DECEMBER 2006 / JANUARY 2007

ISSUE 121

PUBLISHED BY RATBY SCOUT GROUP

About Ratby

# NATIVITY Festival in Ratby Church

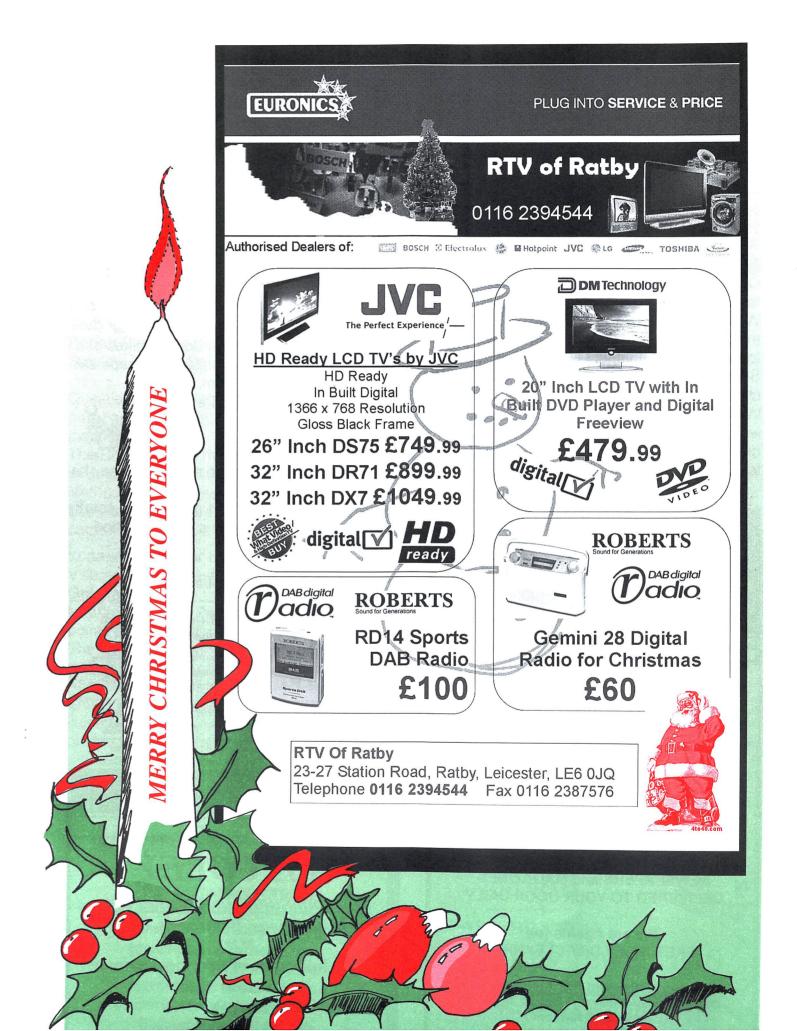
Following last year's successful Christmas tree festival, St Philip's and Saint James's Churc this year celebrated the start of the Christmas season with a festival of Nativity scenes. There were scenes created by Village Groups, including the Bell Ringers, with an appropriar bell tower, Ratby Drop in and Craft group with a display of knitted figures, and the Young Families to mention just a few. The Glow Worms Youth Group scene featured an unusual Ken and Barbie interpretation of Nativity, and The Lighthouse Children's Group scene was made up of charming hand made figures. Individual visitors had created other interesting displays, amongst them a Mexican Nativity scene, and an 'expectant' Mary and Joseph resting in the hay.

Ratby Village Society received most votes in the Adult section of the Nativity Scene competition, and Emma and Ruth Atkinson came first in the Junior section with their 'Away i a peg basket'

The Christmas Bazaar on Saturday morning raised over £1000 for Church funds, and donations of £120 were collected for the homeless people's Charity SHELTER.

Do you have raffle ticket number 254? If so please ring David Willis on 239 0010 to claim your prize.





