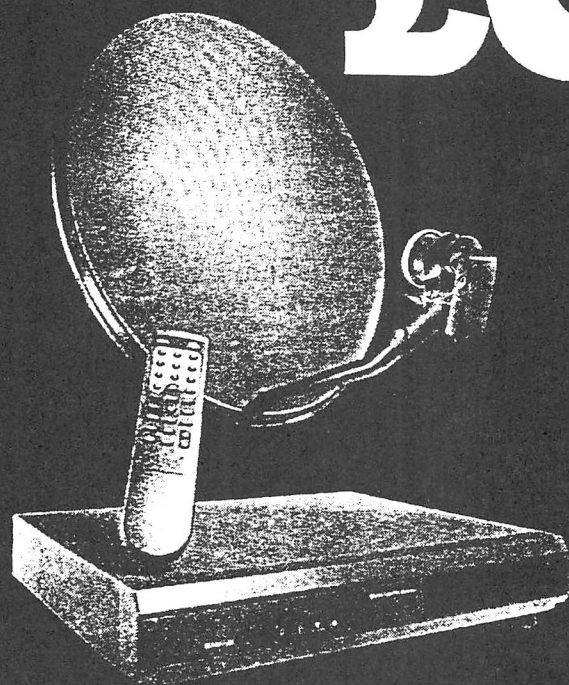


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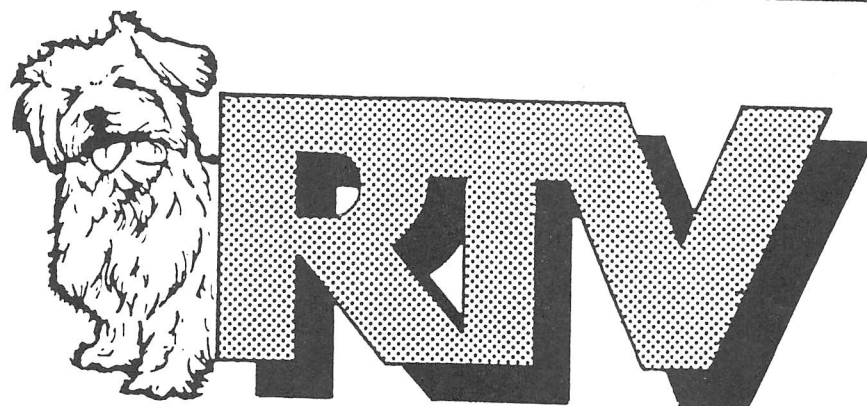
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Wot!

About Ratby

PUBLISHED BY THE RATBY SCOUT GROUP



June 1995

Issue 52

LEST WE FORGET



Mr Roy Holloway, Chairman of Ratby and District Royal British Legion, and Mr. Charles Rogers, Chairman of Ratby Parish Council, pictured spades at the ready to shovel the final soil around the newly-planted Column Oak.

V.E. Day celebrations in Ratby started with the planting of a three metre high Column Oak tree by Mr Roy Holloway, the Chairman of Ratby and District Royal British Legion and Charles Rogers, Chairman of Ratby Parish Council on land donated by Cawrey Homes adjacent to Taverner Drive and Station Road.

Two trees have been donated by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council to commemorate V.E. and V.J. days.

The V.E. day tree is a Column Oak which as it grows will grow more vertically than the spreading Common Oak tree donated for V.J. day.

It is hoped that as it grows it will not interrupt the visibility on the Station Road, Taverner Road corner, and would not need pruning.

Mr Holloway, after the planting said in the presence of Methodist Lay Preacher Mr William Jones of Markfield Road, British Legion Standard Bearer Mr Sam Askew, Ratby Co-operative Brass Band Bugler Mr Philip Sturdy and a large group of villagers that "It is very fitting that we should be planting an oak tree to commemorate the end of the war in Europe fifty years ago because it has all the attributes of the English way of life.

Mr Charles Rogers said that the other oak tree had already been planted by the Council's Tree Warden and it was hoped that on V.J. day in August a plaque could be unveiled beneath the tree.

continued on page 3



continued from page 1

Afterwards everyone joined Ratby Co-operative Band and the British Legion in a procession from their bandroom in Taverner Drive to the Railway Inn in Station Road where a Grand V.E. day celebration was to take place.

