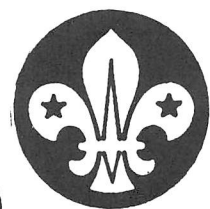




# Wot!

## About Ratby



ISSUE 76

PUBLISHED BY THE RATBY SCOUT GROUP

JUNE 1999

## POND PLANTING

A group of volunteers turned out on Sunday May 16th to help plant the village pond. All of the plants chosen are native species in keeping with the natural theme for the area, and include the familiar yellow flowers of the Marsh Marigold and Flag, or Iris. Once established the pond will provide a haven for wildlife such as frogs, dragon flies and damsel flies, perhaps even newts.

Pictured in the photograph are volunteers putting in the marginal plants.



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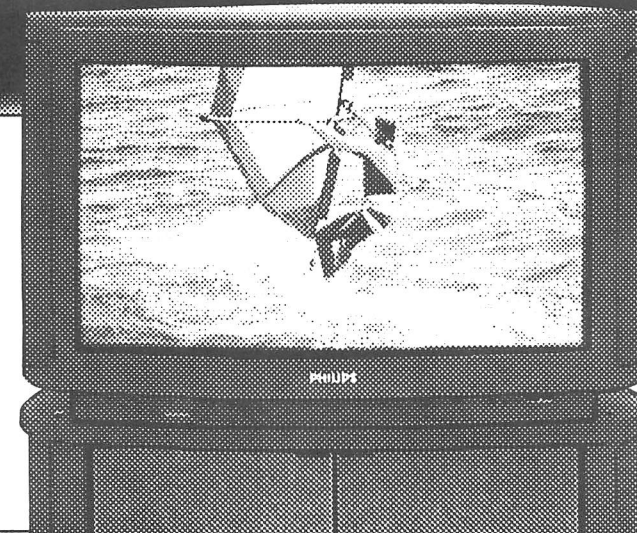
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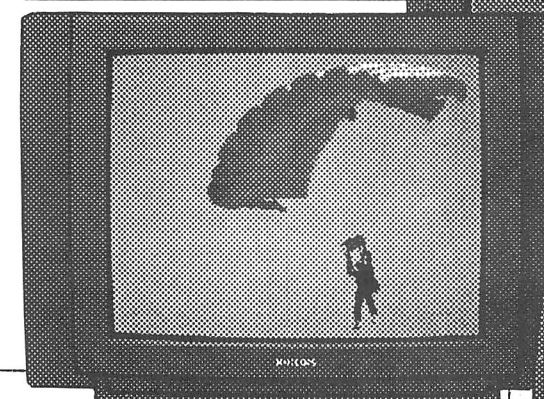


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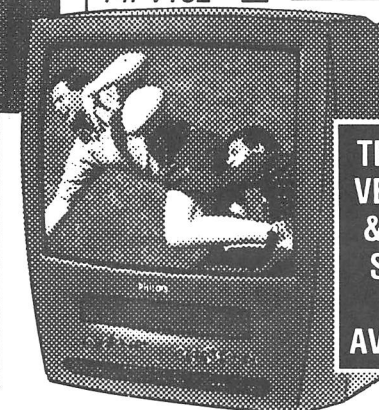


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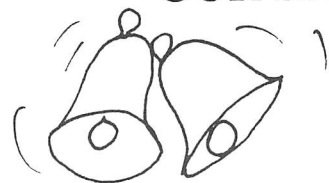
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## DRY ROT IN THE PARISH CHURCH

Twelve months ago Dry Rot was discovered in the roof timbers of the Church. It is present in the area between the Nave and the side chapel (Saint Michael's Chapel), an area which is now easily identified by the absence of plaster. Under the right conditions the fungus can spread quite rapidly. Growth is rapid in warm weather, and may stop almost completely in a cold winter. A 6ins by 4 ins length of infected timber can easily be broken with two hands, so it is obvious that support of the roof is being seriously weakened. If repairs are not carried out in the near future, the church may have to be closed for safety reasons.

Quotations have been requested from three companies who specialise in the repair of rotting structures, and the cheapest is £84,500. This does not include the cost of any re-plastering or re-slating where necessary.

This is an awful lot of money to raise. Many of you will say "the Church of England is rich, why won't they pay?". Unfortunately the Church Commissioners assets are tied up in funding the Clergy, and in buildings. They will give good advice, but It is up to the local congregation, the local community, and a few grant making bodies to provide the money to maintain the building.

Special fund raising events have been held since October '98, and the repair fund now stands at about £7,500. Another £2,000 has been spent on survey work. We have a long way to go, and time is not on our side. Those closely involved believe that it is the wish of the majority of Ratby parishioners, whatever their religious persuasions, that the Parish Church should be restored.