#### RATBY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

September Meeting. Helen Sculthorpe came along to the Village Hall and spoke at length on her experiences working on the family farm at Medbourne, and then with the Land Army during World War 2.

After the war Helen moved to Kirby Muxloe to manage a smallholding belonging to Mr Wragg, the local butcher

Michael Ball gave a short talk after the interval about the bombing of Leicester and Kirby Muxloe in 1940.

December 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting. We are looking forward to hearing from Bob Trubshaw about 'Little Known Places in Leicestershire and Rutland.' This will be followed by a picture quiz featuring such places in Ratby.

January Meeting, Friday 26th, 7.30 in the Village Hall. We will be hearing about 'Enclosures and the Village Labourer 1760-1830' through a talk by Mick Rawle. This will be followed by a short talk by Doug Harwood on the Social Impact of Enclosure upon Ratby after 1770.

See the Wot article in this issue for a report on our Village Quiz success!

Are you looking for an ideal Christmas present? Why not treat someone to our new book, 'The History of Ratby Volume Two.' On sale at The Post Office or by phoning 239 4168. The price is just £10.

VILLAGE SOCIETY FORTHCOMING EVENTS

January 16th .. A MEMBER'S SLIDE AND DIGITAL IMAGES EVENING. 00000000000000



6 SAXONS RISE, RATBY, LEICS, LE6 ONF

#### RATBY VILLAGE SOCIETY **ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN**

We set ourselves the task of visiting 15 villages within the Hinckley and Bosworth area to see how they cope with their litter.

Looking around we could see that floor standing bins worked better than those on posts, possibly because they are more easily seen.

We noted that, in the majority of cases, fast food businesses had their own bins outside their premises and this also appears to work well. Generally the villages look more attractive when the main litter bins match each other in style and colour, and those in black with the village name in gold looked especially smart as well as being practical.

On the whole we are pleased to say Ratby compares very well, although there is always room for improvement.

Did you see the display of posters in the library? They were beautifully designed and illustrated by pupils from Ratby Primary School for our Antilitter Campaign.

Best wishes to you all for a Happy and litter free New Year.

Jane Rayne



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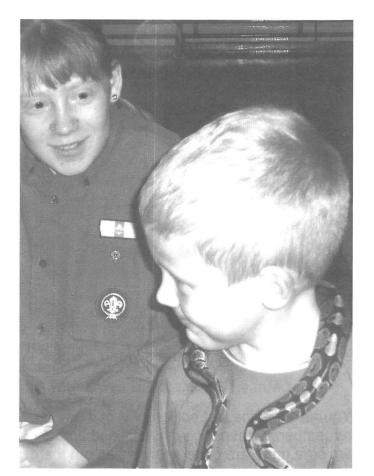
NO JOB TOO SMALL

#### RATBY BEAVERS **CREEPY CRAWLY NIGHT**

The Beavers had an unusual night on 1st November, interesting but a bit scary too! Alex Turney came along to talk about Creepy Crawlies.

Firstly we saw a stick insect from India, then a dark brown millipede with 400 legs. There was a Great African land snail, which eats vast amounts of lettuce, drinks lots of water and even some beer! Alex told us that the snail will obviously leave a slime trail on your hands....Ugh! But the slime is antiseptic and antibiotic....just rub your hands together and the slime will disappear. Do not do this with slugs though, as the slime will not go!

Alex brought each animal round for a closer look, and the children had a chance to hold them.



There was a dreaded tarantula from South America. We were told to be very guiet as the spider hears through his hairs, and anything sudden or very loud might just make him jump and 'explode.'

To close the evening there was a Royal Python, with beautiful black and white markings. Alex told us that he can grow to 70-80 cm and eats mice, gerbils and birds. We were allowed to touch the snake, and were surprised that it was not as nasty as expected. The boys all had the snake put around their necks, one of them saying, 'I'm glad I've got my vest on.'

Alex says she often walks around her house with a snake around her neck, and has even been shopping with her 'warm scarf'. Perhaps she was pulling our legs, she was a good speaker, and had us laughing at her comments.

