



WRVS ASSOCIATION



Silver Jubilee Edition

Newsletter No 48
Spring 1998

**"The responsibility willingly
shouldered by the individual is
ultimately the strength of the
nation".**

From "My philosophy of Life. by Lady Reading

Cover picture by Penny O'Brien

Letter from the Chairman.

Dear Member,

This will be my last letter to you as Chairman and I find it hard to believe that three years have passed so quickly. Meeting so many members at Reunions and AGM s has been a great pleasure and I am always impressed by the enthusiasm and enjoyment generated when members meet together on a regular basis.

In this, our Silver Jubilee Year I feel the Association continues to thrive and fulfil the aims of our Constitution in caring for our members. This is due, in no small measure, to our Divisional and County Representatives and Branch Committees who work hard to organise meetings and keep in touch with those who are no longer able to get out easily.

Our contacts with WRVS colleagues are maintained, in most instances, by the support of Divisional Directors and Area Managers who are usually very willing to attend our meetings, when invited and keep us up to date with WRVS changes.

I look forward to meeting some of you at Milton Hill Conference Centre in July.

With Best Wishes,

Sheila McCormack

REMINDER, "TO THOSE WHOM IT MAY CONCERN !"

Subscriptions were due in January, and membership is now £5 annually

News from the Divisions

All your news from Oct 1st 1997 until Jan31st 1998

NORTH EAST DIVISION *Headquarters Darlington*

Northumberland, Tyne & Wear.

Div.Rep. Mrs M. Doyle.



The Newcastle group is "going strong". The monthly meetings are well attended. They have had a talk on Malaysian batik painting, and copper tooled picture-making from Mrs Doyle. From Mrs York they heard about the job of a Clothing Organiser in a still flourishing and happy department. Miss Ryan, accompanied by her own lovely Guide Dog told them how she and her dog worked together and of the funny incidents that have occurred. At this meeting members contributed £22 towards the purchase of another Guide Dog.

Fifteen members attended the Carol Service in Brunswick Methodist Church, an Area event, well attended this year. The buffet lunch which followed provided by the Area catering team, was excellent.

Thirty "teddies for Tragedy" have been knitted and they (the members, not the Teddies!) are looking forward to their 1998 programme.

The North Shields/Whitley Bay members are sad to record the death of Mrs May Jobson, a hard working cook in the Whitley Bay kitchens who also delivered Meals and did hospital flowers. The group cancelled their November coffee morning at the news of Mrs Jobson's death and the illness of others of the group. Nineteen members attended and enjoyed the Area Carol Service and lunch.

They love good home-cooking in this branch. Delicious cheese scones and cakes are some of the goodies they enjoy at their coffee mornings, made regularly by members.

Two £50 donations have been given, one to the St Oswald's Hospice, the other to the Princess of Wales' Fund.

In September and October Sunderland held their usual coffee mornings and enjoyed their annual Marks and Spencer's Buffet in December. They also invited friends to a "sherry and mince pie party" to end the year.

On January 1st they were all overjoyed to learn of the M.B.E. awarded to Mrs Doreen Whitewell in the New Year's Honours Lists, in recognition of her work with "The Leukaemia Organisation".

Twelve members attended the Carol Service.

Ponteland members say they have had "a few quiet months", but their monthly meetings have been well attended and they all enjoyed the Area Carol Service.

Durham, Cleveland, N. Yorks.

Div. Rep. Mrs R. Thompson OBE

Mrs Thompson reports that she has been able to visit every group in the past six months and she has the extra weight to prove that on most of these visits she shared their Festive Fare !

The Divisional AGM took place in Selby, an excellent venue with a beautifully served, excellent meal with everyone seated in comfort. The speaker, Mr Malcom Stacey, who had worked in Radio and TV told members not to believe all they saw or heard on the media and this led to lively questions, everyone thoroughly enjoying themselves.

The 1998 AGM is planned to be in York.

All groups have had a busy year with meetings and outings. Inevitably, Mrs Thompson regrets that they have lost some good old friends but new members continue to join and are warmly welcomed, with the hope that they also will enjoy the friendship that Association members prize so highly.

Harrogate group has found a new leader in Mrs Sheila Pantin and Mrs Eileen Longley has taken over for her year's stint as Chairman in York.

Mrs Thompson says they are still trying to find a joint County Rep. to replace Mrs Joan Grant but not for want of trying, have so far not succeeded. She says that all members are eternally grateful to all the leaders who lead the groups so ably.

Mrs Thompson has sent news of WRVS celebrations planned in Filey, N. Yorks to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. There will be a grand Flower Festival celebrating "Sixty Years of Service", in St Oswald's Parish Church, Filey from 7th to 9th of August 1998 and anyone wishing to enjoy this festival should contact Filey WRVS Office, telephone 01723/513264. (A possible outing for groups who are near enough ? Ed.)

