



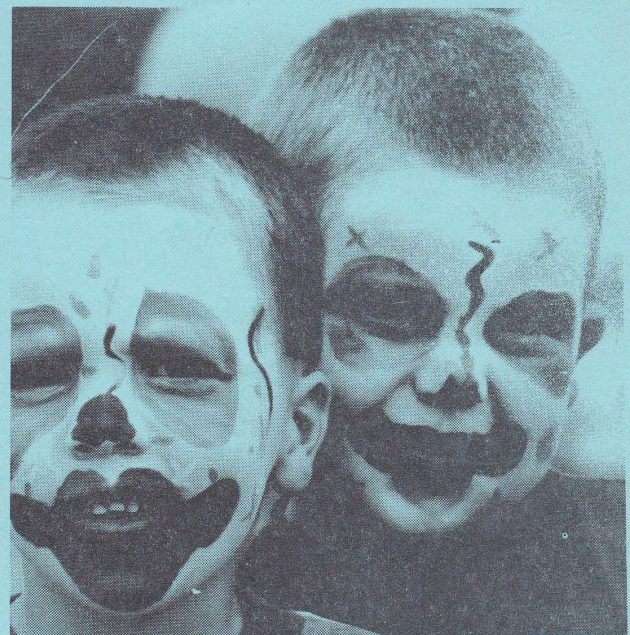
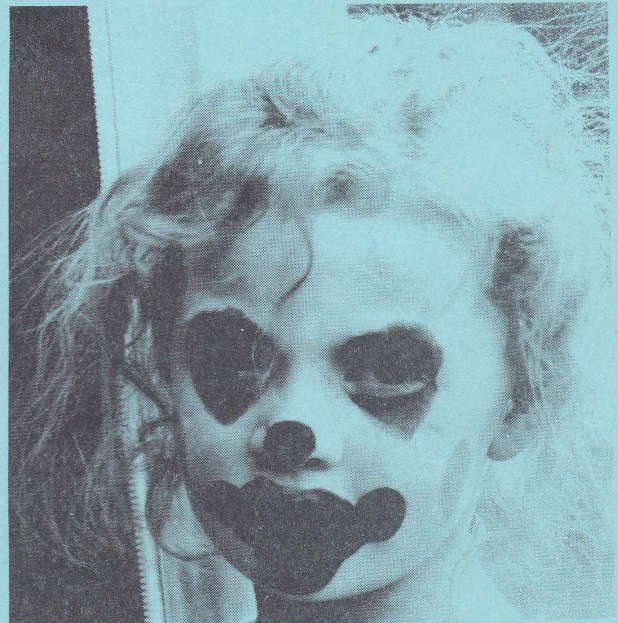
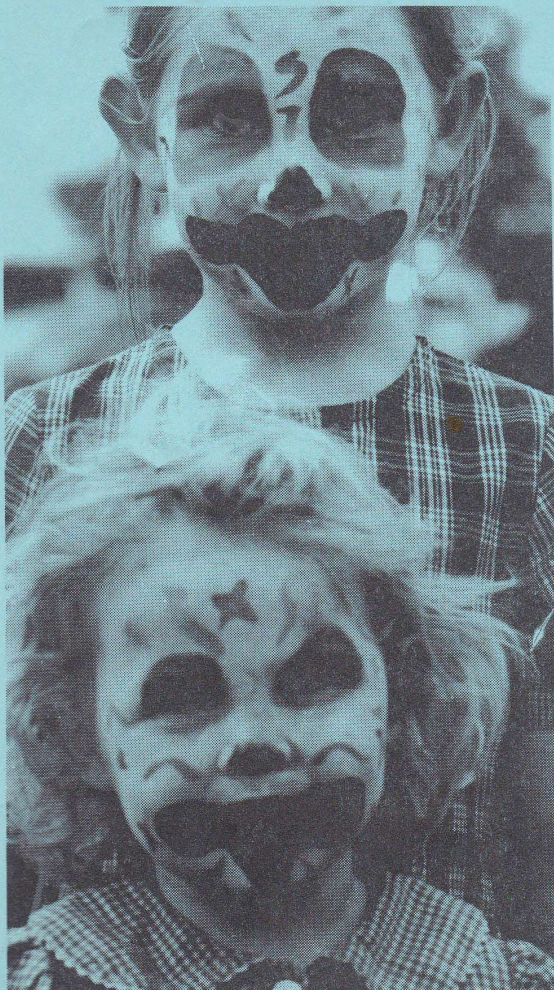
Issue Five
Summer '95

Speen and North Dean News



SEND IN THE CLOWNS

All the fun of the fete . .



Letters To The Editor

The other side of the coin...

Dear Editor,

Having read Peter Keen's remarks regarding the erstwhile Speen shop and Hampden Road site of Keith and Sharon Jones, I should like to present the other side of the coin.

Years ago, when my car "fell off the road" Keith was there, as soon as he heard of the trouble, complete with towing equipment, to bring the car home before too

many people asked too many questions.

Later, following the hurricane damage, who was the first person out on the roads sawing through the fallen trees which were blocking the way and then offering his help to other residents with blocked drives and pathways? Keith Jones.

More recently (in connection with the cover picture on Issue 4 of the

Speen and North Dean News) who did I see in attendance helping at the site of the fire? Keith and Sharon Jones, valiantly loading the burnt out car onto their trailer.

Maybe they do lead less conventional lives than many of Speen's residents, but their hearts are firmly fixed in the right place. So... how about live and let live?

**JO BANKS,
SPENNYMOOR, SPEEN.**

Wellington, Somerset

Dear Editor,

Visiting a friend in Speen recently, I came across your magazine which, as a past resident, helped to rekindle some of the fond memories of the time I spent in Speen. Reading of the various articles reminded me of the late night meetings of the Playing Field and Fete committees, Pub nights at the village hall, the 1960s disco (we never seemed to move up a gear!), the WI get-togethers, cricket on the green (and sandwich making in the morning), Summer Balls and Race Nights - all of these worthy events brought people together in a

community spirit.

Which brings me to a letter published in your newsletter by Peter Keen.

This letter refers to the owner of the shop in Speen and the land on the outskirts of the village. I suppose, Mr Keen, 13 years is a long time for you to remember that Mr Jones was an ex neighbour of yours when you lived in Speen. There can be no denying that the shop is unsightly, but without the benefit of inherited wealth or financial standing, then perhaps Mr Jones doesn't have the means to put it right.

What Peter Keen

overlooks in his sanctimonious letter is the contribution Mr Jones has made on fete days, the help he has given in improving the facilities on the village green and the significant contribution he has made making the Caribbean Night, run for the benefit of the local school, such a resounding success.

Village life is all about helping one another in a community spirit. Mr Jones may not be your ideal neighbour, Mr Keen, but when was your last act of charity?

Yours sincerely, *Sue Lord*

Careful as you drive through North Dean...

Dear Editor,

The recent accident between a private car and the local bus has highlighted the need to improve road safety in our village.

North Dean has been the scene of three car accidents in the past year plus one excursion off the road into the field. Luckily nobody has been seriously injured. However, pedestrians, horse riders, domestic and wild animals are increasingly at

risk. At least one cat has died from injuries sustained after being hit by a car speeding through North Dean.

We are lucky to live in an area of 'outstanding natural beauty', an area of peace and quiet away from the madding crowds and many people visit here to appreciate the beauty and tranquility. Some are on horseback, many walking.

It is our responsibility to keep these country lanes safe for the

people who use and appreciate them.

We in North Dean appeal for motorists driving through our village, either up to Speen or down to Hughenden, to be considerate to horse riders, pedestrians and other motorists.

North Dean resident

(We like to receive letters, but would ask that they have a name at the bottom, please - Ed.)

EDITORIAL

Until now we have been able to rely on people recalling past events to help fill some pages. From now one challenge will be to base a newsletter mainly on what is happening today. The other challenge is to do this in one publication for two small villages which adjoin one another but are socially separate. Reporting organised events in one village I rarely see people attending them from the other. Albeit that there are

a few who do socialise over the borders, it would be a nice spinoff from the newsletter if we could help encourage more of it.

This is where I have to say sorry that we are rather late with bringing out the summer issue. With all the dry sunny weather we have had since April, people are out there doing their own thing - they don't have time to write about it, or so it seems.

I'm glad that we are beginning to get forthright letters. We have no rules - and if any readers wish to

broaden out beyond strictly village matters, then please do so.

Lastly may I thank some people - Ted May for being so patient with this very amateur editor, Philip Suter for so generously getting screened prints done from our negatives. Jude Awdrey for giving us last minute use of her computer for some of our articles. Also fellow team members and all contributors.

PETER DAWSON

REPORT FROM SPEEN BAPTISTS

We would welcome you to our Sunday services, held each week at 10.30am.

The first Sunday of each month includes a communion service.

The 'That's Life' teenager group have continued to meet each Sunday evening at 7pm and the weekly prayer group meet every Thursday evening.

In June, the church were hosts to the congregations from all churches in Loosley Row, Lacey Green and Speen for our annual 'Songs of Praise' evening.

On Saturday, 5th July, the church welcomed visitors from the Baptist Missionary Society, High Wycombe Area Support Group. Sessions were held to illustrate the present day work of a Missionary in Brazil and in Nepal.

The church continues to fulfil its ministry to the local community: visiting the sick, supporting families at their time of bereavement, arranging weddings, and infant dedications.

Discussions are proceeding with the view to selecting a suitable part-time minister for the church, in the meantime the Baptist Manse in Hampden Road has been let for six months by the trustees.

DAVID KING - church secretary.

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IT'S ABOUT THAT SHOP AGAIN

New residents start here:-

We had a shop, with petrol sales at 85p per gallon when the pumps closed. The shop continued, with a Post Office transferred across the road when the postmistress retired about 1978. A succession of grocers continued to rent the shop as the freehold of the house was otherwise owned. That is the grocers did not have a home "above the shop". About mid 1980's no one could be found to take over the shop, it closed with the Post Office opening Tuesdays only in the Village Hall.

A planning notice appeared on the site a few months ago for redevelopment as a residential house. This was referred back to the owners (Nat West Bank) as their plans were not detailed enough in this "conservation area". About 40 residents wrote to the planners to protest at the loss of "planning permission for a shop". A meeting was called by our Councillor Mrs. Jean Gabbittas for Monday 17th June, and held in Speen Chapel.