It was an interesting evening, and we learnt a lot too. Thank you Clive for organising it.

Gwen and Roy.





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### **ASTILL and JORDAN**

Ratby's History.

Our request for pictures and stories in the last issue of Wot! Prompted several responses....we'd love to hear more!



An Astill and Jordan Staff party.

Do you recognise anyone? What year?

Ratby Local History Group sent in these

photographs. We understand that a history of

Astill and Jordan is to feature in volume 3 of



Hoz Gamble has sent in this photograph, taken on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1988. It shows Bus no. 9 a DAIMLER/METRO-CAMMELL, Reg no. OUC 43R. Ex London Transport DMS 2043. It arrived in Ratby in April 1987.

Hoz tells us that Midland Fox acquired Astill and Jordan in 1987, and it is their name which appears on the garage wall. Part of the garage is a World War 2 Spitfire Hangar!



Outside the Astill and Jordan garage.

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You asked in the last edition of Wot if any of us remembered travelling with Astill and Jordan. I am sure there are quite a few ladies out there who used to work at County Hall, like myself. We could always rely on Tony the driver waiting for us at the bus stop opposite County Hall. We had to go under the underpass to reach the bus stop on the other side of the A50. He would know we were coming at 4.30 ish and duly wait. It had a good atmosphere on that bus, so friendly, and Tony knew us all.

Wouldn't it be great to have a service like that again?

Gwen Holloway

# A DAY TRIP in ASTILL and JORDAN luxury

6.30 am, a fine June morning. Barely awake. Already my mother is down in the kitchen making cheese and tomato sandwiches. My dad is filling the flasks. "Come on Connie, the bus is here." It wasn't but that was my dad's way of making us keep up. I dragged myself downstairs. Then the bus really was there. Astill and Jordan's luxury coach had pulled up noiselessly.

Somehow we left the house. Have you turned the gas off? Did you leave the iron on? Did you leave the key with Mrs Sessions so she can let the dog out?

"Come on Charley", said Wilf Hulbert leaning forward from the front seat and sliding the door back. We climbed aboard. Already half full of passengers -

Wilf and Lizzie Hulbert, Mr and Mrs Gardner, Mr and Mrs Barnes and Mrs Barnes' identical sister, Mr and Mrs Spencer and Ginny, Eric and Ivy Finney, Betty Faulds, Eunice and Stella and assorted choristers, all from the Stamford Street/Charnwood/Markfield Lane end. I made for the back seat, already claimed by Johnny Hulbert, Frank and Ernie Marston, John and Stuart Sinfield. Grinding the gears, we trundled up to the top of the Sunshine Houses then down the village to rendezvous with 2 other Astill & Jordan luxury coaches down in Station Road. We were off on the Church Choir trip.

These were amazing days. Every year somewhere different. Llangollen; Great Yarmouth; Cleethorpes; Cromer; never went to Skegness, I don't know why.

This year it was Hunstanton. The three coaches bowling along the A46, everyone increasingly jolly as the morning wore on. Wilf Hulbert whips out his mouthorgan and began playing "Beautiful Dreamer" in that strange vamping style that you usually hear in World War One films just before all Hell breaks loose. Little Gillian Wale stands at the front in her yellow dress singing "Once I Had a Secret Heart", a Joan Regan hit. As we approach Wisbech, Lester Green comes round the bus handing out pennies to all the women for what we now call the "rest stop", to great shrieks of hilarity from the ladies.

