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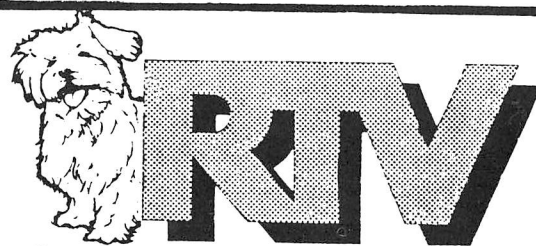
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The views expressed are the views of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers.



Wot!

About Ratby

DECEMBER 1987 Published by Ratby Scout Group **ISSUE 7**



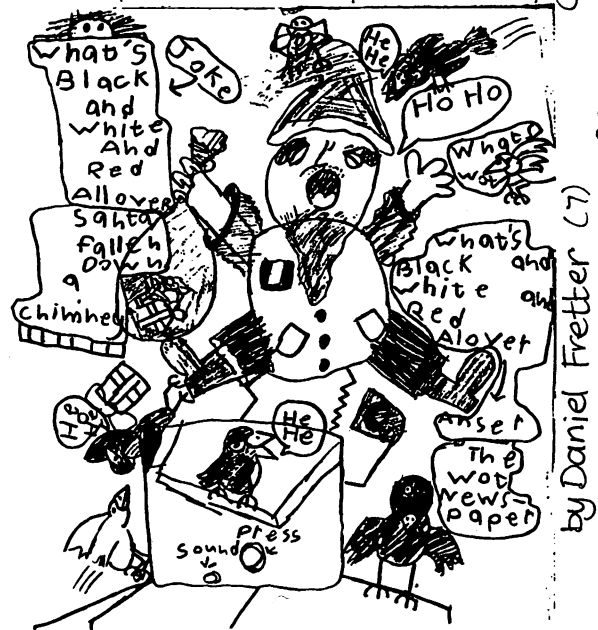
by Sally Skinner, (9)

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

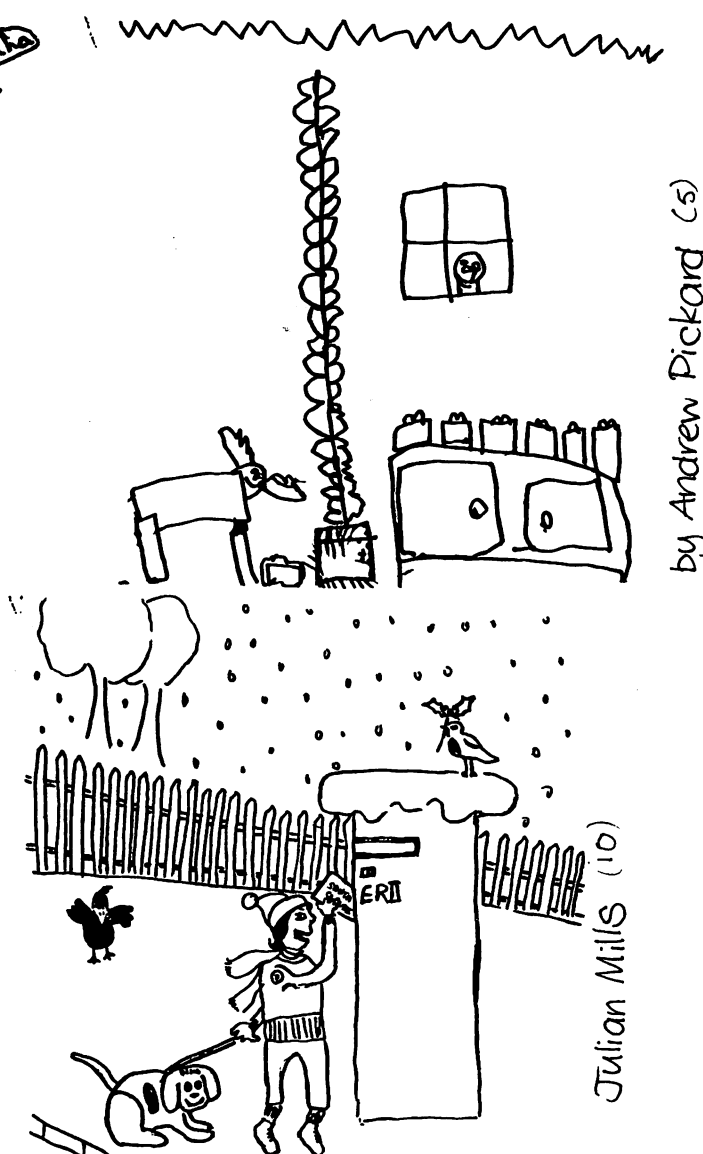
Crow pie children's page



Congratulations Sally Skinner, our Judge, Melinda Measor of the Leicester Pre-School Playgroups Association has chosen your picture for our cover!! It was a difficult choice. She loved Sarah Mukkadum's drawing (but we can't print it... the pencil didn't reproduce) Highly commended were Daniel Fretter & Andrew Pickard



by Daniel Fretter (7)



by Andrew Pickard (5)



James Cross (7)



by Claire Shenton (6)



by Hayley Botterill (6)

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Ratby Parish Council

A46 Leicester Western By-Pass

At the meeting of Ratby Parish Council held on Thursday October 6th, Mr. T. Thompson, Chief Engineer with Leicestershire County Council outlined the alternative proposal for a junction between Kirby Muxloe and Ratby. This plan had been drawn up by the County Council following objections from Kirby Action Group to the original Department of Transport plan.

