VILLAGE VOICE

APRIL - MAY 2004

THURLESTONE VILLAGE VOICE

BANTHAM · BUCKLAND

NUMBER 126
APRIL - MAY 2004

There is no doubt that Adrian Masters, our village Postmaster, is punching his weight. Quite apart from the actual bout of fisticuffs at Salcombe in February to raise money for Kingsbridge under-15 Rugby, he has been pretty active in the business field recently - adding the Post Office and store at Aveton Gifford to his growing collection. And his latest coup is one which will prove a real boon to every car-owner in the parish; for from now on we will be able to re-tax our vehicles at our own Post Office, and thus avoid the expense and irritation of having to traipse into Kingsbridge - to wherever they may have last moved theirs.

Far from the much-feared and trumpeted demise of the Post Office from the village scene, our own goes from strength to strength, and deserves our gratitude and full support - as indeed do all our village services.

With our MOT certificate from Maurice in our hand, we shall now be able to stroll down the village street to Adrian's, legalise our wheeliness for another year (with a simple flourish of our new Post Office account card), and afterwards drop in at the Village Inn for a few celebratory tipples before toddling back home. Sometimes you wonder why we need a car at all!

Front Cover : The Village Inn Steps

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Covers LEN HUBBARD

Published Bi-monthly

I'm a Nonentity.....
Get Me Out of Here!

As residents reel away from their tv sets and burst out into Spring, I have inside information which will drag them back inside again. My informant, who has a second home in Thurlestone parish, is a high-up at the BBC in his other life. He was so excited recently on discovering the proposed autumn schedules of BBC Digital 37 that, dodging the bugged phones on his desk, he raced to the last safe red kiosk pay phone in London to tell Villager all about it.

Though it sounds almost unbelievable, my Leak excitedly informed me that BBC Digital 37 is majoring on a whole series of Thurlestone-based TV programmes. The thinking behind them is that no one can accuse the BBC of dumbing down when their new top programmes are coming from the smartest part of the British Isles.

Producers and directors for these parish epics are in Thurlestone already, says my Leak, planning these big audience pullers. *"Thurlestone"*, he adds, *"is going nationwide. Forget the Antiques Roadshow; forget Stars in Their Eyes; forget University Challenge; forget, dare I say it, Eastenders; or even Emmerdale. These parish programmes are really gigantic!"*

Expected to top all the national viewing figures is a six-part reality programme to be called "I'm a Thurlestone Nonentity - Get Me Out of Here!" Hosting these shows, which will all carry advance warnings for those of a nervous disposition, are two little-known TV stars, "Dec" and "Ent". It was some time before I understood that "Decadent" wasn't one person, but two, and I thought at first that it described the content of the shows.

Six Thurlestone Nonentities are already being sought. My BBC man tells me that though people are always very keen to get on the telly, the executive producer has been surprised at the resistance of parish people to taking

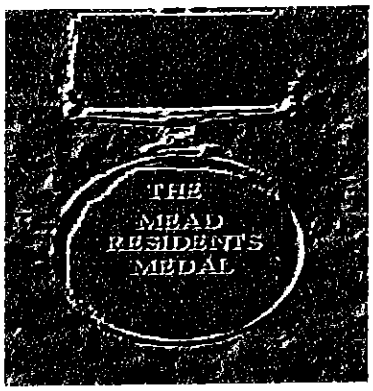
part. The reason is thought to be that all the people in Thurlestone consider themselves to be celebrities and no one, not even the humblest second home owner, is willing to admit to being a nonentity, not even in their previous life before they sought asylum in our midst.

This pride is also causing problems with other Digital 37 programmes set in the parish. One called "Citizens Keen" will be filmed in the new parish hall and will introduce incomers to the Mead Estate. Viewers will watch as they swear a Mead loyalty oath, stumbling no doubt over the unfamiliar English words as they pledge themselves to Britain and the Mead.

These ceremonies, based on the first national citizenship ceremonies just started in various parts of the country, will include ceremonies in Bantham and Buckland in the presence of the Parish Councillors - with anthemic music provided by the Parish Council Chairman at the piano. At the moment he is searching desperately through his repertoire for suitable songs. The BBC Director of Music has turned down his offer of "Mead, Glorious Mead", and most of the Chairman's usual pieces are more fitted to the regular parish booze-ups than such serious matters.

The loyalty oath for the Mead Ceremony, which has to be memorised by each would-be new citizen, states: *"I will give my loyalty to the Mead and respect its rights and freedoms. I will uphold its democratic values. I realise that no matter what the size of a house, its position on the hillside, or the length of time it has been occupied, all Mead dwellers are created equal. I will observe the Mead gardening laws faithfully, particularly regarding the height of trees and hedges, and fulfil my duties and obligations as a Real Meado".*

Then, as the Chairman strikes up on the piano (his song titles have still to be submitted), each new Meadonian, bursting with pride, will be called up to the stage to receive a special certificate - and an aluminium medal,



specially created in the Thurlestone Garage from cars which even Maurice Blight found impossible to repair. A newly-elected "Queen of the Mead" will make the actual presentations.

In "I'm a Thurlestone Nonentity", the formula will be the same as with earlier similar shows - competitors, all locals, will be guided by Dec and Ent round local torture high spots in the parish. Ideas for excruciating agony so far suggested:

1)Trying to drive to Kingsbridge in a Kerse farm tractor when

Thurlestone School mums are coming the other way to pick up their kids in huge 4 by 4s (better known locally as Chelsea Tractors). Points will be deducted for bodywork scratches.

2) Trying to park in the parish without straying on to double yellow lines or virtual pavements.

3) Trying to get a local pub lunch at one o'clock on a Sunday in the holidays.

More savage tortures are being kept secret for the present. But persistent rumours say that one concerns the vicious biting bugs found in all parish gardens.

Fears of racial tension have been reported to the BBC Governors after parishioners were surprised to see Bantham swarming with turbaned gentlemen busy setting up an Indian restaurant. These fears were quashed when it was explained to the Governors that this activity was for a follow-up programme to a Channel Four show called "A Place in France", showing a similar operation in a French village. The BBC will broadcast yet another apology about this shortly. However, they think they have a big hit on their hands with "A Place in Bantham" - as the only distinguished newcomer in Bantham has already accepted a leading role. Paignton Zoo have been asked to reserve an elephant for a famous TV star to ride on down to Buckland in later episodes.

You will soon see strange military style events on Yarmer Beach and along the coastal path. These are for another follow-up, a programme provisionally called "Are You Tough Enough To Live Round Here?" It involves a group of SAS instructors putting numerous overweight residents through battle-course exercises and is part of the government's latest war - on obesity.

The Blair Broadcasting Corporation has other plans for up-to-date follow-ups to other shows put on by the old networks. "A Third Place in the Sun" will be operated in conjunction with South Hams estate agents, and is specially designed to appeal to second home owners.

The People's Home Office have suggested a programme. Called "I'm an Asylum Seeker, Hide Me", it uses the South Pool and Dart Vale Harriers pack of hounds to chase illegal immigrants across the Devon countryside, thereby providing useful work for the hunt after field sports are banned.

Local opposition to the vast increase in tourists that such popular TV coverage is bound to bring has already started. Antis are forecasting vast mobs of viewers blocking the lanes and bringing village life to even more than its usual standstill.

"It 'll be worse than Eastenders, Coronation Street and Neighbours all rolled into one....not the right kind of tourists at all ," remarked one well-known Thurlestone Nonentity, who has asked Villager not to reveal his name as he hopes to win "Get Me Out of Here"

Villager

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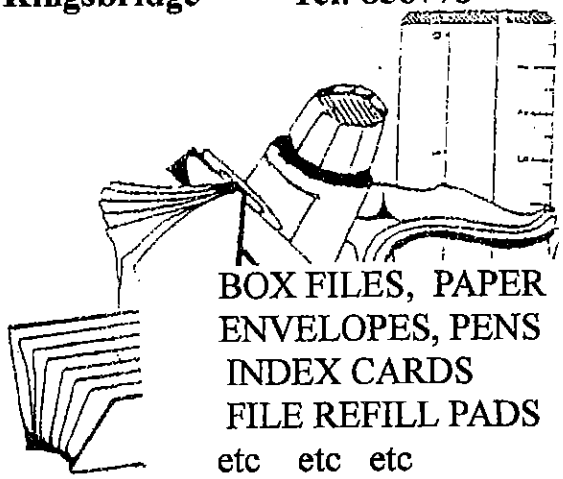

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Village News Round-Up

Elizabeth Teresa Woodrow

A familiar face in the parish has gone with the sad death of **Terry Woodrow** on the 9th March. We send to her husband, Jim, their daughters and families, our condolences.

Terry was a stalwart member of our local community in Thurlestone, and over many years gave unstinting and loyal service to all the activities with which she was involved. She was a member of the Parochial Church Council and a keen supporter of, and fund-raiser for, St Luke's Hospice.

Village Voice will always appreciate the help she and Jim gave when the magazine was struggling to find new management following Penny and Kendall McDonald's retirement. She will be long remembered and sadly missed by her many friends.

Golf Club Secretary

Terry E Gibbons, MCMI, RAF (retired), has been the club secretary at Sleaford Golf Club, in Lincolnshire, from April 2000. He was previously a Squadron Leader in the RAF commanding the Engineering Support Squadron at RAF Wittering (home of the Harrier).

Married and with two daughters, Terry is a keen golfer (playing off a 9 handicap), an ardent gardener, and also a DIY enthusiast. He likes travel and walking, and has made a practice of holidaying in the West Country for many years. He has long admired the Thurlestone golf course, and has been a regular walker of the Coast Path.

He will take up his new post at the beginning of April and Village Voice extends a warm welcome to him and all the Gibbons family.

Valentine Dance

A St. Valentine's Barn Dance was held in the Parish Hall on 14th February, but before the doors opened a team had been very busy putting up stunning and appropriate heart-shaped decorations which transformed the place. Eighty revellers danced until 11.30 pm to the strains of Mrs Crotty's Ceilidh Band whilst **Dave** - the caller - put the participants through their paces. Before the last call, **Jan Poyzer's** grandson, **William,** dressed as Cupid, presented each of the ladies with a red Valentine balloon. Bear Brand lingerie of Exeter donated Valentine garters and a pot of Kama Sutra massage cream which were auctioned.

The magnificent sum of £560 was raised for Parish Hall funds. The Hall's chairman and committee wish to thank, most gratefully, all those people who contributed raffle prizes - the Village Inn, The Sloop, Burton Farm, Galmpton, The Cottage Hotel and many others - those who made the food; **John Beven** who produced bright posters and tickets; everyone who helped in any way; those who came; and last, but by no means least, **Pat & John Crawford** who master-minded the event.

Sunset at Thurlestone Rock

We still have for sale a few copies of that wonderful colour picture of Thurlestone Rock at sunset which formed the front cover of our December/January issue. Size A4, they are a bargain at just £5.00 per copy.

The original photograph was taken by **Peter Stafford,** who most generously provided us with copies, sales of which so far have raised **£205** for the new Parish Hall funds. Contact **Pat Macdonald (560436)** but hurry, there aren't many left!

Parish Hall Event Photographs

Joan Mackenzie, holds archive albums of photographs taken at events in the Parish Hall. She would be delighted to hear from anyone who has taken similar pictures (recent or past) who could spare them for the albums. Her phone number is 560671

Slate Coasters

A limited edition - they will not be repeated -

The Slate Coaster

of most attractive slate coasters (coloured turquoise, black and gold) which are decorated with an artist's impression of how our new Parish Hall will look, can be purchased at **£3.00** each. They will be a good way to demonstrate, in your home, that you are a Parish Hall supporter. Ring **Joan Mackenzie** on 560671.

Age Concern

Can you spare one morning a week? Age Concern in Kingsbridge urgently need cooks and kitchen helpers to join a friendly team and help prepare simple meals at their centre in Kingsbridge. If you would like to learn more about this please phone 810611 or 810373.

Ladies Bridge

Joan Mackenzie would like to thank all those who took part, or helped in any way, at the Ladies afternoon of Bridge held at the Parish Hall on Saturday, 13th March. As well as proving a very enjoyable occasion, the event was successful in raising the sum of **£200** for the Parish Hall New Building Fund.

The "all girl" power was clearly evidenced at the end of the afternoon, when the card tables and chairs were cleared away, and all the washing up for forty people completed, in the twinkling of an eye.

Turpentine Champion?

We were mystified the other day to hear that the Chairman of our Parish Council had won a "Turpentine Competition". Uncertain as to whether this was a feat of drinking or painting, Village Voice sent an undercover reporter to ascertain the true story. We hope to reveal the full details of this mysterious event in our next issue.....don't miss it!

NSPCC

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Spring Clearance

JUMBLE SALE

Parish Hall
Saturday 29 May
2 - 4 pm

We would be grateful for contributions of clean, saleable items and for donations.

The Hall will be open in the morning or collection can be arranged

Please ring 560518 or 562417

Help us to help the children

Parish Council Meeting

16th February 2004

News and Views by Citizen

This report will be somewhat briefer than usual. Do I hear cheers? The reason is that it only covers the February meeting. The March Parish Council meeting will not be held until after the final date for copy for the April issue of Village Voice. My report on the March, and later meetings, will appear in the June issue.

WASTE

Much of the first part of February's meeting was taken up with a discussion on green waste with **Verity Palk**, of the South Hams District Council. She explained the SHDC plans and the assistance they are prepared to offer us - subject to suitable land becoming available for storage, shredders, etc. It was pointed out that there is no central point in the parish where sufficient space could be found, and as the waste would have to be loaded into a car one might as well travel a bit further and go to Torre Quarry where excellent facilities already exist. There is no doubt, however, that the SHDC is determined that as little green waste as possible goes into landfill sites and that as much as possible is turned into compost.

PARISH HALL

It was confirmed that four quotations had been received in respect of the rebuilding project, and that as a result the application forms had been sent off for Lottery and other funding. A response is now awaited but no time-scale has yet been indicated.

WARREN HILL PATH

A meeting was scheduled for the Tuesday, 17th February to arrange for a supply of additional chippings and to discuss what could be done to protect the path from further erosion by passing lorries and surface water.

BANTHAM TO CHURCHSTOW ROAD

The potholes along this road were getting dangerous and the County Council would be contacted and asked to rectify this situation.

GOLF COURSE STILE

The stile at the top of the golf course was very difficult for push chairs to get through, particularly as the coastal end of the path is open. Visitors in particular have had to re-trace their steps as the present stile proved insurmountable. The appropriate authority would be approached and asked whether the entrance could be made similar to the one at Eddystone road.

SCHOOL GROUNDS

Concern was expressed at the number of sheds and a Portacabin which were appearing in the school grounds adjoining Glebefield, and it was hoped these were not to be a permanent feature. It would appear that the school was entering a "Topsy" situation, where it seems to be growing and growing without regard to the effect it might have on the surrounding area. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the situation.

PROPOSED ISLAND VIEW PLAY AREA

It was reported that discussions had taken place with a number of those affected by the proposal, and the opinions seemed to be mixed as to whether it was a good idea or not. Further discussions will take place.

