



SPEEN AND NORTH DEAN NEWS

Issue Ten Spring 1997

Waiting in the wings...



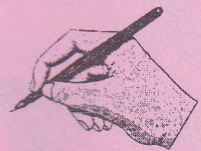
...Angels at Speen School
about to go on...



... and Olly
still living with his
15 family members
at Risborough while
Peter Salmon builds
their new aviary at
Loosley Row.
Welcome back to
the Parish, Peter.



Readers Write



Dear Editor,

During the last twenty years Speen and North Dean have become increasingly populated by people who have moved out of towns to enjoy what the countryside has to offer. Perhaps, therefore, it is not surprising that an article appeared in the last edition of the "NEWS" which had the hallmarks of a city dweller commenting on country matters of which he knew nothing.

The writer took "such pleasure in seeing the little fox cross his path". Every countryman accepts that foxes and for that matter badgers have a part to play in the balance of nature, but nowadays both animals are present in such large numbers that they have become pests. Two years ago we lost 50% of our lamb crop to foxes (we found the headless bodies in the wood) and no one can keep free range chickens as foxes dig under the wire netting with monotonous regularity. Anything the hunt can do to keep down the numbers is most welcome.

Regarding hunting, the writer seems to be under the misconception that foxes are shot; in fact they are killed by the hounds. To the man in the street this may sound cruel, but just think for a moment what happens to any wild carnivore at the end of its life. Once it becomes unable to catch its prey, it dies a very slow death from starvation. We often see mangey foxes dying under machinery in our sheds. Surely it is better to die in the prime of life after an hour's chase from the hunt and a quick kill, than linger for a week on cold concrete, driven mad by mange?

Gill Kent.



was it something
I said?

Dear Editor,

Concerning Speen Stores - A FOCUS FOR UNITY AND COOPERATION

Shortly before Christmas a mini-bus full of councillors, travelling to a site visit, passed the building site of Speen Stores. A cheer arose when they saw that work had at last begun!

Two site meetings, many letters, phone calls and debates in the Council Chamber finally resulted in the vote of support for the amended plans with only two councillors objecting.

I would like to thank all who have written or otherwise been involved in bringing about this decision. You will see that the shop and small cottages for villagers have been restricted to the original shop site: sharing only a turning head with the plot to the rear (the re-development of the rear "Tree Tops" site has permission for two houses, although the Parish Council and myself lobbied for bungalows, as we believe that there is a need for these).

I hope now, therefore, that the fears of some residents are set at rest and that the site in future will become a focus for unity and cooperation.

I understand that Mrs Fleming of the Bucks Housing Association wishes to meet with representatives of all village organisations to discuss future involvement; it was due to the possible social benefits of her scheme that lottery funding has been approved. - SO, FOLKS, IT'S UP TO YOU.

You can count on my continued support.

Councillor Jean Gabbitts

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the article in the last Speen and North Dean News about fox hunting and would like to add my own strongly held views.

I dislike every aspect of hunting. It is a cruel sport and should be banned like cock fighting, badger-baiting and other blood sports have been. How can it be sporting to inflict pain and fear on defenceless animals.

I hate it when the hunt comes down our lane; people from all over, destroying the peace and quiet of our locality. During last spring and summer we have seen a new generation of cubs growing up. We have made friends with them and gained their trust and spent many pleasurable hours watching them. Then suddenly along come a load of people on horses, charging up and down the lane, hellbent on tearing the foxes and their cubs apart - limb from limb in the name of sport - and the whole set-up is destroyed.

I appreciate that we all have different views and many people think of the fox as an enemy. I myself am a nature lover and prefer to think that nature is beyond criticism. How can a person love some aspects of nature and condemn another? These people must be in some way out of tune with nature.

I do sympathise with the idea that foxes are pests to certain types of farming, but there must be means and measures to outwit a fox, which is, after all, only following its own nature. We are all faced with problems in our work. We have to use our skills and intelligence to find a solution. To me fox hunting is not an intelligent solution.

Sue

Quotes from naturalists:

"Many foxes live quietly in woodlands and give the farmer no cause for complaint."
"Like the fox, the badger has been accused of killing poultry, but this is unusual."

organisation contacts

BAPTIST CHURCH	DAVID KING	01844 344839
CUBS & BEAVERS	PETER SYMONDS	488016
CRICKET	S. KING	488542
FETE	PETER DAWSON	488222
GOOD NEIGHBOURS	GLORIA HOLMES	488420
" " (phone)	DORIS WILSON	488334
" " "	MARGARET JONES	488246
" " "	POPPY ELLIS	488548
GUIDES	PAULINE HALL	488372
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY	TED DREW	488738
N. DEAN VILLAGE HALL	JOHN ROGERS	562041
& PARISH COUNCILLOR		
SPEEN PARISH		
COUNCILLORS	DON WHITE (Chairman)	488437
	JUDE AWDRY	488607
PRE-SCHOOL	DAWN SCHOLLAR	488
PLAYING FIELD	JEANNE HANFORD	488402
POLICE		01296-396000
DISTRICT COUNCILLOR	JEAN GABBITAS	01844-346469
SPEEN SCHOOL OFFICE		488321
SPEEN VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS	CATHERINE BUTLER	488412
SPEEN PTA	PETER SYMONDS	488016
SPEEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION	PAUL ROGERSON	488315
SPEEN & N. DEAN NEWS	PETER DAWSON	488222
SPEEN & N. DEAN YOUTH CLUB	ROB & TRICIA LENKO	488337
SPEEN NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH	JACKIE NEWMAN	488474
TABLE TENNIS	JIM LAWRENCE	01844-344610
TENNIS	ROGER CRAFT	488343
THEATRE & OUTINGS CLUB	SHEILA TIDBALL	488377
W.I. (1st Thur each Mth.)	BARBARA COLLETT	488348
N. DEAN VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS	MEGAN CHINN	563074
SPEEN VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE	DAVID SLADE	488262
MOTHER & TODDLER GROUP	CHRISTINE DUNNINGTON	488203

future events

DATE	DETAILS	VENUE
FEBRUARY		
Tues 25	Lenten Discussion for 5 weeks	Contact Andy Gower
MARCH		
Sat 1	Ladies' Breakfast 8.30	Speen V.H.
Thur 6	Speen WI "Pop to opera" 7.45	Speen V.H.
Sat 8	PTA Auction of Promises	Speen V.H.
Sun 9	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Baptist Church
Tues 11	Public Enquiry (see notice within)	N. Dean V.H.
Thur 13	Pre-School Cafe Morning 11.00	Speen V.H.
Sat 22	Beetle Drive	N. Dean V.H.
Sun 23	Pre-School Easter Egg Hunt 2-4.00	Hampden Playing Fd.
Sun 23	Aquarius Choir & Organ 7-8.00	Baptist Church
Fri 28	Good Friday Walk of Witness Noon	Baptist Church
Sat 29	Theatre Club "Guys & Dolls" Matinee	Contact Sheila
APRIL		
Thur 3	Speen WI Birthday Party 7.45	Speen V.H.
Mon 7	Hort Socy Talk/Slides Rock Gdns 8.0	Speen V.H.
Sun 6	Speen Tennis Ct Open Day 2.00	Speen Tennis Ct.
Mon 14	N. Dean AGM/Slides of Locality 8.00	N. Dean V.H.
Fri 18	Hort Society Serengeti Safari 8.00	Speen V.H.
Sat 19	Men's Breakfast 8.30am	Speen V.H.

pto...

MAY		
Thur 1	WI	Speen V.H.
Sun/Mon 25/26	Cricket Club Barbecue	Contact S. King
JUNE		
Thur 5	WI "Life in the Library" 7.45	Speen V.H.
Sun 8	N. DEAN Lunchtime Barbecue	N. Dean V.H.
Sat 21	N. Dean Midsummer Dance 8.00	Pigotts
Sat 21	Speen PTA Caribbean Night 8.00	Speen School
Sat 28	Theatre Club outing to Wisley Gdn.	Contact Sheila

**Speen Church of England School
PTA present a**

GRAND AUCTION

OF

PROMISES

SATURDAY 8 March at Speen School

Auctioneer - Dave Evans

The event comprises the auctioning of pledges made by parents, children and members of the village community. A ploughmans dinner will be provided and the event can be great fun judged by previous experience.

Please support the Village School which is faced with a 12% cut in its budget by making interesting and potentially attractive pledges which people can bid for. The possibilities are endless. Ideas from previous years would include offering baby-sitting, hedgecutting, horse-riding lessons, DIY services, a bottle of whisky, use of holiday homes, surfing on the Internet, or various business services:-

Tear Off ----- *Tear Off*

Please return

My pledge is to offer for auction:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Reserve price (if necessary).....

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone.....

Please return to school or send to Peter Symonds, 10 Abbotswood, Speen HP27 0SR - 01494 488016

Please reserve(No) tickets for the Grand Auction of Promises at £3.50 each (to include a Ploughmans Dinner).

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone.....

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hill. 01494 438057

Plans for Speen Fete '97 on schedule

However, we need help from village organisations and individuals, especially to run side-show attractions; it's only for about three hours on the day. If you can contribute in any way - even helping to clear up afterwards - then let me know.

This year we are having a civil war demonstration, which seems appropriate given the civil war connections of the area. The Chinnor band will be back with us, and we have had an offer to include a dog display team.

And rather than just let everything gradually evaporate at around 4.30, this year we thought we would let things go on a bit with refreshments and music, probably in the village hall (details will be announced later).

Incidentally, if you have or know of any equipment which can be borrowed, bought cheaply or donated which would contribute to running a side-show then please let me know about it. We have been very fortunate in being allowed to borrow some items from North Dean for many years, but we really ought to be collecting our own stuff a bit more. PD (488222).



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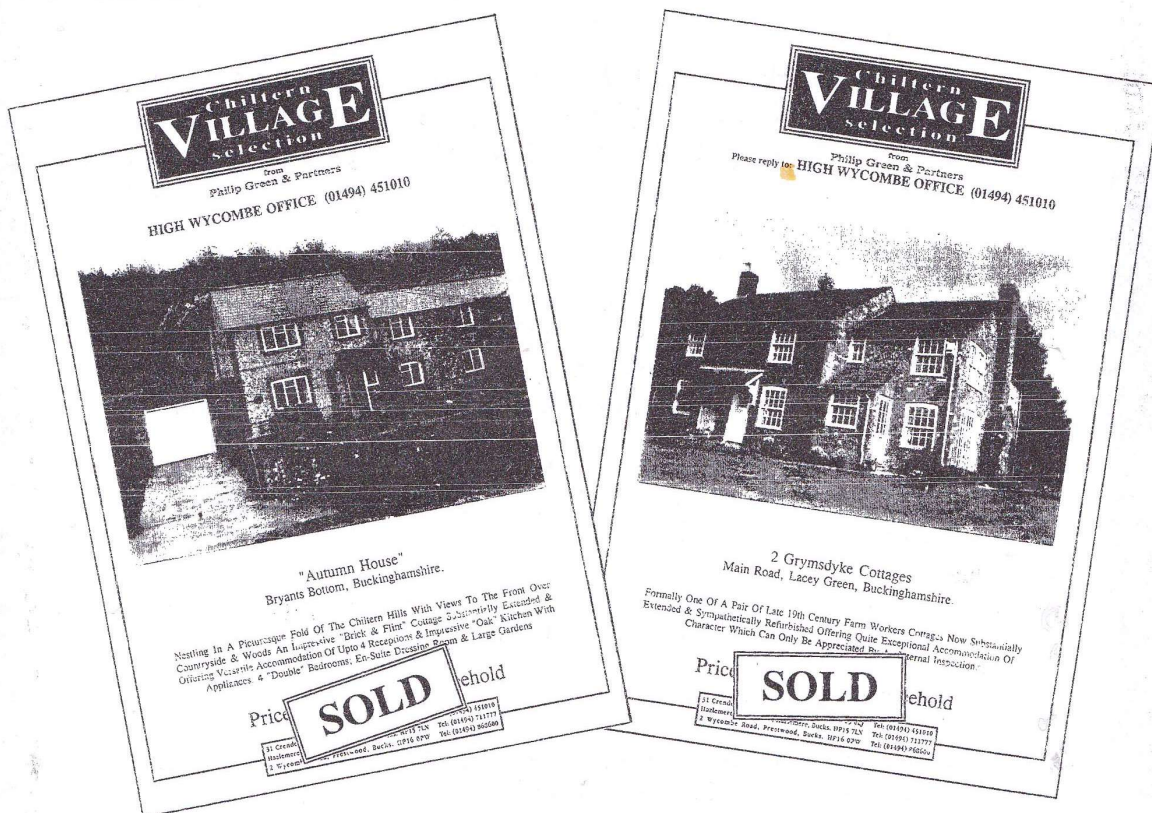
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Philip

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- from 1st April until 30th April 1997

- ♦ The offer applies to one main course per person chosen from the specially produced menu in the Bistro.
- ♦ Tables for up to 6 people can be booked. All tables must be booked in advance and the special offer menu requested at the time of booking.
- ♦ Tables are subject to availability.
- ♦ The offer includes food only. The offer applies to a meal taken at lunch Tuesday to Saturday, or dinner Tuesday to Friday, between 1st April and 30th April.
- ♦ Where additional courses are ordered, i.e. starter or dessert, these will be charged at the standard menu price.
- ♦ A £2.00 per person cover charge will be made **ONLY** when **NO** drinks are purchased in conjunction with this offer.

