

HAPPY

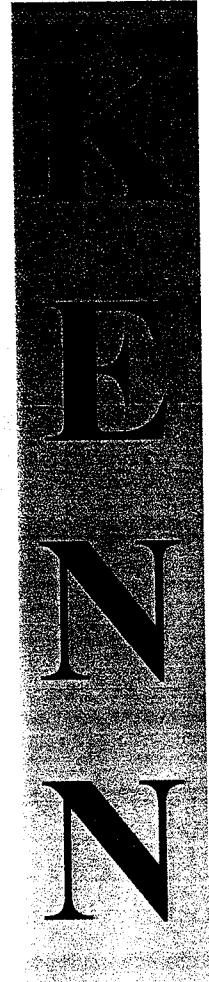
XMAS

FROM

NEWS

&

VIEWS



Editor Sheila NAISH
01934-838357

Issue No 148 December 2000

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KENN NEWS AND VIEWS

BIRTHDAYS ETC.

- 1st Sotoris Papisolomontos
Verity Rogers
- 4th Sally Whitehead
Roger Jenkins
- 5th Jerry Naish
Chris Wall
- 10th Louise Pugh
Tom Clark
Penny Leiper (Griffin)
- 15th Emma Palmer (Smith)
- 20th Vincent Stowell
- 21st John Griffin
- 23rd Richard & Avril Gaunt W.A
- 24th Shirley Wall
John Street
- 25th HAPPY CHRISTMAS ONE AND ALL
- 31st HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

Message from Ed

On behalf of us all at News & Views may I wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Thought of the Month

It's simply fantastic the amount of work you can get done if you don't do anything else!!

Naish's Notes

I'm off to see Tom Jones in Cardiff on the 5th with my friend.

We're looking forward to the concert.

I'm hoping to strike it lucky and be whisked away to a life of luxury by Tom Jones - as his "young" plaything - failing that I'll see you all at the Village Tea Party on the 6th !!!

16th December

Don't forget to get your Christmas Party tickets - £4 from Heather Jenkins or myself.

Posh Frocks for the ladies.

Smart Gear for the men!

Celebrate with us at the Happy Hour
8.30-9.30

Kenn Village Hall
Bar - Disco - Raffle

Get your glad rags on and get jigging.

Kenn Altar Guild December 2000 Rota

3rd - Mrs J. Fenwick/Mrs J. Pascoe

10th - Mrs R. Bell/Mrs G. Griffin

17th - CAROL SERVICE
Mrs M. Ball/Mrs H. Jenkins

24th - Mrs J. Cheek/Mrs M. Mackay

31st - Mrs J. Naish/Mrs J. Staples

Mrs J. Naish, with helpers, will decorate the tree in Church for the Carol Service.

Would ladies please decorate their windows etc. for the Carol Service on 17th December.

Many thanks to everyone.
Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Jean

KENN NEWS AND VIEWS

St. John the Evangelist, Kenn
Church Services for December

Sunday 3rd December
8 a.m. Holy Communion
11 a.m. Special Service of
Christingle

Sunday 10th December
11 a.m. Sung Holy Communion

Sunday 17th December
6 p.m. Service of Carols & Lessons

Sunday 24th December
Christmas Eve
8 a.m. Holy Communion
3 p.m. Crib Service

Monday 25th December
Christmas Day
11 a.m. Family Communion

Wednesday 27th December
11 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday 31st December
6 p.m. Special Evensong
Patronal Festival -
St. John the Evangelist

Dance at Kenn Village Hall

Saturday 2nd December 8 till late
Treble Rock - Dance to a live band -

Tickets £5 from Jo or Rob 878782
Proceeds to Children in Need

Drum and Monkey
12.30 pm. Tuesday 5th December
Village Lunch
- 2 courses £5.25 or full menu -
Everyone welcome.

Children's Christmas Party

The Kenn Children's Christmas Party will be held from 4.00 pm on Wednesday 20th December.

This party is not only for Kenn Children, but also for the children and grandchildren of Kenn folk - for further information contact Jo Batten on 01275 878782.

