalls did a brisk trade and visitors tried their luck on the tombolas and raffle, and tested their skills in fishing and catching the rat competitions.

Teas were served in the church room at St James' and visitors then went into the church to admire the floral

arrangements which were also on show the following day. The village Methodist church also put on a flower display. A pig roast completed the festivities in the evening.

Although the festival is held on the same weekend each year to mark St James' patronal day, the event has become a village affair with local organisations taking part in the preparations, and sharing in the proceeds.

It is hoped that about £750 has been raised, which will be split between St James' the recreation ground, the Methodist Church, the village magazine and a contingency fund.

On the Sunday, parish communion was held in the morning, amid the flower displays at St James' and in the evening the Rural Dean, the Rev Peter Bullock Flint joined local Vicar the Rev John Haffer for a celebratory evening service. Seven members of the congregation were asked to choose hymns, and give their reasons for selecting them, and readings were given by Colin Higgs and Lynne Deloore.

The Rev Haffer commented on the weekend festival: "The great thing is that both the church and the village come together for this. Apart from the rain it was quiet a success. Everyone seemed happy with the result."

• This racing team would have got Murray Walker into a right old state - hardly Formula One is it?

Police were butt of barrow joke

JOKER Paul Drysdale could not resist having a playful swipe at Aylesbury police on Saturday.

Paul, of Aston Abbotts, entered a decorated wheelbarrow competition at the village festival.

The wheelbarrow was featured in last week's Bucks Herald when it was stolen from his father Ernest in Tremantle Road, Aylesbury.

Neighbour Roger Clay tracked down the thieves but was furious when Aylesbury police decided to take no action against them.

So Paul, who has lived on the paradise isle of Tonga for 10 years, decided to do his own humorous protest.

Wearing a native grass skirt, he pinned a few choice words about the police on his backside.

Most onlookers could not understand the joke, but his cheeky capers gave him second prize!

Joint first prize went to

Fisher Cheshire and Gwyneth Price.

Among the stalls were grocery, bric-a-brac, knitwear, plants, home-made produce, fruit, dressed dolls, toys and minerals, and there was a variety of sideshows.

The Great Horwood Band played during the afternoon and there was a display of morris dancing.

St James' Church had been decorated for the festival by village organisations.

Competition winners included: Bowling, Mr. M. Swan, Mrs. L. Mills; bean bags, Master R. Cleaver; raffle, Mrs. Tenley (steroid), Mr. R. Cleaver (total for two), Mrs. Raines (crystal), Miss Diana Kent, Mr. C. Shepherd and Mrs. Anita Parker.

The festival continued on Sunday with parish communion and, later, a Songs of Praise service, conducted by the Rev. John Haffer, at which the rural dean, the Rev. Peter Bullock-Flint gave the address.



Paul Drysdale: Humorous protest



• Colin Higgs a work on one of the floral displays in the church.



• Lucky dip time for three of the young festival-goers.



Esther Cheshire and Gwyneth Price: First

FATED

Come the day, come the weather. In this dismal summer every mention of a fete has been the signal for another downpour. Aston Abbotts was no exception.

Fete day dawned ... just. Clouds were low but the rain held off until Nick Murray pointed out that Aston Abbotts was as close to the centre of Aylesbury as Stoke Mandeville and that the green field gap dividing us from the expanding county town was narrowing by the month. Then as Nick finished his speech and purses opened [Cont. on the next page]

**Fete Profit
£781.77**

ASTON ABBOTTS FESTIVAL

[Continued from previous page]

to obtain the best of the bargains, so did the heavens, saving all those gardeners the labourious task of watering! But the rain was ignored beneath the shelter of the trees on the Green. People who had not seen each other for months exchanged news and views while the cake stall did record breaking business. As the showers

From Ivy Brandon

My helpers and I would like to thank everyone who gave so generously to our cake stall at the Fete, but a special thanks must be given to Mrs. Price (a relative newcomer to the village) for her lovely Gingerbread Men. We made a grand total of over £100 for the first time ever. Thank you.

<u>Sideshow</u> : Skittles	£22.20
Bran tub	22.30
Others	10.91
Total	<u>£55.41</u>

Donation from the Royal Oak : £61.00

<u>Refreshments</u> : Teas	£76.02
Barbecue	37.30
Expenses (food & Complimentary teas for band etc.)	24.40
Total profit	<u>£88.92</u>

<u>General Expenses</u> : Great Horwood Band	£45.00
Aldbury Morris Men	60.00
Press advertising	29.31
Total	<u>£134.31</u>

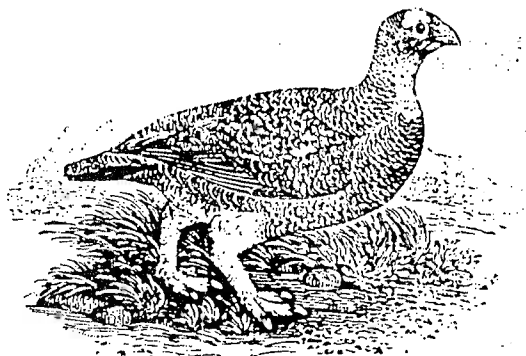
Overall Balance : £ 781.77.

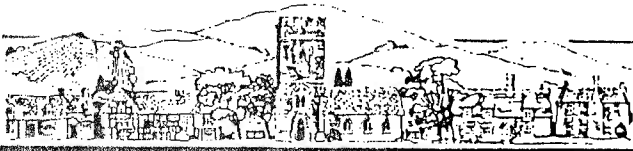
stopped the Great Horwood Band entertained us before the Aldbury Morris Men took over to complete a uniquely English scene. A least I thought it was a uniquely English until Juan and Brigitte pointed out that Morris dancing in its current form is said to date back to the 15th Century and probably comes from the Spanish 'Morisca', meaning Moorish play or dance. The tradition, of course, goes back further than the 15th Century and almost certainly originated in the spring time fertility rites of pre-Christian Europe. The exuberant performance of the Aldbury Morris Men was enthusiastically received and even encouraged the sun to make a token appearance. Perhaps the Morris Men will become a traditional part of the Festival weekend.

To round off an excellent day the Royal Oak's pig roast in the evening was well supported and resulted in a £61 addition to Fete funds.

Finally congratulations and thanks to all those on the committee for the efforts made, for the enjoyment given and for the money raised.

Graham Parker.





UPDATE

OUR REGULAR FEATURE ON PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Five parishioners and P.C. Neil Leggett outnumbered the Parish Council two to one at last month's meeting. There was resignation at what everyone expected to be the inevitability of the 'Bikers' obtaining permission to hold rallies on their recently acquired land outside Cublington, but there was renewed hope that the village conservation proposals may finally come before the District Council. [For further comment on these items see "Bootsie & Snudge" on page 11 and 'Inside the Back Page'.]

The routine meeting went on to mention the repair of the recreation ground seat; announce the arrival of the 'Domesday Plaque' (one of thousands sold at £10 a time to villages up and down the country that had an entry in the original 1086 document); and complain about the telephone box (no replacement door yet and often out of action because it cannot take any more money, evidence, at least, that it is well used), and the absence of progress on the priority signs for Moat Lane.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

Neil Leggett, our community policeman, was at the meeting and spoke of the problem of burglaries in villages such as ours. During the day the village can be almost deserted with children at school and both parents out at work. This is the time when most burglaries take place. Conventional safety locks do help but even they are no deterrent to the determined thief, with patio doors, and even solid wooden doors being smashed to gain entry. You would think that the noise would alert somebody but apparently we just ignore the crash of glass or find some rational explanation to prevent us interfering. Meanwhile the house is emptied of everything of value and much else senselessly smashed to pieces. Such crime is on the increase and the chance of catching those concerned are limited. Prevention rather than detection is the best response and P.C. Leggett has offered to give a free survey on the security of your home. Be sure to ask him before you are burgled.

The best deterrent appears to be an alarm, as P.C. Leggett pointed out he has attended the unpleasant scene of burgled homes in local villages on several occasions recently but never once to a house fitted with

an alarm. As with most things in life quality varies with price, but before you rush out and buy an alarm system please consult P.C. Leggett who will advise on areas of your home that need to be covered. Some alarms are linked direct to the police station, others to a security firm or to British Telecom, who will then phone the police. Others just make a helluva noise which should result in a neighbour phoning the police and the intruder taking flight.