Citizen

Parish Of Thurlestone Society

Having spent eight years working on behalf of POTS as its chairman, **Len Hubbard** now feels it is time to sit back a little to let someone else take the reins. POTS is delighted to say that **Chris White** has ***willingly*** agreed to assume Len's mantle. Chris and his wife, Lisa, are newish residents of Thurlestone but have had very many years of visiting here, as his parents, **Dick and Esme White,** were long-time residents. In accepting the chairmanship Chris said *"I feel it a great honour to serve as chairman, following Len's enthusiasm, foresight and inspired leadership since POTS was founded".*

Len Hubbard

Len formed the **"Save Our Old Pump Association"** in 1995 with the object of raising funds to repair and renovate the small building, sited on the main village road, which used to house Thurlestone pump. Because the Parish Council had not got the funds to do this the building was in danger of being demolished as a safety measure, and this is where Len and friends stepped in. Determined that this should not happen to an historically interesting little building they set about raising funds to put the work in hand. Within a very short space of time enough money had been raised and the work was completed.

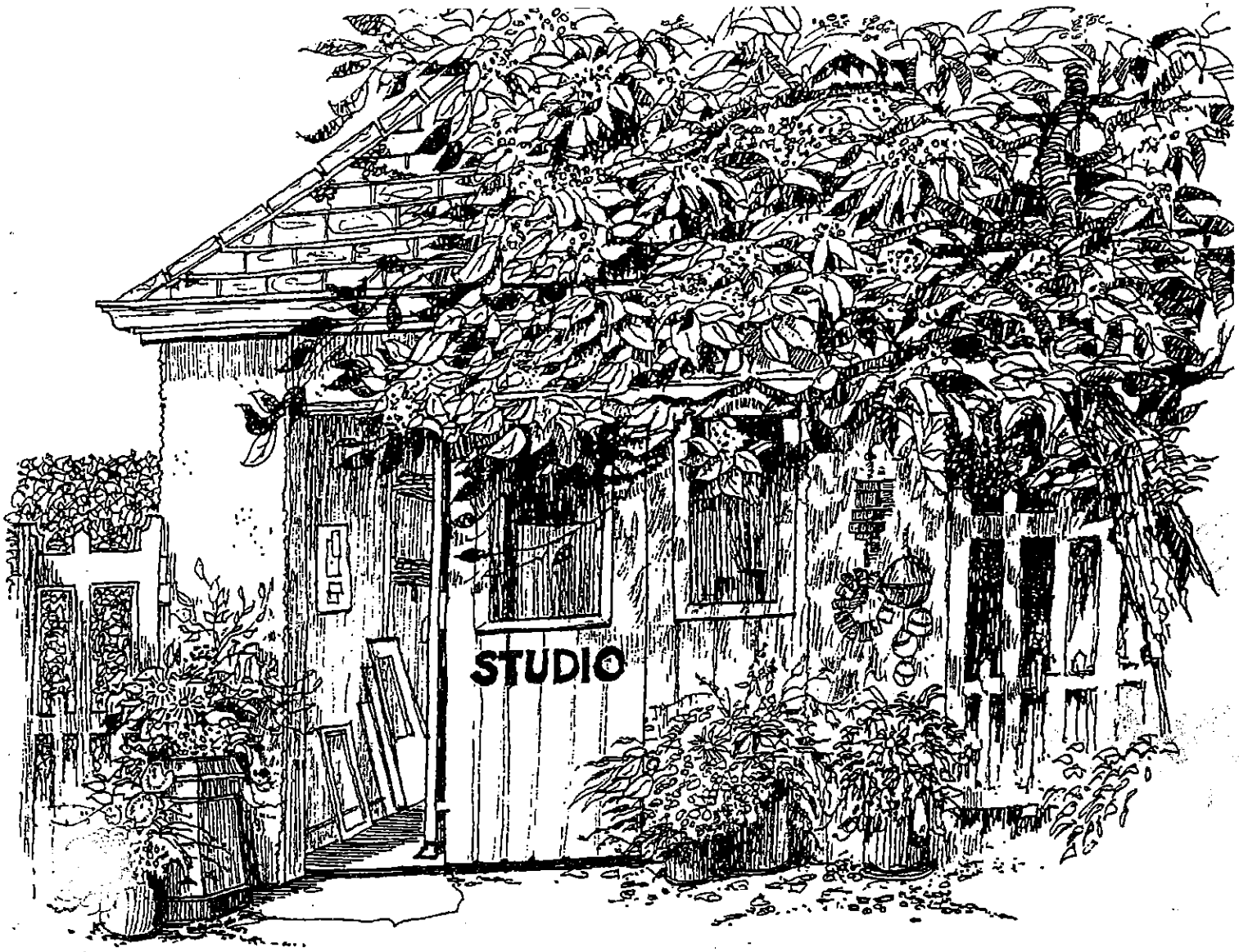
As a result of this success, it was decided in 1996 to form the **Parish of Thurlestone Society** and to carry on with the job of trying, whenever and wherever, to protect our heritage here in the parish, calling upon residents to help on an ad hoc basis.

It has been purposely maintained since its conception as a loosely-based and non-membership body.

POTS has carried out quite a lot of work since it was set up, providing the seat at the corner of Glebefield in memory of the late Ida Smith, repairing the well-head on the hill at Buckland, planting up this and the trough at the corner of the Bantham road each summer. **Derrick Yeoman** on POTS behalf plants up the hanging basket in the Pump. Len himself restored the bust of Queen Victoria prior to its being put on show once more on the school wall. The group undertook to pay for the necessary insurance cover during the time (in 1998) when we had a temporary Post Office in Thurlestone. In 1999 POTS were co-sponsors of the 'farewell party' to **Ken and Bob Morley** as they retired from their shop; **Gordon and Frances Bromfield** as they retired from the former Post Office; and **Jean Yeoman** when, at the same time, she finished her employment there.

More recently there was the making of the Video ***Land of the Five Beaches***, a task started in late 1996 by **David Smeeton** and completed in December 1999 in time for the Millennium. This won a Royal Television Award for excellence. POTS contributed financially to a children's Millennium Party. Two trail maps, one of Thurlestone, one of Buckland and Bantham, which are a walker's guide to the interesting points in the parish, have also been created. Last September they helped the Coast Path authorities to celebrate their Silver Jubilee by arranging a week-end of special events. They have contributed **£250** to the School computer suite and **£500** to the new Parish Hall funds. Their funding has come from sales of the video and maps, supplemented by specific fund-raising activities from time to time and from grants by various agencies.

A project which it is hoped will shortly be put in hand is the conservation of the unique archive collection of over 300 old parish photographs which has been put together by **Peter Hurrell** over the past thirty years.



Len and Kate Hubbard

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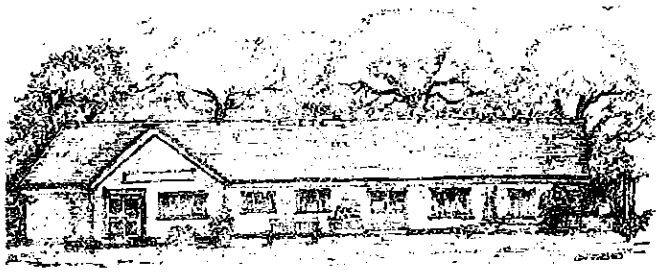
PARISH HALL NEWS



By Rowland Cole

Lottery Application

Our Application for funds to the Community Fund of the National Lottery was submitted in January. Since then we have been visited by their Grants Officer, who wanted to see the existing Hall and to discuss aspects of our application. This has entailed the provision of some additional information, but it is now anticipated that a decision will be received within 3 months.

The Parish Hall Committee has been extremely fortunate in having an enormous amount of support and help in submitting our Application to the National Lottery.

In this context sincere thanks must be placed on the record for the advice, time and professional expertise given by **Malcolm Northmore** and **Paul Carpenter** in preparing drawings, specifications, and the host of technical details required.

Equally, much appreciation is owed to **Martyn Grose** and **David Houghton**, who have spent an enormous amount of time compiling information, statistics and the like, as they ploughed through the complex requirements of the application forms and formulated our responses.

The final documentation, which by any standards was weighty, was expertly typed by our Secretary, **Gillian Marshall**, who devoted much time to the project, and is also owed grateful thanks.

Fund Raising Campaign

Treasurer Bill Clarke reports that further contributions have been received in 2004 to date from the following sources.

Treasure Hunt (G. Marshall)	£ 50.00
Beatle Drive (R & C Cole)	£279.00
Barn Dance (P Crawford)	£560.50
Smarties promotion	£402.60
Individual donations (4)	£265.00
Total	**£1557.10**

bringing the total of the Funds as at the beginning of March to:

£88,868.12

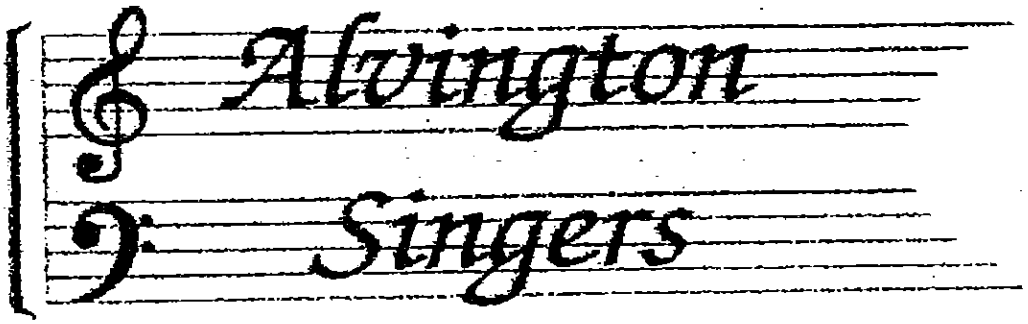
Future Events

April 28th ---- the Alvington Singers are giving a concert ***Music in Celebration of St George*** at All Saints Church in aid of our Fund Raising Campaign. The concert will start at 7.30 pm. Admission will be by Programme (£6.00 including refreshments) from Pat Macdonald (560436)

June 5th --- Strawberry Cream teas in the garden at Warren House, Warren Road, from 2.30 to 4.30 pm, by kind invitation of Mr & Mrs Cyril Atkins.

August 6th ---- a Tennis Tournament is to be organised by Lindsey Fletcher, with the kind cooperation of the Golf Club..

Please keep filling the Smarties tubes. We are going to need every penny !



Music in Celebration of St. George

The Programme to Include

English Folk Songs
Gilbert & Sullivan
Cloyd Webber's Pie Jesu
Karl Jenkins' Agnus Dei
Bach à la Swingle Singers

All Saints Church, Thurlestone
Wednesday, 28th April
Concert starts at 7.30 pm

Admission by Programmes obtainable in advance from
Pat Macdonald - 560436

£6.00 (with refreshments)

In aid of the new Parish Hall Building Fund

All Saints

Rector: Revd. Andrew Girling 562219
Churchwardens: Graham Worrall 562016 & Liz Webb 560090

Andrew Girling writes:

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

Mel Gibson's film *The Passion of the Christ* is coming, preceded by a veritable cauldron of controversy. Not having seen it, I cannot say if it is anti-semitic, nor comment on the level of its violence. I can say, however, that Jesus' death by crucifixion would have been quite incredibly violent. It was one of the most cruel and painful ways ever devised for killing someone. The reality of the cross has so often been sanitised by popular art and liturgy, perhaps the film will bring home to us the pain and horror of the crucifixion. If so, that's all to the good.

We are left, however, with two questions with which I am often confronted. Why do Christians think the crucifixion is so important? What difference does something that happened two thousand years ago, make today?

First, Christians believe that Jesus' life and death were an expression of the nature of God in human terms. What happened at a point in time show us God's nature for all time.

Secondly, at the crucifixion, we see mankind treating Jesus in the worst possible way. Deserted and betrayed by his friends, given an unjust trial by Pilate, falsely accused by religious leaders, brutally beaten by Roman soldiers, nailed to a cross for a long and painful death.

By contrast Jesus could not have treated man better. There was no rebuke, no retaliation, indeed as he was nailed to the cross, he offered only forgiveness and love to those who were cruelly destroying him.

If that is indeed the expression of the nature of God, then we know that nothing any one of us can do or be puts us beyond the reach of God's love and forgiveness. There is always hope of reconciliation and a new beginning. If God, revealed in Jesus, will suffer anything rather than stop loving those who treat him so horrendously, that is the sort of love I want to know and experience for myself and even more important, it is, I believe, a force for good which offers real hope for the world torn apart as it is by violence and terror. Nelson Mandella and Desmond Tutu have shown that to be true, so have thousands of people throughout history.

That is why the crucifixion of two thousand years ago is so important to us. That is why Good Friday is one of the most significant days in the Christian calendar. That is also why, whether or not you go to see Mel Gibson's film, I pray that the strength of God's love revealed on the cross, will become a reality for you.

Andrew

(*The Passion of the Christ* is now showing at Warner Village, Plymouth)

All Saints Diary

Churchwardens: Graham Worrall 562016 & Liz Webb 560090

Church Services

All Services are at Thurlestone unless indicated otherwise
You would be welcome at any services

APRIL 4TH	**PALM SUNDAY**	**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (BCP) **10.15 a.m.** Palm Sunday Procession leaves Parish Hall **10.30 a.m.** Morning Worship for All Ages (Please note time)
APRIL 8TH	**MAUNDY THURSDAY**	**8.30 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (CW) **6.30 p.m.** Benefice Eucharist at West Alvington
APRIL 9TH	**GOOD FRIDAY**	**10.00 a.m.** Family Service at South Milton **2.00 p.m.** Last Hour Devotion led by Revd. John Young
APRIL 11TH	**EASTER DAY**	**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (BCP) with hymns **11.10 a.m.** Family Communion (CW) Preacher: Rev John Young **6.00 p.m.** Benefice Evensong (BCP) at Thurlestone
APRIL 18TH		**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (BCP) **11.10 a.m.** Parish Eucharist (CW)
APRIL 25TH		**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (CW) **11.10 a.m.** Parish Eucharist (CW)
MAY 2ND		**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (BCP) **11.10 a.m.** Morning Worship for All Ages
MAY 9TH	(Christian Aid Week starts)	**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (CW) **11.10 a.m.** Matins (BCP)
MAY 16TH	**ROGATION SUNDAY**	**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (BCP) **11.10 a.m.** Family Communion (CW) **3.00 p.m.** Rogation Service at Shute Farm South Milton
MAY 23RD		**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (CW) **11.10 a.m.** Parish Eucharist (CW)
MAY 30TH	**WHIT SUNDAY**	**8.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (BCP) **11.10 a.m.** Parish Eucharist (CW) **6.00 p.m.** Informal Praise Service

BCP = Book of Common Prayer CW = Common Worship * = Change from normal pattern

Regular Weekday Services

THURSDAY APRIL 1 & MAY 6	**10.00 a.m.** Holy Communion (BCP) at White Horses, Bantham
OTHER THURSDAYS	**8.30 a.m.** Holy Communion (said) (CW)
THURSDAYS APRIL 29 & MAY 27	**8.00 a.m.** Informal Prayer

Please note that the church has a loop system & a wheelchair is available

Homemade Soup & Ploughman's Lunch

MONDAY APRIL 5TH & MAY 3RD
NOON – 1.30 P.M.

