

WOT!

About Ratby

PUBLISHED BY RATBY SCOUT GROUP

WE HAVE LOTS OF FUN!

That's what all the girls said when I visited the Ratby Girl's Brigade at the Methodist Church on Tuesday March 4th. The junior group, eight to eleven year olds, with leader Amanda were busily painting the clay picture frames and models they had made in a previous session. Their evening also included a party celebration with games and a 'feast' for three of the girls who were celebrating birthdays. Here they are, pictured below.



Alison Whitmore, Brigade Captain, explained that a key activity within the Girl's Brigade sessions is the Badge Work. The girls are currently learning about co-operation, focussing on the story of Noah and his co-operation with God. And co-operation was certainly much in evidence during the evening, with all the girls working sociably together, helping each other in the games and with all the activities. The Senior group girls said that they were 'like big sisters to the younger children.'

For more about Girl's Brigade, and pictures turn to page two.



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Girl's Brigade continued from page 1

The younger girls, led by Joy, were enjoying baking and decorating cakes. Whilst waiting for their cakes to cook they played games together, and told me why they liked to come:

'We have lots of fun.'

'It's a surprise what we are going to do the next week.'

'We learn new things. We learn about different religions.'

Here they are decorating their cakes.



Meanwhile the Senior Brigaders were busy making pancakes for everyone to share at the end of the session. And very delicious they were too!



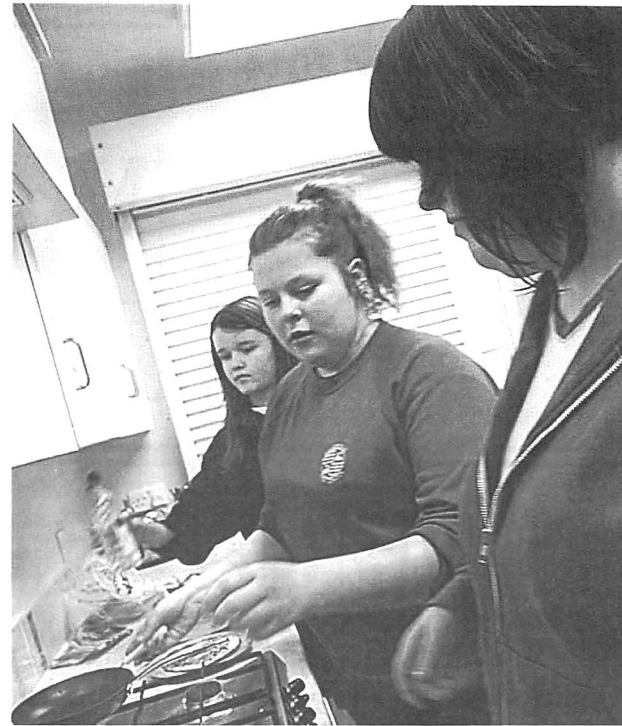
WILD FOR NATURE

Following the Nature Talk held in Ratby Church on March 25th, the Church Eco Group are planning to create 'wild nature' areas in the Churchyard.

Two sections will be left unmown to encourage plants and animals to thrive.

On **Sunday 27th April at 2.30pm** a survey will be carried out to explore what is currently living there.

Future visits and surveys will enable the group to discover what difference the project makes. All are welcome to join in. Please bring your



At the end of the session all the groups came together for a final gathering in the hall, joined by Revd. David Lawton who had been busy helping with the washing up. Parents arrived, and a host of smiling girls headed for home.

Wot's roving reporter.

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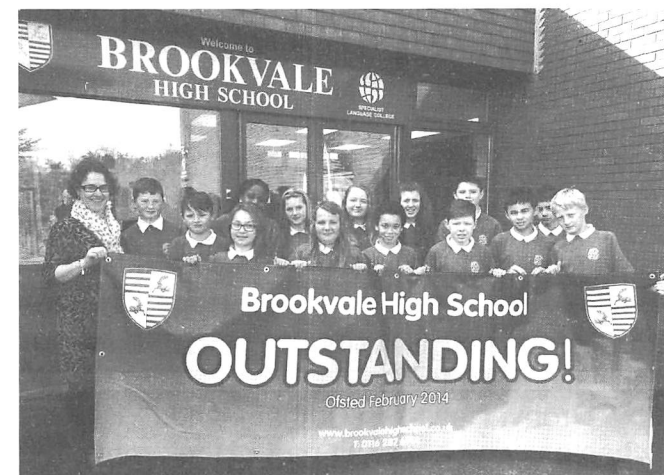
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"BROOKVALE HIGH SCHOOL IS AN OUTSTANDING SCHOOL"

