

Issue
Number 12

SPEEN AND NORTH DEAN NEWS

Autumn
1997



Cotecha
Miss Glis
edible dormouse
one of 65 "arrested"
in the Hampden Gate
loft of Bruce and Jean
Elder (see story)



Speen Fete...

**...Ends in
Civil War!**

The editor wishes to thank Mr and Mrs Hart and Mr and Mrs Elder for these photographs

Many thanks also to Mr Stuart Newman and his colleagues for bringing colour to our cheeks.

Letters



Dear Editor,

Having assisted many times with the collection of suitable items for the erstwhile Bran Tub, I know only too well how difficult and time consuming gathering articles together for any fete stall can be.

This year, a good friend of mine and a visitor to Speen bought five Tombola tickets and was "lucky" enough to win three prizes - all of which were edible but well out of date, the "sell by" date on one jar being ten months overdue.

I appreciate that fete stalls are stocked by villagers' kind and generous donations, but surely giving out-of-date foodstuffs is both dangerous and irresponsible.

Please, donors, take more care in future.

Jo Banks

Spennymoor

Dear Editor,

Frankly I am surprised at the editorial ambivalence regarding planning issues in Speen.

In 1995 and 1996, the editorial opinion was against new building in Speen; the planning applications for the shop site and the house in Flowers Bottom Lane moving you to an apoplectic state at the risk of despoiling our lovely village with these buildings. Well those matters have run their course and there is little any of us can do to alter any decisions made regarding the two applications.

I was surprised to read you condoning the structure built to replace the mobile home in Highwood Bottom. Whether you or I

or anyone else in the village regard this to be more attractive (personally its appearance does not particularly offend me) than any mobile home which could have been placed on the site is in fact irrelevant. The building may in fact meet the requirements to be classed as a mobile home, although I, as a daily witness to its construction, can assure you that it was not built of kit parts, unless you consider planks of wood to be kit parts.

The problem with this building, as Paul Rogerson pointed out in the previous newsletter, is that it is likely to set a planning precedent for Speen such that anyone knowing that they will not get planning permission for a building can put the building up anyway and then apply for retrospective planning permission after they have moved in. This in my opinion is far more likely to contribute to despoiling Speen than the normal planning applications that have attracted much attention in the past few years.

Pauline Hall,

Bryn Cottage

This case bears no resemblance to the two first mentioned, as no planning permission is involved in the case of the "Omar Lodge" site, where the council have already acknowledged that a right exists for a mobile home. The only point at issue is whether the "log cabin" comes sufficiently within the official definition of a mobile home. The council say it doesn't and the owners say it does comply with the rules. Ultimately the minister will decide, say the council, should there be an appeal within 28 days of a notice for removal. However, when last spoken to, very recently, the council had not even issued their notice; neither did they issue a "stop" notice, since to do so and lose on appeal implies being sued for damages, I was told. I was only stating a personal preference on aesthetic grounds that I would prefer to see a wooden box of 60 feet by 20 feet rather than a tin one of those dimensions.

On the general point, the official policy is virtually no further development in Speen (only single dwelling infills within already built-up frontages) and no development in the immediate area outside the village which is all within the Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. I think that is a policy most people living here would support. Ed.

Dear Editor,

Motor bikes are becoming a pain in the woodlands.

As I ride my pony through the woods, the peaceful sounds are blown away and replaced by screeching engine roars. I don't want to give motor-bike riders a bad name, but I think that they should be more careful in woods. Horses can get easily spooked by the roaring sounds and sometimes motor-bike riders are not very considerate to other people. My friend was out riding through the woods one day, when three motor cyclists came, one behind her horse while the other two overtook and raced off. I think that this is very unfair and should be stopped.

Danielle Dawson (11)

Dear Mr Dawson

At last I have found time to send you the promised photos of the Balloon landing at N. Dean early July 1997.

The Balloon was flown by the Humbug Balloon Group and include my sister Ann (50) and mother Phyllis (78). It originally started at Stone near Aylesbury, 10 miles as the crow flies, and was a 50th birthday present to my sister from the rest of the family. My sister joined the flight at the last moment due to a late cancellation.

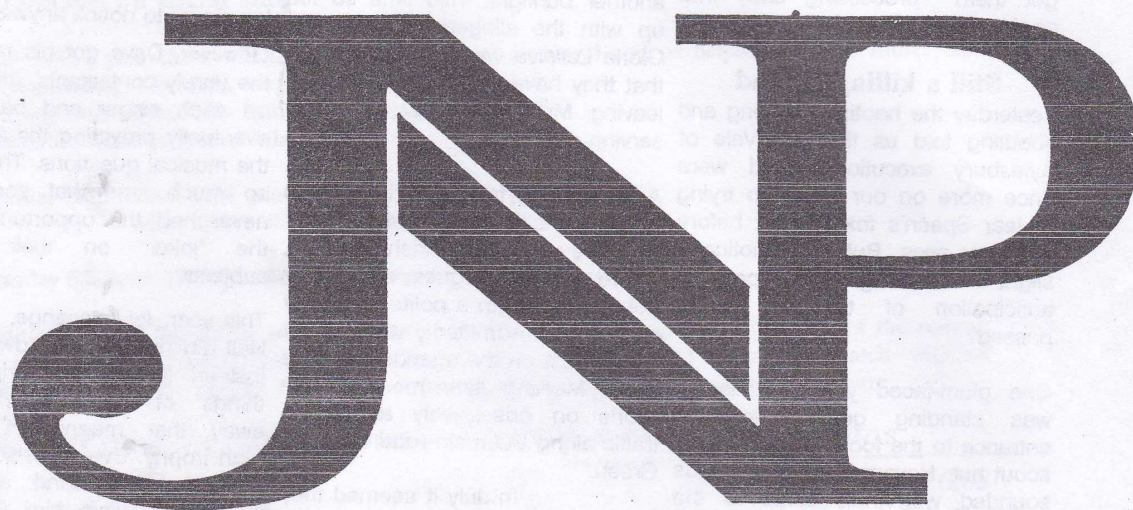
The pictures are a little dark, but it was close to dusk.

John Winyard

Farnham Common

(I met John watching the balloon land at N. Dean where so many of them end up, but one never gets to meet the "visiting aliens" - so this proves that they are just like us after all..!) Photo on another page...

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Return of the migrating Merry-Martins Jan and Si revisit us from "down under"

5

In September last year, my husband and I visited Speen and North Dean in Buckinghamshire after an absence of forty years. My husband, now 62, was evacuated there as a five-year-old, and spent the happiest six years of his life there. He stayed with Flo and Bunny Anderson, who treated him as their own child. Having been in many foster homes before that time, this was his very first experience of love and caring in a real family. Coming from London, he had many lessons to learn, about the countryside and about people, but there he grew up within a caring extended family of grandparents, uncles and aunts, even gaining an older brother in Flo and Bunny's son Arnold, who was in the Army, and was soon after posted to India. He eventually earned the nickname of "Young Scissors" for his sharpness, given him, I believe, by Bert Atkins.

I was shocked to learn that my conservationist husband, who won't kill a spider, was a "mole killer" when young. Apparently moleskins were used to make warm winter gloves, and the children of the village were paid what they considered a handsome price for the odd mole that they acquired. Young Simon thought that this was a good way of making money, so came up with the idea of putting fire crackers down mole holes to scare them out, thus making a small fortune in "mole money".

He was able to walk for miles in the countryside. Finding badgers, squirrels, foxes and the many birds took a lot of time and attention. Hours were spent just sitting quietly, watching the wildlife about him. Sundays were a church and social occasion, with time spent in the Baptist Chapel in the mornings. In the evenings, there were often visits to the Plough Inn in Flowers Bottom, owned by Ishbel MacDonald. She introduced him to his first "Welsh Rarebit" and other tasty snacks. His Auntie Flo worked with Ishbel in the kitchen, preparing beautiful meals for the patrons.

On our visit, we spent four days in this beautiful area, where I was introduced to and walked the length and breadth of: Piggotts Wood, Flowers Bottom, the Home for Retired Horses, Spring Wood, the Spinney, the fields and villages, as well as visiting the Speen Baptist Church and meeting lots of special people.

At the Church, we were also given a lot of help and background information by Megan Chinn and Doris and Doug Redrup, who took a lot of trouble to make sure we had a copy of the Speen and North Dean News. We had a great time at the Flower Festival Service, led by pastor Andy Gower, which we lucky enough to take part in. David King, the Church Secretary, was especially helpful in locating Flo and Bunny Anderson's unmarked graves and giving complete details, including dates of their passing, etc.

We visited Speen School House playground, where Si told me of the time he was playing "aeroplanes" near his favourite greengage tree by the road. His was "flying" around, arms outstretched, mouth wide open, making appropriate noises, when a large wasp entered his mouth and was swallowed. His tongue immediately swelled up, and he was rushed to the doctor. From then on he decided that "aeroplanes" was not for him.

I also heard of Miss Smith, rudely referred to by ill-mannered lads and lasses as "Boiler". She had black bobbed hair with a "basin" cut, and sped from Downley daily in her raincoat and wool hat, with thick-rimmed glasses, on her sturdy black Rudge bicycle with string mudguard protectors on the rear wheel to prevent her coat from getting caught. She apparently made the journey this way no matter what the weather. Miss (Minnie) Hopton was the Head Mistress, and a third teacher, with whom Simon was always in trouble, was Mrs Ashby.

We were treated royally by Sandy

and Geoff Carter at the King William IV. They very kindly allowed us to stay in their upstairs suite, which was just perfect. Their hospitality and wonderful food was the best we found on our trip. We also enjoyed our long talks with them and appreciated their help in finding people.

We were delighted to meet up with many of Simon's childhood friends. He had been in touch with Edna Wall (nee Thomas) for many years, and we very much enjoyed the day spent with Edna and her sister Eileen Jones (nee Thomas), talking of old times. Eileen provided Simon with a copy of Nicholas Wheeler Robinson's "Preliminary Chronicle of North Dean", which together with photos from both Edna and Eileen, and Poppy and Gordon Ellis, have filled in many gaps in Simon's story. We also found Jean Clark (nee Hatt) in the front garden of her home (which used to belong to her parents when Si was young), and spent a pleasant afternoon with Jean and Andrew, her son. We also enjoyed a chat with Peter Humphries, still living next door. Another pleasant evening was spent with Poppy and Gordon, whose home used to be the George Hotel, sorting through photos and discussing life both then and now. We also visited Elsie Cromack (nee Rixon) and her husband Colin.

Simon was very sorry not to have met with John Rogers, one of his childhood friends, but looks forward to meeting with him when we return to the UK to live, in the year 2000. *(If you look elsewhere in the SNDN, Jan, you should at least be able to recognise John again when you see him, provided he keeps himself fit with golf between now and 2000 - which I suspect he will, Ed.)*

Now I can see what Simon loved so much about his childhood, and the time spent in this area. It made him the wonderful, caring man he is today, and I can only say thank you to you all for allowing me to meet you and see this very special part of the English countryside and way of life.

*Jan Merry-Martin
Sept '97 N. Zealand*



Cheeky Chicco's Latin American Evening

On the 20th September 1997 the air around North Dean was filled with a strange mixture of exotic Latin American music and the shrieks of many people. The event was Beechdean's Cheeky Chicco's Latin American Evening and the charities that are to benefit from the fund raising event are Speen pre-school and Childline.

The recipe for an evening such as this is simple. You start with a group of people that are willing to give up their time in search of the ultimate party. When they have been thoroughly convinced of the motives of the evening, you mix in a few other ingredients. In the case of this party we needed some extremely exotic Latin American Music, some fancy lighting, a pair of incredible exhibition dancers, some external amusements, a Tequila Bar, sensational Mexican food and a venue that could whisk people away to a part of central America.

Lets start with the venue, the only way to convert two cow barns and some boring white marquees is with the help of 10 tonnes of evergreen, two trailer loads of maize, a tennis court's worth of netting, 10 bags of sawdust, 200 straw bales and some props from a film set. The one thing I did forget was the willing help of our Latino Lovers (the name of our helpers). In pitch darkness the area was slowly, but magically, changed into a small piece of South America. The next thing that had to be added was a sound and light system that would blow the ponchos off the expected guest's. A small van on its normal route to Top of The Pops studio was quietly diverted and the contents borrowed for the weekend. Not enough for our party, we next went to the guy who does the lights for major rock bands. He filled in the gaps and gave us flashing lights where we have never had them before.

We now had our complete venue. Next we needed the Cheeky Chicco chow to go in the Cheeky Chicco chow bar. This was abundantly supplied by La Mexicana, of Aylesbury. The only way to describe the food was sensationally unique. The food had to be complimented by the correct selection of drink. Known for our

almost tea total stance at these venues, we the organisers decided to cut the drink to only Mexican Beers, Red Eyes, Tequila Slammers, Margarita's, and a selection of Chilean Chardonnays. The bar was run by Martin from the Duke of Cambridge in Marlow.

We now had a venue, a chow bar and liquid refreshment, the next ingredient had to be the entertainment. Live music is the root to all good parties and with this in mind a Colombian and Brazilian band were asked to play for us. For those looking for even more fun, bungee running and Sumo wrestling games were also arranged.

We now had a venue, food, drink and entertainments, all we required now were some generous guests. On the evening over 350 people, in a variety of outfits, attended the venue. Dress code ranged from jeans, T- shirt and a sombrero, to Peter Keen's outfit which had to be seen to be believed (full marks to you Peter!!) .

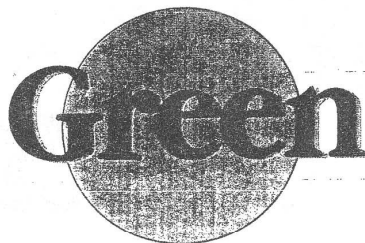
On the evening, the money for charity was raised with a charity auction and a £5 raffle. With wonderful gifts from many people, everyone got into the spirit of the occasion and generously dug deep into their pockets. The final total was about £2500 which will be split between the two charities.

From everyone involved in organising the party, we would like to say thank you to all those who donated, participated and most of all helped to make the evening a success both for the charities and as a good fun party. For those who are interested, the next 'do' in 1999 (??) will be a 1940's big band; watch for the advertising.