THE MEETING.

About 50 residents attended. Mrs. Gabbittas had been called to an urgent meeting in the council and could not attend. Bill Taylor, an ex village retailer in Wiltshire, of the

Rural Development Commission, gave us an outline of problems of re-opening a shop.

The key facts were -

1. Market research to find out which goods could be sold. For example, it could be general groceries or a specialist range i.e. stationery and cards to fit in with a Post Office.
2. The village families would have to make a "commitment to use the shop" not just casually but he suggested a minimum of £5.00 per family per week.
3. Staffing - An experienced retailer is required as a manager - on a salary, with support staff - A L L VOLUNTEERS at no pay. for buying, transport, pricing, selling and bookkeeping.
4. Finance, to be raised as a co-operative or shares, prepayment for purchases, and usual village fundraising events. A minimum of £7000 of the stock required to offer a choice of goods.
5. Operate a Post Office. The Post Office Counters Ltd., are keen to facilitate more village stores.

The questions and decision centred on two topics. (1) Planning permission for a shop on the existing site and (2) viability of a shop, even if it were on another site.

On planning permission, I think Don White (Parish Councillor) said the County Structure Plan specifies "shops should be included in small villages". But in the absence of Mrs. Gabbittas we had no further information on the present submission by Nat West Bank.

Various villagers felt the development costs would be far too high if we had to purchase the present site. It might be possible if a developer could - say - build two houses and provide a shop building for a peppercorn rent.

On the general viability of a shop - assessing the market and commitment of villagers to use it, the meeting did not want to set up a steering committee. As the meeting attendance was small, and the notices had not been delivered to all the villagers in time, it was agreed to call a meeting early August, adequate notice to be sent to all villagers. Mrs. Gabbittas to attend and Nat West Bank (or the owner of the site at that date) to be invited.

BOB JOHNSTON

**See below for
the latest news**

Shop site bought by Housing Association - new shop envisaged

Thanks to Bob for this item. However, exciting events have taken over since that meeting.

Don White received a visit, on 24th July, from a representative of the Bucks Housing Association Ltd who informed him that her organisation was purchasing Speen Stores, contracts had been exchanged and completion was scheduled for Wednesday 2nd August. A detailed planning application for redevelopment was in the process of being submitted.

If the application is passed, the Housing Association will promptly hold a meeting in the village hall to explain all their intentions to local people.

The Bucks Housing Association, a registered charity, has been in

existence since 1944 and they are already involved in a small housing project in Hampden Road.

Basically, with the new project, they would first clear the old petrol tanks, then remove the existing building. In its place would be built a shop with accommodation over, at the front. Behind this would be two pairs of flats. The site is about three quarters of an acre and it in no way involves the bungalow behind or the developers who own it.

The plan would be to employ, say, a semi-retired person to run the shop, any profits going towards his or her salary. As a charity, says Don, there would be no question of rates, taxes or rents, which have been the last straw for many a village shop. There was talk of possible lottery money

being applied for. The Housing Association have every expectation that the shop would be viable, but if not, the design of the building would be such as to easily convert the shop to living accommodation. Presumably no one wants to see one empty shop replace another?!

I understand that the policy on choice of tenants would be to favour present and former Speen people.

Having based this report on a short telephone conversation with Don, I won't elaborate further in case I misreport anything by mistake. Perhaps by the time we get this issue published more will be generally known. Suffice to conclude by saying that on the face of things, it does sound the best idea yet.
ED.

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION

Parish Council Elections were scheduled for 4th May 1995. The Speen Ward of Lacey Green Council has two seats but there was only one nomination, that of Don White. So at their meeting on 16th May, Mrs Jude Awdrey was co-opted to fill the vacancy.

STILE WARS

The Rights of Way Officer of Bucks Council received a complaint about the height of a stile on Footpath 35, where it abuts Studridge Lane. A site meeting was held at which the landowner and the complainant met with representatives from the County and Parish councils. The County are "the ultimate authority on footpaths" says Don, and they confirmed that there was a need "for safety reasons" to have a stile there; presumably in case someone might be run over on entering the road from the footpath? Historically, according to Don, there had been a stile in that position for at least 100 years. Presumably this had initially been for reasons other than safety, given the absence of motor traffic in earlier times? I believe that the stile had been non-existent for some years before its recent resurrection. When it did

reappear it was certainly a very solid-looking affair, I recall, too high for any but the athletic and impossible for any walker with a pushchair or dog. As for safety, if anyone was to have stumbled from that height, he or she was more likely to have been injured by the rockery which was integral to the new design than be run over by a passing car!

A VICTORY FOR ACCESS AND FOR COMMON SENSE

Anyway, whoever made the complaint must have used a convincing argument because the County council eventually agreed to replace the stile with a barrier style fence at the public expense. Lo and behold, the new structure is already in place. Will there be an official opening with a bottle of lemonade by way of an economical celebration, one wonders?

"MOST STILES ILLEGAL"

Mr Chris Beney wrote in the March edition of the Chiltern News on the general subject of stiles and

whether many of them are unjustified.

According to Mr Beney, "most (stiles) have been put up entirely illegally and without any by-your-leave either of the users or of the highway authority." He says that the stile is only a concession by the public, if legal, to help the farmer stop his animals straying. Stiles are not for the public's benefit and landowners don't have the right to put them up where previously there were none.

"Remember that the highway authority must act to protect the rights of the public...and be very circumspect about granting permission for stiles...Permission for stiles should normally be refused."

Mr Beney's own council, Hertfordshire, is, he says, beginning to tell landholders of one-time pasture, now arable, that they must remove the stiles.

Mr Beney concludes that the modern view is not to have any stile or gate unless essential. He personally would like to see more kissing gates replacing essential stiles, in any case.

Thanks to Don for his information and viewpoint and to Bridget for spotting the Chiltern News article

HOWEVER...

Personally I'm still very puzzled about the law regarding stiles. According to Don, "any landowner who has a public footpath crossing his property is fully entitled to erect a stile across that footpath in any position he wishes." But Chris Beney, also having researched the subject, claims that "most have been put up entirely illegally..."

Legal stiles should, he says, "be listed on the definitive Statement, but often are not." When the Statement is revised "Next time will have to be different" says Mr Beney.

Meanwhile, according to Don, "Unfortunately there is no way one can make a landowner remove a stile completely from a public footpath." Yet it seems that's

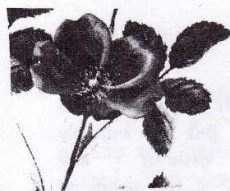
exactly what Hertfordshire are doing where there is no longer a need to constrain animals and now we have a precedent in Speen where the county made the decision to remove a new stile and replace it with a negotiable barrier.

If any reader has views or knowledge on this subject, then the newsletter would be pleased to air them.
Ed.

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO GO OUT AGAIN...

A police helicopter was hovering over Speen on Monday 31st July trying to spot someone who had been attempting to break into at least two properties, one in Abbotswood, which has a garden leading down to Coleheath Bottom and the other property actually in Coleheath Bottom. I understand that a jemmy was used and that one of the residents was in the house at the time of the attempt. A large dog who normally lives next door to one of the properties was away at the time. Two youths were seen running from Coleheath Bottom into the adjoining wood, but this may have been a coincidence.

I am told that there is a need to be wary of young men going round with bags saying that they are students selling door to door. They may be in possession of some card purporting to be a license, which may not always be the case.



The Speen Countryside part of Nature's garden

Arguably, those who are fortunate to have extensive views over the Chiltern dipslope or escarpment need hardly garden at all in any elaborate way. Why would they try to rival the beauty of such a landscape?

Grubbins Lane is one such location in Speen. Properties on the western side slope steeply down towards Highwood Bottom. Generally, the owners are doing a wonderful thing for local flora and fauna by allowing the natural Chiltern scrub and meadow to encroach well up the hillside. The owners of adjoining properties down in Highwood Bottom are also leaving much of this hillside to nature. Effectively, therefore, it has become one continuous nature reserve covering several acres. Anyone can see the overall effect of this by looking across, say, from Turnip End. Recently, however, I was able to get a closer look. Mary and I were visiting Mr and Mrs Reading of Grubbins Lane to collect some furniture which they had kindly donated for the fete draw. We got talking and this led to our being shown the beautiful wildlife pond in their 3-acre field adjoining the house. It was a hot early July day and we counted three species of dragonfly competing for air space above the crystal water. The Readings are helping nature by planting a wide variety of native pond and marginal plants. Not only is their pond valuable for keeping up the waterlife population in an otherwise dry area (as are all the other garden ponds in the village) but in this summer's rainless weather it has proved a useful water hole for the wild mammals, including the fox family of which

Mrs Reading showed us some photographs taken as they visited the pond in daylight.

COLLEGE PLANTATION another wildlife friendly patch

Generally the local local beechwoods, like Monkton Wood, for example, have a certain cathedral-like appeal and they look pretty in Spring and Autumn leaf. But they are relatively impoverished from a wildlife point of view, with an absence of birdsong even in Springtime. Well, maybe that isn't entirely true; where large swathes have been felled, light is let in, varied undergrowth regenerates, giving food and cover for wildlife. How quickly and how varied probably depends on what species have managed to hang on at the edges during the 'dark ages' of boring beech monoculture

Despite the discouraging signs and wire which have recently appeared, Monkton Wood, and the woodland adjoining it, continues to be visited on a regular basis by Speen folk and walkers from farther afield, just as it has for generations.

Small though it is, my favourite patch of woodland around Speen and North Dean is College Plantation (the one which flanks Coleheath Bottom). It was planted up largely with larch some sixty or so years ago and in recent years this has been steadily extracted, albeit quite a bit left. Replanting with hardwoods, has been done and there is natural regeneration, but for the present there are large areas in the wood open to the sky. Nature has returned in good

measure and this summer it has looked like the garden of Eden up there, such was the variety of plants and butterflies. Tracks in the burgeoning undergrowth indicate the presence of many mammals.

