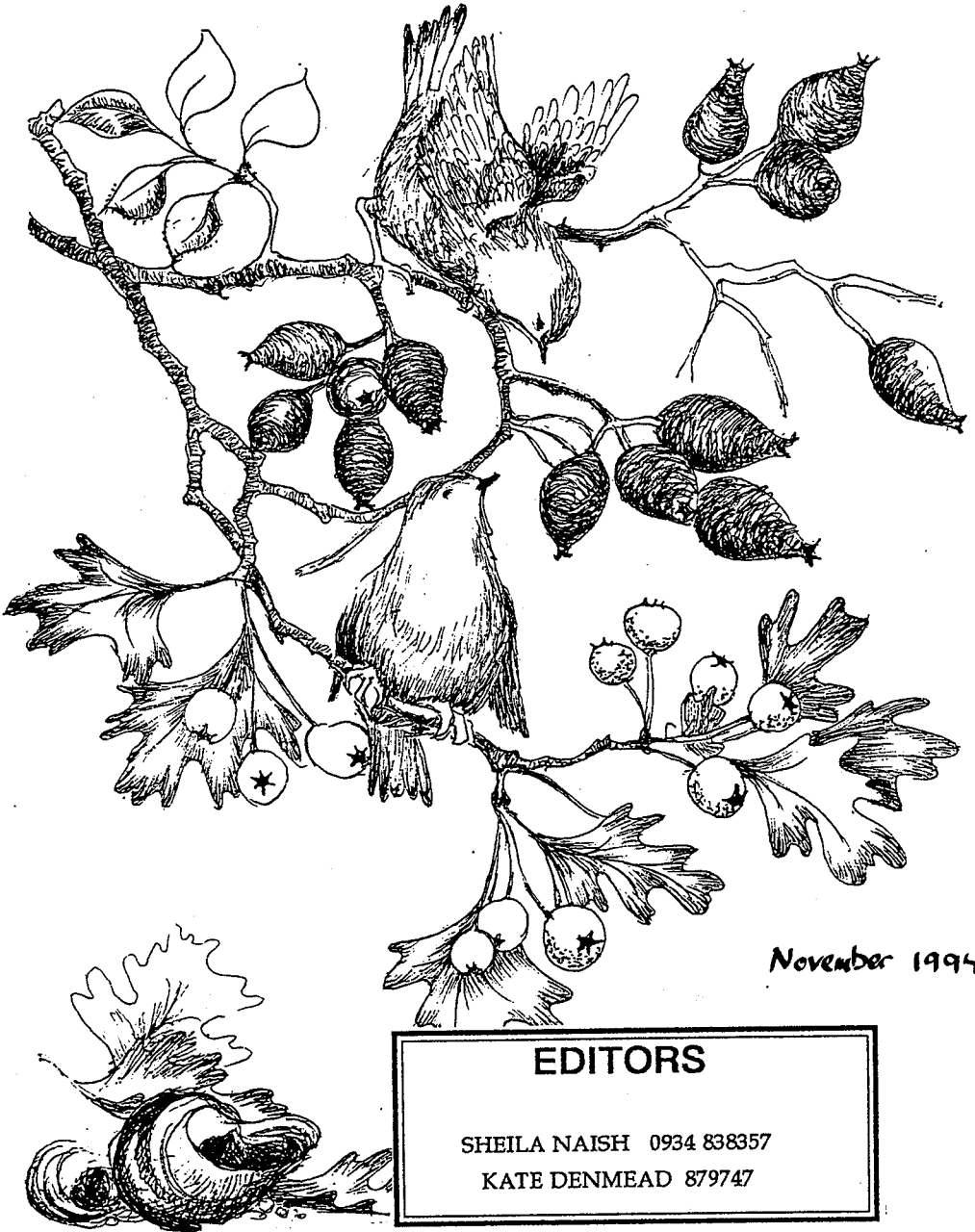


KENN NEWS AND VIEWS

ISSUE 76



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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

It was six years ago, in October 1988, that Sheila and I realised there was room for a new village magazine in Kenn. Reports of village events, good news to be shared, forthcoming attractions could all be reported and published to inform and entertain. In those early days and for a couple of years, we succeeded in producing an interesting magazine containing community news, dates of events, birthdays, celebrations, history notes, gardening and cookery tips, fund raising ideas, puzzles, competitions et al.