Since writing the above P.C. Leggett has been out to advise us on our security and given advice as to locks that should be used on doors and windows as well as explaining the areas that should be covered by an alarm. Will we go to the expense of full security? I'll let you know. Certainly the modest expense on good locks for doors and windows seems sensible but the £200+ for an alarm system will need more thought. Do we have anything worth taking? Probably not. Would we mess any of the possessions? Most certainly, many with great sentimental value and absolutely irreplaceable. How would we feel if thieves had ransacked our belongings and smashed what they could not take or did not want? Devastated indeed it is said that some people never recover from the experience and many more move house to try and escape the memory.

The idea that it will never happen to you should be dismissed there is an increasing chance it will unless you take precautions now before it happens. Over 90% of alarm systems fitted to domestic properties are fitted after a burglary.

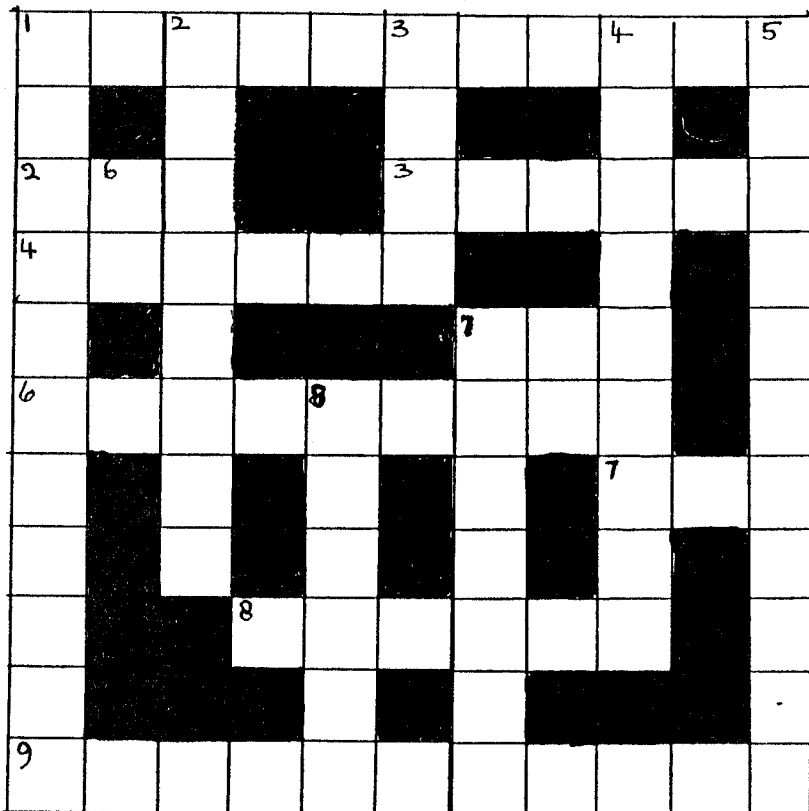
To contact P.C. Leggett just telephone Aylesbury 395010. If he is not in the station just leave a message asking him to contact you.



NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING IS ON FRIDAY
30th SEPTEMBER AT 8 p.m. IN THE CHURCH
ROOM.

CROSSWORD

[COMPILED BY ROSEMARY FRANKLIN]



ACROSS

1. Fear of open spaces.
2. Stone or hole.
3. Mind or mental process.
4. A riddle.
5. Top of cue.
6. To pay ones debt.
7. Two of a kind.
8. To scatter.
9. UB 40 perhaps ?

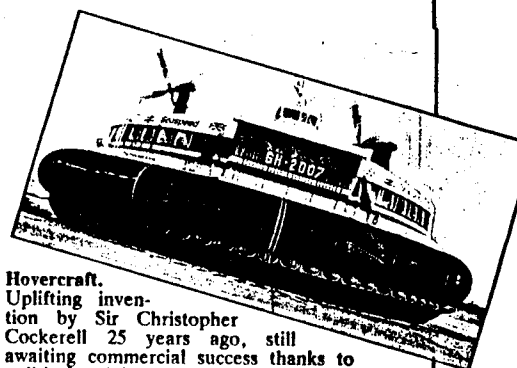
DOWN

1. The way things seem.
2. on the bright side.
3. Transitional stage of insect.
4. To retreat .
5. To idealize.
6. At home.
7. An ear instrument?
8. Swim-wear.

THE BEST OF BRITISH

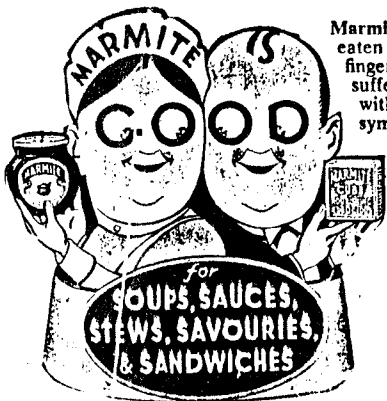
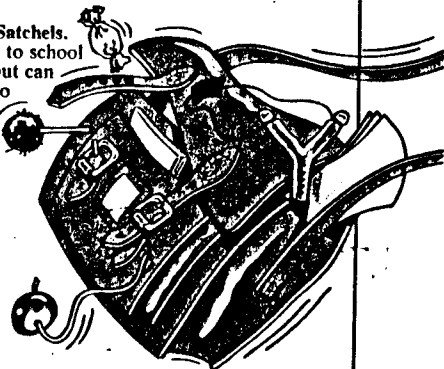
FIVE MORE THINGS THAT ARE
'ESSENTIALLY BRITISH'

Jumble sales.
Recycled
rejects in the
name of
charity

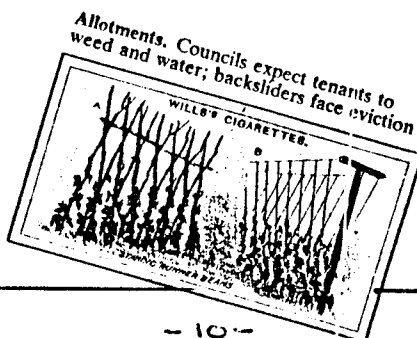


Hovercraft.
Uplifting inven-
tion by Sir Christopher
Cockerell 25 years ago, still
awaiting commercial success thanks to
political and financial dithering

Satchels.
Adjunct to school
uniform but can
be turned to
subversive
playground
advantage



Marmite. Best
eaten with the
fingers. Expats
suffer frenzied
withdrawal
symptoms



Allotments. Councils expect tenants to
weed and water; backsliders face eviction

THE BATTLES OF BIKER BOOTSIE

The 'Battle of Cublington' between Biker 'Bootsie' Waite and the Cublington Residents Association looks set to run and run. The two camps are now settling down behind well defended lines preparing for the next foray 'over the top' into the guns of the enemy. With the positions of each side becoming more and more entrenched the likelihood of reasoned dialogue is reduced. Both sides will want nothing but total victory. Such is the way groups behave when threatened; indeed, such is the way nations behave when threatened. When will we ever learn? Fear stalks the mind, fear reinterprets every pronouncement of the other side until we have one side producing their smooth, graniloquent embellishment of the truth, while the other side responds with exaggerated bombast.

'BIASED LIES' SAY BIKERS

ANGRY members of the National Chopper Club have attacked residents of a local village for being "totally biased" against them and of "suffering from severe paranoia".

The charges come after NCC members read a report compiled by the Cublington Residents' Association over possible use of nearby land by the motorcycle club.

The report was put before Aylesbury Vale District Council's development control sub-committee on Wednesday, when there was a lengthy debate over the club's application to use the land for meetings.

In the report the Residents' Association urged the council to serve an Article Four Direction, which means that the club's right to use the land — which they own — for 28 days in any calendar year without planning permission would be taken away.

Although Aylesbury Vale planning officers recommended against the Article Four Direction, committee members went ahead and served the order.

Cycle club slammed in residents' dossier

By Susan Rust

Now the Secretary of State for the Environment Nicholas Ridley has six months to confirm the direction or the restrictions of use run out. But the National Chopper Club are determined to fight on.

Club president Bootsie Waite, who lives in Slapton, and is vice-chairman of the village schools committee, was angry about the Residents' Association document which he said condemns the club and its members unfairly and out of hand.

He said: "I have never seen such a load of rubbish in all my life. If this is all they have got to go on, then we are not worried at all. There's nothing we can do for six months, but we didn't intend to use the land this year anyway."

"This report is just a tissue of lies. The facts are all irrelevant. They have just taken all the

bad bits they could find about all bikers and put them together."

