

Leisure Magazine of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Research Group and Associated Organisations

3p

Harlequin



**In this
issue**

THE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE – ART EXHIBITION
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR – CHRISTMAS 1915
PROTECT YOUR TOWN'S HERITAGE – GOLF – LONG SERVICE, ETC.

DECEMBER 1975

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COVER PICTURE

SOME RECENT COLLEGE LEAVERS WHO HAVE JOINED HARWELL FOR TYPING/SECRETARIAL SUPPORT. IN WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL YEAR — SEE PAGE 6 — IT IS FITTING TO RECORD THAT SOME YOUNG LADIES WHO BEGAN IN THIS FIELD HAVE RISEN TO HIGHER EXECUTIVE RESPONSIBILITY, WHILE OTHERS HAVE ALSO ADVANCED IN THE SCIENTIFIC FIELD.

From left to right: Jenny Bellinger, Angie Miles, Nickie Hutchinson, Tricia Johanson, Liz Davies, Debbie Mills.

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... FROM

THE DIRECTOR

You might say that 1975 was the year Harwell 'came out'. It was this year for the first time that we were able to put our hands on our hearts and tell the world that half of our total income came from work done for outside bodies. Furthermore, names such as Fluidyne, the nuclear heart pacemaker, the thermomechanical generator and HARVEST became almost household words in the scientific press. There are many other areas of our industrial programme which are great money earners for Harwell - such as the HTFS service, the Chemical Emergency Centre, and the NDT Centre. One of the most promising new developments is the protein recovery technique which is also beginning to receive attention in the press. I am delighted with the giant strides made by the industrial programme this year and I am firmly convinced we need to maintain and develop this programme alongside our major responsibilities for nuclear power. At present it is for our nuclear work that we are world famous. 'A nuclear laboratory' is the label that the average person might attach to Harwell when asked what we do and one of our objectives is to promote our industrial programme without losing out on the prestige that we enjoy from our high reputation in the nuclear field.

As the home of the Government's Energy Technology Support Unit we also have an important role to play in assessing alternative sources of energy for the United Kingdom - such as wave and tidal power, solar and wind power for the future. Although they will only make a minimal contribution in this century they may have a major role to play in the next, when the North Sea oil and gas reserves begin to run down and we have to rely more upon man's inventions and resourcefulness for our energy supplies.

In short, Harwell is a laboratory that cannot be put in any narrow classification; we are a nuclear laboratory, we are an industrially oriented and innovative laboratory, we are a trusted and respected agent of Government policy in a number of fields - energy and marine technology in particular. All this makes Harwell a busy and exciting place to work and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff who have helped to make all this work the success it is.

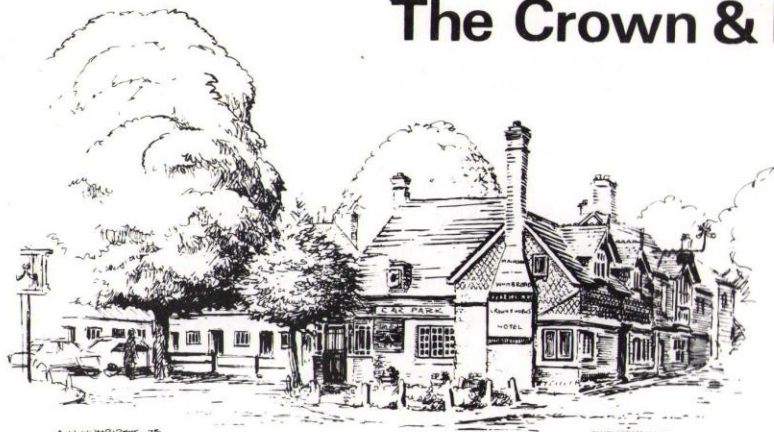
As many of you know, I have travelled abroad a great deal this year, probably more than any other year and it is very pleasing to note how well known the laboratory is outside our own country. You will have read that we have signed an agreement with Iran to advise them on a programme for their research centre in Tehran and also to train their staff in some of Harwell's techniques. This means that these staff will be spending some considerable time on site and I am sure we will all welcome them here. We have also signed a similar agreement with Kuwait on training and we will therefore be receiving their staff on site also.

It only remains for me now to congratulate you all on such a successful year and to persuade you to do even better next year! My wife, Ann, joins me in wishing you and your families a very happy Christmas and New Year.

