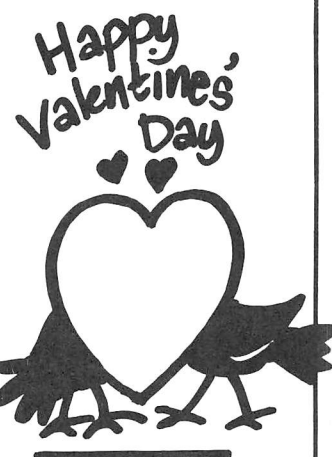


Centre
page
Pull Out
REPORT ON DRUG USE
THE RATBY
PARISH COUNCIL

Wot!

About Ratby



FEBRUARY 1992

PUBLISHED BY RATBY SCOUT GROUP

ISSUE 32



Photo kindly lent by Mr Cliff Lissaman

Party at the Wolsey Factory

Some of the people in the picture:-

Kate Ball, Lawson Moore (Manager), Bradley Moore, Carol and Diane Plant, Betty Sherlock George Preston, Ivy Finney, Kath Gamble, Edna Irons, Mrs Mott, Winnie Mott, Phyllis Ball, Audrey Lee, Violet Joyce, Audrey Marvin, Phyllis Godson, Chrissie Argyle, Mrs Nell Plant, Florrie Moore.

Do you recognise anyone? Perhaps you remember the occasion. Write in and tell us about it.

Christmas Party at the Working Men's Club

We've had quite a few phone calls in response to the 'Christmas Past' photos in Wot'.

Mrs Elaine Harris was really excited when she saw the pictures! She recognised her sisters straight away. Mrs Harris was originally a Plant - one of ten children who were living on Markfield Road at that time. She says that the photo must have been taken 31 years ago in 1959, when her sister Joan was 11, and sister Kath, 9 years old.

Kath, now Mrs Smith, told us that it was the only time they'd been to the annual party, and thought it might have been because their Dad had just died that year.

She recalled that Santa came to the party and gave them all a present.

Lots of the faces were familiar, Valerie Green, Ann Dunford, the Tipper boys, and the Woolley girls.



RTV

27 STATION ROAD, RATBY TEL: LEICESTER 394544

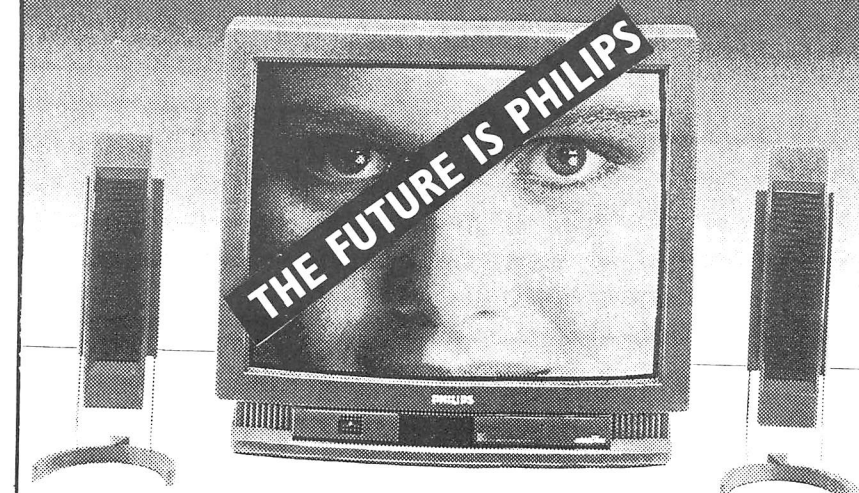


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AND MARTINSHAW WOOD

Hello! I am writing by kind invitation of Ratby Scout Group, to introduce myself as the Woodland Trust's Officer responsible for Martinshaw Wood, your local Wood.

As some of you will be aware, The Woodland Trust is a national charity, concerned with the safeguarding of Britain's woodland heritage. Following acquisition the woods are managed for public access, nature conservation, and for the value for woodland in the landscape. To this end, the Woodland Trust purchased Martinshaw in November 1985, with the help of a number of bodies including the Countryside Commission, Sports Council, Alan Evans Memorial Trust, as well as County, City, Borough and Local Parish Councils. However, Martinshaw could not have been purchased without the support of the local people who gave generously to local appeals and fund-raising events.

Martinshaw is very much your woodland, and in the Trust's ownership its future is safe. But what of the management

.....Originally, Martinshaw's 254 acres comprised predominantly oak woodland with large areas of hazel coppice, cut regularly for fuel. However, following large-scale felling between the World Wars, the wood was acquired by the Forestry Commission and planted with the mixture of oak and conifers that exists today.

It is the long term aim of the Woodland Trust to restore Martinshaw to its former glory as a native oak wood. This will be done by the gradual thinning of conifers, with emphasis being placed on those areas where the oaks are struggling for light, and where early removal of conifers is considered prudent. Elsewhere the conifers will be grown on to maturity to produce a good crop of

timber, before native broadleaved trees are re-established.

Some of this work has already started, but I am currently drawing up a new management plan for the wood, and I hope that in the next few winters the process can be accelerated to produce noticeable results.

Visitors to Martinshaw are of course always welcome, but I know that a number of local residents and Ratby Parish Council have expressed concern about the Ratby Entrance to the wood. I am currently drawing up proposals for an improved entrance, including a car parking facility, so that the wood will be more welcoming.

Certainly, I think the new surfaced footpath on the Groby side, installed by Leicestershire County Council has been a success, and now provides a welcome facility for wheelchair, and other, less mobile visitors.

I hope that you will all make use of Martinshaw and take an interest in its management. I will be writing to all Voluntary Wardens in the near future to arrange a meeting to discuss management proposals in more detail, and I hope that with the help of Ratby Scout Group, we will also be able to undertake some practical management work this winter.