The competitions dried up because there were no entrants, even though attractive prizes were available. Our pleas for new cover designs had fallen on largely deaf ears until this month when two designs have been submitted. Thanks to the History Group, Ann HOLTAM and one or two other sterling contributors (thank you Ray) we still get articles on the history of the village and its surroundings and from the various committees.

But we are concerned, nay worried about the future of News and Views. It seems that each issue is getting smaller and, therefore, presumably less interesting and entertaining. All in all some of us foresee the demise of our village magazine unless more of us pull together to keep it alive - we are beginning to wonder if it's worth it and if we should retire the mag gracefully at Christmas.

Many of you have had nothing but good to say of the magazine over the years and your compliments on our efforts have kept us going in the past when material got a little thin. But how do you feel now? At the back of this issue is a small questionnaire which we would appreciate your filling in and returning to Sheila, Kate or Richard so that we can gauge the future prospects. Not only will your answers be studied but also the number of replies. If you think the

magazine is worth saving then please fill in the questionnaire and return it.

Thank you for your assistance.

Kate and Sheila

TYPIST'S EXPLANATION

The above message was written by Medium Ed 5 days after the official deadline for the magazine. At that time we had three articles and a very short magazine indeed, hence the diatribe. Since then a great deal more has arrived which has made this a large and, in my opinion anyway, interesting issue. However it does not alter the basic facts that:

1. Increasingly articles turn up late or very late; the last article this time came a full week after the deadline. Lateness causes a good deal of extra problems in getting the mag out in time. Please try to show more consideration.
2. It is getting increasingly difficult to get articles from other than our regular contributors. We need more.
3. We now get very few funny accounts of village life or puzzles, crosswords etc submitted. WHY?
4. Kate thinks the questionnaire is very important so try to fill it in.

DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER ISSUE

***** 21ST NOVEMBER *****

BIRTHDAYS

- 9th - Andrew JENKINS
- 13th - Sheila NAISH
- 14th - Rowena AYRES
- 15th - Timothy DENMEAD
- 16th - Sebastian WILCOX
- 27th - Rebecca BRETT (nee FENWICK)
- 28th - Sarah CLARKE

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ANNIVERSARIES

- 16th Sheila & Miles NAISH

SNIPPETS

Our flag was flown to celebrate the eightieth birthday of Mr Roland HAZELL

SICK LIST

At the time of writing Mrs Hilda STAPLES of Duck Lane is in hospital - we wish her a speedy recovery.

POTS ON GREEN

Many thanks to Mrs McCAULY who has planted the pots on the village green with winter flowering pansies.

KENN VILLAGE HALL

The quiz organised by Mrs Kate DENMEAD raised £71 for hall funds. Thank you very much to all those who attended and to Kate and friend Ann for setting such entertaining questions.

A wine and cheese party will be held on Saturday November 19th at 8pm. Tickets are £2-50 each from committee members. Kenn residents and their friends are invited to come along to support our hall.

Once again we shall be able to guess the weight of the turkey (Not the same one as last year!!) - the prize will be £15.

Offers of prizes for raffles will be much appreciated. Please contact me before 12th November.

NB. A TV will be in the hall should anyone wish to watch the National Lottery draw.

DIARY DATES

- November 9th. Wednesday at 7-30pm. Kenn WI Annual General Meeting.
- November 12th. Saturday. Barn Dance.
- November 23rd. Wednesday at 7-30pm. Flower arranging

demonstration "Christmas" by Mrs Pam BLUER

SENIOR CITIZENS' TEA PARTY

This will be held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 7th December, beginning at 3pm.



KENN CHURCH RESTORATION

Work has now started on the roof of Kenn Church and we appeal again to our readers to support fund raising schemes that will enable us to reach our target of £ 22 000 - the cost of repairing the roof.

Maurice FORD has organised a raffle which will be drawn at the coffee morning to be held by Jean NAISH at Stonehouse Farm, Kenn on Tuesday 15th November. Tickets are available from Kenn Post Office or, if that is not convenient, from Maurice at The Old School in Kenn Street.

There are still tickets to be sold and if anyone can help please contact Maurice on 878805.

COFFEE MORNING

On Tuesday 15th November between 10am and midday at Stonehouse Farm, Kenn there will be a coffee morning and bring and buy in aid of St John's Roof Fund. A grand draw will take place.

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Everybody welcome.

ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild members on duty in November are:

Mrs R DYER, Mrs M MACKAY and Mrs S CLARKE.

TEA and CHAT

Tea and chat this month will be at the home of Mrs Marianna MACKAY, Church Path Cottage, on Thursday 3rd November from 2-30 to 4-00pm. Everyone welcome.

KENN WOMENS INSTITUTE

At the October meeting of Kenn Women's Institute, Mrs. Fran Williams from the Meningitis Trust gave a very enlightening and reassuring talk on meningitis. Despite all the publicity it is a comparatively rare disease, but speed in getting treatment is essential if victims are to recover. Mrs. Williams said that anyone connected with children and young people should be aware of the symptoms so that the illness is not neglected. Thankfully vaccines are being developed which will help to eliminate the disease. Mrs. Williams was thanked by Mrs. Dodd. Many members made cakes which were sold in aid of the Trust.

Final plans were made for the Birthday Party at the end of the month. Hopefully, a skittles team will be successful in the first round of the Tournament. Kenn was very fortunate in the County Quiz by coming fourth. Another team is entering the village quiz.

Mrs. Ford was thanked for entering her beautiful willow pattern embroidery for the competition at the Group Meeting in November. Mrs. Mann gave a report on the Autumn Council Meeting at Weston-S-Mare. The subscription for 1995 will be £12, an increase of 40p.

The November meeting will be the Annual General Meeting and will begin at 7.15 p.m. Mrs. Anne McDougall, our VCO, will be our guest and will answer any questions we may have. Nominations were taken for the new committee and if necessary elections will be held in November.

BRITAIN IN BLOOM COMPETITION

The report from the judges of the Britain in Bloom Competition has been received. Kenn did not do at all well this year. My own view is that perhaps rather more flowers than is practical for a working village are expected. We also had very formidable opposition, the villages of Catcott, Cockington, Cossington, Goodleigh, Hinton St. George, Pentewan, Plympton St. Maurice (Catcott actually won).

The marks awarded were 49 out of 100 and the comments were as follows: The residents are trying hard to improve their environment. Feel a Britain in Bloom Committee would help in planning a focal point i.e. tubs, baskets, beds on the Main Road around the green and verge by the Post Office and Pub. An effort should be made to get the garage to tidy up its frontage.

There have been no comments so far from the judges of the Best Kept Village Competition, but as everyone will have gathered by now Kenn was not successful there either.

POST OFFICE

The Parish Council was sorry to hear that Mrs. Middleton felt unable to continue as a General Store, but very pleased to hear that by just being a Sub Post Office she will be able to remain open. The Parish Council hopes that everyone will use the Post Office at every available opportunity, because as we all know the message about village shops and Post Offices is **If you don't use it you lose it.**

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HISTORY GROUP I

The last walk of the History Group on September 6th was a trip to explore West End, Nailsea with its remarkable drystone walling. These dark flat stones are to be found a few feet under the surface of the soil in the area, and are used extensively in buildings and walls - some even say that St John's, Kenn contains a lot of this local stone giving it a unique character. Matt HOBBS was the craftsman responsible for rebuilding all the drystone walls in the district - he started work at the age of ten and continued his craft until he died a few years ago at the age of 84. His son has taken on this skill now, rebuilding and maintaining these beautiful walls.

Although entreated to hurry due to failing light, we made our way slowly, enjoying the superb panoramic views from this vantage point and admiring the homestead of Jeff and Toyah NAISH, poised on the edge of the moors - the sea can be seen from upstairs. Ninety two acres of moorland were purchased in 1978 by Miles, Jeff and Ray NAISH, very much on the spur of the moment - the Bank Manager being consulted on the Thursday prior to the auction on the following Tuesday! The land had had a bad reputation for disease and problems with liver fluke, so had been left unsold from the previous auction. However, within 5 years the ground had paid for itself by fattening barren cows for the market. As Ray talked, we stood watching with fascination, Toyah's collection of game birds - the Reeves, the Silvers, the Yellow Golden, the Golden, the Lady Hammist and the wild Pheasants. Their cages form a valuable wind break for the garden in such an exposed location. we were also shown the family's pet red deer behind high fencing - even then they escape and cause everyone a merry chase recapturing them.