In the dress of fifty years ago villagers flocked to the sample war time food, eating outside in the pub car-par at trestle tables along-side dozens of fellow revellers under buntings and enormous union-jack flags. On purchasing a ration book you could exchange it for a meal of that era.

A raffle for a whole pig donated by Mike and Jaqui Thornton of the Railway Inn raised a laugh when the winner was drawn and went to collect what he and everyone else thought would be a fresh pig but found it was a large pink ceramic money box pig with £25 inside. He promptly donated £12.50 back to the Royal British Legion V.E. day funds.

The day continued with games, tug-a-war, side shows, live music and community singing in the evening.



V.J. Anniversary 20th August 1995.

In conjunction with the Village Service to mark the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, we are planning to hold an exhibition in the Parish Church over the same week-end.

The British Legion and the School will be contributing but we are also hoping that Ratby residents will lend their own mementos of that time.

Photographs, souvenirs, ration books, gas masks, letters and newspapers, anything that will bring back memories and also help those who are too young to remember, to visualise what it was like.

So, please get ready to respond for requests or get in touch with the Vicarage (2393009) nearer the time. let's make it a weekend for thanksgiving and remembering.



Dear Editor

Whilst not originating in Ratby, thus having no wartime memories of this area, I felt I would like to pass on the feelings of a child who was evacuated with her sister two days before the outbreak of war.

My family lived in a naval/military town in Kent and the general feeling was - "move the children to the countryside". Later, when France capitulated, the Germans were just 26 miles away "as the crow flies" so this was obviously a wise move.

Our part of England was known as "hells corner" by the Germans. When the ships in the dockyard opened up with their guns and the rocket guns started up on the railway, it was bedlam for the Kentish folk but pretty horrific for the enemy.

I enclose a poem I wrote when I was young, which expresses the feelings of two sisters and I would imagine most youngsters of that memorable day.

PAMELA CHEW (MRS)

A Day in my Life
September 1st 1939



"Report to your schools" the radio said - at the break of day we were out of bed.
Our cases packed, a hug from our Mum, my sister and I - we just felt numb.
Away from our safe and happy life, to an unknown place, our feelings were rife.
Our father had gone just the day before - a memory of sobs as they kissed at the door.

Now she stood bravely, waving her hand, our beloved mother, how could she stand
to watch all her family leave one by one, how would she manage when we were all gone?