Coffee-Time

ALL OTHER MONDAYS
10.30–11.30 A.M.

in the Parish Hall

Donations for *St Luke's Hospice* (April) & *Christian Aid* (May)

Anyone is welcome to come for coffee &/or ploughman's and for a chat.
Lifts can easily be arranged by contacting Rosemary Chipman 562013

A Tribute to Terry Woodrow

by the Rector, Revd. Andrew Girling

All of us will have our own very different and very special memories of Terry. In the few years I have known her, I've rejoiced in her hospitality and thoughtfulness.

I first met her carrying a gift of a camellia for us to put in the garden when we first arrived in Thurlestone. I was immediately struck by that lively sparkle in her eyes and her obvious sense of fun and humour. A glimpse of her past shows that those impressions were true.

Born and educated in Plymouth, she joined the WRNS during the war. All the special incidents of that time seem to have involved either royal men or motor vehicles or both! This, of course, at a time when men knew that women couldn't drive properly!

She had a reputation for fast driving especially along country roads at night with no lights on. On one occasion, so struck was she at having Admiral Mountbatten in her car she drove him the wrong way up a one way street. He, as they say, was not amused. On another occasion, she, and the other WRNS, had to take the blame when King Peter of Yugoslavia, when at Dartmouth, took a fancy to one of their motor bikes and took off for a ride on one.

Terry, not surprisingly, was the toast of many *naval* officers but there was one handsome *army* officer who beat off all the opposition and it was Jim who led her up the aisle in February 1947 in the midst of a blizzard!

That was the beginning of a superb partnership which has produced a wonderful family, caring both for Terry's mother over many years and nurturing three wonderful daughters. She was the heart of a deeply committed and loving family, now joyfully including seven grandchildren.

Terry has also served the community, the church and the county in a wide variety of ways. Her particular involvement was with the *Save the Children* Fund Committee, chairman of the *Multiple Sclerosis* Committee, President of the Inner Wheel and on the Fund Raising Committee for *St Luke's Hospice*. She served very effectively as

wife of the High Sheriff of Devon during Jim's period of office and graced many and varied functions. For ever catching the eye of royal men. It was none other than the Duke of Edinburgh who noticed during a pose for a photograph that she was hidden behind the Mayor of Plymouth. Philip soon sorted that out and she could be seen in all her charming glory.

But Terry was never one to stand on her dignity. She was prepared to get involved and to get her hands dirty. She loved gardening, was a chatty 'fair weather' golfer, spent many hours organising and arranging flowers for the church and was with Jim for a time 'chief stapler' of Village Voice magazine.

Her close friend, Pam, tells of her joining her patchwork class. Like most of us, she had always thought of Terry as neat and tidy and organised. Not so! She turned up late, never prepared but always enthusiastic. She quickly learned to produce beautiful quilts even if, at times, that meant that the dining room table was covered with all sorts of bits and pieces, most of which were later put in the bin!

I gather the easiest way to lead Terry astray was with chocolates. She was an enthusiastic grandmother in the children's Easter Egg Hunt. She firmly believed that Terry's All Gold chocolates were indeed Terry's (certainly not Dawn French's)!

But, as Jesus said, "by their fruits you shall know them". We can all see the fruits of Terry's life – a compassionate, dedicated, loving, caring woman, with a great sense of fun and energy. A loyal and supportive wife to Jim, a caring daughter to her mother for many years and herself a marvellous mother to Josanne, Rosalind and Vanessa and rightfully proud of her grandchildren, one of whom, when asked what he would remember most about grandma said "Chocolate cake"!

We say goodbye and thank God for a wonderful woman and share just a little of the deep sense of loss felt by Jim and the family. But we also hold on to the knowledge that both Jim and Terry have shared a strong Christian faith, as witnessed by their faithful service together to the church in Thurlestone over many years. We believe in the great gospel truth that Christ, through his crucifixion and resurrection, has triumphed over death and that the love they have shared here on earth will be continued in due time, as you enter together in the fullness of God's eternal love and joy, where even now Terry awaits Jim.

And so we hear again that simple but truthful message, with which Jesus encouraged and cheered his disciples before his death: "I have prepared a place for you. You will be with me."

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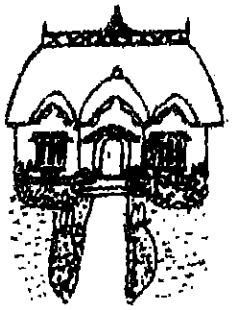

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1219

Puzzle Page

by Keith Farrelly

NINE-LETTER WORD-SEARCH

The answers to the clues can be made up by combining three sets of three letters from the grid. When complete, three sets of three letters should remain. Combine these letters to find another 9 - letter word.

1. To give up
2. Putting your arms round
3. Sold to the highest bidder
4. Tinseltown
5. Composer of the Can-Can
6. Large group of musicians
7. They wreck and destroy
8. This person is a dolt
9. Full of wisdom
10. A Spring-flowering bulb
11. A youth still growing
12. Reliable and true
13. Degradation and humility
14. Gun dog
15. Send it - it comes back!
16. Confidence and composure
17. Christmas entertainment
18. Venue for horse trials
19. They are down and out
20. An exciting enterprise
21. ???

HOL	RAC	AST	STR	OUS	DEA	ENB
VER	NED	ENT	ORC	TON	SUR	RET
OFF	MER	NAR	URA	CKH	BOO	SAB
ABA	HES	RIE	TIO	DBE	IPL	LYW
SAG	REN	ADF	IME	ASS	BLO	STE
OTE	URE	TRA	SEM	CIS	BAD	EMB
NCE	EAD	ANG	ING	ATS	DER	PAN
SUS	ING	TOM	ENT	ACI	ADV	ACH
IAL	OOD	MIN	AUC	POT	URS	ENT

TEN TEASERS

1. Which is the second largest continent in the World?
2. Who wrote the words of the song "Jerusalem"?
3. Which is the largest bird in the world?
4. Which planet is furthest from the sun?
5. What is the duration of a vicennial period?
6. Where was Hans Christian Anderson born?
7. Who first sailed non-stop round the world?
8. Who wrote "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty"?
9. In which year did "Elvis", "Bing", and Maria Callas die?
10. Where were the 22nd Olympic Games held in 1980?

NEWS FROM THE WI

February

Bob and Sheila Mousley came from Sherford and showed delightful slides of the five different gardens they have made together over the years. **Bethany Lee** was welcomed as a new member, and **Judith Le Grice** was presented with a new silver President's badge of office. She later outlined the Charleton resolutions meeting where, in common with other similar meetings in the county, the number one resolution concerned the illegal trafficking of women and children. **Joan Booth** and **Pat Clarke** have started to put together the individual pieces of embroidery, mostly depicting parish buildings, that will form the WI's parish wall-hanging

Our charity for 2004 will be for the Triangle Centre (cancer support) and coincidentally the local supporters of St Luke's Hospice will have a coffee morning at the Parish Hall on the 26th April when there will also be a talk about the work of the Centre.

March

Agatha Christie was the subject of **John Risdon's** talk. Starting from her birth to comfortably-off parents in Torquay (her father was American), he talked about her novels and showed a delightful collection of slides of the Christie family, their friends, and of places, houses and buildings that were important in Agatha's life, down to her final marriage and home at Greenway, on the River Dart, as Mrs Mallowan.

Shirley Barnes, newly arrived in Thurlestone from Epsom, was welcomed as a visitor.

Rosemary Mackay was volunteered to replace **Jo Parkin** as WI representative on the Parish Hall committee.

Val Brown's play-reading group met for the first time and further dates have been fixed (contact Val).

The games evening and supper at the Village Inn on the 1st March had proved very popular and enjoyable, and arranger **Pat Clarke** was warmly thanked.

April & May

At our April meeting **Dawn Platten** will talk on "Potions & Natural Remedies".

On the 13th April the Sea Coast Group spring meeting will be at West Alvington, with **Graham Collier** of South Hams Newspapers as the speaker.

On 22nd April we are off to Exeter University for the county's Council Meeting where guest speaker will be **Kate Adie**.

On 28th April, members will provide supper food for the concert by the **Alvington Singers** in our parish church, 7 for 7.30 pm, in aid of the Parish Hall fund.

On 29th April a walk through the West Alvington bluebell woods at 11 am will precede lunch at the Ring 'o' Bells.

On the 26th May, 11 am, **Vanessa and Colin Mills** who farm Southdown Farm (Soar Mills Seeds) near Malborough will host a 'Diversification Day', an introductory talk then a walk around their farm, which has won a FWAG award for outstanding contributions to conservation. A picnic lunch to be taken. Talk to **Carolyn Taylor** soon if you want a ticket (£3.50).

"Friendly Neighbours"

Our WI hopes to set up a group to help anyone in the three villages who may be elderly, sick or alone. The sort of activities envisaged may be, for example, spending time with someone housebound, perhaps playing a board game; making an occasional meal to take to someone who is alone; a car trip, including the occasional medical appointment; sitting with someone so that a carer may have some free time; or any emergency. If you would like to help in any way, please contact **Pat Crawford** initially (560688). You do not have to belong to WI.

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FRI APR 2nd/SAT 3rd/
MON 5th **8.30pm**
TUES 6th/ WED 7th/ THUR 8th
5.45pm & 8.30pm

THE CAT IN THE HAT (PG)
FRI APR 2nd **5.45pm**
SAT 3rd/MON 5th
3.30pm & 5.45pm
TUES 6th/WED 7th/ THUR 8th
3.30pm
FRI APR 9th/SAT 10th/MON 12th
3.30pm & 5.45pm
TUES 13th/WED 14th/THUR 15th
3.30pm

SCHOOL OF ROCK (PG)
FRI APR 9th/SAT 10th/MON 12th
8.00pm
TUES 13th/WED 14th/THUR 15th
5.45pm & 8.00pm

MONA LISA SMILE (12A)
FRI APR16th/SAT17th/MON 19th
8.30pm
TUES 20th/WED 21st/THUR 22nd
5.45pm & 8.30pm

UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN (12A)
FRI APR23rd/SAT 24th/ MON26th
8.30pm
TUES 27th/WED 28th/THUR 29th
5.45pm & 8.30pm

MAY 7th-13th
THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST (18)

FILMS AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. PLEASE CHECK BEFORE YOU COME.

TEAMAKERS

POST - EASTER COMPUTER TRAINING CLASSES

Classes will continue at All Saints School from Monday 19th April until Wednesday 14th July. They will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4.30 pm to 6.30 pm for four groups.

		April	May	May	June	June	July
Group **1** (primary skills)	Monday	19	10	24	14	28	12
Group **2** (secondary skills)	Monday	26	17	BH	7	21	5
Group **3** (primary skills)	Wednesday	21	5	19	9	23	7
Group **4** (secondary skills)	Wednesday	28	12	26	16	30	14

Depending on their level of previous experience, students can opt for the group that is most relevant to their skill level and also their availability for the dates indicated. Primary skills will include basics, an introduction to word-processing, e-mail, the internet, and spreadsheets. Secondary skills will cover more varied applications including digital imaging, and family history. But with only six classes per group in the term the scope will of course be limited. Anyone wishing to register for the term should phone **Robin Macdonald** on **560436**.

Broadband Update

Time for another reminder that Broadband will be available from 5th May, and that if you want to use the service without delay, now is the time to be choosing your ISP and ordering your connection. If you're a small business user, Broadband4Devon will be holding a seminar in the Kings Arms, Kingsbridge at 6.00 pm on Tuesday, 20th April, and they have lots of money to help you make use of this new technology. Full details should appear in the Kingsbridge Gazette shortly.

I mentioned one website last time that can help you choose your ISP

www.ispreview.co.uk

but this whole question is essentially a very personal decision, and as there are so many factors to take into account, any assistance is welcome. I was therefore very pleased when I was contacted recently by a fellow campaigner giving details of a website,

www.astonparish.net

which contains answers to most of the questions that people ask. It is, in fact, the website of the Parish of Aston, but the links to the sections on Broadband are easy to follow. I won't say it's all in words of one syllable, but it does contain a lot of useful information. As an aside, is this a foretaste of where we should be heading in Thurlestone? Village Voice on the Net perhaps?

Finally, I am aware of one Thurlestone household which has been advised by their chosen ISP that they can't have Broadband because ***"according to BT, their telephone line has failed the test"***.

The Regional Director of BT has confirmed to me that this is totally incorrect, as the line can't even be tested until the exchange is enabled on the 5th May, so be on your guard.

Chris White

St Luke's
Hospice Plymouth

Coffee Morning & Raffle

There will also be a representative from the Hospice who will be giving a short talk on the work of the Triangle Centre in Kingsbridge and the complementary therapies it offers

Thurlestone Parish Hall

Monday 26th April

10.30am

Cake Stall **Gift Stall**

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ON

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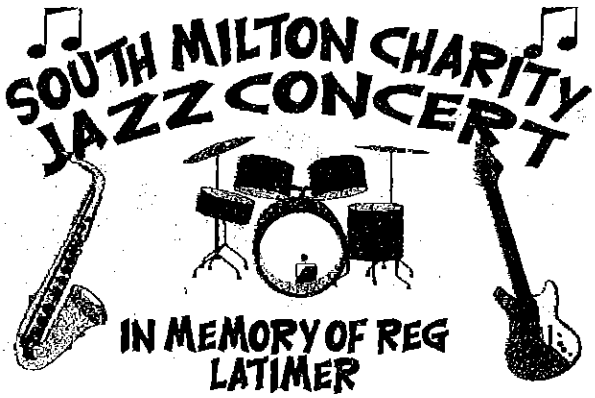

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My South American Travels

I was coerced into going on an Andean trek in Argentina in November to make the party of nine walkers a viable one. I always enjoy travelling in South America but I had not been on such a tough trek for about 5 years. Although I started with good intentions, I failed to attend the gym enough times beforehand to increase my fitness.