The report says that the objections to the use of the site by the National Chopper Club rest mainly upon two principle points — the numbers involved in meetings, and the regularity of such meetings.

In a concluding summary the association stated that members of the committee had enough information to answer two questions: the "invasion of Cublington and Wing by up to 5,000 custom motor bikes and six to seven thousand people" and the "detrimental effect on the environment, and a potential traffic hazard and damage to the village".

But Bootsie strongly denies that the figures would be that high. "We

have got under 500 members in the country, and our meetings are not for the public. We only invite who we want to invite."

The residents also claim that the NCC has said it will sub-let the land to other groups.

"What we said was that if the village wanted to use the land for a fête they could have it, and nobody else. They have just turned what we said around to suit them," said club member Chris Ireland.

The report quotes an article from custom bike magazine Back Street Heroes about the annual Kent bike show run by the Hell's Angels, but the Chopper Club say there is no comparison between such shows and the rallies which would be held at Cublington about four times a year.

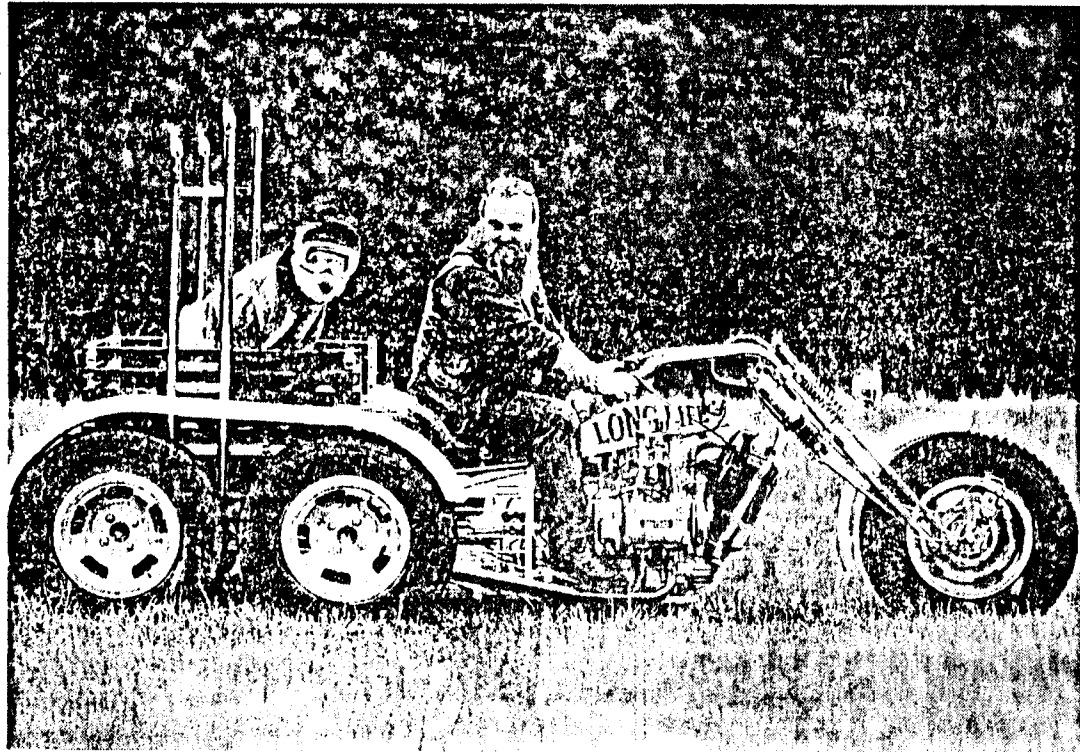
In a survey of local residents 166 of 183 responses wanted to restrict the use of the site, half a mile from the crossroads.

The early secrecy on both sides has been a major factor in allowing this modern country saga to develop to its present intensity. The original sale of the land, an 18 acre field adjacent to the gipsy site along the Wing road out of Cublington, was kept mysteriously quiet by the vendor, who added fuel to the sense of intrigue by a reluctance to identify the proposed purchaser. Then the news escaped that the field had been bought for £18,000 by representatives of the National Chopper Club. Now there's a name to conjure with if ever there was one. The rumours grew about the threat this would be to the locality. The Cublington Residents Association, a graniose name for four concerned individuals, emerged from beneath its veil of secrecy to fight the good fight. They formed themselves into Primescan Ltd to raise money to put in a counter offer for the land, but it appears that Lindsay 'Bootsie' Waite, President of the NCC had already completed the transaction. So far so good, at least for Bootsie and the NCC, but just what is all the fuss about?

Well, as in any good saga the truth is difficult to ascertain amidst claim and counter claim. The fears of the Cublington Residents Association are that the NCC will be holding

regular rallies, up to 28 a year, that would attract 5-6000 bikers to the area; that such 'invasions' would have a 'detrimental effect on the environment' and be 'a potential traffic hazard' as well as cause 'damage to the village'. There is fear that there would be inadequate sanitary arrangements and that the site would become an environmental disaster area. Stories of rallies in the past add credence to the fears. The NCC has been described as a group of 'modern vagabonds' roaming the country looking for places to hold their rallies. Good natured landowners have often accepted the reassurances of Club officials and granted permission for rallies to be held, but the thousands who attend are accompanied by their own hooligan element. Local pubs are 'visited', villages swamped by the 'invasion', land left in an appalling state, with a wiser landowner vowing never to make the same mistake again. Thus the Club has wandered the country seeking sites for its rallies but now, it hoped, its troubles were over, the eternal wandering finished, Cublington would become the home of the NCC.

Bootsie Waite denies that Cublington residents have anything to fear. There would, he claims, only be about four rallies a year not twenty eight and they would attract



EASY RIDERS: Sheepdog Lucel travels in style on Bootsie's Honda Gold Wing bike

Standard Picture: DENIS JONES



BRIAN WILLIAMS: "The fight isn't over yet."

Biker Bootsie has a real field day . . .

IN THE heart of the affluent commuterland north of London, Bootsie the biker is set to create a stir.

He and his mates are preparing to take over a field just under a mile from the sleepy village of Cublington, near Leighton Buzzard, despite the villagers' readiness to buy the land for 19,000 more than Bootsie paid for it.

It is a classic case of newcomers trying to preserve the rural calm.

Lindsay Waite, 33, alias

Bootsie, is Bedfordshire born and bred, active in his local school parents' association and married to a school governor.

Rallies

He is also president of the 500 strong National Chopper Club, an Easy Rider custom bikers' group, which is looking for land to hold rallies to show off their gold-plated bikes.

"They're not actually rallies, because we wouldn't

wreck the bikes by riding them around a field. We plan to have several runs a year to this field on Bank Holidays. It won't be that much louder than a caravan club weekend."

Bootsie runs his own business customising bikes for TV programmes like Dr Who, The Lenny Henry Show and Russ Abbott, as well as for other bikers.

At weekends, complete with tattoos, leathers and dark glasses, he and partner Chris, 37, indeed take to the road. Chris's old English

sheep dog Lucel (short for Lucifer) sits in the back of his rebuilt Honda Gold Wing in a giant child seat, wearing a balaclava to keep the wind out of his ears.

"These people in Cublington haven't given us a chance. They seem to think we're going to be up there raping their daughters and biting the heads off chickens," he said.

On the other side of the fence is management consultant Brian Williams, who moved to a modern house in Cublington eight years ago. Mr Williams, who is also protesting about clay pigeon shoots and a new turkey farm, mobilised wealthy locals to put up £27,000 to buy the land, but they were too late.

"The National Chopper Club may have bought the land but the fight isn't over at all."

Ted Payne, chairman of neighbouring Wing parish council whose boundary embraces Bootsie's field, said: "We invited Mr Waite to a meeting and he gave a very good account of himself and his group. They have done a lot of local fund-raising.

"I can understand people's fears, but our view is to take a wait-and-see attitude."

A planning meeting will discuss the problem next month, but officials admit that it is difficult to take any action against the bikers before they have started doing anything.

King's Cross aid team faces disaster

A CASH shortage threatens the future of a project.

Battle over bikers continues

CUBLINGTON is waiting with bated breath today to see if district councillors will stop up to 5,000 bikers holding festivals on land at the edge of their village.

The land was recently bought for £18,000 for use by the National Chopper Club, whose president Lindsay "Bootsie" Waite is boss of the separate Dan custom bike shop in Linslade.

At Aylesbury Vale District Council's planning meeting today, councillors will decide whether to apply an "article four direction" to the land.