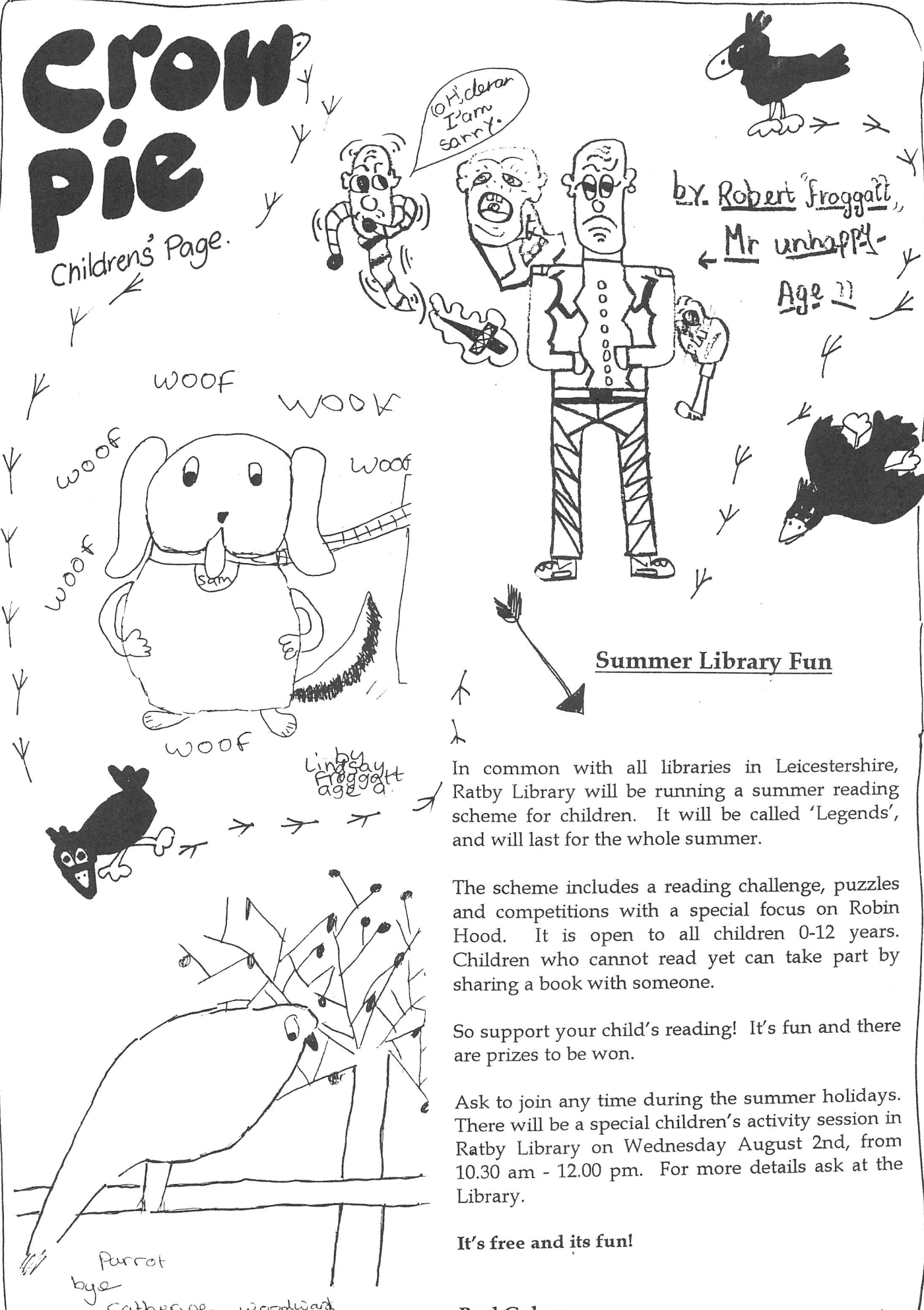
Up to the school at the top of the hill, unusually quiet, a feeling of chill -
Where were we going, with whom would we live, perhaps it's a dream and soon they would give
Reasons why we should all in the main, return to our homes and be normal again.
To the station we walked, sisters and brothers, "stay together" had been the request of our mothers.
On to the train, and we'd hardly sat down when the mistress informed us "this is the town".
No names on the station, as you might guess, but the place was familiar, it couldn't be less
than half an hour's journey from all we held dear - it won't be so bad, there's no need to fear.
Whom were we fooling, not ourselves that's for sure, just nervously hoping we'd have strength to endure.
The day was so warm, we were starting to flag, would we walk far and carry our bag
of food we were given in order to share, with the folk who were willing and ready to care -
for children confused and unable to see that this new way of life was going to be -

Gas Appliance

6 Saxons Rise, Ratby, Leicester LE6 0NF.

Crow pie

Children's Page.



Summer Library Fun

In common with all libraries in Leicestershire, Ratby Library will be running a summer reading scheme for children. It will be called 'Legends', and will last for the whole summer.

The scheme includes a reading challenge, puzzles and competitions with a special focus on Robin Hood. It is open to all children 0-12 years. Children who cannot read yet can take part by sharing a book with someone.

So support your child's reading! It's fun and there are prizes to be won.

Ask to join any time during the summer holidays. There will be a special children's activity session in Ratby Library on Wednesday August 2nd, from 10.30 am - 12.00 pm. For more details ask at the Library.

It's free and its fun!

continued from page 3.

I did hear that Ratby's 'Vera Lynn' Win Baillie sang along with a pub full of fellow songsters to Peter Webster on piano, all the old war time songs into the early hours.

Jaqui and Mike Thornton send their heart felt thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make the day so superb, raising £435 for the Royal British Legion funds.