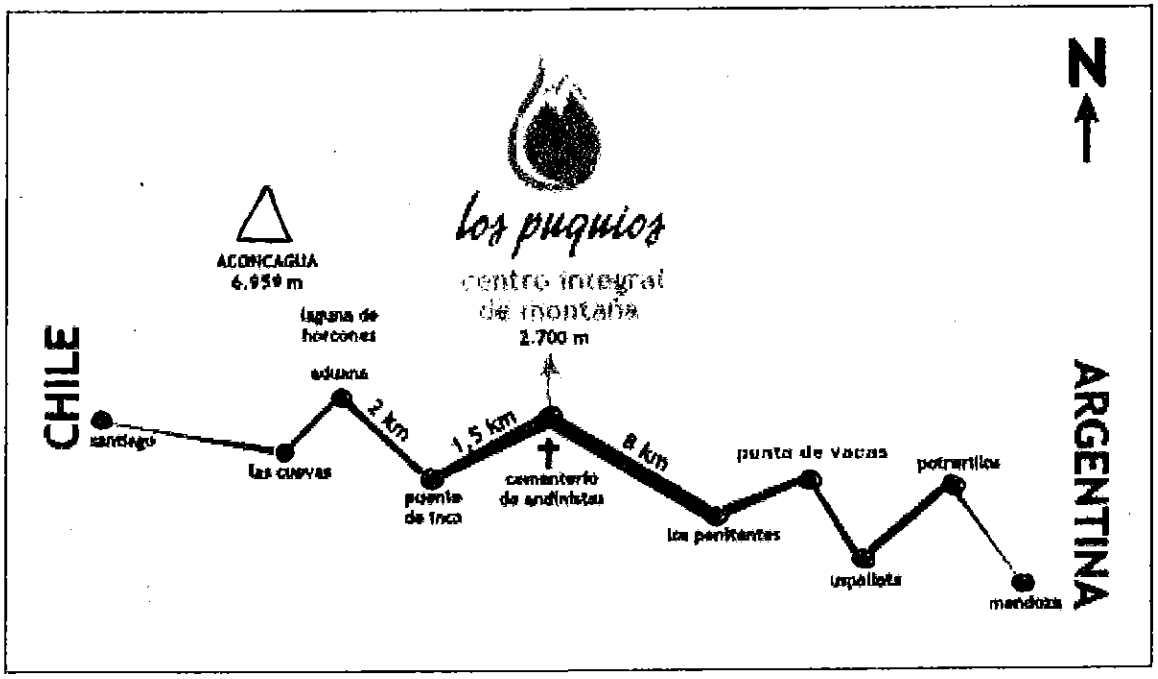
We left on the evening of 8 November and flew to Mendoza via Buenos Aires, arriving about lunchtime the next day. Mendoza is at the foot of the great Andean range, which can clearly be seen to the west of the city, and is the centre of the Argentinian wine trade. There have been many earthquakes in this area over the years and before earthquake resistant buildings were designed, large squares were left so people could run to these for safety from falling buildings. The city has an abundance of tree-lined streets and squares which gives a cool atmosphere despite the high temperatures. All this greenery is dependent on an irrigation system, originating in the Andes, which was already operational before the Spanish conquest.

Then into the Andes to stay at Los Penitentes, named after a mountain that appears to have monks praying to an altar on the summit. This small village of hotels and apartments was built as a skiing centre for winter sports. There was a train service from Buenos Aires to Santiago in Chile which came through this valley, but which was curtailed in 1968 due to avalanches. Work is being done to re-open the line, when it will truly be one of the great railway journeys of the world.

Los Penitentes proved to be of great interest to my husband, as just before we left he was told of a great uncle who was buried there. His great uncle had gone there to open a Sanatorium beside the amazing natural salt Inca Bridge and its nearby natural thermal springs. He had married a Spanish lady and lived there with their two sons. He died in 1908 having been into the Andes to help the

The Celtic Cross

local Indians with a diphtheria epidemic. He caught the disease himself and died, and is buried in the mountaineers' cemetery along with one of his sons, Muldoon, aged 2 years. His grave was easily identified as it was surmounted by a large Celtic cross, and there was a photo of the cemetery in ***Lonely Planet.*** Although the photo showed the Celtic cross we did not of course realize that this was the grave of Declan's great uncle until we had actually arrived there. He was also a climber and had climbed Aconcagua several times, thus entitling him to be buried there. As usual in these cemeteries there were graves of many young climbers. His widow came back to



Route from Mendoza to Santiago

England and lived in Bideford for a year before she moved to Ireland.

We walked for a couple of days in the foothills of Aconcagua, which is the highest peak outside the Himalayas and reaches to nearly 23,000 feet.

Our next highlight was to cross the Andes into Chile, making a quite spectacular descent down through about 30 hairpin bends on the Chilean side. The security was tight - all luggage x-rayed. We all had to stand in line, while pieces were selected for searching. Needless to say mine had to be chosen and unpacked, but nothing was found. Then on to Santiago for a couple of days, but I was not so impressed with this city as others I have visited in South America.

An early morning flight took us north to the Atacama Desert and Calama, an oasis town in the middle of a desert. The rainfall of the region is about 1 inch yearly falling in March. We travelled on for 2 hours to San Pedro de Atacama, another small oasis town. Approaching the town we passed through the Valley of the Dinosaurs, which was eerily evocative of those prehistoric animals. This small town (of about 2000 people) was very dusty from earth roads, with adobe houses and no water apart from a small stream.

It was an extremely hot place; we walked early morning and late afternoon. We found small green river valleys, a vast wasteland of desert, and came to thermal pools for swimming. We saw magnificent sunsets and moonlit valleys from the top of high sand dunes, with tall volcanoes in the vicinity - and what wonderful stars! One night we went star watching with a French astronomer. He had three telescopes, and my most memorable vision was of Saturn with its rings and two satellites clearly visible.

I visited a small co-operative where women wove and knitted. They had the classic knitting needles of this area, made from cactus prickle needles, and used them to knit circular objects. I was unhappy with the quality of items there, except for one item, a rope that was made in the typical Andean technique. This really excited me. The rope was made using a crossed tubular warp weave and is called Nawi Awapa meaning ***"Eyes on the Cloth"***. I was given a lesson on how to weave this by an American anthropologist some years ago, but was never able to master the technique. It is extremely time consuming to weave, and even an expert can only manage about 2 metres per day. Most ropes

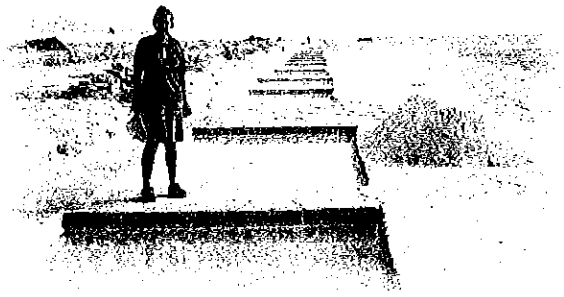
these days in the Andes are made by twisting or plaiting. This one was rightly expensive, but I did not buy it. What could I have done with it on returning home? The rope was about 10 metres long!

After 4 days it was time to cross the Andes again via Paso de Jama at 16,500 ft. En route we saw vicunas, condors, flamingoes and llamas. We were met at the Argentinian border and changed vehicles as well as roads. The wonderful tarmac changed to dusty dirt roads. Chile had honoured their pledge to tarmac the road. Argentina, to date, had not. Progress was slow but as well as seeing more wildlife we came to the salt lakes.

These were 2000 sq km in size and 200 to 600 m deep. The bus could travel on the surface. Each March the rains melted the surface and this then reformed. Channels were dug along seams and the salt harvested. The salt workers were covered in black clothing including their faces, wore strong dark glasses, and were paid 2 pesos (50p) for each 50 kg bag of salt. They also sold small stone carvings for 2 to 5 pesos, which some of us bought, to supplement their income.

Eventually we came to Purmamarca, a delightful town with cliffs of seven colours. This is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. Next day we travelled onwards to the end of the road at Iruyà, the last 2 km along the riverbed. The town is about 30 kms from the Bolivian border. Thereafter, there were no roads, only narrow donkey tracks up and down steep canyons, and no good for anyone suffering from vertigo, as there were very long drops into the canyons. The government had built a surprisingly comfortable small hostelry at the top of the town, and this was where we stayed.

Next day the trek started, 13 donkeys plus 4 drivers carrying our tents and luggage and each of us carrying our



The Salt Lakes

day-pack, with two guides plus a cook. The trek started at 10,000 ft and we crossed passes of about 14,000 ft each day, coming down to sleep at about 11,000 ft. The first day was the worst for me, a steep vertical climb out of the River valley that seemed never ending, then to a plateau where we saw many elderly people coming towards us. They had to walk for two or three days from their villages each month to collect their pensions at Iruya from the travelling bank.

We camped in small villages, comprising about one dozen families apiece. All land is community owned and everything is shared. Each small village had an elementary school with a couple of teachers, dedicated people who were paid extra for working in the remote areas. Giving them breakfast and lunch encourages children's attendance at school, free of charge, and they all looked

"On the trail"

healthy and well fed. Nurses visiting villages on a regular basis achieved immunizations and provided health care. Secondary school education was at Iruya and the students had to board in the town. Girls were rarely sent away to board - mostly just the boys went. Girls who went away apparently quickly returned home pregnant.

Each village had many, many children. Girls start having babies about 13 years of age. There is no maternity care; the husband normally delivers the babies. Our cook was 23 years old, already had 4 children, and was pregnant with the fifth. No contraception was available, apart from at the clinic in Iruya, and then could only be given with the husband's consent and presence. The men did not want their wives to have any contraception so children were numerous. One week before we arrived, one 11-year old girl rounding up goats slipped and fell into the narrow valley below. She died instantly. Hence villagers thought having many children was important to support them in their old age.

There had been no rain for many months so one Sunday there was a procession (bearing a replica of the local saint) from the village in which we were staying to the cross at the top of a distant hill, to reinforce the prayers for rain. The procession of men and boys left at 8 am and returned at 3 pm. On their return, a 9 ft long "erke"- a type of horn - was blown. This day was supposed to be a rest day (and one which I needed), though the rest of the party went off for a full day's walk. I stayed behind and knitted, my circular needles causing a lot of interest. I saw no knitting in the villages, but as the only animals they have are goats and donkeys there is no fleece. In Iruya, however, I did see women knitting with long needles and commercial yarn. The processional effort and the villagers' prayers were soon answered, because that night it rained heavily.

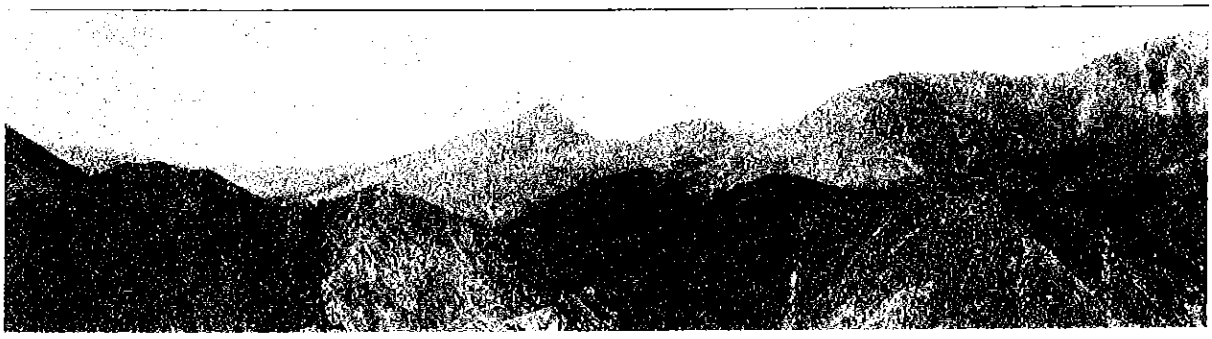
After one week we returned to Iruya. To have a hot bath was luxury. Then we went to Salta, an imposing colonial city with much Spanish influence. The next day we flew to Buenos Aires and to a Tango evening. Buenos Aires is a lovely town, with a lot of open spaces, jacaranda trees in bloom, and a pleasant temperature. We then left the group, who flew home, and we went on to New Zealand.

I had thoroughly enjoyed my trip to these remote northern parts of Chile and Argentina.

I have memories of wonderful coloured rocks, which in many ways are just as beautiful as the lusher, greener environment in which I live; also of villagers who have very little in the way of material things, but who live happy, healthy lives with a great communal spirit. I also enjoyed the trek, but if I go trekking again I will make sure I am much fitter before I start.

Unfortunately, as the years go by, I now find myself usually the oldest female member of any trekking group!

Sue Dwyer



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POSTBAG

Dear Editor

I must applaud Andrew Girling for his article *"Do we have a future?"* Whilst everyone is rightly focussed on the recent spate of atrocities caused by terrorism in its many forms, as a whole we seem to sweep under the carpet the growing problems of environmental destruction and global warming, which if left unchecked will reach far more apocalyptic proportions in the relatively near future.

I am constantly amazed at peoples' reaction to recycling and the moaning that goes on about having to sort out ones own rubbish. *"Can't be bothered with window envelopes"*...three seconds to tear out the window?, or *"No way I'm going to wash tins and take the labels off"*.....ten seconds? Although more concerned with our imperial progress through the lanes rather than gas emissions we all have a go at oversized cars, but how many of us make any effort to use our vehicles, gas guzzlers or otherwise, more effectively, share a trip to the supermarket, or from time to time take public transport? Whilst wind generator technology is now well developed and is an obvious solution, tumultuous indeed would be the cries of *"not in my back yard"*.

I could ramble on about the many different forms of pollution where we could all do just a little better, but I currently have two pet topics. The first is dog-poo bags which are not deposited in the appropriate receptacles, but left for someone else to pick up; regretfully a practice not confined to our much maligned visitors. The second is packaging. Can't we start a campaign to persuade retailers that we don't need boxes - within boxes - within wrapping - within bags - all of non recyclable plastic? Big would appear to be beautiful, and the smallest item is apparently not value for money if left in its original size.

Let's all make just a bit more effort, so that our beautiful parish can promote a beautiful environment as well. Yours (as guilty as the rest)

Kit Marshall
Leaside, Ilbert Road

Dear Editor

I am moved to say how dismayed I was to read a letter in the last edition of Village Voice wherein the writer appeared to be using the publication as a vehicle to attack another member of our community. I ask that the Editor be mindful of how cowardly this is, and how damaging to the individual concerned - it is a public forum after all. The principle of free speech is one thing, but this left a very bad taste for me, and must have been devastating for the person who it was clearly aimed at.

Perhaps my sensitivity comes from having had complaints made about me and my family by my fellow villagers, people choosing to remain anonymous and misusing public authorities or services to make their point - some of them about the simplest and smallest of things. I could never understand why the issues could not have been addressed in a more up-front manner, or even a note put through my door. I do hope that we never allow our community news forum to become yet another vehicle for people to persecute their neighbours. The issue here is not necessarily with the transparent resentment of the writer, but that it was allowed to be published at all. Thurlestone appears to set a lot of store - and money - by its Christian community. Let's see how those principles truly work in our daily lives. There is enough conflict in the world surely.

Julia Hunn
10 Parkfield
Thurlestone

[Village Voice is always ready to publish readers' letters, so long as they are neither anonymous nor scurrilous. Nor do we hold controversial topics as taboo, though we accept that our role is more to inform local opinion than to inflame it. However, we do apologise if any part of the content of our magazine may have offended readers' sensitivities. Ed.]

KATE'S KITCHEN

Spring time! Welcome to longer days, with gardens and hedgerows full of flowers and sunshine. The Easter festival will bring friends and family together enjoying our wonderful surroundings. Try this variation on a traditional roast chicken as a mouth-watering lunch or dinner.

FRENCH- STYLE ROAST CHICKEN

For the best flavour use a free-range chicken if possible. They will usually come with their own giblets which should be washed and placed in a small pan and covered with water, a little salt, some celery pieces and ½ onion with the root left on. Then bring to the boil and simmer for about ½ hour. This stock will provide a delicious addition to the gravy.