Walter Marshall

The Crown & Horns

East Ilsley



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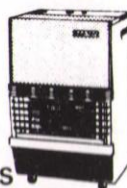
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aere art exhibition

1975



"Innocents Framed and Hung"

In spite of all our photographers' skills, our illustrations are but pale shadows of the originals. However, they do serve to show that once again the Harwell Artists have had a busy and successful year. Not so many exhibitors this year; there were some notable omissions which we hope the culprits will make up for next time.

We gave pride of place to Colin Scott-Kestin, whose picture of Shelducks (illustrated) was much admired and caused some to wonder why he chose science, rather than the arts, for his daily bread!

Those who visited the exhibition may have been startled by some nude studies, which we decided not to illustrate here out of consideration for readers who may be less than robust when it comes to art appreciation.

As usual Jessie Mole showed a couple of very attractive portraits, and there is no doubt how she will be spending her forthcoming retirement.

Geoff Best, who has organised the show for the last few years, has both extended his shop-window genre (perhaps an artistic expression spilling over from his work in Marketing and Sales) and taken up glass engraving with considerable success. Geoff is now giving up the organisation of the Art Show, and our thanks are due to him for his patient work on our behalf over the past years. He tells us that Culham is neither a cultural desert nor tremendously far-flung, but just too far away for him to be able to make the arrangements in future. Barrie Dale will be taking over now and looks forward to a busy time at next year's show.

All in all, a high standard, and a successful show which brought in £31 for the Guide Dogs for the Blind.

P.R. Orman
Marketing & Sales Department.

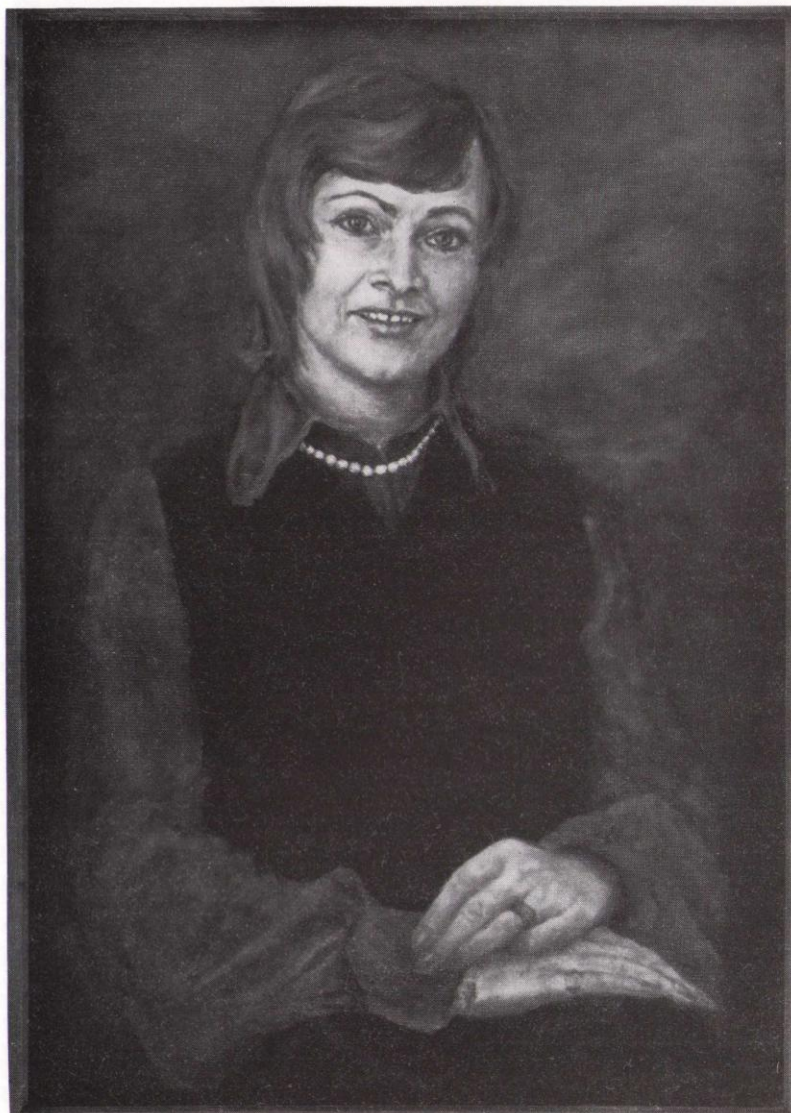


SHELDUCKS

C. Scott-Kestin

MELANIE

Jessie Mole



International Women's Year

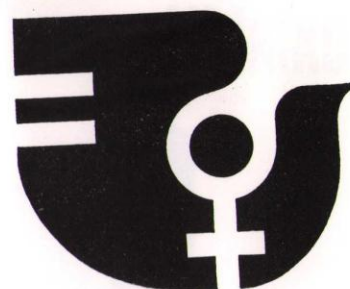
The UN General Assembly resolution designating 1975 as International Women's Year set three main goals:

TO PROMOTE equality between men and women.