If you would like to be involved more closely in Martinshaw's management, or indeed have concerns about the wood, then please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below I look forward to hearing from you, and to passing on news about Martinshaw and The Woodland Trust, in future editions of 'Wot!'

Angus Hancock, The Woodland Trust,
c/o Forest of Mercia, Rumer Hill
Rd. Cannock, Staffs, WS11 3EX.



DEALER

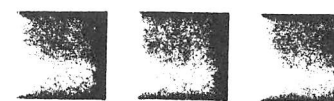
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Ratby Primary School Association

Ratby Primary School Association would like to start 1992 by thanking all its supporters who helped to raise much needed funds for our school and therefore, the children of this village.

Thank you especially for coming to the Christmas Curtain Raiser in December, which raised nearly £400. Many people in the village - or 200, to be precise! - belong to our "200 club". This is a lottery which has been run for the school for the past 13 years by Mr. & Mrs. Ken Brown of Ingle Drive. They have put in a tremendous amount of work over the years for which we are very grateful and would like to record our thanks. However, no one wants to do the same job for ever - nor should they be expected to - and we are looking for a new coordinator. You needn't have children at the school or belong to the association. There would be no meetings to attend! It's a task that might well suit someone who is retired but who would like to take an interest in and help the school. Basically, 200 people pay £6.00 a year or £2.00 a term for a chance to win £10.00 a week or £100.00 at the end of each term. We have collectors for both the yearly and the termly subscribers but need

PABARI'S RATBY NEWS

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someone to coordinate this venture. Of the £1200.00 collected annually just under £600.00 goes to the school so you would be fulfilling a very worthwhile job. Interested? Please 'phone Judith Harrison on 393871 any evening for more details. This year we shall be holding our annual fete in June, several rummage sales and various other events, the first being a 60's Disco. This will be held in the school hall from 8 - 12 on Friday 14th February.... Tickets are £2 from the school or from Alison Fowler, 29 Gillbank Drive, or any school association committee member. Come along and have a great time. Cheap drinks from 8 - 9 p.m. Whether you enjoy discos, rummage sales, fetes or a flutter on the 200 club thank you all, once again, for your support.

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Police/Community Consultative Committee

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th March at 7.30 pm at Ratby Welfare Hall.

Amongst items on the agenda will be the Sub-Divisional Commander's report on the current policing situation for the area, reports by members of the Consultative Committee and representations from members of the public. The Chairman of the Group will be Mrs C E Brock, a member of the Leics Police Authority. The meeting is open to the public and as many people as possible are encouraged to attend.

Any person wishing to have an item included on the agenda should send it to Mr D J Ward, County Secretary's Department, tel. 656026.

Persons submitting items for the agenda should bear in mind that it is not within the Committee's term of reference to discuss individual cases. These should always be directed to the Sub-Divisional Commander - Supt. Walker at Beaumont Police Station.

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Christmas Music Maze

at Brookvale

The largest number of students ever took part in this successful and entertaining event. An unusual theme linked the pieces of music together. Drama students created a story in which 'Debbie' got lost in a computer game - 'The Music Maze'. The voice of the computer took us on a journey through time to the present and even into the future until 'Debbie' was finally released.

The evenings began with the school choir singing medieval carols, followed by some very unusual instruments - crumhorns, accompanying traditional songs from the time of Henry VIII

The choir, orchestra, and instrumentalists then performed a wide variety of music, including well known carols from the Victorian era, and plantation songs from the southern states of North America. There were some outstanding solo performances.

Eventually we reached the present day, and the school pop group played and sang popular Christmas songs to an enthusiastic audience.

A glimpse into the future was provided by pupils from year 8, who performed music and songs they had created, to warn us of the dangers of commercialism and greed.

Congratulations to everyone concerned with this venture. It was a successful and very enjoyable evening.

VILLAGE KARATE INSTRUCTOR EARNS 2nd BLACK BELT

Some of the members of Ratby Karate Club, which meets every Wednesday in the Chapel Rooms 7 - 8 p.m. Children, 8 - 9 p.m. Adults had an early Christmas Present. Nine members took a grading and all passed.

The belts obtained were:-

Laura Stafford	Red
Tony Stafford	Orange
Gary Pounder	Red
Tom Fowler	Red
Alison Pounder	Orange
David Root	Red
Gwen Willet	Green
Amy Willet	Red
Steve Cooper	2nd Dan Black

They were all graded by Dave Spicer 4th Dan Black Belt, the club's main instructor.

Anyone interested in joining the club or just wanting to have a look is welcome any Wednesday evening.



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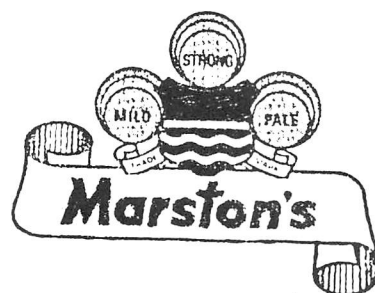
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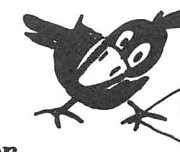
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Dear Editor,



Letters



Dear Editor

May I through the pages of "Wot" express my gratitude to the people of Ratby, for their kindness, sympathy and help during Joan Johnson's illness and eventual decease. Joan, my daughter, had made a lot of friends locally and this is something I find it very easy to do in this village and I know that she loved living here. Ratby has a deserved reputation of being "a friendly sort of place", but as far as I am concerned it should also be known as a caring community.

Thank you
Ron Thornton
97A Station Road

I was saddened to read in the local paper that construction of the Western by-pass was beginning soon.

We will suffer the disruption of the road being built. We will sit and watch as the bulldozers destroy the environment and the recreational potential of the urban fringe around a quarter of Leicester.

Once built, the new motorway junction at Kirby Muxloe is bound to increase crime in the area and to increase pressure for more development. Before long the green wedges between Groby and Glenfield and Ratby and Kirby Muxloe will disappear.