**There is no limit to the number of bookings you can
make for this special offer while it lasts**

Book now on 01494 488300

**The Old Plow Bistro and Restaurant, Flowers Bottom Lane, Speen
All dishes on our menus are subject to availability**



SPEEN TENNIS COURT

Hopefully the long dark & cold days of winter are numbered and we can look forward to the onset of spring and the chance to get out and about.

With these thoughts in mind, Speen Tennis Court Committee look forward to seeing old and new friends out on the village green using the excellent tennis facility that we are so fortunate to have in Speen.

I would, therefore, like to bring you up to date with current and planned events for the forthcoming season :-

- **COURT REPAIRS** - Currently, workmen are on court carrying out major repairs and replacing the posts and chain link fencing down two sides of the court.
- **OPEN DAY** - It is proposed to hold a social "Open Day" on the afternoon of Sunday 6th April 1997, starting at 2 pm for all prospective players to come along, play tennis and try the facilities whilst also relaxing over a cup of tea or coffee and light refreshments. (Details to be posted on village notice boards in due course).
- **COACHING** - Extension of our tennis coaching activities to cover both juniors and adults, details of which are as follows:-

EASTER HOLIDAYS

Monday 7th April & Thursday 10th April 1997

Short Tennis As existing groups 10.00 -10.45am & 11.00 -12 Noon
Tennis Coaching Two Sessions 2.00 - 3.00 pm & 3.00 - 4.00 pm

SUMMER TERM

Short Tennis from 17th April, Tennis from 18th April

Short Tennis(Thursdays) As existing groups 4.30 - 5.15 pm & 5.15 - 6.00pm
Tennis Coaching(Fridays) Two Sessions 4.00 - 5.00pm & 5.00 - 6.00pm

LADIES TENNIS COACHING

From Thursday 17th April 1997

Every Thursday Two Sessions 10.00 -11.00 am & 11.00 -12 Noon

GENTLEMEN'S TENNIS COACHING

From Saturday 19th April 1997

Every Saturday Two Sessions 9.00 -10.00 am & 10.00 -11.00am

For further details and to register your interest in coaching please contact :-
CHERRY SEEKINS - 01494 488355

- **SUBSCRIPTIONS** - Last year the committee decided to reduce the annual subscriptions, i.e. Family Membership down to £25 per annum and subject to ratification at the forthcoming AGM the proposal is to peg the subscriptions for a further year at least in line with the reduced 1996.
We trust that this will induce current members to renew their subscriptions and help to increase our membership by inducing new members who will be warmly welcomed.

The committee look forward to seeing you on our "Open Day" on Sunday 6th April 1997 and in the meantime if you have any queries, then please do not hesitate to contact myself or Bob Johnston (01494 488593) accordingly.

ROGER CRAFT, Chairman Speen Tennis Court
31st January 1997

Tel:- 01494 488343

News from Speen Baptist Church

Blue Peter Appeal, Bring and Buy Sale in Aid of Leprosy Relief: Saturday 2nd Feb.

Many thanks to everyone who donated items for sale, to those who helped on the day - especially the youngsters with their great ideas for games, and to those who came to buy. It was very well supported and we were able to raise £225 towards the Appeal. Special mention must be made of Bill Chinn, the Damian Hill of North Dean, who beat all come round the remote control car racetrack!!

Events leading up to Easter:

"Pathways of Prayer" - Interdenominational Lenten Discussion Series.

In recent years there has been a growing thirst to discover the art and reality of prayer perhaps driven by the dehumanising effects of overwork, and dissatisfaction with materialism.

Starting February 25th for five Tuesdays leading up to Easter, groups will be meeting in various homes in the community to explore prayer using the Lent course "Pathways of Prayer" which has contributions from Cardinal Basil Hume, Grace Sheppard, Donald English, Gerard Hughes and Angela Tilby.

There will be a choice of morning (10:00 - 11:30am) and evening meetings (8:00 - 9:30p) to fit in with peoples schedules.

Ladies Breakfast - 8:30am Saturday 1st March, Village Hall.

The next in the series of "Breakfast with..." will be a well known personality sharing about the relevance of the Christian message in the circumstances of her life.

Mothering Sunday Family Service - 10:30am Sunday 9th March.

Join with us as we celebrate and give thanks for "Mums".

Aquarius Choir and Organ with music for Passiontide - Sunday evening 23rd March

John Goldswain and the Aquarius choir will be bringing their selection of music for Passiontide to the church on Palm Sunday evening.

Shared Good Friday Services and Walk of Witness - starting 12:00 Noon 28th March

Joining with our Anglican and Methodist friends from Lacey Green we are holding a series of Good Friday services in the three churches linked by a walk between them. Starting at Speen Baptist at 12:00 Noon with a service of meditation and worship, then via the footpaths to Lacey Green Methodist where refreshments await (!) before finishing at St. John's for a 2:00pm service.

Advanced Notice - next Men's Breakfast - 8:30am Saturday 19th April.

Andy Gower

SPREEN VILLAGE POND DAY IS SATURDAY 22nd MARCH COME ALONG FROM 9.30am.

STOP PRESS ITEM

The Lacey Green Parish Council contacted the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and their Volunteers Officer, Lucy Withers has responded by offering help in a letter to Gloria, passed on to me. Lucy tells me that her organisation will provide leaders, tools and even refreshments for a tidying-up operation. She would like to encourage villagers to come along, for just an hour or so or all day if they can manage. As well as the pond, of course, the Speen Village Hall will also be used as a base.

One or two villagers I've spoken to have thoughts on the subject: as at this morning, 24th February, there appear to be no frogs in the pond, but they are on the move elsewhere and by 22nd March their breeding will be in full flow, so we have to make contingency plans to ensure that the clean-up does not cause losses. It might be a time to think of adding more variety of marginal plants. There are alternative views on whether a rubber liner might be beneficial, and what about those branches? I have left a message on Lucy's answerphone. When we get talking I will get more information and get back to interested villagers.

If you might be interested in the project, please contact me and I will update you on any further information and record any views you have.

Peter Dawson 488222.

A leaflet from Lucy began with a list of useful items, such as shovels, buckets, barrows, planks, a punt!?, mattocks, crowbars, picks and water (to wash hands) and it goes on...

and issue the specified safety equipment.

INTRODUCTION

Introduce the site, the work and the reasons for doing it.

Walk around the pond, explaining what work will be undertaken.

Identify potential hazards and set attainable objectives. Also point out things people should take note of, such as plants to leave and areas of bank to be avoided.

DEMONSTRATE TOOL USE

Demonstrate and explain the safe use, carrying and on-site care of the tools before starting work. Remember that extra care is needed handling wet tools and that a tool dropped in a pond is a tool lost.

Refer to the BTCV *Hand Tools Booklet*

DEMONSTRATE WORK TECHNIQUES

Demonstrate all new work techniques as you come to them. This will save mistakes and avoid accidents. Make the group aware of leptospirosis and the danger of exposure whilst working in and around water bodies.

(bending the knee and keeping the back straight so that the leg muscles are used and the back is not strained).

Refer to the BTCV *Basic Safety* leaflet.

ORGANISATION OF TEAM

The most efficient way to work is to form a production line. Make sure that everyone has a place and that no one stage holds up the others. Avoid boredom by getting people to swap jobs from time to time.

The leader should check, assist and encourage people and ensure work standards are maintained.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Consult your local BTCV office.

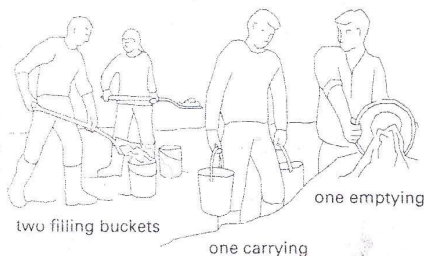
Project Leadership: a self-help guide for local groups (1993) BTCV

Natural Break Leaders' Handbook (1992) BTCV

See also *How to fell trees* and *How to build fences* in this pack.

HANDS-ON TECHNIQUES

POND CLEARANCE

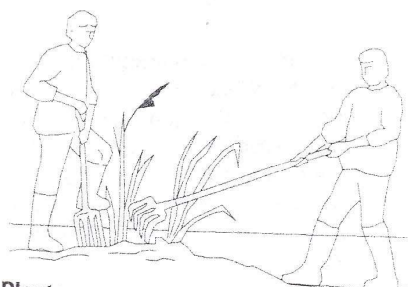


Be aware of the depth of the pond bottom or liner. Consult both the client and the plan available.

Work from only one or a few definite points on the bank, to minimise the areas damaged. Drier areas are less easily damaged by trampling.

It is often easiest to clear a pond once it has been drained, but this should be done after careful consideration of the potentially disastrous effect on the life in the pond. If you have to drain a clay-lined pond, eg to repair the lining, keep it moist or the lining will crack.

DIGGING OUT



Plants

Most rooted plants grow from rhizomes; underground stems with roots and shoots. These must be completely cleared or they will

Cut round the edge of a patch, then lever it gently. It should float off and can then be dragged to the side.

A number of people working in a line across an area is the best way to ensure complete clearance.

Mud, silt and rubbish

Start at the bank and work outwards so you are not churning up mud and silt you want to dig, or tripping over rubbish you are about to remove.

A log winched slowly across the bottom of the pond can gather in a lot of silt that can be disposed of easily from close to the bank. This is particularly useful in deep ponds.

TRANSPORTING

Wetlands are usually treacherous underfoot. A line of planks to walk on, or a human chain to minimise walking, is usually safer and more efficient.

On large jobs it can be worth building a barrow run out to the area being dug.

DISPOSAL

Decide the method of disposal in advance.

Sludge can often just be heaped up to dry out and grow over, allowing insects to crawl back to the pond. Don't leave it so near the wetland that rain will wash it back again.

Reeds can also be dumped to rot down, but take care not to dump them where it is damp enough for them to root.

BANK REPAIRS

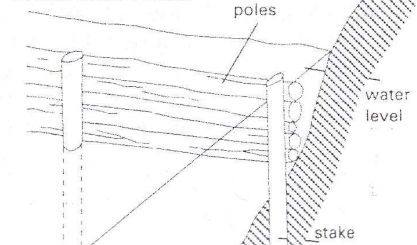
Ideally a wetland should have banks of which the slopes vary in character. Gentle slopes for aquatic plants – the ideal slope is 25%. Steep slopes or vertical banks, with overhanging vegetation such as brambles, for bank dwelling animals and birds.

Don't plant overhanging or shade vegetation on the south side of the wetland because the area should receive as much as light as possible.

Steep and high banks above water 30cm or more deep should be avoided where children will have access.

If a bank is too steep to stay up by itself, but you wish to maintain it, it can be revetted. It will, however, not then be suitable for bank dwelling animals or birds, although it will be good for other uses such as fishing.

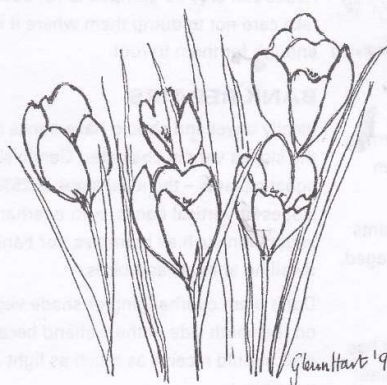
BANK REVETTING



The words of local poet Annie Cross celebrating
the beginning of springtime.

SNOWDROPS

Slowly receding, the blanket of white,
Climbing higher the source of life and light
Ever growing stronger
And days growing longer.
The water crystals dissolve and reveal
More white gems which the mantle did conceal
From obscurity,
Exquisite purity.
Delicate and deceptively fragile,
They nod in acknowledgement and I smile,
For here, proof of the Spring,
The snowdrops emerging.



REBIRTH

Asleep and waiting in infancy
Under a white blanket snug and warm,
Slowly awaking from dormancy,
Refreshed and stirring, a crocus corm.

Plump life with papery shell in the earth,
Impatient for February's sunlit hours,
Miraculous moment of rebirth
Perfection in golden crocus flowers.

