

The Gossip

HORNTON

Issue Number 14



SUMMER

1994

Hornton School News

At the end of this academic year, we look back on an action packed term which has been both successful and enjoyable.

All the children worked hard on the musical production of 'Hamelin Town' which was performed in May. Although it was hard work, it was very rewarding and a video was made, so that the children may look back on themselves in years to come!

Both classes have been on educational visits - the infants to the Butterfly Farm at Stratford and the juniors to the Canal Museum at Stoke Bruerne. The highlight of the junior trip was the boat trip through Blisworth Tunnel, which the children thoroughly enjoyed but which un-nerved certain members of staff!

The children have also been taking part in various sporting events at the Warriner School and 4 children from our school, David Quinney, Peter Whitehead, Clare Connor and Nathan Harwood will represent the Warriner Partnership School at the Area Athletics competition next week - well done those children.

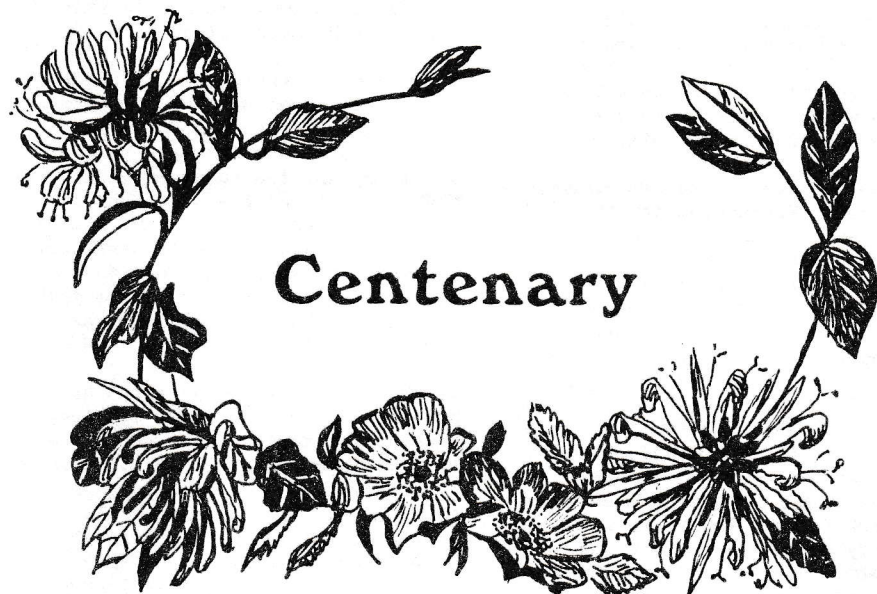
The school association held a highly successful Summer Fete which raised in excess of £800.00 and at which 'Mr. Blobby' delighted the children with his antics.

6 children will transfer to the Warriner School at the end of the term. They are James Hannah, David Quinney, Amy Hinton, Ellen Pople, Andrew Sheppard and Peter Whitehead. We wish them all the very best of luck for the future.

WMAELHnd

noticeboard

The Parish Council have obtained a grant from Cherwell District Council to re-new the Parish Noticeboard. Tenders are invited for this project and specifications are available from the clerk Tel: 670507.



Centenary

This year we celebrate the 100th birthday of Parish Councils throughout the land.

The local Government Act 1894 converted urban and rural sanitary districts (which had been set up in 1875) into urban and district councils. In rural areas the control of parish property such as village greens and allotments were transferred to the new Parish Councils. They were also given other powers such as to provide 'public walks and pleasure grounds' and above all, they had the right to raise money by levying a rate.

In 1894 Hornton boasted several public houses, at least one shop, a baker, a butcher and various trades such as builders, blacksmith, undertaker and dressmaker, not forgetting the school which made it self sufficient. Its main industry was quarrying and farming and transport was by horse or on foot. Life was at a slower pace.

In the last century rural life has changed dramatically, and Parish Councils have taken on more

duties in line with the changing environment. They have given their time and very often their labour, to make Hornton the beautiful village it is today.

Today's Parish Council will be celebrating the achievements of the special people who have served Hornton so well, on Sunday August 28th. There will be a service of thanksgiving at the Parish Church at 11 a.m. (all villagers are welcome to attend this special service). Invitations have been sent to past Parish Council members and close relatives of Parish Councillors who have long since died to attend this service. These special guests will then be entertained to lunch at the Pavilion as a small thank you for what they have done for Hornton over the years.