Just too late for the last Newsletter we heard of the sad death of Mrs Biddy Quinlan, a pioneer of WRVS work in Scarborough, where she gave 40 years service. She was appointed Deputy Organiser in 1974 and was District Organiser during the 80's. She received the long service medal in 1994. Mrs Quinlan had a strong sense of duty, a warm personality and she knew how to get the best out of every member, giving them a tremendous sense of worth, She was a lovely lady in all senses.

(As this Newsletter was at the printers we have heard, very sadly of the death of Mrs Beryl Burkitt. We send our deepest sympathy to her husband. We will put more about Beryl's work in the next issue)

East Yorkshire.

Div.Rep. Mrs D. Price

Mrs Peggy James has sent news of two stalwart East Yorkshire members.

Mrs Margaret Sykes has just completed her 10,000th garment for sending to poor children abroad. The pants, shirts and little dresses, for all ages up to 14 years have all been made out of cast-off clothing, summer dresses, old shirts etc., and jumpers out of oddments of wool. We congratulate Mrs Sykes on her great achievement.

The other incredible achievement is that of Mrs Marjorie Simmons, BEM, and her magnificent band of helpers who have just celebrated the 50th birthday of the Darby and Joan Lunch Club in Cottingham, which she started in 1947. The first years were hard; absolutely everything needed had to be transported to and from the WRVS office and the kitchen re-cleaned for each meal. But by help from King George V Memorial Fund, a grant from Social Services, generous donations from local people, proceeds from plays, whist drives, auction and jumble sales etc., and much hard work, a new purpose-built hall was opened in 1955 and the club continues to this day.



Mrs Simmons



Mrs Sykes

Mrs Robina Priestley has reported on the activities of the Pocklington and Beverley groups, who have held regular lunches. The Hull group had a "quality" meal

at the Quality Royal Hotel which was so good they hope to repeat it soon. The Bridlington group enjoyed Fish 'n Chips at Flamborough. These events, spread throughout the Division meant that there was something within easy travel for all their 94 members. Hull University Ferens Hall of Residence provided their excellent Christmas lunch.

Some members have been knitting Teddy Bears for Bosnia, and they are a cheerful, colourful bunch when they are collected together.

A bus has been organised to take members to Beamish in June for the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. More of this event in our next issue.

South and West Yorks

Div. Rep. Mrs L. Ziegler MBE

No report

Lincs, Notts, Leics.

Div.Rep. Mrs J. Newman

Mrs Newman reports that she has been able to visit most Districts in the region at a variety of activities, coffee mornings, talks, Christmas lunches etc. At these she has been able to talk to members.

She has also had discussions with Mrs Birkbeck, the Association Representative for Lincs. to try to find a way to enlist new members. They plan to hold a reunion lunch to celebrate the Association's 25th anniversary and would also like to join the WRVS Diamond Jubilee celebrations at Beamish.

Mrs Dorothy Humberstone of the Leicestershire group died in November aged 94, after living for several years in a nursing home. She joined WVS in the early days and worked on the Leicester station canteen during the war. She also did trolley work in the General Hospital.

One long serving member, Mrs Myrtle Ellis, the Leicester treasurer was presented with a second clasp to her long service medal.

This group had regular coffee mornings and two outings, one to Syon Park and another on a Christmas shopping trip. The local Leicester office is much missed as a contact point.

In Lincolnshire the faithful few still meet regularly for lunches. We hope their numbers soon increase. (One idea might be to hand round the Newsletter to serving members to show them what we do, as we understand that some serving members in the country still do not know about the Association.Ed.)

Ashfield group have lost their hard working secretary, who has had to take a paid job and she will be difficult to replace. (We hope someone will come forward for this group. Ed)

The former District Organiser for Bassetlaw, Mrs J. Smith and her husband gave their group afternoon tea and a Bring and Buy in September. At Christmas they had a delicious lunch at an hotel. They send best wishes to one of their group, Mrs Buffrey and hope she will join them again soon, following her knee operation.

In Broxtowe they were health conscious, at least for one meal in October ! They do not say what they ate, but then at Christmas and again in January they perhaps spoiled it all, first with a well-attended Christmas lunch and then with a

shortbread and sherry party. The lunch was followed by a Bingo session, a new experience for many members, but the hilarity showed how much this was enjoyed.

The Gedling members have tried the idea of varying days and venues of meetings to make it possible for more members to attend. (Have other groups tried this? If so, do let us know the result. Ed.) After coffee in October they had a talk by the taxidermist from Wollaton Hall Natural History Museum who demonstrated the making of wax fruits, flowers and leaves for displays in the museum. They "jumped the gun" by having their Christmas lunch in November at the local Technical College but had another feed of light refreshments, mince pies and coffee at their December meeting. A New Year meeting in a member's home included a talk on "Blue and White Plates".

In Mansfield they continue their "keep fit" meetings, now changed to afternoons, but also have had speakers, and an afternoon of "Line Dancing".