The Parish Council determined that a Public Meeting would be called to enable Ratby people to voice their opinions.

Police

Acting Inspector Grant and Sargeant Twigg attended the November 3rd meeting of the Parish Council. They informed us that Police Headquarters are moving from Blackbird Road to Beaumont Leys and that this would ensure a better service. There would be a 24 hour Panda car surveillance in Ratby.

Our new local 'Bobby' will be Policewoman Henderson who is determined to get the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme moving.

Several members of the public reported increasing nuisance and hooliganism, including harrassment of elderly people.

Inspector Grant emphasised that all incidents, however trivial they seemed should be reported to the Police. Every incident was investigated, although police did not always visit the informant. Names of trouble-makers could be given to the Police in confidence, and numbers of cars seen speeding or driving over grassed areas, should be taken. Ratby is still a low-crime area.

Playing Fields

Vandalism and rubbish dumping were still occurring. Two councillors had been nominated to report regularly on Playing Areas. Repairs to perimeter fencing were to go ahead at a cost of £1000. As the tennis courts are under-used and constantly vandalised, the fencing would be removed at a cost of £216.00. The damaged roundabout would be taken away. Repairs to play equipment were authorised to ensure childrens' safety. Estimates for providing safety surfaces at both play areas totalled over £17,000. There are not sufficient funds at present to undertake this.

'PLACE OF WORSHIP'

Over thirty worried residents attended a Special Meeting on October 28th to voice their fears about a proposed 'Place of Worship' to the rear of 182 Station Road. Never before has such a pressurised campaign been experienced in Ratby. Representatives of the "Knighton Park Trust" have canvassed local homes and suggested that they would provide Ratby with a lake if their application is successful.

The Parish Council, reflecting local feeling have written to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council recommending that the application be refused since the building would encroach on green belt land - outside the area designated for development in the Ratby District Plan. The Parish Council have always opposed any development on green belt land and will go on doing so.

The Council have also pointed out that the proposed scheme will inevitably create traffic problems in an area where residential development is planned, and where an access road from Church Farm Estate will emerge.

Members of the public left the meeting determined to write letters objecting to the scheme and to organise a petition against it.

FOOTPATHS

One councillor has been appointed to regularly inspect footpaths. He reported that several are now blocked and that two stiles are obstructed with barbed wire.

CHRISTMAS

A Christmas tree would be provided again this year. New lights would be bought following last years vandalism. It was proposed to hold the annual Carol Service on Wednesday December 16th, at 7 p.m. Ratby Parish Council wishes Ratby people a Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

This issue marks the beginning of WOT's second great year. We'd like to thank all those who've made it possible. Contributors, Advertisers, Collators and Deliverers. Not forgetting our Long-suffering printers C & R Printing Services!!

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COUNTRY CODE

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon, the first in October, I decided to take a walk 'up the Burroughs'. Many other people had the same idea and it was great meeting other contented walkers also enjoying probably the last sunny afternoon of the late summer. The majority of walkers were behaving in a correct fashion keeping to the road on footpaths, giving due consideration to local farmers whilst still enjoying the benefits of fresh air and beautiful scenery. But isn't there always someone to spoil it all. Why can't people stay on footpaths, why do they feel that they can walk over open fields willy nilly. The couple I write of accompanied by dog correctly restrained by lead, left the Burroughs Road by the brook and I imagined they were about to walk the footpath to Stamford Street. But no - they proceeded to walk across one meadow, through a barbed wire fence into the next. By this time I was frustrated in my intentions to do something about it by one impatient husband anxious to proceed.

Surely sensible people realise that if there is the need to risk injury by squeezing

through a barbed wire fence, that the way is not open to walkers. Surely sensible people realise that the way out of a meadow or field from a country footpath is to seek a stile sited on the footpath. Surely sensible people realise that if we all acted in that way, sooner or later the owner of the field could retaliate and we would need to fight to retain our access to the footpaths in our Parish. Can I ask, even plead, with people who act in this way, please have a little more consideration for other people's property and familiarise yourself with the country code and your local footpaths and where stiles are located before you venture out into the open country.

O.M. Smalley.

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NEWS FROM RATBY METHODIST CHURCH

On the evening of Saturday 17th October the Church Hall echoed to laughter and appreciative applause as the Choir and the Women's Institute Concert Party combined to provide an evening of melody and comedy at which many unsuspected talents were revealed. A packed house relished the song, dance and hilarity made all the the more enjoyable for knowing the performers - and the evening was nicely rounded off with refreshments and chat. An evening to remember - watch for the next!