Thanks to everybody

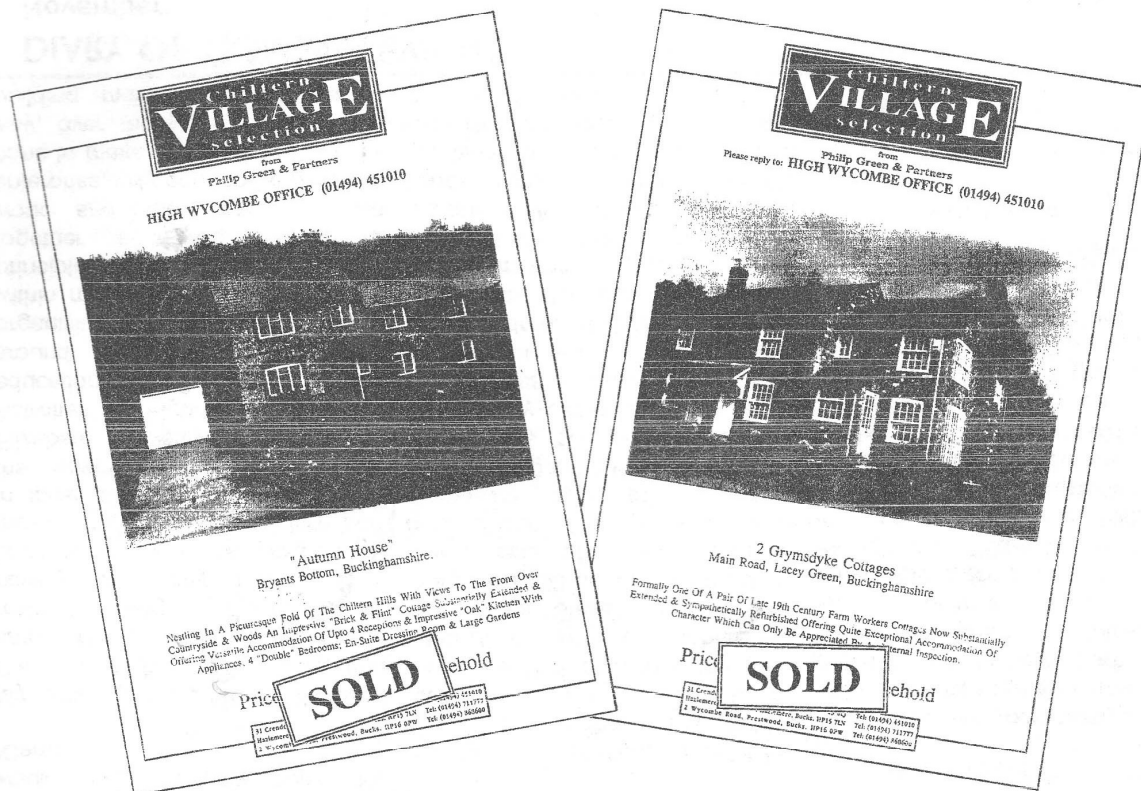
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Twixt Speen and Opoul Perillos

John and Brenda Davies have the best of two worlds

John and Brenda Davies run drawing and painting holiday courses from their house in Opoul Perillos, a village in the Roussillon.

Brenda and I discovered and fell in love with the Roussillon in the 1960s whilst driving, with our two young daughters, to a villa on the Costa Brava. It was before the motorway which crosses the Pyrenees at Le Perthus. In August there were 50 km queues back through Perpignan to Narbonne (it was rumoured that De Gaulle refused to build the motorway in order to stop the French leaving France for the, then, much cheaper Spain). We discovered the Route des Corbieres, a wonderful drive through an unspoilt region.

A small legacy in 1970 allowed us to buy the cheapest possible holiday property, a bergerie called Las Gardis, in a vineyard, with little water, no electricity, holes in the walls but with perfect Catalan arches and the most wonderful view across 60 km of vineyards towards the Pyrenees, Mont Canigou and the Spanish border. The franc was then over 11 to the pound.

We lived and worked by candlelight and oil lamps for the first few years, slowly restoring the house. We increased the water catchment around the citerne and installed a generator for electricity - not nearly so romantic as candlelight but wonderfully practical. When the lights go out in the village (as they often do) we are a little jewel at the end of the valley.

Las Gardis is the last building in old Catalonia. We have grapes, almonds, olives and figs. We use it for family holidays and as our field painting centre when we run our art courses.

In 1990, with another couple, we decided to buy the old post office in

the village - 'L'Ancienne Poste'. By then the franc was just over 10 to the pound. We planned to restore the house and start a painting school to give us enough income to live in France and to give me a studio and time to paint in an inspiring setting.

I have spent 35 years in graphic and interior design but my qualifications are in fine art. I have always drawn and painted.

We have nearly finished the restoration. Unlike the French we completed the inside of the house first and the facade last, trying to retain the exterior 'old' look, despite the pressures to use 'crepi', the ruination of the old French style. We think we are winning!

We have an excellent relationship with the people of Opoul. We always use local labour and the inevitable drama of the building work was made easier by the willingness and helpfulness of the builder, electrician, plumber and carpenter despite them having the same characteristics of all builders ... *demain... demain!*

The builder and plumber, often difficult to find during the week, can always be found on a Sunday morning in the builder's pigeonmire. They are both enthusiasts. We don't have pigeon on our menu!

My theory, to knock down all croissons (partition walls), on the grounds they didn't hold anything up, was disproved when the kitchen ceiling fell in. The builder disappeared and came back a couple of hours later with a massive old wooden beam which is now a feature in our large kitchen. The old Catalan, smokey fireplace is now an indoor barbecue, venting perfectly through the original chimney.

All five bedrooms are themed to an artist or period. The bathrooms are tiled in Catalan style. The Grenier is now my studio with

space for up to 10 artists.

The village of Opoul is dominated by the ruins of an 11th century chateau. There is a school which sustains the ongoing life of the village, a church, a bar, a restaurant, a few shops and a rugby league team. The boulangerie bakes delicious bread every day and Fougasse every Sunday - the custard version is O.K. but the one with salty pork scratchings and sugar pushes gastronomy to the limit!

The only industry is wine making. The Cave Cooperative produces mainly red wines, from cubis at 10 francs a litre to Chateau d'Opoul at around 50 francs a bottle. I designed and illustrated the label for the Cuvée de la St Laurent, a vin de table selling at 14 francs in the Cave Cooperative and 20 francs in local supermarkets which is, of course, our house red wine. I am currently designing another label.

Opoul is a very friendly village. The great majority of people work in the vineyards. They are very proud of the village (about 300 houses) and their Catalan origins and we have made many good friends. We are impressed that the old are looked after by the young. Monsieur le Maire, in his 3rd term of office, is always accessible, runs the line at rugby matches and plays boules in the square at night.

The Opoul villagers have been very kind to us. On our silver wedding anniversary they held a memorable barbecue at Las Gardis. They insisted on using 3 sorts of vinewood for flavour - old cuttings, new green cuttings and old roots - with escargots, moules, sardines, chops, salad and cheese washed down with copious amounts of wine, supplied in old lemonade bottles, and culminating in the



blowing up of an old tree root (with sweating dynamite), which seemed a good idea at the time and was certainly a cabaret ending to the day. It was only the following morning, when I cleared the earth from the bergerie roof, that I realised we were within a few metres of the fosse septique. A metre nearer and I would have been clearing more than just earth from the roof and would have had a hefty bill for a new tank.

When we ran out of water the pompiers held an exercise on the hill behind us and kindly left us enough water in our citerne to survive the summer. The cost - a small contribution to their benevolent fund.

Our courses are more than just 'art'. We live a French village life and Brenda has learnt to cook Catalan dishes which give our visitors a real taste of the region. Escalivada (roasted peppers, courgette, aubergine and sweet onion) topped with anchovies from Collioure or a homemade terrine served with confiture d'oignon, are typical starters to our nightly four course dinners. Couscous, cooked in the traditional way, allows meat eaters and vegetarians to share in a communal meal. Lamb, marinated then barbecued, or served with apricots and dates, reflects the North African influence on Catalan cuisine. Fresh fish from the Mediterranean is plentiful and an abundance of fresh fruit and local cheeses completes our meal.

We serve Opoul wines with tastings from other villages, particularly the next village of Fitou where, once a week, we eat at La Cave d'Agnes, run by a Scottish lady and her French chef husband.

The village is now used to our artists and appreciates the advantages of having many extra

visitors out of season, and more in July and August when we let the house to families for their summer holidays.

Both professional and amateur artists - British, French, Belgians, Americans and Irish, to date - add their generous contributions to the profits of the cave and the bar.

One of our guests, an 80 year old Irish Catholic priest, asked if there was anywhere he could say Mass. Conversations with the local curé resulted in Seamus saying the Mass, in French and Latin (with an Irish accent), in the village church on Sunday, attended by the rest of the course and about 70 villagers (68 female, 2 male). It was a great occasion. Seamus became curé for the week and we received gifts of homemade jam in thanks for his services. He was a talented amateur painter and made a great impression on the course saying an increasingly eloquent and appropriate grace (by request) at our meal every night and adding his particular wisdom and point of view to our discussions. He eventually departed with a 'whip round' for the Sisters he was staying with in London on his way home.

Living in France has improved our French by a combination of a summer school at Perpignan university and...experience, starting 'in the supermarket', 'in the builders supplies', etc., and, latterly, 'in the stone quarry'. I commissioned a young sculptor to carve a piece for our garden. He specified limestone 1.5 x .5m. We are surrounded by limestone quarries, all of which would supply enough to build a motorway, but not a single block of limestone. We, eventually, found a quarry near Montpellier (100 km away), negotiated a price and found it weighed nearly a tonne. Our local builder reckoned he could handle

350 kilos so we had it cut in two and it was sculpted in the square outside (the Mairie kindly closed the road) and the sculptor chipped off another 150 kilos to finish the work. It became the village old boys' alternative to watching boules. They even brought their folding chairs to sit in comfort. Transport through the house was by courtesy of the Cave Cooperative who lent us a forklift truck and a number of men to manhandle the sculpture into position. It now has pride of place in our garden. We have commissioned another one for next year.

On another occasion there was the light opera singer who sang 'The Sound of Music' and 'The Ugly Duckling' at my vernissage, to the bemusement of the French.

More appreciated were the non-painting partners, two ladies, who, last September, were recruited into a vendange team. They left at 7 am and we supplied them with sausages and tomato and garlic to rub on their bread for breakfast, a 9.30am grillade accompanied by the passing of the 'porrou' (Catalan) of red wine. They were a little tipsy when they returned at mid-day.

We are trying hard to maintain our happy relationships with the village. We and our friends are united with a common love of French life, good food and drink.

Brenda and I enjoy running our art courses in Opoul. We enjoy meeting new people and making new friends and we particularly enjoy introducing our aspiring artists to the French way of life. We like to think that we, in our own way, make our contribution to the life of the village.

For further information on drawing and painting courses (all levels) at L'Ancienne Poste contact John or Brenda Davies on 01494 488197 or fax 488198.

SPEEN AND NORTH DEAN YOUTH CLUB

Here, but only just!...

because after our first successful streets there is no easy answer to year our numbers tailed off as the this. Many parents have rung us to club members grew out of table give their support and to express tennis and darts and moved onto hope that we can keep the club other pursuits - such as boyfriends, going; we will if it is a viable group. girlfriends and G.C.S.E's.

We restarted meetings at the along to the Baptist Church Hall on beginning of October and the Wednesday night at 8pm, then rsonse has been encouraging. please do so. We finish at 9.30, and Our real problem is lack of if we have a reasonable size group youngsters of the right age and we can then plan some outings short of dragging them off the similar to those we went on last

year, when we had trips Chessington, Wycombe Ski Centr Slough Ice Rink and many others.

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One pleasant summer's evening, back in late July, some of you may recall an ambulance attending a 999 call to a casualty with a "suspected broken leg" on Speen Playing Field. The victim, yours truly, had been taking part in a friendly fathers and sons soccer game, when a rather optimistic and very badly executed tackle (by me) on Antony Phillips, one of our school governors, ended the game about seven minutes after it had started.

Following my nine days in Wycombe General Hospital, since when I've remained in full-length plaster, my wife Chris and I would like to say how much we appreciate the tremendous amount of help and support given.

In particular, we would like to take this opportunity to thank:-

- * David Slade for those reassuring words "I'm sure it's not broken mate" though he knew it was, and for turning up in A&E a couple of hours later to check on his diagnosis.
- * Tim Rodgers for taking the bull by the horns and straightening the leg before the arrival of the ambulance.
- * Jo and Mark Wengler for looking after our boys, Andrew and Matthew, on the night of the accident.
- * Antony Phillips and Jim White for the bottles sneaked into hospital (*fine time to get "legless" - sorry, tasteless remark by Ed.*) and Jim for organising a modem and teaching me what to do with it.

And there's more...

- * Ian and Debbie Waterman for a fine selection of books, especially the Tom Sharpe collection.
- * Kate Slade, Carolyn and Ben Gower, Tracey White and Sue Rodgers for their baby-sitting sessions (special thanks to Sue for showing Andrew how our (*can't read it*) should be put back together - and clever Andrew for remembering...
- * ...and everyone else for their best wishes, calls and visits.

And finally, one very big thank you, just this time, to my wife Chris and boys Andrew and Matthew, for doing everything I couldn't do during the past three months, for missing our summer holiday and not complaining (too much) and especially for chauffeuring me to work and back every day. I'm just grateful the roles weren't reversed... I couldn't have coped!

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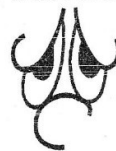


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Here Marjorie Stockley outlines her proposals for a representation of "Speen through the ages."

Would you be interested in taking part in an open-air production in the summer of 1999? The idea would be to create a historical/dramatic presentation/performance of SPEEN through the ages - a celebration of village life; with the optimistic conclusion that village life will be rejuvenated in the next century as more people have the opportunity to work from home. It would be very much a village affair - with as many local people and organisations involved as possible. Initially the Parish Council would invite people to attend a meeting one evening next January to to elaborate on the project. A committee would then need to be formed to oversee the implementation of the production.

The next stage would be to find a

group of interested people who would form a historical/research committee the objective of which would be to collect relevant historical material which could be incorporated into the show. It would be an important pre-requisite to commission a professional to devise the piece and he/she would work alongside the committee to produce a final working script. This would need to be ready by June 1998 to allow for a year's planning, preparation and rehearsal.

Musicians, actors, dancers, set-builders, costume makers, props makers, stage managers, lighting/sound operators, make-up artistes will need to be found amongst Speen's talented inhabitants - children and adults

alike. In addition, groups of people will be required to be in charge of publicity, box-office, front of house, bar/refreshments, car-parking etc. There are jobs for everyone.

Marjorie Stockley, Driftway House, Coleheath Bottom has offered to direct the show and Martin Stockley has offered to research and co-ordinate the musical aspects of the show.

It is an ambitious project but should prove to be an exciting one, which will unite the village as we move into the 21st century.

If you would like to discuss the matter further or offer assistance in any way, please ring Marjorie/Martin on 01494 488101 or e-mail Mastockley@AOL

THANK GOD WE'VE STILL GOT THE WI

Barbara Collett reports

Since we last spoke, Speen WI has enjoyed a very tasty birthday party, been informed of what we could or could not have happened to Amelia Earhart, and heard Miss Glenys Groves sing; after telling us of her rise from pop to opera. What more could a WI want? Well we wanted to go to Beatties in Aylesbury for yet another fashion show and supper with some of our friends, and also to Waitrose in Thame when we had a good look round behind the scenes and partook of yet more gorgeous grub afterwards (*Is this lady obsessed with food or what!? - Ed.*)

Then there was the Spring Group Meeting at Holmer Green when Mr John Cornwell showed some wonderful slides of flowers in close-up. We did our usual Macmillan walk in May with husbands and dogs. In June Mr Mussett told of almost becoming a shellfish gatherer like his father but was rescued in time by his mother to become a librarian instead. (*I bet it would've been more fun with dad...! Ed.*) In July Mrs Kathleen Turner had us in hysterics with her account of being mother of the bride - in between helping the vet

doing a caesarian on a cow. Lovely! And, of course, in between our meetings we helped feed "the 5,000" at both the fete and the "open gardens".

Miss Jean Archer proved interesting when, in her talk on "Hidden Bucks", she showed slides of various parts of the county which are not normally seen. Then there was the Bucks WI's "do" at Hadenham, when Gloria and I walked round in the sweltering heat pushing an extremely large teddy bear in a pram trying to persuade other ladies to part with a £1 to try to win the bear, which I must admit some of us were not that interested in doing. However, Gloria has a very persuasive way with her (*tell me about it...Ed!*) as some of you no doubt know and we got some money out of most of them. By lunch time we gave up and Ed's wife Mary and Doris Wilson took over from us.