Newark branch have met regularly for lunch and after the delicious home-cooked lunch in December, they all enjoyed a visit from Father Christmas. After they had received their presents they sang carols.

Rushcliffe, like Gedling branch, have also tried meetings on varying days of the week, but always in the morning, meeting for coffee, plus a talk. In September the talk was given by a representative of Boots the Chemists, with slides outlining the origins of the business. They all received a gift of soap!

In November they had a speaker from the Nottingham Co-op who, with the aid of slides gave a talk entitled "Not just Beans on the Shelf". In addition to giving a history of the movement, the speaker explained the new "Honest Labeling" regulations, to be brought in by the Co-op that very week.

This group's Christmas lunch was saddened this year by the death of Mrs Mary Pierce, for she had run the raffle with her team at each meeting. She was still active in WRVS, helping with the Keyworth Over 60's Club. Sadly her death came just before this club's 40th birthday. She will be sorely missed.

NORTH WEST DIVISION *Headquarters Manchester*

Cumbria, Lancashire. Div. Rep. Mrs M. McCambridge BEM

No report

Greater Manchester. Div. Rep. Mrs E. Collier

The Sale group have had monthly meetings. In September after hearing several holiday experiences they had a photo quiz on Coronation Street actors and in October they had a cookery demonstration on microwave cookery, making seven dishes. In November they raised enough at their Bring and Buy to pay

the month's rent, (so we are glad they won't be evicted !

They broke with tradition last Christmas by going to Deckers of Bowden to have the meal made for them, instead of cooking it themselves. With two WRVS organisers as their guests it was much enjoyed.

Members of the new group, now only one year old, the former Rochdale Metropolitan were thirteen when they started and now number twenty. They have regular pub lunches, with a raffle to provide funds for Get Well Cards and flowers for members who are ill. They finish off the get-together with a short meeting, when they hear WRVS news.

They finished off their Christmas lunch with mince pies and chocolates donated by a local business man. Some of these went to housebound members too.

This group are looking forward to hearing more about the WRVS 60th birthday celebrations.

The ladies from Bury, we are told are "unquenchably optimistic" in bad weather, which helped when their outing on a cruise on the Manchester Ship Canal took place on a dull drizzly day. (Surely the Fish and Chips meal at Harry Ramsden's helped towards this feeling ! Ed.)

They have started a new venture which others may like to copy. Five of their members are unable to go on day-long coach trips and on those days, they are taken by car to a local farm restaurant and thoroughly enjoy having lunch together.

Romiley branch continue to meet each month. On one successful outing they stopped at "Walkley Clogs" for lunch, followed by a cruise on a horse-drawn barge to Hebden Bridge where a coach met them and took them home. They celebrated the Christmas season with a buffet lunch followed by a visit from Father Christmas and tea and mince pies.

Merseyside, Cheshire (Appointment pending)

No report

Staffs. Shropshire, Derbyshire. (Appointment Pending)

No report

SOUTH EAST DIVISION / Headquarters 99 White Lion St London N1 9PF

Cambridgeshire, Northants. Div.Rep. Mrs B. Titcomb.

No report

Norfolk, Suffolk.

Div. Rep. Mrs S. Scholey.

Members from Norwich, North Norfolk and Gt. Yarmouth gathered for a most enjoyable Christmas lunch in Mundesley, on the N. Norfolk coast. It is an occasion which always attracts the men, and Mrs Scholey wonders of this is due to the bracing sea air ! (Could it be that they like the food there ? Ed.)

In October 1997, the following awards were presented to:-

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Mrs Anne Cowen | WVS Medal | |
| Mrs Jean Pye | WVS Clasp to Medal | 27 years service |
| Mrs N. Fryer | 10 year Certificate | |

The annual Gorleston lunch of the Gt. Yarmouth branch was once more enjoyed by a good turnout of members and they are planning a dinner to celebrate the Association Silver Jubilee.

Mrs Scholey says that several still serving members have been invited to the WRVS Royal Garden Party at Milton Hill House in June and some members also hope to attend the S.E. Cream Tea Day in July.

Mrs Scholey has sent news of the superb record of 53 years service given to WRVS by Mrs Gildersen of Norfolk, who began in Glasgow taking a mobile canteen to the docks. After housing work in London and Civil Defence work in Huntingdon she trained to become local ESO in St Ives Rural District. Mrs Gildersen moved to Cromer and joined the Association where she ran the Norfolk branch before retiring in 1995. She continues to enjoy the Association.

Beds. Bucks and Oxon. Div. Rep. Mrs J. Callaway

An apology to Mrs Callaway and her members that her report somehow was misplaced in the last issue. (We hope we have got it correct this time. Ed.)