Christmas/New Year Refuse Collection

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Mon. 25th now | Wed. 27th December |
| Tues. 26th | Thu. 28th |
| Wed. 27th | Fri. 29th |
| Thu. 28th | Sat 30th |
| Fri. 29th | Tues 2nd January |
| Mon. 1st | Wed 3rd |
| Tues. 2nd | Thu. 4th |
| Wed. 3rd | Fri. 5th |
| Thu. 4th | Sat. 6th |
| Fri. 5th | Mon. 8th |
| Mon 8th | Tues 9th |
| Tues 9th | Wed. 10th |
| Wed. 10th | Thu. 11th |
| Thu. 11th | Fri 12th |
| Fri 12th | Sat. 13th |

Gladys Ethel Tucker

Mrs Tucker who had only lived in Kenn for around twelve months has passed away. Unfortunately during these past months she had been in hospital most of the time making it impossible for her to get to know many local people.

Mrs Tucker's funeral was held at Weston Crematorium. Sincere sympathy is extended to her husband Sydney and his family.

Ray Naish.

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SNIPPETS

Our Flag

Bereavement

We are sorry to record the passing of Mr. Alan Lock of Clevedon. He and Mrs Lock were regular attendees at early service at Kenn Church. His funeral took place on November 3rd when we flew our flag at half-mast.

To his widow and his son we extend our sincere sympathy.

Remembrance

November 11th Armistice Day, we flew our flag to remember all those men and women who gave their lives in wars that we might be free, and again on November 12th Remembrance Sunday (As is our custom in Kenn poppies were placed on the altar).

They gave their tomorrow for our today. Let us never forget !

Celebrations - November 16th

Two reasons for celebration on Thursday 16th November.

Sam Dyer was celebrating a very special birthday (over 21)

The Twenty First birthday of Sebastian Wilcox.

Best wishes to them both.

Thanks

Sam wishes to thank Kennites for their cards and good wishes. They were much appreciated.

KENN CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS FRIDAY 15TH DECEMBER AT 7 p.m. ON THE VILLAGE GREEN

The lights will be switched on by a Kenn Celebrity to be followed by Carols being sung around the tree.

A collection for the Children's Society will be taken.

Offers of mincepies please to Marianna Mackay, Church Path Cottage - to be delivered to her that evening.

All Kennites and friends most welcome.

Ruth Dyer.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Kenn Village Hall

Saturday 2nd December 8 till late
Treble Rock - Dance to a live band -
Tickets £5 from Jo or Rob 878782
Proceeds to Children in Need

Monday 4th December
7.30 pm - Kenn Parish Council

Drum and Monkey

12.30 pm. Tuesday 5th December
Village Lunch - 2 courses £5.25 or full menu - Everyone welcome.

Kenn Village Hall

Wednesday 6th December
Christmas Tea Party, 3pm.

Wednesday 13th December
- Kenn W.I. Meeting at 7.30 pm.
- Christmas Post for Members.

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Kenn Village Green

7.00 pm. Friday 15th December

Christmas Tree lighting and Carol Singing then mince pies - Everyone welcome.

Kenn Village Hall

Saturday 16th December

- Christmas Party and Disco

- 8.00-midnight

Tickets £4 from Sheila or Heather

Sunday 17th December

6.00 pm in church Carol Service followed by Barbecue at Kenn Village Hall - Admission by ticket only. £4 from Ray Naish, Marianna Mackay or Jenny Pascoe.

N.B. on this occasion Kenn's Children Society's Teddy Bear's name will be revealed.

Wednesday 20th December

- Kenn Children's Party, 4.00 pm

Drum & Monkey Kenn Christmas & New Year Opening Hours

Christmas Eve

Food - noon till 4.00 pm

Bar - noon till midnight

Christmas Day

Bar - 11.30 am till 1.00 pm

Food - Fully Booked

Evening Closed

Boxing Day

Food - noon till 3.00 pm

Bar - noon till 4.00 pm

Evening Closed

New Years Eve

Food - noon till 3.00 pm

Bar - noon till 4.00 pm

Evening

8.30 pm till late

Entrance by Ticket only

£10 per ticket - Few left !!