Christmas approaches fast, and as usual we have a full programme ahead, beginning with the Mini-market on Saturday 26th November from 11.00 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Come and fill the gaps in those Christmas stockings - after which, soup and a lunch-time snack will restore your energy.

Our Sunday services for the season begin with a Christmas musical at 4.00 p.m. "The King of Love", performed by the Choir with Susan Roberts as soloist. On December 13th at 10.00 a.m. a special morning service "In Praise of Christmas" will be led by Dr. Teifion Bryant. The afternoon service at 4.00 p.m. will be the Christmas Carol Service; this will be followed by tea, and at 7.00 p.m. we shall leave the Chapel for a carol-singing tour of the village on which anyone who enjoys singing carols is warmly invited to join us. We return to the Chapel at 9.00 p.m. for a warm drink. On Christmas Day our Family Worship at 9.30 a.m. will be led by our Minister, Rev. Ivan Homer (children are invited to bring one of their presents to show the rest of us); and Mr. Homer will again lead the service on Sunday morning, 27th December (no afternoon service).

Do come and join in any of the above, or in our regular activities - and a very happy Christmas to you all!

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CHRISTMAS PAST

Our Christmas began bright and early of course, with the emptying of our stockings. We always had one 'big' present from Mum and Dad, clothes from Grandparents, a tangerine orange wrapped in silver paper and a little bag of gold wrapped chocolate coins.

The rest of the day was spent with my grandparents at 'Box Tree Farm'. Grandpa's brother and his large family would come for tea and supper and we had a marvellous time running around and playing in the attics and all the rooms.

We were allowed to stay up until about 9.30 p.m. when Grandma would say 'Time for bed' and my brother and I were taken up the back stairs to a small bedroom at the back of the house. No electric light upstairs so we had a Prices Night Light in a saucer of water put on the dressing table. I remember so well the flickering shadows on the walls and ceilings, we'd cover our heads with the bedclothes!

Boxing Day was the return visit to my Great Uncle's at Bondman Hayes.

The morning and early afternoon were full of activity. This was the day that all the menfolk went shooting and we kids were employed as beaters to make as much noise as possible and drive the game towards them. Don't think it was very successful but we all enjoyed ourselves and came back to the farm very hungry.

The farmhouse wasn't very big and the table seemed to stretch from wall to wall, overhung by a lovely brass paraffin lamp. However there were so many of us that there were always two sittings, we children always last, no shortage of lovely food and trifles though. There was no room for a Christmas tree but two hoops entwined and decorated hung from a corner of

the sitting room near the stairs and always looked lovely especially when the lamps were lit. (No electricity or tap water here).

We had no television and the batteries for the wireless often needed charging but we had a piano and the know how to entertain ourselves and it was WONDERFUL!!

Margaret Green - (Christmas 1930's)

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Ratby Playgroup



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Dear Readers,

By now most people are aware that we have gone under new management. We are very grateful for everyone's good support and hope that things will continue the way they have done so far.

The Playgroup is run for the children of Ratby. The group has to be self-sufficient financially.

We would like to take this opportunity to inform the village of a few forthcoming fundraising events. These will be to finance the childrens' Christmas Party and also to purchase necessary equipment.

Toy Sale - Friday 27th November
7.30 - 9.00 p.m.
Welfare Hall

Christmas Fayre - Wednesday 2nd December
2.00 - 4.00 p.m.
Church Rooms

Please look out for notices and posters in shop windows.

We really do rely on everyones support, so please come along. You may just find a good bargain or two.

Lesley, Margaret and Lyn
Ratby Playgroup Leaders

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Christmas Shopping in Ratby

You don't have to leave Ratby to find all those Christmas gifts. We've been out and about in village shops looking for ideas.

Ratby T.V. is a veritable Aladdin's Cave with torches for children from £1.50, and how about an Electronic Kit for ten year old budding engineers? Completely safe and with full instructions, £15.95 and £25.90. Ladies might like a hairdryer, the Braun Lady Elegance costs £15.99, and if you're feeling affluent the JVC midi Hi-Fi systems are on offer at £299. You might just have enough change left for a Fairy Light Tester, in stock now at 99p.

Thinking of children again, Pabari's have a wide range of toys. We spotted some good stocking fillers, a Transformer pen for 99p, Car Wash Kit at £1.49, and how about Rubik's World Puzzle for £6.49?

Rush to Stamford Street stores for your 'Dumpies'. These satin-soft puffy animals are selling fast at only £3.99. Boys and girls will love the 'Piano Book' an electronic keyboard, £2.99. (There's always someone playing with it in the shop!) And a bargain stocking filler, Conte Painting Pencils for £1.00.

You'll find plenty of ideas at the Post Office too, including a good range of jigsaws. We spotted 'swimming goggles' for £2.55, pocket games for 96p, and for the three year olds, how about 'Happy Days' Building Bricks at £4.80.

Still stuck for ideas for children? You can't go wrong with books. The School bookshop is open every Tuesday at 3.15 p.m. and stocks a wide range of affordable paperbacks for 3+ age group.

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Spoil yourselves with chocolates from a good selection at Moores' Station Road Store. They also have a Christmas catalogue you can order from.