Speen & N. Dean Youth Group

Our youth club is still meeting at the Baptist Church Hall every other Wednesday at 8pm until 9.45pm. We are always looking for new members, so if you are aged between 12 and 16 please do come along. As well as two table tennis tables, we now have a full-sized table football table - so there is always plenty to do!

Just before Christmas we went on a trip to Wycombe Summit Dry Ski Slope where members of the club had lessons in skiing and snow boarding. We are going again in February as this seems to be very popular as well as being close to home.

The club is closed over half term but will start again on Wednesday the 26th February -

and the dates for next term will be 26th February, 12th March and again - one week later due to Easter - on 19th March.

Come along and bring a friend. If you have any questions about Youth Club please ring Tricia or Robert Lenko on 488337.

More research into local family history by Bob Johnston.

WARDS of Speen = MONTAGUES of North Dean

A Southampton reader of the Speen and North Dean News wrote to the editor after reading the story of the Wards, who were carpenters in Speen.

Roger Ward, now seventy five, is a direct descendant of Edward Ward of Holly Cottage, c 1860 - 1890. He gives us other family relations. They are with the Rixons, Cartwrights, Turners, Floyds, Janes', Plumridges, all of Speen, and the Montagues of North Dean.

Here is the connection with North Dean. William Montague, born 1811, was the victualer of the Sportsman's Arms, North Dean, from 1854 to 1869. He married Mary (maiden name unknown). They had a son, Richard Montague, who married Mary Anne (maiden name unknown). They had about thirteen children born between 1866 and 1888 (I believe that descendants of Richard Montague still live in the area).

William and Mary Montague (Sportsman's Arms) also had a daughter called Catherine Montague, born 1847, who married Frederick Cartwright, whose daughter Elizabeth Kate married Charles Edward Ward - the grandfather of our correspondent. The couple built Wayside to live in. Prior to the marriage, Elizabeth had lived in Rose Cottage.

Can North Dean historians fill in the gaps? If so, reply to Bob Johnston of 15 Abbotswood, Speen.

Shock horror!

An appalling fatality occurred Monday last which unhappily resulted in the death of three persons and injuries, some of them severe, to three others.

The Cottage Garden Society Show, being held at Grimsdyke, by kind permission of the President, John Forrest, will be remembered by everyone in the Village and Neighbourhood for many years, for it was the occasion of a fearful fatality which brought proceedings to an abrupt conclusion. The cricket match between Speen and Lacey Green had completed an innings when light rain began to fall.

Twelve or so spectators had taken shelter under a tree to watch the drawing of a bee hive by Ernest Anderson. Suddenly, without any presumptory warning, there was a flash of lightning accompanied by an onerous peel of thunder resembling the rattling of musketry. The whole body of men were thrown down. When the spectators ran to their assistance it was seen that the lives of John Eggleton, George Adams and Henry Bowler were extinct and three others were insensible.

The three men whose lives were thus brought to such an unexpected termination, one George Adams Snr. was the eldest. He leaves a widow and six children to lament his loss. He was a labourer in the employ of Mr Poulton and what was generally

termed the Sunday Morning Postman, he having delivered the letters at Mr Forrester's and other residences on Sunday mornings for some years. He was a member of the committee.

Mr John Eggleton, who had taken an active interest in the Society and whose name appeared on the schedule as its treasurer, was another victim. Mr Eggleton was a single man. He lived at Wardrobes Farm, Looseley Row, was highly respected and looked up to, a Guardian of the Wycombe Union, captain of Princes Risborough Cricket Club, a trustee of the Literary Institute and one of the managers of the National Schools.

Henry Bowler, age 23, son of John Bowler of Speen, a chairmaker by trade, was the third victim.

Three other men, Thomas Ward of Speen, Ernest Ward of Hampden and Mr J. B. Baldwin of Bromley, Kent, were injured. Mr Baldwin had been invited to give the bee hive demonstration. He was greatly shaken and unable to proceed homeward until the next morning. Ernest Ward had the greater shock and was in great pain. Ultimately he was conveyed home in a cart packed with straw to prevent oscillation. Thomas Ward was not long in recovering. He described the feeling as that of having pins and needles run into him.

After the unfortunate victims of the

deadly fluid had been carried away, a consultation was held and it was decided to abandon the enterprise and to give the prizes at another time.

Charles Ward (mentioned in the previous article) was captain of Speen Cricket Team. He was also struck down by the lightning bolt. Roger Ward feels that this may have resulted in his early death at the age of only 39, in 1908.

The occurrence had cast no ordinary gloom over the whole district. Each of the three places included in the radius of the show - Lacey Green, Looseley Row and Speen - had its victim and all the men were well known and much esteemed. The thunderstorm, so widespread in its fatal consequences, is almost unknown, and the disaster, coming in the midst of a public holiday, has appeared especially saddening.

Date - 27th July 1891

Abridged from Bucks Free Press, Bucks Herald and Bucks Advertiser.

Notes - The tragedy was brought to my attention by Roger Ward of Southampton, where he found a news report in the archives of the Hampshire Chronicle.

The weather report and forecast for that date, from the Met. Office records: N. Westerly light winds, unsettled at first, with thunder, some improvement later.

BOB JOHNSTON

Would You Like To Sing With Us In The Lacey Green Church Choir?

invites Jill White

I wonder if you know that your parish has a church choir? The church is St John The Evangelist in Lacey Green, the parish of which covers Speen and Loosley Row, of course.

St John's has had a choir for many years and it is very fortunate in having an excellent organist and choirmaster who is very talented, works very hard, chooses all the hymns and anthems for the services, as well as the programmes of music for our carol singing at Christmas. He also writes out all the psalms, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis which we use at Evensong. Our Evensong is once a month on the first Sunday - it is the traditional service in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

At Christmas the choir goes out carol singing in local pubs in the area in aid of a child we sponsor - Hussein Farhat in Beirut. We usually collect over £200; £90 of which goes to sponsor Hussein's education and the rest goes to the Save The Children Fund for other needy children, such as those in Bosnia. Last year we made a record collection of £367.80. We go to four pubs on the Friday before Christmas and another four on the Saturday. People are very generous at this time of year. We fit in our visits to coincide with parties where there are plenty of people to see us; they particularly like the children.

Speen Theatre & Outings Club

Our members enjoy regular excursions to theatres and other places of interest. Membership costs £5 per year and that gives you the right to early booking for our trips. We welcome members from anywhere in the district, but our coach pick-up stops are in Speen, Hughenden and High Wycombe.

Lacey Green Village Day

On that day in 1995 the choir had afloat decked out like a church, with a recording of bells ringing - to celebrate V.E. Day, as this was the first time bells could be rung at the end of the war. After the procession, the choir went into the church and sang ten anthems that are used throughout the church year. The church was open all day and there were flower arrangements by various village organisations as well as the organ recitals and a violin recital. The Village Day is Lacey Green's equivalent of a fete (Lacey Green has no field large enough for a fete). This Village Day is held every other year.

Visits By The Choir

have been made to other churches in the area. In 1992, for example, we went to St Mark's Church on the R.A.F. Domestic Site and sang The Crucifixion, by John Stainer. In 1993 we went to St Mary's church in Princes Risborough for the Confirmation Service, and the following year we took part in a flower festival where there was a programme of music in the church; Lacey Green Singers also taking part as well as our choir and that of St Mary's. Last year our choir was asked to sing at a wedding in Great Kimble, as their church had no choir. The bride and groom were very pleased with us and gave us boxes of sweets.

Summer Holiday then the lead-up to Christmas

We have a holiday in August and then in September we start learning the Christmas music. Christmas is a very busy time for us as we go carol singing round the local pubs

and there are extra services in the church: the Nine Lessons and Carols on the Sunday Before Christmas and the Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. This service is very popular and the church is always full. The service on Christmas Day is also very popular and well attended.

There are very few church choirs in our area (Prestwood and Princes Risborough each have one) and ours is considered one of the best by the various visiting vicars who have taken services since Reverend Hale's retirement. As well as singing the usual hymns, we sing an anthem at Holy Communion and the traditional Evensong where we sing a psalm, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. We also do a lot of unaccompanied singing. If anyone would like to join us, we practise on Monday's from 7 to 8pm, so the adults and children can practise next Sunday's hymns together. The choir also practises three quarters of an hour before the service on Sunday and at Evensong as well as at weddings. Joining the choir is an interesting way of meeting new people and very good fun as well. You get the real meaning of Christmas and Easter.

If you would like to come along and find out for yourself what we do, come to our Monday practise or **contact our Choirmaster, Stuart King, on 01844 345927.**

Jill White



The following outings are booked for the early part of 1997:

"Guys and Dolls." Matinee on Saturday March 29th.
Tickets, including coach, will cost £23.50.

The Royal Horticultural Society, in Wisley, Surrey, on Saturday 28th June.

Tickets, including coach, entry and lunch will be £22. There will be plenty to see: roses, borders, hostas, summer bedding and much

more.

We are hoping to book a trip to the Shakespeare Globe Theatre at Bankside, London during May.

If you are interested in any of the above-mentioned trips, please **ring Jo on 488629 Or Sheila on 488377.**

We hope that you will join us.

Sheila Fiddball

Peter,

Enclosed is a list of Plans and decisions received by the Parish Council since the last newsletter. Though not many this time, half a dozen more are in the pipeline.

I heard this week, unofficially, that the decision to demolish Tree Tops bungalow was generally favoured by the W.D.C. Planning Committee but was referred to the Development Panel; since I gather an amendment is coming, although not received yet.

The two Appeal decisions were only received end of last week - not surprising. Details of reasons yet to be received. There is no further news on the date of the proposed public enquiry on the Caravan Site (expected about April).

I've received information on the eventual voting of the Planning Committee for the approval of Speen Stores. With 29 Committee members present:

24 in favour
3 against and
2 abstentions

I note that one of those against was the member for North Dean, which I think is rather sad given the likelihood that the residents there would use and value such a facility.

Do you like the Village Hall internal decorations? Fred Burnham worked hard over Christmas to complete them on time (every day).

Don (White)

SPEEN PLANNING APPLICATIONS

96/06913	Treetops bungalow, Chapel Hill, Demolish & build large detached house
96/06939	Ploughshares, Flowers Bottom Convert garage into bedroom Build double garage

Incidentally, according to Paul Rogerson, Tree Tops has been demolished before the Shop site project has been completed, and this is against the conditions for approval.

DECISIONS OF WYCOMBE DISTRICT PLANNING COMMITTEE

96/06366	8 Abbotswood Large rear extension	Approved
96/06635	Farthings, Studridge Lane Fell 2 trees	Approved
96/06749	Home Farm Cottage Fell larch tree	Approved
96/06462	Flowers Bottom Farm Erect fence at front boundary	Approved

DECISIONS of PLANNING INSPECTORATE (Appeals)

96/05108	Build house on land at side of Heath Cottage Grubbins Lane	Appeal rejected
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SPEEN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Peter Symonds

presents

Serengeti Safari

A slide show providing a closer look at the
wonderful wildlife, scenery and culture of
Tanzania

Speen Village Hall

8.00 p.m.

Friday 18 April 1997

Goings On At NORTH DEAN Village Hall

Since the last newsletter, a number of events have been held at North Dean.

Race Night was, as usual, a successful and very enjoyable evening, raising £362 for the Village Hall funds. This is a fun evening out, allowing everyone to let off a bit of steam when urging their chosen horses to the finishing line in any of the eight races. Supper in the interval, and plenty of good wine and beer, helped the evening along. Watch out for the next time we "race", sometime in the Autumn.

The village Christmas Get-Together was slightly down on numbers this time, but still very much enjoyed by those who were able to make it. Perhaps we were a little too close to Christmas day; this year it will be a few days earlier. It's a great occasion to get to know others in the village, so please try to make it next time.

The annual Carol Service in the village was, unfortunately, very poorly attended, in the main due to a lot of illness, but those of us who did manage to make it had a very enjoyable afternoon.

Over thirty of the more senior members of the community attended the Over Sixties Lunch on 11th January, tucking in to a meal of chicken with all the trimmings, prepared and served by members of the Village Hall Committee. Sherry was served on arrival and wine was enjoyed with the meal. A free raffle and a bingo session completed the afternoon.

If anyone in the village aged over sixty has been left off the list, please let one of the Committee know so that they can get an invitation this year.

It has been suggested that the Over Sixties Lunch might be better held later in the year, when the weather is likely to be warmer. Any views on this suggestion will be welcome.

The present programme of work on the Village Hall has been completed, but there is still much to be done, so please support our future events and help swell the coffers.

A list of forthcoming events will be available soon, but one date for your diary is the A.G.M. to be held on the 14th April. Do come along and give your support.