At approximately 4.30 p.m. there will be a barbeque for everyone and special entertainment (watch noticeboard for details). The Parish Council hope that you will be able to come along and help them celebrate their special year.

CHURCHES TOGETHER

By Arthur Miles

It is hard to believe that twenty years or more have passed since our Ecumenical Meetings first began. One recalls the happy times of fellowship, resulting from our united meetings, conveniently held in the Church room. Our thanks to Mr. Harold Hart for all his help in this. The aim has been to bring Christians of all denominations together. Our joint services have been well supported, with our United Sunday School taking a leading part, which has been very encouraging. With the growing need for closer relationships, joint meetings are being arranged with members of the Church and Chapel. Much is in the melting pot (to coin a phrase). We look for your continued support, together with God's guidance, in our endeavours for his kingdom.

Our sincere thanks to our many speakers who have so willingly given their services in our monthly meetings.

The calendar of forth coming events will shortly be available. ●



Sponsored bike ride on Saturday 10th September from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. in aid of The Historic Churches Trust. Sponsorship forms are available from Julie Stanley, Langway, Bell Street.

COME & SING

You are all invited to attend the Open Air Service at the Sports Field on Sunday August 14th at 2.30 p.m. the Salvation Army will be providing the music and the Sunday School will also be there. There will be refreshments after the service.

PERSONAL OPINION

Dear Editor,

I am one of the many young people in this village who think that we are the only group, aged between 11 and 16 years, who are not properly catered for.

There is not much going on for us in the village, unlike younger children who have many things such as the Playpark, Brownies, Cubs, Sports teams, Sunday School and other organised things to do during the summer holidays.

I know that there used to be a successful Youth Club in the village once and wondered if maybe someone would be willing to run something similar. We could meet to listen to music, chat, play pool or darts etc. We could perhaps compete against other Youth Clubs and go on trips too.

If someone would be willing to take us on for even one evening a week it would give us something to look forward to and we would be very happy. I am sure our parents would be so pleased that they would probably volunteer to help out occasionally too!

Yours hopefully,
Laura Hemmings (aged 14)

Yes, there was a Youth Club which was held in the Pavilion on a Friday evening. The equipment i.e. table tennis tables, pool table, dart board and record/cassette player are still there ready for when enough young people wish to resume Youth Club. There is also a bank account which the Parish Clerk has charge of at the moment. So if anyone over 21 years would like to take on the leadership of the Youth Club or are interested in helping out please contact Julie Stanley. (tel: 670507) ●

Due to limited space in 'The Gossip' it would be appreciated if letters could be of no more than 400 words in length.

CHURCH GIFT DAY

Saturday September 10th
10 a.m. - 12 noon

People or Property

Recently we had a letter delivered from the proposed 'Hornton Conservation Society', expressing its concern in the way "Hornton Village" was going to be irrevocably damaged by the building of low cost houses and the inability of the Parish Council to handle the needs of "Hornton Village".

I believe all the people of Hornton owe a great deal of thanks to the tireless work that the Parish Council have done over the years, and in my opinion they always have the interests of the people of Hornton at heart. They have sought to make decisions to the benefit of the whole community for now and future generations, for surely this is what the housing of today is for, our children?

If the 'Conservation Society' had been formed 20 - 30 years ago, how many of the families who now enjoy this village would not have had the opportunity to do so? Even then this was an attractive unspoilt village and I am sure it could have been argued that more houses would impose on the other residents and spoil their views, encroach on their privacy etc.

Amenities such as the small playing field, the Pavilion and sports field with new car park, were all ideas from people of Hornton and the Parish Council were instrumental in their development, building and continued active support to maintain them, and again the whole village benefits. After living in Hornton for over 30 years, it is my opinion that the village is as it is because of the people not the houses. Hornton people have created over many years a special village, a village with a heart, people who work together to put on the many activities we all enjoy so much. In this day and age of continued strife between communities, this is an environment we should protect.

"Hornton village" is a beautiful village but it's the people that count. The school does need more children. The village does need more young families to continue the vibrant active life we enjoy here. Do we really need a 'Conservation Society' working against the Parish Council, when I'm sure the Society only has the good of the village in mind.

Consolidation not confrontation.