For that special lady, Ellis the chemist has a range of perfumes which are said to be identical to expensive well known brands for only 1/3 of the price. How about Snooker soaps at £1.45, and some of the stocking fillers we noticed, Soft Baby toys for 79p, fashion jewellery from 85p, hair clips and accessories at low prices.

J.T. Lee the jeweller has ornaments that children can afford to buy for mums! Digital watches start at £3.00, and there's a good range of gold and silver jewellery.

For something completely different, we suggest a Gift voucher from Tony, at His & Hers or Julie's Hairdresser. She also stocks some small gifts; we took a fancy to the 'Furry Friends' at £1.25!

Or make someone's Christmas really cosy with a Sheepskin Rug from Porters Discount Carpets, only £17.99.

Geoff and Mary Widdowson always have some beautiful Poinsettia and Cyclamen plants.

We only have space to print a small selection here. Why not go and have a look you'll be amazed at the variety and value!!

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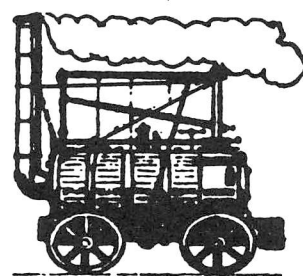
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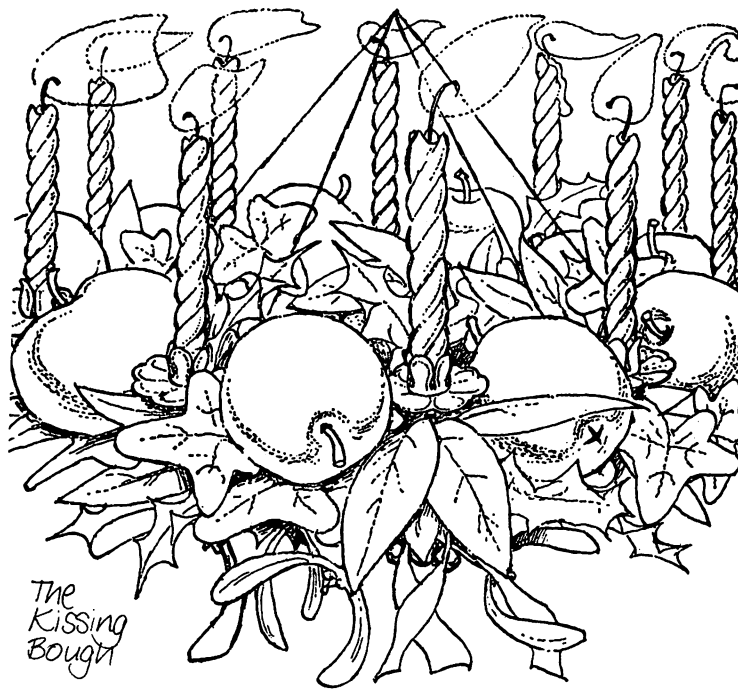
RAILWAY INN
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STIR-UP CHRISTMAS

Stir-up Sunday - the Sunday prior to Advent marks the beginning of preparations for the great midwinter Christmas festival. The Christmas pudding was mixed and stirred on this day by each member of the family and the stir accompanied by a wish. Prior to trading with the New World and the far East with its introduction to this country of spices, dried fruits and sugar, the Christmas Pudding was actually a thick soup with the addition of eggs, breadcrumbs and prunes which gave the name Plum pudding.

The Christmas festival originally lasted for 12 days and was a Christian celebration over a more ancient pagan feast. Turkeys only entered the eating scene around 1550 with peacocks, swans, geese and roast beef preceeding the American immigrant. Mince pies originally contained shredded meat with fruit and spices, busy housewives found that fruit and spices could be mixed some weeks prior to Christmas with the addition of brandy and the meat included at the last minute before baking. It was a short step to leaving out the meat and thus our present mince pies evolved.



Mistletoe and holly have been revered for many centuries with holly, an evergreen and symbol of undying life, used to decorate houses and places of worship in pagan times at the time of the winter solstice. This practice was continued by the Christian church whilst the use of mistletoe is still limited to domestic dwellings. Mistletoe was sacred to the Norsemen and the Golden Bough of the druids was hung over doorways as a symbol of peace and hospitality and a protection from thunder, lightning and evil of all kinds. A custom exclusive to the

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English is kissing under the mistletoe which began with mistletoe being included in the Kissing bough - a crown of greenery, lighted candles, apples, ribbons and sometimes small presents suspended from the ceiling but which in recent times has often degenerated into a bunch of mistletoe hung from a lamp-shade! If you're going to use that mistletoe give it a spectacular setting in a kissing bough then there can be no excuse for missing it when the bough is sure to strike anyone over 4'6" in a modern house with low ceilings!