At the end of August we gave our usual lunch for the seniors of the village which they all seemed to enjoy together with some entertainers called Bandjovie.

September was a bit of a let-down as our speaker didn't turn up (we later learned her car had broken down). Also that month we had the Autumn Group Meeting at Prestwood when Mr Peter Hines talked about his life as a private investigator.

We nearly didn't have a speaker in October as the lady couldn't come for some reason, but fortunately Corinne Symonds came to the rescue as she works for the nice Australian lady Mrs Mawhood who obligingly came and showed slides of some islands in the Pacific, where she had been for two years as a medical records officer.

Our Annual Meeting will be in November, after which we will indulge in our usual Pot Luck Supper (well you have to eat don't you?), and in December Mrs Z. McIntosh will have some desserts to show us.

We would love to see more village ladies joining our little group - to make it a slightly larger group. Why not think seriously about joining us on the first Thursday of the month?

PROGRESS REPORT ON 1st HUGHENDEN VALLEY GUIDES

1st Hughenden Valley Guides have decided that some of the continue to meet in the Scout HQ windows will have to be boarded building. Since the closure of the up permanently to cut down cub and beaver groups we are the maintenance costs. We hope that only group currently using the the there will be no repetition of the HQ on a regular basis. However, mindless destruction of our various scout groups from around property. the district use the building for weekend events.

A small group of us are working very hard to maintain the building and its surrounding land for the use of scout and guide groups and I would take issue with comments about rubbish lying around. What might be considered "rubbish" may in fact be items of campfire equipment etc, which tends to be stored outside for a lot of the year.

A working group is planned for the autumn to clear up the area around the back of the building as much as possible. With regard to the windows boarded up, sadly, following vandalism last year, we

The Guide Company averages about 30 - 36 girls. This year we have been engaged in a great variety of activities. One of the highlights of the year was the production of "The Dancing Princess" in February. A great deal of work went into this production as well as a lot of laughter and enjoyment.

In November we held our annual fireworks and bonfire party, and later that month ran a toy stall for the Hughenden Church Christmas Bazaar. During the only true dry weekend in June, 18 Guides plus 4 leaders camped at a Guide site in the grounds of Cliveden. This was a

new site for us and we hope to use this excellent site again. This was also the inaugural camp for our two new lightweight tents which we have worked hard to raise money to buy.

One of our guides attended two weekend meetings of the Bucks Guide Orchestra and also a four day Anglia Region Orchestra meeting at Easter.

Mary Hall completed her Baden Powell Trefoil in February. This is the highest award in the Guide Section of Guiding and was the culmination of two years hard work including 40 hours service, finding out about international guiding, taking part in a residential event and developing personal interests and skills. This was the 7th BP Trefoil to be presented in the company and we hope to get two more completed in the near future.

Pauline Hall

...and happily still with us

SPEEN PRE-SCHOOL STUDRIDGE LANE SPEEN

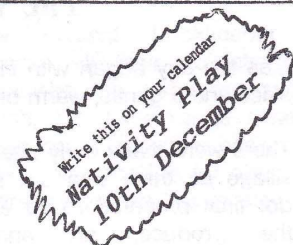
The end of term culminated in a superb Sports Day and lunch. Children, parents, friends and exhausted staff thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. Medals were presented to all the children for their tremendous effort, and lots of laughter from the parents who took part in the rather difficult mums' and dads' races. It was also time to say "goodbye" to some lovely children who were soon to embark on the adventure of "big school", and also to parents who had served the preschool so well. Flowers and gifts were presented to Cherry Seekins, who had devoted a great deal of

time and effort as Chairman of the committee, and also to Jo Wengler, who worked jolly hard as the Pre-school secretary. Their contribution was invaluable and very much appreciated. It was also time to welcome Julie Blundell as our new Chairman, with who we look forward to working with in the new school year.

We anticipate lots of fun as we introduce the children to (virtual) France this half term. We hope to share information with a French Pre-school in Hambye, thanks to an introduction from our local twinning

association in Lacey Green. Our termly Cafe morning on Wednesday 22nd October at 11 am, to which you are invited, will have a French theme. Croissants and coffee will be served.

There are still a few sessions available for children aged between 3 and 5 years. For further information please telephone Dawn Schollar (Pre-school leader) on 01494 488160 - Monday to Friday from 9 to 12 oclock.



Paul Rogerson puts the money into perspective after the 1997 Speen Fete

As a postscript to this year's fete, a draft account has been completed. Whilst not all monies have been collected for advertising etc., it is clear that this year's profit available for distribution to the village organisations is well down on previous years.

It looks likely that a sum in the region of £100 will be the contribution to each organisation.

The main reasons for this are twofold:

- * The cost of putting on the fete has increased from £950 to £1500
- * The takings have remained at approximately £1700.

This means that the bulk of any profit is only generated from advertising and sponsorship. It is difficult to see how, without a radical change in pricing policy or reduction in activities, any improvement to the financial return can be achieved; if anything it is likely to get worse as competition on the day grows.

On the positive side it is a great asset to the village that the fete continues each year. Perhaps the money is not that important!

Paul Rogerson

NORTH DEAN FETE 1997 **The weather gods were with us again...**

...as the day began with clear blue skies and a gentle, warm breeze.

There were many early risers in the village as there was still much to do: final preparations to entries in the produce, art and craft competitions had to be made and then presented in the marquee for judging.

White elephants for the renowned bric-a-brac stall were still to be sorted and the various stalls, beer tent and tea room were hives of activity, but by one o'clock all was ready, so back home for a quick spruce-up before the official opening at 2pm.

This year it was performed by Mr Desmond Ryman of North Dean House, and Mrs Ryman judged the Children's Fancy Dress

Competition. What a difficult task, when some mothers have such clever ideas and lots of imagination.

Very soon the fete was in full swing, with a good crowd of supporters all happy to join in the fun and part with their money. Music was ably provided by the Piggots Band, also bringing their own in-house entertainment - a chocolate throwing competition which raised a handsome sum for Hall funds.

The ever popular Tombola was soon picked clean, raffle tickets were bought in huge quantities and games of chance or skill kept all amused.

At 4pm the cups and prizes were presented. North Dean horticulture had obviously had a bad year as entries were very sparse, but the

cake, jam and wine makers certainly made up for it.

The auction of produce completed the programme, when exorbitant prices were paid for enormous onions and quite pathetically wizened carrots, but it was all good fun and part of the tradition of the North Dean Fete.

Thanks to a team of willing helpers, the clearing-up was quickly done, and yet another happy Fete Day came to a close.

The best was yet to come when Treasurer Pam reported a profit on the day of £1,065.

anon

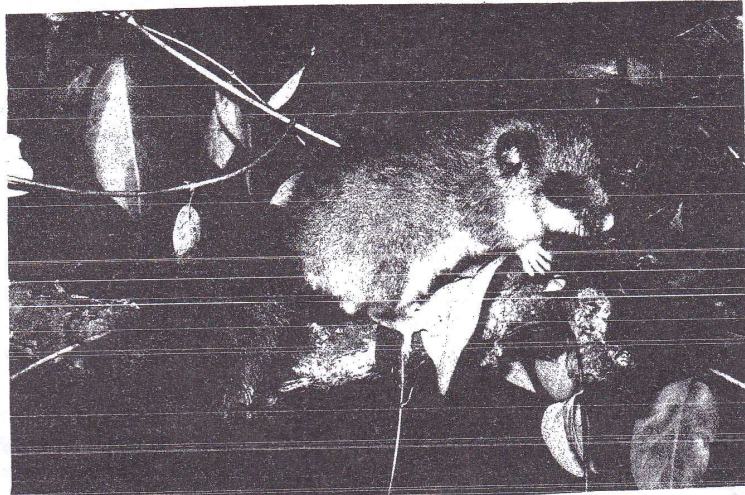
One of Britain's rarest mammals, the Edible Dormouse (*Glis glis*) is very much at home in and around Speen. 15

17th October this year was the first time Peter Symonds and I had seen a *Glis glis* which was both alive and awake; I'd seen one hibernating and Peter had seen one dead along Coleheath Bottom (he's good at finding things dead).

The hibernating *Glis* was being shown to members of BBONT attending a talk on them last February given by a naturalist/forestry worker who came across them in the course of his work. He was young and, by February, a little thin looking (the *Glis* that is). What surprised me was that so many of the "nature lovers" attending this talk seemed to regard the *Glis* more as a pest than a precious part of local wildlife - just because he tends to bite through electrical cable and water pipes, drown in the tank, keep folk awake at night as he dances on the floor above to the accompaniment of his own loud chattering and then one steps on piles of s... upon going to investigate, etc etc! We've had visits from them at Chervil Meadow, but they've tended to leave after a few sleepless nights of wild partying (*Glis* parties I mean).

Thrilled at the sight of a rare creature.

Anyway, it was 17th October, the night of the village quiz. Sitting opposite Mary and I, also representing the "Good Neighbours" team were Jean and Bruce Elder. It transpired that they were martyrs to the dreaded *Glis*, having been visited by no less than 65 of them (another world record for Speen along with Jack's sunflower). Despite this slight inconvenience Jean and Bruce seemed remarkably - shall we say - neutral about these little grey acrobats. Or maybe their apparent tolerance was more due to the calming effect of all that red wine they were drinking (which may also have affected our lowly third place in the quiz - just joking Jean and Bruce).



Anyway, Bruce happened to mention that he had trapped number 65 that very evening (let me stress at this point he does them no harm). I said could I borrow number 65 to photograph and then release him. "Yesh of course" said Bruce, "but let me have the trap back tomorrow as we are expecting number 66 any moment."

Peter Symonds also tagged along and we all staggered walked to the Elders' abode at Hampden Gate, strategically close to College Wood. Awaiting us in the loft was number 65. Peter and I gasped at the beauty of this creature; shiny -coated bright-eyed and plump, really fit to go into his seven months hibernation - but angry and scolding us for the indignity of his predicament. I took him home for the night, supplied him with a cox's orange pippin and said good night.

Next morning Peter and I took number 65 to woods far enough away to satisfy Bruce's plea of "not too near, please" but still in *Glis* country. Peter brought with him a chicken coop. The clever plan was to empty the trap into the coop set on the woodland floor and take photos in this outdoor "studio" before releasing the *Glis*. (Incidentally you don't handle *Glis* if you value your fingers - they have the sharpest set of mouth chisels outside of a beaver colony). It was

then that Peter and I learned an important lesson about *Glis* - that they are the most alert and agile creature you'll ever come across. I'd been warned, and it was true. Number 65, who had been looking so calm and laid back before we opened the trap just made one bounce onto the ground, the next he was outside the chicken coop and in the final leap he was looking down at us from 35 feet up a fir tree, whereupon he just relaxed, stretched out on a branch, looking down at us with a steady stare through those lovely big eyes. Every now and then his dish aerial ears would adjust position and his nose and whiskers would twitch in unison. He knew we couldn't catch him, it was a most glorious warm autumn day and he looked a beautiful picture sunbathing on that branch. Luckily for him, Peter had brought his camera and 600mm mirror lens - there should be some good results, with luck. We watched for at least half an hour before leaving number 65 to work out where he would spend the next seven months of hibernation. Pete placed another cox's at the bottom of the tree and we quietly left the scene.

Some facts about the Edible Dormouse (*Glis glis*) gleaned from the recently published booklet of that title, written by Pat Morris,

Glis item continues overleaf...

published by the Mammal Society and sold locally by Tring Museum at £3.

The *Glis glis* is thought to have been introduced to Tring Park in 1902 (some say 1890). The animals came from either Germany or Switzerland according to one report and from Hungary according to another.

Native distribution:

The *Glis glis* is found across many European countries - from Spain to Turkey and eastward into Russia, but no further north than 55 degrees latitude. (In Britain that would just include Newcastle)

British distribution:

"The core of distribution occupies about 50 square kilometres in the Chiltern Hills. Here there are extensive and well-connected areas of high forest (often dominated by beech trees) and also smaller areas of plantation forestry including various conifers, particularly larch and spruce." This, says Pat Morris, mimics the natural forest of their homes in Europe.

It seems that left to their own devices *Glis* do not spread quickly and the the open agricultural land (loft). to the west and north of the Chiltern woodland forms a barrier. However, the tendency for *Glis* to enter houses and get trapped by householders who are naturally unwilling to kill them means that some are released into previously *Glis*-free territory outside the main population area. "Reliable stories" say that some have been released, for example, near Oxford, thereby crossing the Aylesbury Vale, others into the New Forest ("which offers particularly good habitat") and, recently, near to Windsor. It seems that there are so many reports of "assisted dispersal" that it is "only a matter of time before this animal becomes commonplace in other parts of England."

Ecology in Britain

In the daytime they "lie up in nests built like squirrel dreys or taken over from birds. They also use hollow trees (especially mature beeches, which tend to develop suitable holes naturally)

outbuildings and house roofs." As Bruce might retort - "tell me about it..."

Glis live and eat mainly up in the trees (rather than on the ground) from seasonally available food produced by the trees: tree flowers, insects, especially caterpillars and, by July it is time for gnawing bark. "They eat birds eggs and nestlings" and around autumn there are the fruits, nuts and berries.

Hibernation

They hibernate once the leaves are off the trees and there is no more food to find at treetop level. In

Britain they have been found (by accident) hibernating below floor boards and tree roots, sometimes in outbuildings, rabbit, badger and fox holes - below ground because the temperature remains low and stable. They often hibernate many together indicating there is social behaviour amongst *Glis* - especially when of the same family. *Glis* using nest boxes tend to use the tops of them as latrines, but those living in houses make a considerable mess (I witnessed the truth of that in Bruce and Jean's and the the open agricultural land (loft).

Breeding

In Britain the *Glis* "may not breed until its third calendar year"... "a single litter usually in August-September" (maybe earlier on the Continent).

Mortality

They may live for nine years and have few enemies, tawny owls and cats being the worst predators (interesting, Gloria Holmes tells me one of her cats has recently arrived home with two *Glis*).

It seems that when seized by the tail the skin of it can come off and the *Glis* escapes, and then the tail breaks off, so it is not uncommon to find *Glis* with much of the tail missing - clever stuff!

The Edible Dormouse in and around Speen

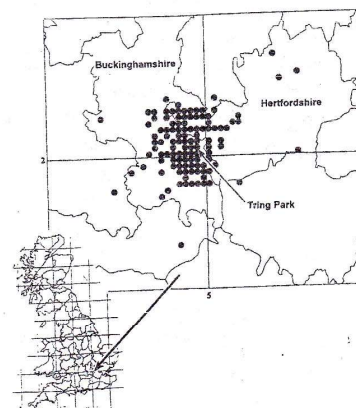
There is a swathe of *Glis*-friendly mixed woodland which runs along the south eastern edge of the

village and it is from people who live near to it that all the *Glis* stories in the area have been related to me, especially from people living close to College Plantation. This has been an ideal habitat, possessing a good mixture of mixed broadleaves, predominantly beech, and a lot of tall larch. The larch will soon all be gone leaving mostly young and semi mature deciduous trees (and a small patch of young conifers). This transition may, therefore, reduce the *Glis* population next to Coleheath Bottom, albeit there is still plenty of mixed woodland close by. The advantage of the conifers is that in years when beech fails to flower the *Glis* resort to gnawing conifer bark until other food sources become more available. I would like to collate any sightings of *Glis* that readers can report and I would particularly like to know if they have been seen away from the eastern edge of the village.