John Rogers - Chairman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC LOCAL INQUIRY

WILDLIFE & COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 SECTION 53

Notice is hereby given that an inspector will be appointed by
the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine

**The Buckinghamshire County Council (Public Byway Open To All Traffic No.37,
Parish of Hughenden) Definitive Map Modification Order 1996**

and will attend at:

Memorial Hall, Speen Road, Upper North Dean, Hughenden

On Tuesday 11 March 1997 at 10.00am

To hold a public local inquiry into the order

The effect of the order, if confirmed without modification, will be to modify the definitive map and statement for the area by adding to them the byway open to all traffic from point E on the map attached to the said Order at the approach to New House Farm in the Parish of Hughenden in a generally south-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 500 metres to point F at its junction with Hampden Road having a minimum width throughout of 4 metres; and upgrading to a byway open to all traffic the public right of way from point A on the said map at Denner Hill in the Parish of Hughenden and the junction with the metalled section of U621 in a generally south-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 450 metres to point B on the said map at the edge of Acrehill Wood having a minimum width throughout of 3.8 metres then from point B on the said map in a generally south-south-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 250 metres to point C on the said map having a varying width throughout of between 1.2 metres and 1.8 metres then from point C on the said map in a generally south-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 260 metres to point D on the said map having a minimum width throughout of 2.7 metres then from point D on the said map in a generally north-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 230 metres to point E having a minimum width throughout of 2.7 metres as shown by a continuous brown line on the said map.

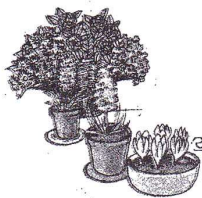
Brian Dodd

B Dodd

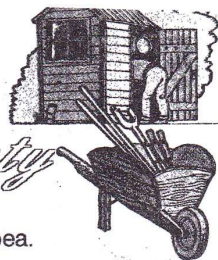
An Assistant Chief Planning Inspector
Department of the Environment

WILL THIS BE A JOB
FOR SUPER SWAMPY?

I've just read this item via Megan
I think I understand, but wouldn't it
be nice if the officialese was accompanied
by a simpler explanation plus a mini
map of the scene. See you at the enquiry



The Speen Horticultural Society



At the time of writing (January '97) we are experiencing heavy frosts, bitterly cold winds and fog; not the best weather for gardening but an ideal time for checking our tools and gardening machinery, reading seed catalogues and planning the growing season ahead. However, by the time this article is printed, Spring will be upon us, and if you haven't done any of those things - it will be TOO LATE.

Whatever, be positive about the season ahead - a successful gardener is a supreme optimist!

We welcomed Chris Chadwell on December 2nd, who gave us an illustrated talk on the Flowers and Birds of Little Tibet. This was a first class presentation and it was a great shame that that there was not a larger audience. Mr Chadwell, who has featured on BBC's Gardeners' World, has travelled extensively in his quest for seeds of alpine, perennials, shrubs and trees from the Himalaya, Japan, New Zealand and North America. I'm sure Chris is a speaker that we will invite again.

On 3rd February we are entertaining John Bishop, secretary of the National Sweet Pea Society (see below, Ed.)

We are hoping to have a speaker on 7th April, whose subject will be rock gardens and alpine plants. Definitely arranged is a meeting on 18th April, when Pete Symonds, from the village, will be giving an illustrated talk on the wildlife of East Africa.

OPEN GARDENS '97

Also planned for this Summer is our bi-annual Open Gardens Day. Please contact me if you would like to be involved.

Ted Drew

Well done, Ted, on your retirement this month.

PS: Last evening John Bishop gave his presentation on Sweet

Peas to nearly thirty members of the Horticultural Society. We were told that they like well drained but moisture retentive soil (plenty of well rotted humous and grit, but not too rich as they make their own nitrogen) and their heads in the sun. Start them off in pots, trim off the tops to encourage lower shoots and plant them out before they've grown too large. When the flowers come, keep them picked as this will encourage a succession throughout the summer.

I hadn't realised that sweet peas came in so many heights. The more usual tall kinds John does not recommend growing in containers because they would need too much watering time. However, there are several short types, still with good-sized blooms, which are quite happy in pots and even hanging baskets. One new short variety was originated in this country but commercialised in America and named by them as "Snoopy" (It's a new pea - get it?). John was a bit disdainful of this.

John began his talk by saying "there are two types of people - gardeners and plantsmen." John being the latter, grows thousands of sweet pea plants on his large allotment at Stokenchurch all in regimented rows of canes, precisely spaced. Next to these are equally pristine rows of gladioli and chrysanthemums, plus rows of vegetables. So the general effect is that of a rainbow hued trooping of the colour.

John finished off the evening with a slide show in which he included photographs taken at the flower shows - halls and tents full of the most magnificent floral art you could imagine, involving hundreds of thousands of beautiful and fragrant sweet peas, all assembled throughout the night before the show.

John also showed us slides of wild sweet pea species including those being used in attempts to create

the yellow sweet pea.

John's other interests include archeology and old cars. My impression was of a man happily obsessed with beautiful and interesting hobbies - not as some lonely "anorak" but engaged socially with fellow hobbyists and getting about enthusing others as he was us last night.

Ed.

PPS: The May '94 issue of THE GARDEN has a splendid article on Sweet Peas by Sylvia Norton. Let me know if you wish to borrow it. Peter 488222.

In the Speen Village Hall at 8pm on 2nd December the Horticultural Society presented Mr Chris Chadwell who gave an illustrated presentation entitled FLOWERS AND BIRDS OF LITTLE TIBET. The area of LADAKH, although politically part of N. India deserves this title. Mr Chadwell's slides of plants growing out of rocks and crevices in such a barren inhospitable area, were quite amazing and gave us all a thought or two about "struggles" in our own gardens. There were some colourful "bird in hand" slides taken during an ornithological study organised by Mr Chadwell's colleagues on the expedition. His slides breath-taking barren mountain scenery - truly a mountain desert with roads tracing their fragile presence on the rock-faces, made one realise the difficulties facing plant hunter in this part of the world.

Later we had the opportunity purchase seeds of some of the species of the region, with cultivation tips. Any plants raised from these seeds will be a colorful reminder of an informative entertaining evening.

Lois Bale



Speen Church Of England School P.T.A.

Following a busy period prior to Christmas, organising the children's Christmas party and associated events, the P.T.A. committee are again rising to the challenge of raising additional funds to support the village school.

The bad news is that the school budget has been cut by 12%. P.T.A. funds are already used to provide many items which parents would assume are basic essentials provided by the local authority: additional reading books, music tuition and sports equipment, for example, are paid from P.T.A. funds as well as computers, picnic tables and Christmas parties. Clearly faced with a cut in the budget of this magnitude, P.T.A. funds become an increasingly important element in maintaining facilities at the school.

Our major fundraising events for 1997 are:-

The Grand Auction of Promises on Saturday 8th March and the Caribbean Night on Saturday 21st June.

Please the publicity elsewhere in the newsletter about the Auction of Promises and see if you can offer something to support the village school. Equally if you would like tickets for this event, please complete the slip and send it through the post. A catalogue will be prepared and postal bids can be made before the event.

Ideas from previous years include offering a round of golf at your club, four hours baby-sitting, a number of hours gardening, acting as a chauffeur for an evening, etc etc. Items auctioned have included paintings, pottery and cakes, cases

of wine and even holidays and cinema tickets - all auctioned in a lively atmosphere. Last time the bargains included a chalet in the French Alps for one week which sold for £40, whilst a £10 Marks and Spencer voucher sold for £13!

With the onset of Nursery Vouchers there will shortly be an increasing number of four-year-olds starting at the school. The school is keen to have additional reception class toys. If your own children have grown out good quality toys for the 4 to 5 age group (e.g. stickle bricks, duplo, jig-saw puzzles etc) or equally books, the school would gratefully receive these. Particularly needed are "ride-on" toys. If possible please ensure that any offerings are clean, safe, complete and in good condition. (please contact any PTA members or the school direct).

Thank you in anticipation.

Peter Symonds - Chairman

THIS COULD MEAN WAR!

John Rogers, on behalf of North Dean Golfers, invites similar enthusiasts in Speen to a ~~thrashing~~ competition between the two villages.

A number of golfers in North Dean have expressed an interest in arranging a golf match, and I'm sure there must be similar enthusiasts in Speen.

So, if anyone is interested in a round or even a day out, please contact me on 562041.

It might be useful to consider possible options, say:

1. 18 Hole Stroke Play competition
2. North Dean v Speen Match Play, or
3. Society Day Out, with either or both of the above-mentioned competitions, plus a possible Fun Round.

Light lunch and evening meal could be included, and, dare I say it, we might even invite our respective partners to join us for the evening meal.

In the days of my youth there was a good competitive spirit, in the sporting field, between the two villages, so this suggestion may be a way of regenerating it?

Perhaps it could be food for thought for our respective Fete Committees?

John Rogers

Footnote:

Sounds a good idea, John. I'll put it to the next Speen Fete committee meeting in a few days time and other village organisations. And for us non golfers what about rounders etc?

More Art And Poetry From Speen School



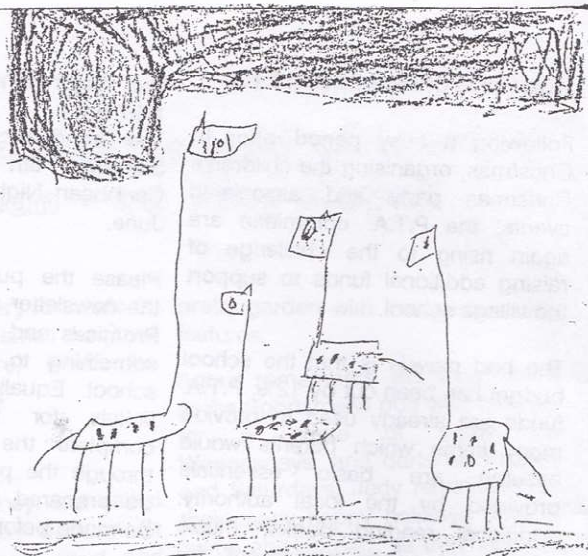
The Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf

The three little pigs were playing in the garden and they were playing football and when they saw the big bad wolf they ran straight into their house. But the big bad wolf got a ladder and climbed down the chimney

And the big bad wolf said come to Farmer Smith's farm at 5 o'clock. But the three little pigs went at 3 o'clock. They picked some red apples and then they ran down the tree as fast as they could. They ran home as quickly as they could and shut the door just in time.

The big bad wolf climbed the tree and got onto the roof. Then he climbed down the chimney and the three little pigs built a big fire. The big bad wolf fell into the fire and scalded himself and that was the end of him.

by Oliver Blundell



The Three Little Giraffes

Once upon a time the mother giraffe said you are too big. You are old enough to look after yourselves. Go and build your own houses. On the way two of them got lost.

The third little giraffe built his house of straw. The next day the big bad elephant came walking along the road and he tried to blow the house down.

And he blew the house down. The third little giraffe ran away and he was never seen again.

by Toby Holmes

Rainbow

by Greg

Real natural colours in the air
And makes you have a tingle in your toes.

It makes the air light up.

Nice bright colours in the air.

Bright tingling colours in the air.

Orange Red yellow colours in the air.

What a great sight.

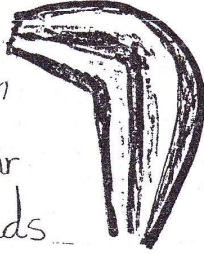


...And More

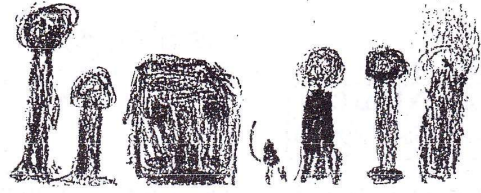
Katherine Pennington

RAINBOW

Red, orange, blue and Green
Amazing colours in the air
Imagine painted clouds
Nice colours in the sky
Bringing happy faces
Over happy people
Wonderful colours



Paul G-J Sun
Sun in the sky
Up very high
New every day



The Three Little Birds

One day mother bird said to her children go and build your own home. The fox heard mother bird and he went after the children because he wanted to eat them.

The first little bird built his house of bricks. The fox caught the little bird in his mouth and ate it up. The other two birds got away.

The two birds built their house of concrete. The fox crept up to the birds and ate one up. Mother bird pecked the fox until he ran away and never came back.

by Tanja Craft

LYZA

Sun

shining down on us

Up so high

Now we can play outside



unhappy at the the thought of leaving North Dean - so they stayed

Newsletter's Lilian Cash
interviews Judy Lipscomb

Arthur and Judy Lipscomb have lived in North Dean at "Rookery Nook" for 48 years. They married in 1941 and spent the first ten years of their marriage in two rooms in High Wycombe, so when they obtained the tenancy of "Rookery Nook" in 1948 they were over the moon. The rent was twelve shillings and sixpence a week, with very little in the way of mod. cons. There were only two electric lights in the house, one upstairs and one down, only cold water, a stone sink in the scullery, plus a boiler for the washing. The cookery range was in the living room (with the electric light), no bathroom, and very rural toilet arrangements. Judy's first major purchase was an Elsan toilet! Later, when their landlady installed a flush loo, the rent was increased to fourteen shillings and sixpence (72.5p) per week; quite an expensive "luxury".