One resident of College Plantation we are unlikely to see, because he is small, comes out at night and sleeps seven months of the year, is that beady-eyed immigrant who goes under many aliases, the Glis Glis, Fat, Edible or Grey dormouse, whatever you wish to choose. How do we know he lives in College Plantation and other local woods? Well it is because he likes to take his long siestas in neighbouring houses, the owners of which nearly all seem to have their Glis Glis visitor story. Mr Faulkener of Coleheath Bottom, for example, noticed that apples in the fruit bowl seemed to have the odd bite taken out of them. Knowing that his children just didn't do that sort of thing he was rather puzzled, until the morning he found the little fellow at breakfast in the bowl - they love apples above all else. Mr Faulkener had no wish to harm this pretty little animal - even though he had no idea what he was at the time. So he sort of chased him out the front door of his cottage along Coleheath Bottom. Mr Glis in no mood yet to vacate his comfortable apple-eating home, promptly dodged round to the open kitchen door, went back in and disappeared. I don't recall if he was ever seen again! Then there was the evening when our former preacher, Charlie Radburn, found he was not alone in his devotions at the church on Chapel Hill; a little grey furry guy was curled up beside him! Charlie gently lifted the Glis and placed him in the churchyard, from whence he scuttled away, presumably back to College Plantation.

Unfortunately not all these Glis visitations end so peacefully. Normally they keep their ever-growing teeth in trim by gnawing stuff like honeysuckle and clematis vine, but once in the loft of a house the nearest thing to that is electric cable or plastic plumbing!! So sometimes they have to be caught by pest control people. I happen to know that it used to be the practice to catch these rare rodents alive and release them back to the wild, as most of us would, but nowadays the tendency is for them to be killed by local pest controllers. Officially there is a 'catch 22' situation; as a rare and protected species the Glis should not be killed, but as an alien neither

should he be released into the wild. This is got round by the granting of special licenses and I am told by Wycombe council that in the year up to 31st August 1994, forty two Glis were taken and killed in their area, twenty eight of these in the Great Hampden area alone.

HUNGARIAN IMMIGRANT

The Glis was reportedly introduced to this country, from Hungary to Tring, in 1902. Since then it seems to have spread throughout the central part of the Chiltern Hills, but probably no further. Whether the relative lack of tree cover beyond this area has halted the spread and what effect the major roads may have had on restricting it no one is quite sure.

It may be that the Glis has extended his territory further than we think. This is where the present enquiry, being conducted jointly by the Mammal Society and The Royal Forest Society, may usefully update our knowledge. They prefer to call him THE FAT DORMOUSE, no matter. If you know anything about recent observations of the animal, would you like to complete the enquiry form and send it to the Zoological Museum Tring, before 31st October 1995.

Personally, I hope the enquiry concludes that the Fat Dormouse is thriving, compensating slightly for the long term decline of his little cousin the Hazel dormouse.

Stop Press: I see in the 11th August Bucks Free Press that some glis captured in a Speen loft have been relocated - live - to the New Forest. That's good.

not-too-distant future the Church will be required totally to finance its own priest at a suggested approximate cost of £25,000 per annum. It therefore behoves us to build up our finances as much as we can and this can only be done if everyone who uses the Church, however infrequently, makes a realistic contribution.

At the time of writing this, the number of people on the Electoral Roll is 103 - more than we have had before - and this is most pleasing. However, there is more to being on the electoral roll than just having your name there. It also requires that you support your Church in every way you can.

Please consider all the above and resolve to make your contribution as a parishioner. The Wardens and the PCC will do their part but they need your help so that at the end of the interregnum we may have a thriving and prosperous Church made possible by your commitment.

THE CHURCHWARDENS AND THE PCC.

YOU - AND YOUR CHURCH ST. JOHNS, LACEY GREEN

As many of you are aware, the Revd. Peter R.L. Hale will be retiring from the parish on 31st August this year. He and his wife, Elizabeth, have made a great contribution to the life of St. John's Church during their five years with us.

When they leave, the responsibility for keeping the Church going during the interregnum will rest upon the Churchwardens and the PCC; but not only upon them. It must be said that responsibility rests also upon every parishioner. It is, after all, your Church.

The question we must all answer is "Do you want your Church to survive?" If you are a regular worshipper your answer will undoubtedly be "Yes"; but perhaps you only want the Church for the traditional family occasions - Christenings, weddings and funerals. Even then the Church has to be

maintained so that it is there when you want it and it is therefore up to each and every one of us to give whatever time, talents and financial assistance we can muster.

Church expenses are heavy. First, our Parish Share is approximately £10,000. The Parish Share is the amount we are required to give to the Diocese each year for central distribution; part of this amount contributes towards the priest's salary and to the two Aided Schools in the parish. (It is unique in the Diocese for there to be two aided schools in one parish.)

Then there are the costs of maintenance and repairs, insurance, lighting, heating, communion wafers and wine, candles, replacement of altar linen, organist's salary, part priest's working expenses, cleaning materials, flowers, etc., etc., - the list is endless. In addition, there are expenses incurred in the running of the various social events arranged by the Church.

If Diocesan financial forecasts continue along present lines - in the

FETE '95 IN SUNNY SPEEN

Typical of this most glorious summer, the weather on July 8 was warm and relaxing for Speen's traditional annual get-together of families and friends

It seemed as though the whole field had been invaded by small clown-faced aliens, such was the skill and energy of the face painters! The competing sounds of band, organ and 1170 also underlined the theme.

Probably because the weather was so warm, folk seemed to linger at the fete longer than in some years - it was certainly a great afternoon for the ice cream sellers, who had to restock several times, I hear!

**It wouldn't have been
a village fete
if nothing went**

wrong...

Not everything worked out according to plan - one or two stalls failed to materialise and the pony lost a shoe - food for thought in the

Gardens Open Days

Fours years since the previous event, it was time to open Speen gardens to the public again, so thought the Horticultural Society. As most of us have relatively modest gardens in this village, it was good that for their £1.50 (to charity), visitors would be able to visit about a dozen gardens, provided they had the stamina to do so.

With hindsight, I guess that we were a little bit too laid back about advance publicity, though no one could help the fact that one important local paper apparently lost our advert! Most car parking directions were put up the evening before in the hope that they might remain intact. Nevertheless a last minute inspection on Sunday morning revealed a situation

planning for next year?

**And maybe
more action events
for older children?**

Maybe also the fete organisers will need to rethink the mix of events and canvass opinions from all age groups. Have they ignored the needs of older children? There was admittedly a lack of "action" events this year - no facility to beat hell out of your mate with a pillow, for example. Anyway, gluttons for punishment, the fete committee will begin to consider next year's programme as early as Wednesday 6th September, and the newsletter would be pleased to pass on any suggestions and offers of help.

Thanks to Roger Craft, the accounts for this year's event have been sorted in double quick time; bills paid and an initial payout of £125 to each of the eleven village organisations (one more than last year). When the bulk of the advertising money is in there will be a small further sum to be distributed. Most of the charges were up a bit from last year and the profit is down by about £350.

Personally I hope that the emphasis will remain fun first, fund-raising second.

whereby visitors were being redirected towards Lacey Green!! In the event, unlike the hordes of visitors last time, there were roughly 100 on this occasion. But it was good fun and had the side effect of making some of us trim our edges etc rather more meticulously than we might otherwise this summer.

At the time of going to press the intention is to hold another opening on Sunday 13th August. But with temperatures pushing 90F will there be anything but stones and bare earth to show, one wonders?!

Luckily for local wildlife, many of Speen's gardeners have ponds in their gardens, the largest being that of Dr Butler and with another large pond in Monkton wood. But there is only one pond in Speen which is the responsibility of the Parish - so couldn't we do something better with it? *Ed.*

**If the balloons
went west, then
why is the winner
from Lincolnshire?**

Much to everyone's surprise, there is a winner in the balloon competition. When last seen, they were all drifting away in an Atlantic direction - so how come the winning finder - the only finder - lives in the other direction - Louth, Lincolnshire!? It's circulating air currents, stupid!

**On behalf of the fete committee
may I thank everyone who helped.**

This year's charity was MacMillan Nurses and their representatives collected, I believe, about £360 at the gates.

£40 will be donated towards the senior citizens' lunch run by the WI.

Just don't ask me who sent the crew to collect tents the day before they were due to be collected - okay?!

Peter Dawson, '95 fete secretary.

PTA NEWS

Thank you to everyone who attended the highly successful Auction of Promises and Caribbean Night organised by Speen School PTA. The two events have boosted PTA funds by about £3,000. The money will be used to buy new computer and playground equipment.

Children from the School have had a very busy summer term. The whole school attended the Chiltern Open Air Museum and saw the Princess Royal open a new centre at the Museum.

Years 2 and 3 successfully incubated and hatched some chickens' eggs as part of their study of birds.

The school children were joined by others from the village for a disco in the marquee the night before the Caribbean night. The youngsters were entertained by Rainbow Big Bottom!

AMANDA CLEAVER

**(MANY CONGRATULATIONS ON
THE BIRTH OF JAMES. ED)**

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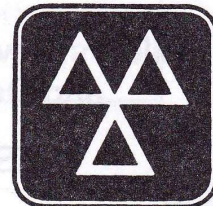
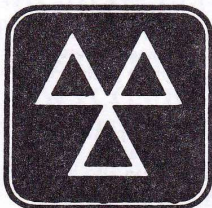
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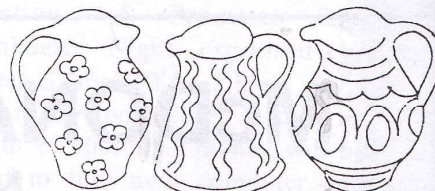
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*Tessa Rubbra : Valley Cottage, Highwood Bottom,
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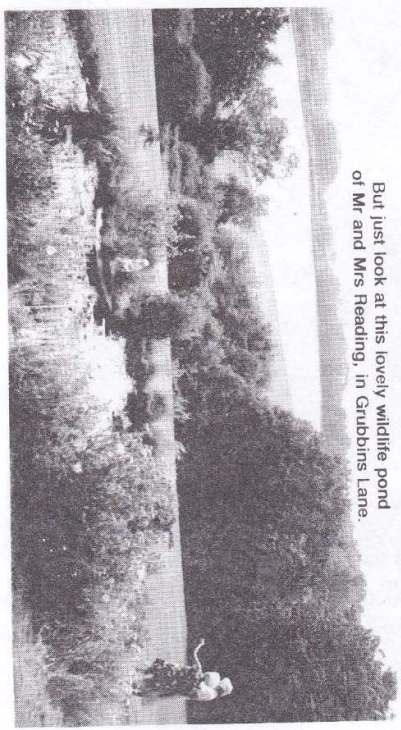
At the Horticultural Society show, tension mounts...



and the winner is - Winnie Lowes.