Brookvale High School has become the first secondary school in Leicestershire to be judged by Ofsted to be Outstanding in every area since the introduction of the new, more rigorous inspection framework last year. Headteacher, Katie Rush, said, "The whole school community is delighted with the outcome of the inspection. Since our last inspection we have secured outstanding practice in all areas of our work. The success of our school is down to the hard work and commitment of the school community. We have a highly dedicated staff and governor team, wonderful students and very supportive parents and carers."



MICK PORTER

Raising funds for LOROS in his Memory.

In the summer of 2009 Mick Porter of Porters Carpets in Ratby, was diagnosed with, "drop foot". However, as his symptoms progressed, in October 2011 further tests revealed it to be Motor Neurone Disease.

With time Mick's health deteriorated. In December 2011 his sons Lee and Ben took over running the carpet shop in the village.

Very gradually Mick lost the use of both legs and became wheelchair bound. With the care and dedication of his wife Di, they managed to enjoy a holiday and days out until his condition deteriorated more.

Sadly on 27 November 2013, Mick passed away surrounded by his family.

In memory of Mick his wife Di, daughter Melissa, daughter-in-law Elaina, granddaughters' Holly and Amber along with a group of friends are taking part in this year's LOROS Twilight walk. They would like to give something back as a way of thanks for the services and support Mick received from LOROS.

Anyone wishing to make a donation can do so by Texting "MPPC53" with the amount to 70070 or accessing the webpage, "Just Giving" and searching for Melissa Hayes. These methods of giving are open until 26th May.

Mick was always very supportive of village groups and events, as well as this magazine. He will be



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"We are particularly proud of our students", said Headteacher Katie Rush. "The inspectors were incredibly impressed with their courtesy, their attitudes to learning, and their pride in their school."

FIRST HINCKLEY FAKE FESTIVAL!

Music fans are in for a treat at this year's first ever Hinckley Fake Festival on 3rd May. It's taking place on Clarendon Park and there's an incredible line up of local talent, including Neon Sarcastic, Formal Warning, Noise Water and The Ferris. These bands will be sharing the stage in the huge marquee with some of the UK's best tributes to Coldplay, Kasabian and Blondie.

Visit the website for more information:
www.fakefestivals.co.uk

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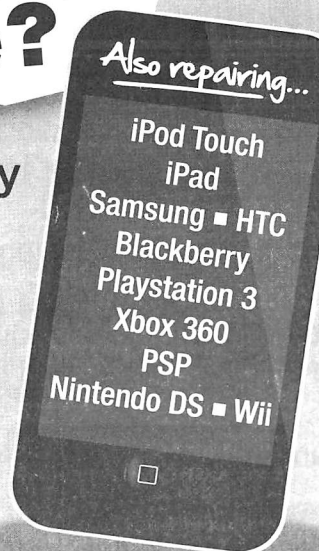
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GRANTS AVAILABLE FROM THE HENRY SACHEVERELL CHARITY

In 1616 a local Ratby dignitary by the name of Henry Sacheverell (who lived at Old Hays Farm at the end of the track through the Burroughs) wrote a will that included a sum of money that was to be used for the needy in the villages of Ratby and Groby. This money was to be invested through the purchase of some land, and then once rented out, the yearly income was to be distributed to needy people in the then ancient Church Parish of Ratby, which included at that time Groby, Newtown Unthank and Botcheston. When Henry died in 1620 a field was bought in the Burroughs, close to where he used to live, and each year since the rental income has been used to help the poor and needy across the area described above.

This process is managed by a group of Trustees and their activity is governed by the Charity Commissioners where it is registered as the 'Henry Sacheverell Charity', registration number 218 603.

Following a review of how the annual rental income is distributed, the Trustees have decided to try a different approach. For 2014, we are looking to give gifts of up to £250 to organisations within the geographic area of Ratby, Groby, Newtown Unthank and Botcheston, who have, as part of their remit the goal to work with or to help local residents who may be in need.