Story and pictures from:
SYLVIA GANT



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Ratby Village Society

'A Naturalist's Year' was the title of the talk given at the March meeting by a deputy head teacher, Mr John Tinning of Queniborough. Living, as he does close to a water-filled pit he has ample scope for observing all year round the wild life on and around the 'lake'; also in his own extensive garden. During the summer he visits Cornwall which gives further opportunity to study and photograph the flora and fauna much of which is native to that part of the country. Mr Tinning's expertise with a camera was well demonstrated in this non-too-easy branch of photography.

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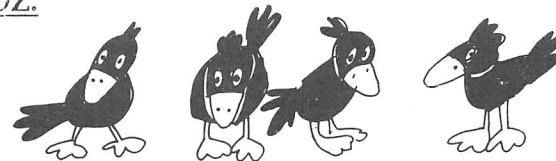
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Although it was by pure coincidence (not intentional when arranging the 1995 programme) the April meeting was held on the Tuesday after Easter, when a talk on 'The Holy Land' seemed most appropriate for the season. The visit to Israel, depicted by Mr Roy Thomas from across the great divide (the M1) at Glenfield, was a side trip while spending a holiday in Cyprus and a profitable decision it proved to be. Again we were treated to some excellent photography embracing most of the historic biblical sites. Following that tour he then went to Egypt to survey the surviving wonders of an ancient civilisation whose architectural feats are still something at which to marvel. By comparison, with the pyramids the Suez Canal is a relatively recent accomplishment and it brought back memories of wartime experiences to several ex-servicemen in the audience.

In June, the Society will abandon the Welfare Hall for an evening in the open air - a stroll round Thornton reservoir followed by Supper at the Bull's Head. As usual there will be no meeting in July.

HOZ.



Spring Front Gardens Competition

Ratby's Spring Front Garden competition winners were presented with their well-earned garden centre vouchers at the Council's AGM in the Welfare Hall recently.

Mr Jim Cammack of the Leicestershire Horticultural Guild had cast an expert eye over the gardens looking for weed free lawns, garden design and flair, condition of plants and colour, all in heavy rain.

The winners were presented with vouchers by Councillor Mr Skip Rae.

First prize of a £25 voucher was awarded to Mr & Mrs Hall of 56 Markfield Road, Second of £10 to Mr & Mrs Woolley of 4 East Walk, Third £5 to Mr & Mrs Smith of 10 Ingle Drive, and Mr & Mrs Stanley of 47 Park Road, were highly commended by the judge.

Sylvia Gant

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More than 50 people from Ratby and further afield came along to the Welfare Hall on Wednesday May 25th, bringing food and drinks to share.

They were all there to celebrate the purchase of land at Old Hays by the Woodland Trust. Stephen Webb from the Trust welcomed everyone and thanked people for the generous donations which had made the campaign successful. He read a faxed message of good will from MEP Mel Read.

Peter Leeson, the Trust's Landscape designer then talked us all through the proposed plans for the area. He explained that the Brookes family have grazing rights until October, and asked everyone to keep to the existing rights of way for this period of time. The Trust will later be creating more pathways through the site.

The plan is to keep existing good views across to Ratby and the more attractive areas. This will be done by leaving grass areas and mowing them annually to encourage wild flowers to spread in glades. The woodland trees and shrubs in existing hedgerows would be allowed to regenerate naturally, and spread across the sites.

Native trees would be planted in hollows and areas where the views are not so special. Peter assured us that there would be no rows of conifers.

Some people expressed concern about a proposed parking space for four or five cars. Others felt this would enable access for the elderly, infirm, or disabled.

There was plenty of opportunity to ask questions, even the neighbouring donkey joined in with the discussion on bridleways!