An unused drive leading onto the moor

was dug up and the Nailsea stones from this used by Matt HOBBS to build a fine new drystone wall around Jeff's house, to match all the others in the area. This is the only new wall built by Matt - all the others have been in place for hundreds of years, only needing repairing. While he was rebuilding another wall here, Matt discovered, lodged in the centre of the structure, two oxen bones still showing the marks of having been rubbed by the yoke while the animal was working. Craig USHER, the local historian was told of the find and, after research, the bones were found to be 300 years old!

The sandy land sloped gently down towards the river and passed around an ancient copse of elder trees with their roots high above ground level to escape the flooding of earlier years. The animals grazing here looked sleek and fit - an interesting Dexter/Longhorn cross, Appaloosa horses, young stock scampering. The thistles and high weeds are left uncut to protect the ground from the trampling underfoot by over-wintering cattle, sheltered here from the East wind by mature trees.

Through the gate, we entered the lowest field and learnt that the soil here is peat, as seen in the black mole hills worked right

down to the river bank. The air felt heavy and damp - it was time to bring the animals of the lowland on to higher ground. They start to lose weight very quickly when the goodness goes out of the grass. In olden times, there were only a few weeks when the moors could be grazed but, with modern drainage systems, this period of time has been greatly increased. Here, the Kenn River is wide, deep and crystal clear - shoals of bream can sometimes be seen in the water. It has been fenced because the Water Authority cut the banks perpendicularly, leaving the animals no easy access to drink, so many fell into the water. Being unable

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to climb back up, they scrambled out onto the shallow bank opposite, causing great problems in retrieving them as there is no bridge over this part of the river. A farmer gave one of these fields to another, but the deal involved all the keetching of the river for a great distance!

Ray showed us a line of willows and a tongue of land, stretching from Netherton Wood to Kenn Pier which in 1970 was separated, the ditch filled and the extra ground added to the adjoining fields at a price, all along the river bank. The predominant trees here are: crack willow or withy, used for thatching spurs; white willows, their bark good for tanning; alders; poplars and oak on higher ground. Also from willow bark comes salicine used in the preparation of aspirin. Some of the willows were ready to be pollarded, otherwise their branches crack and break off in a dangerous way, damaging the tree. One heron had tried unsuccessfully to nest in an oak but was attacked by other birds.

Leaving the lowland, we climbed up the steep hill in a beautiful seven acre field called High Field, to come upon Little Manor built in the 15thC and bought by Mr HALE in 1972. As the elms here had all been destroyed by disease, he planted a one acre coppice of mixed saplings. These are now growing well and in need of thinning out to allow the best trees to mature. This is an impressive Elizabethan building of elegant features set in one and a half acres of lawn which, in the spring, is surrounded by a carpet of snowdrops, followed by daffodils. However, as a farm, it was never successful but has now been converted into separate starter units for small businesses and seems to be thriving. As the sun began to set and the light faded, we came to the end of our walk - some people said the best one - and stood to admire

the high wall at the entrance to the

manor, another magnificent example of drystone walling. Above our heads the pipestrelle bats had emerged and were hunting for insects among the ancient oaks.

The History Group at Kenn would like to thank all the farmers - messrs J NAISH, M NAISH, R NAISH, D CROSSMAN, A YOUNG, J WITHERS, S BYE AND A & R SIMMONS, who have allowed us to enjoy all these rambles and expeditions trampling across their land. Many thanks to Richard GAUNT for typing these long articles and also to Ray NAISH for sharing with us, all his knowledge of the area and his reminiscences and memories - for making these trips into the history of our local countryside, come alive and buzz!

KENN HISTORY GROUP II

We held our end of summer season get together on the 10th October and recalled some very pleasant evenings spent walking in the countryside in the Kenn area.

These walks have been reported for us in News and Views by Claire LEAMAN who was most warmly thanked for doing a really excellent job. We also thanked Ray NAISH for planning the evenings and acting as our guide. His depth of knowledge and remarkable recall made each outing so enjoyable and worthwhile.

We reviewed the arrangements for Mrs MALLETT (nee BOND) to visit Kenn on 15th October and meet again her class of 36/42 at Kenn School. See elsewhere in mag for report of that happy occasion.

We are now looking forward to our Winter (indoor) meetings the first of which will be at The Granary at 7-30pm on Monday 7th November when we will have a second opportunity (some of us missed the first) to see the slides and talk by Ray on some of the interesting properties and sites in and around the village. Anyone interested please feel free to turn

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up on the night and enjoy the show and company. We will give you coffee and biscuits too!