Oficianados meet to discuss fine points at the fete's horticultural tent.



But just look at this lovely wildlife pond of Mr and Mrs Reading, in Grubbins Lane.



A couple of rambles were organised from Speen this summer.

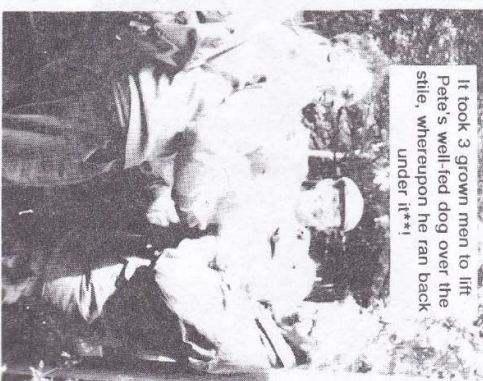
The only criticism of this one, organised by Christine and John, was that it began and ended at a church.



whereas the next one, organised by Gloria and John, finished at a pub between Marlow and Henley!

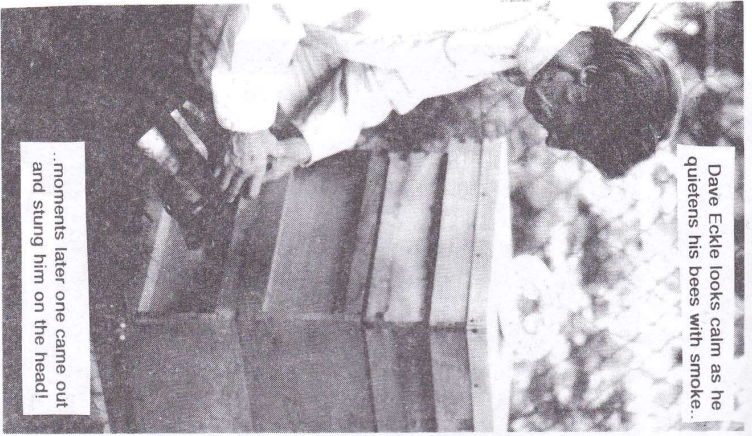


Walkers meet someone's lunch!

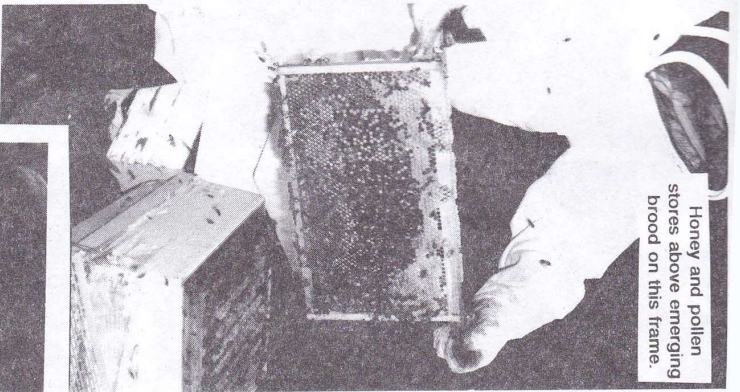


It took 3 grown men to lift Pete's well-fed dog over the stile, whereupon he ran back under it**!

Dave Eckle looks calm as he quieters his bees with smoke...



Honey and pollen stores above emerging brood on this frame.

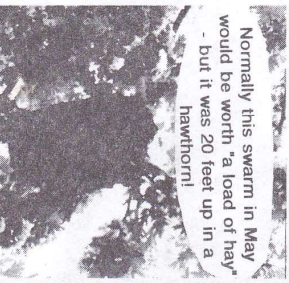


...moments later one came out and stung him on the head!

Turnip End, where Isobel keeps her bees, is a high spot, so she houses them in double-walled hives in the lee of a high hedge.



Normally this swarm in May would be worth "a load of hay" - but it was 20 feet up in a hawthorn!



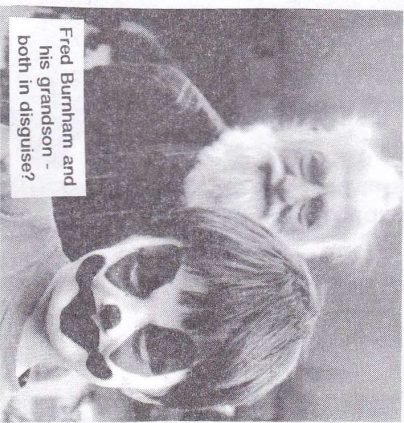
"Trouble is I've too many bees - would you like a few thousand?"



Fete chairman Dave King where you'll always find him on these occasions totally in charge of the milk!



Fred Burnham and his grandson - both in disguise?



Key organisers Fred Howlands and June Howlands - relieved it all got going!

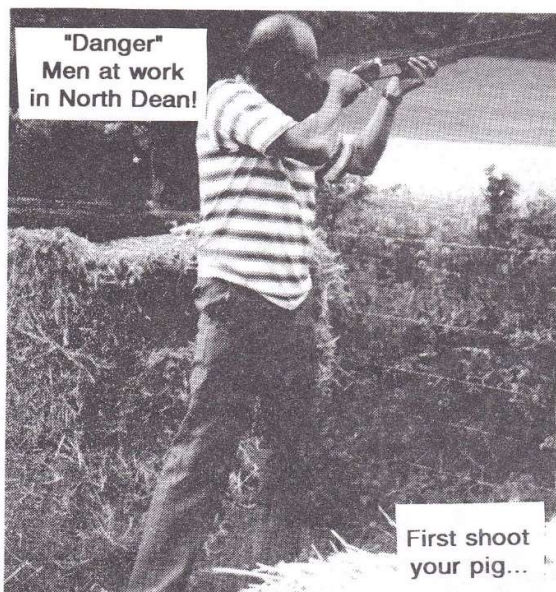


Elizabeth and WJ friends prepare to feed the masses!



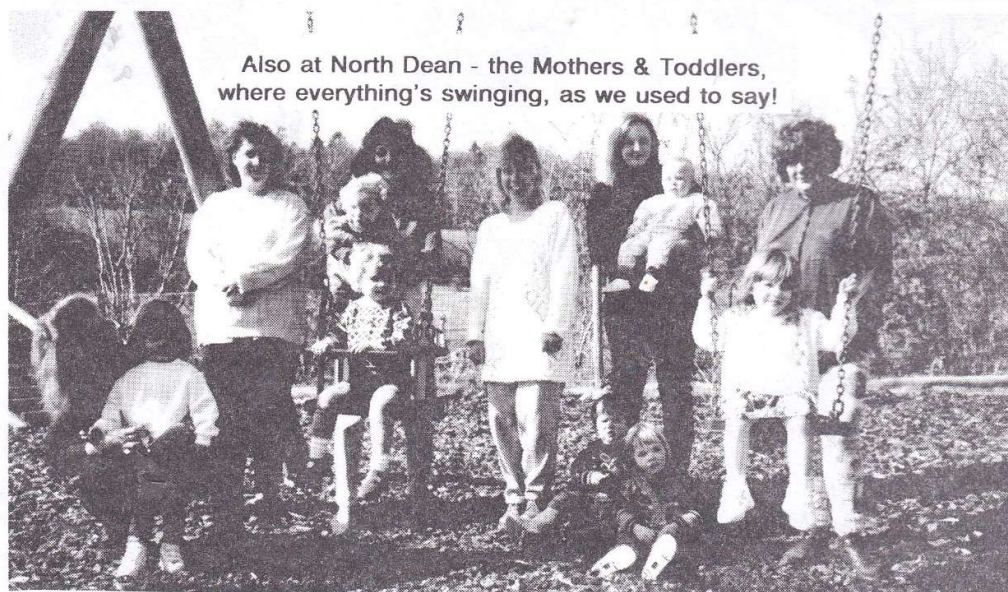
...And what it's all about as Oscar entertains.





"Danger"
Men at work
in North Dean!

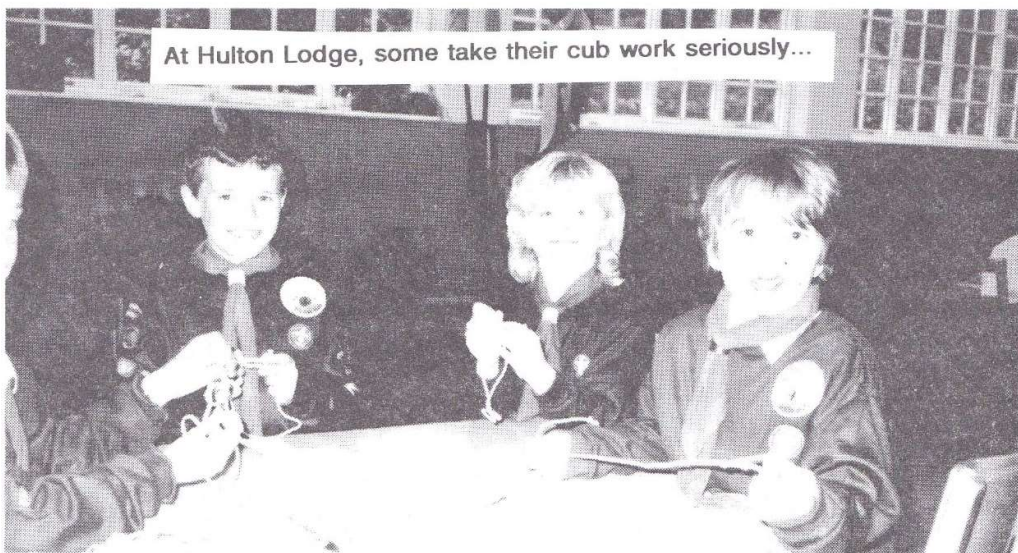
First shoot
your pig...