Twenty Bedfordshire members enjoyed hearing about the WRVS Troop's Welfare Overseas from Mrs Reggie Howe. Mrs Howe served abroad in Germany and Libya as one of "Weaver's Women" and the description of her exploits in both postings showed what a resourceful and brave WRVS member she was in often difficult and exciting situations needing all her expert diplomacy.

She would like to get in touch with wartime overseas members and suggests a "Where are you now" item in the Newsletter. (Letters please on this subject would be welcome. Ed.)

In November, two members, Mrs Edna Woods, MBE and Mrs Pat Henderson-Begg MBE, were invited to a service in Westminster Abbey to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the arrival in 1972, of refugees from Uganda. Mrs Woods, who had overseen the whole WRVS operation at Stanstead, was not able to attend through ill health but Mrs Henderson-Begg, formerly WRVS Emergency Organiser for Beds, who had organised the distribution of warm clothing for the refugees, fortunately was able to go.

They had 70 members at their Christmas lunch and drank a toast to those

who had celebrated their Golden Weddings in 1997 and to a guest who had just received her MBE. It was a lovely day; only the committee knew what trials they had had in the background when the electricity failed and they had no power for the preparations and no dish washer to cope after the meal.

They were sad to learn of the death in December of Mrs Mary Bareford, an early member of the group.

The Bucks group celebrated the 100th birthday of Mrs Hallasey who held the Long Service Medal and two Bars. An early Association member, she still likes to keep in touch, with the help of WRVS "Action News" which a member takes to her. (And we hope also by this Newsletter? Ed.)

In Oxfordshire news of a proposed coffee morning and lunch had been well received but both had to be postponed at the last moment. They hope that with the help of Mrs Irsula Goulding they might set the ball rolling again in 1998. They also hope that their members will attend this year's national AGM at Milton Hill, the new WRVS Headquarters, as it is not too far for them to travel.

Essex and Herts Div. Rep Mrs P.Copping

Hampshire, Isle of Wight. Div. Rep. Mrs B Adams

Flower arranging which looked so easy, is how Mrs Adams describes the Petersfield group's September talk, given to 50 members, using different containers, flowers and foliage and the arrangements were all donated to the raffle after the talk. Mrs Adams says she luckily won one which took pride of place in her sitting room after the meeting. In January 70 members met in Fareham, and this large group were able to meet the new WRVS Area Manager, Mrs Atkins who gave the latest WRVS news. They also had a talk by a tourist guide, Mrs Ferrier, when she told them of her many years of coping with different nationalities and destinations, pointing out just how patient a guide has to be. She wishes that when she says to a group "Follow me", they would **all** do just that.

Surrey, E.& W. Kent, E.& W. Sussex. Div. Rep. Mrs G. Bright

Mrs Bright reports how delighted they all were to welcome the Chairman, Mrs McCormack to their "three Counties " lunch in Surrey where the County Reps. gave accounts of their groups' activities. The speaker, Mrs Topping, ESO for W. Sussex spoke about their help with the problems of the crowds in the aftermath of Princess Diana's tragic death.

After enjoying various Christmas lunches, outings etc., their groups are now looking forward to the S.E. "Cream Tea" day in July,

Greater London Div. Rep. Mrs A.Christophersen

No report

London N.E./City.

Div. Rep Mrs W Taylor DL OBE

No report

London N.W.

Div. Rep Mrs D Stevens

No report

London S.E.

Div. Rep. Mrs G. Block M.B.E.

Fifteen members visited Dulwich Picture Gallery to see the cut stone work by Stephen and Co., some on outdoor display in the large garden, some of the stones so huge it needed a large crane to put them in position. Many smaller pieces were on display inside the gallery. They were given a list of places where some of this work is on permanent view. One piece, called "Ascension" can be seen in the Royal Festival Hall, near the restaurant.

After viewing the stones they had lunch in the restaurant-tent and then walked to near-by Dulwich chapel to view the photographs in the Vestry showing the ancient parts of the area. This was all part of the Dulwich Festival. Several members returned on the following day when the chapel was open, to see this beautiful church, built in 1616.

In November they had a pleasant lunch, arranged by Mrs Cleverly, at a club at Eltham where they had a private room and a lovely meal together.

London S.W.

No appointment

No report

SOUTH WEST DIVISION *Headquarters Exeter*

Hereford, Worcester, Gloucester. Div. Rep. Mrs J. Connop

The November lunch held for Gloucestershire members, although depleted in numbers due to sickness, was very much enjoyed by all who went. Held at the Tewkesbury Masonic Hall, by kind permission of the Directors, the lunch was prepared by Cheltenham members. The speaker was Rev. Tony Lynett, Chaplain to Gloucester Prison who spoke about his work.

Gloucester City members held a coffee and cake morning in October. Mrs Jean Clarke spoke about "Unusual things that happen to people in their lives". (We wonder what these were ? Ed.)