Incidentally, unlike the red and grey squirrel scenario, there is almost certainly no rivalry between the Edible Dormouse and our native species the much smaller Hazel Dormouse; the former lives up in the canopy of tall trees and the little guy stays in the canopy of low bushes. Both species live in College Plantation and I hope neither of them are suffering too much from the extensive felling now taking place.

Peter Dawson

488222



The distribution of *Glis glis* in England. The arrow indicates Tring Park, site of the original introduction in 1902. Black symbols cover 1km squares where edible dormice were recorded 1980-1995 inclusive.

Firstly, an apology for having to cancel this year's summer show. We had planned to take our grandchildren home to Abu Dhabi between the 14th and 16th September but in the event the only flight we could get was the 13th - the very day of the show. Sadly I could not persuade anyone else to run it, so reluctantly I had to cancel. Such has been this season, I doubt whether we would have had a very large entry anyway; to say it was a poor growing season is an understatement! (so how come George grew the world's biggest sunflower then? Ed.)

However, gardeners never give up and so now we must look forward to next year. Dig over the soil as soon as it is cleared, sow broad beans for an early crop. And now is the time to plant fruit trees. Spray fruit trees and soil with a tar oil winter wash. Apple and pear trees can be pruned to give them a better shape. Perennial seeds can now be sown in pots, and rockery seed should be sown in a seed bed or pan. Plant out sweet williams and wallflowers. Continue to mow the lawns if drey. Give the greenhouse a good clean

Future events

We have booked the village hall for the following dates (though as yet I have only one speaker with a firm booking):

12th December, 13th February, 27th March, 12th June - Food Gardening.

Ted Drew

SPEEN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY...

...ran a great OPEN GARDENS DAY on 30th July this year. The weather was good; a bit of rain earlier on having helped to revive the vegetation, I recall.

Notwithstanding the fact that Speen gardens had been opened three years running, twice run by the Horticultural Society and once on behalf of BBONT, the garden watchers invaded the village in even greater numbers - I lost count...! Maybe the sum raised for the Childrens Society, £500, provides the clue for those with a mathematical mind as to how many visitors came from near and far.

Ted excelled himself this year with efficient organisation and advertising - probably all that energy after having retired just before the event. And afterwards he and Jean held a little get-together in their own garden where we drank

wine and chatted about how it all went.

It has to be admitted, our gardens in Speen are quite a modest lot compared with those in some other places. But that is just the point - people like to compare their own modest garden with other modest gardens and sometimes get new ideas which are feasible for themselves

I think it was hoped that there would be a good proportion of new gardens on the list this year, but I think it was mainly the old faithfuls who joined in again, which is fine, but you others would find it great fun and an incentive to fine tune the weeding and edging etc. Through delivering newsletters etc., I know for a fact that some of the most interesting gardens in Speen don't get seen. Often it's because the gardeners in question are too

modest about what they've achieved. Next time more persuasion (and flattery, whatever it takes) should be employed. Just a suggestion to Ted and the committee.

And after Jack Butler's giant sunflower of 1997, celebrated in the media (I know for a fact he used all kinds of clever fertilisers incidentally) how about a village sunflower competition in 1998? Jack's world record was, he claims, 13 foot six inches in old money and 28 heads. So we could have two competitions in one - most heads and tallest plant. Another one for your committee, Ted. Trouble is we'll probably get another b..... drought next year! Of course Jack will be banned from competition and no one must use the seed he's saved from his '97 giant.

Peter

Stop Press Stop Press Stop Press Stop Press

I hope it is accurate information - I'm informed that the opening of the new shop has run into a snag. It seems that it has proved difficult to get a manager and consideration is being given to leasing the shop to a private individual.

Ed.

THREAT TO MOBILE HOMES

An application on behalf of Nicholas King Homes to replace the mobile homes with five executive style houses at Flowers Bottom Lane, Speen will shortly be considered by the Planning Committee.

Glenn Hart spoke to some of the caravan residents.

There have recently been several applications to increase the numbers of caravans at the Hillside Mobile Home Park, but now a developer has had the site surveyed and requested planning permission for five large houses.

Historically all attempts to increase the caravans have been refused, so it would be ironic were these latest plans to be passed.

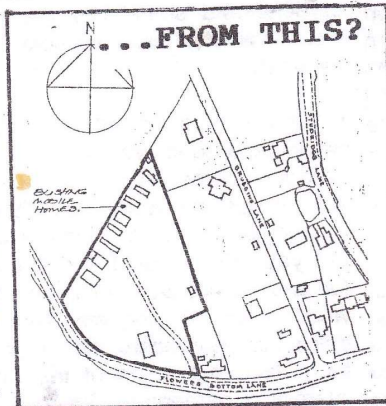
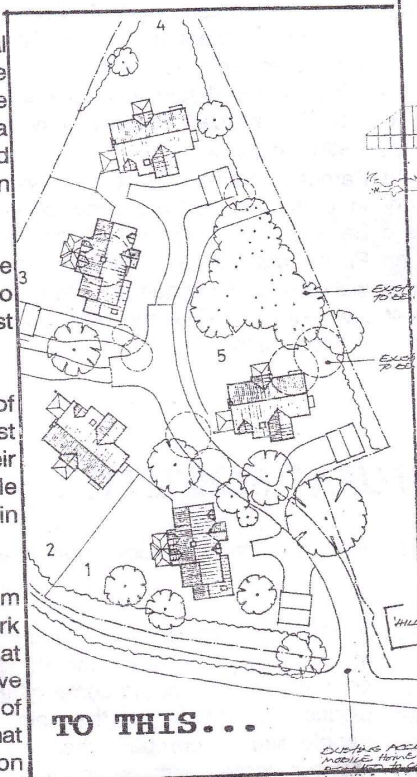
The owners of the mobile homes of course do not want to go and must be offered the market price for their homes, but they would not be able to find other accommodation in Speen for that sort of sum.

One resident asked for advice from the National Association of Park Home Residents and was told that it was unlikely they would receive any compensation for the loss of the site. They were also told that they could be in a difficult position if they dug their heels in and the land was still sold to the builder.

District Councillor Jean Gabbittas wrote to all the residents of the site, on 19th September, saying that she was keeping an eye on the situation and implying that there was nothing to worry about. This view was also put forward by Parish Council Chairman Don White. Nevertheless, further applications were likely if this one is turned down.

Putting myself in the place of the caravan residents, I am sure that I would feel under constant harassment never knowing when one of these applications might slip through and deprive me of my home.

The advice some residents say they have had from various solicitors contradict each other and their position is not clear. Professional advice was offered at £140 an hour, but this type of advice should not be needed; this site is protected under the rules of the Green Belt



and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There should be no way that this application should get through (but others have before). This site is on the edge of a village designated for environmental protection.

Let us hope that the residents of the site hear good news soon and are left in peace.

Glenn Hart



Editor's note: As at 7th October there were no representations on file in the Planning Department either for or against this application, albeit my own objection is on its way. I hope there will be many others. The application number is 97/06870/FUL and letters should reach the Planning Department, Wycombe District Council, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, HP11 1BB as soon as possible.

I've spoken to our District Councillor Mrs Gabbittas who confirms that the application is clearly "against policy" and hopefully this will be reflected in the Planning Committee decision and, should it go that far, in the decision taken by the Ministry of the Environment to reject an appeal. A representative of the Planning Department assures me that new Labour appears to be every bit as determined to support environmental protection laws as the previous administration. Nevertheless, how does it go - "for evil to prevail" all that's necessary is for good men to do nothing?" - something like that.

I presume that the village consensus would wish, for example that the Residents Association will write now to object and later, should there be an appeal, help to orchestrate village objections lest the powers that be make any wrong assumption about how most of us feel?

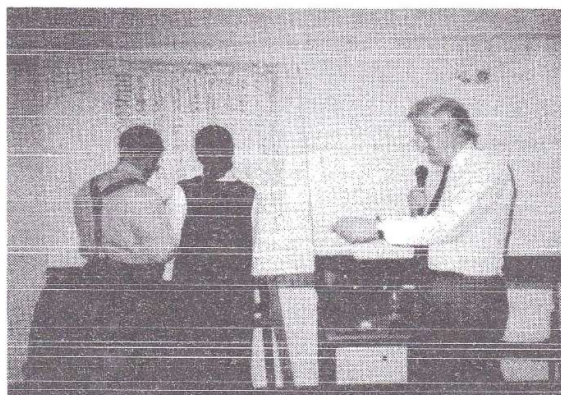
Finally, we must bear in mind that pressures on the countryside have been building up and the voice of the "Philistine" is being heard ever louder that "houses for the people must come before pretty countryside" so to speak. Ed.



*Speen fete pony-ride ladies:
Danielle, Johanna and Emma*



*Gloria reunited with one of her
puppies exported to Czech Republic*



*And the 1997 Speen
Quiz winners are...*



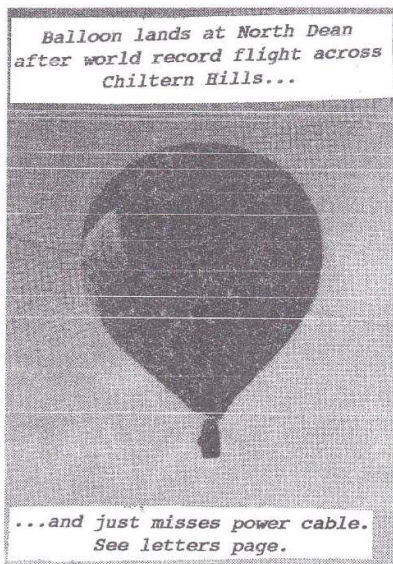
*The PTA. Don White
presents to Peter Symonds*



*Not feeling brave
at the Speen Fete*



Fun Day spud race



*Balloon lands at North Dean
after world record flight across
Chiltern Hills...*

*...and just misses power cable.
See letters page.*



*World record sunflower
falling apart after
autumn gale...*

...see story.

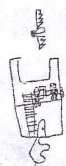
Speen School:
Year 2/3 stories based on the
Minpins by Roald Dahl. The opening
was a class composition which all
the children developed into
individual stories.

James Abbott

James Abbott

It was Billy's birthday. At 3 o'clock

exactly the swan flew in through
the open window and pecked softly
his hand. Billy woke up quickly and
climbed onto his back. The swan
flapped his wings and soared off
through the sky. Billy saw a
haunted castle and the swan landed on
the path and went in the door.



He went up some stairs and he
saw a Dracula and he got his
gun and shot the Dracula then the swan took
home and Billy went to sleep.

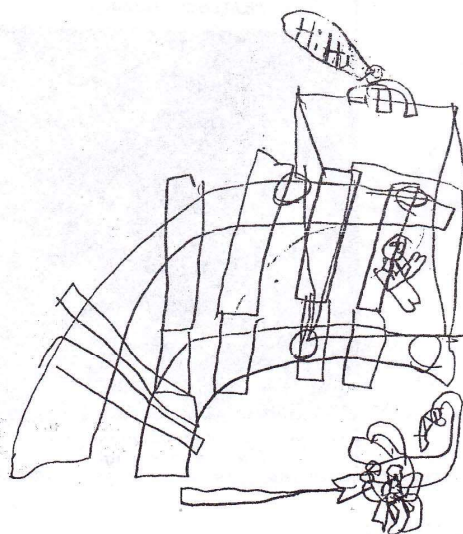
Chloe Hanson

Chloe Hanson

It was Billy's birthday. At 3 o'clock
exactly the swan flew in through the
open window and pecked softly on his
hand. Billy woke up quickly and climbed
onto his back. The swan flapped his
wings and soared off through the
sky. They flew until the swan was tired. We
landed on a land with lots of funny
people. They were dressed up like hairy monsters.
They said you should not be here our
leader is a real monster. He eats other
people. Take me to your leader and
get a sword as well. He went to the
monster he was enormous with his sword
he killed him. And now Billy and his
family lived happily ever after.

William

It was Billy's birthday. At 3 o'clock
exactly the swan flew in through
the open window and pecked softly on
his hand. Billy woke up quickly and climbed
onto his back. The swan flapped his
wings and soared off through the
sky. To another world with a giant
scorpion it took a little while
ill he found it and while the swan
kept the giant scorpion busy
and Billy got a gun and came here
and he killed it with his gun. For a
celebration he went to Thorpe
Park and he went on Witches
Power and he giggled when he
saw the giant scorpion.



Jon Critoph's "hands on" experience in Bosnia

Nothing could have prepared me for the sights of destruction and devastation that were to greet me. There were rows upon rows of blocks of flats with missing roofs and holes blown in the walls by mortars launched from the neighbouring hillsides. Amongst the wreckage was the occasional dwelling that was occupied, signalled by washing on lines, gently blowing in the breeze against the smoke-stained fronts of the buildings. It seemed incredible that only seven hours previously I had been stood outside my beautiful cottage in Speen looking at a dew-soaked valley and breathing the crisp morning air of a typical autumn morning. What a stark contrast of that to this 90 percent plus of devastation that I now stood amongst.

Perhaps I should say what I am doing out here. Well by day I am a technical manager with Symbol Technologies, advising customers around the UK and Europe on bar code technologies and how to implement successful systems. However, by night I now practise various forms of complementary therapy including massage, Reiki healing, Indian head massage, counselling and natural healing. About 18 months ago I read an article in the Guild of Complementary Practitioners magazine about a couple of ladies (Vicky Poole and Diane Hemmings) who had decided that they wanted to do something to help the people of war-torn Bosnia, and being complementary therapists there was no better way of helping than "hands on".

They worked together to form an organisation called "The Healing Hands Network" which is now a registered charity. They were organising therapists to go to Sarajevo for two weeks to work alongside the doctors and physiotherapists in hospitals, clinics, old peoples homes and orphanages. It seemed really exciting for the people for the people going out, but at this point I still hadn't considered it myself. Over a year later I saw an article on

the latest work of the Healing Hands Network in Kindred Spirit magazine and I knew I wanted to be part of it. I phoned Vicky Poole, submitted my C.V. together with my certificates and a copy of my insurance - and then waited. A week or so later I got a phone call telling me I had been accepted and could go out at the end of June. For various reasons I had to postpone the trip until September.

Anyway, I booked my two weeks off work and started the task of raising the money, as we had to fund our own expenses, including flights, accommodation etc, about £750 in all. Thanks to some very generous donations, I raised just over £500, paying the rest myself.

A pair of therapists go out each week, for two weeks, so there are four of them at any one time. You learn the ropes the first week and pass the knowledge on the second week. I worked in a physiotherapy and rehabilitation clinic which was at the west end of "sniper alley" and above a supermarket. It was in the Irish Refugee Trust in a place called Ilidza, just outside Sarajevo, and I organised some home visits for those who couldn't get out. In all I guess I saw about eight to ten clients a day, six and a half days a week, working from 8am to 4pm (noon on Saturday).

We met many genuine, warm and surprisingly open-hearted people during our stay, being welcomed into many of their homes to share what they had. I had one instance where I was invited in for tea and was proudly given a bowl of freshly picked strawberries from their garden. With such an offer how could I refuse.