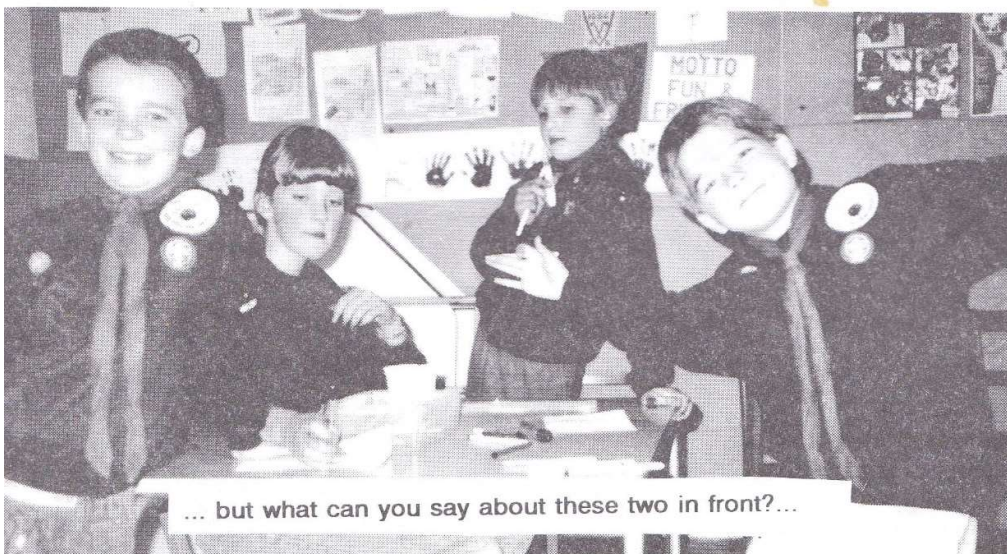
Also at North Dean - the Mothers & Toddlers,
where everything's swinging, as we used to say!



And this Bridge fund-raising event - or was it Whist?



At Hulton Lodge, some take their cub work seriously...



... but what can you say about these two in front?...



Definitely not a good example to the new recruits!

I'm only kidding, Ed.

DEMAND

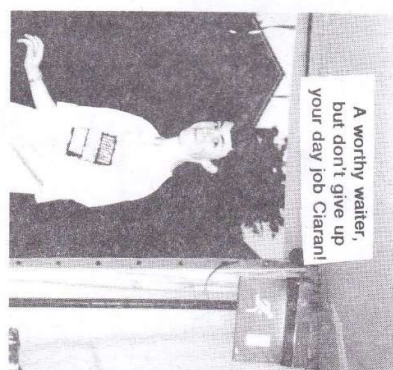
Caribbean Night

SATURDAY 17th JUNE : 8 PM.

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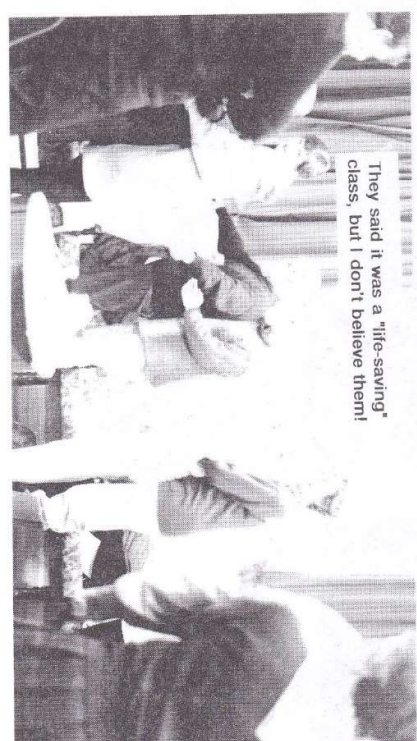
Philip



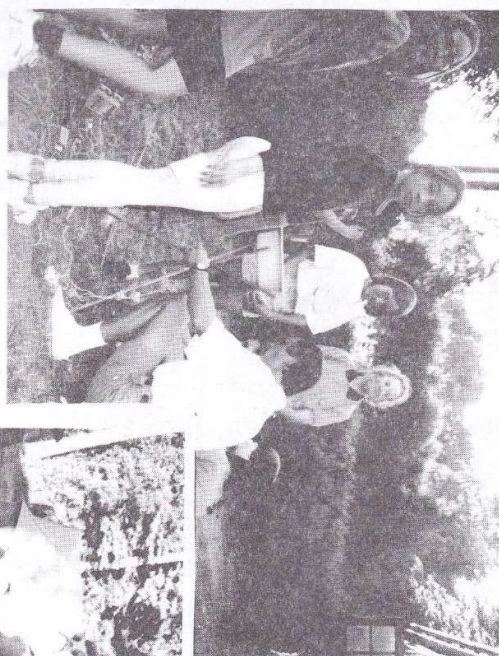
A worthy waiter, but don't give up your day job Ciaran!



I toyed with the idea of blackmail for next two but opted for public humiliation

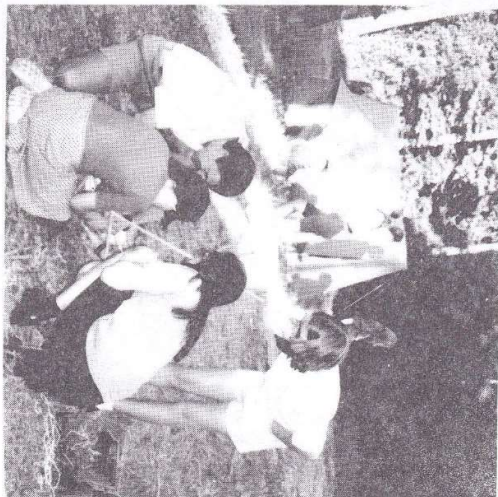


They said it was a "life-saving" class, but I don't believe them!



>

While Rob drills them on this, the others learn how to knock over a tent...



>

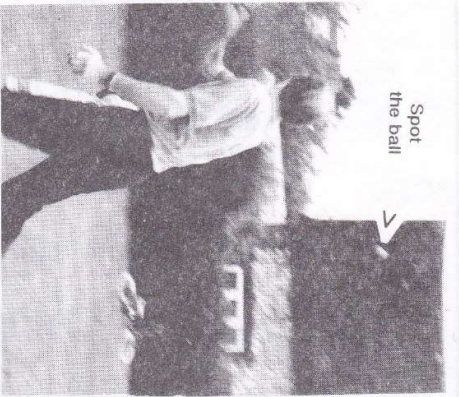
The week before camp you must know how to make a wobbly wash stand, so pay attention girls!



>

while the beavers find it as easy as falling off a log!

PS - Have you noticed how certain cubs, who, in my day, would have been brownies anyway, are always getting in the picture? Only joking, Annabel - Ed.



Spot the ball



"Don't worry Pete, no one will ever know you broke it!"



Then it rained and these masochists were eating soggy sandwiches.. yuch!



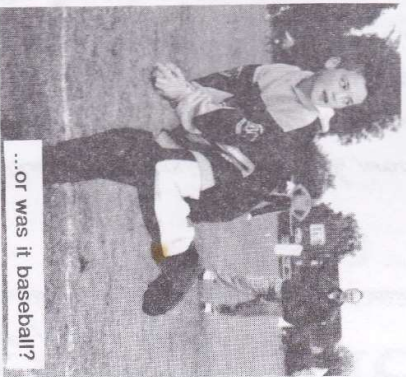
Sheila Tidball is either happy she's indoors or she's been at the stock?!



One of this group was beyond caring...!



...with rounders...



...or was it baseball?



His team cheer...



...as Giaran scores a rounder!

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- * *French smoked chicken and fresh pineapple £4.95*
- * *Avocado and brie salad with papaya £4.95*
- * *Farmhouse cheeses with grapes and crudites £4.95*
- * *Hot stilton, onion and herbed tart with tossed salad £5.95*
- * *Scotch oak smoked salmon platter £6.95*
- * *Old Plow antipasta with mussels, prawns, squid, smoked salmon etc. £6.95*
- * *Melon and giant prawns salad with Marie Rose sauce £6.95*
- * *Avocado and giant prawns salad £6.95*
- * *Cold asparagus and home-dried tomatoes and sauce gribiche £5.95*

Main meals

- * *Steaming bowl Thai noodles with fillet steak, prawns and mussels £5.95*
- * *Pasta with wild mushrooms, tomatoes and capers £7.95*
- * *Grilled breast chicken with curry and coconut sauce £7.95*
- * *Crispy duck's leg with Japanese black bean sauce and vegetables £8.95*
- * *Cold scotch salmon and prawns with mayonnaise, rocket salad and new potatoes £8.95*
- * *Char-grilled fresh tuna steak, basil and lemon butter sauce, salad and new potatoes £7.95*
- * *Catalan seafood casserole with almonds, tomatoes, garlic and olive oil £8.95*
- * *Grilled giant prawns, lemon butter and pesto sauce and tossed salad £9.95*
- * *Half dozen Mediterranean prawns, tossed salad and Marie Rose sauce £9.95*
- * *Grilled loin lamb with Bengal cracked wheat salad infused with mint and parsley £8.95*
- * *Grilled Aberdeen Angus fillet steak with spicy butter £13.95*

Plus

- * *Cold lobster mayonnaise and salad; half = £8.50, whole = £16.50*
- * *Seafood platter; lobster, prawns, mussels and squid, £12.95*
- * *Grilled sardines with lemon and seed mustard sauce, tossed salad and french bread £5.95*
- * *Grilled calves liver with caramelised onions and bacon and fresh vegetables £8.95*

Prices are correct at the time of going to press.

The dishes listed above are a selection from our current menu and are subject to availability. Credit and debit cards are accepted. Reservations for lunch or dinner can be made on 01494 488300. We are closed every Sunday evening and all day Monday.

The Old Plow Bistro/Restaurant at Speen is situated in Flowers Bottom Lane, halfway between Speen village and the Horses Home of Rest.