Buffet, Entertainment,

Free Prize Draw

Tuesday Night Music Night

Tuesday 5th - The very popular

Easy Listening

Mike and Graham

Tuesday 12th - The Entertaining
and professional

Pete Holden

Not to be missed

Tuesday 19th - 60's 70's 80's
sing along and be entertained by

Phil Hobbis

Thursday 21st December The Drum and Monkey Xmas Raffle

50 p. per ticket

100 Raffle Prizes

Tickets available behind the bar.

Raffle starts 9.00 pm.

Thursday 21st

Be here - join in the fun !!!

This month, just in case you think a "small bell" really is small and takes up little room up in our tower, I have taken some basic statistics which, while it is out of sight, may well surprise you. However, may I just comment that in this county of heavy bells, Kenn's (estimated) 5¾ cwt. bell really is only a small one. (Congresbury's heaviest weighs 34 cwt. and Wells cathedral's heaviest is slightly over 56¼ cwt., which means that even the lightest of their other bells (respectively seven and nine) is probably bigger than that at Kenn.) As you can see, and especially as it is an old installation, I make no apologies for using good old British units of hundredweights and inches. (It certainly makes a change from the European system at my place of work!!)

Our bell was apparently rehung on a new headstock in 1912, (and possibly in a new frame as well, Ray thinks), but the only evidence we have is that carved into the wooden headstock, "W.KING 1912". The bell swings East - West and the frame in which it swings is 79 inches long by 42 ½ inches wide. The tower internal dimensions at the bell level are 79 inches East/West and 82 ¾ inches North/South. The frame really only consists of two massive wood beams 9 inches deep by 5 inches wide on which the bell pivots are mounted. These top beams, while appearing quite solidly attached to cross beams which are built into the North and South walls, flex up and down alarmingly when the bell is rung only halfway up!

The bottom structure to take the thrust of the bell, were it ever again to be set upside down as was originally intended, and carried out as we have seen in the records, is now very weak and appears to be merely attached to the floor boards at the West ends. The bottom beams are loose in the walls and will shift to and fro about half an inch if given a good push with the foot!

I have some photographs of some of these structures and will try to remember, when this article is printed, to put them on show in the church.

The bell mouth measures 30 ¾ inches diameter, and internally at the soundbow (the thicker section just above the bell mouth) it is 22 ½ inches diameter.

The wooden headstock is 8 ½ inches deep by 4 ¾ inches wide and the bell, which still has its canons (the cast-in loops on its crown and which look something like a crown) is hung from this by iron or steel plates with nuts on the top threaded ends. There are mating cross pieces of iron or steel on the top of the headstock and under the loops of the bell's canons to clamp it to the headstock. (In even earlier times, as I have seen on really ancient installations which had not been modified, there were no nuts and threads but just very rusty wedges in very corroded slots in the iron straps - just imagine a few hundredweight of bell metal being quickly turned full circle on that - run for your life!!)

The clapper is a wrought iron "flight", "ball", and shaft, the top of the latter being secured in a long and narrow wooden 'box', which is intentionally split longitudinally into two halves. This 'box' is more correctly a wooden bar of two pieces each 12 ½ inches long by 1 ¼ inch thick and 2 ½ inches wide, clamped together to give a 2 ½ inch square section. This clamped section has the pivot hole drilled through it, as it is from this bit of wood that the whole clapper swings on the "crown staple". This crown staple is a U shaped circular bar of iron which was positioned into the inside of the top (or crown) of the bell when the bell itself was cast, hence it was "cast-in"; i.e. the molten bell metal was allowed to cool and solidify around it. (The bell metal is an alloy of copper & tin, roughly in the proportions 70:30 respectively). The clapper 'box' is clamped over this crown staple and the pivot hole is just large enough to allow the clapper to swing freely. Nowadays a clapper and its pivot bearing are much more highly engineered. (The box looks reasonably new and when I took over maintenance of the bell I was perturbed to find that the most important of the 5 clamping bolts, i.e. the one above the pivot, which could stop the whole clapper from flying out, was missing - and there was no sign of it on the floor - I wonder how long it had been rung in that state?! Andrew and I replaced the missing one 25.08.97.)