The Trustees are requesting groups or organisations who may be interested in receiving a grant from the Sacheverell Charity to write a short outline of their activity and what they would like to use the money for. These should be sent to:

Revd Peter Hooper
The Rectory
23 Ferndale Drive
Ratby LE6 0LH

Additional information can be obtained from
Revd Peter on 0116 239 4606.

Applications for grants need to have been received by 31st May.



An exciting new business has opened in Ratby. Occupying the former Chemist premises at 58 Main Street is **Pix2Canvas**. Villagers have already been lured in by the colourful window display featuring large canvases and printed items such as mugs and mouse mats.

But why Ratby for a state of the art company? Craig Biggs and Pankaj Bharakhada told us that they had set up **Pix2Canvas** a couple of years ago in the city centre. You may have spotted them in their 'Pop-up' shop in The Highcross Centre last September.

Although much of the business is online, the move to Ratby has given them a shop front where they can draw in passing trade. It's also much handier for the owners who both live locally.

Craig and Pankaj were teenage neighbours in Groby. After years of developing their individual careers, Pankaj in Printing, and Craig in Banking and with Business Link, they decided to combine their skills and set up a new company. **Pix2Canvas** was born.

The range of services is impressive. They can turn your humble snapshots into works of art to adorn your walls. And they can advise you on the quality of your prints, digitally enhance them, and even transform them by creating different backgrounds, or 'adding' missing people as they did for a client who wanted her sister added to a wedding group photo. A recent project was the creation of wall art from an artist's collage of an Olympic scene featuring Usain Bolt. They can also restore old and damaged photographs.

The process uses Epson archival inks and canvas material, so that the images are long lasting, 75 to 100 years.

An A1, 30x20 inch canvas costs just £19.95. Smaller canvases start at only £9.95.

You can also have your photographs printed onto items such as mugs, mouse mats and a range of products.

Their easy to use website is
www.pix2canvas.co.uk
For All Your Photos Gifts

Pix2Canvas is also on Facebook, and has almost 5000 followers.

www.facebook.com/pix2canvas

So if you have memory cards or computer files filled with photographs that you never get around to printing why not pop in and talk to the team? Craig and Pankaj will help you to create your own original work of art. And if you are setting up in business, or want to promote your own company you can get your competitively priced business cards and leaflets produced here too.

Special Offer for Wot! readers. Take this Wot Issue into **Pix2Canvas**, or use the special code **Wot!** at checkout if ordering online for a 5% discount.



Pankaj and Craig



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RIDING IN RATBY

Oaklands Riding School opened in Ratby some seventeen years ago. Owner, Julie Smith tells us that she started her working life as a veterinary nurse. After redundancy she went to help at a riding stables, decided she wanted to run her own business, and set up schools in Stoney Stanton and then Desford before moving to the stability of her own land in Ratby. In the early days Julie was fortunate in being donated stable doors by a satisfied American parent, together with metal frames from Desford Tubes. Side walls were created from Council House garage panels, still adorned with graffiti, and roofs were made from lorry roofs. Julie has shown the way for imaginative recycling!

She has built up the premises with stables and yards so that she can now keep fifteen horses, and offers both schooling and livery services. The siting of the stables means that riders have easy access to the Burroughs bridle paths, with just one road to cross into open countryside.

During her years in Ratby Julie has had some interesting experiences. Perhaps the most extraordinary was when a crowd of villagers ran up her track to watch a hot air balloon descend in her field. A worrying thing, as horses 'don't like big, noisy, colourful, flappy things.' All was well, however, and Julie discovered that the balloon ride had been a last wish for a terminally ill person. There had been no plan to land in Ratby!



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The horses too often have surprises in store. Julie says she has always had her own pony or horse, and they have all had their own distinctive character. She recalls one horse that snored so loudly he kept all the others awake. One current lodger can let herself and other horses out of their stables. She moves the three bolts on her door with her teeth, kicks the bottom of the door whilst watching for the outside bolt to jump up, and then pushes her way out before setting off to let out the others. Occasionally horses have found their way onto neighbouring gardens, and one neighbour who kept his truck in the field was particularly apprehensive about approaching them. He decided carrots would be a useful way of keeping the horses happy whilst he collected the truck, but hadn't anticipated just how enthusiastic they might be, and had to run for the safety of his vehicle.