The giving of gifts dates back to Roman times when presents were given to relatives and the poor at the feast of Saturnalia, later to be represented by the gifts offered by the Magi to the Infant Christ and by the opening and distribution of the contents of Poor Boxes in churches on the feast of St. Stephen (Boxing Day!) Father Christmas in England, St. Nicholas in many European countries and Santa Claus in America are all traditional gift bringers. In pagan times it fell to Odin rewarding or punishing his worshippers and then Christianity gave the job of gift-bringer to St. Nicholas, a bishop during the fourth century who legend says gave anonymous gifts to those in need and became the patron saint of children, captives and sailors. Our Father Christmas is really a fifteenth century ideal figure showing the joys of Christmas in some Mummers Plays and he was actually abolished in 1644 with all other Christmas customs, only to return at the Restoration and to turn up every year since. I don't think he'll forget to come this year so do get to bed early!

Have a very happy Christmas!

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Editorial

GREEN BELT THREATENED

Already the proposed A46 Leicester Western By-pass has attracted development to Ratby. A group calling itself a Christian Group, "The Knighton Park Trust" has submitted a planning application for a Place of Worship to be built on green belt land.

Attempts to discover the exact nature of this Trust have been unsuccessful. Not surprisingly, certain residents are concerned as to the genuine Christian basis of this group and wish to be reassured of this group's bona fide and intentions. Although it is understood the Trust has access to considerable funds (a contrast with established Ratby Churches, presently struggling to maintain buildings).

The proposed development shows no indication of benefit to local people.

If we are to retain our green wedge and our identity as a village community we must oppose any development which directly or indirectly threatens it. This is regardless of the nature or purpose of the development. There is little enough green space left around Ratby. This scheme would mark the first major dent in the green belt. What would follow?...

.....

Don't hesitate to write to us or the address below to express your views.

District Planning Officer
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
Argents Mead
Hinckley

A copy of this edition of WOT has been forwarded to Knighton Park Trust inviting them to explain their organisation and proposals which we have offered to include in the next issue.

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FAREWELL TO ANOTHER RATBY LANDMARK

As the sun came up on the 1st October, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Community Programme Gang arrived and one of Ratby's landmarks started to come down. Before that day Harry "Drummer" Barratt's fish and chip shop near to the Plough Inn was just a rusty old hut to many newcomers to Ratby, but those with memories knew it as the place where good cheap meals could be obtained, and the companionship of village life enjoyed.

Harry Barratt started in the world of business with a tripe shop and small poultry farm in Stamford Street, opening his fish and chip shop in the 1930's. Microwaves and convenience foods were never even visualised, and village men were employed mainly in coalmining and farming, and the need to feed a family for just a few pennies was uppermost in every mother's mind. Then pigs trotters, cow heel, tripe and peas were a cheap source of nourishment, fish and chips came later.

When Harry Barratt retired, another local man took over the running of the shop, Mr. Sid Prentice now sadly no longer with us. Mr. Cliff Prentice, his brother, following in his footsteps until the middle 1940's, men from neighbouring villages taking over when he retired from the shop. After it closed in the 1950's, it was left for many years as a monument to past days, sometimes used as a store. Mr. Prentice recalls that fish and chips could be bought for 6d. in his day, customers bringing their own newspaper in which to wrap the parcel to keep the contents hot. The Burroughs Lane "chippy" was famed for miles around as seating was available for twenty people to eat their meal in the shop. The first MacDonald's perhaps? Friday was the busiest night of the week as women employed at Wolsey bought the Friday night meal on their way home. Customers visiting the Plough Inn on Saturday nights would order their fish and chips and collect them on the way home, often too "merry" to eat their meal. Mr. Prentice made his own vinegar from acetic acid, water and brown sugar, a licence was required before he could purchase acid from the chemist. He bought his fish from Tricks of Leicester Fish Market. Towards the end of the 1939/45 war the fish was almost too expensive for him to buy and sell at a profit but he felt



that he was providing a much needed service. If potatoes ran out, help was nearby in the shape of Mr. Albert Pickering who also ran a "chippy" in Berrys Lane, and he was always prepared to help out. Mr. Pickering sold vegetables from a cart pulled by a horse for many years until he purchased a second hand bus.

Many past customers will remember the pike which Mr. Barratt caught, had stuffed and displayed in a glass case in the shop. It has long since disappeared but it was once a source of amusement and conversation. An amusing incident recalled by Mr. Prentice was of a small boy who regularly produced a bag full of pop bottles for the return money, until he found the young rascal was taking them from the empties crates stacked in his yard!

Yet another of Ratby's land marks has disappeared, but it had become unsightly and necessary to demolish. But there are still people in Ratby who will remember the old "chippy" for many a day to come.

Olive Smalley

RATBY SPORTS CLUB

would like to wish all the village and its members



All members are welcome to celebrate the festive season during the many events to be held at the club.

PRIZES GALORE - RATBY SCOUTS

The weekend of the 17th and 18th October saw three intrepid patrols from the 1st Ratby set forth to the Ashby - Coalville District Camp Site for the Annual District Camp Competition. How is it they always manage to choose a nice wet weekend?

Weather apart we obtained a credible second and third. Gold standard certificates being presented to Lions and Falcons and a silver award for Ospreys.

