

DECEMBER 1997

ISSUE 67

Wot! About Ratby

PUBLISHED BY THE RATBY SCOUT GROUP



Ratby Parish Council

It's that time of year again when our thoughts turn to things such as fairy lights, food, friends and a fat man in a red suit bringing presents and good cheer. It's a time to get together and offer seasonal greetings and renew friendships.

The Carol Service on 17th December is a date for your calendar when everyone can join in with the Ratby Junior Band and raise your voice in celebration of the birth of Christ. By kind permission of the Governors of Ratby Primary School the service will take place in the school grounds and will commence at **7.00p.m.** (Please note that car-parking is not allowed in the school grounds.)

Mr Crockett of the Leicester City Fire Brigade Museum Society will ensure that Santa puts in an appearance and will also encourage you to part with some money for those less fortunate than ourselves. Afterwards there will be refreshments in the Welfare Hall for which we can thank Ratby Old Peoples Welfare Committee.

The evening should make an excellent start to the festive season and we hope that as many of you as possible will join in. There is something about standing in the cold wind and rain and singing Carols which reminds us about the real reason for the celebration of Christmas.

a Merry Christmas

and a Happy New Year

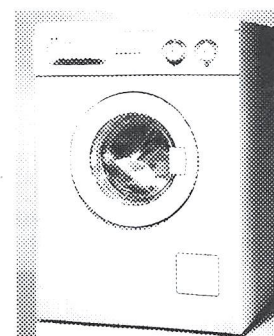


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Issue 67

At six issues per year we are now entering our twelfth. During the years we have seen many changes but some of the advertisers have been with us all the issues:-

Geary's Bakeries
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 Pabari's Ratby News,
 Porter's Discount Carpets
 Ratby Post Office
 Ratby T.V.



THE RATBY GOURD SOCIETY'S ANNUAL DISPLAY

We thank them all for their continued involvement in the mag.

We must support our locals shops, I would imagine it's becoming more and more difficult for them with all the competition particularly from the out of town stores. You all must have seen a steady decline in our local shops. What's going to happen when there are no local shops left and big shops have all the business? There will be no cheap prices then! I hear about various goods price's coming down but I don't see it happening.

A very exciting year was had by the Gourd Growers of Ratby this year. The photo shows some of this years Gourds, regular readers will recognise some new varieties.

It can be seen that there are no, "travelling" gourds here! Ivor Bigun.

It does appear that some societies do grow their Gourds much larger then we do in Ratby. Examples have been seen this year in Leeds Castle where the fruits have been left to grow to perhaps twice the size of ours in Ratby.

Comment and observations would be most welcome.

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Every Second Counts

Have you noticed how time has stood still in Ratby? The Summer, Autumn and Winter months have moved on and people have been on holidays, celebrated birthdays, anniversaries and weddings. They have been to work, retired, moved in and out of our village yet all this while Ratby has remained in a 'Brigadoon' state. No it hasn't vanished for a hundred years and become lost in the mists of time, but for too long the time has remained at 10 past 5!

If you hadn't guessed - I am of course referring to the Parish Church Clock. Everyone uses it, sets their watches by it, looks at it, admires it, is proud of it - but now it is no longer working something needs to be done to save our clock!

But wait! Who can help? - The Doctor, butcher, baker, candle stick maker??? Everyone can help by giving at least a second of their time to save our clock for generations to come.

As a couple living in Ratby we have been looking for inspiration - If only there were real timelords to help! Perhaps H G Wells could assist with his time machine? If we could be transported back approx. 85 years to the time when Ratby acquired it's clock ... What would the people think if they knew that the clock was now in disrepair, left to rust and decay with time? And then there are the future generations - What will they think - Ratby didn't celebrate the year 2000 because it didn't have the time!

Yet in a blinding flash your own Time Lords came along with an inspiration and the answer was the Every Second Counts Campaign!

It will cost approx. £3600 to repair/ replace the parts in the clock. So if everyone in the village bought a Second for a £1.00 we would have enough money to refurbish our village clock.