Preparing for the Pony Club Event

Many of Julie's students have gone on to earn their living with horses. From an early age students can enter for Pony Club and British Horse Society tests and exams, not just about riding, but all aspects of looking after horses. There have been a number who have qualified as riding teachers, eventers and even a jockey. But total dedication and hard work is required to work with horses in any field. Julie has until very recently been teaching three generations of one family.

Julie clearly has a passion for her horses and loves to share her skills with others. If you've sometimes thought you might 'have a go' why not give her a call? It might just change your life!



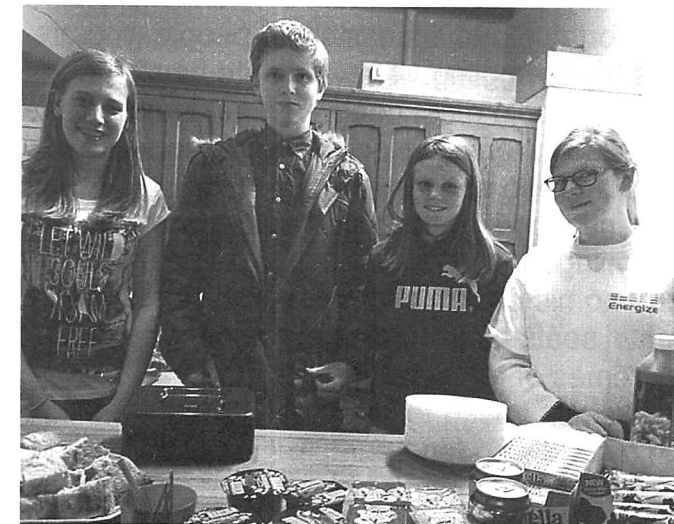
RATBY COMMUNITY CINEMA

This amazing venture started life in the **Energize** Youth Group which meets at Ratby Church Rooms. During these sessions for youngsters aged from 10+ there are a range of activities, games and discussions. The young people decided they wanted to do something for the community, and the Film Club was launched.

Films are shown on alternate Friday evenings in the Parish Church, with food and snacks served from 6pm, and the film starting at 6.30. All families, young people and children are welcome to come along.

At the start the equipment needed was borrowed, but a grant from the County Community Fund enabled a large screen to be purchased. Adults involved in Energize, Richard Scowen and Justin Garrett arrive early with some of the young people to set everything up.

On the 14th March the film was to be 'Percy Jackson Sea of Monsters. Pictured below are the four young people running the refreshment bar for the evening, from left to right, **Megan Trusler, Adam Quinn, Rebekah Garratt and Emily Hall.**



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They told me;
'It's great fun.'
So what makes it fun?
'I like working together as a team.'
'It's great that we're all friends.'
'We're doing something for the community.'

Energize is clearly just the right name for this group of enthusiastic young people and children!

More than 100 films have been shown since the Cinema started, including some for adult audiences, such as 'The King's Speech.' The young people are involved in choosing films, and the License they must pay for permits any film to be shown apart from Star Wars and The Sound of Music.

There is seating for 250. So why not come along with your family and fill some of those chairs?

The April 11th showing is '**The Jungle Book.**'
Doo-bah-dee-doo! It's a bear necessity!

Wot's Roving Reporter

Contributions to Wot!

We welcome items of interest to villagers.

For 8 page issues space is limited so please keep your word count down to around 400 to 500 words. For 12 page issues we can accept longer articles. Village groups can pay for inclusion of longer items at our current article rate. Phone for a dialogue on this if you wish!

See deadline date box for contacts.

We reserve the right to edit articles or indeed refuse to print them where they are not consistent with our policy or may cause offence.

Articles and advertisements do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editor,

Can we rescue the Village Society?

As many of your readers will know, after forty years the Ratby Village Society will shortly close permanently unless a positive initiative is taken.

If you would like to be part of a discussion to consider a 'rescue plan' and to suggest possible alternatives for a way forward to serve our village community then please contact:

Andy Ceresto

Tel. 239 5457

E mail a.10@hotmail.co.uk

"WHERE HAVE ALL THE BENCHES GONE? LONG TIME PASSING ..."

(with apologies to Pete Seeger)

Around 2003, (was it really that long ago?) Ratby residents enthusiastically turned out for a "Planning for Real" initiative in which the Parish Plan Group collected the views, suggestions and ideas of villagers for the future of Ratby using a model village and coloured pins which we stuck in. The idea was to put impetus for change in the hands of the local community. At that time, no fewer than 650 out of 950 respondents desired more amenity seating.