Friday 30th October also saw the result of the Troop patrol competition which is decided on every 6 months. Points are awarded for turnout, scout badge work, projects and competition work. Clear winners were Ospreys led by Nathan Dickman (208½ pts) with Falcons in second place (201 pts), Stags third (199 pts). Lions winners of the last competition were 4th (195 pts).

Chris Woodward
Scout Leader

FUN AND FRIENDS!

That's the motto of the 1st Ratby Beavers, and we have certainly lived up to it in the past few weeks!

On Saturday 26th September seventeen Ratby Beavers joined forces with over a hundred Beavers from neighbouring villages for a Sing-along in Johns Lee Wood. Everyone had lots of FUN eating hot dogs and singing songs around a camp fire. Thanks to the parents who helped with transport!

A few days later the Beavers made some very special FRIENDS when a blind lady and her guide dog, accompanied by a lady helper and her two retired guide dogs, visited our weekly meeting. It was extremely interesting learning about the training of guide dogs for the blind, and all the boys were delighted to receive a badge at the end of the meeting.

On 11th November the Beavers were each given a Christmas Tree picture to colour, with the aim of raising funds for those children less fortunate than themselves. We are very grateful to all of you who contributed.

The Beavers meet every Wednesday in school between 5.30 and 6.45 p.m. in the School Hall. Each meeting is different but might include songs, making items, quizzes and always games!! We should welcome anyone who would like to come along, either regularly or once in a while. If you have an interesting hobby or job, then perhaps you might like to talk to the boys about it. For example, future meetings include a talk on model aeroplanes by Mr. Mellor and one on road safety by our very own lollipop lady, Mrs. Crump.

For further information contact R. Bent (394873), J. Harrison (393871) or J. Hawksworth (870134).

Swifts - Cubs Cross Country

When the District Cross Country was changed from the 10th October to the 17th October because there was another event on the 10th at Groby H.Q., we had to hastily change our arrangements.

I'm convinced the District had some inside information, because the 17th couldn't have been better, the sun was shining brightly and not a cloud in the sky.

Naturally the ground was very wet underfoot after all the rain from the previous week, but that didn't deter our Cross Country Runners, who all did very well. The under 11 team consisting of Michael Greenwood, Matthew Byrne, Thomas Shipman and Paul Haezwindt won the 3rd place for the under 11's.

Congratulations to them, and to the other two teams who took part. Well done all of you.

Akela

£5 prize to the sender of the funniest caption for this photo!



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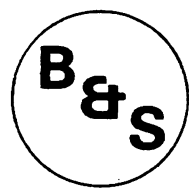


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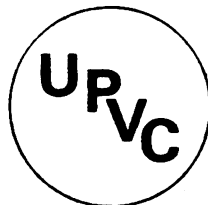
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Send a Valentine

A box in the February issue of WOT
costs only £2.00
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Send your message with money to
either, 35 Danehill, or
50 Stamford Street
by January 14th.

(Money sent with unprintable
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charity).

Dear Editor,

LETTERS

Please do not think I am a kill joy, but
I am very concerned that a once simple
treat for young children has now become
an excuse for blackmail and vandalism!

Too strong a statement you may think.
No say I!

My husband and I went out for the
evening on Halloween leaving the
children in the care of grandparents.
Two youths knocked on our door on
the pretext of 'Trick and Treat'.
Grandfather declined their offer very
politely and was rewarded by having
one of his tyres let down. Both
grandparents are in their late
sixties and grandad is disabled
often needing the support of a
walking stick. In fact the car bears
disabled stickers both back and front.

An isolated incident you may say.
No! Since then I have spoken to
several people in the village and
have heard tales of elderly people
being too terrified to open their
doors and other acts of vandalism.

What's the solution! I don't know,
but perhaps the culprits might feel
a little guilty when they read this
letter and think twice before they
do anything as irresponsible again.

Mrs Angry
(name and address supplied, but
withheld).



Dear Editor,

Firstly I must make it absolutely clear
that I have no ill feelings towards dogs,
but I am extremely concerned. I am unable
to say the same for the inconsiderate
selfish dog owners, that we are unfortunate
to have in our community.