This would have the effect of restricting the use of the land, which is less than a mile from the centre of the village. At the moment, the bikers plan to use the site for anything, up to 28 times a year for meetings and rallies.

But, claims the club in a submission to the council, they have a good rapport with the police and do a lot of work for charity. While they will have music on the site they promise to regulate it to keep the noise down.

Planning officers are recommending no action until the bikers have started to use the site, banding residents' fears "a matter of conjecture".

But some councillors are not so sure. Wing councillor, Ted Payne, supports the bin and Independent leader, Cllr Janet Roff, told the Plus: "I think they have every reason for concern. I think that to wait and see could leave it too late."



Fighting the bikers (left to right): John Jackson; Mike Corcoran; Gillian Dunne, Chris and Cathy McLaren - with baby Rory; and Brian Williams

Local MP George Walden has also pledged his support and, in a village survey, 166 out of 183 villagers asked called for the use of the site to be restricted.

The villagers, who clubbed together to try and buy the land originally, are still prepared to compensate the Chopper Club. Cublington Residents Association chairman, Brian Williams, said the villagers hope the land will revert to agricultural use.

He said villagers feared noise nuisance, anti-social behaviour, road congestion, policing problems and loss of local amenity. "Ours is not high quality landscape but we don't share planners' enthusiasm to downgrade it, for it is all we have."

Bootsie told a Plus reporter: "You are a bunch of w*****ers." He refused to comment further.

inquiry had received people for help, and was the first to be a tragedy

g direc: Mr Ken sort to 3 be a 'ho be d and nken trage feel.

It is ort 30 ple ve n g

only those of the Club's 500 members who were invited. Non-members are not admitted. Cublington has been assured that the field would be as clean after the events as it was before; that the Club would welcome visits from parish residents; that the meetings are for members to show off their bikes to each other, not to tear around the countryside, and that the Club would be willing to help raise funds for village charities.

There is no doubt that Bootsie and his fellow bikers have a good reputation for local philanthropy and good works. Lindsay Waite, who runs the Desperate Dan custom bike shop in Linlade, has been active in his local schools parents association; is married to a school governor and has been involved in supporting local youth work. His credentials are good, but the bikers image strikes fear into the hearts of many who conjure up images not far removed from the rape and pillage associated with the Vikings - and that, we are now finding out, was more rumour than reality.

At the moment image and rumour, allied to some careful wording in the Cublington Residents 'dossier' appears to have blocked the bikers ambitions. The Aylesbury Vale District Council Development Control Sub-Committee, meeting on the 17th August, went against the advice of their officers and granted an Article Four Direction, effectively banning the free use of the land by the NCC. The vote was as close as it can be

Rallies banned

BIKERS have been banned from holding rallies on land they paid £18,000 for at Cublington.

And it's down to local gypsies, whose presence swung the narrow vote on a legal move to stop bikers' meetings.

By a vote of seven to six, the Aylesbury Vale District Council planning committee last Wednesday approved an "article four" direction.

This removes the right of the landowners to hold up to 28 meetings and rallies a year on the site, which they would have been allowed under common law.

The land was to be used by the National Chopper Club. It is right next door to an AVDC official gypsy site for six families, and has been there since 1982.



● Lindsay Waite - National Chopper Club president

Evidence

Planning committee members defied the advice of their officers who maintained that no ban should be imposed until there was definite evidence of trouble at the site.

Wing councillor Ted Payne told the committee: "The National Chopper Club said they don't like gypsies," adding that bikers had told Wing parish councillors "they will soon shift them off the site."

Cllr Payne warned of possible warfare between the bikers and the gypsies. The latter were bound to call up reinforcements, he said. "The whole area will be swamped with gypsies."

Independent councillor, Ken Reading, said: "Gypsies have rights too."

Cllr Andrew Simpson (Conservative) said: "I accept that there are members of the clergy that ride motorcycles. What is going to happen here is lots of people going round and round 'earning street cred' blipping their throats."

Not here

Cllr Leslie Jole (Conservative) said: "I am wholly in favour of chopper clubs. I am greatly in favour of these sort of people getting together for social purposes." But, he added, the Cublington site was not the right place.

One villager said: "We've been trying to get rid of the gypsies for years but ironically it's thanks to them that we have got this order."

THE 'NIMBY' SYNDROME

The issue has resulted in a widespread outbreak of the Nimby Syndrome in which concern is expressed that something has to be done so long as it is not in my back yard. Cllr Leslie Jole gave a classic example during the sub-committee meeting (see above right).

(7-6) and the result will undoubtedly be challenged by the bikers, especially as the balance appears to have been tilted against them by allegations from Wing Councillor Ted Payne that there would be battles between the bikers and their neighbours on the gypsy site. Payne claimed at the meeting that the bikers had told Wing Parish councillors that 'they would soon shift the gypsies off the site', and he feared the 'area will be swamped with gypsies' to defend their interests. Undoubtedly shades here of that famous Enoch Powell speech, with the firm implication that we could expect rivers of blood as the bikers and gypsies clashed.

THE 'WHAT IF' GAME

As this seems to form a basis for much of the arguments in this case what if the site had been purchased for the holding of 28 Hunt Balls a year, or as the organisers would claim only 4, would the reaction have been the same? Rumour has it that the potential environmental disturbances would not have been too dissimilar!

Maybe the Article Four Direction will be confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, but, if it is, then presumably Bootsie and the NCC will have to be substantially compensated for their loss of common law rights. Who would pay

Portraits of Buckinghamshire

No.32 PEBBLE LANE, AYLESBURY.

Sketch by Elizabeth Ogan in
Elizabeth Cull's 'A Picture
of Buckinghamshire'.



THE BATTLES OF BIKER BOOTSIE (Continued)

for this ? Well, the local rate payer seems the obvious choice, and then Cublington could, once again, retire from the headlines.

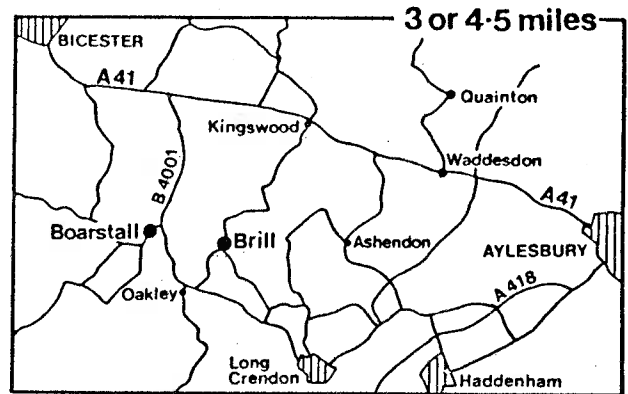
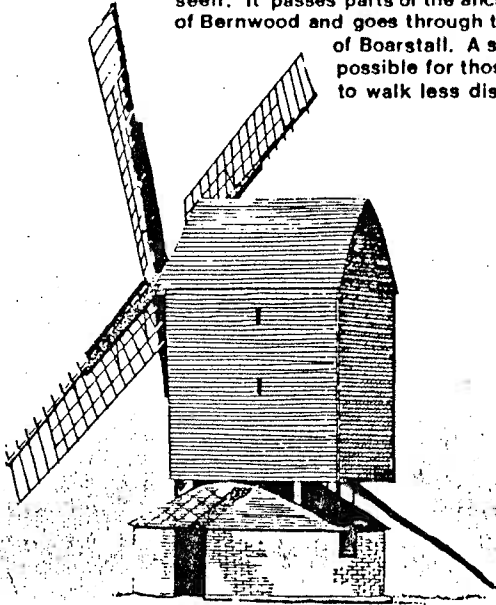
But what would happen should the Article Four Direction not be confirmed by the Secretary of State and in six months time the NCC are able to make full use of the newly acquired site ? Would the worst fears of all those who have fled the city to take refuge in their rural hideout be realised ? Maybe so, but if they were there is little doubt that a campaign against the invasion would gain justifiable local support and result in an Article Four Direction or some similar restriction of activities on the site. The NCC investment of £18,000 would then have been wasted, although a generous Primescan Ltd might be prepared to offer a community buy-out.

Such events would not be in the best interests of the NCC. Bootsie and his friends must realise that they must effectively police themselves, root out any hooligan elements in their organisation and build on the philanthropic reputation they have locally. In such an instance the local community and the police should be involved early to establish the ground rules before the rally, rather than everyone reacting to events as they happen. This would help ensure that the reality lived up to Bootsie's predictions rather than the fears of Cublington 'residents'.