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For what reason is all this havoc being wrought? The traffic planners tell us that the flow of traffic will be reduced in Ratby and the other villages and particularly around the Western Distributor Road in Leicester. Now the decision to build has been made I do hope that those benefits will be forthcoming, but I have a nagging doubt that after a few years if Government Policy (or rather lack of it) stays the same the traffic problems will be just as bad again.

So why didn't people speak out about it? Well they did in considerable numbers at the Public Inquiry, but whenever anyone tried to make a point which went to the heart of the problem, the Government Transport Policy, they were hushed up by the Inspector. It felt as if the only thing objectors could say that would be listened to was 'this road should be **not in my back yard**'.

As the destruction continues over the next months, and with an election in the offing, I hope the electors of Ratby will remember which government wrought such havoc on our lives and consider using their votes for a government with a Transport Policy. By that I mean one that will make private vehicle road users with our insatiable demand for road space pay the real cost of the damage we are causing and encourage us back onto improved public transport.

Perhaps representatives of local political parties would like to take up this challenge inform the voters of Ratby where they stand on this issue.

Stephen Boud
3 Ingle Drive

Santa's sleigh brings a gift to the Library Club

Ratby Insurance Services' Christmas window display, with a village scene complete with Santa's sleigh has won first prize in the Parish Council 'Christmas Windows' competition.

Mr Atul B Jobanputra has donated the prize of £25 to the Ratby Library Club!!

STRONG VIEWS IGNORED

The Local Government Ombudsman, has reported to Mrs. A. Newberry that, "in the absence of maladministration, it is not his role to question the merits of a decision and he was sorry that he could not help her in her complaint against Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council.

Mrs. A. Newberry wrote to "the Ombudsman" complaining that the council had granted permission for an application to build a place of worship on the fringes of Ratby Village, without taking into account the strong views of local residents, the local and structure plans, and the earlier refusal of a similar application.

The details of the application sequence, presented to the ombudsman by Hinckley and Bosworth B.C.:-

In 1987 the Knighton Park Trust submitted a planning application for the erection of a place of worship to the rear of 182 Station Road.

This application was refused principally because the site was located outside of the settlement boundary contained in the Ratby District Plan. In 1988 the Draft North Eastern Parishes Local Plan showed no change to the boundary in this part of the village and proposed a "Green Buffer" to the west of buildings fronting Station Road.

In July 1988 an appeal against refusal of the planning application was dismissed by an Inspector who highlighted the following points:-

- i) No evidence was put forward which would necessitate the siting of the building in this location.
- ii) Almost half of the site would be taken up by building, car park and roadworks, which would not constitute an institution in extensive grounds.

village and would reduce the gap between Ratby and Kirby Muxloe.

In August 1989, a second application was submitted for a similar sized building located on land occupied by a pair of semi-detached houses fronting Station Road and land to the rear. The building had been redesigned so as to reduce its scale and massing within the site and to facilitate its insertion within the street scene along Station Road. Revised parking areas were proposed and landscaping suggested to the west and south side of a new single access to be constructed on to Station Road. This access would conform with the adopted standards of the Highway Authority.

The application was first considered by the Planning Committee on 21st November 1989. The report included details of local opposition as well as support for the proposal and Members deferred making a decision to enable them to visit the site.

Also in November 1989, the Local Plans Working Party considered the Knighton Park Trust objection to the Local Plan and agreed that the boundary defining the limits of Ratby village should be amended to include the proposed meeting room and car park, and that the applicants be requested to sign a legal Agreement to retain the remaining open land as part of the planning application.

The application was reported back to Planning Committee in December 1989, when Members agreed to hold the application in abeyance pending receipt of the Inspectors report on the Public Local Inquiry. The Committee also agreed with the recommendations of the Working Party and, in conjunction with other proposed amendments, these were advertised in January and February 1990, for public comment. On 20th March 1990, the Planning Committee considered comments received on the proposed amendments but agreed that these be retained and submitted to the Inspector for consideration.

Environment appointed an Inspector to consider the Inquiry during May/June 1990. The inspector was required to report to the Local Planning Authority on all formal objections to the Plan, expressing an opinion on the merits of the objections and making recommendations. Both Mrs. Hurdle and Ratby Parish Council presented their evidence.

The Inspector concluded the following in relation to the Knighton Park Trust proposal:-

"The main issue in my opinion is the likely impact of the development on the approach to Ratby from Kirby Muxloe and on the open countryside protected as a Green Buffer. It seems to me that the removal of the existing vacant and derelict building, the infilling of the Station Road frontage and on-site landscaping and planting, which would help to screen the Casepak Depot, would be beneficial. I furthermore consider that the 0.56 hectares addition to the built-up area needed to accommodate this development, most of which would be occupied by landscaped

car parking, would result in an insignificant extension of urban development beyond the existing outbuilding".

Consequently the Inspector recommended that the Local Plan be modified as proposed by the Council to realign the boundary of the Green Buffer and the built-up area west of Station Road, Ratby and to define this site for a proposed place of worship or similar community facility.

As a result the outstanding planning application was reported back to the Planning Committee on 22nd January 1991, recommended for approval, subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement covering off-site landscaping. The application had been held in abeyance by Committee for 14 months, pending the outcome of the Local Plan Inquiry and was formally determined by the full Council on 19th February 1991. The Section 106 Agreement was signed on the 20th February and the decision notice issued on the same date.

In the light of the relevant issues having been extensively debated at the Public Local Inquiry, the subsequent recommendation of the Inspector and the formal determination by Planning Committee and full Council, there is insufficient justification in any amendment.

Slight alterations to the elevational treatment of the building were approved as minor amendments to the scheme by letter dated 4th March 1991. A landscaping scheme for the site was approved on the 11th March 1991 in accordance with condition 8 of the planning permission.

You will have seen the building as it nears completion.