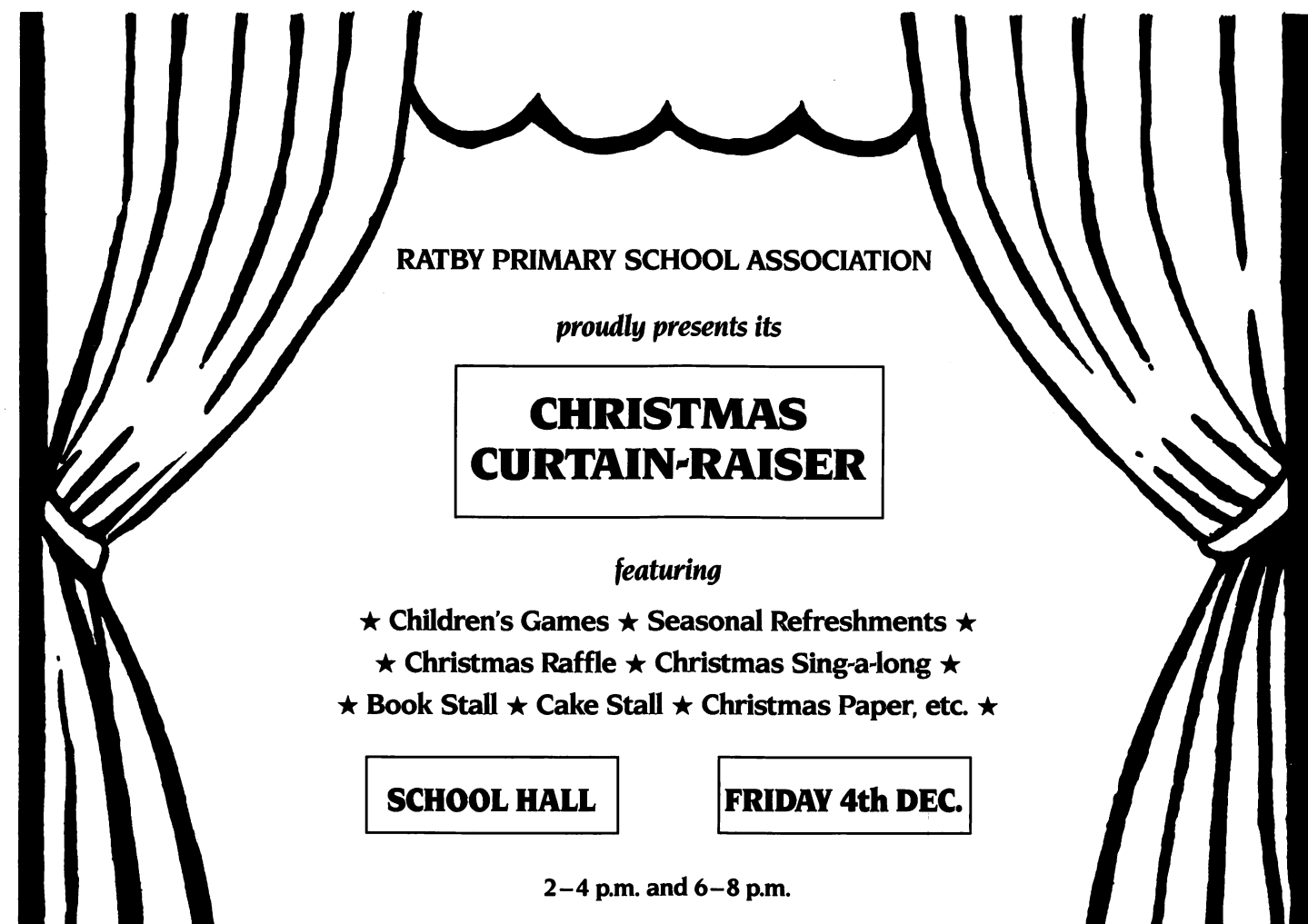
Why do these people persistently and
blatantly continue to break the law. The
council put up notices but instead of
detering these few, they let the dogs
use these lampposts as well.

Perhaps we should teach the dogs to read?
There owners don't seem to be able to.

Come on you few don't spoil it for the
community.

Concerned Person
(Name and address supplied but withheld)

13 P.S. What are the Council doing about it.



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NATURE NOTES

"An every day story of Furry Folk"

by Arthur Fallowfield



Hello me Deary O's

As the Autumn nights draw in, my garden is frequented by numerous little visitors. By late August the Tiggy Winkles arrive. Mrs Tiggy Winkle a rather portly hedgehog spends most of the summer in a small hollow beneath the bank on the rear of my garden.

When my children were young they delighted in feeding them on a traditional fare of Bread and Milk. Another regular visitor on November nights is a Tawny Owl. Some two years ago I was taking a picture of Halley's Comet. The camera was all set up on the tripod, the night sky scanned and the dim distant object of Halley's comet located. Then at the crucial moment, out of the darkness came the ghostly form of Mr. Owl. He promptly landed on the camera tripod, taking care to place his big furry talons across the lens. Despite his hurried departure, by the time I had re-composed the shot the night sky became obliterated by dense cloud and my last chance of seeing Halley's Comet in my lifetime disappeared forever.

A Merry Christmas
to Lynne, Sarah and Sam
from Steve

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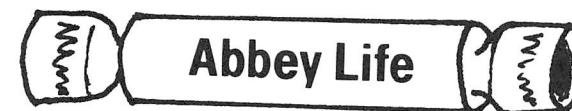
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Dear Editor,

Do we hear mutterings of 'Not another plea for a new leader for the 2nd Ratby Brownies, (following our previous advert in WOT!). Please!! Dear reader, read on. Supporting the saying that all good things are worth waiting for our GOOD THING has arrived in the form of Jackie Roche who is now our new Brown Owl. We welcome Jackie and at the same time thank her for the memorable evening she arranged for our final night.