TO ENSURE the full integration of women in the total development effort, especially by emphasising women's responsibility in economic, social and cultural development at national, regional and international levels.

TO RECOGNISE the importance of women's increasing contribution to the development of friendly relations and co-operation among states and to the strengthening of world peace.

This symbol consists of the dove of peace, the female sex symbol and the sign for equality.



Milestones towards Emancipation

- 1901 **FRANCE.** On a motion by socialist deputy René Viviani, the French parliament discusses women's right to vote for the first time.
- NORWAY.** Women begin to vote in municipal elections.
- 1903. **UNITED KINGDOM.** Emmeline Pankhurst founds the National Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU).
- 1904 **UNITED STATES.** International Woman Suffrage Alliance founded.
- 1905 **UNITED KINGDOM.** Feminist meeting in Manchester: Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst arrested.
- 1906 **FINLAND.** Women granted the right to vote.
- 1908 **UNITED KINGDOM.** Establishment of the Women's Freedom League. Feminist demonstrations at the Albert Hall and Hyde Park. Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst and Flora Drummond jailed after Trafalgar Square meeting.
- 1910 **DENMARK.** At the second World Congress of Socialist Women in Copenhagen, Clara Zetkin proposes that March 8 should be chosen as International Women's Day to commemorate the New York women textile workers' strike (March 8, 1857).
- 1911 **JAPAN.** Creation of the Seito Sha women's liberation movement.
- 1912 **CHINA.** Several feminist organizations meet in Nanking on January 22, to form an alliance to co-ordinate their activities. They demand equal rights with men and present a petition to Sun Yat-sen, President of the Chinese Republic, on May 20.
- 1913 **NORWAY.** Equal voting rights achieved by women.
- GERMAN, AUSTRIA, SWITZERLAND, DENMARK.** March 8, women celebrate International Women's Day, demanding the right to vote and to be elected.
- 1914 **TURKEY.** First faculty for girl students created at Istanbul University.
- 1915 **SWEDEN.** The writer Ellen Key demands that information on birth control be made available and welfare provisions be made for unmarried mothers.
- 1917 **NETHERLANDS and RUSSIA.** Women obtain the vote.
- SOVIET RUSSIA.** The October Revolution proclaims and the first Soviet Constitution (1918) confirms the political, economic and cultural equality of women.
- 1918 **UNITED KINGDOM.** Women over 30 get the vote and the right to sit in Parliament.
- 1919 **GERMANY and CZECHOSLOVAKIA.** Women given the vote.
- 1920 **UNITED STATES.** Women obtain the vote in all States.
- 1923 **LATIN AMERICA.** On April 26, a historic resolution on women's rights is adopted during the fifth International Conference of American States in Santiago, Chile.
- TURKEY.** Spectacular progress towards women's emancipation follows Kemal Ataturk's election as President.
- 1925 **JAPAN.** Women are excluded from the "universal" suffrage bill voted by the Diet on March 30. This sparks off the rise of a Japanese feminist movement.
- 1928 **LATIN AMERICA.** Inter-American Women's Commission set up during the sixth International Conference of American States in Havana.
- 1929 **ECUADOR.** Women obtain the vote.
- 1932 **SPAIN.** The Republican Constitution grants voting rights to women.
- 1934 **FRANCE.** International congress of women for the struggles against Fascism and war held in Paris.
- 1936 **FRANCE.** Three women, including Nobel Prizewinning physicist Irène Joliot-Curie, enter Léon Blum's Popular Front government although women still not entitled to vote.
- 1945 **FRANCE and ITALY.** Vote extended to women.
- 1946 **JAPAN.** Six women elected to the Diet.
- 1951 **INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION.** On June 19, the I.L.O. adopts the Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for work of equal value.
- 1952 **UNITED NATIONS.** December 20: United Nations General Assembly adopts Convention on the Political Rights of Women by a big majority.
- 1957 **TUNISIA.** A new law affirms equality of men's and women's civil rights.
- 1959 **CEYLON (now Sri Lanka).** Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike becomes the world's first woman prime minister.
- 1961 **PARAGUAY** grants voting rights to women. Women can now vote throughout Latin America.
- 1962 **ALGERIA.** Thirteen women deputies elected to the National Assembly.
- 1964 **PAKISTAN.** For the first time a woman, Miss Fatimah Jinnah, stands as a candidate in the presidential election.
- 1967 **IRAN.** The "Family Protection Law" allows women to work without their husbands' authorization. Iranian women had been forbidden to wear the veil since 1963.
- 1971 **SWITZERLAND.** Women get the vote.
- 1975 **UNITED NATIONS.** International Women's Year.