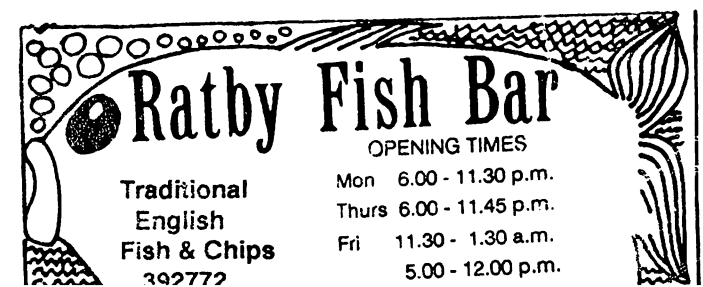
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392772

REPORT ON DRUG USE

involved in substance abuse. There is no formal, timetabled education on the topic, but the issue is discussed with students as part of the College's aim to continue encouraging self-discipline and personal responsibility in students. Youth workers at the College also share this role.

Both school and College will offer advice to parents concerned about their sons or daughters.

Parents

The Drug Advice Centre, (see address below) advises that all parents need to be well informed on this issue, and vigilant. Parents should always be aware of what their youngsters are doing, with whom, and where.

The most important advice is for parents to LISTEN TO and TALK WITH their children and teenagers. Encourage them to talk and share any problems.

Helping children to develop self-esteem and self confidence can help to prevent involvement in undesirable activities. They need support, interest and encouragement. Young people can be encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, but they also need firm guidelines.

Those most at risk are the youngsters who are out at all hours, and whose parents do not know where they are.

Parents and Young People can get more information from:

The Drug Advice Centre, at Paget House, West Street in Leicester. You can visit the centre - Mondays to Thursdays 9 am - 5 pm. Fridays 9 am - 4.30 pm, or telephone (0533) 470200.

The Centre have informative leaflets and trained people to help and advise.

Remember - at the moment this is an issue concerning only a small minority. Lets all help to keep it that way - and work towards total elimination.

Sources of Information

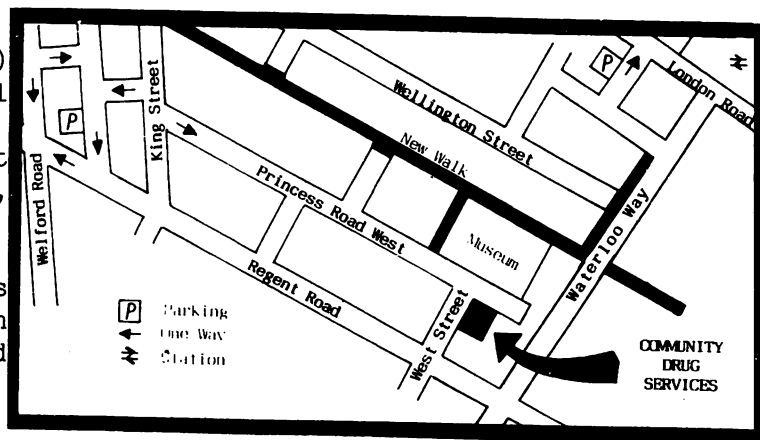
* **The Drug Advice Centre** - funded by Social Services and the Department of Health.

Opened in 1986 by the Leicester Action for Youth Trust (a voluntary organisation committed to working with young people) offers:

* Up to date information and education on legal and illegal drugs

* Advice, support and counselling for individuals, friends and families.

* Information, consultation and training on drug-related issues to individuals, groups, voluntary and statutory organisations.



* **DRUG MISUSE - A BASIC BRIEFING** leaflet published by DHSS 1988

* **DRUG MISUSE AND THE YOUNG - A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND YOUTH WORKERS - D.E.S.**

Books for Young People

Available in Ratby Library on the Children's non-fiction shelf:

"ALCOHOL ABUSE" by Brian Ward
LIFE GUIDES series

"CRACK AND COCAINE" by David Browne
FRANKLIN WATTS

Both books are very readable and well illustrated.

Ideal for reading together and discussing with young people.

Some TV programmes include issues like this which can give you the chance to talk to your son or daughter. 'Neighbours' for example has covered superficially the subject of drug use and under-age drinking. A couple of years ago "Grange Hill" portrayed a likeable youth, "Zammo" who became involved in drug abuse. The programme showed how the drug affected him and destroyed his life.

As adults perhaps we can best help young people by remembering the pressures that we were under at that age (probably older), and being sensitive and responsive to their problems.

JANET'S JOTTINGS

Hi! I'm Janet and I love musing and meandering around the countryside. I often jot down bits and pieces out of the books I read, and I thought that I might sort these items into some sort of order and then share them with you.

Here goes! My main theme seems to be weeds and the past.

COLTSFOOT

*Tussilago
Farfara*

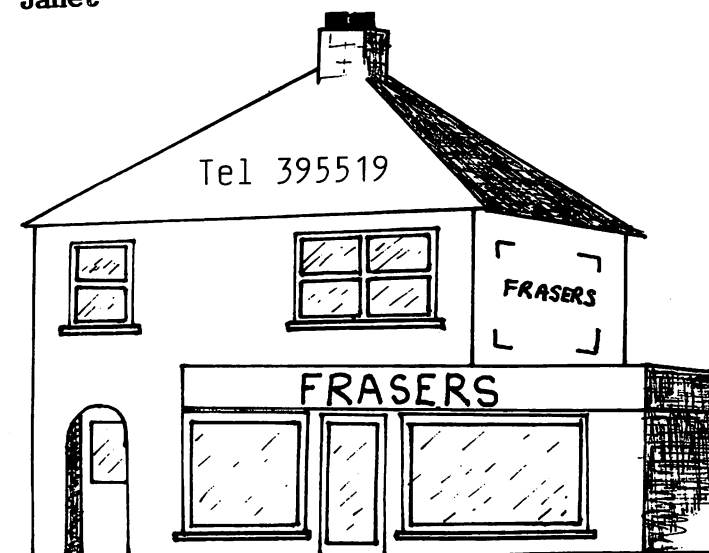


The flowers usually first appear in late January and you find them on waste places, right up to the end of February. They grow about 6 to 8 inches high (15 - 20 cm) and belong to the daisy family, perhaps you could think of the flower as a very bright, small dandelion. Dandelions are also in the daisy family.