Later as we roll through the flatlands of strawberry fields and beet, Lester and my dad improvise a kind of double act about two vicars. By now there's a fair amount of singing, with the boys on the back seat making up our own rude lyrics to "Everybody's Doing It", "All the Nice Girls Love a Sailor" and so on. Then some little kid, probably Richard Taylor, pipes up: "The SEA! I CAN SEE THE SEA!". It may be difficult to imagine these days what a literally rare and exciting moment that was. Then, after what seemed like hours but was probably only about 10 minutes, we were turning into the coach park. There was something really heart-warming about pulling in alongside the other two Ratby buses amongst the dozens of others from Nottingham, Northampton, Derby, Lincoln. Already George and Verona Taylor were out there, counting people off the bus and checking their choices for tea. " Fish and Chips or Ham & Tongue Salad?....That's one without tongue, V'ro...". "Put me down for both, George," chirped someone from the back. "Right, you all know what the café's called: it's the Clock Café and it's next to the clock. Tea's at 4.30 - back on the bus at 6." It was about 10.30 am. The day was ours.

To be Continued...

**Chris Garratt** 





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#### **ENTERTAINING**

I'm glad it's only once a year when all the family gather here, full of life and free from care, to partake of Christmas fare.

But when unveiling the turkey dish that's the time I come to wish I had bought a smaller bird-the size of this is quite absurd!

Soup or melon for the starters? Don't forget the chipolatas, brussels, stuffing, creamed potatoes. Cranberry sauce is best from Waitrose.

Peas and carrots by the ton, is there enough for everyone? Oh, yes, there must be roasted spuds, followed by brandy Christmas puds.

When everyone is quite replete some coffee and a liquer neat. Please pass around the After Eight, ignore the calories, forget your weight. In high spirits all depart and leave me with a sinking heart. How can I face the coming week with nothing to eat but bubble and squeak!



Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December - at 6.30 p.m. Carols around the Christmas Tree, Village Hall.

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December Ratby Co-operative Mid-Band Christmas Concert in the Parish Church 7.30 p.m.

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January 7.30 p.m.
Ratby Band New Year Concert in the Parish Church.
Tickets £5 (children £2) from 239 0010.

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January
Newtown Linford Choral Society will be performing at Ratby Parish Church. 8 p.m. Tickets £7 Adults, £4 children under 14. Ring Peter Sayer on 01530 243822



# of Wot! About Ratby

It would not be possible to produce the magazine without our loyal advertisers. In a tribute to those who have been with us from the start we begin a regular feature, discovering more about our local businesses.

#### PORTER'S CARPETS

This Family business opened in Station Road in 1979. The premises were previously home to Jonella Knitwear, a hosiery firm.

The present owner, Mick Porter and his late father, Mr Wilfred Porter were originally carpet fitters when they decided to set up their own business. It is still, as then, a family affair, with son Lee carrying on the tradition, and Mick's wife Diane staffing the shop.

Over the years Mick has seen many changes. He says they don't have to advertise much, because most of their business is from personal recommendation, a tribute to the personal touch they offer. Customers have become more particular. Nowadays most carpets are imported, with English companies wholesaling.

#### **CHRISTMAS GREETINGS**

Ratby Senior Citizens Welfare Association would like to wish all supporters a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

Many thanks for supporting us throughout the year.

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Penthouse carpets are a popular British range. Porter's have followed trends, including the recent enthusiasm for laminated flooring, but Mick says people are going back to carpets. Laminate floors are found to be noisy and not so cosy!

In the early days burgundy and reds were the popular colours for carpets, and people changed their carpeting every 5 or 10 years, sometimes 20.

Nowadays the trend is for neutral shades of beige or brown, with teenagers still going for black. Carpets are changed every 2 or 3 years according to fashion.

Porter's cater mainly for the domestic market in Ratby and surrounding villages. They have carpeted caravans, and recently a 'Ratbian's' home in Spain! Carpets have had to be taken into homes through windows, and one memorable moment was when a dressing-gowned young female customer tumbled downstairs and landed on top of Mick! We are glad to report that no injuries ensued!

The busiest time is coming up to Christmas, when everyone wants a new carpet, but the company is busy all year round. Over the years they have expanded, doing all the fitting themselves after finding contract fitters to be unreliable.

Long may this business prosper!

Thank you for your support for Wot!