Ingredients

3 - 4 lb (1.4 - 1.8kg) chicken
2 - 3oz (50 - 75g) butter
2 tablespoons wholegrain mustard
1 lemon
Seasoning
A small bunch of fresh parsley and thyme
A handful each of chopped fresh parsley and thyme
1 crushed garlic clove
½ pint of dry cider or red wine

Preparation

* Preheat the oven 200C / 400F / Gas 6 (lower temperature for fan ovens)
* Wash the chicken and dry thoroughly
* Wash the lemon and finely grate the lemon zest (do not grate into the bitter white pith)
* Slice what is left of the lemon and place it in the chicken cavity with the small bunch of herbs
* Mix together the butter, the chopped herbs, mustard, garlic and seasoning and lemon zest
* Ease up the breast skin on the chicken and gently push half of the butter mix into the space taking care not to split the skin
* Spread the rest around the bird
* Place on a snugly fitting roasting tin and pour over the cider
* Place in a hot oven and baste every 15-20 minutes. Allow 20-25 minutes per lb cooking time
* Once the chicken is well browned, cover with foil
* Test the thickest part of the thigh with a fine skewer and the juices will run clear when cooked
* Remove from the oven and place on a heated carving plate - keep the foil on the top and allow to rest for 20 minutes in a warm place
* Bubble up the cooking juices and scrape the extractives to prevent sticking to the roasting tin.
* Skim off the fat, and use along with the giblet stock to make the gravy. Chicken stock may be used if giblet stock not available.

Serve with roast potatoes and fresh young vegetables e.g. baby carrots, broad beans, pak choi - a very pretty Chinese cabbage with a stem resembling Swiss chard and a flavour of spinach and artichoke. Cook whole or in half lengthways for 1 - 2 minutes in boiling lightly salted water. Enjoy!

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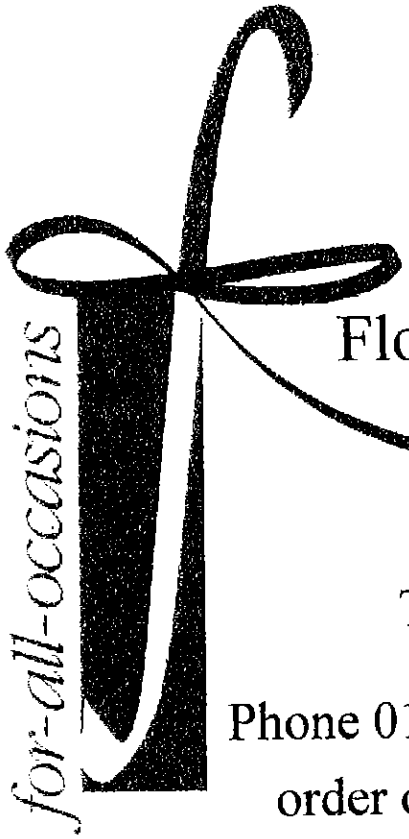

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WHY THE TWIZZLE STICKS IN HARRY HUGGINS' MEMORY

I wonder if a birdwatcher's ultimate ambition is to find a first for Britain, a bird which has never been seen before, the first ever? Most of us never give it any thought, the chance of finding something new is so remote that it isn't worth considering. But it does happen. Until the early 1950s, Collared Dove, the little pink pigeon, was unknown. Now they are all over our parish. Someone must have found the first one that came.

To get a 'first' has to be a remarkable piece of luck - finding a vagrant from the far east which has lost its way. Or an American bird blown over by storms. Like the Golden-winged Warbler which someone found in a Tesco car park in south-east England. It should have been in South America. It got to Britain to be the first for Europe. How? The balloon man, Hempleman-Adams, blew across the Atlantic in three days. He had no motive power at all. He could go up, or down, and no doubt his land crew told him which to do to get the best winds. A little bird can fly, not fast, but it can. Thousands must fall into the sea, exhausted, but the odd one, like this Golden-winged Warbler, gets through and for birders history is made. They said that two days after it was found there were three thousand twitchers visiting the car park, and that Girl Guides made a small fortune selling cups of coffee.

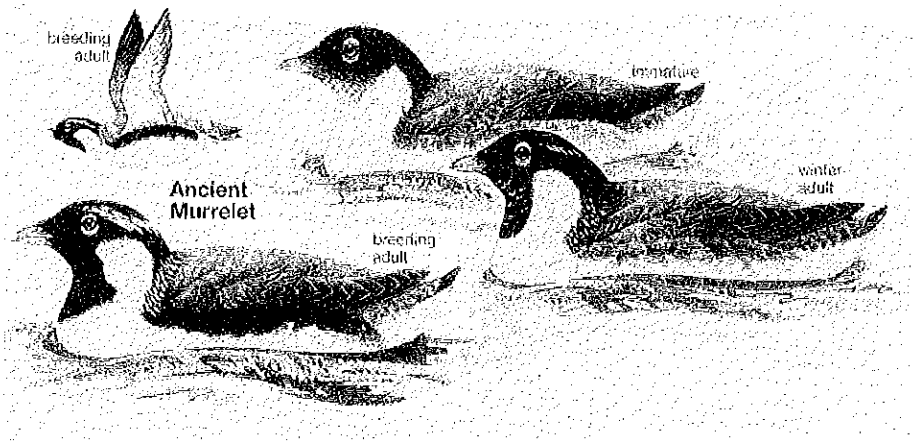
What must rank as the most incredible first for Britain (and Europe) was found off Lundy Island in 1990. The two birders concerned had both worked on the island as wardens - not together, they can only pay one. Rewarding for birds, etc., yes, but rewarding financially - emphatically no! One day they were deputed to escort a shipload of RSPB members, about 250, to see Puffins. A very few of these went around Jenny's Cove, on the west side of the island. Puffins were supposed to teem there at one time, but do so no longer - probably gulls and rats have done for them. And so these two were to look after the punters and answer their questions: *"Is a Shag the same as a Cormorant?", "How much did your binoculars cost?", "How far can you see with them?".*

You go on the ship to Lundy. You drag up the long steep hill to the level plateau at the top and Jenny's Cove is about half way along the island. On the hill someone once showed us a specimen of Lundy Cabbage. Unlike the round things we regard as cabbages (which probably weren't round until the breeders go to work) the Lundy cabbage has narrow leaves, about a foot long, and is famous to botanists because Lundy is the only place in the world where it grows. There are two sorts of beetle which eat nothing but Lundy Cabbage. If it dies out they will hand in their lunch pails. When you get to Jenny's Cove you sit and hope for Puffins, which buzz in and out - and are usually gone before you can see them. Guillemots and Razorbills are rather more accommodating, as you can see them at their nesting places.

While our two young gentlemen were at Jenny's Cove trying to find Puffins for the RSPB people, a little bird flew in and splashed on to the sea below. Not the most beautiful of birds - like a very small Puffin without the colourful bill. Neither recognised it, neither had seen one before. Its most striking feature was a white line on each side of its head, meeting on its nape. They dashed off to the Marisco Tavern, the island pub, where there was a copy of Peter Harrison's book on seabirds of the world - not only written by him but all the illustrations painted by him. Harrison had

taken himself to art school to learn to paint and then he sailed all over the world, often as a deckhand on fishing boats, to get him to the birds. He reckoned that out of three hundred plus species, he had seen in the wild all but about thirty. I think this bird was one he didn't see.

But from that book they could pin their bird down as a Murrelet, from the north Pacific. What we call Auks, Razorbills, Guillemots etc., the Americans call Murres. A very small one obviously is a Murrelet. It was not clear from Harrison's book whether this was a Crested Murrelet or an Ancient Murrelet. In the end it was reckoned to be the latter, so named after the white feathers on its head.



Ancient Murrelet

Our American field guide says it is eight inches long, about the size of our Blackbird; not an exact comparison because Blackbird has a long tail, whereas Murrelet has virtually none. Peter Harrison says it is about ten inches, a big difference, but I suspect he was working from skins which had got stretched.

It stuck around for much of the spring of 1990, re-appeared in 1991 and 1992, after which it was seen no more. To see it at all required some patience because it never showed for more than about four minutes on any day. Ancient Murrelet breeds on the coast of Alaska and on the islands to the west, dispersing in winter over the north Pacific. I read it had never been seen on the eastern coast of the USA, but the books say the species is one which storms sometimes carry far inland in north America. Maybe this one was carried right across. No one will ever know.

Recently I bought a new little book called *Blokes and Birds*, compiled by Stephen Moss, author and something at the BBC Natural History Unit. It contains seventy-odd photographs of birders, pictures on one side, words on the page opposite. Each was asked to write about something in birding which had impressed him. One had found on Portland Bill a Red-flanked Bluetail, a little Robin-like thing from the far east. Another went to the Antarctic to photograph some Penguins, camped at 30 degrees below zero, washed his hair, and had it freeze solid.

To our delight, one participant was Simon Cox, our doctor at Clacton-on-Sea, where he taught us most of what we know about birds. His comments were startling. People often brought him sick or ailing birds. Once, when he and his wife were formally entertaining her parents to lunch (her father was a very stiff upper-lip RAF officer), a policeman brought a cardboard box. Simon looked into it at the lunch table and out popped a very lively Ruff - a long-legged medium-size wading bird. It ran over the dining table, narrowly missing the roast beef! On another occasion he had a lady patient at the house. She asked to use the facilities, and they showed her to an adjoining annexe. But they forgot that in the shower tray was a recuperating Great Black-backed Gull. Now Great Black-backed Gulls are big, big, and have seriously wicked beaks! He mentioned also his star patient, a well-informed bank manager who found an unusual bird seen near the marina where he kept his boat. Enter 'Yours Truly'!

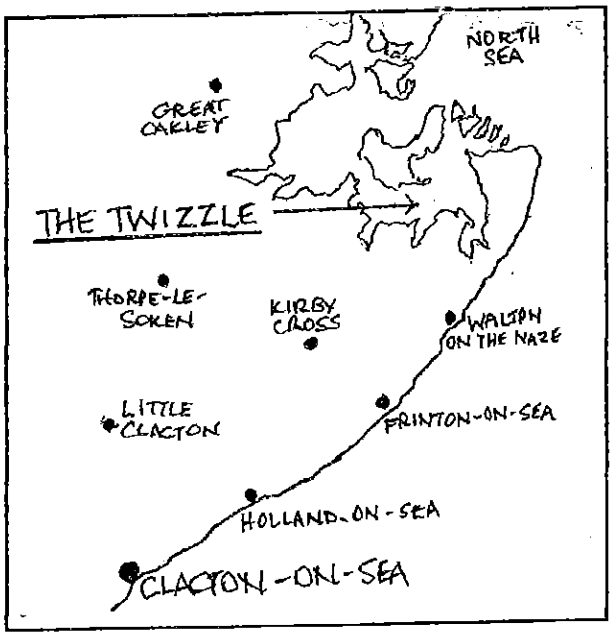
Behind Walton-on-the-Naze, in north Essex, is a maze of creeks and channels, the Walton backwaters. Some people call it Hamford Water but that, strictly speaking, is the big channel which runs up the middle from somewhere near Harwich. In a creek called the Twizzle we moored our boat, a 26 foot cruiser/racer of 1960s vintage. It would sail rings round anything, and was a perfect lady - June could sail it with one finger on the tiller however rough the weather.

There were four berths, though we never used the forward two, and the dog's bunk, a cardboard box, was on the cabin sole between us. The dog always found her way into my sleeping bag - a Jack Russell is better than any hot-water bottle - except when she had been ashore on one of the little islands where Black-headed Gulls fed chicks on regurgitated fish!

Each year, once the weather warmed up a bit, we spent nearly every weekend aboard, Friday night to Sunday night. Usually we went for a sail, spent Saturday night on the mooring. Sometimes we walked around the sea walls, looking at birds. Occasionally we crept around the smallest creeks in the dinghy. It had a noisy outboard motor but birds ignored that.

There was an added reason for this 'week-ending'. We lived less than ten minutes' walk from my office, and people were apt to turn up - *"I'm going on holiday and need £500. Can you open the safe and let me have some cash?"* I couldn't, of course, living so near. I didn't even know the combination of the locks, and anyway you needed two people. Or *"As you're here, I'd like to discuss a loan"*. Usually this turned out to be for buying a property at an auction which was to be on the following day. If we weren't there, none of this happened.

The Twizzle, where we kept the boat, was at the top of a long narrow channel crowded with moored yachts. We could and did sail up this but when we returned to our mooring the prevailing wind was usually against us and we used our small engine for the last bit.

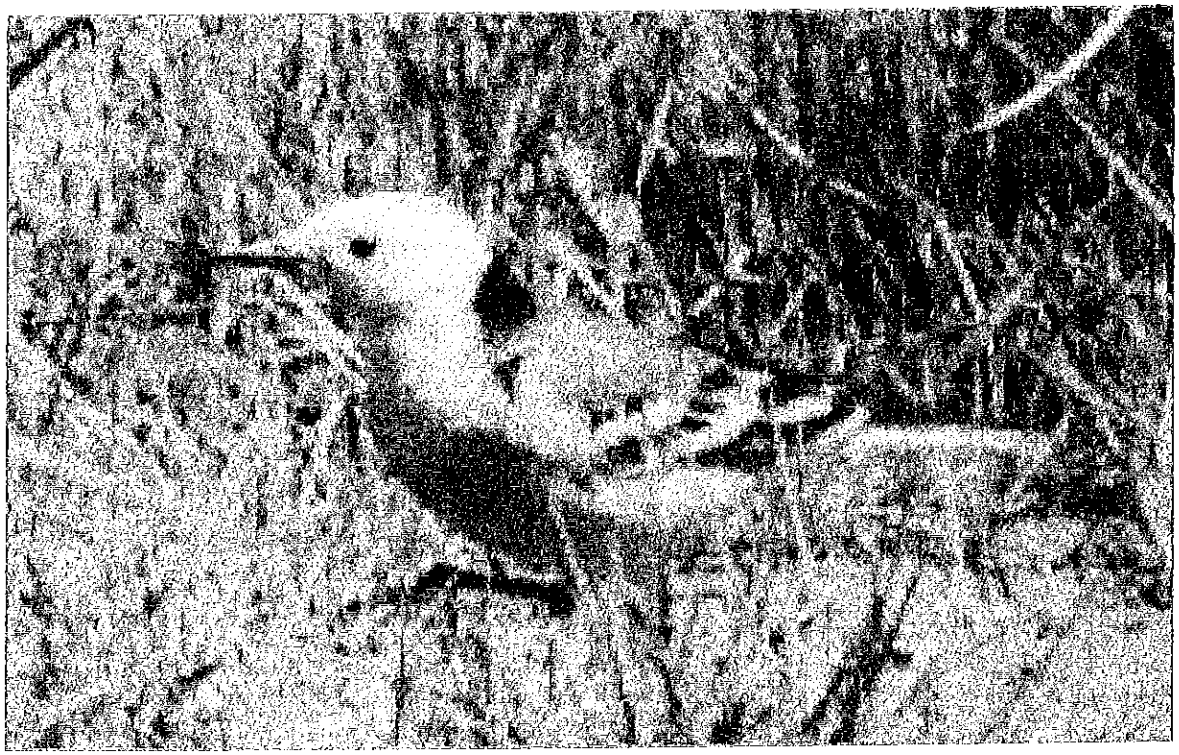


Early in the season (1976) this gave trouble. So I undid all its attachments and mountings and lifted it up - it was small enough for that - but it took time. Meanwhile, June rowed the dinghy to the landing place for the dog to stretch her legs ashore - miles of grassy sea walls and the odd sugar-beet field where she was apt to run away chasing partridges.