The oldest part of the Church as we see it now is the lower part of the tower, dated about 1240. There are records, tenuous at times, tracing the history of the Church from that date to the present day. Let us hope that the people's response to the present crisis will enable the history of the Parish Church to be continued into the next millennium.

You can help by :-

- (1) supporting the many church social functions and sales which are well advertised throughout the village (and ALWAYS in the window of the Alliance & Leicester Building Society in Main Street).
- (2) making a direct cash donation to the appeal fund. (cheques should be made payable to "Ratby Parish Church fabric fund")
- (3) if you are in business, consider sponsoring an event, and benefiting from the publicity which you will receive.
- (4) helping with the organising and running of events.

G A Hurd, 14, Mill Drive, Ratby tel.(0116) 2394241  
(Chairman of the Roof appeal committee)



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## A FEAST OF MUSIC

Ratby Co-operative Band's popular annual *MUSIC FEST* was indeed a feast of music. On a Saturday evening in May we were treated to a wide range of music and dance in the unlikely setting of Groby Community College Sports hall.

The Junior Band got the evening off to a rousing start with music ranging from 'Tocata', a piece they had played for a competition in Manchester, to 'Ghostbusters'

Barwell Boys and Girls Brigade Band then played an entertaining range of percussion music, with spectacular cymbal flourishes.

By way of contrast this was followed by some spirited dance routines performed by The Starlight Academy of Dance. Members of this Academy range in age from 2 to 50! A trio of young women who had just won a competition treated us to a dynamic performance before rushing to another event.

The Seaforth Highlanders took the audience by storm next with a stirring selection of pipe and drum music. They were followed by the excellent 'Green Shoots Ceilidh Band, a community group from Leicester. Fifteen people, ranging in age played a variety of instruments, flute, saxophone, clarinet, viola, guitar, to name just a few. Sadly we could not fully appreciate their music without amplification in this venue.

Ratby Mid Band then took the stage to demonstrate once more the professionalism of the Ratby Bands. They played a range of well known music, from 'Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho', to Frank Sinatra's 'New York, New York'.

A quartet of cornets performed an excellent rendition of 'Jokers Wild', and Ratby young man, David Root gave us an accomplished tenor horn solo during the performance of 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow.'

It was a great Saturday night, equalled only I'm sure by the following Sunday evening performances of the *FEST* which was to feature the Senior Band.

Congratulations to Ratby Band for enabling us to enjoy a range of live music and dance within walking distance of the village. If you get an opportunity, go along to next year's event, you won't be disappointed!

SB

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## Ratby Village Society

### TREASURE AND PLEASURE in VENICE and LONDON

#### Italian Life

One would expect that someone who has spent twenty holidays in Venice at all seasons of the year would have acquired an intimate knowledge of the place. Not only had Mr Ken Day done that, but in his fascinating talk, 'Venice, its Treasures and Pleasures' gave us the benefit of what he had learned, and moreover showed us that he is an artist with a camera.

The story came alive because his beautifully composed shots of the canals, the buildings and their architectural detail were supplemented by equally excellent pictures of the natives going about their daily lives.

Outsiders have a vision of the canals as being romantic tourist attractions, and what better way for the bride to go to her wedding but in a gondola? But to the inhabitants they do create some problems. Imagine, for instance, moving house! The furniture removal van (if there was one) cannot get outside the door and so all the contents have to be removed manually to the nearest mooring to be transported by boat.

Similarly for funerals, where an even bigger obstacle exists-the lack of cemeteries. Coffins are carried by boat to storage chambers, where after a number of years, when the body has decomposed, leaving only the skeleton, they are taken out and buried at sea.

#### Victorian London

Photographer, author and RVS member Derek Seaton took us with his slides on a guided tour of the most spectacular Victorian buildings in London for our delight at the April meeting.

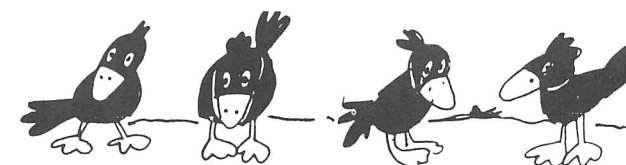
Arriving in the capital by train from Leicester at St. Pancras station, the old Midland Railway Grand Hotel designed by Gilbert Scott is a wonderful introduction to

the impressive and confident architecture of the period.