OCTOBER BIRD NEWS

A flock of 70 lapwings had gathered on wet fields by Claverham Drove at the beginning of the month. Several starlings, a few meadow pipits and a buzzard (feeding on earthworms) were keeping them company.

Moorhen numbers seem to be increasing and a single snipe was an encouraging autumn sighting. There was a large flock of black headed gulls perhaps 300 strong feeding on a recently cut field but most unusual was a cock sparrowhawk quartering the fields almost like an owl trying, unsuccessfully, to flush out prey. Several skylarks were crouched in this field and the sparrowhawk was doubtless aware of this.

I noted my first redwings of the winter on the 9th at Yatton and a pair of stonechats on the same date was a good record.

A survey of the birds of the South Avon Levels is being organised and Kern Moor will be one of the areas to be covered. So if you me or a fellow surveyor counting birds you now know what it is all about. Needless to say I shall be very interested to hear if anyone sees any unusual or large flocks of birds, please phone on Yatton 835208 or via Ray NAISH

Trevor RIDDLE

SCHOOL REUNION

On the afternoon of 15th October there was a reunion of those former pupils of Kenn school who attended between 1936 and 1942.

Twenty ex pupils gathered outside the School to meet their former teacher, Mrs Christine MALLETT, - Miss BOND in those days. This meeting had been

arranged by Grace and John GRIFFIN who by chance had contacted Mrs MALLETT through a member of their family.

The present occupiers of the school, Maurice and Margaret FORD invited everyone inside to have a look around. We had a great time trying to remember what it was like when it was two classrooms.

Outside in the road again, group photos were taken for the local newspaper before the ex pupils moved to the village hall to enjoy a cup of tea and a chat; several of them had not met since their schooldays.

During the afternoon, Connie WILSON presented Mrs MALLETT with a bouquet of flowers on behalf of those present and Ruth TRANMER presented her with an ornamental plate engraved with snowdrops and a poem which she remembers Miss BOND teaching her. Ruth had made the plate and hand painted it.

The former pupils and Mrs MALLETT were delighted to meet again at the get together Mrs Winnie GRIGG now aged 87 and still living in Kenn, who was the caretaker of the school all those years ago.

Those present at the reunion were (former names in brackets):

Mrs Christine MALLETT (BOND) from Clifton

Mrs Winnie GRIGG Kenn

Connie WILSON (HALLWORTH) Kenn

Richard HALLWORTH Bath

Frances FORD (MOORE) Nailsea

Mildred SWEET (MOORE) Lympsham

Phylis BROWN (HOLLYMAN) Yatton

Betty RICHARDS (HOLLYMAN) Congresbury

Ronald GRIGG Nailsea

Antony PIKE Clevedon

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Moira LUXTON (BAKER) Clevedon
Margaret MOXHAM (HOLLYMAN) Clevedon
Ruth TRANMER (PIKE) Claverham
Irene STOWELL (COX) Kenn
Brian STOWELL Kenn
Theo STOWELL Weston-s-Mare
Robert GALE Wick St. Lawrence
Linda WATHEN (PALMER) Yatton
George WAINWRIGHT Clevedon
Florence (WAINWRIGHT) Clevedon
Trixea VILE (GALE) Wells
Ray NAISH Kenn

During our school days at Kenn we were chiefly taught the three Rs, with some religious, history, and geography teaching also.

I was talking to former pupil Lucy BAKER the other day about the school; she said that no child left Kenn School at 11 years of age who was unable to read and write so good was the teaching there.

I consider myself a very lucky and privileged person to have been able to spend six of my nine years of schooling at Kenn C of E School.

All present at the reunion are extremely grateful to Grace GRIFFIN for contacting Mrs MALLETT and arranging for her to meet us again, and to Maurice and Margaret FORD for allowing us to look around our old school once more and to those ladies who arranged tea in the hall.

We are thinking about having another, and bigger reunion, next July when everyone who attended the school will be invited to attend.

Ray NAISH

FUTURE OF KENN NEWS AND VIEWS - QUESTIONNAIRE

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Do you enjoy reading the magazine? | Yes | No |
| 2. Do you feel you could contribute articles? | Yes | No |
| 3. Do you have a criticism of format or content? Please detail below. | | |

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 4. Shall we discontinue the mag at Christmas? | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|

Please circle yes or no as appropriate.