June came back to tell me of strikingly different Yellow Wagtails. This species was quite common there then and nested on the grassy banks. I kept on playing with the engine, didn't go ashore that weekend, maybe not the next. When I did, the female wagtail had disappeared, picked off, we thought, by a predator. There was a male feeding young. But not a Yellow Wagtail. The male of the British race is olive-brown on top and yellowish below. This bird had a bright yellow head, black collar round the back of its neck, grey back and yellow underparts.

Not a Yellow Wagtail, but a ***Citrine Wagtail***. How did I know? Well, sailing, you spend a lot of time at anchor or on the mooring - our boat sailed well, but you didn't try to push

against the hard-running east-coast tides. So you lie on your bunk and read. All I had was a field guide for the birds and I knew it pretty well by heart. When we got home I rang Simon Cox, told him we had a male Citrine Wagtail. His response was ***"That's quite impossible, never been seen in Britain".*** I said "Yes, it is" and pleaded with him to go and look. He grumbled a bit, said he might go one evening. Two or three nights later we were in bed; at about half past eleven we heard a commotion at the front door - Simon and his birding side-kick shrieking ***"It is, it is!"*** After that we left it to him. In birding, as with many things, it isn't only ***what*** you know, it's ***who*** you know. We didn't know to whom to send a report, hadn't even a camera then, and almost certainly no one would have believed us. Citrine Wagtail summers in Siberia, Russia and places east and goes for the winter to India. There had been supposed immatures in Britain, suspect because difficult to identify, but never before an adult male in full breeding plumage. Simon got expert friends to come and see it. I suppose altogether about a dozen people saw it, otherwise knowledge of its presence was 'suppressed'. It was feeding its young by a pool in the outskirts of the marina; we had no business to go there but the marina people didn't mind. If, however, hundreds - maybe thousands - of twitchers turned up, stamping all over the place and leaving their cars about, as they do, they would have been warned off and so would we.



Citrine Wagtail

So that is how June found and I identified a first for Britain!

Harry Huggins

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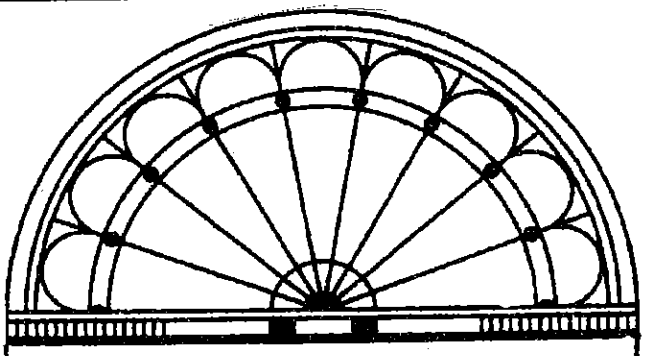

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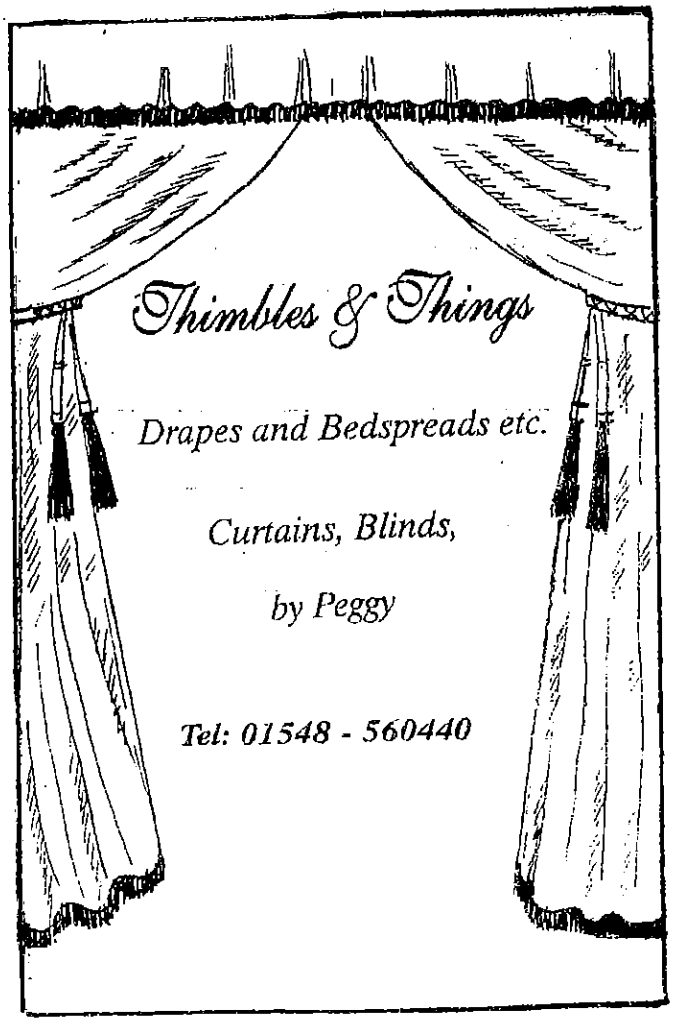

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IN YOUR GARDEN

Are you satisfied with your garden? Walk around it and give it a critical 'once-over'. Make a list of any gaps in the borders or where plants could be moved to make more use of them. It's the perfect time for splitting up and re-positioning herbaceous perennials. Don't waste too much time on nursing plants you find difficult to grow. Concentrate instead on the good 'doers' on your patch, make an impact with them and don't be afraid to plant several of the same thing together. Try not to make your borders 'spotty' with single plants - be bold!

If you buy a large expensive pot of a perennial, very often it can be carefully divided to make several plants. I sometimes manage to make three from a dormant polythene-wrapped plant of the sort one often sees in the supermarket - it looks as if you are buying a handful of peat with, if you're lucky, a very small, rather shrivelled-looking shoot The secret here is, (immediately you arrive home), to unwrap, divide, and pot the divisions up in good compost, water well, and keep the pots in a cool light place indoors or in a cool greenhouse or frame. They should sprout away within a few days, but don't plant them outside until the weather warms up and you've hardened them a little in a sheltered spot.

Keep an eye open for shrubs that have usefully layered themselves and provided you with a new plant for free. If they are established, dig them up carefully now and pot up for planting out in the autumn, but they can be planted out if they have made sturdy roots. Work at getting rid of weeds as soon as possible and then, after a good downpour of rain, spread a mulch over the ground. This saves a good deal of time and effort as it helps to cut down on weeding later on (and of course on the watering if we have a long dry period).

Trim back those very early-flowering shrubs, for it is on the wood made this summer that you will get your flowers next year (winter-flowering honeysuckle and jasmine, flowering currant, forsythia, etc.). Buddleia (davidii) will benefit from a very hard cutting back - to within a couple of buds of the base. Lavatera and the cornus (dogwoods) that you grow for their winter bark colouring should also be cut down without delay. But don't cut back bulb foliage, let it die down naturally. A nice idea is to scatter a packet of annuals, say love-in-a-mist, round the bulbs, and the emerging and growing foliage of the annual will help to mitigate the effects of the untidy bulb foliage. If some of your bulbs have not flowered this spring, they may be suffering from congestion. Dig them up, divide, then give the ground a fork over and a little feed before re-planting them. Next year, with a bit of luck, they will give a better show.

Shallots are very easy to grow and welcome in the kitchen. Some put in now in a sunny place pay ample dividends. Do not be in a hurry to plant summer bedding or runner beans because if they are checked with a spell of cold weather, this is when slugs and snails get busy. If you have a cold greenhouse, you can of course plant up baskets - again giving them a gradual hardening up before hanging them outside, but beware of doing this if the weather is very windy.....and Jack Frost can be around until mid-May!

I had read with awe about the Painted Lady butterflies being seen in gardens in East Devon and Cornwall in January and February. Thurlestone has not been totally outdone, for on the 1st March I saw one in the garden at Rock Hill! *Had it managed to survive hibernation here, or had it crossed the Channel very much earlier than usual?*

The past season has been a bit upside down in terms of timing for a lot of plants and flowers. But there is a plant sale at the Parish Hall on

Saturday 15th May
10.30 am - noon.

And early birds get the choicest worms!

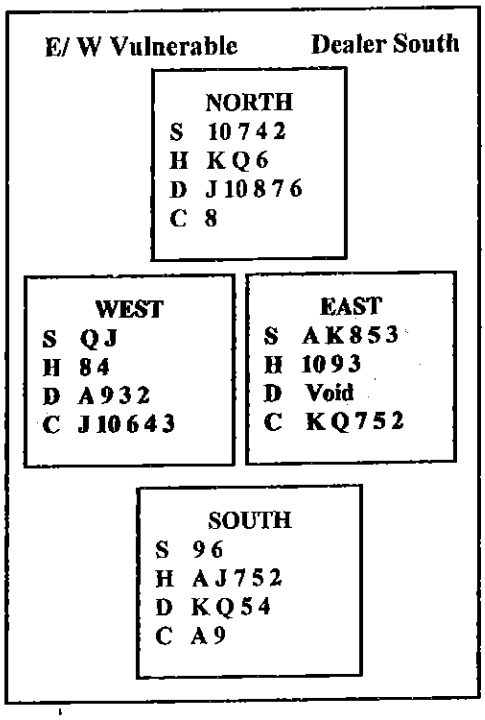
Ladybird

♥ *At the Bridge Table* ♣

Here is a final example (for the time being) of the benefits of defensive signalling. The bidding goes as follows :

West	North	East	South
			1 Heart
Pass	2 Hearts	2 Spades	3 Hearts
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East / West can make 4 Clubs, but given the adverse vulnerability this would be risky. Similarly, North / South might bid on to 4 Hearts, which could make if the defence failed to find a Diamond ruff. Against the actual contract of 3 Hearts, West started with the Queen of Spades and on taking this trick many would continue with the Jack, followed by the Ace of Diamonds and a small Diamond to give partner a ruff. This holds declarer to his contract, but there is no way back to West's hand to obtain a second Diamond ruff.



The clue to a successful defence is East's response to the opening lead of the Queen of Spades. If he simply plays the 3 - **a discouraging card** - then West should realise that partner is asking for a switch to another suit. It can hardly be a Club when dummy has a singleton, so he switches to the Ace of Diamonds, followed by the 9 of Diamonds. This latter card is a **suit preference signal** asking East to take his ruff and return the **high suit** (Spades), showing that he has either the Jack of Spades or can ruff the next Spade. In this way the defence can obtain two Diamond ruffs and defeat the contract. The clear message is that you must trust partner's signals, and if he asks for a switch, ignore any suit he cannot want you to play.

Turning to another topic - **safety plays** - the deal shown next is an interesting example. Bidding was brisk. 1 Spade from South. 2 NT from partner (game forcing with at least 4 card Spade support). 3 NT from South (showing 15 to 16 points) and North not unreasonably taking a punt at 6 Spades. The Spade suit illustrates one of the oft quoted suit combinations which can be played with the certainty of only one loser (providing that the distribution is not 5 - 0). The safety play is to start with the Ace and then lead to dummy's King 9. If West follows, you put in the 9 so as to neutralise West's Q 10 x x if East shows out. If East follows, the suit is dividing 3 - 2 and on the next round the King will draw the outstanding trump. Conversely, if West shows out when you lead towards the King 9, you play the King and then lead back to your Jack.

North	
S	K 9 4 3
H	A J 3
D	K Q 9 3
C	K 3

South	
S	A J 6 5
H	Q 10 7
D	A J 8 6
C	A 10

But this safety play does not guarantee your slam, because you may also have a Heart loser. The answer is to take the Heart finesse before drawing trumps by leading the 7 of Hearts towards dummy's Jack. If the Heart King is wrong, the Spades will have to be played for **no losers** by finessing immediately through the Ace Jack. This runs the risk of losing to a singleton Queen held by West, but if the other four Spades are held by East you would have a sure loser whatever you do. But if you find East with the singleton Queen then by leading low from dummy you can capture the Queen the Ace, cash the Jack, and then finesse the 9 on the next round. There is no certainty with suit combinations of this type, but the lesson is to give yourself the best chance of success. So think, and plan - and good luck!

Victor

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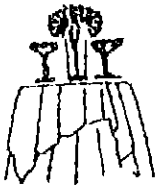

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HORSWELL DIARY

Looking out at the crisp frost on the lawn, and pulling on yet another layer of clothes, it is hard to remember that only a week ago we were relaxing in 92 degrees of sunshine on the white sand beaches of East Africa. Phewee! What a contrast! The hairs on my skin are huddling together for comfort and my hard-earned tan is falling from the cold wastelands of my body like flakes of snow. I always knew I was a hothouse flower, (an orchid - not a daisy), in need of light and warmth, quality nutrients and sensitive care. Not for me the life of a stalwart daffodil boldly smiling in the teeth of a gale, nor the snowdrop's valiant struggle to pierce through winter's unforgiving earth. No, at the very least I suppose I could be a camellia, dreaming of faraway places and sunnier climes, as its blooms, brown and bruised by the cold, collect around its feet; fading memories of former glory.

I know I must not complain, but layers of Damart plus sweaters and scarves do little for the libido, and even less for my appearance. A new laptop computer means I can give our cold office a miss and crouch in my chair beside the fire as I write. Bertie and Flossie lie beside me, pleased to have us both home after our travels. What do they care of wind surfing and safaris, exotic scenery or warm turquoise seas? A walk to the beach and a tin of Pedigree Chum can provide a dog with food for thought indefinitely, and with Guinea Fowl and peacocks roaming the garden who needs to go to the Masai Mara for a game drive?

But the thing is -
Africa gets under your skin as easily as its dirt gets under your fingernails. Its colour, its warmth, its people; the richness of its history, the fragility of its future. You can feel its heartbeat flooding through your veins, sense its neediness, and its pride, and hear its gentle cry for help echoing through your mind long after you have left.

The recent change of leadership in Kenya has brought with it an air of cautious optimism; the possibility at last of having a government that actually cares about its people, not just the financial rewards of a position in office. Past corruption is freely aired in the local press in an effort to clamp down on future losses. But money and resources are in pitifully short supply and one wonders how long the people can live on promises alone.

At least now Primary education is free for all and, although the lack of money to pay teachers means that classes can be as large as 50 or 60 pupils, the pride of the children in their spotless hand-me-down uniforms is a delight to see. They know, as they walk to school with their books balanced on their heads, that they are taking the first steps towards a better life. But what is important is that Africans, having completed their education, are not tempted to hone their skills elsewhere. Their own homeland needs them - desperately.