ARTHUR'S STORY

Arthur, born in High Wycombe, had a twin brother and a sister, now in a nursing home. Their father was killed in the 1914-18 war, so life was not easy for them. Arthur's mother caned furniture and often did work for Queen Mary). Arthur contracted TB as a child and spent many years in a convalescent home at Peppard Common.

Arthur also joined the furniture trade in the town, firstly making polish from shellac and methylated spirit for all the french polishers in the Wycombe furniture factories.

He served in the army from 1939-46, where he was nicknamed "Brush" - the name Judy prefers to use. Arthur returned to his old firm after the war, but the development of cellulose finishes was sounding the death knell of the polish manufacturers. On being made redundant at the age of 58, Arthur

considered himself very fortunate to be employed by a small furniture maker at Hazlemere, where he remained until retiring.

JUDY'S STORY

Judy, christened Nancy, but called Annie by Arthur, was born in St John's Wood, an only child and daughter of a Civil Servant. She and her mother were sent to High Wycombe at the outbreak of the 1939-45 world war to stay with an aunt, and she met Arthur at a local dance.

AS they had no children, Judy has always had a job, in the Civil Service and also at TRADA. Getting to work from North Dean was never easy, even in the 1950's, so Arthur invested in a motor bike, only to find the handlebars were too wide to go through the shed door! That was only the first of many, for Arthur loved biking and has many happy memories of fantastic holidays and wonderful day trips, with Judy riding pillion. He once treated Judy to a sidecar, but she didn't like it because she couldn't talk to Brush as they were riding along.

Eventually the motor bike gave way to a car - a three wheeler Reliant, and Arthur recalls with great satisfaction being able to drive 310 miles on a full tank of petrol (6 gallons). These good times continued until Arthur could no longer drive due to familial paraplegia, which has got progressively worse.

In 1966 the Lipscombes purchased "Rookery Nook" for £2000, and they continued the improvements they had already started as tenants. They now have a very comfortable home with all the conveniences of hot water, a bathroom and an up-to-date kitchen, plus a really

pretty garden with many interesting features.

Arthur remembers evenings spent at the Sportsmans pub with his pals for a game of cards on Wednesdays, and darts on Fridays and Saturdays. Judy reminisces on their many happy holidays both at home and abroad, as they travelled widely in Europe from 1950 to 1985; their home containing many souvenirs of those happy times.

Sadly now the travelling days are over; Arthur can walk only with the aid of a walking frame, his eyesight failing.

In 1990, in preparation for the years ahead, Arthur and Judy put Rookery Nook on the market, intending to move to a bungalow in Great Missenden, very near to the shops and amenities. A buyer was found for the house who was full of enthusiasm and ideas for this pretty cottage. But as the day for completion approached, Arthur and Judy became increasingly unhappy, and Judy wept at the thought of leaving North Dean and Rookery Nook. At the eleventh hour they changed their minds and decided to stay.

They have learned to live without the car - Judy is still very active and walks for miles, Arthur has a chair lift, which overcomes some problems. The important thing is they are happy and comfortable in the home they have loved for so long, and North Dean is very pleased they stayed with us.



SPEEN - A VICTIM OF RURAL DEPRIVATION

At first sight there appears to be little in Speen which is deprived. Rural deprivation was, however first identified in 1970, and it has become increasingly common ever since. Speen is a very good example of this form of deprivation. It is seen in the increasing population density, the lack of any shops, pubs and services and it is seen in the decreasing social interaction of many age groups in the village. As a result, the level of community spirit in the village has steadily decreased.

For my A-level geography project I chose to study the causes and the effects of rural deprivation in Speen over the last 50 years. To do this I used census data, maps, land use analysis, photographs, a present day questionnaire completed by a sample of 124 households and interviews with senior village residents. The results were quite striking.

Firstly what are the effects of rural deprivation? Since 1891 the population of Speen has doubled to its present 646. During this time the number of houses has almost tripled to 237. Most of this growth has come during the last 50 years through in-fill development. Since the village boundary has not moved significantly this has resulted in a significant increase in population density.

The newer houses have been significantly larger than those in the 1940s village. The average number of 'basic rooms' has increased from 5 to 7, and the population pyramid is symptomatic of this. Now, 36% of the population is in the age range 35 - 49 years, whereas only 9% is in the range 20 - 34 years. This younger age group cannot afford to live in the large expensive houses which have been built more recently. The village has plenty of children; 26% of the population is below 19 years old. This is fortunate since some of these keep the village school in existence, which acts as a social meeting place. Older people however find the large houses and the lack of shops and services unattractive. Only 9% of the population is 65 and over. The village is therefore largely populated by the wealthy middle-aged and children.

Fifty years ago Speen was a balanced community with shops, pubs, industry and a resulting high level of social interaction. The village was largely self-contained; 90% of people were employed within 5 miles of the village centre, the main employers being furniture, wood and agriculture. Almost all shopping was done inside the village which had its own bakery and dairy.

What has brought about this change? The car and the improvement in road and rail links have played a major part. The wealthy urban worker has chosen more and more to live in a pleasant rural village such as Speen and to commute to work. The lifestyle of this type of resident is very different to that of the original villager, however. The newer resident demands better choice in goods and services than a small village can offer. Having one or more cars makes it easy for him to travel to find this choice. This is reflected in statistics on Speen. In 1940 only 50% of households owned a car, compared with today when 96% own cars and 72% own two or more. (5% own 4 or more!). Now, 70% of workers are employed more than 5 miles from the village centre. 74% of shopping is done up to 10 miles from the village and 22% is done between 11 and 20 miles from the village. This has caused the loss of the village shop and other amenities.

What does the future hold? Well luckily the village still has some important assets in its school, the village hall and the playing field. Some new small houses and a shop are being built, and this is a step in the right direction, although the survival of the shop is in some doubt. There is also a growth in the number of people working within the village. Now 9% work at home, often using modern telecommunication systems to carry out their work. Perhaps these people will take the place of the old agricultural and furniture workers. Unfortunately theirs is a much more solitary type of work which is less likely to improve the social aspects of the village. People are generally having to work longer hours and thus have less time and energy to devote to the village. We are therefore increasingly dependent on the selfless efforts of those who do not work full time to sustain the village as a pleasant social environment.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the village who completed a questionnaire, and especially Gordon and Poppy Ellis who provided some extremely valuable and fascinating information about the village of years ago.

Simon Peake
Beeches
Hampden Road
Speen

Carols, coffee, Christmas, cakes, computers and much more - It's all happening at a W.I. near you.

It's quite difficult when still stuffing oneself with all the nuts etc. one bought for Christmas and all the chocolates one got given, to have to think back to before the festivities to what one was doing in October. However, referring back to my notes, I vaguely remember Miss Cattell giving a slide show and a talk on Tuscany, including a visit to Florence. We also made £180 for Macmillan Nurses "Biggest Coffee Morning" appeal when Gloria Holmes agreed to have one at her house.

In November we had our Annual Meeting when Wendy White saved the day by agreeing to be our President for the next year (or three). We also had another evening trip to Hunter's Farm Shop near Waddesdon, when we bought some Christmas goodies and had a delicious lasagne and salad in the large dining room with an enormous log fire burning in the grate - comfort with a capital "C".

We'd had a notice about a Sugarcraft show in Birmingham, but Wendy said she could show us how to do that (is there no end to this "girl's" talents?), so lessons were set up at Jean Baines' place (more room) six before before Christmas - bring your own cake and go for it! Funnily enough, our December meeting was "Having fun with Sugarpaste" with Mrs J. Thorndycraft. There we all were sitting around tables drinking our warm Christmas punch with bits of coloured icing and being told to make a snowman (having been shown how, of course) - and they came out pretty good too. The following week some members did us proud carol singing round parts of the village and making £90 for our charity, which this year was for Wycombe Hospital, who had been in touch with us asking if we could raise some money for a Human Computer Interface which helps brain-damaged patients to communicate with thought waves.

Wendy also added another £50 which she had made out of her icing lessons.

We had a good turn-out for the January meeting when we got together for a chat and two of our ladies had arranged a quiz.

NORTH DEAN CORONATION CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

CARNIVAL DANCE

THE VILLAGE HALL,

NORTH DEAN,

On Saturday, 27th February, 1937

8-12 Late Bus to Wycombe

WILL BE HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL

see Megan for your ticket.

Future events:

February - Whatever happened to Amelia Earhart? - Mrs S. Mawhood.
March - From Pop to Opera - Miss G. Groves.
April - Birthday Party.

Speen and Lacey Green Cub Pack & Beaver Colony

The local cubs and beavers have continued their weekly meetings since the past newsletter.

In addition to the regular weekday meetings the cubs visited Wycombe Wanderers Football Club and had a guided tour of the ground, met the players and then saw a good win against Plymouth Argyle. The cubs also participated in a sponsored walk and attended Remembrance Day and Christmas services at the Baptist Church.

During Wednesday evenings the cubs made progress with learning skills and training for badges, as well as taking part in a successful fox watch (not all dead, then! - Ed.)

The beavers likewise have continued their meetings, many of which are aimed towards developing craft skills.

We must again appeal for further leadership support, since Mike Warden will be moving on shortly. Anybody who would like to help run cubs would be very welcome. Support and training are available. Equally, Catherine Foster, who runs the Beavers, would be pleased to have additional help. If you wish to learn more please contact:
Derek Lewton 01844 34413
Peter Symonds 01494 488016

In any event, in addition to the activities listed below, it is hoped to organise more outdoor activities as soon as the nights get lighter; possibly with a repeat of the hugely successful Mid Summer Camp.

Peter Symonds

Scheduled activities:

Beavers:

February

5th

Potato Printing

12th
26th
March
5th
12th

Leaf Printing
Open Activity

Matchbox Boats
Musical Shakers

Cubs:
February
5th

Map Reading

12th
26th
March
5th
12th

Map Reading/Modelling
Science and Nature

Science and Nature
Evening Hike

As stated in the previous issue, Beavers is open to boys and girls aged 6 to 8 and the meetings are held in the Chapel Hill Hut on Wednesdays between 5 and 6.15. Cubs, also open to girls as well as boys, is held after the Beavers - 6.30 to 8.

Also mentioned last issue is the facility for marquee hire. Contact the above mentioned Derek Lewton for more on this.

Jean Gabbittas summarises the case in favour of the new parking and bus lane schemes in High Wycombe (presently being received with much criticism from some members of the public)

As long ago as 1992, High Wycombe traffic was the cause of great concern and so a joint County and District Transportation Policy was approved in 1994 after public consultation on four strategies suggested by the consultants Halcrow Fox. The result was - "Public Positive Transport Strategy".

The first stage is being introduced: "The scheme aims to encourage commuters to use public transport and not park all day in residential streets or block vital traffic

Good Neighbours

The scheme has been running for four years, Gloria tells me. If you would like to be added to the now updated list of those on stand-by to give occasional help to any Speen or North Dean villager in need then contact her on 488420.

I don't know if my few calls out have been typical, but they have all involved driving elderly residents to doctors, dentists and chiropidists appointments. But I understand that there are other needs expected such as: shopping, hospital visits, baby sitting, emergency repairs, helping discharged patients and various moral support etc etc. Gloria always stresses that drivers should check that their insurance covers passengers, and any reimbursement for petrol is left for the people involved to discuss, if necessary.

Telephone receptionists should be listed elsewhere and Gloria wishes to thank all those who have helped or agreed to help if called upon.
Ed.

arteries....."

"The bus lanes will not cut down current driving space but will utilize the space on the public highways formerly given to parking."

A network of cycle lanes is also being planned and, most importantly, a fully integrated bus and train scheme is being worked out with local train and bus companies.

This strategy was agreed in 1994 with ALL-PARTY SUPPORT.

Councillor *Jean Gabbittas*

Footnote: Although this is not strictly a "village" matter and debate is concentrated in the Bucks Free Press, Wycombe is a big factor in our lives and so the newsletter will welcome any comments. Ed.

May I say...