Kevin Wain

about 50 miles from Baghdad. This station was partly occupied by American servicemen whom we never saw although we saw their films. The camp was very large with cinemas, churches, shops, taxis, sheep, water purifier plant etc. There was a lake just outside the camp. One of our airmen swimming there, caught a turtle by putting his hand on its back and turning it upside down to carry it to the mess kitchen.

The churches were partly constructed with HORNTON STONE a pleasant sight to see and to attend church on Sunday was a big relief from military life on other days.

Outside the station was a signpost to England 3280 miles, to put anyone off the notion of setting off for home on their own. Having been at Habaniya about 1 year, I was then posted to Arabia, a much hotter country about 126 - 30 degrees Fahrenheit. 'Workday' for many, was at night-time, with flying beetles as big as small birds. Sandfly fever was a common complaint. A visit to the local doctor resulted in his local and only treatment, a glassful of salt and water.

During my stay in the Middle East I was able to visit Palestine (it's Israel now). The Jews certainly knew which part of the world to call their home. A lovely area to live. The Jews work well to make it good, different to the Arabs who are there as well. They only sit about in circles, burning lice and bugs from their clothing as they probably have done for centuries.

I went to Jerusalem and Bethlehem and stood at the spot where Jesus Christ was born and walked up Mount Carmel and visited Jaffa, the Gardens of Babylon and the Tower of Babel. I saw the Dead Sea and went inside the Pyramids of Egypt and stayed a weekend in Baghdad. I saw the Euphrates and Tigris and Nile rivers as well as many other places.

December 1945 we returned home via the Med. in the same ship that we went out on. Having spent another 11 days afloat using my boots as a pillow and keeping my overcoat on, choosing to sleep on the open deck, we disembarked at Toulon in the South of France. Since there were no beds we walked the streets all night till the train journey North to Dieppe, then a rough channel crossing to Harwich. Then to the demobilisation centre at Wolverhampton and arrived home at Christmas.

In 1946 a generous monetary gift was awarded to all village servicemen and women, which was very much appreciated by all those villagers who did so much hard work for the war effort away from home. ●

PEACHTREE PLAYGROUP

By Jane Wain

Peachtree Playgroup first began over four years ago, using the newly renovated Old School House and in that time has moved from strength to strength.

Beginning with only two sessions per week with mainly village children, we now have four sessions weekly with children from Horley, Hanwell and Banbury. Starting with just the building and no equipment whatsoever, a committee of willing volunteers, fund raised and begged donations from various sources and we slowly began to build a good stock of toys and equipment so vital for the pre-school years. Now with the aid of different committee members over the years and many fund raising events we have some really excellent facilities including sand pit, water trough, climbing frame, slide, seesaw, trampoline and dolls house to mention just a few, and on sunny days the children enjoy using the playground to ride on bicycles and tractors.

Children can learn so much from a playgroup environment and it is an excellent way to begin the transition from playgroup to "big" school. We work very closely with the Primary School. The older children even go across to school to share T.V. time one afternoon, and the children who have now started school from playgroup do so with the added confidence of knowing their teacher and classroom well. Playgroups can offer lots of learning experiences through play, especially social skills, learning to share, leaving Mum and the first steps to becoming independent. At each session we offer a variety of different activities, with painting, sand and floor toys always on offer, along with a quieter book corner with puzzles and games. Milk or juice and biscuits are provided mid-way through the session, followed by story time, then a change of equipment or outside play if fine. We always end the session with singing or dancing and the children often leave clutching their offerings of art work to take home! We also make use of the kitchen to have baking sessions regularly.

Peachtree Playgroup has a staff of two. The Supervisor Mrs. Jane Wain who is an N.N.E.B. and Mrs. Jane Slade who has a City and Guilds Diploma in childcare. Each session has a maximum of 12 children with a mother helping on a rota system (a ratio of one adult to four children). We take children at the start of the term when they are 3 years old, and our sessions are Mondays from 1.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m., Tuesdays from 9.15 a.m. to 12 noon, and Fridays from 9.15 a.m. to 12 noon and 1.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m. We welcome visitors at anytime or any enquiries can be made to Jane Wain on 670676. ●

EVACUEE TEACHERS

By Winifred Baker

The deep snow of that January was a great joy to us personally, when once we had arrived back at the Stanley household each afternoon. We remember walking through the woods enchanted by the scene all around. Toboggans were unearthed and put to good use down the famous Civil War's battlefield slopes. The local young folk were all there and so were we - soon joined by our soldier friends from the Radway Camp.