For centuries, the sunny nature and capacity for hard work of the majority of Kenyans has made them an easy target for exploitation. Even as far back as the 14th century they were being taken as slaves by Arab traders who sailed down the coast in their dhows to trade with the local tribes. Several of those coastal tribes were completely wiped out by the years of slave trading that followed. *'Only the intelligent ones remain"* said our friend Clement, with his gleaming smile. *'If they were difficult or clever they were left alone. The traders wanted only biddable slaves, not troublesome ones!"*

Although they each had their own dialect, all the coastal tribes were able to understand one another. However, it was the gradual integration of the Arabs with the Africans which brought about the use of Swahili (a mixture of their two vocabularies) as a common language.

We flew one day up to Lamu, an island that hugs the Kenyan coast just south of its border with Somalia. It was here that the Arabs made their first landfall, establishing a town on the waterfront. As we approached by dhow from a neighbouring island it was easy to imagine that since then little had changed. The town stretched along the low horizon, the domes and arches of Moorish design smothered in bougainvillea: vibrant splashes of orange, pink and purple against pale crumbling stone. As we drew closer, the throb of our diesel engine the only discordant note in this timeless scene, we could see the waterfront was a hive of activity.

Climbing up stone steps worn thin with age we arrived, incongruous in our western clothes, into a scene seemingly unaltered since the 14th century. Men in Arab dress called and whistled to one another as panniers of mangoes and bananas were unloaded from the large wooden dhows creaking at the jetty. Others enquired anxiously about leaving times and destinations as they stepped over obstructions and peered around crumpled sails and rough-hewn masts. Small lean donkeys laden with water and building materials wandered between heaps of sand and piles of 'bricks' cut from coral rock, disappearing with their owners up the narrow dark alleys that ran at right-angles to the wharf.

We followed them, immediately struck by the cool air and foetid smells of the tall sunless alleys. Flea-ridden cats licked their wounds in dank doorways and effluent ran in open gutters, making its way slowly to the sea. Men walked soundlessly on sandalled feet and women, modestly covered from head to toe, flashed winsome glances with knowing eyes. Even now, our guide told us, male visitors are not allowed inside another man's house. Only the women may enter.

A glimpse into the airy light filled rooms and inner courtyards of the houses belied their unwelcoming exterior. The men, we were told, will be served coffee outside, seated in the alcove at the entrance to each home. Only the frequent interruptions of our guide's mobile phone reminded us that we had not stepped backwards into a time warp. It still seemed unreal, perhaps as if we were on location, on a film-set somewhere. One thing was certain. The mosque, now as it was then, is the focus of all their lives.

Our tour ended in the Museum, where the enthusiasm of our guide made ample compensation for the minimal exhibits. Lamu, like the other coastal islands of Zanzibar and Madagascar, was built on trade with the Arabs. They brought brass and silver, spices and Islam to Kenya and took away timber, copra, coconut oil, foodstuffs - and slaves.

Feeling somewhat faint and grimy, and knowing we were going to Peponi's for a rather smart lunch, I thought I would have to be brave and use the toilet facilities in the Museum to freshen myself up. I knew it would be ghastly, but the desire to at least wash my hands overcame my reticence. It was ghastly - very dark and very smelly. I advanced towards the basin, waiting for my eyes to adjust to the gloom. I washed my hands under the tap and wondered if I could be brave enough to use the drain in the floor that served as a toilet. It would mean closing the door and being in total darkness. I hesitated, then swung the door half closed.

I don't know who was more shocked - me, or the rat! We stared momentarily at one another, pink eyed in the gloom, weighing our chances. He was very large - and very wet, having presumably crawled up the drain I was about to use. I didn't wait to see his reaction. I retreated with all haste, in some disarray. "There's a rat! There's a rat!" I yelled at our guide.

He was unmoved by my discovery.

"Ah!" he said, somewhat profoundly. *"A rat. That is Africa".*

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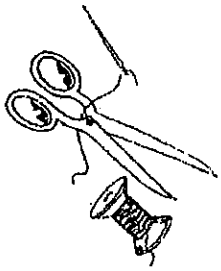

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BOOKSHELF

Unless
by Carol Shields
(Fourth Estate £6.99)

The title of this novel is, grammatically speaking, a conjunction. Carol Shields herself writes near the end of the story, *"but these events, if they are to form a coherent narrative, require odd bits of language to link them together, little chips of grammar (mostly adverbs or prepositions) that are hard to define - words like also, instead, else, and otherwise".*

This is the writer's explanation for her novel's title, which lends meaning to this many-faceted story in which a mother's grief over her daughter's break with the family revises her feminist outlook and pushes her craft as a writer in a new direction.

Reta Winters is a 44 year old novelist whose daughter suddenly and inexplicably drops out of university and ends up on a Toronto street with a sign reading "goodness" hanging round her neck. Reta's search for what drove her daughter to such a desperate statement turns into an unflinching and often amusing meditation on where we find meaning and hope.

This novel was short-listed for the Orange Prize for 2003.

The Lovely Bones
by Alice Sebold
(Picador £7.95)

This is an amazing work of fiction, wrought from the novelist's own experience as a student at an American University. But the experience of the central character, Susie Salmon, goes considerably beyond that.

The novel charts Susie's time in heaven looking down on her family and friends coming to terms with her death. This is of course a fantasy, which builds out of grief the most hopeful of stories.

We first meet Susie looking down from a heaven strongly resembling her old school playground watching the effect her death has had on her parents, sister, and school-friends. As the months pass into years Susie sees her parents' marriage fall apart, her sister change into a forceful character, and her small brother try to understand the word "gone".

The themes of rape and death should be entirely gruesome and without hope, but this novel is really about joy, love, memory, and healing. There were one or two extraordinary events which I felt undermined the rest of the novel, but I would still recommend this book to anyone with a capacity for empathy.

MCH

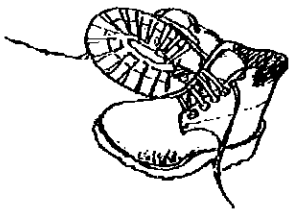
Elegance
by Kathleen Tessaro
(Harper £10.00)

This is really, as the name suggests, a book for the ladies, but from the very start I knew I would enjoy it because the author has a wonderful command of the English language and writes with great perspicacity, candour, and an irrepressible sense of humour!

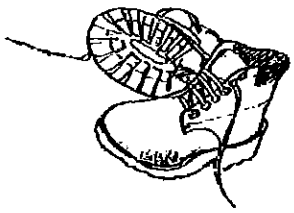
Although very funny at times, the book begins with a rather sad episode about a girl who has the traumatic experience of discovering she had married a gay man, and describes the events leading up to the subsequent depressing divorce. Eventually she overcomes her misery and there is never a dull moment as she courageously (and uproariously) sets about revolutionising her lifestyle. As she certainly deserves, there is ultimately a happier future.

I consider this to be a great first novel and hope we hear a lot more from the author. Make sure you read it, ladies - then pass it on to your husbands (or vice-versa)!

GW



TRAMP



1 A warm and sunny February day, following a week of almost continuous rain, enticed fifteen walkers to assemble at the Parish Hall car park for a local walk. It was quite a pleasant change to walk from base instead of having an initial car journey, and also not to have to take waterproofs.

We made our way across the fields down to Bantham and then upriver along the Avon Estuary. Reaching Stiddicombe Creek we encountered a lone rower who had rowed upstream from Bantham, and exchanged a few pleasantries on the relative merits of walking or rowing up this stretch of the river. A steep uphill climb, a walk through a wooded path edged with snowdrops, and a gentler downhill path then brought us to our lunch stop at the Fisherman's Rest at Aveton Gifford. We made the most of the sunshine by eating a leisurely lunch outside at the picnic benches, being joined by two more walkers and two dogs for the afternoon.

We returned across the fields via Osborne Newton, the site of a testing hill climb which will live in the memory for a while, and on to Clanacombe. and Thurlestone. We lost only one soul (sole) which resulted in one member finishing the walk in one walking-boot and one sandal. However, all returned in good spirits, weary but happy, after an excellent day out concluding with a request for this leader to arrange the weather for the rest of the season.

TW

2 The forecast had predicted cold, strong winds, and rain showers for our scheduled walk on 10th March, but sure enough the luck of the Tramps walkers held, and a glorious day's weather was experienced (cold, sunny and dry).

Fourteen of us, plus 2 black labradors (one an old hand, the other a learner) met at Loddiswell car park and set off down towards the river for a leisurely stroll to Topsham Bridge, keeping mostly to the west bank of the Avon. Although it was hoped that this would be a primrose walk, there weren't that many about, but Mother Nature compensated by treating us to some wonderful displays of wild daffodils and snowdrops, with outcrops of wood anemones, marsh marigolds, and other Spring flowers.

Basking in the sun at Topsham Bridge we were also treated to the rare sight of a peacock displaying its plumage to an uninterested harem. Turning for home, this time on the Avon's east bank, we eventually arrived at the Avon Mill Garden Centre in good time for a lunchtime stop.

After a very good lunch (and gathering ladies from around the nursery) we set off slowly on a roundabout route back to Loddiswell, following the river by road and footpath towards Hatch, crossing it at Hatch Bridge, and then making the stiff climb through cattle and ploughed fields.

Arriving back at the cars in excellent time for the 'whizz-kids' to go off to computer class, everyone was agreed that it had been a wonderful day's walk (helped by the previous three days' cold, dry and windy weather, which kept the inevitable muddy sections to a minimum).

RH

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My Dunkirk

by Bruce Mackay

[It is over 60 years since the British Expeditionary Force was evacuated from Dunkirk in the summer of 1940. The following account was written by the late Bruce Mackay and, in view of the recent television programmes about this event, Rosemary has kindly allowed us to include this personal recollection by one of the participants. Editor]

France, May 1940.

War had finally come to France, though it had actually been declared more than 8 months earlier. The bombs were beginning to fall on French towns and villages. The French army had been mobilized many months ago - only 10% of its weapons were modern. I was living in Bethune, northern France, having billeted myself on the local butcher and his wife, their son being in the French army. Madame's old mother lived with them. I was treated as their son - or better. Madame oftern cooked me her favourite "omelette aux pommes". Grandmère would darn my socks. Then the land war began in earnest and had come to France itself. We woke on May 19th to the sound of bombs on Beuvry, and were told that the German army was some 20 miles away and advancing fast. The guns got louder. Rumours were rife of Nazi parachutists dressed as priests and nuns to cause havoc amongst the columns of refugees who had begun to stream towards the coast - anywhere to escape from the terrors of the ***blitzkreig***.

I bade farewell to my kind friends, the Clarisses, as they joined the fleeing throngs. Grandmère told me that it was the third time in her life that she had fled from the Germans - in 1870, in 1915, and now in 1940.

My Unit, which was a casualty clearing station (RAMC) was ordered to move across the border into Belgium. We were, of course, unarmed under the Geneva Convention. The fact that we were British troops made little impression on the civilian refugees who made up the saddest sight in the world. Thousands fleeing their homes, taking their most treasured possessions on carts, trucks, lorries, cars, and barrows.

Amongst the throng we came across a mounted column of French colonial troops from Africa - the Spahis - in their long white robes. These made them a wonderful target for the German Stuka dive-bombers, which dived, with sirens screeching, machine-gunning the columns of troops and refugees. Many hundreds were killed and injured. Later, we passed horse-drawn ambulances and cannons - both relics of the 1870 Franco-Prussian war, but of little use some 70 years later.

We billeted on a hill at Roodenberg, in Belgium, and promptly at noon the next day, with Teutonic precision, the Luftwaffe obliterated the towns of Menin, Ypres, and Poperinghe. It was like watching a film to see the three towns exploding into dust in as many minutes. Then we were ordered to set up a hospital for any casualties. By the evening of the 28th May we had taken in 450 wounded civilians and military. Pressure of work was intense. The dead were buried at once. One's senses almost became anaesthetized to suffering. Next came an order to hand over all the wounded to the care of French nuns and evacuate on foot towards Dunkirk, some 30 miles away.

It was a hot night and we shed kit and equipment along the way, finally arriving at the coastal dunes about 1 pm. We could see the masts of many ships just off-shore and cheered loudly. We spent the night in shell holes on the beach, which was being strafed by Gennan field guns and bombers. When dawn came, it was evident that every one of the masts visible belonged to a sunken ship. Our disappointment was more than somewhat.

Life for the next three days was not very pleasant. We were hungry and thirsty. Also bombs and shells fell often. Dunkirk town became a pall of thick black smoke as the bombers hit petrol stores. On the 30th May more Royal Navy ships plus an armada of small boats began arriving to take off the troops - British and French. In all 338,226 men were picked up from Dunkirk and the nearby ports, all of which were under constant air-attack. On the beaches, tbe waves lapped over the bodies of men who had been hit or drowned. Inland, corpses, dead horses and cattle swelled obscenely in the heat. It was not possible to "uplift" the forces equipment, and vast amounts of ammunition, guns, lorries, etc., littered the approaches to the coast.

I got away in a small Dutch ship, the Frisco, after waiting a long time in the water. It was a hairy voyage due to mines, coastal guns firing on us, several machine gun attacks, and one torpedo which fortunately passed astern.

An hour later, we were stuck fast on the Goodwin Sands, but the tide floated us off and we put into Dover. We were not overjoyed to be ordered out to sea, to proceed on to Ramsgate. It was, however, good to be on English soil once more.

Bruce Mackay

Puzzle Page Answers

WORDSEARCH

1. SURRENDER	2. EMBRACING	3. AUCTIONED	4. HOLLYWOOD
5. OFFENBACH	6. ORCHESTRA	7. SABOTEURS	8. BLOCKHEAD
9. SAGACIOUS	10. NARCISSUS	11. STRIPLING	12. STEADFAST
13. ABASEMENT	14. RETRIEVER	15. BOOMERANG	16. ASSURANCE
17. PANTOMIME	18. BADMINTON	19. DEADBEATS	20. ADVENTURE
21. **POTENTIAL**			

TEN TEASERS

1. Africa	3. Ostrich	5. 20 years	7. Robin Knox-Johnston	9. 1977
2. William Blake	4. Pluto	6. Denmark	8. James Thurber	10. Moscow

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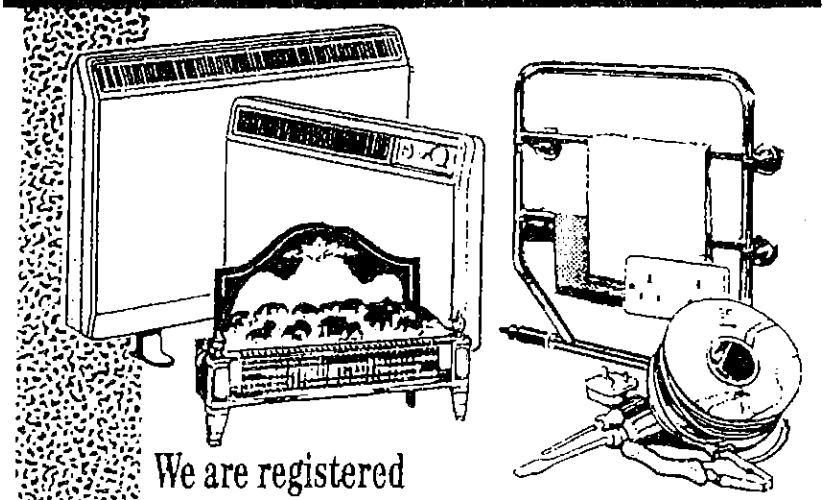

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Weather Wag

By Jan Turner

Today is March 11th and it is snowing outside at Beach Cottage. Well, let's say it is trying; very wet, and not settling, but nevertheless snow flakes. We so rarely have a decent snowfall it would be quite nice to wake up tomorrow to a white world (just for the day you understand). Then the sun comes out and it all goes away and we return to lovely spring time. (Dream on WW!)