Christmas 1915



"MACHINE GUNNER 1914-1918"

by C.E. CRUTCHEY

Published by Bailey Bros and Swinfen
Folkestone, £4.75

This is an extremely well-edited book compiled from the accounts of survivors, officers and men, who served in the front lines with their machine guns during the dreadful years 1914-1918. It gives a vivid picture of the ghastly conditions which prevailed, of the hardship and suffering in the various battles and actions. It pays a fitting tribute to the Machine Gun Corps and the Regimental Machine Gunners in particular, and reminds us of the great price that had to be paid at this time in history for the preservation of liberty.

J.F.A.M.

Many awful episodes are high-lighted, but we have selected one which gave light relief in the Christmas of 60 years ago.

One machine-gunner relates how as a front-line soldier serving on the Western Front he was one of only a small percentage able to spend Christmas in billets:

I was in the machine-gun section on the 11th Inniskillings, 36th Ulster Division, attached to 'B' Company. On Christmas Eve, 1915, we were relieved at 8 p.m. and marched through the mud down Jacob's Ladder, from the old cemetery on the left of Beaumont Hamel, to the main Martinsart-Asnex road.

Transport was awaiting us, we were told, and the messenger would guide us to our temporary billets. So off we set and in due course all were billeted in barns, etc., except our machine-gun section and about 26 men of 6 platoon. We were marched on, and eventually arrived at a cluster of houses and a very large barn attached to a farmyard complete with pond. We were very tired, but not too tired to notice that there were seven ducks swimming on the pond. After a drum-up (tea) very soon all was quiet, so six of us slipped out of the billet, and quickly captured the seven ducks, silenced them, and safely deposited them until the morning.

Reveille on Christmas morning was not by bugle, but by the Frenchman (late owner of the ducks) and he was making some noise. A chap in our machine-gun section could speak French like a Frenchie, so he held a discussion with the farmer and tried to

calm him down. It was no use. 'I am going straight to the General,' said the irate farmer. I noticed that the Frenchman was smoking an empty pipe, so I filled his pipe and he quietened down a little. It was then I remembered that we had a platoon issue of tobacco in our gun limbers, but nobody would smoke it as it appeared to be made of rubber cuttings and weeds, and when smoked left a smell around like a blacksmith shoeing a horse. I nipped down to transport lines, got a tin of this vile tobacco and offered it as a peace-offering to the French farmer. He opened the tin, carefully examined the contents, and then gleefully accepted the gift.

In a few moments we had collected the entire stock of issue tobacco (about 40 4 oz. tins) and handed them over. So great was the farmer's satisfaction that he decided to consign the General—who was to be his ally—to warmer climes. Off he went and was soon back with about 10 stone of potatoes, several turnips, a crate of honey and a barrel of French cider. The seven ducks were roasted in clay castings, and what a Christmas dinner we prepared.

We invited the French farmer and his wife as guests, and to our delight—and surprise—they accepted, but the only drawback was he would not stop smoking that awful tobacco, which he declared was much better than the sample I had given him. To sort of ease our conscience a little more we presented Madame with a few tins of bully-beef and Ticklers jam.

When we left on January 26th, for another spell 'up there' the farmer and his wife conveyed us to the main road, a distance of four kilometres.

For us it had turned out to be a Christmas of goodwill, and we sang as we marched towards the trenches, where man's inhumanity to man continued.

PROTECT YOUR TOWN'S HERITAGE!

The primary aim of the Abingdon Area Archaeological and Historical Society is to encourage an interest in the past, paying particular attention to the heritage of Abingdon and surrounding districts. The society has a varied programme of lectures, excursions, projects and excavations.

The suggestion in a recent television programme that amateur archaeologists are treasure hunters who destroy more evidence than they collect caused great indignation among members. Most of the society's excavations are urgent rescue digs on sites about to be redeveloped; without the help of societies like ours many of these sites would never be investigated, and much evidence of earlier times would be destroyed. The work involved is detailed and painstaking and is supervised by professional archaeologists. It certainly bears little resemblance to a treasure hunt.