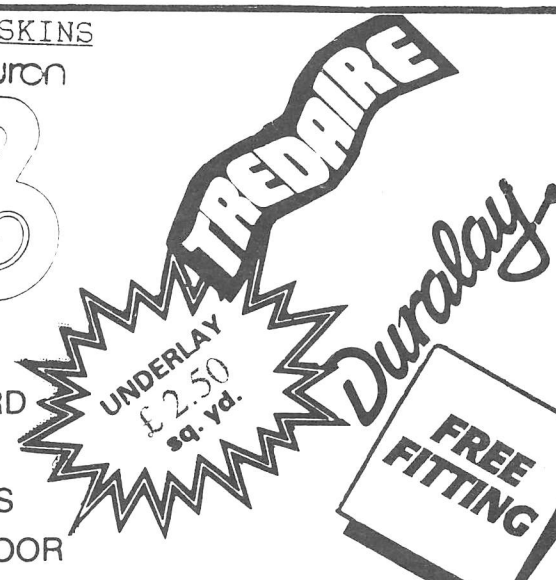
The proposed scheme was designed to create a varied experience, with woodland and meadow contrasting with surrounding open farmland landscape.



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More news in the next issue of Wot!



Can you help?

VOLUNTEERS WANTED AT FAIRDEAL.

Volunteers are wanted to work with FAIRDEAL. FAIRDEAL is an advocacy and empowerment project working with and for disabled people in Leicestershire. Volunteer work at FAIRDEAL could involve either administrative work, working with groups of disabled people or driving. Training will be given and will start towards the end of May. Disabled people and people from ethnic minorities are particularly encouraged to apply. For further details please contact FAIRDEAL, Magazine Business Centre, 11 Newarke Street, Leicester, LE1 5SS. Telephone: (0116) 255 9711. Minicom: (0116) 255 9991.



Old Boys Play on New Pitch

Senior footballing members of Ratby Sports club who had worked hard over more than ten years to turn farm land adjacent to their sports club in Desford Lane into two superb football pitches were rewarded when they ran out onto the yet - unused pitch to play a friendly fun-packed football match between themselves.

Many of the veteran players, now managers of the various aged football teams in the club sported tighter than usual football kits due to middle age spread.

Referee and captain of one of the teams, Mike Webber and a goalkeeper called 'Wilma' made it fun from the minute the whistle blew for the first of three thirty minute sessions.

It had been agreed they would not be able to take the pace for 45 minute halves. In true footballing tradition Mr Dick Borrett donned the bowler hat and mack of the gaffer.

Crowds gathered to watch the players and howled with delight as 'Wilma', still light of foot, ran up the pitch beating off all opposition and nearly scored a goal. After finishing they all staggered into the

This had all been made possible with grants from The Sports Council, Leicester City Council a donation from Mansfield Brewery and fund raising by the club who then purchased the land from the farmer Mr Flecher for £56,000. With further grants and fund raising £45,000 was needed to level the hill site and create one main pitch and two others. The site will cater for the seven junior and four senior Saturday and Sunday teams, a hard court area for netball, tennis five-a-side football a cricket square, outdoor bowles and mixed, ladies rounders areas. Up to date £120,000 has been raised from sponsored events over the ten years.

Conservation had not been forgotten with 1,600 quickthorn bushes, 15 Maple and 15 Oak trees among the 300 large trees planted by the club on its boundaries and watered by a Green Goddess fire engine in the 1990 drought.

Back Row Dick Borrett, Dereck Preston, Kevin Grudgings, Barry Seal, Paul Moul, Pat Docherty, Ron Preston, Colin Mackenzie, Mike Webber (who was referee and captain), Philip Walton, goal keeper John Cotton captain, Ashley Davis, Chris Astill, Tony Jarvis, Micky Roach

Front Row Rick Atkins, Dave Vallance, Terry Whitehead, Bob Smith, Dereck Goodman, Steve James, Jim Macro, Jim Rigsby, Graham Jepson, Dave Cragg, Graham North, Mick Rowley.

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Joyce's Goodbye After Twenty Four Years

One of the very first school ancillary assistants to be appointed to a school in Leicestershire, Mrs Joyce Haywood of Danehill has retired.

Pupils gathered together in their school assembly to show their appreciation by presenting her with a chiming mantle clock and an enormous card signed by many of them.

Looking back over her 24 years at the school she recalled that when she started her 15 hours a week job that the headteacher's room had a pottery kiln in it which covered everything in inches of dust.