The legacy of terror and deprivation

The locals showed very many obvious signs of living for many years under appalling conditions with very little food, and what they could get was of very poor quality. In addition they would be living under the threat of being killed by a mortar indiscriminately fired into a

populated area, or a carefully aimed bullet from a hidden sniper. You can feel the atmosphere the minute you enter the buildings, and at night you can only wonder what it must have felt like; during the war you couldn't walk in front of a window for fear of being shot.

We all lived in a 3-bedroom apartment with one person sleeping in the living/dining/common room. There was no gas, or electricity (most of the time), and water for only a couple of hours twice a day. So the first task when the water came on at around 6.30 am was to fill our water bottles and saucepans to give us enough water to last until the evening when the water came on again.

We treated people of all ages; from a four-year-old girl to an eighty-six-year-old man with serious health problems. They were all equally grateful for our time and the treatments we gave. Our reward was in seeing the life return to their eyes as they realised there were people who cared. In many cases they would bring a bit of chocolate as a gift; never have I eaten so much of it in all my life!

Memories that will stay with us forever

We all made friends, had many great and unique experiences and have memories that will be with us forever. It was very humbling experience and certainly made me realise how lucky I am. I was able to add a few Serbo Croat words to my vocabulary and some friends to my Christmas card list.

I will be showing my slides at a special evening in the Speen village hall and talking about my experiences more detail. I hope I will see some of you there. As far as going back there again - we will have to see.

**SPEEN AND NORTH DEAN GOLF DAY
AT PRINCES RISBOROUGH GOLF CLUB ON MONDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 1997**

The Speen versus North Dean Golf Challenge match finally took place, following the challenge from North Dean, on Monday 1st September at Princes Risborough Golf Club where 24 golfers enjoyed a glorious day.

The day commenced at 9 a.m. in the Clubhouse where over a cup of coffee both teams had the opportunity of meeting each other in a congenial atmosphere. It was surprising that people who lived in the same village had not met before in 12-15 years despite living within 300 yards of each other – what a shame we haven't got a proper "local". At 10 a.m. the morning "Texas Scramble" competition was held over 9 holes with Speen coming out the narrow winners; the team comprising Bob Stupples, John Codling, Geoff Morris and David Black.



**Speen
"Texas Scramble"
Winners**

Close Runners Up for North Dean were John Rogers, Steve Rogers, Steve Ball and Peter Brownridge.



**North Dean
"Texas Scramble"
Runners Up**

Following an excellent ploughman's lunch the main "Challenge Trophy" match took place and was won on this occasion by Speen, the Trophy being presented to Stuart Newman by John Rogers. The Trophy to be retained until the next match!!

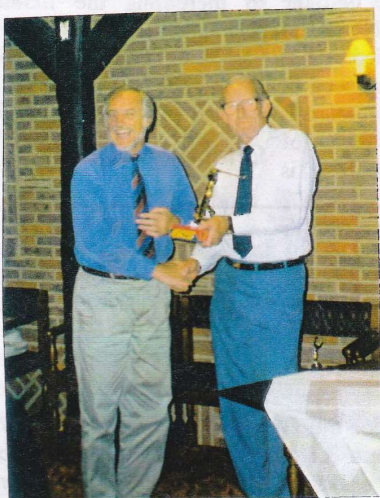


**John Rogers presenting Challenge Trophy to
Stuart Newman**



**Ivor Beeks (left) being presented with
Winners prize**

The individual winner was Ivor Beeks representing North Dean and the runner up was Keith Rosling from Speen. Eric Cash from North Dean won the prize for "Nearest the Pin" and Geoff Morris playing for Speen had no problem in collecting the prize for the "Longest Drive".



Keith Rosling & John Rogers



Geoff Morris (left) – "Longest Drive"



**Eric Cash (left)
"Nearest the Pin"**

Prize Giving was preceded by a superb three course dinner and Tom Yates, a member of Princes Risborough Golf Club, was invited as a guest proving to be an excellent after dinner speaker relating amusing stories to all!

The event proved to be a most enjoyable day out for all participants, concluding at approximately 10 p.m. with everyone being taken back to their homes by hired mini buses.

It is anticipated that this event will be repeated in the Spring and any golfers who were not able to play in September are encouraged to contact John Rogers (North Dean) on 01494 562041, or Stuart Newman (Speen) on 01494 488350 until the 16th November and 01494 481536 from the 17th November onwards

SPEEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION are monitoring the situation

We would extend a warm welcome to the new residents of Speen, some having moved into the new cottages and others arriving as part of the normal comings and goings of the village. The Association exists for everyone in Speen to ensure that matters affecting the villagers are considered and represented to those who make decisions on our behalf.

Over the past few months, the Association has continued to lobby Wycombe District Council for a resolution in respect of the applications for Speen Store and Hillside.

The application to build on the Green Belt site at Hillside (subject

of an article elsewhere in this issue) was opposed by the Association and has since been refused by WDC at their meeting on 15th October 97.

This, of course, may only be the first move of the developer to gain permission. It is likely that an appeal to the Secretary of State will be made within the 6 months available.

With regard to the Store site development, we have continued to press for a proper resolution of the vision splay issue to ensure that the safest access is provided. Now that the site has become occupied it has become even clearer that the need to join up the two lengths of footpath is

essential for the safety of pedestrians. I believe progress is

being made, but I am not sure of the final outcome as the officer in charge has not been available.

We have also pointed out to WDC that the parking arrangements to the front of the Store site development do not, as promised, prevent parking "end on", so allowing reversing directly onto the highway. Parking on the pavement is also a concern raised as it reduces even further the vision available to oncoming traffic, so increasing the likelihood of an accident.

Paul Rogerson
Chairman S.R.A.

MAINS WATER CAME QUITE LATE TO SPEEN

*Francis Caldwell has researched the history and
speculates on the future*

In the crafts tent at the fete there Chilterns, accounting in part for the were post cards of Speen in the sparsely populated landscape of past, including some of the ponds woodlands and sheep walks, in the village. In addition to the contrasting with the Thames Valley, present ponds down Water Lane in Speen everyone depended on and close to what was Plumridge's rain water collected in butts and shop there was a pond opposite tanks, and on the ponds for the the old post office (a photograph of gardens and livestock; there were which was featured on the cover of some wells in the valleys but not in a recent *SNDN*, Ed.) until about our village.

1935, and another beside

Woodbine Cottage (until the early In retrospect, the years 1935 to 1970's I think). In the nearby 1975 seem an era of abundant, countryside there were the present cheap, good quality water - taken pond in Monkton Wood, one in by us all for granted. Piped water in College Plantation and another at the parishes of Monks Risborough, Piggots. In what are now Moses Princes Risborough, Great and Platt fields there were a pond and Little Kimble and Horsenden was two concreted water collecting initially supplied by the Rural "basins" which I was told were dew Districts Water Co. Ltd. over this ponds but which I now think had to area of about ten square miles with do with the old brick works. a population of less than one thousand in 1925. Following

Piped water at last...

Piped water came to Speen in supply was then piped to the hill 1935, following a severe drought in area of Lacey Green, Speen and 1934, when those with water in the Hampdens. Two extra storage tanks helped out boreholes were sunk, 45 miles of neighbours. Water had always been mains laid, the elevated tower at a commodity to conserve in the Green Hailey built and a low level

reservoir constructed at Whiteleaf. Expansion of the network continued even during the second world war period of 1939-45. In 1950 the company was acquired by the Bucks Water Board, prior to nationalisation.

Recycling today - back to rainwater tomorrow?

Since the early 1970's water has been drawn more and more from recycled supplies, with various additives, and the years in which it has been in short supply grow more frequent, though with borehole extraction wisely limited as in the Hughenden Valley - and "monsoon" rains from time to time - the Chiltern streams currently run again. But now we have the longest (and it seems the wettest) drought since the time of George 2nd., so perhaps the collection of rainwater, and ponds for use as well as appearance, will feature in the future, as well as what is now called the forest garden as was practised in the past.

10/10/10

Michael How

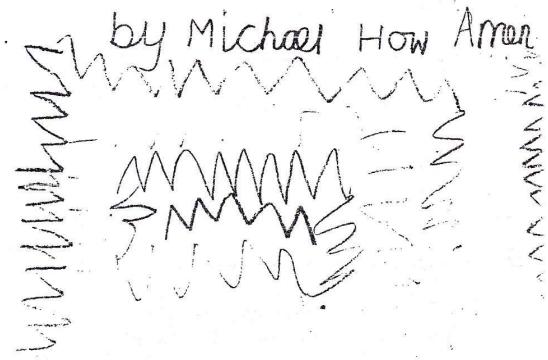
Bianca

Year 2/3 "Harvest Prayers"

Dear God
 Thank You for the
 food we've got. We
 would like to share it
 with other people
 Amen



Dear God Thank you for the
 juicy fruit on the trees and
 thank you for our money
 so we won't starve of hunger



by Michael How Amen

The editor hears
 that several ladies
 in the village have
 been listening to
 children read at
 Speen School.
 That's great!
 (Anyone else interested
 please phone Gloria Holmes)

Toby

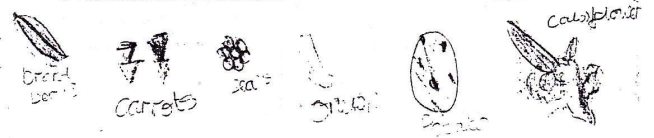
Dear God thank you for all the
 seeds that we grow and we give
 to church to be sent off to poor
 people who have nothing amen



Claire Collier

Claire Collier

Dear God,
 Thank you for harvest
 for fruits and vegetables
 I would like to share my food
 with the starving people and the
 people with no money and hope they find
 some food soon
 Amen



26 Autumn Lectures - Booking Form

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Lecture Title(s)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Number of Tickets at £5.00 each _____

Total Enclosed _____

Please return this form with remittance to :
Admissions Desk,
The Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum
Akeman Street, Tring, Herts. HP23 6AP

Please make cheques payable to:
The Natural History Museum (Tring)

Tickets will be sent by return.

ODDS & ENDS

Ladies Breakfasts

18th October Marie Biggin t.b.c.

Holding together a family
facing cancer

24th January Mary Kissell

Coping with trauma

16th May Jackie Cray

Children's culture today

Mens' Breakfasts

20th September Dr Ted Williams

Trends in Public health
and their implications

6th December John Pressdee t.b.c.

Feedback from the great hike

21st March Paddy Mallon t.b.c.

God at work today?

13th June Prof Sir Ghilleen Prance

Are science and
Christianity compatible?

TOUR DE FORCE THEATRE COMPANY

87a HIGH STREET
TRING, HERTS HP23 4AB
TEL/FAX: 01442 827934

LORNA

Since January 1997, three members of the Tour De Force Theatre Company, James Harry, Peter Joucla and Marjorie Stockley have been working to fulfil an ambition to write and produce a new musical based on Blackmore's classic novel Lorna Doone.

What are the musical's unique selling points?

- LORNA is an adaptation of a wonderful novel. It is a perfect story for a musical. It has a strong plot-line and characters, and its themes of love and war, vengeance, duty, class and personal pride are no less worthy of exposure to audiences today, than they were when the story was written a hundred years ago. As far as we are aware there has never been a commercially produced musical based on this powerful love story.

- All three of us share a passion, a determination and a desire to combine our creative energy. In addition we can call upon a vast amount of professional skills and experience. James Harry is a professional composer whose unique and exciting music can be heard on 20 commercially released albums. LORNA will be his 4th musical. Cameron MacIntosh expressed interest in his last musical Svengali.

Peter Joucla is a published playwright, with 10 years professional experience in theatre both as an actor, director and musical director. Marjorie Stockley a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama has directed over 70 productions at home and abroad.

At this stage, the musical is almost complete. A cast of talented professional actors have been auditioned and the project is set to preview at the Court Theatre, Pendley, Herts from 4-6 December 1997. We are writing to you in the hope you can support our venture in some way.

- We would like you to come and see the show. We want your feedback and your comments. After December LORNA will be revised for a future London production. We believe that good musicals are not written but re-written. Your assessment of it will be vital to us.
- We are most importantly looking for funding and would therefore welcome any financial support in helping LORNA become an established show. If you feel that you would like to share in our vision, please contact one of us on the numbers detailed below so we can discuss what benefits sponsorship may have for you - complimentary tickets, publicity, client entertainment etc.

Look forward to hearing from you soon
Kind regards

James Harry - 01296-662658
Peter Joucla - 01442-827934
Marjorie Stockley - 01494-488101

September 1997

31st October

"An Evening of Bats"
by Dr Clemency Fisher

Dr Clemency Fisher, Curator of Birds and Mammals, The National Museums of Merseyside, is a co-founder of the Merseyside and West Lancashire Bat Group and Deputy Regional Representative for the Bat Conservation Trust. Clem combines her curatorial activities with active field work and has a particular interest in the historical aspects of natural history. She has travelled widely on museum and conservation projects, notably to Australia, the US and the Maldives. Clem's talk will start with an introduction to the world of bats - What are they? What bats do we have? Where do bats live? Do they really get in your hair? How do they find their food? How do we find them? How do we protect them? Clem's talk will also describe bats as seen by different cultures at different times.

7th November

"200 Years of Britain's Birds"
by Bob and Ann Scott

Bob has recently retired after 37 years (not 200) with the RSPB, working within the Reserves mechanism, in a distinguished career culminating in his appointment as Head of Reserves Management. Bob is an enthusiastic bird watcher and contributor to county bird reports.

In his retirement Bob edits the "News & comments" column for *British Birds* and is Vice-President of the British Ornithologists' Union. He is also involved in leading bird tours and lecturing in many countries from Argentina to Rwanda.

Ann Scott, who gave us an interesting and entertaining talk on her work as Senior Wildlife Advisor with the RSPB two years ago, makes a welcome return in partnership with Bob to add her own knowledge and experience to what promises to be a splendid double act. Ann and her team at RSPB have answered up to 40,000 enquiries about birds each year - making an immense contribution to helping members of the Society.

14th November

"A Wildlife Photographer's Year - Part 2"
by Ernie Jones

Following his prize winning entry in The Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition last year Ernie has agreed to give us a further insight into the life of a wildlife photographer. His previous talk was enthusiastically received and we are delighted that he has agreed to return.

Ernie, who lives near Berkhamsted, is a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and a past President of the Zoological Photographic Club. He has photographed animals in Kenya, The Gambia, Florida, India, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan (and of course UK!). He has provided illustrations for numerous books and is a regular contributor to all the leading wildlife and countryside magazines.

21st November

"Tring and The Edible Dormouse"
by Dr Pat Morris

Pat has become a regular contributor to our lecture series and never fails to provide a superb evening. As an academic he has stimulated generations of students of natural history at Royal Holloway, at undergraduate and post graduate levels, and he is the leading authority on British Mammals. He has researched on hedgehogs, dormice, watervole and red squirrel and recently began pilot studies of the edible dormouse *Gliis gliis*. In this talk he will give us some of the preliminary results of the *Gliis gliis* work.

Pat is a consultant on BBC radio and TV programmes and landscape and ecological management, site management and impact amelioration measures. He has published widely in scientific journals and magazines and is the author of four books.

Pat has served on many committees including The National Trust Conservation Advisory Panel, Scientific Advisory Committee of the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust and was Chairman of The Mammal Society from 1991-97.