A good example is the iron-age dig carried out last year at the Ashville Industrial Park just before redevelopment took place. This was a joint venture by the Oxford Archaeological Unit and the Society. In common with most iron-age sites, all that remained was the evidence of ditches, pits and post holes, provided by changes in soil composition. It is remarkable that the shape of a ditch can be recovered 2,000 years after it has been filled in.

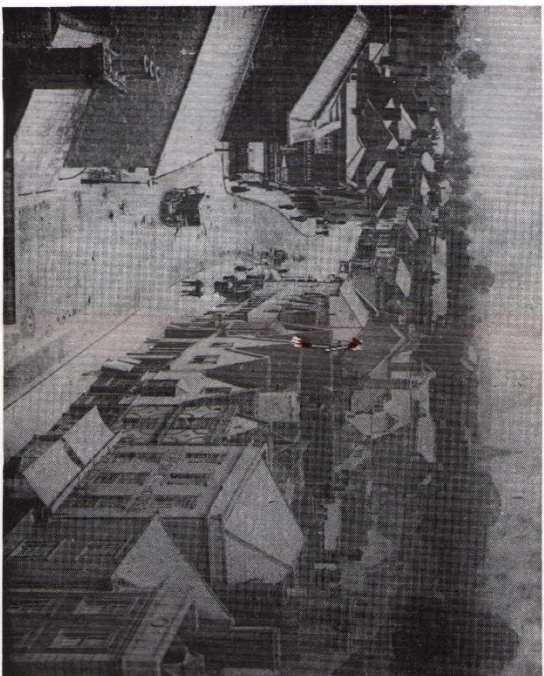


been filled in. Quantities of pottery fragments, animal bone and grain were also found. The study of these finds will provide valuable information about iron-age farming practices. Many of the 3,000 visitors on "Open Day" at the site were impressed to see how clear a picture of the settlement emerged from this carefully carried out dig.

The Society is at present excavating a site on Stert Street, Abingdon, which takes its name from the Stert, now culverted, but once an open stream. There are hopes that preserved organic material may be found in waterlogged deposits. The diggers have already identified the remains of an 18th-century building on top of an earlier stone structure which may be mediæval. Mediæval and Roman pottery have been found and also the skeleton of a baby buried beneath the foundation wall of the mediæval building.

During the summer, excursions are arranged to places of archaeological and historical importance. One of last year's excursions was of particular interest, as it tied in with the excavations on the Ashville Estate. In an attempt to make an experimental test of the interpretation of sites such as Ashville, Mr. P.J. Reynolds is trying to recreate the conditions of an Iron Age settlement at the Butser Hill Ancient Farm project in Hampshire. At the Ancient Farm site we saw a variety of small farm animals bred back to types whose bone formation is compatible with animal bone found at early sites. We also saw crops grown from seed similar to that found in excavations. The crops are cultivated by primitive methods and, surprisingly, they give a yield which is almost twice the amount predicted by agronomists. Mr. Reynolds also builds wattle-and-daub huts, testing archaeological theories of their design and construction.

In the winter months the emphasis is more on indoor activities. On Tuesday & Thursday evenings various projects are carried out in the basement of the Abingdon museum. For example, the pots and bones found on digs are washed and marked. For the past two years the Society's projects have been mainly of an historical nature. In 1974 it was decided that a collection of old photographs of local interest should be made. An appeal was made to townspeople for old photographs. After a slow start they are now coming in fairly regularly, and Rod



ABINGDON'S HIGH ST. AT THE END OF THE LAST CENTURY SHOWING THE BUILDING OF THE RIGHT THAT MADE WAY FOR THE PRESENT LIBRARY AND POST OFFICE.

PREMISES, CIRCA 1880. THEN OCCUPIED BY COXETER'S - NOW BY BEADLES.



James and his willing aides now have a fine and expanding collection which provides a valuable record of the town's history. The prints of the photographs, together with a card-index file containing interesting information about each, is available for examination in the museum basement. Eventually it is hoped that Wantage and Didcot will also be covered.

Another project is the sorting and cataloguing of some 1,300 leases of the old Borough Council. These documents, some dating back to the dissolution of the Abbey, have been in the museum of the County Hall since 1868 and have only recently been "re-discovered". All of the leases have been sorted out by streets in chronological order, and approximately 250 in Stert Street and Broad Street have been more closely examined. Roy Hallett, who is directing this project, has been able to record a great deal of information about the nature and position of properties, who the owners were and what, if any, were the conditions of the lease. A vast amount of work on this project remains to be done and hopefully, during the coming months, our members will be found poring over these fascinating documents.