The extension was not built and everyone had to use outdoor toilets "without lights" located in the middle of the playground! Meal times were eaten in classrooms.

At a party for Joyce, at the school a pocket sized pair of binoculars were presented to her. The binoculars will be useful to Joyce and husband Jack, to use on their country walks and holidays around Great Britain.

Another story revolves around Jack, a native of France who escaped from the Nazi occupation at the age of 14. He retired last Christmas and together with the newly retired Joyce they intend

That is when Joyce is not bell ringing. Introduced to the pass time by the family she was evacuated to, in Billsdon, Joyce has continued this love and is the senior member of the Ratby Ringers who recently came second in the Leicestershire District Diocese Guild Striking Competition.

The photograph shows Joyce with Mrs Joyce's class of 5 year olds dressed as evacuees, bringing back memories of her own evacuation from Banstead in Surrey.

Report from Sylvia Gant



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Memories of Rev G Tavener

September 7th 1933, our late Vicar Ben Ingle was inducted at 8.00 p.m. to the Parish of "All Saints", Leicester. The same day our new Vicar to be, Rev Tavener and his wife were married at Leicester Cathedral at 12 noon, his wife being the daughter of the late Canon and Mrs Law-Harkness.

On Nov. 10th, he was inducted to the benefice of Ratby cum Groby (being one parish then). Rev Tavener and his wife both worked very hard, he tried between other duties to visit most homes in Ratby and Groby. He visited the sick at home and in hospital. He managed the two churches with the help of lay-readers on Sundays. In the week especially in the evenings you would see him dashing from one village to the other for council meetings, services, confirmation meetings and others.

He helped his parishioners to raise money for a new window in Ratby Church known as the butterfly window and also 2 new bells making 8 bells. They both had a sense of humour and could always see a good clean joke but sometimes the joke was on them.

He also helped raise money for electric lights in the Church at Ratby, which were dedicated and switched on by the Church Warden on August 21st 1938. In November of the same year he and his wife left for Chailey in Sussex where sad to say his wife died in 1944. In 1948 he moved again to Rottingdean one of the most pretty villages in Sussex; he was there until 1954 when sad again he too died.

What more can we say just "Lifes work well done"

Anon.

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Ratby Mother and Baby/Toddler Group

Dear Mums/Dads/Grandmas

Are you a first time mum or new to the Village and feeling lonely? If so, why not come along to this friendly group on a Wednesday morning 10.30 - 11.30 am at the Welfare Hall, Main Street, price 70p.

I remember having had my first child in October 1990 and having worked full time feeling rather lonely at home with a new baby, not knowing anyone else locally in the same situation, I went along to this group and from this made many close friends with children the same age.

The group is run voluntarily by Marie Richards, Angela Humphries and myself. We all took over in September last year. We welcome babies and children up to pre-school. We now also have three grandmothers who come along with their grandchildren and the occasional father. There is a nice selection of well maintained activity toys including a slide, a play tunnel, various sit and ride toys and a small area to do jigsaw puzzles, colour and play with playdough. Once a year we have our summer outing which is greatly subsidised from funds and a Christmas party. The price includes tea or coffee with a drink and a biscuit for the children. So why not come along and make new friends.

Dawn MacLeod (Telephone: 2387292)

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Whole of July



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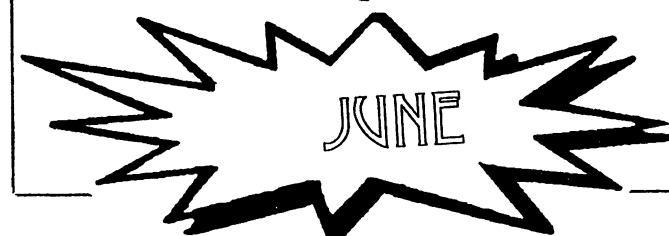
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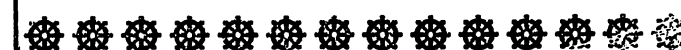
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Dear Editor

Letters

I understand that there have been complaints from some residents regarding the new bus services even to the extent of a petition being organised. Those who I have heard voicing disapproval are all car owners (some with two cars!). They ought to realise that there are those who have to rely on public transport as they do not own a car either because it is too costly; because of ill-health on infirmity, or because they abhor the hassle of driving among the many ill-mannered and aggressive motorists at large nowadays.