The latin name is Tussilago farfara, and is associated with the old English names of Cough wort and Cold wort. Latin Tussis means a cough. The hoof shaped leaves, which do not appear until after the flowers have died also earns the plant other local names such as Foal foot, Horse hoof, and bull foot. The leaves have lots of white hairs on the under side, this looks almost like felt.

All down the years the plant has had various uses. The cottoney down under the leaves was collected and then dipped in a salt petre solution, allowed to dry and used as tinder before the invention of matches. In the Highlands there are records of the seed heads being used for stuffing pillows. Coltsfoot tea has been used all through the ages for the relief of coughs, even today. At least one famous cough sweet has extract of Coltsfoot in its recipe today (Hacks)! Now where to find this gem of a plant in Ratby and its surrounds. It likes to grow on bare waste ground and is often found beside old lanes and footpaths. Like all natural growing plants it helps itself to stay in existence. The wind distributes the seeds, that is why the leaves do not come up until April and May. The leaves are very large, forming umbrella cover over the ground, this keeps out the other weed seeds from settling too close. In the past the people of the village would have "looked after" this useful plant and each household would have known where to find it growing. There was one rule that everybody harvesting any part of the plant would always obey, this is it. Never ever take more of the plant than you need at that particular time and never ever take all of one plant. I hope you will enjoy finding some Coltsfoot plants. Have fun looking anyway.

Janet



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REPORT ON DRUG USE

*It is an offence to sell alcohol to under 18's for consumption in a bar or elsewhere.

*It is an offence to send a person under 18 to buy alcohol.

*It is an offence to consume alcohol inside off-licence premises.

* It is an offence to buy alcohol and share it with persons under 18 on, or outside licenced premises. Retailers have a responsibility to confiscate the alcohol and refund money in this circumstance. The retailer could be fined for allowing under-age drinking outside their premises.

Private clubs which supply alcohol to their members are exempt from the laws concerning sale of alcohol on their premises.

*It is an offence to be drunk in a public place.

* It is an offence to drive with more than 80 mg of alcohol in every 100 ml of blood.

The commonest hazard caused by drinking alcohol is injury after a fall. A Department of Health and Social Security 1988 report states:

"A quarter of 14 year olds in England and Wales, rising to 40% of 16 year olds report that they drink in pubs - girls and boys alike."

Relative to wages, the price of alcohol almost halved between 1950 and 1984.

In a small community like Ratby, where most people are well known, it would be difficult for young people under 18 to buy drinks in a pub. This must be another good reason for opposing a rapid increase in development.

Tobacco

100,000 people die each year from tobacco-related causes in Britain.

There has been an increase in smoking amongst young people, particularly girls, in recent months. The more a person smokes, the more likely they are to suffer from heart disease, bronchitis, or cancer of the lung, nose or throat. It is said that each cigarette shortens the life of a smoker by 5½ minutes.

What does the Law say?

* It is an offence to sell tobacco products to children under the age of 16.

Solvent Misuse/Glue Sniffing

Solvent misuse is the common term for the deliberate inhalation of intoxicating substances such as aerosols or butane gas. These substances are widely available in homes and shops.

What are the dangers?

Inhaled vapours are absorbed through the lungs and rapidly reach the brain. Part of the effect is due to reduced oxygen intake. Body functions like breathing and heart rate are depressed. Repeated inhalation can result in disorientation, loss of control and unconsciousness. Effects come on quickly and disappear between 10 - 30 minutes.

The greatest risk comes from losing control in an unsafe environment (such as a canal bank or roadside).

There is a possibility of death from choking on vomit, or suffocation if plastic bags are placed over the head.

The greatest danger occurs when aerosols are sprayed directly into the mouth, causing suffocation.

Why do young people do it?

Many young people become involved through curiosity or through friends. It is a cheap and easy substitute for alcohol. For most youngsters, it is a passing phase. Only a few take it up as a dangerous habit.

What can parents do?

* Find out more about products that can be abused.

* Be vigilant and aware.

Signs to look out for

* Young people may look and behave as if they were drunk

*There may be a chemical smell on breath or clothes

*A sudden unexplained interest in glue or solvent based products

*Unusual soreness or redness around the mouth, nose or eyes

*Persistent irritable cough

*Slurred speech

*Sudden intake or moody behaviour, combined perhaps with secrecy about movements

REPORT ON DRUG USE

* A sudden and uncharacteristic decline in school performance, possibly the start of truancy.

Don't forget though - many of these signs could have other causes, such as illness, adolescent hormone changes, or anxiety.

What does the Law say?

Under the Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1985, it is an offence to supply, or offer to supply solvents to persons under 18 if the supplier has reason to believe that they intend to misuse them.

Other Drugs

In depth information on other drugs is beyond the scope of this article. Further details can be obtained from the address listed at the end of this report.

What the Law says?

Drugs which are controlled in the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) are placed in different classes, depending on the penalties associated with that drug. Class A drugs (e.g. Heroin, Ecstasy, Cocaine/Crack) carry the highest penalties. Class C (Marijuana Cannabis) carry the lowest.

*It is an offence to allow anyone on your premises to produce or supply (give away or sell) illegal drugs. It is an offence to offer to supply.

*It is an offence if one or both parents know about but do nothing to prevent their son or daughter from sharing illegal drugs with a friend in their house.