Jackie Smith and John Carter have been doing some research into the history of pubs in Abingdon, covering the period 1500 AD to the present time. The purpose of this project is to try and build a picture of how the ordinary townspeople lived. The term "public house" was used loosely to include inns, taverns and alehouses, although in the 16th and 17th centuries these were quite different types of establishments. Investigations using Borough Leases, Ordnance Survey maps, trade directories, old newspapers and records kept by Morland's the brewers have so far revealed the existence of 120 public houses, most of which have been pulled down or turned into houses or shops. Today there are 29 pubs, ranging from the "Mighty Midget", opened last year on a new housing estate, to "The Queens", which stands on the site of the earliest known inn, the "Novum Hospitium", frequented by visitors to the Abbey in the 16th century.

The programme of lectures arranged by the Society last year contained speakers of international standing who lectured on a wide range of topics, from "Decipherment of Linear B" through "Carbon-

- 14 Dating" to "The Roman Pottery Industry in the Oxford Region". The lectures to be given during the coming months of 1976 look equally exciting:
- 21st January
Mr. P.J. Fowler - Early Agriculture
 - 18th February
Prof. B.W. Gunflite - Potchester
 - 17th March
Mr. R.T. Rowley - Welsh Border Castles
 - 21st April
Mr. B. Hobley - Recent Excavations in the City of London
 - 18th May
Prof. A.C. Renfrew - Revolution in Pre-history
 - 18th June
Members' Evening.

The Society holds its meetings, which are open to non-members, on the third Wednesday of each month in the John Mason High School, Wootton Road, Abingdon, at 7.30 p.m.

Patricia A. Toner.

Some members in a huddle behind the Summingwell Church.





20 YEARS' SERVICE left to right:

Back row: P.A. Hall, P.S. Elwood, D.H. Wheeler, W.R. Evans, F.J. Gale. **Front row:** R. Paske, H.G. Tattersall, R.B. Bull, F.H. Stacey.



20 YEARS' SERVICE left to right:

Back row: P. Bratchell, Dr. D.J. Mazey, A.C.G. Merrill, K.J. Major, R. Causer. **Front row:** S.P. Bailey, Mrs. L.B. Price, Mrs. D. Bone, P.J. Alder.



I've always accepted that putting is an individual thing, and I never thought I'd not only see someone putt one-handed — a normal two-armed man at that — but be also pretty deadly from ten feet in. He's a member of Ballybunion, one of three Irish golf clubs I was visiting earlier this month as a guest of the Irish Tourist Board and British Airways. The full story will keep, though, and being an Irish tale will be all the better for telling later on.

Let me go back to the beginning, when the Irish Tourist Board and British Airways decided to send a party to the West of Ireland in search of golf. They invited eleven of us from various golfing societies and professional tournament organisations to spend a week-end in the Clare—Kerry area looking at the available golf facilities.

Guests included Mr. G. McPartlin (Secretary of the Golf Foundation), while Mr. Derek Mulrooney (Irish Tourist Board), Mr. Ken Young (British Airways) and J.P. Murray (Bord Failte) were our hosts and looked after us during our travels in Ireland.

The Lahinch Golf Club, which was our first port of call, is a linksland course which was started by the Black Watch in 1891. Old Tom Morris laid it out over the dunes, ridges and grassy hollows and pronounced it 'as fine a natural course as it has been my good fortune to play over'. It was modernised in 1927, and in its present form measures 6,700 yards from the championship tees. Forward medal tees reduce the yardage to 6,300 making the course just right for the club golfer. The SSS is 70 with a par of 72. The course stretches along Liscannor Bay with only the mile-long beach separating it from the Atlantic rollers. The prevailing wind is south-westerly, and with the majority of the holes generally orientated both ways in that track there is no benefit to the golfer.

Lahinch is a championship course of high quality — the South of Ireland Amateur Championship is played there and the Irish Close Championship has been there also.

All links courses have carry on some holes, and Lahinch is no different. It has many testing holes, but no unfair ones. For me, who played it some years ago and whose memories were delightfully refreshed by this visit, the outstanding holes are the 5th (Klondyke), the 6th (Dell) and the 17th and 18th.