One of the fears of the protesters is that buses are a danger to pedestrians, particularly children, but surely they are less of a menace than those cars which travel at 50 mph through the village? With frequent request stops the buses, with their high-visibility yellow fronts, would be hard pressed to reach 15 mph.

Some folk bemoan the fact that they were not consulted about the routes through the estates. Was anyone consulted about allowing cars to exceed speed limits on the same roads, or about indiscriminate parking on pavements and grass verges?

It would be interesting if statistics could be produced to show out of all the thousands of road victims every year how many were killed by buses.

Very few I suspect.

Sincerely

HOZ GAMBLE

PS Incidentally, during 45 years accident-free driving, I drove a total of 87 different vehicles ranging from minis to mini-buses!



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WOT GUARDIAN WOT

Bovey Tracey Devon.

Dear Editor,

I enclose a photocopy of the Weekend Biff cartoon, to appear in the Guardian this Saturday (5/5).

I was in need of a picture of a VE day party for the story, when what (wot) should pop through the door but Wot. I bunged it straight in and sent it off, so apologies for not consulting upon in advance - deadlines before courtesy in this game. May I say how much I look forward to receiving copies of Wot (sent to me by my long time friend Mrs Win Bailee).

I even saw a picture of me in a back issue (the Christmas Past parties loaned by Mr Cliff Lissaman).

Chris Garrett

(Formerly of Markfield Road)



Bevington Close

Re: The New 116 bus route.

I find this a God send as I am one of the O.A.P.s who does not longer, have my own transport. The climb, back either up Stamford Street or Markfield Rd, was a trial.

We have to remember we don't stay young for ever and those who complain now will be glad of this service in the future years.

Q.Gamble.



Editors note.

I think that one or two of the younger fraternity have already found the usefulness of these stop any where buses.

Ratby Fish Bar

OPENING TIMES

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Ratby Methodist Church
Sunday School Centenary (1895 - 1995)

As we prepare to celebrate this milestone in the history of our Sunday School, we would enjoy to share with readers of WOT the bare bones of that history which led to the establishment of the first non-conformist "school" in the village in 1895.

Sometime in the mid 18th century, a Baptist named Samuel Deacon arrived in Ratby from Barton in the Beans and set up a grocery shop, from which he began to gather supporters to his cause. Against great opposition they met in each others houses and in 1760 Samuel Deacon was appointed Pastor of the small group. Some time later he left the village and non-conformity faded out.

In 1830 a small number of Primitive Methodists gathered together again meeting in each others houses, until numbers grew and inspiration led to the purchase of a plot of land in Church Lane (just above the butchers) where, amidst ridicule and opposition, a small chapel was built, complete with clock. Despite much hostility, numbers outgrew this building and by 1892 sufficient funds were raised to buy 1,100 sq. yds of land on the corner of Dirt Lane (Chapel Lane) and the Main Street.

The great desire of those Methodists was to build a Sunday "School" rather than just a chapel because public education was then limited and such a school would be the only education afforded to many. The School Rooms cum Chapel was built at the rear of the plot and opened in 1895.

Since then, like most other religious denominations, the past 40 or 50 years have seen great fluctuations in attendance, but without any doubt, there will be many folk living in our village and beyond who will remember Sunday School and the principals it did and still does endeavour to teach.

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Our weekend celebrations will be held on :
Saturday 10th June with a Victorian Garden Fete
on the Bakery Lawns
(by kind permission of the Family Geary)
and on

Sunday 11th June our Sunday School
Anniversary Services at 10.00 am and 4.00 pm

The 10.00 am service will give a strong Victorian emphasis. Our guest Preacher will be Rev Trev Grewcock, a product of our own Sunday School, and not the least bit Victorian!

Do please be happy with us and join us if you can at one or the other or both, we would love to share your company.

Congratulations to Ratby Methodist Sunday School on its forthcoming 100 years birthday.