So, join us in our Time Adventures - all you have to do is buy some Seconds of Time.

Our Campaign starts on 4-1-98, from when you will be able to buy Seconds of Time. In exchange we will give you a certificate and your gift will be recorded for posterity. This will form a permanent record for the future so our children's children will know exactly who it was that helped saved the Village timepiece.

Each numbered second will be entered into a prize draw for a clock and assorted time-related prizes. So the more seconds you buy the greater the chance you have of winning!

Posters and details from your resident timelords who are:

Diane & Alan Spencer

Tardis Address:

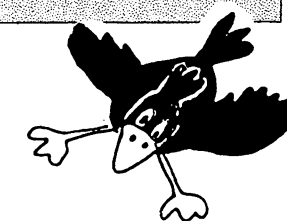
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Let's make sure this campaign goes like clockwork!

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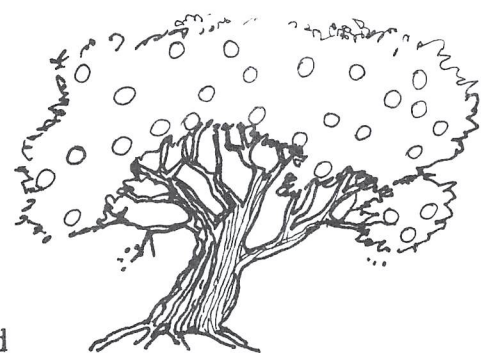


Ratby Parish Council

Remembrance Sunday - a special service was held on 9th November by the War Memorial to honour those who lost their lives at war. Ratby Co-operative band played beautifully and it was a very moving occasion to help us remember those who ensured that we enjoy peace today.

Play Equipment - many of you will have noticed the new play-equipment at the Ferndale Drive play ground. It cost over £2,000 to supply and install and is meant to be used by older children. We trust that it will give a lot of pleasure to those who use it.

New Seats - A new bench seat has been installed to replace the one vandalised at the corner of Markfield Road / Main Street and we note that it is already being enjoyed by many. Arrangements are being made for the replacement of the vandalised seat in the Ferndale Drive toddler play area.



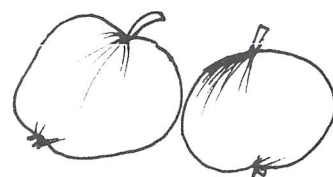
A Community Orchard For Ratby.

A small group of people have met twice in Ratby to talk about creating a Community Orchard in the Village. For some time the Parish Council has been considering this possibility. Samantha Forster, the Urban Fringe Officer from the County Council arranged for Paul Hand of 'Bees and Trees' to come to the Library and give a stimulating presentation on Community Orchards. We all got excited by the idea and organised another meeting in November.

We've now decided on some aims which include creating an attractive and interesting area, fostering a sense of community, helping preserve native and local apple trees and encouraging wildlife. So far representatives from a cross-section of the Community have attended or expressed interest.

We've selected the site on Taverner Drive for the first part of the Project. We've talked about the idea that people in the Village who are interested in having fruit trees on small sites near their house could be involved in looking after those trees. We've also talked about the idea of people planting trees in memory of their loved ones. We're working with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers to apply to Barclays Bank for financial support.

We now need help. We need information about any local varieties of apples or other fruit that may have been traditionally grown in the area. We need to know if there are any varieties of fruit, especially apples, that Ratby people would like to eat. We need local people of all ages with enthusiasm or expertise or both to get involved in designing, preparing the site, planting and caring for the trees and eventually eating the fruit! We need representatives of local organisations to involve their members.



STOP PRESS :-

New Parish Council Office - Planning approval has been received for the construction of a new office in the Church Rooms. We hope to provide the full details in the next issue of WOT.



Wassailing the trees...

TWELFTH NIGHT is sometimes called Twelfth-day Eve. Old Christmas Eve or the Eve of the Epiphany. After the change from the Old to the New Style, certain districts continued, as far as possible, to keep their Christmas on 6 January, and to wassail their apple trees on 17 January, sometimes called Old Twelfth Night, or on 18 January, sometimes called Old Twelfth Day.