Whatever the eventual outcome this is a saga to follow, a real life soap in your own backyard.

CIRCULAR
OUT AND ABOUT
WALK
BRILL/BOARSTALL

This circular walk starts from Brill Common at the Windmill where extensive views of the surrounding countryside can be seen. It passes parts of the ancient forest of Bernwood and goes through the village of Boarstall. A short cut is possible for those wanting to walk less distance.



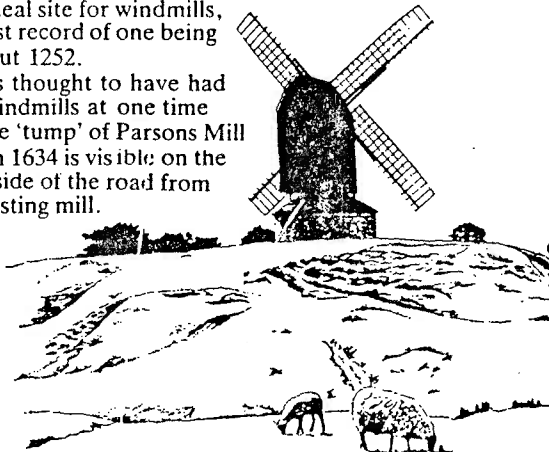
The route is described in a clockwise direction starting from Brill though the walk can be joined at other points and may be followed in either direction. Different views will be seen by walking the route anticlockwise.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

- ① The walk starts from the car park by the Windmill. This post mill dates from around 1680 and was used to mill corn commercially until 1917. It was altered and restored in 1947 and is now owned by Buckinghamshire County Council.
- ② Leave the windmill and turn down the metalled road, South Hills, on the edge of the Common. The hollows in the ground are from the extraction of clay for pottery tile and brick making which was an important industry in Brill from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. A couple of medieval pottery kilns near the common have been excavated and the finds are now on show in Bucks County Museum, Aylesbury.

The relative height of Brill (615 feet above sea level) makes it an ideal site for windmills, the first record of one being in about 1252.

Brill is thought to have had five windmills at one time and the 'tump' of Parsons Mill built in 1634 is visible on the other side of the road from the existing mill.

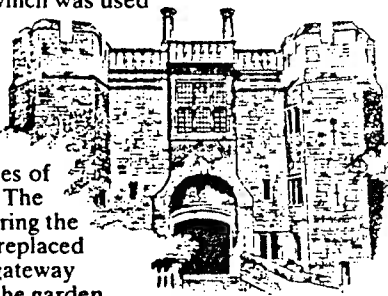


- ③ Bear left just before the end of the tarmac and follow the track. Cross a stile ahead and follow a footpath between hedges along the end of some houses and over a field to the road. The extensive view to the right shows large patches of wood, which are the remains of the ancient Royal Forest of Bernwood. Brill was the administrative centre of the forest and many kings stayed there to hunt the 'beasts of the chase' (red deer, fallow deer and wild boar). Bernwood Forest was not one large patch of woodland but more a patchwork of woods with villagers growing crops and grazing their animals in between. The area was covered by Forest Law (not Common Law) and preference was given to the success of the deer so that the king could hunt them. The area of Bernwood Forest changed many times, but between 1300 and 1630 it was about 8,000 acres.
- ④ At the road turn right, ignore the footpath sign and turn right down a bridleway. The trees beside the track include scots pine, larch, horse chestnut, sycamore and willow. All were planted at roughly the same time but those at the top of the hill have grown much more slowly due to the exposed conditions.
- ⑤ At the bottom of the hill good views can be seen through gaps in the hedge back up to the windmill. Immediately before reaching the road turn right across some common land.
- ⑥ At the far end there is a choice of routes; turn right along Span Green Lane for the short cut back to Brill (see Section 14) or turn left towards Boarstall.

⑦ Cross the road and follow the path along the edge of Boarstall Wood which is part of the forest of Bernwood. Many of the best trees have been removed, particularly during the last war, and although much has been replanted with conifers it is still a good woodland for wildlife. After 100 yards turn right across the fields, aiming for the right hand side of the small woodland. Go over the bridge and turn left through a newly planted woodland. Walk across another field, over a sleeper bridge, and head towards Boarstall Church.

⑧ On the right hand side of the field before the Church is an old moat, now overgrown and wooded. There are 159 moats recorded in Buckinghamshire, many constructed in the thirteenth century. Many were undoubtedly for protection and had mansions, barns, or dovecotes within, while others show no evidence of any buildings. It is likely that some moats were built merely because they were fashionable.

⑨ At the road turn right and go past Boarstall Church rebuilt in 1818. Glimpses of Boarstall Tower can be seen behind the churchyard. The tower was built around 1312 as a fortification for a mansion, which was used as a royalist stronghold in the civil war. The house was demolished in 1778 on the orders of the owners after the death of their young son. A moat surrounds three sides of what is now the garden. The fourth side was filled in during the seventeenth century and replaced with a fine brick wall and gateway between the church and the garden.



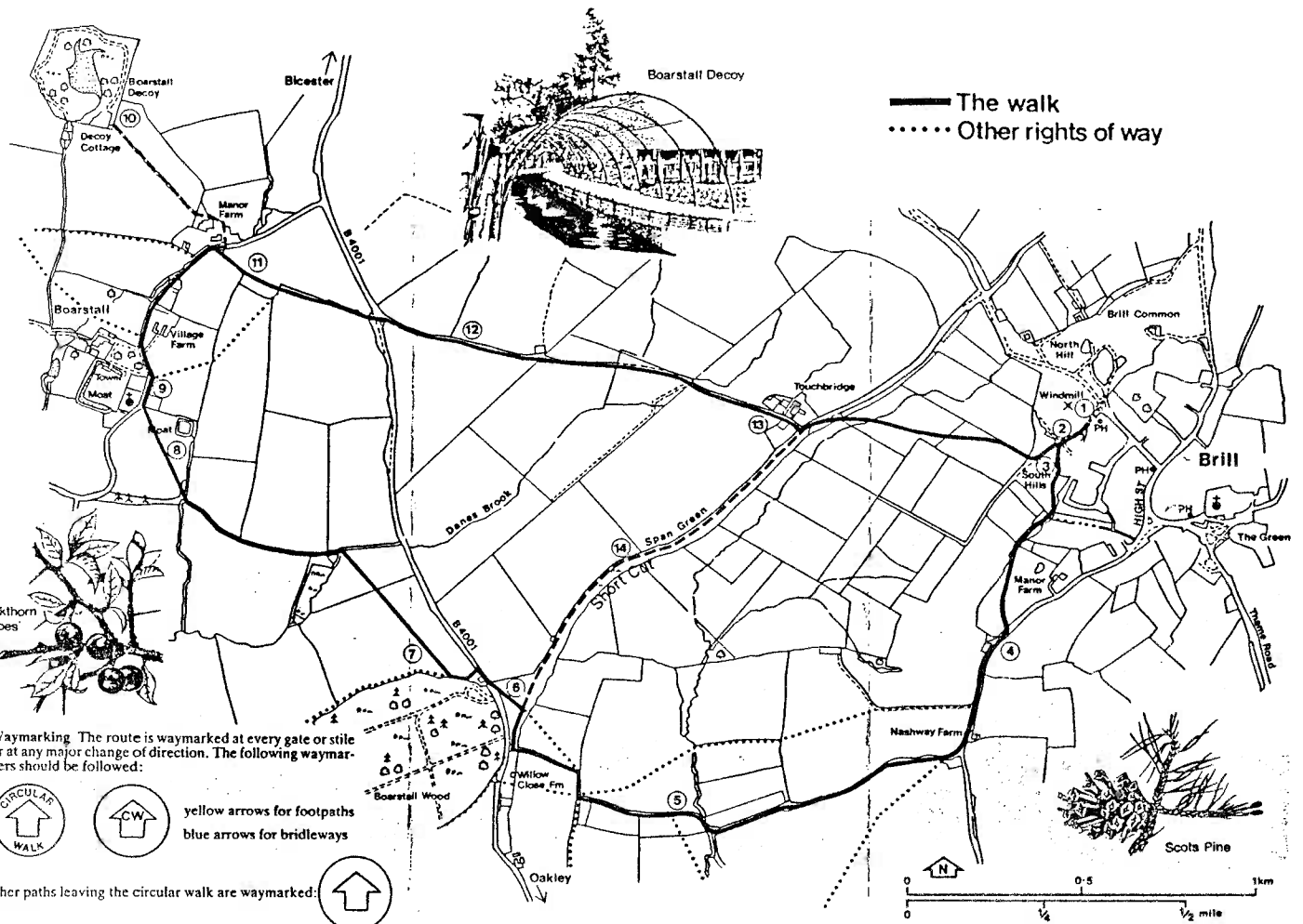
⑩ Walk up the main street of the village. After 1/3 of a mile a short detour can be made by turning left at Manor Farm to Boarstall Duck Decoy (for opening times see later). It is one of only four working decoys in the country and was constructed in the 17th century. Originally the ducks were caught as an important source of winter food but nowadays they are ringed for research purposes and then released. The decoy is owned by the National Trust and managed by Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Naturalists Trust (BBONT). There is a nature trail through the surrounding 13 acre woodland which is thought to be a remnant of Bernwood Forest.