Cannabis

Known as black, draw, pot, spliffs. There is some evidence of cannabis use in Ratby. It is an offence to allow premises to be used for cultivating, producing, supplying or smoking cannabis.

Cocaine

(Crack, coke)

A white powder, extracted from the leaves of South American coca bush. there is increasing use of crack, a purified form of cocaine in the city, which is usually by all accounts, about a year ahead of rural areas.

Ecstasy

This is an hallucinogenic amphetamine which is associated with 'Acid House' parties and all night 'raves'. Again it is popular in the city.

HIV/AIDS

According to workers at the Drug Advice Centre, an increasing number of young people are becoming HIV positive. This is mainly due to an increase in unprotected heterosexual activity. There is a connection with substance misuse, because young people 'intoxicated' by alcohol or other drugs are uninhibited and can forget to take precautions.

What can be done?

At present we state again that this is still a minority problem in Ratby. We are sure that no-one wants to see it increase, and so we need to consider how to prevent growing substance misuse.

Shops and Licencees

Shopkeepers and licencees in the village should be aware of the Law and their own responsibilities. However, it is difficult to assess the age of many young people nowadays. Requesting identification is not always successful.

Police

Of course, the Police are concerned to stop all illegal activities. Whenever possible they will take action.

If you have evidence that any laws are being broken, the Police will welcome information. Phone Beaumont Leys on (0533) 530066 (ask for Beaumont Police), or tell P.C. Moore when you see him around the village.

School

Both Brookvale High and Groby Community College include education about drug use as part of their work in Personal and Social Education. At Brookvale this takes place during the final ninth year, when pupils are aged 14. This topic is discussed in school as an issue in society today. Students are encouraged through group work and videos to gain self-confidence and be able to resist pressure to conform.

If ever there were causes for concern about a student, parents would always be contacted

At Groby College parents would also be contacted if students were found to be

Library Club

The Ratby Library club has now established itself as a great success with the younger children of the village; since it opened in June 1991, attendance figures for the sessions held each Tuesday afternoon in the library have been running to almost full capacity.

A wide variety of story themes have been used each week providing a vast range of crafts which the children have made and taken home, and the books used can be borrowed by the children for their own use.

The last session of the previous term took on a completely different formula from previous weeks; since it was held during the week before Christmas, it had been decided that the library club should celebrate it with a Christmas performance of songs by all the children for their parents/relatives/friends, etc.

The "big day" itself was tremendously exciting for the children; they had rehearsed their "stage positions" many times before, and with the boys dressed as toy soldiers and the girls as Christmas fairies, on they all "paraded", led by Christopher Ridley (aged 4) and his big bass drum, much to the delight of everyone.

Their performance was excellent, in fact far better than any of the rehearsals and at the end, Christopher had devised his own thank-you speech which he delivered very well, and he then presented all the children in the audience with chocolate bars in recognition of their excellent behaviour throughout the performance.

However, a bell ringing from the foyer of the library heralded the arrival of Santa, laden with a sackful of presents for the children; apparently Santa had heard the "dulcet tones" of the library children and decided to reward them with a pre-Christmas gift, much to the squeals of delight from the children themselves.

Refreshments were then served to everyone.

As well as parents etc. who attended, a representative of Beaumont Leys Library also attended and presented Bernie and Jayne with gifts (much to their surprise) and Mrs Ann Day represented the Ratby Library (who spent most of the afternoon clicking away with her camera - "Mrs" David Bailey or what).

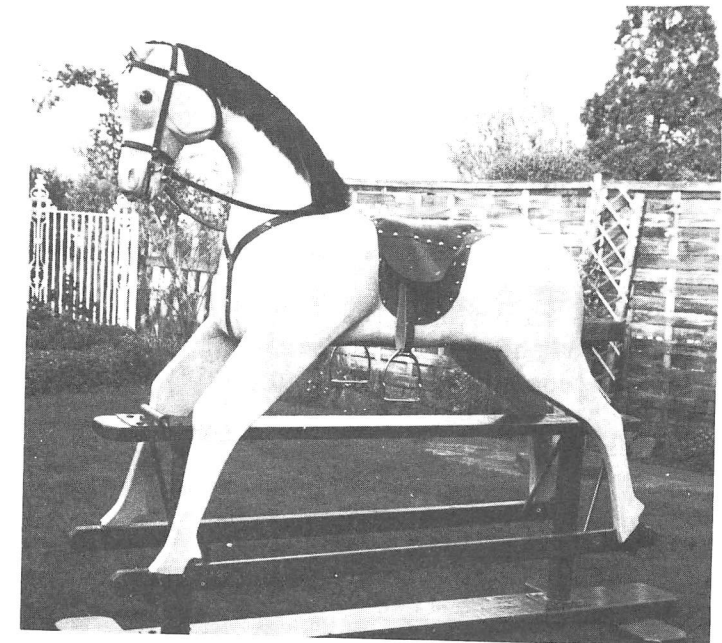
Bernie and Jayne would like to thank the following people who contributed to making the afternoon a great success, namely

Narette Charnock for her help with the preparation of refreshments and costumes; Mrs Lindsay Edwards of Ratby Primary School who supplied the musical instruments, not forgetting Mr Smith for supplying the extra seating facilities; Mr Atul Jobanputra, owner of Ratby Insurance (Alliance & Leicester, Main Street) for donating the Christmas decor, and of course, Mr Horace Ball of Overfield Close, who completely stole the show in his role as shh ...you know who!!

He has played this role many times over the years and his excellent rapport with young children certainly shone through on this occasion, he is known to many Ratby villagers, in particular through his work with the Church, and is a grandfather himself. To demonstrate how talented Horace is, many years ago, he made the magnificent wooden rocking horse, as shown in the photograph from scraps which he moulded together for the "princely" cost of £20 - for his grandchildren, and it is still enjoyed by many young Ratby children today.