Twelfth Night is the start of the period when farmers used to wassail their orchards; this was believed to charm the trees which would result in a good crop the following season. Every district or county had its own specific date for carrying out this time-honoured procedure, which reached a peak around 17 January. Much lamb's wool (roasted apples, sugar, ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon, and wine and/or ale) was prepared for the wassail bowl, which was carried to the orchard where a toast was given and echoed by the assembled company in booming tones. The wording of the toast varied from place to place, but the following are typical:

*Health to thee, good apple tree,
Whence thou may'st bud and whence thou may'st blow,
And whence thou may'st have apples enow.*

*Hats full, caps full,
Three bushel bags full
And my pockets full too.*

*Wassail the trees, that they may bear
Many a plum, and many a pear;
For more or less fruits they will bring
As you do give them wassailing.*

*Wassail, wassail all over the town,
Our toast is white, our ale is brown;
Our bowl is made of the maple tree,
We be good fellows all, I drink to thee.*

If a good cross-section of Ratby people get involved, we could develop a beautiful feature for the Village, and help build the community. Imagine coming into Ratby in Spring and seeing the apple blossom. Imagine the delight in Autumn of being able to walk to Taverner Drive and pick some ripe tasty, Ratby apples, so different from the over packaged, over transported fruit from the supermarket.

The next meeting of the Community Orchard Group will be on Monday 19th. January 1998.

Come along if you are interested. Why not complete the slip below to tell us what you think and drop it at the Library in the box provided.

Please tick as appropriate

I support the idea of a Community Orchard for Ratby.

I like the following varieties of Apples.....

I would like to help by:-

- a. Researching local Apple fruit varieties.
- b. Helping to prepare the site.
- c. Locating and purchasing trees.
- d Planting trees.
- e Caring for trees.

Please give us any comments or information you have about local fruit trees or varieties on a separate piece of paper.

Name

Address

Tel. No.



HIS & HERS

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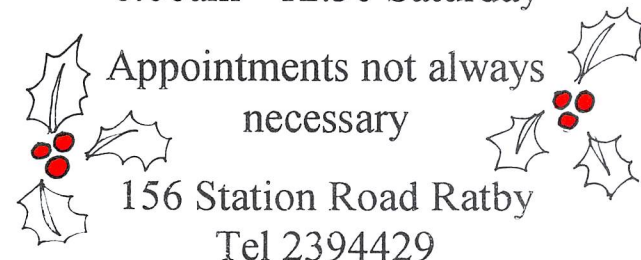
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Ratby Village Society

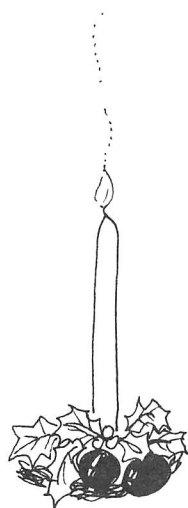


By tradition a pilgrimage, made to a holy shrine, has to be undertaken on foot. Those who, nowadays, travel by car, coach, train or plane are not, in reality, genuine pilgrims but Mr Frank Mackey, who gave a talk at the September meeting entitled 'The Pilgrimage to Santiago', considered that riding a bicycle was just as gruelling therefore admissible. Even so he gave the impression that he had made the journey not in spiritual pursuit but out of interest and curiosity. He joined the pilgrims way in western France where he then had some 500 miles to travel before reaching Santiago in Northern Spain, supposedly the burial place of St. Peter the Apostle, (being one of several others in Europe!) Along the route he visited Lourdes and other Holy places photographing the many ancient carvings which were the visual aids of past centuries for those unable to read or study religious history. The trip was not without its hazards for after a spill from his machine he suffered a broken nose and had to be ferried off to hospital by a family in a camper van who had earlier befriended him. Seemingly his bicycle, and camera were more fortunate than he and later, after sampling the hospitality of the Basque people, safely reached his intended goal. No mean feat for one who had not taken up cycling until middle age!