## **HIS and HERS**

# LADIES AND GENTS HAIR DRESSING

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#### **EXPLORER SCOUTS IN SWITZERLAND**

A party of 30 Young people (aged 14 – 18 years), adults and a 5 month old baby from Chomolungma Explorer Scout Unit travelled to Adelboden in Switzerland for 10 days for their summer expedition earlier in the year.

Fundraising started last year with a Table Top Sale in the Stamford Arms Car Park on the August Bank Holiday, followed by Bag Packing at Marks & Spencers (Fosse Park) and Morrisons Supermarket (Leicester) and car windscreen washing before culminating in a Sponsored Abseil of Everest down a local climbing tower.

This supplemented the £400 paid by each individual and provided the diverse range of activities undertaken during our trip and a hooded Chomolungma Unit sweatshirt for everybody. The price also included travel, accommodation, food and travel / mountain rescue insurance.

The journey from Groby in an air-conditioned coach, took 22 hours crossing by ferry and passing through France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany.

We had our own chalet "Sonnenrain" with 4 floors which could sleep 43 people and had ample washing facilities with 8 showers and 6 toilets. The kitchen with its dish washer was on the same floor as the dining room and balcony – where several people often ate their breakfast whilst enjoying the scenery. Plenty of games facilities were also available with a table tennis table and table football game inside and outside was basketball and volleyball. The village centre was a short 10 mins walk away.

Food was delivered daily and the group took it in turns to prepare, cook and wash up. The weather was usually very hot and sunny so sun cream was often being used. However as is typical in an alpine area, short thunder storms with heavy showers were also experienced.

On our return home, at our next meeting, we enjoyed our annual post camp barbecue where we showed everybody's photographs and videos on a big screen.

Now to start thinking and planning for next year

If anybody is interested in joining Chomolungma Explorer Scout Unit then please see our website (<u>www.westexplorer.org.uk</u>) or contact Bethan Dodge (07977 500416) for more details

Sean Williams

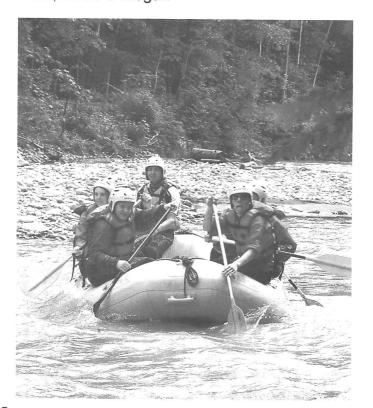
The Explorers' view

On the 21<sup>st</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> July, our Chomolungma Explorer Unit went on a trip to Switzerland. We did various activities such as visiting the Schilthorn and Jungfraujoch mountains, visited Lake Oeschinen and went on hikes, went tobogganing, white water rafting, mountain biking, scooters, swimming, went to the Trummelbach Falls, to the Wood Carvers.

On one of the nights we went to a Swiss Evening where we had to perform on stage an act along with other Scouts from different areas.

Our favourite activity was white water rafting because it was fun and something different because we have never done it before. We had a fantastic time, we would recommend going to Switzerland.

Kate, Hollie & Megan



#### RATBY COMMUNITY ORCHARD GROUP

#### APPLE DAY EVENT

We set up our stalls in the rain, and we packed away in the rain, but the sun shone for the important bit in the middle! And with the sun came the families and others to taste the orchard apples, cakes and pies, and have a go at the various attractions.

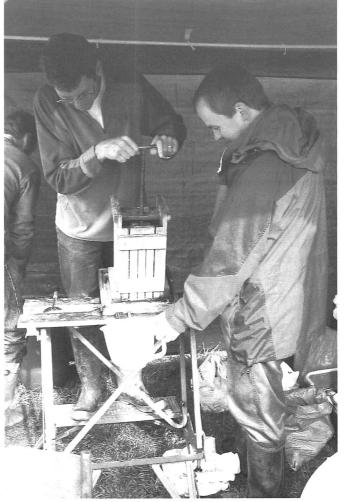
There was the traditional juicing, baked apple rings, and apple bobbing.