OPEN AFTERNOON

The Governors of
SPEEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST SCHOOL

warmly welcome prospective pupils and accompanied adults

1:30 TO 2:45

WEDNESDAY 19th NOVEMBER

Speen School is a member of the Princes Risborough Liaison Group and the Wycombe Small Schools Group

Here is a report from Megan on recent activities organised by the North Dean Village Hall committee.

A big THANK YOU to all who have supported events that have taken place in North Dean this year.

Your village hall committee work hard to arrange a variety of events and activities for all tastes (to that end any suggestions gratefully received).

Our lunchtime barbecues are a great success - extending almost to tea time. The food is great (as is the company) not to mention the wine and beer provided, with soft drinks for the children. And where would we be without the ice cream from our own local dairy?

The Midsummer Dance, held at Pigotts, was certainly one of the highlights of the year. Once again our thanks to Nick and Rachel Wheeler Robinson for generously providing the venue for this event, also Pigotts band. Food was provided by the committee.

A report of the village fete appears elsewhere in this issue.

About 45 people attended the Race Night on October 11th. I think there must have been quite a few hoarse voices the next day (*terrible pun, Megan*). Shouts of "come on number..." bounced off the walls. This is a great fun evening and the banter between the two presenters has to be seen and heard to be believed! We are lucky to have a number of sponsors in the village who turn up trumps every year - thank you, folks!

Future events:

* November 29th Beetle Drive. * November 20th Mid-day Bridge Session. * December 18th (7.30) Annual Village Social Evening.

Looking ahead: * August 8th 1998 NORTH DEAN FETE.

I'm sure that they'll all be a roaring success, so see you there.

Leaflets will be posted. Please contact your local committee member for more information.

Megan Chinn

Hughenden Council suspends subsidy to Speen And North Dean News. But continues to subsidise the three other publications in the Parish.

Today, 31st October, I received a copy of the Hughenden Council Minutes covering a recent meeting of their Finance Committee. Here is a quote from those minutes:

"Cllr Mrs Leflaive stated she was concerned about Hughenden Valley getting £160 between them for 2 newsletters. The N. Dean one is only a small part of the Speen and N. Dean News sheet and she felt it was very extravagant. Cllr Mrs Leflaive felt that as Speen is not in our Parish, the North Dean element should be included in the Hughenden Valley newsletter. Cllr Davies proposed that we hold back the Speen and North Dean News cheque for one month to get further information. This was agreed. Cllr White abstained because he did not see why this Parish should be influenced by what another Parish does or does not do."

Editor's response:

Speen and North Dean are two small communities situated close together along the same stretch of minor road and they have been socially linked for many generations. The Speen and North Dean News is doing its bit to foster and reflect that relationship to the benefit of both villages. North Dean residents requested that they be included when our newsletter was started 12 issues ago by people attending the church which lies between the two communities and which is attended by people from both of them. This is a democracy and people associate freely, they do not need to be dictated to by this or that councillor elected to represent some other village.

I personally think that the Hughenden council is wise in its overall policy of providing small subsidies for the four village publications within its Parish as they all no doubt help to aid a community spirit in each location. Obviously it would be inequitable to subsidise, albeit modestly, three of these publications but not the fourth. It should be an easy calculation to work out a fair distribution according to population being served within any particular village.

As editor of this particular newsletter I have concentrated on producing it and I was unaware that no similar subsidy was being made by Lacey Green Parish, where three quarters of our readers live. This is an anomaly we will try to have remedied. Meanwhile, may I say that we make best use of what very little money comes our way and we would not have survived the past year without, for example, the very small profit taken by Princes Risborough Upper School who do our copying. Our advertising revenue has lately been reduced and so we can barely afford to forego any other monies. So I hope that Hughenden will be kind enough to restore some contribution and that Lacey Green will assist us in addition.

I have to say how disappointed I am with the attitude taken by Councillor Mrs Leflaive; it's penny-pinching, unkind and inappropriate to the good morale and best interests of the various communities within the Parish. Village life isn't just about traffic-calming and dog loos, important though they undoubtedly are. I recall about a year or so ago it was

reported in the local press that Mrs Leflaive was trying to undermine her own village publication through having its tiny subsidy removed, almost seeming to imply suspicion of a lack of financial integrity on the part of its editor - a person seemingly possessed of a sense of humour about it. Ed.

PLEASE!! PLEASE!!

Next time you are having a clear-out and don't know what to do with old blankets, shoes, coats, clothes, etc., (for children and adults), please give me a ring and we will have them re-cycled for reputable charities who will distribute them at home and abroad. Telephone Olivia Cowan on 488766 to arrange collection.

The editor apologises to readers for the tiny print used on this page. Even with 44 pages this time, we nevertheless ran out of space!



Twinning Association aim to recruit more from Speen

It's been some time since there was anything about twinning in the Speen and North Dean News (hereafter identified as SNDN), and we wouldn't like the residents of Speen to think that they had been forgotten. One minor problem is that I don't normally see a copy of SNDN because I don't live in Speen, nor do any other present committee members, nudge, nudge.

The Lacey Green Parish Twinning Association is still very much alive, in its 16th year. However, we would like to see more new recruits from Speen, especially from those of you who are relatively recent arrivals, or are in the younger age group (say, 5 to 30). Joining is quite painless. We simply extract money, £2.50 for individual membership or £5 for a family including children under 18. If you don't already know what twinning is about, ask an existing member or call me on 01844 344975. We do welcome new Twinners Martin and Marjorie Stockley, from Coleheath Bottom.

Some of our recent activities this year include the following. The visit from Hambye took place in May, when we had excellent weather for a change, giving us a weekend that everyone enjoyed. It was especially pleasing to have Georges Pigace, the new Mayor of Hambye, making his first visit outside France. The tour of Woburn Abbey and the trip along the Grand Union Canal both proved to be very popular. Allan Ryder's pipe band entertained us on the Saturday afternoon in the Black Horse car park. We managed (just) to retain the Jeux sans Frontières shield. The visit ended in the evening with a pig roast at the Home of Rest for Horses.

Three of us represented the Association in Hambye at the annual Fête de la Liberation last July. This year, many of the Hambyots dressed up in old Norman costume, and a mock Norman wedding was held on the Sunday afternoon. Hambye is now the home of several British families, although I am not aware that anyone from Speen has yet taken up residence there. We were offered a house in the village for about £25,000 (plus my commission, of course). John and Lavinia Bevington who have been in Hambye for 5 or 6 years say that it now feels like home. They run the B & B spot at La Rairie, just out of the village centre along the main road towards Caen. It's a pleasant place to stay if you are travelling through Normandy. (I even have the 'phone number, somewhere).

In September, we had a successful second barbecue at the Pink and Lily, with 31 people turning up for a very pleasant and non-arduous evening.

We propose to send a team of 10 to represent LGPTA at the Wingrave quiz on Saturday 29 November. Let me know if you would like to participate. We will be running our own quiz on Saturday 17 January in the Lacey Green village hall, and we want to have twelve teams of 8 each. We are hoping to have teams from Wingrave, possibly the Marlow Twinning Association, as well as local teams.

During the past few months, under the auspices of the Wycombe District Council, we have had semi-formal meetings with the other twinning associations in the Council area, and it is proposed to continue these in the future. It is interesting to know how other similar associations operate and we hope to obtain some useful ideas. Marlow is particularly active, with 8 or 9 different organisations in the town having their own twinning exchanges, including a regular petanque competition. It would be good if our local village organisations could get involved with their French counterparts in a similar way. If anyone is interested in this idea, let us know and we will do what we can to help set it up. Don't be put off by our inability to set up an exchange of names, photographs etc between the Speen pre-school and its counterpart in Hambye.

Our AGM in May was notable for the almost total absence of Twinners other than those on the committee. We are unsure whether this meant:

- (a) members trust the committee implicitly
- (b) the free booze was insufficiently advertised
- (c) there was no entertainment other than the opportunity to throw eggs etc. (not provided in the package, however).
- (d) it wasn't held in Speen
- (e) some other reason (your suggestions are invited but no prize is being offered!)

Nevertheless, we are happy to reassure readers that the meeting was held correctly with only one change in the committee, Bob Forrest standing down as Hon. Secretary. Subsequently, Pat Williams was co-opted back on to the committee and has taken on the job of Secretary.

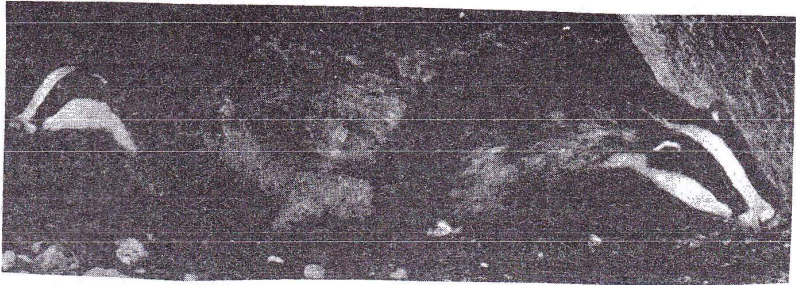
Phillipe Lehodey, a former President of our twin village, has recently become the proud Dad of a brand new daughter. Phillipe is also well known for his trumpet playing with the Hambye band.

A bientot

Tony Molesworth

A desperate attempt to rescue an injured badger.

If you wondered what was happening at about six on Thursday evening, 18th September, around the bottom of the King William yard - George and I were chasing an injured badger, along with Mike Collard from the Bucks Badger Group.



George was dead-heading petunias at the gate (as usual) when a young badger came running up the grass verge. On seeing George, the badger dashed into our garden. George could see it was injured on its back as it ran across the lawn to hide behind the shed.

As the badger seemed settled we phoned Mike Collard on a number I had always kept under "Badger Rescue". Mike's wife called him from work and he soon arrived with a cage and a pole which had a noose on the end. After moving the pile of wood from behind the shed, where he was hiding, the badger,

of course, rushed out in the opposite direction to Mike, tearing past me and pushing through our hedge into next door. It then proceeded to run through various gardens, criss-crossing the road with us following, frantically waving at the traffic.

Twice Mike got the noose around its head, but it twisted free. The last we saw it was running down Chapel Hill into the gardens of Tara and The Biggleswade Barn - with Mike, George and myself rushing after it with an empty dustbin, stick etc, madly out of breath and upset at having lost it!

A week later the badger was spotted still foraging but limping quite badly. Mike felt that if we had caught it he could have had its wound treated and then returned this badger to the wild. If anyone did find it, would they please phone either Mike on 01494 866908 or the police or RSPCA. Mike always likes to hear of any badgers found injured or dead as the Badger Group keeps records of all these things.

Catherine Butler
Rose Cottage

Update

The injured badger has been seen alive since its meeting with Kath

About a week after hearing of Catherine Butler's injured badger at their house on Hampden Road I was pleased to see it one night at around 11.30 on Chapel Hill. From the car I watched as a badger rummaged in and out of many of

the gardens on either side of the road. It had a significant limp with an injury apparent on his back left leg, but he did not seem unduly concerned about this, or indeed about the close proximity of my car.

Other villagers have reported daylight viewing of a badger in their gardens along Coleheath Bottom and in Abbotswood, so keep your eyes peeled.

Peter Symonds

The Speen and North Dean Mother and Toddler Group meet each Tuesday morning between ten and quarter to twelve at North Dean Village Hall.

Nothing much to report really, only to say that we've said goodbye (or, hopefully, only au revoir) to one or two of our regulars over the past few months, which is always sad.

However, I'm pleased to welcome all the new mums and and toddlers to our group.

Since last I wrote, we've had two trips out, one to Bekonscot Model Village on a very wet day in May - not that anyone seemed to mind.

Our second outing, much closer to home, was a visit to Speen Pre-School, which proved most

successful if the noise level was anything to go by....!

Thank you Mrs Schollar for inviting us.

Chris Dunnington

30 "CLOSURE OF SPEEN SCHOOL" Just a newspaper "scare story" says Peter Symonds.

A recent newspaper report referred to Speen school as one of a number of small schools whose future was under scrutiny. However, this "scare story", which usually appears every five years or so, failed to give a true picture of the status of Speen school.

Popular

The school has this year accepted an intake of fifteen children, which is the maximum allowed. The school is therefore still in high demand and many of its children have younger siblings waiting to follow on; many of these having already been registered. Families new to the village, with young children, should ensure that they too are registered for Speen school at the earliest opportunity.

Wycombe parents opt for Speen school

In High Wycombe, several first schools have been merged, creating huge establishments, and many parents are happy to drive to Speen to gain the acknowledged educational benefit of a small school in a particularly attractive setting. Given this background it is unlikely that demand for places at Speen school will fall.

Not owned by Council

The newspaper article also did not indicate that Speen school is not owned by the County Council. The grounds and the buildings are in fact owned by the Diocese. So whereas in other cases the sites of

closed schools may become available for redevelopment, this would not be the case in Speen. Furthermore, the Diocese has a high regard for Speen school and the type of educational environment that it provides.

Speen school gets good report

During the past year, despite the turmoil created by nursery vouchers, the school achieved a very favourable report from the Ofsted inspectors, reflecting well on the efforts of the teachers and the school governors. In conclusion, SPEEN SCHOOL IS THRIVING AND WILL CONTINUE TO THRIVE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

How would we manage without our Village Hall?...

...Speen Village Hall, a centre for so many activities says Stan Bale.

The many clubs and associations using the hall on a regular basis reflect the variety of interests that involve the villagers. These include Parish Council meetings, Post Office, Pre-school, Table Tennis, WI, Horticultural Society, Men's and Ladies' Breakfasts, Musical events, "Village Pub" evenings, Village Quiz evening, Art Classes, Polling Station, Lace Days, Christmas Fayre and various functions organised by private individuals etc.

And for example, in the dark wintry days of last January we had a Jazz Evening when one of our village friends, Martin Hart, brought together some of his friends from the jazz world and gave us a wonderful evening of jazz music.

One of several successful private occasions was that in February when Catherine and George Butler celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary - in the very hall where they had their Wedding Breakfast in 1957.

In March, Bucks Conservation Volunteers used the hall as their base while supervising the village working party which tidied up the Studridge Lane pond.

In April we had first the Horticultural Society Spring Show, then Peter Symonds presented his "Serengeti Safari" during the following week.

On May 1st the hall was used as a Polling Station for the General and County Elections.

In June, Pre-school (who use the hall each weekday morning) held a First Aid Course. In November they will be holding a photographic session for the children.

In July the hall was open and emptied of its contents, tables and chairs etc, which were used on the Playing Field for the Summer Fete. Also in July Jan Stevens began her Art Course.

Also, in late July, the WI provided teas at the village hall for the many visitors who came to Speen for the Horticultural Society's "Open Gardens Day."

In August the WI provided their Annual Lunch for the senior citizens.

The Village Quiz took place on 17th October and Lace Day the following week.

The hall was used by the Bucks Housing Association and the Speen Residents Association for their respective meetings in connection with Village Shop and Social Housing project.

A date for your diary is November 29th when the Annual Christmas Fayre will take place. This, together with the Quiz and Lace Day will be used to raise funds for the upkeep of the Village Hall, which, as you can see, is so important to our village life.

Jeanne Hanford regrets...

NO BONFIRE AND FIREWORKS THIS YEAR!

The Speen Playing Field committee reluctantly decided at their recent meeting that they will be unable to put on the Bonfire and Fireworks party this year.