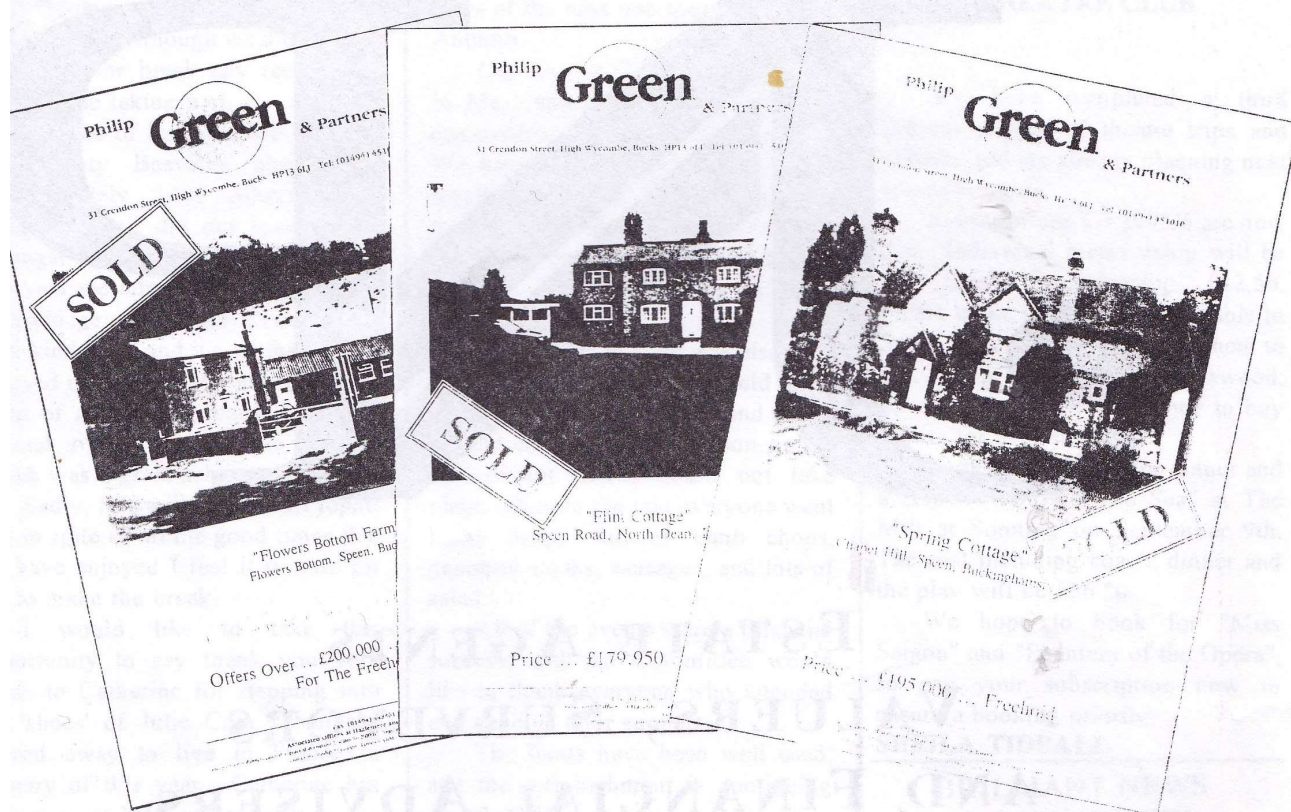
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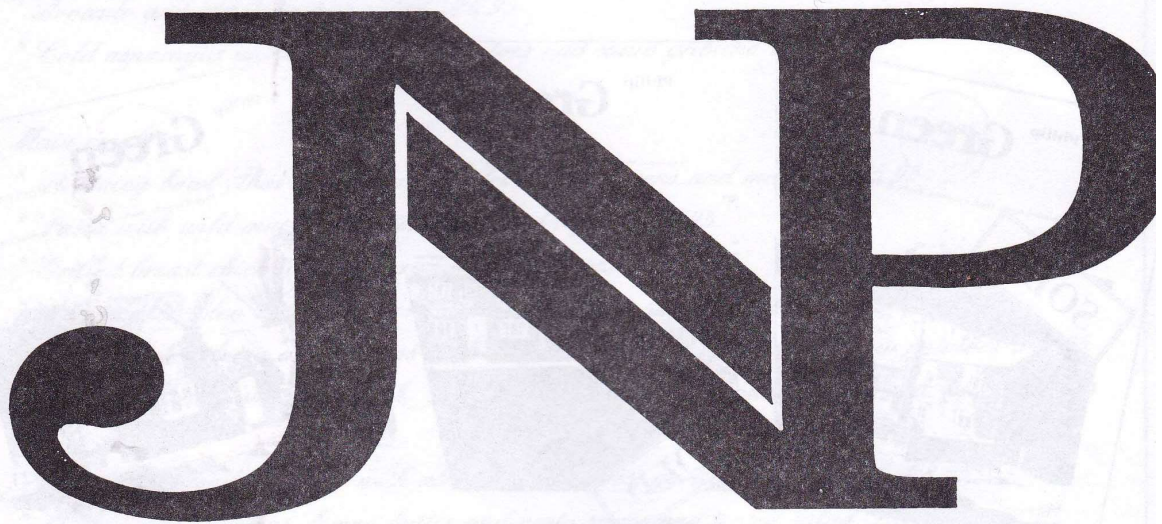
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SPEEN & LACEY GREEN BEAVER COLONY ANNUAL REPORT

The Colony continues to thrive with new recruits being welcomed in during the past year. Some of the Beavers have gone on to join cub-scouts which is always a thrill to see the children enjoying their new challenges.

Within the colony, our activities have been wide and varied. We have made things and played many games, mostly noisy but some quiet ones! In November of last year we took part in the Swimming Gala at Stoke Mandeville. Although we did not win any prizes or break any records we enjoyed the taking part.

In June of last year we attended the County Beaver along with approximately 2000 other Beaver Scouts and we did not lose anyone amongst the crowds. Then in May of this year we attended the Sports Day at Radnage where the weather was very kind to us and we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. It was made even more of a success because we came Second overall within the District which was a great achievement.

Sadly, this will be my last report and in spite of all the good times that we have enjoyed I feel it is time for me to make the break.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you very much to Catherine for stepping into the 'shoes' of Julie Cope when she moved away to live in France in January of this year. Catherine has been a great help and support to me since then.

Finally I must not forget to thank you Parents for your help and support and I truly hope that the Colony will continue and I wish the Beavers and Cubs every success in the future.

**MARGARET GRAY
BEAVER SCOUT LEADER**

RED CROSS

THE BRITISH RED CROSS thanks all who gave donations during Red Cross Week. We collected £150 in the village.

LEE JONES

NEWS FROM NORTH DEAN

Fund raising has gone on apace since the last issue of the Speen and North Dean News, and at North Dean we have enjoyed a bumper of very successful events.

Race Night was well supported, and enjoyed to the full, the bar, and supper of soup and dog rolls, helped to keep the vocal support going until the final race. The auction of horses for the last race was fast and furious, with a lot of local rivalry swelling the pot for the winner. Look out for news of the next one sometime in the Autumn.

Our Annual Clay Shoot was held in May, and the skills of our local competitors were well to the fore. We have to thank Sarah and Kevin Booth, and their friends for their expertise, in organising this event for us. The weather was kind and good support ensured it was a very successful day.

A Bar-B-Q in June was also well attended, and the weather held good while the food was served and eaten, but did cut short the afternoon, so the fun cricket match could not take place. Despite the rain everyone went home happy full of lamb chops, gammon steaks, sausages, and lots of salad.

All of the events were a financial success, and the Committee would like to thank everyone who attended and gave us their support.

The funds have been well used, and the refurbishment is continuing on schedule.

Our Fete takes place on 5th August, we look forward to seeing many of you there, don't forget the flower, veg, cake, and art competitions, schedules can be obtained from myself or any member of the Committee.

Watch out for news of future events, both in this paper or through your door.

JOHN ROGERS

Chairman

**North Dean Village Hall
Committee.**

NORTH DEAN PIG ROAST

A Charity Pig Roast was held in the Playing Field at North Dean on 24th June, this was well attended, despite the cold evening. £1400 was raised, to be divided between three charities, M.S., Cancer Research and Hearing Dogs for the Deaf. Many thanks to all who braved the weather to attend.

(Just think - if this was China, we might have held a Dog Roast - sorry, ED)

SPEEN THEATRE CLUB

We have completed a third successful year of theatre trips and outings, and are already planning next season's events.

Subscriptions for 1995/6 are now due. Individual membership will be £7, family membership £12.50. Please make your cheques payable to Speen Theatre Club, and send them to me, Sheila Tidball at 4, Abbotswood, Speen. We need your money to buy tickets for next season.

Book now with Jo for dinner and a comedy "Beside The Sea" at The Mill at Sonning on September 9th. The cost including coach, dinner and the play will be £36.50.

We hope to book for "Miss Saigon" and "Phantom of the Opera", so pay your subscription now to ensure a booking priority.

SHEILA TIDBALL

BRILLIANT NEWS A NEW YOUTH CLUB

Before sailing off with her family into the great blue yonder for the summer break, Patricia Lenko just had time to give us the exciting news that she and Rob are about to start up THE SPEEN AND NORTH DEAN YOUTH CLUB, for school years 8 to 10 inclusive, which is, I believe, for ages of about 13 to 16.

It is going to be held, they think, in Speen, hopefully starting in September, but these details are to be confirmed when they are back from holidays. So anyone who is interested please contact Robert or Patricia on 488337.

Ed.

Riding in Portugal

John, Gloria and Eleanor accompany a group of disabled riders

As part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations for the Riding for the Disabled, a group of 12 riders and 10 helpers spent 10 days on a riding holiday in Portugal in April. Of these helpers, High Wycombe group organiser, Mrs. Gloria Holmes, and her husband, John, who live in Speen, along with myself were lucky enough to go. John Holmes was sponsored by the Princes Risborough Rotary Group, with the West Herts Engineering Group generously funding Gloria and myself. The trip was also heavily sponsored by various companies, such as British Airways etc.

The riders were mixed in both ages, (19-60), and disabilities, (two wheelchaired ladies), but could all ride quite competently. The Trail riding centre was run by Sheila and Robert, who spared no effort to help and adapt whenever needed. Four horses were borrowed from an RDA group in Lisbon, to supplement the 9

beautiful Lusitano's from the stables. Some helpers rode out with the more experienced riders, who went on longer trips, while others walked with the two shorter rides each day. Everyone also took turns in sandwich-making, tack cleaning, or photo taking!

The countryside around Milfontes, which is on the west coast of Portugal, about 100 miles south of Lisbon, is beautifully unspoilt and rural. Each ride came across Cork forest, eucalyptus trees, fields of wild flowers, or typical Portuguese agricultural methods. As many of the riders usually only ride for short periods indoors, they revelled in these fantastic outdoor treks. The odd shower may have severely dampened their clothes, but had no effect on their spirits.