There was an apple themed quiz, and the everpopular William Tell Archery game. New for this year was the art table, where children and some adults created some stunning pictures of apple trees and fruit.

The raffle contributed to the day's takings of over £100. And we gained some new members.

But the event was not planned to raise money, although the funds come in handy for covering essential costs such as insurance!

Our aim was to promote the orchard, and we feel we were successful, despite the weather.



#### **Jazz Evening**

Bradgate Twinning Association held a Dixieland/New Orleans jazz evening in Newtown Linford Village Hall on Saturday November 11th.

The band arrived, set up and played the music which lovers of this type of music are very familiar with to our sell out audience. Impromptu entertainment was also provided for some of the evening by a young couple from the audience who were very adept at dancing to this music

Bradgate Twinning are always looking for new members, we have a good social calendar.

Call our Secretary on 0116 244 4290 to find out more.

Robert Hill.



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#### **RATBY VILLAGE QUIZ**

The Village Quiz, a biennial event, took place on 17th October, in the Methodist Chapel, in front of a good audience. Five teams competed against each other in friendly rivalry.

The teams were:

Village Society - Jack Haywood, Carol Measures, Brian Rayne. 35 pts History Group - Bryan Lewis, Michael Ball, Val Knott. 61 points

Parish Council - Ian Vernon, Ozzy O'Shea, Mick Earl. 20 points

Methodist Chapel - Ian Freeman, Ken Pickard, Jean Vann. 54 points

**Parish Church** - Richard Worsfold, Anita Stanley, Serena Garratt. 50 points

Question Master, Peter Smith, kept the questions coming in a lively and entertaining manner.

The History Group maintained their lead throughout the contest, closely followed by the Methodist Chapel team.

The Parish Church answered all their questions correctly in the Bible round (perhaps something

to do with the Vicar being on the team?). The Village Society answered well in the rounds on Geography and

Inventors and the Parish Council gained valuable points playing their Joker in the Sports round. The General Knowledge rounds caused much exercising of the brain cells!

After a most enjoyable evening the Harding Shield was presented to the History Society by Horace Gamble. Nancy and Fred Harding were unable to attend due to a prior engagement.

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Pictured are the winning team being presented with the Harding Shield by Hoz Gamble.

Left to right, Hoz Gamble, Michael Ball, Bryan Lewis, Captain, Val Knott.



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#### **News from St Philip and St James**

On Sunday evening 29<sup>th</sup> October, a group of singers and musicians from Ratby and Groby churches gave a performance of 'Giant Slayer' in Ratby church. This was the story of David and Goliath set to music with a narrator leading us through the story. It was a great evening with a lot of people coming along to listen and support our younger members who sang so enthusiastically. We also celebrated Bible Sunday the same day so the musical was quite fitting.

Our larger choir is now set to start rehearsing for our Advent and Christmas carol services. We welcome singers to come along and join the choir for special services who do not want to make the commitment of attending every Sunday. If you think you might like to join the choir then why not come along on a Wednesday evening 7pm – 8pm and see what we get up to. During November we will be meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> and children will need to drag a parent or carer along with them.

**David Collins** 

# DEADLINE for issue 122 FEBRUARY/MARCH FRIDAY 12th JANUARY

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#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### **DUST CAPS**

I heard some footsteps on the drive
So opened up the front door wide
And there I stood with mouth ajar
As two young boys knelt by my car
Their hands were feeling round the wheels
Trying to pinch some stainless steel
(in other words dust caps)
I said that I would tell their Mum
But all they did was turn and run
Parents can I just appeal
To tell your kids it's WRONG to steal.

Maybe it would be a good idea if parents periodically checked their children's bikes and if they notice these stainless steel dust caps ask them where they came from.

Name and address supplied

Dear Editor.

Why do people park on the road when they have a perfectly good drive?

Why do people park on the grass verge-totally ruining it-when they have a perfectly good drive?

Name and address supplied.



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