⑪ For those not visiting the decoy turn right on a path opposite Manor Farm. After two fields cross the main road and take the back-road signposted to Brill.

⑫ The steeper land on the left of the road, rising up to Muswell Hill is unimproved pasture and grazed by cattle and sheep. In contrast, the land on the right is lower, flat and easily ploughed. Muswell means "moss hill" and a number of springs can be seen coming out of the hillside. They are created by rain water trickling through the top layers of sand and limestone and coming to the surface where it meets an impervious layer of clay halfway down the hillside.

⑬ The steeper land on the left of the road, rising up to Muswell Hill is unimproved pasture and grazed by cattle and sheep. In contrast, the land on the right is lower, flat and easily ploughed. Muswell means "moss hill" and a number of springs can be seen coming out of the hillside. They are created by rain water trickling through the top layers of sand and limestone and coming to the surface where it meets an impervious layer of clay halfway down the hillside.



⑬ At Touchbridge Farm the short cut joins the main walk. The farmhouse is an attractive brick building with an unusual greensand stone extension. This type of stone is seen frequently in buildings in East Anglia, the Brill area being one of its most westerly outcrops.

Turn left along the road (or keep straight on from the short cut) and after 100 yards turn right on a footpath over the fields. Cross a stile and stream and follow the path back up the hill to South Hills and the windmill.

⑭ (from 6) Span Green Lane is thought to be an old drovers track for moving stock to market in Oxford. Nowadays it is still used as both bridlepath and agricultural track and consequently it is frequently muddy from farm machinery. The hedges on each side are old and attractive for wildlife. It is thought possible to date a hedge by counting the number of woody species growing in 30 yards of hedge and multiplying by 100. Hence three shrubs in 30 yards would make the hedge approximately 300 years old. Along Span Green Lane the hedges contain hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, aspen, rose, ash, willow and elder. At the end of the lane rejoin the main route (see Section 13).



Cottages at Brill

Brill At the end of the walk Brill has three pubs and two general stores supplying refreshments. A walk around this hill-top village is full of interest and surprises. The church originates from the 12th century and attractive brick and tile houses surround village greens. There are thought to be the remains of a royal palace near the church where kings used to stay on hunting trips in Bernwood Forest.

Brill Windmill is open April – September, Sundays 2.30 – 5.30 pm. A small admission charge is made.

Boarstall Tower is owned by the National Trust and is open May – September, Wednesdays 2 – 6 pm by written appointment with The Tenant, Boarstall Tower, Boarstall, Near Aylesbury.

Boarstall Duck Decoy is open between Easter Friday and August Bank Holiday Monday on Wednesdays 2 – 5 pm and Saturdays and Sundays 10 am – 5 pm. Guided tours are at 11 am and 3 pm. Entry – £1.10 Adults, 50p Children/O.A.P's., N.T. members free.

Footwear Many of the paths on this walk can be wet and muddy at any time of the year and therefore waterproof footwear is recommended.

Maps The leaflet can be used in conjunction with Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Landranger map No. 165 (Aylesbury) or 164 (Oxford) or 1:25,000 Pathfinder map No. SP 61/71.

Brill Footpaths Group Anyone interested in walking in the Brill area should contact Mr J Saunders, Brill Footpaths Group, 23, Windmill Street, Brill, Telephone Brill 237182. Other walks in the Brill area are described in a leaflet published by The Brill Society, available at local shops and post offices.

Car Parking Parking is easiest in Brill although the streets are narrow. Care and consideration in parking should be taken.

Buses stop at Boarstall, Oakley and Brill from Oxford, Bicester and Aylesbury. Check bus times through local bus companies, Motts Coaches (Stoke Mandeville 3831), Oxford Bus Company (Oxford 774611) or Heyfordian Travel (Aylesbury 25999).

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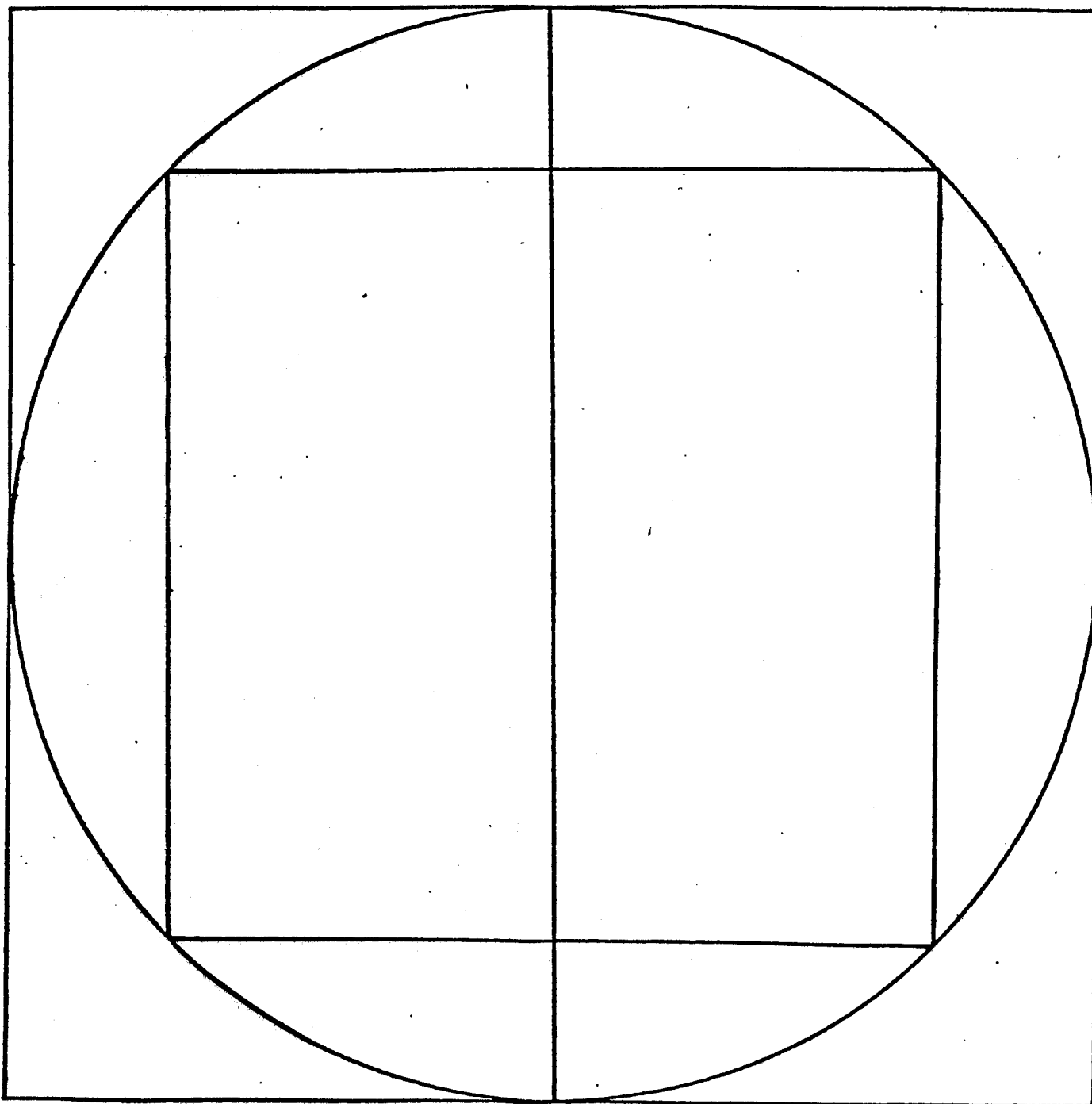
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QUIZ PAGE

Something a little different this month; what you have to do is to see if you can trace this shape without going along the same line twice. The answer can be found elsewhere in this issue but try it without cheating!