Since then, seating on Station Road/Main Street (the principal road for shops and services, with high pedestrian footfall of the fit and not-so-fit) has not increased, but, in three instances, has completely disappeared. You can see the sad concrete foundation slabs. Benches have vanished from:-

1. Outside Ratby Surgery. What an irony that is! Doctors tell us to take exercise, and the very tool that would help us do so has disappeared.

2. Church Lane/Main Street junction. This was a useful bench, part-way up the hill.



3. Beside the M1 motorway on Sacheverell Way next to the "Ratby" name-plate. Believe me, if you were struggling back from Budgens, this bench was a godsend. There is no other place on Sacheverell Way to sit down. Although broken for many years, it still held me up when I used it and, being of flat wooden slats on concrete ends, it was very comfortable.

Hurrah! With the new Co-op should come a new opportunity to encourage shoppers to walk there. I very much hope to see convenient outside seating as an intrinsic part of the development. People may walk a mile to get there and will want to sit down once more before setting off for home, carting shopping bags. Let the seating include others who are just passing by.

Street-level benches are humane and civilised. Benches are sociable. Benches are vital to preserve our independence of two-leg mobility. You can sit, engage with Ratby's comings and goings, greet others who pass by, thus defeating loneliness and isolation, and generally while away a few pleasant minutes.

Crucially, seats need to be convenient, comfortable and accessible to people who are already struggling. They need to be sited where people most need them and not installed in remote places. Recreational seating on our green spaces is no substitute for essential on-street public seating throughout the village. Attention needs to be paid to ergonomic design and materials. For example, metal seats offer nothing but penetrating extremes of temperature to the human backside. I used to see elderly people sitting on the old wooden bench at the junction of Markfield Road and Main Street. They liked it. The replacement metal bench with rounded (rounded!) slats is extremely uncomfortable and this is sad because its provision was well-meant. Examples of good seating can be seen at Station Rd, Desford.

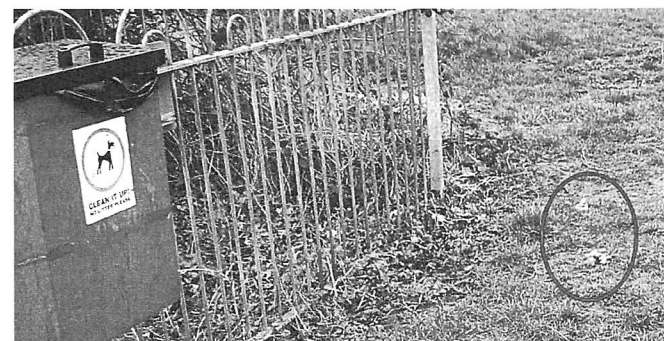
Let there be no confusion. Far from increasing public amenity seating after 2003 in line with majority demand, it is now worse than it ever was. More seating is many years overdue and to remove existing benches is cruel. So if you see me squatting on the pavement like they do in the third world, please don't be alarmed - I am only having a sit-down - come and join me.

R. Simmonds

DOG FOULING ON FERNDALE PARK

Despite numerous requests from Ratby Parish Council for dog owners to clean up after their animals, some continue to refuse to act responsibly by picking up their dogs' mess and disposing of it in the bins provided.

The picture below shows how some owners show utter contempt for the local bye laws and the health and safety of playing children.



This owner has allowed their dog to foul within 8 feet of the dog bin and still not removed the mess. This shows that this owner simply doesn't care what their dog does or where it does it, showing contempt for other park users or the many responsible dog owners.

Let's ensure these individuals are identified, brought to court and fined. Hitting them in the pocket may be the only way such behaviour is changed for the better.

Responsible dog owner.
Name and address supplied.

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RATBY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Remember the last issue when we reminded you that there is a WI in the village? Well we are proud to announce that one of our members, Margaret Towsey, recently won a Leicestershire Federation Trophy for a short story on the theme "A conversation between you and an historical figure". She was presented with the trophy at the Leicestershire Federation Annual Council Meeting on Saturday 8th March.

You see, although we have a member who makes excellent jam and several who sing beautifully there is more to us than Jam and Jerusalem. Why not come along and meet us and find out more. We meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall, Main Street.