How hard it must have been 100 years ago when they went to church only to find a group of people with stones and batons trying to stop them going. Thanks to their faith in god the Sunday School started.

30 years ago I was at Sunday School, I remember we went twice a day, morning and afternoon, we used to go to Sunday School in the morning and then into the church afterwards for the service. (unless you could escape down the steps). In the afternoon we had class lessons and our own service.

These days the Sunday School has to fight the car T.V. football and cricket but thanks to a dedicated few we can carry on.

I would like to thank past scholars and teachers for the way they developed the Sunday school and for their dedicated response to God's work amongst our young people, and of course I must not forget the present struggle our Sunday School Teacher's are having keeping the Sunday School functioning and I must express my sincere thanks to them and the young people, for all the hard work that they put in, and the dedication of the entire Sunday school.

God bless you all.

TRAFFIC CALMING

The recent exhibition in the welfare hall of traffic calming measures for the village showed that three mini roundabouts were proposed together with entry marking systems on two of the four routes into Ratby.

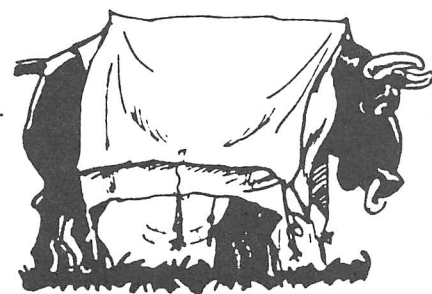
I hope I shall be proved wrong but I believe that by themselves they will have little impact on traffic speeds through the entire village and will only reduce vehicle speeds in the immediate vicinities of the measures being proposed.

The exhibition displayed several existing schemes which were presumably examples of successful traffic calming measures. One was of a mini roundabout at the junction of Sturdee Road and Hillsborough Road on the Eyres Monsell Estate (very close to where I used to work and a junction used regularly on my evening journey home). The island failed to have the effect of traffic calming and subsequently Sturdee Road was closed to allow the laying of speed bumps. These do effectively slow the traffic because there is insufficient distance between each bump for vehicles to build up speed.

Traffic will only be slowed if drivers are presented with obstacles they must avoid, undulations in the road which must be taken slowly or by vehicle owners displaying social responsibility in the way they drive. These schemes fail to acknowledge the modern motor vehicle accelerates so quickly drivers might, assuming they don't drive straight over the mini islands, accelerate even more quickly away from them through our village.

The scheme fails to address the serious issues of: congestion along Main Street; the dangers presented by vehicles parking on the corner at Desford Lane; lorry drivers visiting Casapak; and parking immediately outside of the shops just above the school before the bend. In this latter case it is up to the owners of the shops to remind their customers that alternative, and safer parking, is available just a few seconds walk away. I hope they will discharge their responsibility and do so.

G C STANLEY



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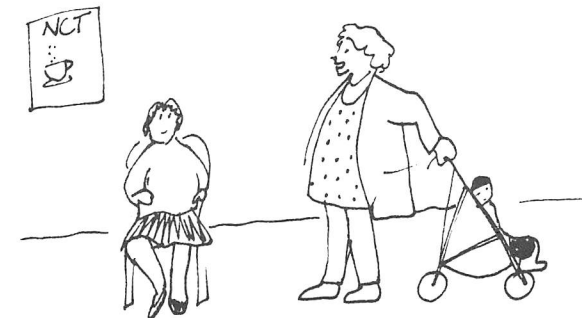
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Attention all mums and mums to be !!

*The North West Leicester National Childbirth
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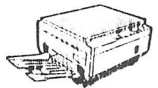
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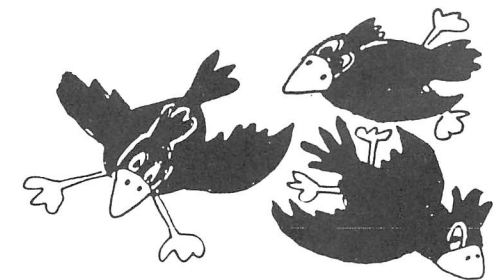
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