Whilst at Edgehill we were invited to attend a number of local activities in that area. We helped in a Boys Club and taught them how to play "Black Magic". There was a Young Farmers Club held at Westcott House which at that time was a Residential Nursery, so we became 'Young Farmers'! One of us bravely volunteered to give a talk on 'Art', which went down very well. There was a Talent Night and we composed and presented an 'ode' on our, then "up to date evacuation" experiences which poem, by the way, we still possess - forty-eight years on!

There were village dances at Ratley Village Hall and we well remember a Grand Concert there. We watched very good dancing by a Ballet School from Banbury. One of our Pioneer Corps friends, Q.M. Sgt. Harrold Pollard volunteered and played a Beethoven Sonata. We thought he was very good too. The concert ended with a community sing-song of current War time melodies and a big vote of thanks and rounds of applause to all the performers and organisers. We expect the proceeds went to a War charity.

Coming back late one snowy night from a Ratley dance we discovered we had an Italian P.O.W. visitor! Phyllis Stanley was with us and on coming in, had closed the chicken-run door and shut him in! He soon got out - came up the side steps, propped a nearby toboggan against the wall and climbed up. We two had heard strange, scuffling noises outside our bedroom, we then saw a head appear over the curtain. We fled for help! Poor Mr Stanley was rudely awakened by his daughter. Pulling on his trousers, he went outside on to the verandah calling "If there's anyone there come out!" Dead silence! No movement or answer to the summons - so we all went to bed. In the morning however, the man's tell tale foot prints in the snow told Mr Stanley "Those girl's hadn't imagined it after all!" We were told later, the wandering P.O.W. was captured elsewhere, whilst doing more night exploring! Poor chap - lonely we expect!

P.T.O.

Banbury was still our goal on Saturdays. We two caught the early bus from Edgehill now. The mornings were spent 'having hair done', visiting banks and various shops, then on to Brown's for our lunch. In the afternoons we were often met by Phyllis and her friend Enid - and several friends in the Pioneer Corps. Sometimes we would all have tea and Banbury cakes at a teashop near the actual Banbury Cross. The Regal cinema matinee sometimes tempted us. We remember seeing "A Song to Remember", Chopin's life story - we girls all wept! Often there was a mad tear-away rush down through the streets to catch the precious 'last bus' at 5 p.m. We don't think we ever missed that one. Oh! To be able to run like that again!

One especially memorable Saturday a party of us went to Oxford instead - to meet relatives of Harold Pollard. First we had to cycle into Banbury to catch the train. Our main visit was to Magdalen College Preparatory School where the choristers lived. A son of one of Harold's relatives was a choral pupil and, poor boy, he was detailed to show this motley group of adults around. Naturally we two, as was, and is, our wont, saw the funny side of this tour - especially when we all trooped through the dormitories and saw the blue rimmed enamel 'chamber pots' under each bed. We kept quite 'mum' during the actual tour - with difficulty, we can now admit! The whole party had lunch at one of the old Oxford inns and afterwards visited other interesting 'sights'. After tea in the store which is now Lewis's, we departed for the station. It was a tired party of cyclists, who arrived back at our homes and camps that night.

At the beginning of the Summer Term we moved on to a third "evacuee" home with Viscount Bearstead's stud groom - Mr. W. Sears and his wife at Upton House Stables. Again we were exceedingly well cared for. Mrs Sears was a professional cook and her Gooseberry Fool - made with cream from the Jersey herd was a dessert quite out of this world. Mr. Sears had a cat which caught young rabbits, which she then presented to Mr. Sears for his approval. We seem to remember he ate these, fried for his breakfast!

There was a special 'annual' day, whilst we were at Upton House. It was the day for 'rook shooting' and we believe it was May 1st. The de-feathered rooks were then soaked in milk for twenty four hours and then 'baked in a pie' so reminiscent of the old Nursery Rhyme. We wonder if those blackbirds were really 'rooks' and if this tradition is still kept up at Upton? It all tasted very good to us that day anyway!

On Saturday afternoons that summer, we played tennis on 'The Teashop' court. The weather always seemed to be fine and the tennis was good. An American tournament was arranged and one of us, Winifred, won the Women's Singles and Tino Pastor of the Pioneer Corps, the Men's. There was always afternoon tea provided at the tennis court. Perhaps we bought it at The Teashop - one just forgets these things.