Just turn up on the night or if you'd like more information ring the **President, Viv, on 0116 2393738**



RATBY COMMUNITY ORCHARD

The Orchard Group is celebrating after gaining a grant from Central England Co-operative Society Community Dividend Fund.

The money will be used to purchase much needed equipment for Apple Day events, pond dipping and maintenance tasks.

Check out our new **website** to learn more about the Orchard and see photographs of events;

<http://ratbycommunityorchard.wix.com/ratby-orchard>

There is a link to the website on our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/RatbyCommunityOrchard

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RATBY VILLAGE SOCIETY

March and April's meetings will be held as usual in The Village Hall on Tuesdays at 8 pm. Refreshments served.

15th April – 'Technology of the English Country House.' A talk by Wendy Freer.

May and June meetings will be held in The Sports Club room, Desford Lane on THURSDAYS, starting at the earlier time of 7.30

Thursday 15th May – Antiques expert and TV personality Charles Hanson will deliver a talk and value your antiques. (two items only per person please.)

Thursday 19th June – Gill Smart from the Heart Link Charity will deliver a talk, together with a display of photos on the work of the charity. Monies collected for Heart Link by the RVS over the past year will be presented.

Admission: Members £1.60, casual guests £2.50, including refreshments of wine or orange juice. Non members welcome.

REWARD

A reward is offered for information leading to the safe return of MIDGE to her home in Church Lane.

Midge is believed to be residing somewhere in the village.

Do you know anyone who may have started feeding her, or adopted a new cat around the 14th December 2013?

If you see a cat that looks like MIDGE can you take a photo on your mobile to help me to find her.



Midge has a twin brother who sits everyday on the windowsill looking for her. Please help if you can. Your call will be in complete confidence.

Tel. 07763818484

TRUE BLUE DANCE CREW OPEN WEST END VARIETY SHOW

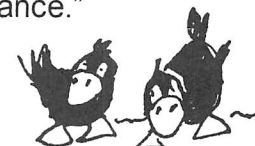
Members of True Blue Dance Crew have just about come down from 'Cloud 9' having had the most amazing experience. 26th January 2014, 7.30am, a very cold Ratby Village Centre. True Blue dancers left the village by VIP Coach bound for London. The all-girl group had been selected to Open a Variety Show at Her Majesty's Theatre in front of crowds of over 1,000. After six months hard work forty four girls were finally on their way to 'Live Their Dream'.

On arrival at Her Majesty's Theatre, the dancers were shown to their dressing rooms. (The night before these were all filled with the Phantom of the Opera cast...how amazing!)

The girls looked very nervous, but were met by a West End Star, Gary Weston, who has appeared in Saturday Night Fever, CATS, Les Miserables, Evita, Mama Mia and many more. Gary put the girls through their warm up and stretch session.

The squad, aged 7 -21 years, got all glammed up and hit the stage for rehearsals. It was soon time for curtain up!!! Nerves were now kicking in, along with excitement. The tannoy announcement : True Blue to the stage! This was our chance to shine.

The girls opened the show with a Modern megamix kicked off by Will I Am, and our 198 supporters in the audience were clearly heard! How amazing....can we do it again? Can't believe that! It was awesome. (comments made on the way back to the dressing room.) We had about 40 mins. to prepare for our next routine. Hair and make-up re-done, changed and ready again. The girls bought tears to many eyes with their elegant lyrical routine, all dressed in Topaz Blue. All the costumes were made to measure and all looked stunning. My mum makes all our outfits and had many sleepless nights making 44 evening dresses! What an amazing experience for all the Dancers, a day they will never forget. Coach Angie Phillips said "This has always been my childhood dream.....to watch my dancers, including my two daughters; out there on a west end stage was totally breath taking. Each and every dancer has been totally brilliant, and I am so pleased with their performance."



The Group are already in talks for a return visit to London next year, and have their annual Show in March. The Group is a Community Team, based at Ratby Village Hall and Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and has been running for over 16 years.

Head Coach Angie Phillips, Assistant Coaches Megan Williams, Alex Pool and Saturday Assistant Sadie Hurst would make you very welcome at classes. Should you wish to find out more about the teams or have a free taster class and the chance to perform in the West End, please email **Angie Phillips** at tbd1@yahoo.co.uk.

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