Other excursions were undertaken, ranging from canoeing, picnics on the beach, a river trip, and a day sightseeing at Evora, as well as

lots of walks to the local village for present shopping, or just a coffee. We also enjoyed some amazing evening meals out, even if some of the smaller local restaurants had to borrow more china to cope with 22 holidaymakers and 5 stable staff, they did so without batting an eyelid. Lots of people had fun trying new dishes, even when the local fish they were eating couldn't be identified.

Despite some initial worries, careful advance planning and organisation by the RDA Holiday Committee, headed by Lady Gladstone, (who also came and joined in the fun), meant that the venture was a huge success. The group of 22 people who arrived at Gatwick airport as mostly strangers, came back 10 days later as firm friends, as both the tears of sadness that it was all over, and the extension to our Christmas card lists of 21 more names proves!!
ELEANOR EVANS (GROUP TREASURER)

STOP PRESS - Gloria Holmes, writing on behalf of the High Wycombe Riding for the Disabled Group says "We are hoping to start a small group for adult riders at Shana Riding School in September, on Fridays, between 2 and 4pm. " Anyone who would like to ride or help please contact Gloria on 488420.

Lee Jones speaks of her friend, Joyce Coleman

Joyce was an integral part of the village. Everyone seemed to know her. Whenever I told anyone I live in Speen the invariable reaction would be: "Oh, isn't that where Miss Coleman the weaver and spinner lives!"

When I first met Joyce, in the 60's her workshop and cottage were buzzing with activity. Three or four looms were in constant use; one for a student, one possibly set up with a soft woollen blanket, another with linen for table napkins, another perhaps warped up with finest silk thread.

She loved to share her skills and to show her many visitors her work, untiringly displaying her finished scarves, silk lengths, table linen etc. I felt privileged to help her to set up her looms, particularly the huge one which filled her sitting room. Joyce taught me to spin, of course, and that became for me a lasting and enjoyable hobby.

Those who knew Joyce for as long, and longer, than I did will have rich memories of her earlier years, when she was the visitor to villagers less active than herself. We will remember her in many different ways. She had a great personality, a

conflicting mix of obstinacy and humility. She could be a formidable opponent if she disapproved of something, but was always ready to accept another's point of view.

I feel sorry that her more recent friends did not have the opportunity to know Joyce before she became ill in her latter few years. Even to the end she was delighted to see her visitors and was always overwhelmingly grateful for the unstinting help given by so very many.

I miss her. The village is not the same without her.

LEE JONES

ALEX, CIARAN AND DAVID INVADE HAMBYE

Over Easter three thirteen year old Speen boys went on a twinning visit to Hambye for a week. They were accompanied by Mrs. Pat Williams, her brave friend Ann and seven Lacey Green children. What impressions would they form of our French cousins? and perhaps more importantly what impressions would the French form of us!

Alex Hanford, Ciaran Suter, and David Tinsley, left these shores, excited but nervous. David: "I thought I might end up in this weird family home were they might be really annoyed if I didn't speak French". Alex: "I was looking forward to it, I went two years ago, but not to the same family", Ciaran: "I was pleased to be staying in the same home as my brother did, when he went".

"What about the journey"? I asked, (great gales of laughter followed this question) "We played a virtual racing video game, most of the way, we became addicted to it. The amount we spent on it....! don't tell our parents". The boys travelled on one of the most modern Stena Sealink ferries, "It was enormous, we kept getting lost, we weren't even sure which end we were at".

They enjoyed the good restaurant on board, what cuisine would they choose? Ciaran chose Chicken Tikka with poppadoms, David and Alex being really adventurous, tucked into sausage and chips.

"It was great seeing the ferry dock, we normally miss that when we go by car" (David has about ten pictures of this, each one being taken about 1 minute apart!) "We were met by some of the twinning people who crammed us into a few cars, and we were on our way to Hambye!"

The boys were all staying within walking distance of each other, what did they think of their hosts, and their homes? Alex: "They couldn't speak English hardly at all, except for their 15 year old son, who wasn't too bad", Ciaran: "Mine could manage a little English, they kept calling ham bacon", David: "Mine couldn't speak

a word of English, except their 18 year old son Cedric, who was quite good. They ran a smallholding and every morning the cockerel would wake us up really early".

Dinner is important to the French, and takes quite a while, all the boys found it difficult sometimes to handle conversations totally in French and unfamiliar food. David: "One day we had this meat that was almost raw, it took me nearly an hour to finish it, I hadn't the heart to tell them bien cuit, and as far as I am concerned, TRES bien cuit!" Alex: "When we went out for lunch they did us a picnic, Ciaran's host gave him SIX baguettes!" Ciaran: "I could just about manage three". David was given a giant packet of crisps every day!" It seems the hosts were very generous, and determined the boys never went hungry.

Some of the trips were organised, on Easter Sunday and Monday, they had trips with their host families, Ciaran was taken to the aquarium in Granville, on the Monday all three boys went to the Zoo, not too many animals but the play park did find favour with the boys, David enjoying the 'Hamster Wheel' until the others jumped on, the resultant speed was stomach retching, (How did Ciaran manage with all those baguettes?). One trip to Villedieu had the boys dismayed over the high French prices for sports goods, feeling unable to purchase these, and with an hour to kill, they bought a 'pain au chocolat' at every available shop, and had their own competition judging the best. In the evenings, they went to a local pub (not to drink, I am assured!) to play table football, or pinball, one night Ciaran stayed in and watched football. The Disco was a big hit, except David found they kept on playing the same record all the time (maybe it was the only one they had?) so they went outside and had a "Canada Dry" fight, when they came back in with soaked tee shirts, it was the same song 'Saturday Night'.

Time to leave, the hosts had given the boys chocolate Easter eggs made locally, which contained small sweets, like aniseed balls, smarties and jellies. David: "I was sad to leave

the family, but looking forward to coming home again". Alex: Yes I was sad to leave, especially as it meant going back to school!" Ciaran: "I didn't think a week was long enough, I would have liked to have been there longer, but we could still play 'Virtual Racing' on the ferry!"

And the journey home? "Well there was the 'Tom and Jerry' incident", two children's entertainers on board, dressed as 'Tom and Jerry' found themselves talking to the boys, Ciaran gave one of them a friendly pat, only to have him overbalance, fall flat on his face, and his 'head' fall off! "What happened after that?" I asked, "We don't know, we had already legged it around the corner!"

All the boys said they had had a wonderful time, and really appreciated all their hosts had done for them. A big thank you was also given to Pat Williams and Ann for their hard work and care. I asked if they would like to go back again, and had a resounding "Yes", How the French feel about that or 'Tom and Jerry' is of course another matter.

IRENE TINSLEY

Reading the minutes of the Twinning Association AGM, held in June, one notes that they had been very active throughout the previous year. Forty people went to Hambye for the celebration of the day, 50 years previously, when that place was liberated from German occupation. Several fund-raising and social events were held, among which the jumble sale was a slightly damp squib, but the wine tasting was a rocketing success!

Well rehearsed by their own quiz night, the Twinning Association teams went on to take first and third place in Lacey Green's village quiz. Best fun was had at the VE celebration when they were entertained ENSA-style. Ten youngsters, including the three from Speen, went on the Easter trip to Hambye and then 35 French folk came over here at Whitsun.

Two members had a stand at Speen fete. They were looking for a Speen representative for their committee. If anyone is interested, I'm sure that Irene will put you in touch with the appropriate person.
Ed.



Two endangered species of Speen 'wildlife' - the honey bee and its keeper!

With the warm dry weather this summer, the insect population has been abundant, supplemented, we are told, by invasions from the continent. But one species I have not seen lately, on this side of Chapel Hill, has been the honey bee (*Apis Melifera*).

Prior to 1914, Britain had its own race of honey bee; uniformly black or dark brown, it was suited to our climate, flying in relatively low temperatures, but making only moderate amounts of honey, it swarmed a lot. The primitive method of keeping this 'British Black' involved housing them in small cone-shaped hives, called skeps (made from bramble stems, would you believe?) The idea was that the colony would build up quickly in a good year and swarm early. The swarms, having formed a 'rugby football' hopefully not too high in a nearby tree (while scout bees looked for a permanent tree hole)

would be shaken (with a karate chop) into a box or bag, taken over to an empty skep and merely tipped out onto the ground in front of it. Hard to believe, but they then meekly walk into it, build comb, store honey and raise baby bees. The early beekeeper would, later in the summer, roughly weigh the skeps. Then he would drive out the bees from those skeps which seemed to hold most honey, using smoke and then remove the honey combs. Presumably the angry dispossessed bees would cut up rough with any villager foolish enough to be standing near.

Before sugar growing came in, beekeeping was an essential occupation. Eventually someone thought up the wooden hive built in tiers which did not necessitate the destruction of the colony when taking a proportion of its honey.

But getting back to our British Black - the continental races of honey

bee never mixed with ours because bees could not fly far enough to cross the channel. But with modern beekeeping methods it became possible to import them - plus their pests and diseases. The favourites were the Italian bees; great gatherers of honey and pretty with it, in their golden yellow stripes. To cut a long story short, the British Black soon succumbed to hybridisation and death from diseases to which it had evolved no immunity - plus the desire of beekeepers to get their stocks as "yellow" as possible through importing the yellowest Italian queens.

I used to keep bees over thirty years ago and experimented introducing queens from the Caucasus (via France). They were supposed to be hardy. They had, I recall, grey hairy stripes and seemed to fly more slowly than the smart little Italians. But at the end of one long winter my bees all died out, weakened by disease.

Anyway, checking up on the honeybee situation in Speen, it seems there are only about three beekeepers left. I visited two of them and include photographs taken at the time.

It seems that even these few colonies may be endangered by yet another pest from Europe. A hideous looking eight-legged mite called VARROA is now sweeping across Britain. This tiny creature climbs aboard an adult bee and when, as happens, the bee accidentally finds it way into a strange hive, the Varroa mite climbs off and lays eggs in the brood cells of the new colony, whereupon the hatchlings feed upon the bee larvae, which are thereby killed or deformed. These mites can be killed only by the clever use of chemicals, so perhaps this may spell the beginning of the end for casual beekeeping in Britain.

Ed.

REPORT FROM SPEEN W.I.