Thanks

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue, to Princes Risborough Upper School (especially Alison) who copied our pages at a price which enabled us to keep going, to Phil Suter who screen printed our photographs, to other team members, especially Gloria whose persuasiveness got things in. Thank you Simon Peake for letting us have a peek at your "A" level project concerning Speen as an area of "Rural Deprivation". Mind you, Simon, many people would "kill" to be deprived of urban noise, overcrowding and pollution. On the other hand, Speen residents are not in the least deprived of pleasant scenery and a chance to hear and see wildlife as they walk along the many pathways through the woods and fields which surround us on every side. - Bit academic if one is carless, I suppose.

buses or bikes

One statistic which surprised me in your article was that 50% of Speen households possessed a car in those grim far off days of 1940. In that year, when I was a child living in High Wycombe, my parents knew someone who was quite wealthy by the standards of the day - he owned a motor bike. Megan Chinn (then Evans) lived in the next road, and she will verify that we played hopscotch, cricket and skipping across the actual road. We were pretty safe provided we kept an eye open for the occasional passing tank. In those days the greatest potential hazards came from the sky where the Battle of Britain was being desperately fought. (To us five-year-olds it was just a game. Serious trouble was when you got sent home from school for arriving without your gas mask).

and queues

Megan will also confirm that queueing was the national pastime in 1940; long queues for the only mode of transport, the bus, and even longer queues for a single orange per child whenever a ship got through the U-boat blockade. By late May the mother of all queues was forming a few miles beyond Dover, off the beaches of Dunkirk. As if pretending national survival was not the immediate

issue there was also much queueing outside the many local cinemas. (The Grand in Desborough Road was well nick-named "The Flea Pit"). It was also an age when uniforms were the fashion, and cinema doormen were more impressively dressed than field marshals - medals and all (from the Great War) jangling on their multicoloured chests as they marched up and down the mighty queue, shouting out that there was a single "one and nine" available (the queue was largely comprised of couples, of course - but that's another story). Later on, when American forces arrived "to win the war," we children thought how kind some of them were to escort ladies from our road to "The Pictures" whose own husbands were otherwise engaged fighting overseas. Sorry, I digress, but getting back to Speen in 1940, if half the households here then owned cars it only goes to show how early on the village had become "gentrified" - not that they would have been able to use the cars in most cases - because there wasn't any petrol!

It's all crackers

That was all a long time ago, but recent bonfire nights tend to remind one of "the blitz" thanks to the explosive power of China's latest pyrotechnics. Albeit half a mile away, they sound as if they're exploding just outside the window - quite exciting but someone has reportedly complained about the fireworks on the Speen playing field. It seems there's a rule (there is always a rule) that firework displays should be at least 125 metres away from houses or something and apparently this cannot quite be achieved on our playing field. I understand that discussions are taking place and no doubt we will hear the result in due course - or not, as the case may be.

and rubbish

Taking part in the rubbish clear-up last November (there were half a dozen of us) I was surprised how little rubbish there was on the ground compared with some other occasions. One of the interesting features before the advent of the wheelies was the apparent tendency for the "dustmen" to strew the contents of every fifth plastic bag along the road as they went to

the next pick up. Mind you, not everyone is happy about the mobile bins - the local foxes and cats no longer get to rip open plastic bags left out the night before collection in order to take away the remnants of take-aways etc.

Christmas crime

I'm afraid there is nothing to publish on the latest crime figures for the area, admittedly usually no big deal - unless it was your house that got broken into. Speaking of which, I was following the W.I. carol singers around during their annual collection for charity just before Christmas (I went to take a photograph but someone pushed a song sheet into my hand and encouraged me to join in as the only baritone present) when we came across a house in Water Lane where the owners had returned to find they had just been broken into. They were awaiting the arrival of the police and so we were about make a discreet exit, but before we left a certain residents association chairman and his wife insisted that they make a contribution to the collection, despite the trauma they were going through.

watching what

Anyway, despite the break-ins etc of the latter part of 1996 - no meetings of the recently formed Neighbourhood Watch and, allegedly, not much feedback from local police.

watch Hughenden

Most will have seen the posters on the road through Hughenden; not strictly in our readership area but concerning us no doubt - as patients of the Hughenden practice in many cases and maybe for other reasons. So feel free to write about it in the newsletter if you so wish. Basically, I understand that a new medical centre (with inhouse treatment facilities and off road parking) was planned for that bit of land at the corner of the main road and Cryers Hill. But now the wish is for a larger piece of land in this direction where there may be potential even to evolve a cottage hospital at some time in the future. It would consequently destroy the Green Belt countryside of some beauty, upset the nearby residents and, arguably, create a precedent for future development in the North Dean direction. The latter may sound fanciful, but I can recall, for example, along one road, High

.May I say, continued

combe swallowing up first rriers, then Hazlemere, Holmer een, then Prestwood, then ssenden in one virtual tentacle of an development. A quote from a ycombe Planning Committee amber in a recent Bucks Free ess - "We must keep developing." ere are environmental rules now place to protect Green Belt ound local villages, but, as we e, developments with "social ed" have enough dynamic to get er them - quite reasonably in me cases perhaps - but, just a y example, the social housing up apel Hill has also facilitated

permission for two houses, behind, where development had so recently been refused. - ie a developer got his way once again - like they often do.

provocation

Part of my aim, as current editor, has been to try to provoke discussion of slightly controversial issues in the newsletter, but in this I've not had much success. Except that this time we have a small response on fox hunting. You can usually rely on this to stir up the English. Never mind destruction of the planet due to human overpopulation and greed - FOX

HUNTING is THE BIG ONE.

The next deadline for copy is 1st June 1997 - but send stuff in as soon as you like to

**The Editor, Peter Dawson
Chervil Meadow
Chapel Hill
Speen**

01494 488222 (The mailbox is by the gate on Chapel Hill which is opposite the patch of grass known as Pye Corner)

On a purely personal note...

hanks for asking after my stolen apomobile some of you - it's back battered but unbowed.

'ou will recall that the dog sleeping n the back was rescued hours later rom Medmenham churchyard? Well, seven weeks later, we eceived a phone call one Saturday morning - "This is the Flying Squad ve believe that we have your car in our Paddington yard. It was being used on several occasions in connection with armed robberies in London and last night we arrested someone in possession of the car -

and a shotgun - after an armed robbery in the Tottenham Court Road. The car is driveable can you collect it?" I felt like saying can't you forget about it - we were just about to receive the insurance cheque and had already ordered a replacement car. Oh dear! Mary and I duly drove up to London where the Nissan was being held behind the station. Formalities completed, we went to collect it. It seems that the thief had kept the car quite smart - having cleaned it, changed the hour on the clock, carefully tuned in to radio one and had stubbed only three cigarettes out in the ash tray.

However, the police had not been quite so delicate when they rushed in mob handed to arrest the villain (well, he did have a shotgun). The police weapon went straight through the front passenger glass and size elevens went into the panelwork on the other side to make sure he didn't get out that way. Anyway it's back in our drive and the repairs have been done. But I'm still on the lookout for that rottweiler, I tell Maddy!

Peter

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE (U3A)

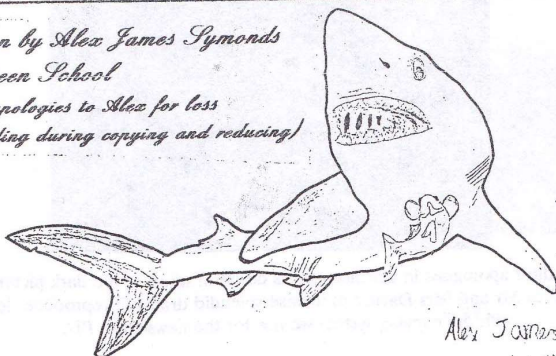
The term "university" is used in its original meaning of a group of people gathered together to learn from one another. The third age can be defined as that period of life when a person is no longer gainfully employed and has a greater freedom to choose what to do with their time.

Currently there are over 300 U3A's in the UK with a membership in excess of 50,000. Non religious or political, without lecturers, examinations or degrees - just people getting together in small groups - mostly in one another's homes - to share a common interest in subjects of their choice. These can range from Art to Zoology - the choice is endless.

The High Wycombe and District U3A now meet at Naphill Village Hall on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 2 to 4pm. Our next meeting is on the 26th March, when Miss Zoe Elliott will speak on voluntary work in the community. Please come along without charge or obligation. Further details can be obtained from me - **telephone 562409**.

john town

*Drawn by Alex James Symonds
of Speen School
(with apologies to Alex for loss
of shading during copying and reducing)*



Alex James Symonds

Darkness

by Ella Corrick

Dangerously gloomy
Always looking spooky
Right down to your bones you feel a little shiver
Keen little eyes seem to watch you
Nothing to see
Everything turns silent
Strange things brush past me
Scary little noises

A Week in Beijing

Bronwen and Wynne Davies of Abbotswood, Speen spent a belated summer holiday in Beijing in December. This is a report of some of their experiences

When we were first approached at a local housewarming party in November to write a piece for the Speen and North Dean Newsletter on our forthcoming trip to Beijing we said yes and thought it should be reasonably straightforward. But where do you start?

Do you start with the sights - where stunning Imperial Chinese masterpieces mingle with concrete monstrosities of the communist era?

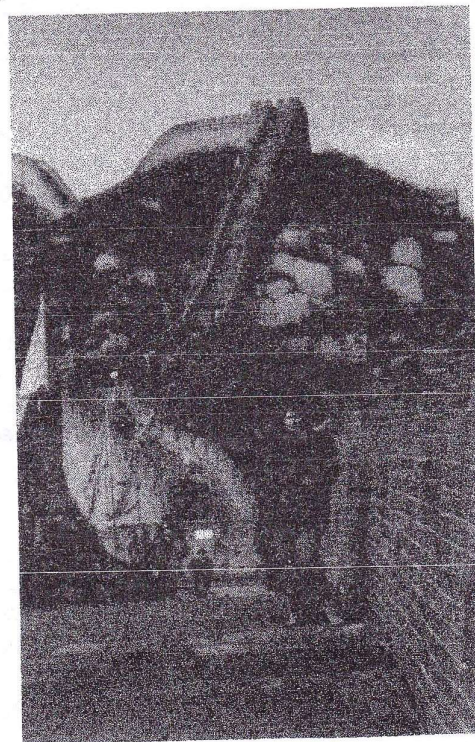
Do you start with the people - who were so welcoming, far more westernised than we'd expected but who also seemed to be taking the steps to capitalism at a more measured pace than their Soviet cousins.

Do you start with the food - they say the Chinese will eat anything on two legs apart from humans and anything on four legs except tables. You bear this in mind and end up playing safe, eating 14 versions of much the same menu over the week. The last thing you want to touch on your return is another Chinese meal.

Let's start with the sights. I used the term 'stunning' earlier and I meant it literally. When you walk into the Forbidden City (which many will have seen in the film 'The Last Emperor') the scale of it stops you in your tracks. The original brief from the third Ming emperor Yongle in the 15th century to his architect was that the visitor should be overawed - he succeeded!. The effect was partly spoilt for us by the wind whipping straight off Siberia making an already cold December day almost unbearable. You can't stand gawping for long at - 27°C.

However the time of year was a positive advantage when we travelled to Badaling

about 46 miles northwest of Beijing to the Great Wall. There were a few other hardy individuals struggling to make it to the top but I confess I had not appreciated how much of a climb it would be. I think I expected a quick few steps to the summit then a gentle stroll along a sort of rampart. Oh no! The height of the steps varies from 2 or 3 feet to 2 or 3 inches, randomly! You cannot get into any kind of rhythm and certain parts are so sheer that you pass several people sitting with head in hands unable to go up or down, and having 'funny turns'. It's hard to believe that warriors in armour on horseback rode four abreast along the top but quite easy to see why it's the only man made structure visible from space. In summer apparently the wall gets so crowded with home grown visitors ten abreast that the only way to climb is more or less in step as a massive millipede.



The editor apologises in advance as it is doubtful whether the dark pictures integral to Mr and Mrs Davies' otherwise splendid draft will reproduce clearly with the copying system we use for the newsletter. PD.

On another day we made our way to a different restored portion of the wall near Mutianyu about 60 miles northeast of Beijing. Now that was more like it! A joint venture between local Chinese and a Japanese partner had installed a ski lift/telecabine which whisked you from the valley floor to the top of the wall in 5 minutes flat. A few quick photographs and you could be back in the valley in a round trip time of less than 15 minutes. Ideal for the "been there, seen that, been photographed in front of it" brigade.

Of all the places we visited I have to say that the Summer Palace on the shores of a lake some 7 miles northwest of the city was my favourite. It was so tranquil with beautiful views over the frozen lake and such wonderful vistas at every turn that you could understand why the Empress Cixi called it a 'Garden for Cultivated Harmony'.

What about the people? I've already said they were very welcoming. The guides we met could not do enough to make sure we enjoyed our time in their country. Most were university lecturers practising their English. Some were comic - one delighted in telling us of his 'faux pas' when, proud of his idiomatic command of the language, he had toasted a visiting dignitary with "Up your bottom" rather than "Bottoms up". Another had us moved nearly to tears as, quite suddenly it seemed, the horror of Tiananmen Square came back to him - he'd been a post graduate student at the time and his wife had been a major in the army sent to oust the students. He spoke of the intense optimism leading up to the events, the incomprehension at the

shooting, and then the relief as the survivors queued up at the Post Office to telephone family and friends.