West Midlands

Div. Rep. Mrs J. Smith

We are sorry to hear that the Erdington and Sutton Coldfields leader has been ill throughout the past year. We wish her well and are including their early

1997 activities, which had had to be omitted in the Autumn Newsletter.

They enjoyed a lunch in January 1997 at the Birmingham College of Food and have had various coffee mornings throughout the year, held at member's homes.

They still have 15 members and with their friends to fill the coach they have enjoyed two outings, one to Calke Abbey and another to Stokesay Castle.

Solihull branch are without a leader since the retirement of Mrs Oswald but they have met, "leaderless" ! at the home of a member for coffee and have also had a Christmas lunch together.

The editor has had a letter from Mrs Piddock, Englefield, Ross Drive, Kingswinford, W. Midlands, DY6 9EJ, asking to be put in touch with Mrs J Smith and Mrs P Linton., with whom, she says, she had spent many happy times at WRVS Conferences. Perhaps these ladies would contact her ?

Avon, Wiltshire, Dorset.

(Appointment pending)

No report

Somerset, Devon, Cornwall. Appointment Pending

Mrs Margaret Dunn has written from Bideford, asking the editor if some names could be put in the Spring Newsletter of much-missed members who have inadvertently been missed in the Autumn edition. Unfortunately the names apparently went to Headquarters for their records and were not also sent on to the editor. We are sorry for any distress this has caused to families and friends and we wish to make amends now.

Mrs Mary Mead, a member for 35 years died, sadly in January '97, a dedicated Meals deliverer who would never attend Association meetings if they clashed with her duty.

In February the group lost Mrs Doris McQueen, BEM, a member for 40 years, meals deliverer, local Organiser, and Association secretary since 1989. Mrs McQueen gained her BEM for emergency work.

Then in December Mrs Iris Biddick died aged 93. She did evacuee work during the war and still gave out meals in her 80's.

Mrs Dunn says on a happier note that in the past few months they had welcomed seven new members

Twenty-two members very much enjoyed their Annual New Year lunch when they heard a Macmillan nurse talking of her work for Cancer Care. This nurse brought with her a book, "The Oxford Text Book of Palliative Medicine" , costing £100, which the group had given, instead of a donation, to this nursing body in 1997. It gave them much pleasure to know that the book is still treasured and they all were asked to sign their names on the fly-leaf.

WALES*Headquarters Cardiff*

Div. Rep. Mrs E. Edwards BEM

It is encouraging to get a report from Conwy that their numbers are increasing and that they now meet monthly. (Well done! Ed.) They have had a talk, and free samples from their local health food shop. Mrs Bocking wonders if perhaps they looked as if they needed them and the speaker took pity on them !

Llandudno is getting a Hospice, shortly to be opened, and at another talk, the co-ordinator gave them an insight into how this project was going.

These lucky people had a Christmas shopping trip to Chester, (the city where I became engaged, so I have happy memories ! Ed.) and at another meeting they spent a relaxing afternoon listening to an anthology of Christmas readings.

At their annual lunch in January they were joined by local WRVS members. They look forward to another successful year.

CHANNEL ISLANDS**Guernsey.**

Assoc. Rep. Miss E. Robilliard

No report

Jersey.

Assoc. Rep. Mrs D. Jennings

As Mrs Jennings wrote her report the Jersey sun was shining and the sea was blue, a pleasant change, she says, after the storms of the New Year 1997.

In December with two members having left to spend Christmas in Ireland, one too frail to attend and one otherwise engaged, it left only eight of them to enjoy a pre-Christmas restaurant lunch.

Jersey members are hoping to join WRVS members on the island in the 60th celebrations. Mrs Jennings says it only seems like yesterday that they were buying Golden Jubilee mugs.

Scotland Chairman Mrs A. Blair

We are pleased to have news from Scotland. This covers the whole of 1997 as they send it annually, not six-monthly. Mrs Blair reported at their AGM that the Scottish membership increased by 74 in 1997 and they now have 640 members.

Their AGM was held in a Bearsden hall which was once a tram depot and used to be one of their emergency centres. The venue brought back memories. Once the district was flooded and a rabbit, sitting in its hutch, floated away past them but was found later, safe on dry land. Also they remembered the man who

refused to leave home and was fed by food delivered by fishing rod to his window !

Mrs Elma Bompfrey attended the AGM from S.HQ. and explained developments in Scottish WRVS. She reported that Scottish WRVS now have 19,229 members, 129 of which are paid members working 2,344 hours per week. She also reported that they badly needed more funds and sent out an appeal to all members for fund raising efforts.

The meeting heard a talk on "Hearing Dogs for the Deaf" and learned that these dogs can be of any breed and all wear a yellow coat on which is written "Hearing Dog" so that people realise that their owner is deaf.

They were told of a young Bearsden policewoman who, when she found recently that members were from "WRVS", asked was that a new organisation and what did they do?