The clapper 'ball' is very squat, more like a rugby ball section, or flying saucer shape! (A flying saucer first seen in Kenn in 1815 then, but I don't think it made headlines in the local press!) It is 14 ½ inches in circumference, giving a diameter of 4 ½ inches, but it is only 3 inches deep, thus giving the 'squat' section. The tapered flight below the ball is eight sided and is 2 1/8 inches diameter at its minimum section adjacent to the ball, and 2 ¾ inches diameter at its maximum (lowest) section, with a length of 2 7/8 inches.

The wooden wheel rim diameter is 67 ½ inches with a sole diameter (on which the rope sits) of 64 ½ inches, so you can tell it is quite a size.

As I have said previously, in view of the state of the frame in which the bell hangs, it is not considered safe at the moment to ring the bell full circle and set it upside down as should be possible. I feel it would be an appropriate start to the new millennium if we could soon get it safely rehung in a modern frame and have the old cast-in crown staple drilled

out and replaced with an independent stirrup. This would take away the possibility of our bell becoming cracked due to corrosion stresses, as could so easily happen, especially in this 'near to the sea' position. It is not a case of "well it hasn't happened in 185 years, so why should it happen now?" - it is more a case of we have been extremely lucky it hasn't happened yet! (Last year our architect required rust removal and painting of the straps on which the bell hangs but completely missed this hidden, but much more potentially disastrous situation.)

Our wardens are in the process of getting a quotation for the re-pointing of the walls on the first floor of the tower since the old plaster between the internal stones is crumbling badly. Obviously the sooner this work is done the less mess will be experienced both upstairs and down and the deterioration will be halted. The top floor, ie. The bell chamber itself, and the short spire above it, are in a somewhat better state and will probably have to wait until it is seen whether a new bell frame is a near future possibility.

Now what is our bell used for nowadays? Well the most important use is that for which it has always been used, that is to announce the approach of the start of a service and to bid all to "come", "come", "come"... Just think, it has been doing this for over 185 years in some form or other! Whenever I ring it, I try to keep to a pattern of two sessions of half circle ringing and this brings out the full tones. I say "tones" advisedly because a bell does not just sound one note but many different notes (in true harmony if the bell is well tuned), and these emanate from different parts of its anatomy. I always remember the first time I rang Kenn bell up to this pitch and I was especially pleased when Avril remarked how much better it sounded than the previous "ping, ping"!

For a Holy Communion service you may have noticed that this is then followed by groups of three chimes leading up to a short break before the clock strikes on a much slower beat. (Funny that the clock only strikes before a service... - and only then if the priest doesn't beat me to it and start the service early!!) For any other service the "5 minute bell" is a continuously regular chime.

You may have also noticed that in the Communion services we have re-instated the "elevation of the host" or "sacring" bell, ie. 3 chimes when both the bread and the wine are individually blessed. The theory behind this is that those who cannot get to church (especially when ill) can still know when the most important part of the service has arrived and can join in by private prayer. This function is not a legal requirement of the Church of England, whereas the sounding of a pre-service bell is, but several people have said how much they like this additional signal (and I have it on good authority, as I write this at the end of September, that Yatton are now going to follow suit.) We have used the bell also for special occasions - to ring-in the year 2000 when 26 people turned up to add their chime, on the Queen Mother's 100th birthday when 25 turned up, and John Griffen rang it on 27.11.99 for a wedding - I wonder when that was last done at Kenn? (We are not the only church to use a single bell for a wedding, our family were on the way to Inveraray a few years ago and we stopped off at Luss on the banks of Loch Lomond. Suddenly the church bell started to ring on that beautiful Saturday afternoon, to be immediately followed by the bride and groom coming out with beaming smiles into the sunshine, and to a bagpipe accompaniment as well. Now.....I'll ring the bell next time if John can manage the bagpipes!!