Too many obstacles

We are sorry to break with tradition, but unfortunately there were just too many obstacles to overcome at one time. The first hitch appeared earlier in the year after a meeting with the Environmental Services Department revealed that we would have to completely reorganise the arrangements of fireworks/bonfire/safety areas etc. on the field in order to comply with their advice on ensuring the safety of buildings in the vicinity of the field. We had, in the past, followed the advice given by the High Wycombe Fire Service, whose prime concern was understood to be the safety of the public. However, the suggested rearrangement which would allow the required area of fall-out zone behind the firework display would mean siting the firework display in a different place. As a consequence, a larger area of the field, including the bonfire site, would have to be taped off from the public; possible but complicated.

Key organisers unavailable

Organising the whole event takes up quite a lot of time and however much one tries to delegate (as any who have been involved in this kind of event will know) there always has to be a "key person" to pull the whole thing together. Unfortunately our key people of the past few years just could not make the time to take on the job this year. Since knowing that there would one day be a shop again, there had been a collective sigh of relief that at last there would be somewhere central to sell tickets; but, alas, even that was not to be this year, as we heard, about a month or so ago, that the shop would not be open for business in time.

New volunteers wanted soon

Some of our committee members have been involved with the Playing Field for ten years or more, and at the AGM in the spring of 1998, several will be stepping down in order to move onto other things and to - quite rightly - make way for other people to come in with new ideas and enthusiasm. So we need new volunteers to join our committee; please would you seriously consider being one of them. The Playing Field is an asset

belonging to us all, even those of us who may never step on it from one fete day to the next.

The under-fives play area...

...now has a little house bought with the proceeds from Fun Day. Thank you very much for your support with this venture. The Pre-school children have made good use of their new outdoor safe area and Pre-school are hoping to carry on using it throughout the autumn and probably the winter too. We would be grateful if you could kindly discourage children older than five from paying with the equipment in this area.

The Fortnightly Draw new volunteer needed

As you may know, this has been one of our main sources of income, adding over £500 a year profit to the funds. There are eight collectors who go around the village collecting individual subscriptions once each year. We are very grateful to them and owe them a huge THANK YOU, as without them the Draw could not exist.

The present bookkeeper who records all their collections and organises the fortnightly prizes - which, for convenience sake, are done on a monthly basis - has been doing the job for about eight years and would like to step down

Bob Johnston reports on a time when some North Dean allotments seemed to have their own unique system of central heating - by accident.

As a child, Denis Hill lived in a house at North Dean called the Turnery. The fields behind the house were the village allotments.

One winter's day he noticed a steady stream of smoke arising from cracks in the ground. His parents arranged to have a digger in to find the source of the smoke.

The top soil was removed revealing smouldering sawdust below which

then burst into flame upon exposure to the air. It was a huge former saw-pit which, being over twenty yards long, was capable of holding four or five pit sawyers working together. Perhaps they thought that firing the pit would dispose of the accumulated sawdust when the pit ceased being used.

The back shed once held a shaft of ten or twelve pulley wheels (of cast

iron, so dating this cottage factory at about 1820 - 1840). As a boy, Denis found fragments of these wheels in the shed.

(The implication that this old saw-pit may have been gently smouldering for several decades at least does not surprise me, given the same phenomenon with many disused rubbish tips elsewhere, Ed.)

SPEEN PLANNING APPLICATIONS

97/05622	1 Woodland View - Fell one tree
97/05628	The Manse, Hampden Road - Fell two trees
97/05724	Speen Caravan Site - Resite three caravans and provision for two extra caravans
97/05674	Ashton, Studridge Lane - Extensions and garage
97/05804	Maple Cottage, Grubbins Lane - Side extension
97/05992	Brambly Hedge, Studridge Lane - Side extension
97/06078	2 Woodview Drive - Side extension
97/06097	Studdridge, Studridge Lane - Side extension
97/06237	Bakery Cottage, Chapel Hill - Rear extension and Dormer Window
97/06378	Driftway House, Coleheath bottom - Garage
97/06399	The Manse, Hampden Road - Fell tree
97/06430	5 St Peter's Close - Conservatory
97/06455	Ploughshare, Flowers Bottom - Attached Garage
97/06517	Speen Stores - Removal on Condition 12 from planning application
97/06597	Halcyon, Cottage Farm Way - Garden Shed
97/06598	Rosebank Cottage, Chapel Hill - Erect new house
97/06611	14 Abbottswood - 2 Dormer Windows

DECISIONS:-

97/05124	Treetops, Chapel Hill - New triple garage	Permitted
97/05332	Wayside, Hampden Road - Rear Extension	Permitted
97/05622	1 Woodland View - Fell tree	Permitted
97/05674	Ashton, Studridge Lane - Rear Extension	Permitted
97/05628	The Manse, Hampden Road - Fell tree	Permitted
97/05503	George Farm - Double Garage	Permitted
97/05326	Pye Cottage, Chapel Hill - New Garage	Permitted
97/06097	Studdridge, Studridge Lane - New Extension	Permitted
97/06078	2 Woodview Drive - Side Extension	Permitted
97/06517	Speen Stores - Removal of Condition 12	Permitted
97/06399	The Manse, Hampden Road - Tree Works	Permitted
97/05992	Brambly Hedge, Studridge Lane - Side Extension	Permitted
97/06430	5 St Peter's Close - Conservatory	Permitted

DECISIONS OF WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

97/06378	Driftway House, Coleheath Bottom - New Garage	Permitted
97/06237	Bakery Cottage, Chapel Hill - New Extension	Permitted

Application No 97/06870 - Speen Caravan Site - Replace existing Mobile Homes with five detached houses, garages and new entrance road. This application was considered by Lacey Green Parish Council at their meeting on 17 September 1997 and the following comments have been submitted to the Wycombe District Council Planning Committee:-

The site is in open countryside on a prominent situation on the hillside. It is in the Green Belt, in an area of outstanding natural beauty and outside the perimeter of the village. The Structure Plan precludes any form of residential development under these circumstances.

A previous application for residential development of part of the site has already been refused on appeal (Ref T/APP/K0425/A/87/076249/P4). To use the site for houses would set a dangerous precedent for use of land within the village which has recently been refused on appeal. There is no local need for this type of development as stated by the Inspector in paragraph 9 of the Appeal T/APP/K0425/A/90/171836/P3. No sewer facilities exist in the area.

For these reasons our Council strongly oppose the Application.

subsequently refused

Early in 1997, Lacey Green Parish Council discussed what kind of celebration should take place within the Parish for the forthcoming Millenium. The whole country would be celebrating in some form to commemorate the year 2000. It was felt that Lacey Green and Speen should each undertake their own celebrations as separate villages. As Lacey Green is proposing to build a new village hall, this will form the basis of their celebration. As far as Speen is concerned, possibly some form of celebration could be organised during the summer of 2000. Actually, the next century commences on 1 January 2001, so any dispute as to the exact date would not arise. The Council did have an offer from a resident in Speen to organise an event and further preliminary discussions would be taking place at the Parish Council's next meeting. No doubt in the very near future when the Council has a few definite proposals to put forward, a full meeting of the village organisations could be called and hopefully a Millenium Committee could be set up, probably on the same lines as the organisation for the 1977 Silver Jubilee. The matter of funding immediately comes to mind and the Parish Council would of course investigate all channels of available monies from sources outside the village.

Don White

Wendy says "thanks everyone" for helping Rebecca

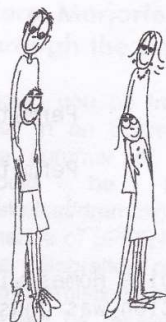
Rebecca (Whitehead) and her family moved back to Yorkshire in August.

On behalf of her parents, David and Nicky, and myself, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who helped with Rebecca's programme. Although her progress has been slow, she has benefitted from the daily exercises and stimulation from all her adopted Aunties.

Thank you all so very much.

Wendy White - Rebecca's Carer.

"Time Out" for Parents



Well, that is what we hoped it would be - a bit of space and time in the week for Mum's (and Dad's if any had been about) to focus our minds on the rearing of our off-spring.

Twelve to fifteen of us have been meeting each Wednesday at the church to discuss areas of parenting such as "Building self-esteem"; "Setting loving limits" and "Making our kids street-wise"; not to mention "Top 10 tips for keeping sane as a parent"!! We have explored ideas and experiences together, gaining support and encouragement as we have recognised our own strengths and weaknesses and found that we are not alone after all.

I am sure that all of you parents out there will recognise what a complex and challenging job we face as we seek to train our youngsters for the complex world that is our society. It has been a privilege to take part in such a lively and pro-active group of people. I wish you all the very best as your children grow and develop.

The material we used came from "Positive Parenting" and is designed for use by "non-experts" in a workshop / discussion style of meeting.

Further one-off sessions are planned for the future -

- next week the Dad's of this group will meet to cover material under the heading "Are you there, Dad?"
- in the spring we hope to cover the sessions for
 - ◊ "Single parents" and
 - ◊ "Living with teenagers".

Look out for information next year.


If you missed this five week course, we will be running it again - so don't worry - just make sure you spot the posters!

By the way - none of it would have been possible without the army of Creche helpers - You know who you are - Many, many thanks to each of you...


Village Lunch Club

The Speen and North Dean Good Neighbours
have come up with an idea which might appeal to you.

Would you like to get together with friends once a fortnight?

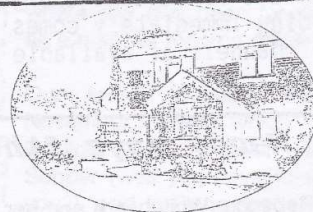


Hot snack lunch provided!
(Bring your own wine or beer).



The venue would be the meeting room above the new Speen Stores.

For details phone Gloria on 488420.



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Fete day turned into a lovely balmy late afternoon and people just lingered in groups savouring the occasion.

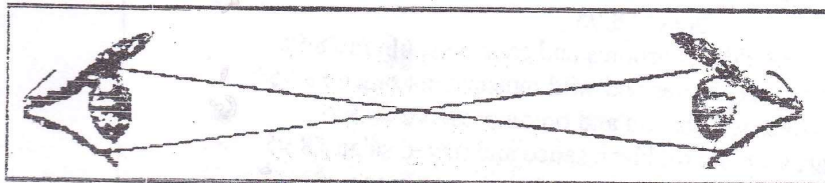
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*1997 Speen Fete
"Never was a maypole so
vigorously danced round..!"*



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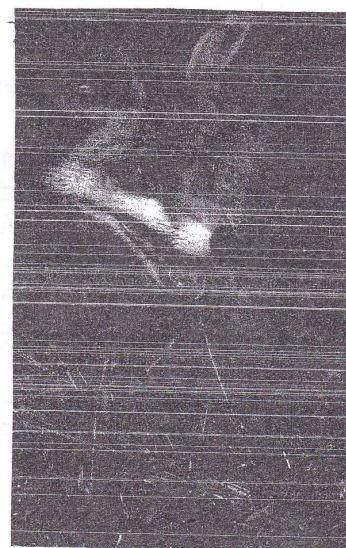
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- Avocado, cream cheese and fresh paw paw salad £6.95
- Melon and giant prawns with Marie Rose sauce £6.95
- Oak smoked Scotch salmon platter £7.95
- Avocado, brie and tomato salad £6.95
- Home-made duck and pork terrine with sweet mustard fruits £4.95
- Char-grilled baby squid with rocket salad and fresh parmesan £5.95
- Farmhouse cheese selection with crudites and grapes £4.95
- Smoked chicken and fresh pineapple salad £6.95

Main Courses

- Grilled breast chicken with Malayan fish and coconut chutney, tossed salad and pitta bread £8.95
- Linguine pasta with wild mushrooms and sauce Napolitan £8.95
- Scotch salmon with lemon butter and wild mushrooms sauce £8.95*
- Grilled calf's liver with bacon and onion preserve £9.95*
- Hot ratatouille tart with beurre blanc sauce and mixed salad £8.95
- Roasted breast of duck with gooseberry and beetroot chutney £11.95*
- New seasons' rack English lamb with apricot and mango chutney £11.95*
- Char-grilled Buccleuch Scotch rib steak with Provencale tapenade £12.95*
- Grilled Scottish scallops with bacon, lemon butter sauce and rocket salad £11.95*
- ½ doz. Mediterranean prawns with Marie Rose sauce £9.95
- Grilled fillet of loin of veal with wild mushroom, port and sour cream sauce £10.95*

OLD PLOW SPECIALS

- Old Plow marinated salmon with seed mustard and honey sauce (Gravadlax) £7.95
- Char-grilled fresh monkfish Nicoise with egg, haricot beans £6.95/£9.95
- Fish and shellfish Bouillabaise with lobster sauce £9.95
- Char-grilled fresh monkfish orientale with oyster sauce and salad leaves £9.95
- ½ cold fresh Devon lobster with mango salad and new potatoes £12.95
- ½ hot fresh Devon lobster with lemon butter sauce, new potatoes and tossed salad £12.95
- New seasons' grouse, roasted with a sour cream and port wine sauce £14.95*

All dishes are subject to availability. Prices are inclusive of VAT but not service and are correct at the time of going to press

A separate dessert menu is also available

* = Dishes are served with fresh vegetables

THE OLD PLOW BISTRO AND RESTAURANT AT SPEEN, FLOWERS BOTTOM,
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Bernard Wheeler Robinson 1904 - 1997 Physicist with a passionate love of music

37

Nicholas Wheeler Robinson writes affectionately of his father.

My father moved to North Dean in order to be able to pursue his lifelong hobby and passion - organising amateur music. In 1963 he was about to retire (professionally he was a physicist) and the Berkshire farm buildings he had used for 30 years for his "Music Camps" were threatened by the plans for the M4. Pigotts was the perfect answer - no piped water, no mains drainage and sufficiently run down for us to afford; with a couple of old barns and a couple of fields; no unmusical neighbours to annoy and 35 miles from London - it would make a new home for "Camp".

My father enjoyed his life in North Dean for a third of a century, and came to be North Dean's oldest resident. Living on top of the hill, having so many friends from London and with his passion for music making, he played little part in local activities, particularly after the death of his second wife Elizabeth, twenty years ago. Activities at Pigotts, musical and educational, grew and flourished around him, with many friends organising varied occasions - but all within my father's long established principles: that people come together as friends, sharing the work and the cost of each enterprise, with none to be paid and none to make money from it. In this way, over the years, most of the building, maintenance and garden

work at Pigotts has been in his mid-eighties met, quite undertaken by "working parties" of Campers and other friends - from early youth! In the "Singing Barn" the "Main Barn" (65' x 40') to the were photographs of my father from plumbing. My father enjoyed being 1905 (aged 1) to this year, and involved in "construction" - he was albums from past Music Camps, nearly 75 when he fell off a roof and many long before "Pigotts". and then climbed straight back up again...a definit stage in his. In mid afternoon the great choir - of recuperation from his hip 260 sang the wonderful music of operations was when he first got Monteverdi and Bach, with the back on a roof ladder. Sadly, chosen orchestra, and the solos too gradually his hearing began to fail sung by old friends. As requested, and his last few years he could there was no applause, but a brief neither make music nor much enjoy warm appreciation of "Bernard" listening to it. followed and then there was tea and cake - and yet more gossip.