They keep their Scottish records on computer and Mrs Blair admits they do make mistakes, as she is not an expert !. (We send our greetings to all Scottish members. Ed)



This cartoon depicts the trials of the job they did when Comet stores asked WRVS in SE. Div. to provide a Christmas wrapping service for goods bought in the store to be given as presents

Letter from the Editor. *Derwent Cottage***Please note new post code→**

Dear Members,

I want to thank all those who have written to me since September. I am sorry that I cannot reply to you all because of cost, but if you would like an answer, do send a stamped addressed envelope and I will reply.

But could I now appeal to the majority of members. These are the members who never write at all and have never sent me anything to put into the Newsletter. Those who do write always say how much they enjoy the contributions others make, so do try to do your bit, if you have never submitted anything.

And here is something in which **everyone** can take part.

Imagine you are being interviewed by Sue Lawley for Desert Island Discs and she asks : 1. What favourite record (out of the eight) you would choose to take with you, if you could only take one ?

2. Which book would you take ?

3. What luxury would you take ? (Non animate !)

Just write your three answers on a postcard or scrap of paper and send it to me at the address above (not to H.Q.) and I will print the best ones in the next issue. It might even give some pleasure if the next time you visit a housebound friend or Association member you could get their answers too and send them in. And do you have any visually handicapped members ? I find that they often listen to more music and read more books (on tape) than some of us more fortunate sighted ones and they might love to send in their contributions. Perhaps the branches could help with this ? If I get too many replies for the next issue (as I hope !) I will put them into future ones.

Can you "surf the internet". No ? Well perhaps like me, you have a very young grandchild who knows all about computers. If you do, ask them to search for **<http://www-saw.arts.ed.ac.uk>** and there on the screen you will see the old uniform you used to wear ! The child will be impressed !

I hope you all have a good summer. This year my summer promises to include the July celebrations for my Golden Wedding so I am going to be busy. But I trust I will have recovered from all that excitement before I write to you again in the Autumn issue and that you will all make it easy by sending me lots of contributions.

Best Wishes to you all,

Ness Venables

Poems

A quote for us all perhaps...especially those of us who are still fit and able ?...

"How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use !"
From Tennyson's Ulysses.

Countryside

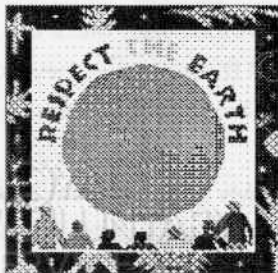
A patchwork covers the lands,
With green of field and yellow of sands,
Stitches of hedge and hem of sea,
Coloured dots, you and me.

A stream of thread from a wind mill bobbin,
A coloured bead in the form of a robin,
The furry green creates a forest scene,
With cross-stitch fences in between.

Where the quilt frays,
A dump site lays,
Where the tangled threads sprawl
Birds and bees fall.

The quilt ends with rubbish clots,
The only survivors are the coloured dots.

This poem was written by nine year old Tom Conway of Wilberfoss, E. Yorks, during his village's fight to prevent a toxic waste tip being sited in his village. They were successful.



The Divine Office of the Kitchen

Lord of the pans and pipkins, since I have no time to be
A saint by doing lovely things and vigilling with thee,
By watching in the twilight dawn, and storming Heaven's gates -
Make me a saint by getting meals and washing up the plates.

Lord of the pans and pipkins please, I offer thee for souls,
The tiresomeness of tea leaves and the sticky porridge bowls.
Remind me of the things I need, not just to save the stairs
But so that I may perfectly lay tables into prayers.

Accept my roughened hands because I made them so for thee !
Pretend my dishmop is a bow, which heavenly harmony
Makes on a fiddle frying pan... it is so hard to clean,
And oh ! so horrid, hear dear Lord, the music that I mean.

Although I must have Martha hands I have a Mary mind;
And when I black the boots, I try thy sandals, Lord, to find.
I think of how they trod the earth, what time I scrub the floor.
Accept this meditation, when I havn't time for more.

My matins are said overnight, to praise and bless thy name
Beforehand, for tomorrow's work, which will be just the same.
So that it seems I go to bed still in my working dress;
Lord make Thy Cinderella soon a heavenly princess.
Warm all the kitchen with they love and light it with Thy peace.
Forgive the worrying, and make the grumbling words to cease.
Lord, who laid breakfast on the shore, forgive the world which saith
"Can any good thing come to God out of poor Nazareth ?"

This has been sent by many readers, but Mrs Watson of Stockport writes, "It was originally written to console a violinist who was spoiling her hands with kitchenwork during the first World War. First published by the author, Cicely Hallak, in an Irish monthly paper, it has since been quoted in Catholic, Protestant and Non-Conformist pulpits throughout the country and printed in periodicals throughout the world. John Rockefeller Snr. is said to have given away copies with his famous "dime" gratuities.