Many of you may not have known that not only did John Cruse ring himself in at Shaiford with 10 good strikes on the 4th of the 8 bells there, but he willingly agreed to ring himself out from Kenn with an equal number of chimes prior to his last service here - how many actually saw and heard that I wonder? (10 strokes = 10 years intended incumbency, so an old rumour has it!)

On Remembrance Sunday we now put a leather muffle on one side of the bell clapper so that there is a joyful open stroke followed by a muffled "echo" - as in the "half-muffled" ringing performed at many other churches on this occasion, and for funerals and Good Friday.

I am hoping that our next bell event will be the solemn muffled ringing-out of the 20th century approaching midnight on December 31st this year and the joyful start of the 21st after midnight, but for this I need a volunteer, or volunteers, to come along to the church at about 11.40pm and be able to stay until about 12.10am. This is because I will have to go up into the bellchamber and therefore, for safety's sake, someone must be present just in case I fall off the ladder! Please let me know as soon as possible if you could be that volunteer. (01934 834550). Again, children and all are invited to do their bit on January 1st, at 12 noon. This will be the last of these particular specials, so do come along, and bring friends and relatives, if you would like to have a go.

And so, like the final instruction from the conductor at the end of a session of change ringing, I have to say "That's All; STAND". Many thanks for listening to our bell and reading these notes.....and, by the way, we would love to have more replies or suggestions to the questions asked along the way!

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KENN WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Members at the November Meeting were given a report on the Group Meeting at Walton-in-Gordano WI. The Line Dancing was very entertaining and Jean Ings won the bowl for the best photo of a sunset.

Final arrangements were made for the Flower Demonstration by Glenda Martin on 29th November.

A small charming teddy bear was in attendance, provided by the Children's Society. At 50p. a try members were asked to guess his name. This will be revealed after the Carol Service at Kenn on December 17th and all proceeds will go to the Society.

The Group Carol Service is at Congresbury on Monday 4th December.

As this was the AGM, reports were given by the President, Secretary and Treasurer. As only eight members stood for Committee there was no election for this. Visitor Addy Mann conducted the election for President and once again Ann Holtham was re-elected. Rene Kingcott proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring committee.

Mrs. S. Dunbar then gave a display of all the things she makes for Christmas, from crackers, napkin rings and tree decorations and anything else to be made from coloured foil sequins and glitter. Small angels holding scrolls could be used on a tree or as place names for the table.

Polystyrene eggs were covered with strips of folded paper. One egg was decorated entirely with sequins held in place with dressmaker's pins. Mrs

Dunbar said she could make one of these in an evening - this would be a bit ambitious to try but any of the other items would be fun to make.

Next month's Meeting will be a social evening and the post box, for Kenn WI deliveries only, will be organised by Eileen Prew.

Shirley Livesey
871419

BIRD NEWS I

Firstly apologies for missing last month's magazine, so here is a double helping.

Back in October, Ray related the tale of the Hobby at Riverside Farm taking a full brood of Swallows and asked if bird of prey populations were too high.

Well, I could write pages on this topic, but in brief, bird of prey numbers are controlled by the amount of available prey - not the other way round.

Furthermore, more birds are killed by domestic cats than all the birds of prey together

Incidentally, the number of Hobbies in Britain is around 1,000 pairs, so the Hobby is still a very uncommon bird, as well as our most beautiful flyer.

On the 1st October, there was a large migration of Swallows all across our area - with birds heading south east - there must have been thousands involved.

At the 'YACWAG' fields on Congresbury Moor (near the Cheddar Valley Railway Path) a roost of Pied Wagtails built up. There were a few

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Snipe and 130 Black Headed Gulls were feeding on a wet field. A pair of Grey Wagtails were a colourful addition and good numbers of Goldcrests were showing, presumably migrants from the north and east.

The terrible rain and gales at the month end brought a couple of Storm Petrels to the Chew Valley lake, but it is likely that these small oceanic wanderers perished, as they feed on plankton from the surface of the sea.

Early November continued very wet and there was no major influx to Fieldfares and Redwings until the second week. By then there were some clear nights and the birds could be heard calling as they flew south in the darkness. Hartley Staples mentioned that on one day (9th?) he witnessed a day-long passage of Fieldfares and Redwings.