At least two visits were made to Stratford-On-Avon that early Summer. On the first occasion, after unsuccessful enquiries about trains at Kington, we set off from there to continue our journey by bicycle. Except for military vehicles, there was very little road traffic, so cycling was much easier - and we were young! We met our Pioneer Corps friends in the afternoon and enjoyed the sights of Stratford - our first time there ever. Two visits were made to the Memorial Theatre. We saw 'She Stoops to Conquer' and 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'. There was no need to book seats then and we sat in the mid-theatre stalls. We have no recollections as to the casts. Probably the well known actors of the day were in the Forces! A trip on the river was memorable too. Miss Sibthorp's school friend at the Brentwood Ursuline Convent was Mrs 'Sonny' Rose - so we probably had free trips. One pair ventured up the river in a canoe and the remainder in punts. No one fell in. We then all cycled down the Shipston Road for tea at the Rose's home - where Miss Sibthorp's parents joined us. There was one unforgettable cycle ride back to Upton. Whilst walking up that steep hill we saw our very first glow-worms. The bank literally 'glowed' with their soft greenish lights - never to be seen again, there - or anywhere else now, we fear.

World War II with all its national and international devastation was coming to an end. This account has dealt only with around six months of our personal lives in the comparative peace of an Oxfordshire village. Accomplished professional writers have written countless articles and books on the history of those terrible six years of war. Millions suffered the loss of loved ones. We too, were personally involved in this tragedy! Cousins and the boys we went to school with, were killed, 'missing' and wounded. Their faces and names are still part of our memories of those tragic days.

Looking back now, we recall the sense of unreality which permeated our thoughts in those days of late April and early May 1945. Radio and the press were our only News Channels then. Hornton, Edgehill and Upton wirelasses were constantly 'tuned in' we know, to hear the 'glad tidings'.

May 8th was announced to us all as the official VE Day and there were to be two days of national thanksgiving and rejoicing. All schools were to be closed, so we and the children would be free!

The 'leaders' on such occasions rose up and Hornton folk joined the rest of the country in celebratory red, white and blue ribbons and feasting. Many of our readers will remember vividly those days of 1945 and Hornton's rejoicings.

As we lived out of the village and had no definite parts to play, we chose to stay at Upton. The weather was superb and we decided to picnic in the lovely grounds of Upton House. Mrs Sears and the Radway Pioneer Camp provided ample food and drink. We remember arraying ourselves with red, white and blue belts and rosettes - one of us still has her belt! We wandered around the Temple Pool and watched the antics of many water creatures. Talked and ate and drank - and talked again! All of us were aware in that quiet spot, we're sure, of the great silence which had descended over Europe. We had no knowledge then of the grim events taking place in Berlin. Our picnics are forever recorded in fading black and white 'snaps'.

School started again after these two days of rejoicing. There was a different feeling in the air and in our hearts. We knew we would soon be leaving Hornton and its school, Miss Thompson and all the children. We were soon called back by the Essex Education Authority. There were sad farewells - we expect we wept! Our stay at Hornton had been continually happy and we hope somewhat educationally successful too.

Olga Sibthorp and Quartermaster Sergeant Harold Pollard were married in June 1946 and set up their first home in Essex. Winifred Baker went back to teach in Essex and then out to Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and became an Education Lecturer in Bulawayo's Teacher Training College. Our other Pioneer Corps friends were 'demobbed', one went up North and two, finally, back to Spain.

Our "Hornton" friendships have continued all through the years, including the now late Mr. and Mrs Percy Stanley and Mr. and Mrs Will Sears, Mr. and Mrs Miles - Arthur and Phyllis. Our "evacuee teacher" adventure, starting nearly fifty years ago, is still part of our lives and those Hornton children and people have a special place in our hearts forever.

T H E E N D

POSTSCRIPT Sadly Tino Pastor died this Spring.

Affordable Housing

By Edie Szep - Cherwell Housing Trust

Having attended the Parish Council Annual General Meeting on 27th June, 1994 and read the articles and letters which have been circulated about a possible scheme for Hornton, I thought it might be helpful if I put Cherwell Housing Trust's involvement to date into proper perspective and clarified some of the "facts" which have been circulated.