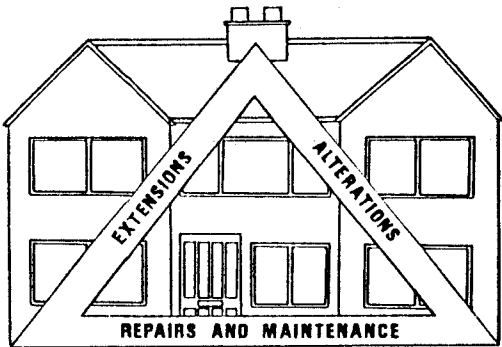
ANSWERS TO THE CROSSWORD.

Across: 1 Agoraphobia. 2 Pit. 3 Psycho. 4 Enigma. 5 Tip. 6 Reimburse. 7 Duo.
8 Dispel. 9 Subsistence.

Down : 1 Appearances. 2 Optimism. 3 Pupa. 4 Backpedal. 5 Apotheosize. 6 In
7 Trumpet. 8 Swimwear.

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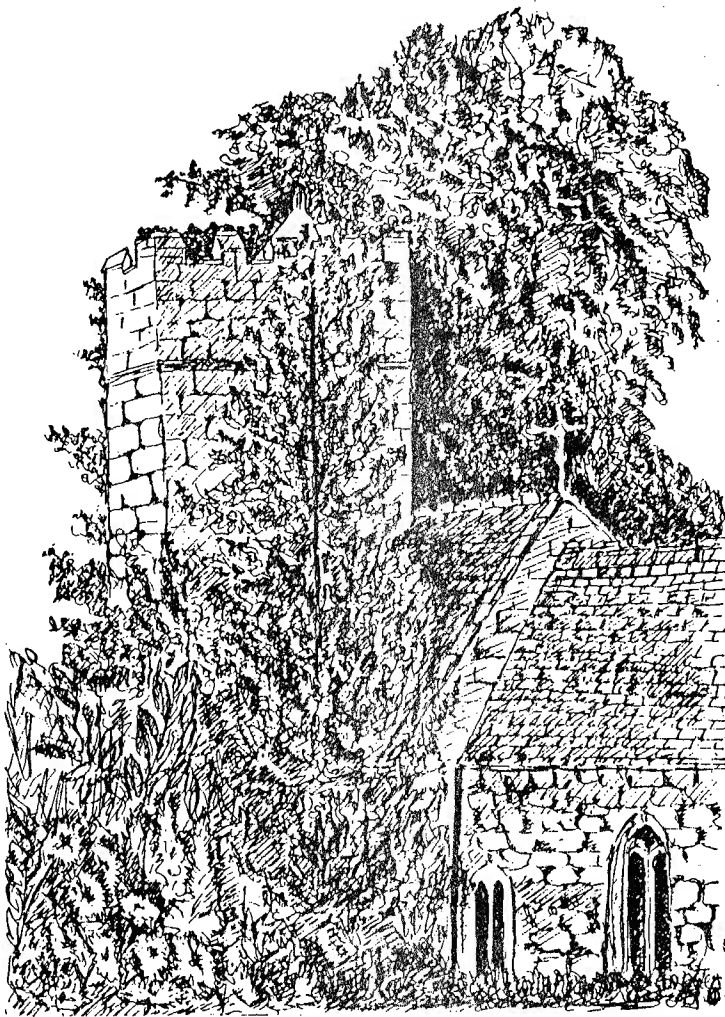
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CHURCH NEWS



[Sketch by Rosemary Franklin]

Harvest Festivals are with us again. Our Harvest Supper and Sale will be on September 17th, with a Harvest Festival Family Service on the 18th. The P.C.C. have decided that this year the money raised by the sale of produce will be given to Christian Aid. I quote " In this programme people listen to what we say we need. They give us oxen and seed on credit. Then we can pay back what we have received and become more independent. That way more people can be helped ... ". This is the way Christian Aid works. It provides capital so that people can help themselves. So please, if you can, give generously to the sale and then bid high for our home produced goods. Tickets for the supper and sale [the price has not been fixed yet but it will be about £3 a head] will be available from Kay Dines and Doris Scutchings. Since there will be two Family Services in September - on the 4th and 18th - there will be no Family Service in October.

Last month Mrs Hook wrote about the peace and quiet of our churchyard. We know that also some villagers would like to have a seat put there to 'sit and meditate'. The P.C.C. would very much like to put a seat

there. If anyone would like to contribute to the cost the church wardens would be pleased to know.

Lastly, but by no means least, the church will be open [what a pity it is not always] all day on the 8th September. The Bishop has asked that a vigil be kept that day for the success of the Urban Fund about which I wrote recently.

Peter Dines.

CHURCH SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

			<u>Sidesman</u>
4th.	September	: FAMILY SERVICE 11.15 a.m. Special Readings.	Alison Hewitt.
11th.	September	: HOLY COMMUNION 11.15 a.m. 1 John 4(15-21) Luke 16(19-21)	Colin Higgs.
18th.	September	: HARVEST FESTIVAL FAMILY SERVICE 11.15 a.m. Special Readings.	Sarah Lovell.
25th.	September	: HOLY COMMUNION 11.15 a.m. See Rectors Page.	Alison Ford.



ADULT LEARNING AT WING

ADULT LEARNING AND LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES

Wing Adult Centre, whose office is based at Wing School, provides a range of courses designed for adults. These courses take place during the daytime as well as in the evenings and are located not only at Wing but also in Stoke Hammond, Cheddington, Ivinghoe, Dagnall and Edlesborough.

All our tutors are experts in their subject or activity and they are also trained to teach adults. Their emphasis always is on how they can help you to learn and to find enjoyment and stimulation from your class. This means that our courses are never like "going back to school" but are a completely different experience in which your own experience and knowledge are fully recognised and valued. Our tutors are also conscious of the importance of creating the right atmosphere in their classes. They know that people learn best in friendly, relaxed groups where they do not feel threatened or have to worry about being 'shown up' or made to look foolish.

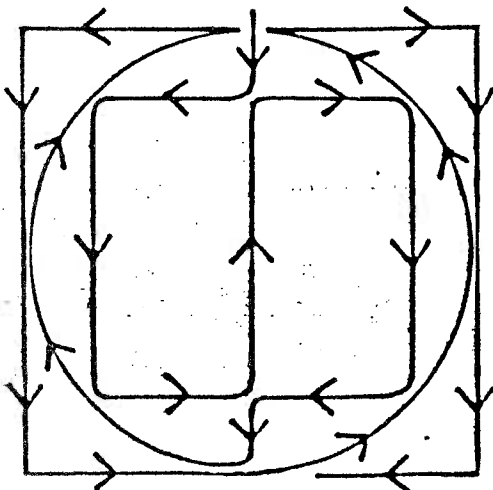
This year we have been put into a completely new financial system, called Net Budgeting. We, as a Centre, are now responsible for recovering most of the direct costs of putting on courses and we are no longer able to go back to the authority to ask for special dispensation to run course with low numbers. This is really part of the political movement to make the costs of services provided by local government more visible. It does give us much greater flexibility but, coupled with the recent pay award to lecturers and tutors, it has meant a rise in fees this year which is greater than inflation.

Full details of courses that are available can be found in our brochure and there will be FREE introductory sessions during the week of the 12th of September so that you can see if you like it before parting with your money.

To obtain a brochure please ring AYLESBURY 688632.

Alan Owen
Head of Centre.

QUIZ PAGE ANSWER



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September 1988

A MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

Aylesbury 681623

This is a statement that I read in all three churches on Sunday, 31st July:

"I want you all to know how sad I am that I have to make this statement because I have grown so fond of you all, and making this decision has been one of the hardest I have had to make in my entire life.

"I believe God is calling me to other work and I feel that you are ready for another parish priest. So I have to tell you now that the Bishop of St. Albans (from my old diocese where I was ordained) has appointed me to be the Rector of the parishes of Wilden, with Colmworth and Ravensden - three fast growing villages just north of Bedford - some thirty miles away from here.

"I have asked that my Institution be delayed so that the gap between me and my successor may not be any longer than necessary. Advent, November 27th will be my last Sunday here.