A Merlin has returned to the sea wall - This species is doing better now with heather regeneration schemes and its adaptability to conifer plantations.

Water Rails are now vocal along the Cheddar Valley Railway Path and one has been showing in a ditch at 20 feet range, seemingly unconcerned by dogs and walkers.

Today, as I write (19th), I have just have a 'garden lifer' (first time in my garden) - a Firecrest - a veritable jewel of a bird and a great excuse to leave the garden a little unkempt !!!

Trevor Riddle 01934 835208

Bird News II

Again, I have very little to report on the bird front.

The first Fieldfare I have spotted this year was on the 9th of November, but on the 21st a very large flock flew over the area around the crossroads on the Moor Road.

There are several Robins singing their feeble winter song around the farm buildings here. One very bold one has been singing near the kitchen window, waiting to be fed scraps of food, but unfortunately he has disappeared. He may have got too bold and got shut in a shed by accident

Ray Naish.

Kenn 2000

As the year 2000 draws to an end, it is wise to pause for a moment to give thanks and reflect how lucky we are to live in Kenn.

We say thank you to all the ladies who week by week clean our church, polish all the brass and arrange the altar flowers; to the folk who open up the church for services.

To our clergy who take our services, to our organist who plays for us on Sundays; to those who mow the Churchyard and to those who tidy up from time to time.

We are lucky to have our Village Hall which is cleaned and maintained by volunteers for the use of Kenn folk. This year we have had the exterior of the Hall painted and all the windows painted inside and out. Some more lightweight tables have been purchased.

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Thank you to all those who arrange social events where we can meet our neighbours.

We are lucky to have our Post Office when so many villages have lost theirs. It is up to each and everyone of us to use it or lose it.

At our local pub we always receive a warm welcome.

We say thank you to all those kind folk who visit older members of the community; drive neighbours to the doctor or hospital and visit Kennites in Nursing Homes.

To those who fly our flag for happy and not so happy events; to those who plant the pots on The Green, brush up the Church Path and the Bus Shelter.

Our Parish Council does its best to look after Kenn's interest; The Women's Institute meets every month and arranges very interesting talks and demonstrations.

Finally a very big thank you to those who, each month, write, print and distribute (whatever the weather) our News and Views.

R. M. Dyer

Sixty Five Years of Great Change in Kenn

There are still twelve people living in Kenn who were here before there were any services in the Village.

By services, I mean no piped water, no electricity, no gas, no private telephones, no refuse collection and only about three cars.

Some parts of Kenn had the chance to be connected to electricity, gas and water about 1936-37. Kenn Street had water and electricity available from that time, but no gas. The Top Road as it was called then (now Kenn Road) had electricity, gas and water available as far as the top of Kenn Street (then called Moor Road) but from there on as far as Yatton only gas was available.

When Kenn Estate was built in 1938 the first four houses had to rely on water from a pump in the first garden and the only sanitation provided was bucket toilets, the contents of which had to be buried in the gardens.

Some years later the water from the pump was condemned as unfit to drink. A farmer named Clifton Ake got the contract to supply drinking water to the houses from his farm "Walnut Tree Farm". He supplied each house with only two milk churns full of drinking water each week. Jack Hanson worked for Clifton Ake at that time. He had the job of delivering the water with a pony and cart.

People living in the outskirts of Kenn such as Kenn Pier and Nailsea Wall had to wait until the 1950's to have electricity and piped water available. Before that time most people in that area dipped their drinking water from the River Kenn.

Sometimes when the weather was rough, sea water got into the river and flowed up as far as Nailsea. This made the water undrinkable. Mrs Edith Tripp who has lived in that area for well over seventy years has told me that when the 'sea was in the river' she, with her neighbour Mrs. Mary Hale had to walk across the fields with

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their buckets to find a pond where the water was clear to find drinking water

Some of us can remember back to before the first telephone kiosk was installed. Before that time, if you wanted to make a phone call in Kenn you had to go into the Post Office and ask Mrs Clara Moores who was the Post Mistress to make the call for you. She picked up the receiver and spoke to the man at Clevedon exchange and asked him to connect her to whatever number that was required. She then handed the phone to you. The cost was 3d.