Cherwell Housing Trust is a charitable housing association established in 1967 which provides homes for rent for people on low incomes who cannot afford to compete in the private market. It is a not-for-profit organisation which undertakes housing schemes to meet specific identified needs. It is not a private developer and works within the confines of the local authority's (i.e. the District Council's) housing strategy, local plan policies and established planning criteria. Cherwell Housing Trust does not sell its rented housing. Its policy is to retain it for all time so that it will continue to benefit those most in need of it.

Through its sister housing association, Cherwell Family Housing Association, it also does low cost home ownership schemes, known as "Shared Ownership" for those who wish to move onto the home ownership ladder but cannot afford to obtain a mortgage to buy property outright. Shared ownership contains a mechanism called "staircasing". This permits people who can only afford to buy, say, 25% of the equity (or value) of the property at the outset to buy additional shares of equity at a later stage, if they can afford to do so. In rural affordable housing schemes there is a restriction on such staircasing. People are only permitted to buy up to 85% of the equity, thus ensuring that these affordable low-cost home ownership homes are also retained to meet the needs of the local people in future.

It is, therefore, not accurate to say that Cherwell Housing Trust "has no facilities for wholly rented units" (indeed, 86% of our total housing stock is wholly for rent), nor is it true that "if built, the units could go the way of similar unfortunate schemes and be purchased by outsiders".

The statement that "Cherwell apparently favours new-build schemes only" is also inaccurate. 40% of Cherwell's housing stock is "rehab", i.e. rehabilitated or converted older existing buildings. Existing houses in Hornton are, by common agreement, very expensive and are therefore likely not to be affordable to young people from the village. It is for this reason that Cherwell is unlikely to be able to do a rehab. scheme in the village. New building is generally much less expensive and particularly so if inexpensive land can be part of the equation.

This does not mean that the character of the village would be spoilt. The planning authority would determine what would be in keeping with Hornton's character, in terms of the size or scale of any development, its location, and the building materials. Planning Agreements will contain covenants about who can be housed (i.e. people from the village itself or neighbouring parishes).

As to a possible scheme in Hornton, many numbers have been mentioned, both in terms of the number of homes that might be built and the cost. We have mentioned something between 2 and 10 homes because this is typical of what has been permitted elsewhere under planning policies for rural housing and is likely to represent the level of need/demand locally. I was asked the average cost of a two-bedroom house and mentioned £55,000 (land and building costs), but this is a general average across all of our developments and includes land at full market value.

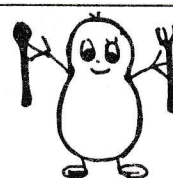
The exact number of homes and their cost will depend on the outcome of our questionnaire (the second survey questionnaire will

be circulated shortly) and the availability and price of suitable land. Suitability and need will be determined by villagers.

Our discussions and visits with the Parish Council have been entirely concerned with those two issues and certainly have not been secretive or privileged information. Equally, no decisions have yet been taken on either issue nor will any conclusion or decision be arrived at without full discussion and consultation with people in the village. I undertook to do that at your Annual General Meeting and the Parish Council are firmly committed to it.

Cherwell Housing Trust has no interest in developing housing schemes that are not needed or are not affordable (whether rented or shared ownership or a combination of the two) for people in Hornton village. We have no designs on particular pieces of land, small or large, and no expansionist motives. Our most recent visit was not a "site visit", but was specifically to finalise the second questionnaire. We did, however, also have a very enjoyable walk round the village to get an idea of the size and scope of the village "envelope", its landscape and special characteristics and ownership of land in and around the village.

We are looking forward to many more meetings with people in the village to see whether together we can provide viable and affordable homes for the people of Hornton, whether young or old, single people or families.



SPUD LUNCH

MONDAY AUGUST 15TH

AT THE PAVILION

12 NOON - 2 P.M.

FOR PAVILION FUNDS

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Gordon Ingram David Jarrett

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The Children's Playground Committee will be holding a COFFEE MORNING ON SATURDAY AUGUST 20TH AT 10.30 A.M. in the Playing Field (Church room if wet) to raise money for their funds.

HELP! It seems we have a MOLE problem in the playing field. Can anyone offer any solutions? All ideas welcome.

Travelling on from Syria through to the Jordan valley which was a very pleasant and quiet experience. It may have been this part of the journey where the train driver stopped the engine to get some hot water from the boiler to make some tea which everyone welcomed and enjoyed. On to our destination, Habaniya an Air Station in Iraq