It seems a bit like sod's law that we do not have a speaker in January, in case the weather is bad, but in March it can be equally dodgy and was! Our speaker made it as far as the "Devil's Elbow" but had to turn back at that point. He telephoned later to say it wasn't snowing in Haddenham! However we had quite a lot of business to discuss, then refreshments and a nice chat.

In April we thoroughly enjoyed Italian chicken and some super desserts at our birthday party and were afterwards entertained by three delightful young ladies from the Chinnor Operatic Society.

In May we had our Resolutions evening with Voluntary County Organizer, Muriel Rutherford, when we discussed whether food should be

labelled with all ingredients, to help people with food allergies, especially peanuts, and whether to have Identity Cards. After much discussion both resolutions were carried.

Some of us enjoyed taking part in a Macmillan walk during the month, starting at Hughenden Church via Coombe Lane (the top), walking down Trees Road, up the other side past Piper's Corner School to Cryers Hill, across the road through the fields and back to the church. A delightful walk.

The train trip to Chester which was cancelled last year due to the train strike was back on this year and thoroughly enjoyed by those who went, although the weather could have been better. In June a Mr. R. Hardy delighted us with reminiscences of John Betjeman during the latter part of his life. Mr. Hardy was a top bod at one of the

big London Stations and was able to take J.B. who was an avid train enthusiast (what man isn't) on special train journeys. He enthused over everything he saw and made others see things they may have seen every day, in a new light, an amazing man.

As most people seem to expect a cuppa and a slice of cake with their Fete, we will, by the time this is read, have been busy baking like mad, and hoping for a nice day. Let's hope it was!

FUTURE EVENTS:

3rd August - Mrs. J. Jones - Leeks, Daffodils, Gymslips, Jerusalem.

7th September - Mrs. Medcroft - The work of the Citizens Advice Bureau.

5th October - Mrs. J. Davies - Cookery.

**BARBARA COLLETT - Secretary
Speen W.I.**

Local schoolchildren write about "where I live..."

A deer in the garden - but no roses, I bet...

I like Speen because of the countryside. There are long walks. I go to the park to play football. I like all the trees and wild life in Speen. We have a deer in our garden. There are dark woods and bike rides. I can ride my pony anywhere I like. I think Speen needs a shop because people go to Lacey Green for food. Also the roads are too narrow and we need more signs and less rubbish on the ground

ROSS SUTHERLAND, aged 8, Water Lane.

What we want is an ice cream van...

I like Speen because there is lots of wildlife, country sides and woods. Every day I take my dog for a walk. She goes to the houses and sniffs around in the grass. But no body minds because it is so quiet.

I can ride my bicycle around on the road because it is safe. It has not got many cars which causes a lot less pollution. The town has lots more pollution. I like the park. It has a slide, two swings and one baby swing, but no picnic tables. I think it isn't right people can't sit down on benches.

Speen used to have one shop. It sold fruit and vegetables, bread, rice, curry. Anything you wanted you could get even petrol. But now the shop has gone you have to go a long way to the shops. Sign posts are covered by branches and I think they should be cut back. I think there should be an ice cream van maybe outside the old shop.

Getting back to the sign posts they should be re-painted so people can read them more clearly. There are lots of woods one neare my house. One day I walked my dog there and I saw all the trees in one place had been cut down and were lying on the ground for no reason. I want to know why the people have to do this. Is it just for fun?

Alexandra Lenko, aged 8, Grubbins Lane

Scary fox and a horse called Pinky...

I like North Dean because it is quiet and peaceful. It is not very noisy the only noise is birds and a few cars passing by. There are lots of woods in North Dean, there is one near our house. We go to some to have short walks.

There is one sort of next door to us, you need to go next door to me where the horses are. Then go up and see the horses. The brown horse with white blobs is called Pinky. The white horse is called Silhouette, the horse that is all brown my next door neighbours didn't tell me what her name is. Then go up the hill and you'll find a piece of barbed wire. Go under that. Then you go up the hill right to the top then look on your right. You will see a gate. Go through it and you will be there.

There is a lot of wildlife in it, I was scared when I went in last time because there was a fox behind a bush, and it ran on the leaves behind the bush, I thought it was a female and it was going to jump out at me.

Josie Corrick, aged 8, Speen Road.

Some roads are not bike-friendly...

I live in Speen in Coal Heath Bottom. It's a very peaceful lane. I live in front of a wood but the only things is it is very bumpy so you can not ride your bike because you will get a puncture and I like where I live because its a very nice village but there should be more shops.

Hannah Faulkner, aged 7.

...but others are!

I live in Speen and it is quiet and I can ride my bike. I go horse riding in the woods. I like Speen a lot and I don't think anything should be changed.

Amy Rodgers, aged 7, Studridge Lane.

"Where I live" by some Speen school 8 year olds (apart from Laura who is 7)

5.6.95. A dam

Adam Green

Where I live

I live in A bbotswood number seven. In Speen it is very quiet because there are a lot of cars and if there were not a lot of cars it would mean there would not be a lot of pollution. It is surrounded by fields, country side and woods. Many animals can be seen in Speen like moorhens and guinea fow. In Speen there is a lot of trees and a nice pond. I like to go to the pond. I like to see people on the pond. I like to see small boats. There are a lot of people who like to ride on horses round the area and my sister is one of them. I like to see people built a house near the pond. I often ride on my bike in Speen to see the playing field to play with my friend Stephen.

Where I Live

Stephen Harries

In the village of Speen, where I live there are no shops. There was once but it closed down. Speen is very quiet; there are not many cars or lorries.

I wish the shop would open again. I like the Ark in Speen because it is very big but I would like it to have playing things.

I live in a very big house which my Dad is still building. I have a big bedroom.

by Stephen Harries

Wednesday 24th May 1995 by Amber Mussell

Where I live.

Amber Mussell

What I like about Speen is there is more peace and wildlife. It's more quiet and safe. There are lots of country side and less danger. There are lots of moss, grass and there is a nice pond. There are lovely schools and less pollution. I think it would be better if Speen had a shop again and added more things to the playing field like more swings and a smaller slide for little children. Because I live in front of the playing field I normally play there and I sometimes bring my little brother and really he can go on the Adventure play ground because it's too big so I would like it if there was one for smaller children.

Wednesday 24th May 1995 *Andrew Wood*

Where I live.

In Speen it is very quiet. I can hear my bike around Speen. There are less cars and less pollution. I live in Speen. And I think some trees should be cut down. Or otherwise a will fall on the road.

by Andrew Wood

I live in Speen. There are no shops. I love Speen and the village. It is very quiet in Speen. Birds are popular in Speen. The wild life is most popular around the country. I think there should be more shops and some leisure pools.

Laura Page, aged 7, Studridge Lane.

I like the village because it is quiet and you can play in lots of fields. I go horseriding round the village. It is safe because there are not many cars and not so much pollution and I like Speen because the school is quiet. There are nice views when you look out of the windows. From my house you can see my horses and sheep. There is a lot of grass for my ducks to eat and a lot of space. But sometimes there is too much noise. When it isn't raining I bring Sunrise my pony in the field. Nearly every day I go horse riding and on Tuesday the 9th of May I went horse riding down Grubbins Lane and I went with Patrick my brother and daddy. Where it was flat I canterd. I would like Speen to have a shop and a petrol station again. I would only like a small shop because I don't want it to get busy.

EMMA CLEAVER, Flowers Bottom

Sheila Tidball is proud of her son Lee's progress with his residential course at Ruskin Mill.

Ruskin Mill is a craft education and community centre which aims, through its Further Education Course, to help young people make the step from special education to a valuable and fulfilled life.

Sheila has loaned me a copy of the Centre's Newsletter, Volume 1 Issue 1, April 1995. From this I learn that Lee thought up the title, Run of the Mill, and wrote one of the articles, which we reproduce below.

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FISH FARM?

At the end of January 1995 I interviewed Roger Duncan about the fish farm at Horsley Mill

"There is nothing else going on anywhere like this in the country...there are people attempting to set up organic fish farms, there are people who are setting up sustainable woodland management systems for conservation and there are people who are exploring experimental education...we are trying to do all three of these together." Concerning the fish farm at Horsley Mill,

Roger mentioned that, linked to this setting up of an organic endeavour, the long-term plans are widespread and varied.

Some of these are to reshape the ponds so that the oxygen supply is better and also for the fish farm to produce its own fish food. The long-term plan for the woodland is to set up an eight-year coppicing rotation system and to have a horse in the pasture for extracting the timber.

PRESENT WORK

Roger Duncan, who manages the fish farm, started in July. He organises the seven people on the trout farm team plus extra students who are doing project work.

In the winter time they did a lot of work in the woodlands. The main tasks were coppicing and clearing the rubbish. The other tasks were feeding the fish and generally tidying up and keeping on top of the every day jobs.

The main problem is the fungus which is in the soil and the water. It's a secondary infection which

means it will only attack if the fish are not kept completely healthy. Unlike the fish-farm's soil ponds, many commercial fish-farms have concrete ponds so that they can control pests and parasites.

The beginning of the life cycle of the trout starts with stripping the melt (sperm) from the male fish because in this system they cannot breed by themselves. The fertilised eggs are put in the hatchery and they hatch out in about five weeks. They start by feeding on a yolk sac and once that has been finished they have to be fed every half hour with very fine food.

They are then graded regularly so that fish farm workers know how much food to give the fish. If too little food is given the fish get stressed but if too much is given then it falls to the bottom, rots and is wasted.

There are two types of fish: the table fish which are sold when 12" long and the restocking fish which are used as sport fish for catching. The

trout live up to about eight or nine years of age.

THE PAST

Midland Fisheries was established in 1908. It is one of the oldest trout farms in the country and it is connected with the first people who began trout farming in Britain. They brought the first rainbow trout over from America and started three trout farms which later amalgamated and became Midland Fisheries. The ponds have been virtually unchanged since that time.

There was a market for the fish from Midland Fisheries before it belonged to Ruskin Mill Further Education Course and the market needs to be re-established, starting up next summer when the fish are a bit older.

'It's an exciting project - very long term and it's very satisfying to be working with the season's said Roger.

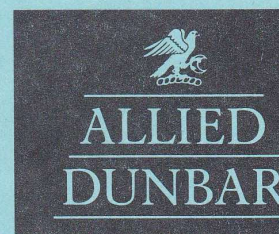
LEE TIDBALL

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