Over the last six years we have acquired so many memories. The newly promised Brownie who desperately wanted to take a badge and said (Now I'm in uniform I'm going to take my Skaters Badge' pause for thought 'Only thing is Brown Owl; I can't skate'. Listening to Katie Harrison, then 9 years old playing Bright Eyes on her flute in a Brownie Arts Competition, with tears in our eyes it was so beautiful. Selling hundreds of cups of tea at Beaumont Leys for Save the Children, on what must have been one of the coldest days ever. Tramping through Martinshaw Wood on Tawny's guaranteed short cut, expecting Dr. Livingstone at every turn! We've heard every excuse for missing bits of uniform ranging from 'My baby ate my badge' through 'The Hamster ate my hat' to 'My tie's just disappeared! The latter was found sometime later firmly attached by the velcro fastening to Dad's vest!

We wish the 2nd Ratby Brownies continued success and hope that Jackie enjoys her time as it's Guider and as part of the family of Guiding as much as we have.

The 2nd Ratby Brownie pack meets on Tuesdays at the Methodist Chapel School Rooms, 6.15 - 7.30 p.m. Further details from: Jackie Roche tel: 386853.

12 Kathy Byrne and Ros Gould

WESTERN BYPASS



The view into the Sports & Social club field. In the foreground is the Rothley Brook. This Brook is environmentally rich in wild life. On a fine summer's day Kingfishers can be seen fishing from the tree in the foreground. If the road goes ahead these poor little blighters could be the first to suffer from the onslaught of the Bulldozers of the road construction unit.

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FACTS

- ★ The Public Enquiry has been postponed until March 1988 or later. The By-pass is on schedule for a start-date at the end of 1989. A two year construction period is anticipated.
- ★ The Department of Transport's own Assessment Framework shows a loss for the entire BY-PASS scheme of 2½ MILLION POUNDS, if low traffic-growth forecasts prove accurate.
- ★ High-traffic growth forecasts shown an 18.13 million pound profit. If the By-Pass is constructed it will save only 1½ minutes off-peak journey time between the M69 and Redhill Circle.
- ★ Mr. T. Thompson, Chief Engineer, Leicestershire County Council, informed the Parish Council that this junction would cost an additional 8½ million pounds.
- ★ The proposal, unlike the D.O.T. original plan, does not include a north-bound motorway sliproad.
- ★ Who pays the bill? The Government meets the cost of major road construction, although the County Council will pay for traffic management schemes arising from the scheme.
- ★

Ratby Parish Council has written to the Department of Transport opposing this proposed junction.

The Parish Council did support the original D.O.T. plan for a junction at Bloods Hill, on the premise that the need for the entire BY-PASS scheme was proven.

PUBLIC MEETING

The Welfare Hall was packed and there was standing-room only for the Public Meeting called by Ratby Parish Council on October 21st. Ratby people were out in force to find out for themselves about the latest proposal for the junction between the Leicester Western Bypass and the M1. Mr. Marriott from Leicestershire County Council was present in his capacity as team leader for the project.

ROTHLEY BROOK THREATENED

He explained that the County Council had drawn up a new plan for a proposed access road running alongside Rothley Brook from a roundabout between Ratby and Kirby, passing under the motorway to a free-flow junction.

The County Council favours this proposal since they believe it would give greater traffic relief to surrounding villages - a 20 - 30% reduction.

SPAGHETTI JUNCTION ON OUR DOORSTEP

Members of the public pointed out that traffic going through Ratby and Kirby was local and would not use the By-Pass. Most people did not welcome easier access to the motorway - several remarking that we'd have a 'spaghetti junction' on our doorstep.

KINGFISHERS MADE HOMELESS

Environmental issues were uppermost in peoples minds. The proposed access road would be constructed as close to the Rothley Brook as possible (avoiding Kirby sports land). It would be raised one metre above the washland. Devastation of this important washland environment, home to rare crested newts and recently-returned Kingfishers, would be inevitable.

GREEN BELT DESTROYED

Mr. Marriott confirmed that there is documentary evidence supporting a proposed relief road along the Rothley Valley, parallel to Desford Lane, Kirby. The construction of the By-pass junction and its access road, would make this relief road the logical next step.

The inevitable development attracted to the area would mean the destruction of the green wedge between Ratby and Kirby.

A46 LEICESTER V



This photograph shows the approximate position of the northern edge of the proposed new island. Note the relationship to the Bridge on the Rothley Brook and the Sports & Social club field. The building in the distance is the Railway Inn at Ratby. If Leicestershire County Council have their way this quiet country lane on the edge of our village will be inundated with heavy traffic by the year 1991.

ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER

The feeling of the meeting was that this proposed junction would be environmentally disastrous. Everyone present at the end of the meeting signed a statement opposing the plan.

ACTION!!

If you object to this proposed junction then write and say so - every letter counts. Tell the Department of the Environment and Transport that we want to keep our green wedge. If you don't write, then you can't complain when its too late!

Letters regarding the proposed A46 Leicester Western Bypass should be addressed to:-

Department of the Environment and Transport
Cranbrook House,
Cranbrook Street,
NOTTINGHAM NG1 1EY

Please send copies to Leicestershire County Council and Ratby Parish Council.