The 478-yard, par-5 Klondyke plays from a plateau tee down into a narrow valley between the dunes. The A-line is just right of a high dune, over which the second shot is blind to the roadside green. This hole might be termed unfair, but without it Lahinch would undoubtedly lose one of its famous characteristics.

When J.P. Murray was asked what club to take at the Dell, he answered "Anything that gets you on the green". The tee-shot at this 151-yard hole has to go over the continuation of the dune met at the Klondyke second shot, and once over it the ball will either run down its western slope onto the green or hit the opposite slope of a dune at the back of the Dell-green. Either way the ball should finish on the green, but with its borrows one could get a 2 or finish with a 5. A character hole to stick in the memory.

The 410-yard 17th and the 500-yard 18th holes alongside the Liscannor road are two very good finishing holes. Long and straight, but with typical links fairway humps and hollows. The tee-shots have to be out right to avoid out-of-bounds on the road, and when the south-westerly blows both holes will naturally play their length. Only the tigers will get up in two and then only off the meat and low under the wind.

Incidentally, when there's any doubt about the weather at Lahinch, always consult the local weather prophets — the Club's three goats who normally live out on the course but who head unerringly for the clubhouse at the slightest sign of rain. They didn't do to well when we turned up, though, heading out again as soon as they saw us coming through the gate!

Maybe they didn't like the looks of this latest Sassenach invasion — although we weren't all English — so let's hope that the Club Secretary, Austin ("Brud") Slattery, was able to reassure them after we'd gone.

Dinner that evening at the Aberdeen Arms was followed by a run into Liscannor, 2 miles away, where J.P. Murray introduced some of us to P.J. O'Donnell's pub and almost nightly ceilidhe band.

We were fascinated by one of the band instruments — the bodhrann — an open-

ended drum made from goatskin stretched over one end of what looked like a garden sieve without the mesh. This drum — pardon me, bodhrann — is held vertically between the knees and played with two small wooden sticks in spoons fashion against the goatskin. In Paddy Mac's skilled hands both he and the bodhrann were the star turns of the evening.

On Saturday, we took the Killimer-Tarbert car-ferry across the Shannon estuary to Ballybunion GC where the Secretary Manager, Sean Walsh, had a drink and an excellent lunch waiting for us.

Ballybunion, whose records go back to 1891, is on the south side of the resort where the Shannon estuary meets the Atlantic. The new clubhouse commands wonderful views of the Kerry hills and the top-class salmon river, the Feale, in the background, and the sea to the west.

This is a linksland course of the highest quality and has been the venue for several national events — the Irish Close Championship, among others. Two expert opinions about this course are worth quoting: Herbert Warren Wind, famous American golf author and commentator, reckoned it to be the finest seaside course he had ever seen, and Christy O'Connor said that anyone breaking 70 here is playing better than he is able to — wise words, indeed, which just about say it all.

I had heard all about this course, and I was delighted to study and play it.

Niall O'Brien, one of my opponents, is the one-hand putter I mentioned earlier. On the first green he had a 20-footer to hole, and from where I was standing I was very surprised to see him use his left hand only and roll the putt up stone dead.

Keeping his right hand in his pocket momentarily presented the picture of a one-armed man standing to the ball, and just for a second I was more shocked than surprised. After that I'm not sure which fascinated me most — the course or Niall O'Brien's deadly putting one-handed.

What can I say about this course that hasn't been said already? The first five holes are innocuous enough, but from the 6th onwards the high sand-dunes nearly everywhere put a premium on accuracy which I've rarely experienced before.

Four holes are deeply impressed in my golfing memory. The 400-yard 7th and 390-yard 11th run right along the cliff edge, with the beach and sea about 40 feet below on the right, and the dunes all

the way along on the left. The south-westerly blows straight into one's face on the tees, and the tee-shots have to be dead straight — not down the middle, but nearer the cliff edge if anything. The second shots are almost an anti-climax. The 151-yard 8th downwind into the long kidney-shaped basin green can be a sand-wedge only, but again accuracy is imperative to avoid the trap on the left and the runaway on the right. The 351-yard 17th is almost a semi-circular dog-leg left, where the tee-shot into the sun and wind has to carry a yawning fairway sand-chasm, and the approach has to be well right to come round the dog-leg into the green. Nobody in our match suggested taking the professional line over the dunes, which is probably very significant.

Like all links courses, the pinch-shot off the top of the turf is the one that pays off here, and it also seems to me that with this shot the ball can be kept low under the wind by not following through completely.