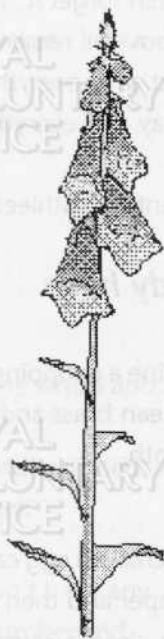
Adlestrop

"Yes, I remember Adelstrop -
The name, because one afternoon
Of heat, the express-train drew up there
Unwontedly. It was late June.

The steam hissed. Some one clear'd his throat
No one left and no one came
On the bare platform. What I saw
Was Adlestrop - only the name.

And willows, willow herb and grass,
And meadowsweet, and haycocks dry
No whit less still and lovely fair
Than the high cloudlets in the sky.

And for that minute a backbird sang
Close by, and round him, mistier,
Farther and farther, all the birds
Of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.



By Edward Thomas. Sent by Mrs Jennings. Jersey.

Verses by S.H. Payer.

Dare to be different and to follow your own star.
Don't be afraid to be happy.
Believe those that you love, love you.
Forget what you have done for your friends
Remember what they have done for you.
Disregard what the world owes you
And concentrate on what you owe the world.
When faced with a decision , make it as wisely as possible,
Then forget it. The moment of absolute certainty never arrives.
Above all remember that God helps those that help themselves.
Act as if everything depends on you.
Pray as if everything depends on God.

Sent by Kathleen Payne-Collins. Essex.

Handy hints

Wipe a chopping board with lemon juice to remove onion and garlic smells.
Clean brass and copper with a cut lemon dipped in salt. Polish with a soft cloth.

From Marjory Brown York

A cracked egg can be boiled successfully if wrapped in a piece of greaseproof paper and then dropped into the boiling water for the usual time.

To clean a saucepan in which milk has been boiled. Turn the pan upside down immediately until cool; it can then be washed very easily.

To prevent tears when cutting onions. Cut a slice off the top of the onion and then a slice off the bottom. Holding the bottom upwards, peel the skin downwards. No more tears

From Miss J.M. Smee. Southsea. Hants.

An aspirin dissolved in a vase of water will make flowers last longer.

Peel onions under a gently running tap. They then will not make your eyes water.

Boil a kettle once a week with the juice and rind of a lemon to keep it free from scale.

Small heaps of bran placed in the garden keep off slugs.

Vinegar removes rust.

Dry mustard rubbed on the hands removes offensive smells.

After washing dusters, fold into four lengthways. Sprinkle with paraffin. Roll up each duster and place in a double paper bag. Leave for one week. The duster will flow much more easily over the furniture. (Does the room not smell of paraffin ? Ed)

From Jean Ellis. Wilberfoss. York

Funnies

Statements on accident insurance forms.

A pedestrian hit me and went under my car.

I had been driving for forty years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident.

An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my car and vanished.

From Joan Sadler. York

"People who say "they slept like a baby", generally don't have any.

Anon. Northumberland.

After meeting the mother of our teenage babysitter I remarked to my family how very young she looked to be the mother of four children. "That's OK Mum," my eight year old son reassured me. "She probably uses that Oil of Delay stuff".

From Northumberland, Tyne and Wear.

A little girl was saying her prayers - "God bless my mother and father, my brother, my Gran, my friend Susan, and God Bless my friends in Brownies. And God please take care of yourself 'cos if anything happened to you, we've had it!"

From Mrs Dubois. Essex.

Frantic Home Owner to Fire Brigade.

"Please come quickly".

"Yes sir", came the reply. "How do we get to your house?"

After a pause a horrified said ...

"You mean you don't have a fire engine any more?"

From Mrs Dunton. Poole. Dorset.

Women's faults are many

Men have only two.

Everything they say, and

Everything they do.

From Mrs M.M. Doyle. Northumberland



Reflexology. A recommendation.

I have been having regular treatments for a few years and now have no pain from arthritis in my shoulders. It is very relaxing too.

From Mrs Lewis. Tyne and Wear.

Memories

A memory of "clothing"

I remember working in the Westminster clothing department in the 1950's. Does anyone else remember it ? Our gifts were mostly gents evening suits and our applicants often ex-prisoners looking for clothes for interviews. I became very practiced at removing stripes from evening trousers.

From Mrs J. Hiller M.B.E. Wiltshire.

A childhood in wartime Guernsey.

One Saturday morning, playing as usual in the fields near my home, we saw a German Army doctor watching us. He called to us, offering sweets in his outstretched hand. As the others sucked theirs I drew back and he said "Your parents have forbidden you to accept anything from a German ?" When I nodded he said it would give him pleasure to know that I had enjoyed the same sweets as his own children enjoyed. As I took my share and said "thank you" I remember the delicious taste as the sweet melted on my tongue, reminding me of sweets I used to buy, before the enemy came. However I knew better than to mention this encounter at home,

From Mrs Cheminant. Guernsey.

Driving for Children's Holidays.