For a complete change, at the October meeting, we enjoyed a talk without slides ~ well, not quite because a trombone was central to the topic of 'Brassy Tales'. This was Croft Silver Band's bass trombone player John Deacon's first public appearance as a raconteur and because he is also an avid angler threw in a few fishy tales for good measure. His two most hilarious stories (though undoubtedly not funny at the time of enactment) happened when he was serving in an RAF military band. One occurred during a concert performance of Tchaikowski's overture 1812 in which sound effects of heavy gunfire and church bells are incorporated. To make it more realistic it was planned to detonate small charges of explosive in large cannisters whose lids, held by flexible cables, would lift at the appropriate moment emitting a BOOM and a puff of smoke. Unfortunately one of the technicians involved had, either by way of a practical joke or being inebriated, put into one of the drums a much larger charge than necessary. At the point in the score when the 'cannon fire' joins in there was a huge explosion and the lid flew up to the ceiling of the hall which soon became filled with smoke. Performance abandoned!

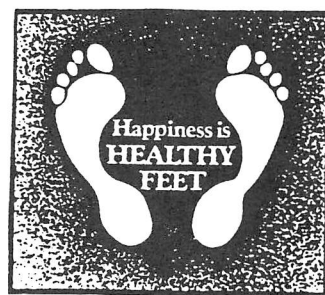


The second, which almost beggars belief, took place in Skegness at an illuminations switch-on ceremony where someone had dreamed up this most unlikely scenario. The band sat on a floating island, in the lake, on which there was a foot treadle to actuate the lighting. A baby elephant was to be ferried across to the pontoon to perform the actual switching on. When the creature stepped onto the 'bandstand' it began to rock and the elephant, not having acquired it's sea-legs, stumbled about and eventually put one foot down, crushingly, on John's trombone which until then had laid neatly at this feet. It was not the elephant which appeared before the C.O. next day but bandsman Deacon for negligently allowing an expensive piece of equipment, belonging to Her Majesty, to be written off!



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Proceeds from the sale of The Calendar go to the Fire Service National Benevolent Fund. You can buy your own copy for £5.99 from the Aviation Gift and Hobby Centre at East Midlands Airport.

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FAMILY QUIZ EVENING

On Saturday 10th January 1998, Ratby Methodist Church is holding a quiz evening, commencing at 7.00pm. You are invited to enter a team of 4 - 6 people, as a family or organisation, giving your team a "name". The number of teams will be limited so early booking is advised. The cost will be £1.25 per person and a deposit of £3 per team is required on application, with the balance payable on the night. The closing date for application is Wednesday 7th January. It is a written quiz organised by Gordon Jelley of Glenfield and you are assured of an enjoyable evening. Refreshments are included and there will be a prize for the winning team. We are not yet sure of the venue but you will be notified when you enter your team. Proceeds are for the Development Fund. Please contact Margaret Pickard on 2386795 or Joy Parker on 2874042



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X - Mas Booze Bonanza



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Skol	£5.00	8 Pack
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Ratby Youth Action

After a successful run in the Working Mens Club, the Youth Club was homeless for a while, but has now started meeting in the Church Rooms on Monday evenings from 8.30 p.m.

Ratby Youth Action continues to apply for grants on behalf of the Youth Club, and now has had support from the Parish, Borough and County Councils. Now we need more support from you.

So far, the Youth Club has been staffed by the Detached Youth Workers and Eileen Parker, but while the workers are looking after the Youth Club, they cannot do their equally important work outside.

Ratby Youth Action will be holding its AGM at the Church Rooms at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday 27th January. Please come along, find out how Ratby Youth Action is helping young people in Ratby and offer your help with the Youth Club. It would be much appreciated.

If you want to help before that, or want to know more, please contact me, Andrew Simmonds on 239 2845.

Wednesday 31st Dec 1997

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8.00 p.m.



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