In July my father died, peacefully at Pigotts. On October 4th we held a gathering in his memory, to do music he had chosen - the Bach "Magnificat" and the Monteverdi "Ave Maria Stella". On that day more than 450 people came up our narrow lane, of all ages, from all over Britain, from Holland, from Zimbabwe, even from Australia, enroute to Denmark. One had been at the very first Music Camp in 1927; many came to Camp 30, 40 or 50 years ago; there were children of Music Campers, and grandchildren, active at Pigotts nowadays. To our great good fortune it was a golden October day, and we did not need the hired marquees. At lunch time a huge happy picnic overflowed from the courtyard onto the field, rich with reminiscence and gossip, and meeting old friends. One trumpeter

During that afternoon many friends walked across the fields and down to the Speen graveyard where, at the highest point, my father lies buried between two other remarkable men from Pigotts Hill, Eric Gill and Eddie Nuttgens, and with his beloved wife Elizabeth. Their wooden "gravestone" was made for Elizabeth by my father and his, new, inscription was cut by the grandson of Eric Gill's colleague here, the great letter cutter Laurie Gibb. The inscription ends: "Creator of Music Camp".

*Nicholas Wheeler Robinson
October 1997*

DIARY OF COMING EVENTS

November:

7th. Lecture, Tring Museum, "200 Years Of British Birds". 12th. "Alpha Course", Baptist Chapel (Andy Gower 488758). 14th. Lecture Tring Museum, "Wildlife Photography". 15th. School, "Seventies Revisited" (Peter Symonds 488016). 19th. "Alpha Course" (Andy Gower). 19th. School "Open Afternoon" 20th. N. Dean, Hall, Lunchtime "Fun Bridge" (Gloria Holmes 488420). 21st. Tring Museum, "Edible Dormouse". 26th. "Alpha Course". 29th. Speen V.H. "Christmas Fayre" (Stan Bale, 488015). 29th. N. Dean Hall "Beetle Drive" (Megan Chinn 563074). 29th. Lacey Green, "Twinning Quiz" (Tony Molesworth, 01844344975).

December:

4th. Speen V.H. "W! Christmas Meeting" (Barbara Collett 488348) 6th. Speen V.H. "Men's Breakfast" (Andy Gower 488758). 4-6th. Court Theatre, Tring, "Lorna" (Marjorie Stockley 488101). 12th. Speen V.H. "Horticultural Socy." (Ted Drew 488738). 18th. N. Dean Hall "Social" (Megan Chinn 563074). 21st. Speen Church "Carols By Candlelight" (Andy Gower).

January:

17th. Lacey Green, "Twinning Quiz" (Tony Molesworth). 24th. Speen V.H. "Ladies' Breakfast" (Carolyn Gower 488758).

February:

13th. Horticultural Socy. (Ted Drew) **SEE ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE FOR FULL DETAILS**



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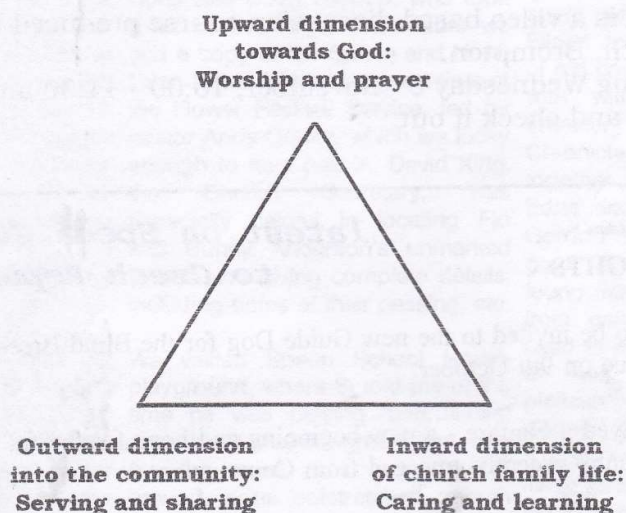
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Andy writes:

I have had the privilege of living here in Speen for a little over twelve months now, (how time flies) and have greatly appreciated the help, friendliness and encouragement of the community. Over the year we have seen the gradual transformation of the church family, as folk have found their faith rekindled, or perhaps come to a new faith in Jesus. As we have met week by week to worship and pray we have been aware of God being with us, and many can speak of how he has touched their lives.

Just before moving here I came across the ideas of a vicar from Sheffield who described a healthy church as one that lives in three dimensions. These three dimensions can be illustrated by using the angles of a triangle:-



The first dimension is upward towards God. A church needs to develop and prioritise its worship and prayer life, keeping in touch with God and following His agenda not our own.

The second dimension is inward, focusing on the people who are committed to the church in that locality. This involves developing the "family" life of the church - sharing activities together, meeting to discuss the Bible and to pray.

The third, but by no means least important, dimension is outward, into the community - sharing the message and serving where we see a need.

I cannot claim that your local church is perfect, however, it has been our aim over this last year to allow the church to develop its role in the community in these three dimensions, with the hope of being more relevant to everyone and enabling God to use us. So:

UPWARD - we have a young music group learning to lead in worship and a band of faithful musicians who carry the music load week by week for the All-age morning services. We also meet fortnightly on a Sunday evening to pray.

table' was the long-suffering patriarchal chairman David Davies, desperately trying to keep the peace. But, occasionally, his jolly farmer's face would redden with rage as he rose to rebuke. Other 'family' members joined the bickering before being told to sit in line. I sat like the Victorian who should be seen but not heard; but I felt like slapping the lot of them. The Thompsons.

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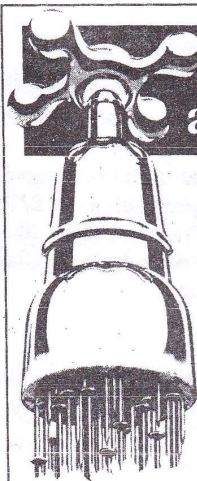


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these sure signs of hard water problems:

- Blocked shower heads
- Slow running taps
- Scum marks in baths and basins
- Excessive use of household cleaners
- Harsh, hard towels and clothes
- Increased water heating bills
- Scaled-up kettles and appliances

Nail all your hard water
problems by installing
an EcoWater system.



MARION BENNET

Sterling Softeners

WATER TREATMENT SPECIALISTS

Sterling Softeners,
Courns View House, North Dean,
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP14 4NN
Telephone/Fax: (01494) 565232

ECOWATER



Rosemary A. Stone

(MSSCh MBChA)

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Home visits by appointment

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Bucks. HP14 4NE



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PTA providing brilliant support for Speen School

reports Peter Symonds

The previous school year proved to be very successful for the PTA. Our fundraising target of £5000 was substantially exceeded with a profit of some £7500 being achieved. This in itself indicates the scale of operations, ranging from fundraising socials like the Caribbean Night and the Auction of Promises, running sales catalogues, the Friday draw plus Saturday sports and cycling clubs etc etc.

Money spent on books

Whilst a healthy profit has been achieved this is gradually being spent on extra books, toys and facilities to maintain and improve the vitality and popularity of the school against an increasingly competitive background.

Re-emphasis on social side

For the 1997/8 year there will be a greater emphasis on social and participation events rather than purely fundraising. The main events will include:

- * Saturday 15th November - 5pm "The Seventies Revisited"
A seventies night at Speen Village Hall.
- * Saturday 28th March 1988 (planned date) Children's Fashion Show
More information to follow.
- * Saturday 6th June 1988 (planned date) Summer Ball.

In addition, we are hoping to arrange a visit to Wycombe Wanderers before the end of the season. More information to follow, but we hope have a tour of the ground before the match, with an opportunity to meet the players, followed by a fixture and then possibly a barbecue elsewhere.

THANKS TO THOSE IN THE COMMUNITY WHO HAVE SUPPORTED OUR EVENTS.



Speen PTA

Present

The Way We Were The Seventies Revisited

Featuring The Play-Actors
An evening of entertainment reminding us of the 70's

The events

The people

And the music

A one-hour show followed by a fish and chip supper,
sing-along and disco session

Saturday
15 November 1997
8.00 p.m. at Speen Village Hall

Tickets: £7.50 each

[Detach, return to school or post to Peter Symonds, 10 Abbotswood, Speen, HP27 0SR]

I should like (number) tickets at £7.50 each for The Way We Were:

I enclose a cheque for £..... (made payable to Speen School PTA)

Name:..... Tel:.....

Address:.....

CRISIS TIME FOR THEATRE CLUB

Many of you will have had notices of outings we had planned for the coming season, and requests for a subscription of £5, which Jo and I will donate to disabled children. We had very little response and have already had to cancel a planned trip to the Chiltern Valley Vineyard. Our trip to the Albert Hall on Nov. 2nd. was also undersubscribed and we have had to give tickets away, rather than waste them altogether. This has cost the club about £160.

Jo and I are feeling very disheartened by the lack of interest. Are we just getting it wrong, or has the theatre club run its course? If it is to continue, we need your subscriptions, your ideas and your support NOW!

If anyone else would be willing to take over the organisation of outings, Jo and I would be happy to help someone settle in and give them the benefit of our experience. If you want the club to continue, please contact us now. If we don't have a favourable result from this request, we will retire gracefully!

Jo Keattick 488629 - Sheila Fulham 488377

A group of local volunteers has been assembled to develop a string of services to help anyone in the community. Everyone can use the scheme when they need. Some of the needs may be:-

shopping, hospital visits, baby sitting, emergency repairs, support to the bereaved, lonely and recently discharged hospital patients, welcoming new residents to the village, etc.

How does the scheme work?

Ring one of the three Telephone Receptionists, whose names and phone numbers are:-

Margaret Jones Thatched Cottage (HW) 488246
Poppy Ellis The Old King George (HW) 488545
Doris Wilson 3, Woodview Drive (HW) 488334

You will be given the names and phone numbers of three volunteers; ring one of them, and then the others if no answer is obtained. Please call for help between 8:00-9:00am. or 6:00-7:00 pm.

Please note:

- Any payment for services should be arranged between individuals; a contribution of £1 per journey is suggested for the transport service.
- Car owners must check that they are insured to carry passengers.
- Users of the service do so at their own risk.

Further information can be obtained from:

Gloria Holmes, Cherry Dell, Chapel Hill (HW) 488420.

Organisations in Speen.

Speen Church of England First School:		
Head	Mrs D. Nayna	488321.
P.T.A.	Amanda Cleaver	488239.
Playgroup	Cherry Seekins	488355.
Mother & Toddler	Chris Dunnington	488203.
Parish Council:		
Clerk	George Crombie	488240
Councillors	Don White	488437, Jude Audrey 488607.
Speen District Councillor	Jean Gabbittas	01844 346469.
Residents Association	Paul Rogerson	488315.
Neighbourhood Watch	J. Newman	488474.
Baptist Church:		
Pastor	Andy Gower	488758.
Secretary	David King	01844 344839.
Speen Village Hall	David Slade	488262.
Bookings	Katherine Butler	488412.
North Dean Village Hall	John Rogers	562041.
Playing Fields	Jean Handford	488402.
Cricket	Steve King	488542.
Tennis	Roger Craft	488343.
Guides	Pauline Hall	488372.
Horticulture	Ted Drew	488738.
Speen W.I.	Barbara Collett	488348.
Theatre Club	Sheila Tidball	488377.
Youth Club	Rob & Trica Lenko	488337.
Milkman	Wren Davies Dairies	862224.
Bread Delivery	Roger Price	442358.
Newspapers	Combe Lane Corner Stores	563887.
Wycombe District Council Refuse Collection		421415.
Mobile Library	Hampden Rd. 10:15-10:30am.	

1st Thursday in Month.

Every Wednesday.
Alternate Mondays



Parish Council:

Clerk - George Crombie 488240
Councillors - Don White 488437, Jude Audrey 488607.
Speen District Councillor Jean Gabbittas 01844 346469.



Residents Association Paul Rogerson 488315.
Neighbourhood Watch J. Newman 488474.



Baptist Church
Pastor Andy Gower 488758.
Secretary David King 01844 344839.



Speen Village Hall David Slade 488262.
Speen Village Hall Bookings Katherine Butler 488412.
North Dean Village Hall John Rogers 562041.



Playing Fields Jean Handford 488402.
Cricket Steve King 488542.
Tennis Roger Craft 488343.



Guides Pauline Hall 488372.



Horticulture Ted Drew 488738.



Speen W.I. Barbara Collett 488348.
(1st Thursday in Month).



Theatre Club Sheila Tidball 488377.



Youth Club Rob & Trica Lenko 488337.



Milkman Wren Davies Dairies 862224.
Bread Delivery Roger Price 442358.
Newspapers Combe Lane Corner Stores 563887.



Wycombe District Council
Refuse Collection (Every Wednesday) 421415.



Mobile Library Hampden Rd. 10:15-10:30am.
(Alternate Mondays).



Post Office Speen Village Hall, Tuesday 12:30-1:45 pm.

GEORGE AND THE GIANT SUNFLOWER martin hort

Should you have been passing Rose Cottage one week in September you would have seen an unusual sight; George Butler being photographed in his garden by a photographer from the Bucks Free Press. I don't mean that George is unusual or that people taking photographs of George is unusual. It was what was being photographed standing next to George that was unusual!

It was a sunflower, and probably the biggest sunflower you have ever seen. What was unusual about this sunflower was not the size of the flowers but the number of flowers on a single stem. George had counted them - 29 he told me with some pride and the giant plant was now standing some thirteen and a half feet tall, and still growing...! I watched as the photographer tried to get the whole plant and George in the viewfinder, finishing up crouched like a panther on the ground, looking a bit like a Johnny Weismuller Tarzan film set.

What also was unusual was that George hadn't planted the seed, the giant stem having grown from the edge of a brick path.

Have you seen the siskins?

I remember about eighteen months ago talking to George about greenfinches, "But have you seen the siskins?" said George. I had never seen the siskins although I knew about siskins. Ornithology was one of my three burning passions when I was transferring from primary to secondary at the delicate age of eleven. The other two passions were steam locomotives and Guy Mitchell records (I was famous in school for being able to whistle all Guy Mitchell's songs and for knowing all the words, as well as being able to memorise all the record matrix numbers). (Next time we meet we can do a duet, Martin, - "she wore red feathers and a huly huly skirt...and she lived on just coconuts and fish from the sea..." Anyway, back to the siskins - I searched my mind trying to recall the picture of them in my Observers Book of Birds, but to no avail. George said he would give me a ring when the siskins were in his garden and I could run round and see them; why the wouldn't come into my garden was beyond me. The next day George rang, and we went round to watch them at the

Two days later George rang again.

"Have you seen the waxwings?" I knew that there was no shame in not seeing waxwings as they are as rare as hens' teeth, and are hardly ever seen in Britain. But here is George telling me there are three of them in a cul-de-sac off Desborough Road.

We drove down to Desborough Road and sure enough a group of twitchers had gathered in anoraks with telescopes on tripods. Three waxwings were settled in a small tree and flew occasionally to a bush for berries. They were much bigger than I expected, the Observers Book of Birds giving them a length of seven and a half inches.

And now here is George with probably the biggest sunflower this side of Watford, which, now I come to think of it, had probably self-seeded from the bird seed feeder that had fed the siskins.

So if you see George in his garden, it pays not to pass him by, things begin to happen to you. I expect one day I might be able to do something for George. I could always teach him some Guy Mitchell songs.

*Let's hear it
for Dave King
for booking
the Sealed Knot
and making it
one of the best
Green Fetes ever*



*Caught in
the act -
A Glis glis
scaling up
The Elders'
house wall
prior to
entering the
loft.*



*Takes one
to nose one
Peter Salmon
and this year's
baby barn owl
are in love!*



Top and bottom photos by the editor, middle one by Mr and Mrs Elder