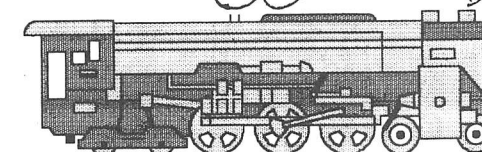
Scott was responsible for many of the Victorian landmarks in London, including the recently restored Albert Memorial, and the Foreign Office in Whitehall. Here Derek had been privileged to photograph the ornate interior detail.

Such is the wealth of outstanding buildings that to list them all would be tedious, but memorable among those illustrated were Tower Bridge, the Houses of Parliament, the Albert Hall, the Law Courts, and the National Portrait Gallery.

The talk ended where it had begun, at St Pancras Station where the long disused hotel has recently been restored to former glory. Here there was a local connection, in that Ibstock bricks, specially made to match the originals, have been widely used.



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## WHAT IS A LIBRARY?

Of course it's a place where you can borrow books. We all know that. So are library's out of date and old fashioned now that we have the Internet, and so many cut price book shops?

Surely this must be true of a small place like Ratby Library?

I went along to the library to borrow some books, and while I was there had a chat with a few other users. I asked them what they thought about the library. Did they come here often?

### A Place to Browse and meet Friends

Mr J Godwin was reading the papers when I spoke to him. He told me that he does borrow books, but added, 'Because I'm retired I like to come down here, look at books and read the papers. Sometimes I use the dictionary. I watch 'Countdown' and 'University Challenge' and I like to look up words I come across. I come in most weeks, sometimes twice a week'

### Meeting Friends

'Nine times out of ten,' he recalled, 'you meet someone you know, sometimes people you haven't seen for quite some time'. Mrs Geraldine Aldwinkle echoed those words,

'For me it's a treat time. Now I'm working I don't have much time. I enjoy coming to choose a book. Invariably you see someone to have a natter with, often someone you haven't seen for ages.'

I asked her whether she thought computers would replace libraries in time.

'I think computers are so isolating, you don't meet anyone, you're just stuck indoors. Here you talk to people about books you've read. It's lovely and relaxing. The staff are so friendly here. Ann's seen my children grow up.'

### This must be a record!

Geraldine still has a library ticket from her in 1978, albeit a little well-worn. She told me that she had been using the library for over twenty years, 'I've always used the library since children were babies, in fact since they were born. The children have brought up to use books for reference. My twenty year old son still uses the library for University research. They know how to use the library and respect books.'

### Books for babies

A couple of weeks later I was in Ratby Library once more, borrowing books. I was thinking I'd chat to some more people. A young toddler, William, was in the library with his Mum. Whilst he enjoyed himself in the 'Fantasy Cube', and explored the books, she told me that she came to the library to enable William to choose his own stories, and 'Teach him how to borrow books. It's important to have access to books, some children may not have many books at home. If I didn't work I'd come in more often, it's so friendly. I've noticed that some people just come in to read the paper,' she added, 'It's nice that they can do that'. William's current favourite is 'Postman Pat'. While we were talking, two year old William found a 'Spot' story, and came over to his Mum, 'Read it'. I left them to enjoy the story.

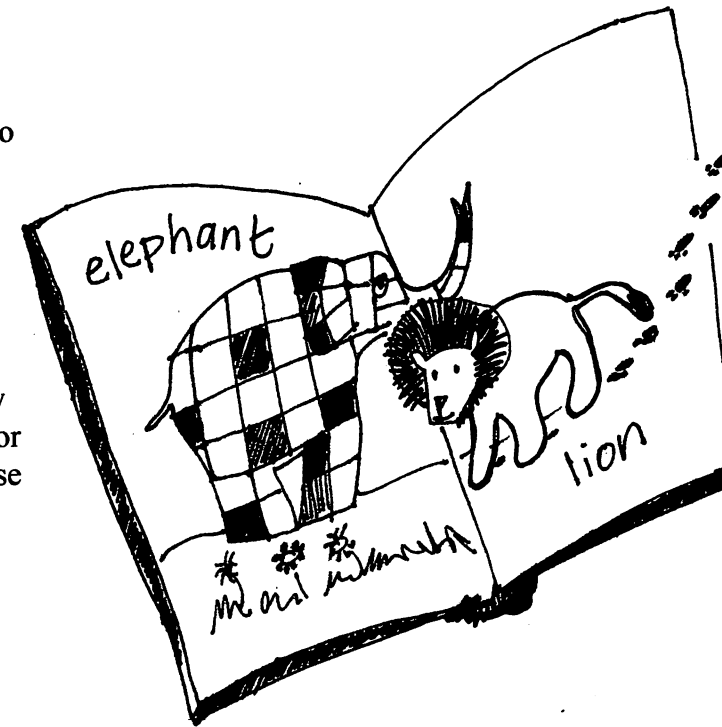
### Getting to know you!