At the time of printing, the waiting list for the Club is quite a lengthy one, and so the one requisite is that the children on the list must be residents of Ratby - applications from other villages are

refused in order that Ratby children are guaranteed a place in their own library. The waiting list is held in the library and it is suggested that the child's name be placed on the list in advance of their 3rd birthday to guarantee a place before the child reaches "school age".

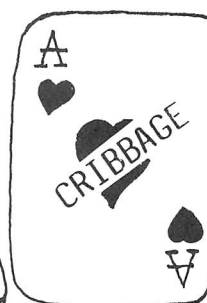
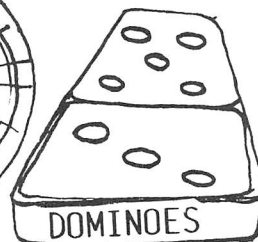
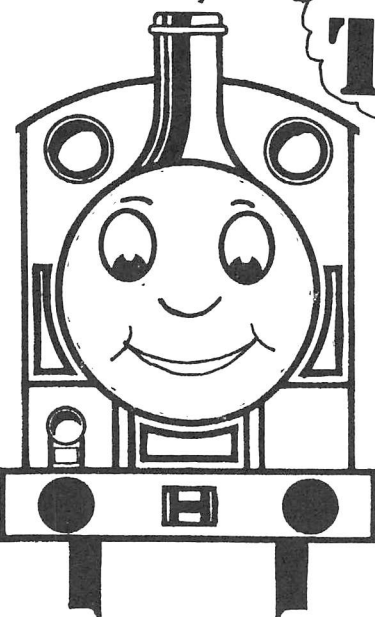


Mr Ball has since improved the horse by re-painting with a dappled effect and creating a new mane.

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Ratby Parish Council

Cycling Safety

From time to time residents have complained to the Council about people cycling on pavements. One resident reported that an adult cyclist on a pavement had knocked over a pedestrian.

Children over the age of 11 and adults should not cycle on pavements. Children aged 11 have an opportunity to learn cycling proficiency during their last year at Ratby Primary School.

Roads can be dangerous, and drivers often disregard cyclists. Parents need to ensure that children allowed to cycle on the road have had safety lessons, and are appropriately dressed with helmet, and bright reflective clothing. The Parish Council has written to the village newsagent to ask if they can encourage newspaper deliverers to dress appropriately and have well-maintained bicycles and lights

Christmas Activities

Carols around the tree

Despite the rain, a good number of people joined in with the carols, and 'warmed up' afterwards with hot drinks in the Welfare Hall!

Thank you to everyone concerned for making the evening a success.

Christmas Tree

Sadly, our original tree, cut down for the village, was destroyed by someone who cut off and removed the top seven feet.

So special thanks are due to the Ratby Scouts for their considerable effort in selecting and cutting, then erecting the second tree!

Thanks also to Mr Mangham for getting the tree down to the village for us.

Christmas Windows

Once again there was a magnificent display throughout the village, making selection of winners very difficult.

The final result -

- 1st Prize - Ratby Insurance Services
- 2nd Prize - Frasers
- 3rd Prize - Stamford Street Stores

Well done, and many thanks to everyone who got involved in brightening up the village.

Part time Gardener Post

The Parish Council is hoping to appoint a part-time gardener to maintain trees, shrubs and other landscaping throughout the village. Hours and salary to be negotiated.

If you are interested, please apply to the Parish Clerk as soon as possible.

Pollution in Rothley Brook

The National Rivers Authority have informed the Parish Council that the source of recent pollution has been traced, and the appropriate action taken.

The brook is monitored on a regular basis.

Hedgerow on Cottage Close

The County Council's Hedgerow Officer has advised the Parish Council that the hedge could be gradually coppiced in February of each year to encourage strong healthy growth and provide shelter for wildlife.

Site Meeting on Traffic Problems

Recommendations from the site meeting which involved Parish Councillors, County Council representatives, and the Police are now being considered. Amongst the areas of concern were Park Road, and the junction at Desford Lane and Main Street.

Police Liaison Meetings

The Chairman of the Parish Council reported that the greatest areas of concern in this area are burglaries and motor vehicle crime. Both are on the increase.

There are now 194 police officers in Beaumont Division, the first time in 7 years that there has been a full force.

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Ratby Parish Council

Front Gardens Competition

The Parish Council would like to announce their latest venture concerned with brightening up the village. Each Spring and Summer there will be a competition open to everyone in the village. A prize will be given for the best FRONT GARDEN. Judging will be by an independent 'gardener'. Residents can nominate themselves, or a neighbour. If you see a front garden that is particularly attractive - let us know! You do not have to be an expert on garden design - we are looking for something colourful and well kept!

Footpaths

Waymarking should now be complete. The Council has had reports that some of the new stiles are very high, and difficult to get over, especially for older people. Please let the Parish Council know if you come across any problems on the footpaths.

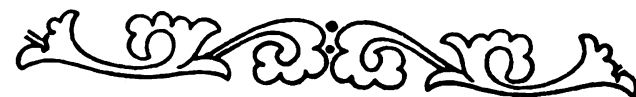
A map showing the designated Rights of Way in Ratby Parish has been mounted by the Parish Council and is displayed in Ratby Library.

The Parish Council is preparing a leaflet on walks in the Parish. This will be printed by the County Council at no cost to the village.

Dates of Next Meetings

February 4th
March 3rd
April 7th

7.15 pm in the Welfare Hall.



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A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

A short history of land tenure and landscape history of the parishes of the manor of Groby and later Bradgate Estates of the Earls of Stamford during the years 1200 - 1800 with particular reference to the Parish of Ratby.

In 1981 a remarkable document came into the hands of the county record office. The book had lain in the vaults of Stone & Co. solicitors and had only come to light during spring cleaning prior to Stones amalgamation with another Leicester solicitor. The book and other documents that came into the hands of the record office in that year were all estate records relating to the Bradgate Estates of the late Earl and Countess of Stamford.