This job was always a pleasure and I particularly remember one little girl who, on the way to her holiday, was a little apprehensive. Chatting to her, I asked her what was her favourite colour. She replied "yellow".

Imagine, when her hostess opened the door of the bedroom she was to have and revealed a vision of yellow - yellow candlewick bedspread, yellow curtains, etc. I will never forget that look on her face. It was one of those totally unexpected magic moments.

From Mrs Pam Mathieson. Stamford Bridge. E. Yorks.

"Grub" on a farm holiday

I collected two small boys, brothers, from a farm, to return them to their home in York. On the journey I asked them what the food had been like. "Magic Miss", came the reply. "Do you know, Miss, we had puddin' every day".

From the Editor

Hair trouble

One child arrived at camp with rather more livestock on her head than we would have liked and this resulted in our having to wash all the children's, and our own hair, in Derbac soap. On their return home, I had an irate letter from one annoyed mother, who informed me that she had gone to great expense, before the holiday, to have her daughter's hair de-kinked, only to have it all frizzy on her return. You just could not win !

From Mrs Mathieson. Newquay. Cornwall.

Letters to the Editor

Mrs Buxton from Devon writes that she has recently been to Florida. She says "At the Blake Hospital in Bradenton an elderly man drove us in an electric buggy back to our parked car. He proudly announced that he was one of 500 volunteers at the hospital. The buggies had been paid for out of profits from the hospital coffeeshop. I noticed other white haired volunteers, wearing white coats, with their names pinned on and it still makes me feel good to think of them all.

From Mrs E Buxton. Budleigh Salterton. Devon.

Mrs Kaye Holmes has written from West Vancouver. She sends her greetings to anyone who knew her, especially Kathleen Halpin. She recalls memories of Christmas 1945 on the troopship "Empress of Australia" with about 30 other WVS on board.

She writes "A war widow, unable to settle down, I had joined the WVS and was sent to South East Asia Command. The ship was full of RAF and there were wives and children too. We were determined that the children would have Christmas stockings, so we saved our chocolate rations, apples, oranges and anything we could scrounge from the crew and made up Christmas stockings.

Somehow a tree appeared and we made paper chains from a motley array of paper. The captain also produced small gifts to add to the stockings. In the early hours of Christmas morning we retired to our bunks and dreamed of wide-eyed children round the tree. But I never did see them, nor have my Christmas dinner. I was so terribly homesick for my family that I spent the whole day on my bunk crying and sleeping.

Mrs Holmes says she still does the job she has done for 14 years, working once each week on the front desk of the Seniors Activities Centre in West Vancouver, selling memberships, registering members for courses, trips and outings and keeping all the records on computer.. They have a membership of 4,000, with eight paid staff and 700 volunteers”.

From Mrs Kaye Holmes. Canada

A sad but happy tale

During the sad task of sorting the flowers and gifts, in the aftermath of the Princess of Wales’ death, a petite Chinese lady asked to see me personally and proceeded to say she had brought “presents”. Out of an enormous bag she handed me jars of Chinese honey, peanut butter, Chinese jam, a huge lump of cheese , a long fruit cake and a bag of nuts.

I thanked her warmly and she said she would come again tomorrow with more, but I assured her that this was plenty and not to bring more.

I put the pile on the centre table and invited my team of 40 to take some home when they left. This they did and we ate the remainder of the nuts, in the car on the journey home.

Next morning a colleague phoned me. It had just dawned on him that it was possible that the food was not intended for us at all, but for the “spirits”, an old Chinese custom. I am sure the Princess would have been amused by our mistake. It was a less serious note at a very sad time when WRVS teams worked tirelessly and with heavy hearts.

From Peggy O’Brien. Area Emergency Services Manager Essex, Kent and SE London

Recipe

Bakestones. (no oven needed)

8 oz S.R. Flour)

pinch salt) sieved together

1 teasp mixed spice)

2 oz margarine

2 oz lard

3 oz caster sugar

3 oz currants

1 teaspoon syrup

1 egg

Rub fat into dry ingredients, add sugar and currants. Mix to fairly stiff dough with egg and syrup mixed together. Roll out on floured board to 1/4 inch thick and cut into rounds with 1 to 2 inch cutter. Heat a lightly greased griddle, (I used a large thick frying pan. Ed.) to medium hot and cook cakes in batches until lightly browned on both sides but slightly soft in middle. Dust with sugar. Eat while warm but will keep for 10 days in tin. Makes 20 to 30 cakes.

From Marjory Brown. York

Some WRVS Celebrations in Diamond Jubilee Year 1998.

- all Association members are invited

7th June Service at Carlisle Cathedral

Contact Mrs Heap.

10th June Meeting at Beamish Open Air Museum

Admittance £3.

Tickets from Div. Office

7th August Flower Festival.

St Oswald's Church Filey.

Contact Mrs J. Smith

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