I approached a gentleman next, who informed me, to my great embarrassment, that he lived just across the road from the library and hadn't realised! So not only is the library a place where you can bump into old friends, but somewhere you can get to know your neighbours.

Mr Jones was someone else who I met in the library, as well as spending a couple of hours browsing

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books, looking for new authors to try, and hunting for old favourites.

Like the other library users I had spoken to, Mr Jones mentioned the Library as a meeting place, 'I often meet people in here I don't meet anywhere else.'

I know that I too enjoy searching for books to read, and collecting useful leaflets about local events and places to visit. When choosing books you can afford to try a new author, whereas I tend to buy only books by authors I've read before. I certainly couldn't afford to buy as many books as I read. And I would miss the friendliness too, and the chance to catch up on news with people I haven't seen for a while.

It seems that many of us appreciate Ratby Library for a whole lot of reasons, not just for the books! We haven't even mentioned the thriving Library Club for pre-school children which we mentioned in the last issue of Wot!

It is clearly a valuable community resource! Long may it continue. Perhaps we might one day 'take a leaf from the booksellers' book' and sell coffee and tea!

SB

## READING SAFARI

Don't miss this summer's special Reading Safari in Ratby Library. The event will be part of a National Programme. The aim is to have 1 million children joining in! Children will be given a folder, and can collect a safari card for each book they read. When they've read six books they earn a certificate.

An activity and story afternoon is being planned for August. All children in Ratby School will be given a leaflet with more information.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

May we, through the auspices of 'Wot', thank all the people who participated in the Ratby Methodist Church Craft and Hobbies exhibition.

The exhibition was a great success, not only in raising £330.00 for our development funds, but more importantly in bringing together the many and varied talents that we have in our village. All the exhibits were superb and gave a lot of pleasure to the many people who came to see them.

So thank you all for all your hard work, exhibitors and helpers. It is very much appreciated.

Also thank you to the organisers and players of the Ratby Band concert which was held on the Saturday evening.

Thank you too, to John Bower for his service on talents on the Sunday morning, and to John Johnson for the Songs of Praise on the Sunday evening which was enjoyed by all who came.

Yours in Christ,

Ann Tipper, Pauline Pendery and Barbara Winfield.



## HOW OLD IS THAT YEW?

Do you know how old the yew is in Ratby Churchyard? Do you know why some of the carving in the Church was never finished?

If you'd like to know more about this beautiful building, come along to the Church on Sunday 25th July and enjoy a guided tour!

There will be an opportunity to buy a copy of the popular new edition of the guide book too.

## STRAWBERRY TEAS

Strawberries, scones and cream will be served in the Church Rooms during the afternoon.

The event runs between 2.00 and 4.00 pm. Donations raised from the tours, and profits from the sale of refreshments will go towards the Church Roof fund.

## LOCAL HERITAGE

We often take for granted what is on our own doorstep. Perhaps we have all visited Churches or Cathedrals on trips and holidays, and yet never taken time to look at the fascinating historical building which is a focal point of our village. It would be a tragedy to lose this local heritage.

So put this date in your diary, and on Sunday 25th July leave your gardening and D.I.Y. and enjoy a 'holiday at home.'



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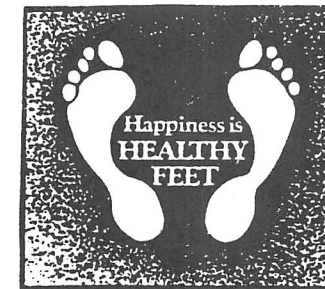
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1oz (25gr) Margarine  
1oz (25gr) Lard  
1 Tablespoon (approx) cold water

1. Rub fat into flour & salt
2. Bind with cold water to a pliable paste
3. Roll out thinly, cut into rounds and line 12 tins

#### Filling

1oz (25gr) Flour  
1oz (25gr) Margarine  
1/4 pint (150ml) Milk  
2oz (50gr) grated tasty cheese  
Salt & pepper  
1/4 teaspoon Mustard  
1 Egg

1. Melt fat over low heat, add flour and cook gently for 1 min stirring continuously
2. Gradually stir in milk and boil for 2 minutes
3. Stir in cheese, seasoning and beaten egg yolk
4. Whisk egg white stiffly and fold into sauce
5. Put one teaspoonful in each tartlet
6. Bake in preheated oven, gas mark 6, 400°F, 200°C for about 20 minutes, middle shelf

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