On a lighter note I have to record that I doubt that I shall ever become a true fan of Chinese Opera - although I know that the caterwauling of the heroine is part of a stylised art form - it is awful! However I'd like to see some of our western operatic divas performing the combination of martial arts and juggling which our heroine demonstrated when not screeching.

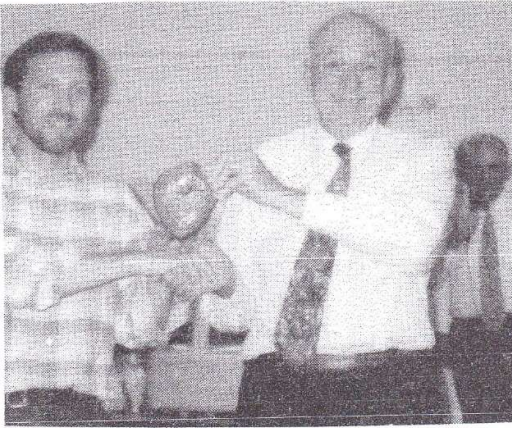
What about the food? I've already said we were quite conservative (even though we are normally adventurous). It was just as well! One couple that we spoke to who had been there for over a week reported choosing 'Golden Horn' off the menu only to discover that the round discs with a hole in the centre were part of a bull that delicacy prevents me from revealing.

What was the most interesting part of the trip? Perhaps it was visiting a small village some 30 miles from the capital and comparing it with our life in Speen. They had logs piled up outside the door, had most of the 'mod cons' although I admit I haven't seen anyone in our village using their washing machine in the yard when the ambient temperature is well below freezing. Their kids behaved as any would and I had a lovely moment as two aged around 5 or 6 played hide and seek with this odd foreigner and howled with laughter as I caught them.

Before we went - everyone that we spoke to who had been to Beijing raved over it. Having been - I can understand why.



We wuz robbed at The Village Quiz



And they say photos don't lie!? The one on the left was taken when it was thought that there was a tie for first place, but after a later recount Don's team were awarded the trophy. However, if our appeal had been allowed - that the US/Canada border was mainly along the 49th parallel (and not the 39th, as the questionmaster insisted) - the team representing the newsletter may have had the highest score. Gutted!



AT
SPEEN SCHOOL
CONCERT

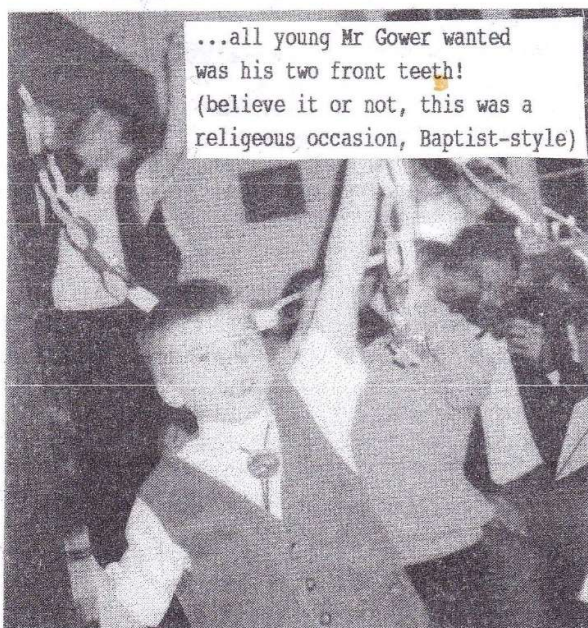
Alex Symonds
kept order with his
gentle persuader.





...while this lot beavered away at more frugal fare.

...but we don't think this little guy quite made Christmas - he wasn't seen again after the Hunt came "cubbing" in Coleheath Bottom. They'll be back this month for his mates.!



YES, OF COURSE WE HAVE TWO PARISHES

I was recently taken to task by the clerk to Hughenden Parish Council; being politely reminded that although our readers are spread over two parishes I tended to refer only to Lacey Green as "the" parish council. Guilty as charged and I'll try to improve. The Hughenden clerk also enclosed a copy of the Hughenden minutes for December. There was, I perceived, nothing there about North Dean and not much of wider interest. But that was just one occasion; no doubt future minutes will include items of local interest which I will report. I've not yet received a copy of the January minutes. January minutes have been received from Lacey Green parish council, albeit nothing to report since Speen was not discussed nor were any Speen councillors present.

Hughenden parish covers a large area, of course, and North Dean holds but a tiny proportion of its population, so I am very grateful to the clerk for taking the trouble to contact me. Readers may recall that I did report on one of their meetings, on the occasion that Mrs Le Flaive, one of their members, tried to stop financial support for village publications. To be sure, Hughenden council are famous for their clashes between certain egos and the Bucks Free Press are very happy to report on the resulting fireworks - as will we when we hear about them. The trouble is that official minutes rarely bring out the true flavour. Wait a minute - isn't it a fact that a prominent member of Hughenden council lives in North Dean. How does he report back to his constituents if not through the one and only village publication? (only kidding John). *Ed.*

Planning Appeals

A further thank you to the many people who wrote in protesting about attempts to build two large houses in the field adjoining Willotts, Studridge Lane and the attempt to squeeze a further dwelling next to the pond!

The inspector dismissed them both.

Jean Gabbittas

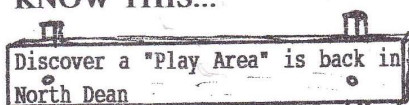
Note:

The individual objections to development of the field were mainly coordinated by the adjacent owners assisted by the Speen Residents Association committee, albeit we were a bit slow on the other one. However the Parish Council made sensible objections to it I recall, which possibly had the right effect.

Councillor Gabbittas is right to praise the Appeals Inspector in protecting Speen's Green Belt and AONB; his biggest achievement to date being, arguably, the land at Flowers Bottom? It would be nice if we could pull together every time to support the rules which are there to stop the remaining small villages from overdevelopment.

J.D.

NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW THIS...



It was a pleasure to see the above-named event so well attended in October at Half Term.

When I was approached by Wycombe Council to book our Play Area for this children's activity I assumed that not knowing anything about it must be due to being in the wrong age group! But not so - it seems that plenty of "Pick-up" leaflets were available in Wycombe, but nothing locally, so even our own young mums knew nothing about it.

Sarah Booth and I felt that this worthwhile scheme needed attention being drawn to it and so we set about obtaining and distributing leaflets to local families with young children, encouraging them to spread the word and bring a friend (It was nice to see our friends from Speen and Naphill who responded).

I hope this scheme continues; anyone unable to attend missed a great couple of hours with a very caring team who specialise in keeping the children's attention throughout a variety of activities.

I do not know who enjoyed it the most, children or adults. There was plenty to chat about over coffee and biscuits (it is hoped that packed lunches will be brought next time)

knowing the children were in good hands.

So look out for the next date (leaflets will be distributed) and if mum cannot bring you ask grandma to do so.

Megan Chinn

Note: This activity is offered in cooperation with Village Hall Committee, local residents and Childrens Services of Wycombe District Council.

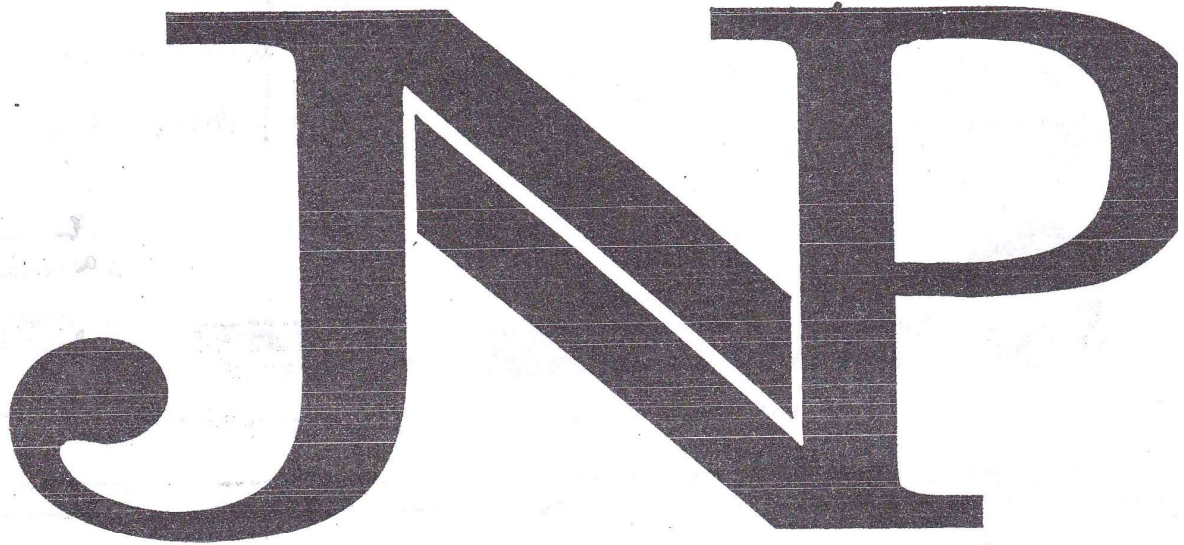
LACEY GREEN ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 18th MARCH

Held from 8.30pm at Speen V.H., immediately following the monthly Council Meeting, this could be an opportunity for individuals and organisations to take part in free-ranging open discussion with the Parish Council. So if you have any suggestions or criticisms, or might just wish to listen to the debate, then be there. The SNDN will try to be there to take note of what goes on. *Ed.*

Village Hall

I understand that there is a vacancy for someone to "care-take" the Speen Village Hall.

JENKINS NEWMAN Partnership



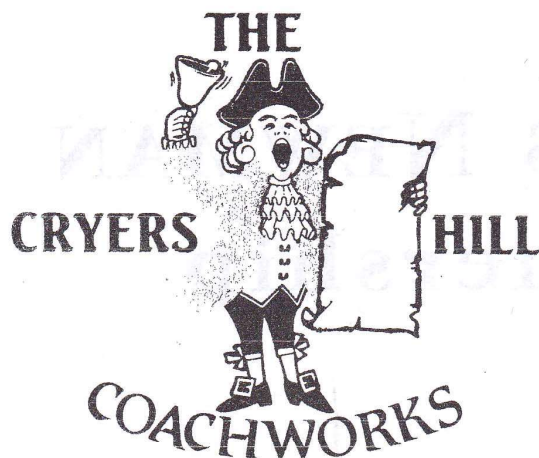
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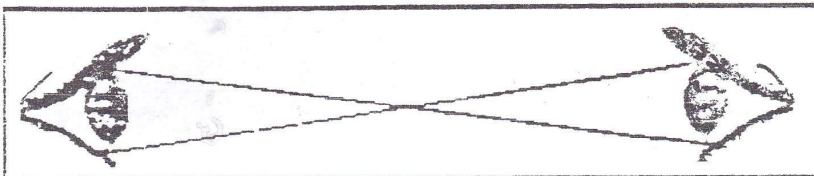
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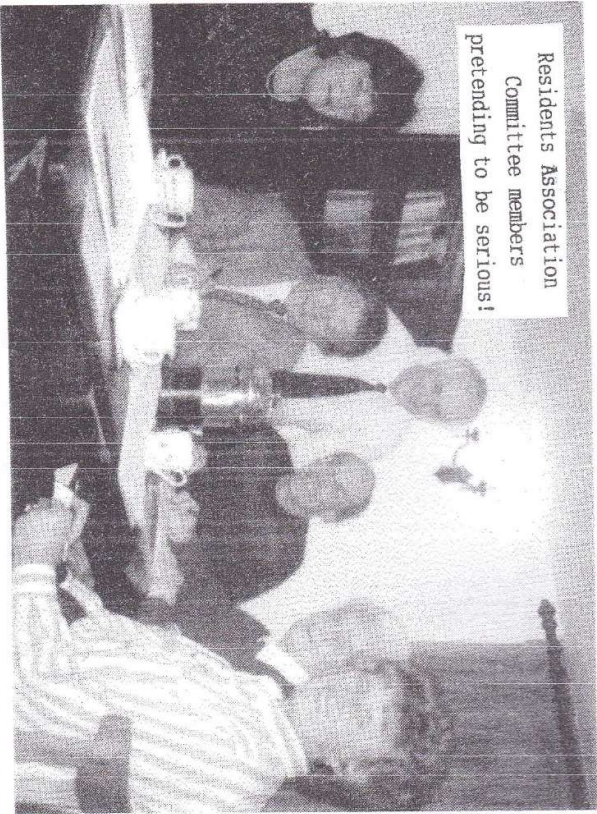
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Residents Association
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pretending to be serious!