The first two months of this year have reversed the usual figures for Sunshine and Rainfall, though Temperatures are almost identical.

		2004	2003
Sunshine	(J)	34.86hrs	89.19hrs
	(F)	92.79hrs	43.65hrs
Rainfall	(J)	140mm	49.9mm
	(F)	92.2mm	78.14mm
Temp	(J)	7.2.C	7.1.C
	(F)	7.2.C	7.5.C

So far then we haven't seen anything very startling. The most obvious one is the number of frosts we have had. They don't show up on average figures, only on the diurnal ones. In fact, by the end of January we had had more frosts than at any time during the last two years at least. Since then there have been lots. Lovely to see the hoar frost patterns on the windows or the car bodies, the grass and leaves of some plants. But it does affect those plants that thought Spring had arrived, and the early flowering camellias. Several gardens in the west of Cornwall were commenting on the early blooming, but now I guess they have been cut back by the frost.

An air frost is much more damaging as this low temperature freezes the tissues beyond recovery. Visual or hoar frost can effectively protect the tissues from real damage. Have you ever walked on a very crisp lawn in the morning and then observed the state of the grass afterwards? Walking on it breaks down the ice that has formed around the blade and damages the tissue underneath. If it is allowed to thaw naturally damage is far less likely.

When I was teaching, the Geography Department used to hire a film about frost to demonstrate how it formed, moved, and the systems used to try to protect fruit trees. In California and in some areas of the Midlands and Kent, a fine mist of water was sprayed over the trees and allowed to freeze thus protecting the buds. Another system was to place barrels of oil at intervals among the trees and set fire to the oil. This produced a layer of hot air that was trapped underneath the cold, thus protecting the plants. (The polluting smoke must have been awful.) I believe the former is still applied at times, but not the latter.

The damage caused by frost can be quite devastating for certain types of farming enterprises. I'm thinking about the fruit farmers of the Midlands and Kent, where, I guess that growth had already begun on some trees. Damage can be quite catastrophic, and in some cases insurance is hard to come by at a price that the farmer can afford.

The weather today, 12th March has been interesting in the extreme. Sunny and pleasant early, squalls observed going across towards Plymouth. There was a fantastic rainbow formation in that shower, such as I have never seen before. The main rainbow was very strong, there was a secondary one beneath it, and a third reflection way above it. This was much fainter (as is usual), but the one directly below it was almost as bright and very close to it.

The morning remained fine, then things

began to go wrong after lunch time. The washing was on the line of course, and I thought it'll blow over and the clothes will dry out. Ha! Ha! All hail was let loose, so to speak. It was quite vicious, but didn't last long. The clothes stayed out! I went off to clean up in church and prepare for Sunday. It was raining when I left, and as I drove home the Heavens opened. I got out of the car and into the house - quick. Then there was a flash of lightning, a roll of thunder, and more hail. The clothes were still out. A decision was made - I had to get the clothes in. Well, I retrieved some towels from around the garden, and battled with the rest as the whirligig tried hard to wrench the remaining items from my grasp. Wet and somewhat dishevelled, I made it back to the house. What a noise as the rest of the squall hit the windows in a quite unfriendly way.

I mentioned insurance and crops earlier. In a book entitled 'Book of the Weather' by Philip Eden, there is a section headed *Making Rain and Killing Hail.* After today's episodes I thought I'd have a look. Farmers have, throughout history, always waged war against the ravages of the weather, and in particular HAIL. It is perhaps the most destructive of the weather phenomena and in some countries there are NO insurance policies - it is considered an Act of God.

The earliest communities tried shooting arrows into the clouds to scare off the spirits who lived there, and were responsible for making the hail. In parts of Europe church bells were rung when storms approached, although the belief that evil spirits inhabited the storm clouds was probably heretical. In the 14th and 15th centuries Chinese peasants were observed firing a simple sort of cannon into the clouds (gunpowder had been discovered in the 10th Century in China).

Later in the 1600s and 1700s there were some Europeans who copied the idea. This led to local disputes when hail fell on the vineyards and the farmers accused each other of damaging their crops. An Austrian farmer called Stiger installed a network of three-centimetre guns throughout his valley. They pointed directly upwards and had broad stacks attached in order to amplify the noise of the explosion. When storms threatened, the guns were fired repeatedly until the threat had disappeared. He had three years when there was much damage from hail storms, then in the first year of operation (1896) there were very few storms. Success was his, so it was thought, and within five years there were 10,000 guns operating the world over! They were quite dangerous and many people were killed as the shot returned to earth. Then in 1902, the system was discredited by scientific testing, but even today hail cannons can be found in various parts of southern Europe.

Modern farmers still try to protect certain crops (e.g., vines), which in S. Europe are covered with a reed matting when storms threaten. Peach and nectarines are covered with a fine-mesh plastic or carbon-fibre netting. This is fine on a small scale, but not practical on large enterprises such are found in USA, Canada or Russia. Tobacco, grain, and tea crops all suffer catastrophic damage during the type of hail storms experienced in those parts of the world.

So today was an insignificant nothing on the scale I have been mentioning. Does anyone remember the storm of 1979, (I think), when there was horrendous damage in South Milton, Kingsbridge and Slapton? I have the account in the Gazette of the golf-ball sized hailstones that fell. It has not been repeated as yet!

I hope that the most severe frosts have gone now. In the last two days (11th & 12th March) there has been 46 mm of rain, almost 2 inches. The weather always has surprises around the corner - even hour to hour. It's fascinating, isn't it?

Happy springtime! And don't the daffs look well this year?

Jan Turner

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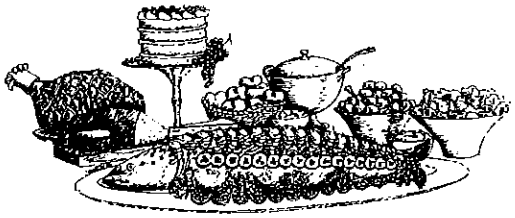

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DIARY DATES

APRIL

Sat	3rd	Farmers' Market, 9 am - 1 pm, Kingsbridge Quay
Tues	6th	TRAMP, East Soar (short walk)
Thur	8th	WI, Parish Hall, 2.30 pm, "Potions & Natural Remedies"
Wed	14th	TRAMP, Newton Ferrers
Fri	16th	PROBUS, Thurlestone Hotel
Sat	17th	Charity Auction, South Milton Hall, 2.00 pm
Mon	19th	ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm
Fri	23rd	Jazz Concert, South Milton Hall, 7.30 pm
Mon	26th	Coffee Morning (St Lukes), Parish Hall, 10-30 am - noon
Wed	28th	TRAMP, Dart Valley Trail
		Alvington Singers Concert, All Saints Church, 7.30 pm
Thur	29th	WI Bluebell Walk & Lunch, West Alvington

MAY

Sat	1st	Farmers Market, 9 am - 1 pm, Kingsbridge Quay
Fri	7th	TRAMP, Dartington (short walk)
Wed	12th	TRAMP, West Portlemouth / Inner Hope
Thur	13th	WI, Parish Hall, 2.30 pm, Resolutions
Fri	14th	PROBUS, Thurlestone Hotel
Mon	17th	TRAMP, Ayrmer Cove (short walk)
		Annual Parish Council Meeting, Parish Hall, 7,30 pm
Wed	26th	TRAMP, Plym Valley Trail
Sat	29th	Conservative Coffee Morning, Thurlestone Hotel, 10.30 am
		NSPCC Jumble Sale, Parish Hall, 2.00 pm

JUNE

Sat	5th	Farmers Market, 9 am - 1 pm, Kingsbridge Quay
		Cream Teas, Warren House Garden, 2.30 - 4.30 pm
Wed	9th	TRAMP, North Sands / Bolt Head
Thur	10th	WI, Parish Hall, 2.30 pm, Poetry & Prose (Meg Horton)
Fri	11th	PROBUS, Thurlestone Hotel
Mon	14th	TRAMP, Noss Mayo (short walk)
		Parish Council Meeting, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm
Wed	23rd	TRAMP, Widdecombe

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In Thurlestone, Village Voice is delivered by a team of volunteer helpers organised by **Derek & Sally Yeoman.**
In Bantham and Buckland it is delivered by **Peter Hurrell** and **Linda Chilcott.**

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE : 5th MAY 2004

Please drop any contributions marked "Village Voice" through the letterbox at 25 Mead Lane before that date (or e-mail to Vvoice@aol.com or RbnMacd@aol.com)

PARISH

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Vice - Chairman	Peter Hurrell	560496
Parish Clerk	Catherine Tavender	853163 (day) - 852139 (evening)
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County Councillor	Sir Simon Day	01752 - 691212
Members	Neil Girling	560489
	David Grose	560375
	Andrew Rhymes	560564
	Geoffrey Stidston	560695
Tree Warden	Charles Mitchelmore	560602

The Parish Council meetings take place on Mondays. See dates on Diary page overleaf.

PARISH HALL		
Chairman	Rowland Cole	561006
Bookings	Pat Crawford	560688
PARISH OF THURLESTONE SOCIETY (P.O.T.S.)	Chairman Chris White	560731
RECTOR	Canon Andrew Girling	562219
CHURCHWARDENS	Graham Worrall	562016
	Liz Webb	560090
COFFEE TIME (Parish Hall - Monday, 10.30-11.30 am)	Contact Liz Webb	560090
FRIENDS OF THURLESTONE CHURCH	Contact Kit Marshall	560214
AUNE CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION	John Crawford	560688
BANTHAM SAILING CLUB	Contact Hugh Cater	560593
BANTHAM SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB	Clubhouse	560447
BOWLS CLUB (indoor) Tuesdays and Thursdays, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm	Contact Eileen Dayment	560295
BRIDGE CLUBS 7 p.m Parish Hall Wednesdays and Fridays	Contact Dorothy Stone	560708
THURLESTONE GOLF CLUB	Secretary / Manager Terry Gibbons	560405
TENNIS SECTION	Contact Lindsey Fletcher	560157
KEEP FIT Tuesdays, 10.00 - 11.30 am Parish Hall	Contact Brenda Murch	560487
HORTICULTURAL SHOW (annual)	Contact John Lonsdale	560742
PROBUS	Contact Tom Trender	560893
TRAMP (Thurlestone Ramblers)	Contact Rodney Horne	560889

DIRECTORY

W. I. Second Thursday monthly (ex.August) 2.30 pm Parish Hall.	Contact Judith Le Grice	562135
SOUTH HAMS SPINNERS, WEAVERS, & DYERS	Contact Pat Crawford	560688
TEAMAKERS (Computer Club)	Contacts : Robin Macdonald	560436
Mondays (beginners) & Wednesdays (improvers)	Chris White	560505
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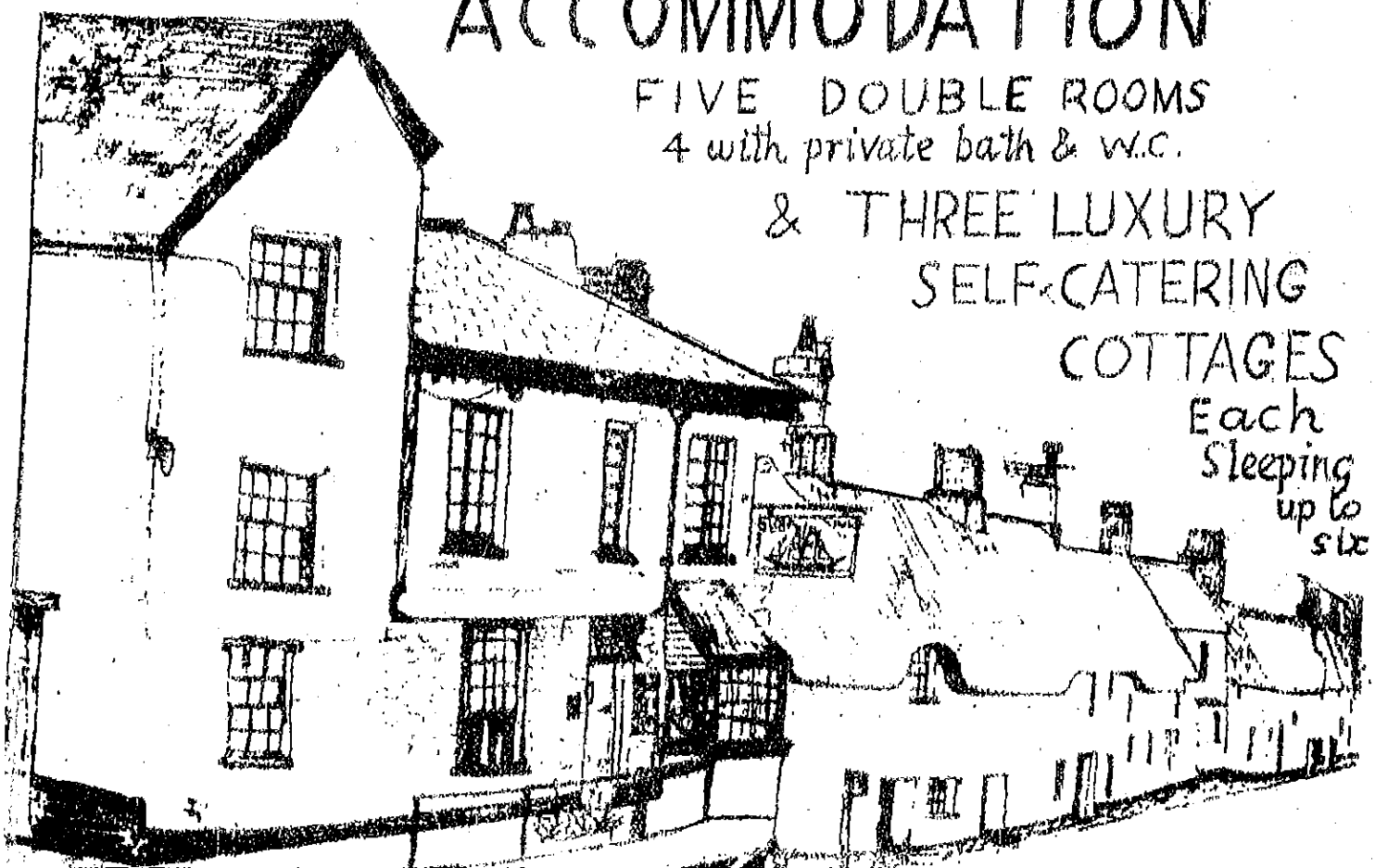
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