The book itself had been prepared by Samuel Miles a surveyor of the Bradgate estates and was a careful copy of a large collection of documents relating to the manor court records of the parishes of Ratby, Groby, Newtown Linford and Anstey.

The records preserved in these documents relating to the manor court records of the Manor of Groby are of immeasurable importance to those historians interested in agrarian and landscape history. A close examination of the documents indicate that they are derived from a series of court rolls which span the years between the early years of the 17th century to the last quarter of that century, up to and during the reign of Charles II.

The majority of the documented records give details of manorial rents and changes in land ownership or tenure numerous entry give details of the names and ages of the various freeholders, leaseholders and other villagers who held their land by copyhold from the Lord of the Manor, Henry Grey Earl of Stamford.

Before referring in detail to the documents themselves it is important to understand the rather complicated history of landownership and tenure that had preceded the period to which the documents refer.

At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, the parishes of Ratby and Groby comprised of two small villages with populations in the order of 68 and 64 people respectively.

The land under plough according to Domesday was some 360 acres in Ratby and 320 acres in Groby. However despite the modest acreage under plough these parishes were substant-

ially large in size.

Away from the village centres were vast tracks of woodland waste much of it to be untouched for several centuries.

Of this woodland area much still remains today and can be seen in Ratby, at Burrough and Martinshaw Woods, also at Groby, Lawn, Ladyshay and Sheet Hedges Woods still survive. All these woods were part of vast acreage of woodland recorded by the Domesday commissioners and remained substantially intact until the early years of the 17th century.

Prior to 1600 early evidence of land clearance had occurred in various parts of the parishes.

To the north of Groby in the year 1280 it is recorded that peasants had established an assart (wood clearance) in an area of the forest later to be known as the parish of Newtown Linford. Other woodland clearance occurred at Ratby in or around the year.

The newly established area of woodland clearance lay to the west of the present village in an area to the west of Burrough Woods and was known as Lunderhay. This new assart was later to comprise the fields and meadows of the present moated farmstead of Old Hayes.

In the following century further colonisation of the woodland waste occurred in the lands to the north of Old Hayes in an area today known as Bondman.

A further area of early woodland clearance occurred to the north west of Bondman Hayes probably as early as the 11th century. This area which today comprises the lands of Whittington rough and fields of the present farms and small holdings in the vicinity of Whittington Grange.

This later settlement which by the 12th century was an integral part of the village of Whittington appears to be the earliest of all the woodland clearances. A second area adjacent to whittington bounded on its east side by the present Woodland of Martinshaw, and on its north side the Lawn woods and the site of Stewards Hay. This large area of ancient woodland appears to have been cleared by the early 13th century and formed the area of land known as Groby Park. This park together with the park of Bradgate and a smaller parcel of land to the south comprising the park of Burgh formed the three important improve-



ments to the early manorial estates of the Lords of the Manor of Groby.

All these early woodland clearances were taking place at a time of great expansion in the rural economy of the lowland zone of Britain.

From the 11th to the 14th century the population had expanded considerably.

In the year 1086 the year the great domesday survey was began. Ratby as mentioned earlier had a population of some 68 souls. there was evidently a church which predated the present building. Our evidence for this again comes from the Domesday survey which lists a priest amongst the population at that time.

By the time of the first great poll tax of 1377 the population had probably risen to some 350 persons, although like the recent dismal attempt to raise money by a head tax it is likely some of the population may have succeeded in avoiding payment and therefore their names do not occur in the register of payers.

The 13th and 14th centuries prior to the Black death were a period of considerable economic growth. In the reign of Edward III the first of the fairs were held in ratby and at that time Groby had a weekly market. As mentioned earlier Old Hays farmstead was probably established by the middle of the 13th century.

In the following century a serf who had aspirations of owning a "home of his own" fled the village and built a homstead within the village waste. This man whoever he was, gave his name to Bondman Hays (the woodland clearing of the Bond man) which was another name for the serf who was bound to his lord of the manor by common bond.

Meanwhile other settlements failing, ravaged by the visitations of the Black death the village of Whittington (which once stood on the edge of Ratby) struggled on for

The remains of this ancient village lie still undiscovered in the woods and fields near Whittington rough.

During the 15th century the expansion of Ratby both in size, population, and wealth declines.

It is evident from the documentary evidence that the Greys the new lords of the manor were more interested in developing their estates at Groby and Bradgate. Apart from a golden period just before the battle of Bosworth held in 1485 there was little economic growth. The building of Lord William Hastings extensive moated manor house (Kirby Castle) did stem the economic tide. During the four years between 1480-85 the building accounts of Kirby Castle indicate the degree of village involvement, unparalleled until the building of the Railway in 1832 and the building of the M1 motorway in the 1960's. Probably a third of the adult population were involved in the ventures.

The building accounts record Ratby men working on the castle as gardener, ditchers, carters, carpenters, sawyers and brickies labourer.


It was also at this period that the first extensive woodland clearances began. the woodland a Burrough spring was extensively felled at this time by Lord Hastings men for timber for scaffolding and wood for the floor and doors and the great gate house and bridge across his moat.

The site of burrough spring we know today has Holywell farm and the road which runs from the farm to the junction of Desford Lane was laid down under the supervision of John Fletcher of Ratby.

After the dust of the battle of Bosworth had settled, and Henry Tudor ascended the throne of England, ratby too was on the verge of a second phase of economic expansion.

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A new leaflet has been produced by Leicestershire County Council which explains its role in tackling problems caused during adverse weather conditions.

The leaflet includes some handy hints, when at home or travelling by car, which will reduce discomfort and help to save lives. It covers a variety of topics, such as roads and accessibility, school closures, information sources and emergency food and rest centres. It contains useful information and telephone numbers during times of severe weather.

The leaflet can be obtained, free of charge, from libraries throughout the county or by




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