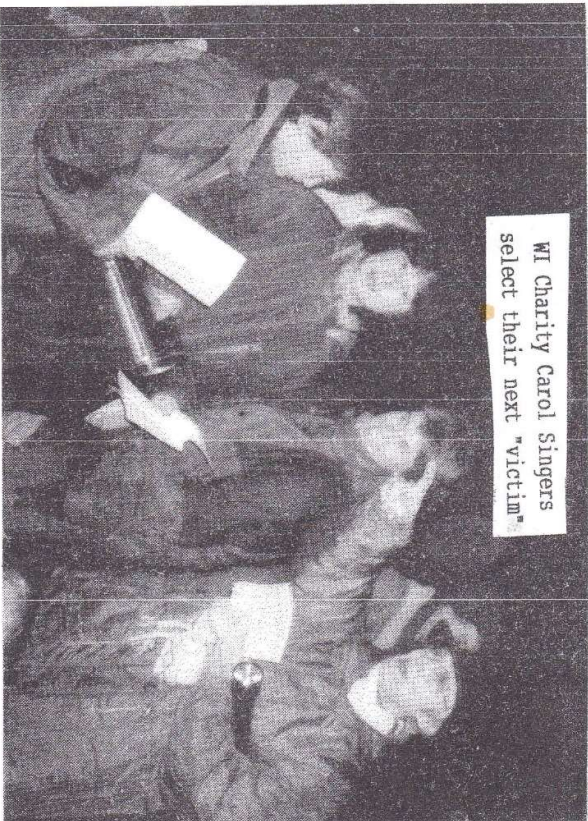
Pre School all in one ambulance -
but it's only for fun.



Horticultural Society
members queue for
alpine seeds



WI Charity Carol Singers
select their next "victim"



SPEEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

January 1997 Update

The end of 1996 and the start of the new year has already seen some developments that impact on Speen. The most significant of these are the outcome of the Studridge lane appeal and the final outcome of the applications for Speen Stores and Tree Tops.

The **Studridge Lane appeal** to build two detached dwellings on Green Belt between Studdridge and Willotts Farm has been dismissed by the Secretary of State so removing the possibility of building and the setting of precedent for similar proposals. Credit for the result must go to all villagers that submitted the pre-printed cards and wrote letters objecting to the application and Lacey Green Parish Council who also wrote with objections.

The applications for both **Speen Stores** and **Tree Tops** have now been approved. The final outcome for the Stores has recognised, in part, the case for road safety, so long an issue of concern. The access road was re-sited and the parking arrangements revised to avoid reversing on to the highway only after significant pressure from the Association and Lacey Green Parish Council. Provision has also now been included for the footpath to the front of Monimail. We have raised this item with WDC as, at present, only a grass verge has been provided.

The outcome for vision splays to be included has been less successful with only half of the County Standard being required by the permission. Even this provision still remains in doubt as there appears to be insufficient ground to for it without further trimming and or removal of additional hedge to the front of Hamilton Cottage. This point has also been raised with WDC.

The approval of Tree Tops (two large detached dwellings) was put through Council without a serious challenge; indeed the proceedings bordered on a Whitehall farce. Mrs Gabittas was called from another chamber to put forward her view, she said she was disappointed that large houses were being proposed but thought it inevitable that this would be the case. At this point, and as other members were raising their hands to speak against the proposal, the new chairman, who has replaced Mrs Gabittas after the winking incident, simultaneously called for a vote to approve the application. Such was the speed of the Chairman's actions and the response of the councillors that the vote for approval included those members who had raised their hands to speak against it. Protest then followed by those members wishing to speak but to no avail, the motion had been carried. All this came after it had previously taken 20/30 minutes to agonise over an application for a conservatory in the West Wycombe Road which in all probability did not require a planning consent.

On other matters I would like to thank those who took part in the Village Litter Collection in November. The entire village was covered with the pleasing result that not too much litter was found. It is intended to repeat this exercise around Easter time.

One final item of interest **Andrew Dolder**, Greengrocers of Princes Risborough have confirmed that they will, given a reasonable order, deliver to Speen; their phone number for anyone interested is 01844 345092.

Paul Rogerson
Chairman

Stop Press: Paul reports that Wycombe Council confirms to him that the Shop Site project has gone ahead despite an inability of the owners to obtain the full vision splay necessary for the work to proceed. And Tree Tops has started without completion the shop site - also against the Council's conditions.

PS: The Residents' Association A.G.M. (open to all villagers) will be held on Wednesday 12th March at 8pm in Speen Village Hall

The next meeting of the committee will be at 8pm on 7th May at Chervil Meadow, Chapel Hill.

Speen Cricket Club

Now that February is behind us and spring is on the way, thoughts inevitably turn to the English summer and all the sounds that come with it. The crack of leather on willow is one of the most traditional of country sounds and Speen is no exception, with a friendly and enthusiastic club.

Speen plays most Sundays (friendlies only) both home and away. The cricket pitch is located right in the centre of the village, while away matches are played at most of the surrounding villages.

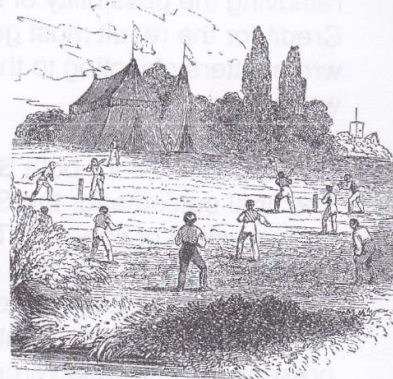
One of the advantages of not playing a league is that come the

end of the season imaginations of "what-ifs" can alter the outcome of various matches without fear of contradiction. Using this technique Speen are available. Many players choose to turn out a few times every year instead of every week, which means that we need as many players as possible, whatever their standard.

One notable social engagement is held on Whitsun weekend (either Sunday or Monday) during which the cricket club hosts an all-comers softball tournament. As well as the softball itself, There is entertainment for the children and a barbecue. Last year was a success despite the weather. This year, I suspect we might not be so "British" about it and play on an alternative weekend should it pour with rain on the

appointed day.

Stephen King on 488542 should be contacted if there are any players out there who might be interested in a few games over the year, or if anyone fancies being involved in the softball tournament.



Speen Pre-School

The children and staff at Speen Pre-School were well served by the three Emergency Services just before Christmas when they were visited by the local Constabulary, Wycombe Fire Service and Wycombe Ambulance and Paramedic Service; this latter visit being made all the more special by the fact that the paramedic in attendance was the father of one of the Pre-School children. We were thoroughly

entertained and informed by these visits.

Another important visit to Speen Pre-School was at the Christmas party when Father Christmas himself, together with a sack full of presents, made an appearance! The children were transfixed as Father Christmas spoke to them one-by-one. It was also time to say "goodbye" to six children who were leaving to start at local primary schools.

We would like to invite you to our cafe morning on 13th March

at 11am when the children will be displaying their Easter Bonnets and entertaining you with song. Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will take place on Sunday 23rd March at 2 to 4pm, located at the Hampden playing field. For further information on Speen Pre-School or the above-mentioned events please contact Mrs Dawn Schollar, Pre-School leader, on 488160 (mornings).

Speen & North Dean Mother & Toddler Group

*Tuesday at 10'ish to 11.45'ish
North Dean Village Hall.*

When we moved from Speen Baptist Church Hall to the present venue, we happily changed our name to include the new location, with the hope that this would encourage some "new blood" from North Dean; not yet so. North Dean mums and toddlers - please come along and expand our small group.

The current ages of the children range from the youngest and most recent arrival, Emily Reed, born October 1996, who comes with her

brother Miles, through to the oldest, at three, Alice Pennington.

Last Year, with healthy funds in the kitty, we were able to take the children to Odds Farm, which they thoroughly enjoyed.

Another outing in 1996 included a visit to St Johns Church at Lacey Green for the Christmas Pram Service. An outing to Fit For Kids is planned for the New Year.

If you would like any more information, *please call me, Christine Dunnington, on 488203.*

We look forward to seeing you in the near future.

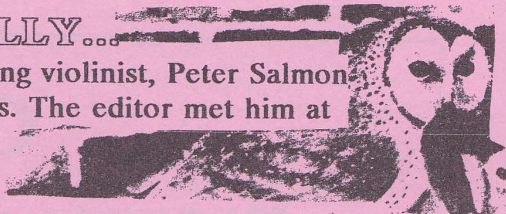


No special reason for putting this in, except there was a space and this may be the last anyone saw of this little guy.



IT ALL BEGAN WITH OLLY...

One time mechanical engineer, village baker and lifelong violinist, Peter Salmon has also successfully bred Barn owls for thirteen years. The editor met him at their aviary in late January.



The perceived wisdom, as far as I knew, was that barn owls were gradually disappearing from the British countryside, due to loss of habitat and maybe food sources, and efforts were being made to create nest sites and breed owls in captivity for reintroduction to the wild.

But Peter Salmon recently gave me an update from the point of view of someone who has been breeding barn owls in captivity for thirteen years. According to Peter the barn owl has been making a modest comeback in recent years, partly through the provision of artificial nest sites by conservationist farmers. However, says Peter, the reintroduction of barn owls to the wild from aviary-bred stock is not that easy. Barn owls take readily to captivity and have been aviary bred for many generations. It may be that some of their preservation instincts have been diluted and that, in any case, the young in the wild learn from their parents example of how to catch prey and cope with hazards etc. This problem has been discovered when well-meaning people have simply released their surplus aviary bred owls, which have then died of starvation or been killed by predation or accident when weakened. Peter has known of cases where the owls have simply returned "asking" to be let back in!

Peter informed me that it is now against the law to release barn owls except under strict conditions and supervision by the RSPB; although he suspects that pressure of accommodation may lead to "escapes" taking place, despite the possible large fine for unauthorised releases.

I met Peter by appointment at his owl aviary - situated, believe it or not, behind Princes Risborough High Street (I won't say precisely where, but some of you will know). We are taught that barn owls

epitomise all that is wild. We love them for their beauty and their almost human gaze, but most of us would not imagine them to be happy in captivity. But I was soon to learn that they are arguably better suited to aviary life than, say, a flock of budgies.

When you come to think of it, owls are one of the very few species of bird which deliberately nests in houses; not under the eaves like swallows, but actually inside the roof space. Peter's aviary was a complex shape with various alcoves leading off, each furnished with a large box for sleeping and nest quarters. Yet the owls negotiated in and around all the corners with grace and expertise. All of the owls had immaculate feathers, indicating that they seldom if ever crashed into anything.

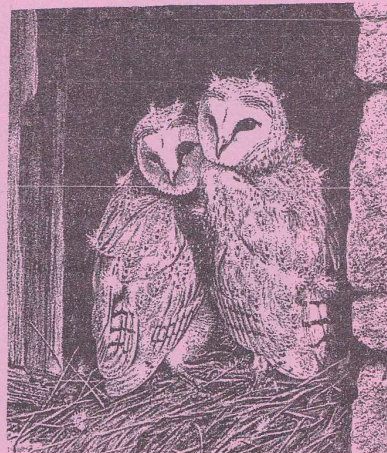
Peter first introduced me to Ollly, a male in such splendid condition that I was surprised to be told he was Peter's very first barn owl given to him, from aviary-bred stock, thirteen years ago. Ollly had been the runt of the litter thrown out by his parents. But after Peter had successfully hand reared him from a tiny skinny bundle to a fine and healthy adult, the breeder gave him a young female for company. From this pair Peter now has a total of sixteen barn owls. The females are slightly darker and distinctly larger (and more ferocious?) than the males. Peter's largest female has a wingspan of about four and a half feet (almost twice that of Ollly).

This was late January and Peter was in the process of moving from Princes Risborough to Loosley Row where the sixteen owls were soon to be set up in a brand new aviary to be built in Peter's large new garden.

The topic of conversation then changed from owls to Peter's love of music and particularly the violin. Peter was a child of the early fifties;

a hard time for folk of ordinary means when Britain was still struggling to recover from a ruinous war. Football was the predominant culture at Peter's school, but luckily the headmaster was a music lover and he was perfectly happy for Peter to spend time learning to play violin while others perfected their goal scoring abilities. Then came a time when Peter might have made a decision to go further with his playing, but a cruel chance remark by some lad (who was probably just jealous) made him give it up. "Only sissies play violins!" That's all it took at a time when no young chap could bear the stigma of being thus described. Amongst the regrets that we all have about lost opportunities in youth, this is certainly the one which will always trouble Peter, or so it seemed from the way he talked about it. Nevertheless he still plays a lot and it sounded good when I heard him playing in the Baptist church over Christmas. And his daughter was playing cello.

By now it was getting dusk and the owls were becoming restless and calling with an eerie sound to be fed, so I took my photographs and left Peter alone with his owls. I am going to visit again once they are housed and hopefully breeding at Loosley Row. Incidentally there are wild barn owls on Kop Hill on the back road from Risborough to Speen.



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