"You will understand that I feel very emotional about this, but we must look to the future, here, and to this end, I have given a form to the Churchwardens for them to distribute which I hope all Electoral Roll members will complete: an opportunity to say what kind of a parish priest you would hope to succeed me."

Meanwhile, I am not leaving for some months yet. There is much work to be done, so let's get on with it!

Yours sincerely,

FR. JOHN HEFFER

P.S. I have just heard that the date of my Induction to Wilden is Wednesday, 14th December at 7.30 p.m., and I shall be Instituted by the Rt. Revd. John Taylor, Bishop of St. Albans.

RESUME OF HARVEST THANKSGIVING

11th September	Wingrave URC	2.45 p.m.	(Rev. Henry Gordon)
18th September	Aston Abbotts Family Service	11.15 a.m.	(The Rector)
18th September	Wingrave Methodist	10 a.m.	(Dr. John Prebble)
25th September	Aston Abbotts Methodist	6.00 p.m.	(Rev. Peter Lemon)
2nd October	Wingrave Parish Church	10 a.m.	(Rev. Peter Binns)
		6 p.m.	(Rev. Sam Prasadam - Vicar of All Saints, Luton)
2nd October	Cublington Family Service	10 a.m.	(The Rector)

SUNDAY LESSONS

(ASB)

18th September	Pentecost 17	{ 717 }	Galations 3(1-9)	Luke 7(1-10)
25th September	Pentecost 18	{ 722 }	1 Peter 4(7-11)	Matthew 25(14-30)
2nd October	Pentecost 19	{ 728 }	Romans 5(1-11)	Luke 19(1-10)
9th October	Pentecost 20	{ 733 }	1 Cor. 9(19-27)	Matthew 7(13-27)
16th October	Pentecost Last	{ 745 }	Isaiah 33(17-22)	Matthew 25(1-13)

Harvest Lessons replace the above as follows:-

Genesis 1, vv. 1-3 (ASB 891) Matthew 6, vv. 24-34 (ASB 899)
& 24-31a

ORDINATION Best wishes and prayers for Rev. John Camp (son of John and Rose) made Deacon in Amersham Parish Church on Sunday, July 3rd.

SCHOOL ASSEMBLY In Wingrave Parish Church, 7th September at 9.30 a.m. Parents and friends are very welcome to attend and share this beginning of term Service with the children.

SEPTEMBER 8TH - VIGIL in all three churches for the Church Urban Fund. See local publicity for times and details.

SERVICE OF PRAYER & HEALING Cublington Parish Church, Thursday 15th September at 8 p.m. This is a Service for everyone.

CONFIRMATION A preliminary meeting for those thinking about Confirmation this year will be held in Wingrave Rectory, Monday September 19th, 7.30 p.m.

THIRD COTTESLOE LECTURE The Roman Catholic Bishop of Northampton will speak on the subject "In The World Not Of It". The Parish Church of SS. Peter & Paul, Buckingham, Friday 7th October at 8.00 p.m. All Welcome.

FUNERALS

Wingrave:

21st July	Gladys May NEWELL
9th August	Edith PEARCE
10th August	Arthur WHITE
19th August	Leslie TOMES
23rd August	Alan THORNALLEY

"Rest in peace"

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CONSERVATION CANDIDATES

In the autumn the District Council will be drawing up a list of candidates for conservation status. District Planning Officer J.W. Peeters has stated that Aston Abbotts will feature on that list, however the list is likely to be a long one and the Council will have to determine priorities. Thus we must do all we can to push our case with the decision makers. Our detailed case was first submitted in March 1984 and, after updating, resubmitted earlier this year. This latest submission was supported by a barrage of letters from villagers to George Walden, and anybody else who it was felt could raise our profile amongst the powers that be. Perhaps a second barrage is due as the Council ponders its selection of those villages to be granted conservation areas this time around.

THE FIRST RESULTS

Well, the GCSE results are out and, surprise, surprise, aren't they good! The Secretary of State for Education declares that this indicates a miraculous improvement in teaching standards, so I am expecting my productivity bonus in next month's wage packet. The evidence supporting this statement is the fact that more youngsters have achieved the higher grades (A B C) in GCSE than were obtained under the old GCE & CSE system. Well, sad to say the Secretary of State would not have obtained a high grade had he been taking a GCSE in history, which, among other things, sets out to assess a candidate's ability to

show the skills necessary to study a wide variety of historical sources such as primary and secondary written sources, statistical and visual material, artefacts, textbooks and orally transmitted information

- (a) by comprehending and extracting information from it;
- (b) by interpreting and evaluating it - distinguishing between fact, opinion and judgement; pointing to deficiencies in the material as evidence, such as gaps and inconsistencies; detecting bias;
- (c) by comparing various types of historical sources and reaching conclusions based on this comparison.

The Secretary of State can certainly reach the low level skill of comprehension and extraction of information but as for the higher level skills in (b) and (c) I'm afraid are not reached. A good 'C' grade candidate should be able to show that he or she can handle the skills indicated in (b). So where did the Secretary of State go wrong?

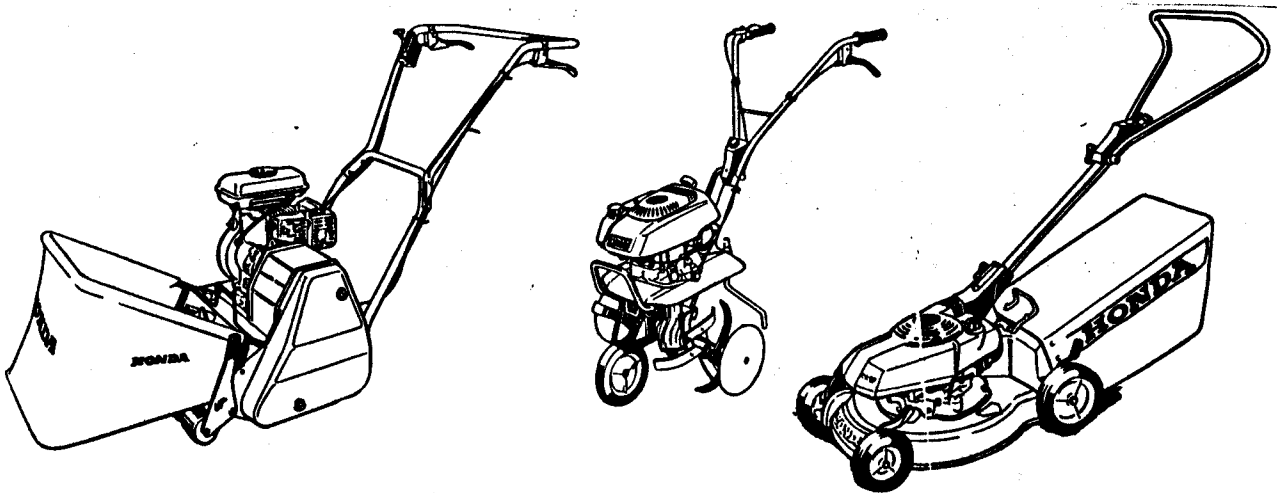
Well, to compare GCSE with GCE & CSE is not to compare like with like. GCSE is a multi-skilled based examination while GCE & CSE were, almost exclusively, testing only the skill of recall. It would thus be disappointing if the GCSE did not result in more students reaching the higher grades; for with GCSE students have more opportunities to show what they can do. If their recall is not too good they can, perhaps, show their ability in the other skills being tested - such as being able to point out gaps and inconsistencies in evidence set before them.

In addition the Examining Boards must, in all fairness, have taken into account the facts that: teachers and students were often well into their courses before course details were known; teachers were inadequately trained for the changes in teaching style demanded by the changes in the methods of assessment; for many teachers course-work was something entirely new, and the Boards themselves frequently gave contradictory advice. Giving the students the benefit of any doubt would have pulled down the nominal grade marks. So to say that standards have risen based on the number of students gaining grades A, B and C seems to be an opinion rather than a fact, appears not to take account of the gaps and inconsistencies in the evidence and results in a conclusion based on one source rather than the full range of evidence available! And this does not even mention the argument that teachers, examiners, Examining Boards and the Government could not afford to proclaim GCSE a failure.

The results cannot be used to show that GCSE is a success or a failure. The success of the GCSE is in changing a narrow, recall based, examination system into one that allows all candidates to show what they can do by testing a wide range of skills.

Abbottsbury.

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