Many people at that time knew the telephone operator at Clevedon by name. The conversation with him often went something like this ("Hullo Ted, this is John Smith here, would you get me Clevedon 103." "O.K John," "Many Thanks Ted")

Here at Stonehouse Farm we had one of the first private telephones in Kenn installed in 1937. The number was Clevedon 343 - in other words the three hundred and forty third phone on the Clevedon Exchange - at that time many Villagers came here to make phone calls. Some were very nervous about using a phone. My mother had to speak to the operator to ask for the number required. The charge was 3d. some didn't like paying such a large amount of their meagre income at that time.

The following year my uncle Harold Simmons of "Bullock Farm" Kingston Seymour had a phone installed (Yatton 86) this was one of the first phones in Kingston.

Ray Naish.

The Gender Trap

Thelma was having a bad day, one of those days when nothing seems to go right, and, of all days, it was Christmas Eve.

The day had started well enough, up in good time, and husband Don off to work, leaving her with their two young children who were happily excited at the prospect of Christmas.

Thelma was due at the hairdresser quite early, but first, the children had to be taken to her mother. It was then that things began to go wrong.

The car, her reliable old car, wouldn't start. The phoned advice from the garage seemed simple enough "lift the bonnet, wipe the plug-leads and spray them with 'damp start'". After a lot of searching for the bonnet catch, and a lot more pushing and heaving, the bonnet finally came up.

To Thelma, the underside of a car bonnet is pure black-magic, so she wiped and sprayed everything in sight.

Tried again and as if by magic the car started. Putting the lid down again was easier, but the weight was almost too much and it came down on her head, almost knocking her out.

By now she was getting late for her appointment and the children were beginning to squabble.

The hairdresser was grumpy, muttering about people being late and Thelma too was getting frustrated. So back to Mum to get the children, then home again for a snack lunch.

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Lunch over, they had to go to Winchester for the children's Christmas Party and was reminded that she had to be back for them at 4.15 pm.

Home again for a quick coffee and a five minute rest on the sofa.

Unfortunately, she dozed off and the short rest went on for well over an hour.

Panic! she would be late for the children and little Susan would get worried.

Thelma, lived in Alresford, not very far from Winchester and so once across the A.30 she hurried through the outskirts of Winchester to the party.

Whilst still hurrying, she saw a policeman and he seemed to be pointing something at her. It was too late to slow down, and further along, another policeman waved her to stop.

Two policeman came forward, one carrying a clip-board

"Do you know that this area has a speed restriction of 30 m.p.h.?"

"No,.....er yes" Thelma replied.

"You were travelling at 38.8 m.p.h." he continued as he wrote down details of the car registration

"And can I see your driving licence please"

Thelma tried to explain, "I'm sorry officer, but I was in a hurry to get my children from the Christmas Party, I'm already late and it's getting dark and they'll be worried."

"Everything has gone wrong today" she continued "The car wouldn't start, I've hurt my head, I was late for my hair-do, I fell asleep on the settee, I'm late for the kids, and now this on Christmas Eve". She was almost in tears.

The officer, stern-faced, continued writing. At last, he tore off a page from his pad and handed it to Thelma "Drive on now" he said "and be more careful". She nodded and put the ticket into her handbag.

Later that evening, when the children were safely in bed, she confessed. "I've had an awful day today dear she said, and to crown it all, I got booked for speeding .

She took the ticket from her handbag and handed it to Don. He unfolded it, read it and began to chuckle.

"It's not so bad" he said "look at it".

She looked and saw that across the offence information were two bold diagonal lines and in between them was clearly written "Merry Christmas"

p.s. and a Merry Christmas to Everyone - Cliff Edwards

STOP PRESS !!

Jean and Ray Naish have moved into their new house - we send them best wishes for the future.

Please Note - Ray and Jean's telephone number until the 6th December 2000 is
01275 872060
from 6.12.00 it will revert to
01275 872493