Sean Walsh had dinner ready for us in the clubhouse, and after a pleasant evening with the members the party headed back to the Aberdeen Arms — some of us finding our way like homing pigeons to P.J. O'Donnell's pub and ceilidhe band.

After breakfast on Sunday, the Eirebus took us the 30-odd miles to the Limerick Inn Hotel and Shannon GC for the last 18 holes of our visit.

Shannon is a flattish, open-plan parkland course founded by the Club Secretary, Dr. W. (Bill) Flynn, in 1967 on what was once a marshy swamp famous as a

duck-shooting paradise. It lies between the Shannon estuary — a hooked drive away — and the jet runway.

It is quite an experience to be putting out at the 3rd and suddenly to see — not hear right away, believe it or not — the bulbous snout of a Jumbo jet rise out of the ground a hundred yards in front of one, and quickly climb in a roar guaranteed to call a halt to the proceedings. After that, one gets used to it, and by the 7th one is quite blasé about the whole thing.

Shannon is the perfect foil to Lahinch and Ballybunion. It looks easy, but it definitely is not. Meant to be a championship course, it measures 6,800 yards off the back tees, 6,500 for the medal, and a 6,080 marker makes it a pleasant length for ordinary mortals. Like the other two courses, it is subject to the prevailing south-westerly, and will play long or otherwise depending on the wind strength.

The course needs something to provide the contrast required when the approach shot is being studied. Lots of trees have been planted and when they mature they should provide the necessary depth and perspective on the fairways.

Most of the holes are straightforward, and one is particularly outstanding: the short 15th, which has up to 200 yards of carry over scrub and marsh from the back tee out. The green is banked on one side, and an accurate tee-shot into the green is essential — a card-wrecker if ever I saw one.

All three golf courses were in excellent

condition. The fairways were well grassed in spite of the long hot summer, and the greens generally were fast but true. Being a parkland course, Shannon's fairways were probably a bit greener than the others, making it easier to pick off from the turf, but all were delightful to play. Shannon is actually in the Airport complex and Lahinch is about 30 miles away. Ballybunion is 44 miles across the estuary by car-ferry, but what's 40-odd miles when there's a course like this waiting for you?

Golf courses in this area are all readily available and ideal for Golfing Societies. Eddie Hanrahan, Ballybunion GC trustee and Chairman of the Regional Tourist Board, suggests that the April-June and September-October periods would be the best times to come, when things are quiet and comfortable. Agreed, but with one small reservation: what about places like P.J.'s pub and ceilidhe band? Of course, one tends to take the Irish people's traditional hospitality for granted; one is rarely disappointed.

Golf is fairly cheap in Ireland. Daily green fees at Lahinch are £1.50, with a weekly ticket available at £7, and these are fairly typical of green fees in the area. Incidentally, Lahinch run a couple of Open weeks in August, and it is advisable to book well ahead for the various events.

The trip to Shannon concluded our golfing activities, and we went to the mediaeval banquet in Bunratty Castle as guests of the Shannon Free Airport Development Co and the Irish Tourist Board.

This banquet is quite an occasion. Gerrard, the Butler, introduces the noble guests to the host, the Earl of Thomond, and sees that they are well plied with mead and wine. The ladies of the Castle bring food to be eaten by the fingers and, led by the lady Eileen, serenade the company.

Dermot, Earl of Leinster, must have incurred the Thomond wrath somehow, as he was flung into the dungeon and just managed a pardon by singing for his supper. He wasn't the only one by the end of the evening.

Our visit to the West of Ireland ended with the overnight stay at the Limerick Inn, one of the many first-class hotels a drive-and-a-wedge down the road from Shannon Airport.

At 12 noon on Monday we were back at Heathrow after a very pleasant 55-minute British Airways flight, which I gather was fully automatic from take-off to touch-down. Well, the aircraft may have been back on the ground all right, but my feet most certainly were not.



Golfing, period style. A reproduction of "Medal Day at Blackheath", an engraving owned by the Royal Blackheath Golf Club.

THINKING OF CHRISTMAS . . .

and of the magic of Christmas during childhood ... How soon those fairyland days are gone and the harsh realities of life take over. I remember now how I hated the idea that "Father Christmas" was in fact my parents. That they loved me dearly did not really matter; I just wanted my "bit of magic". How true that is even today. Most of us need the anticipation of something out of this world to keep us going, even more so in these uncertain days when our own world is in such a state.

Isn't this a time when we can work with a purpose to prove that Christmas still does mean something? Can't we put the magic back, and so perhaps help to get our own little worlds into perspective?

Let us forget the spend—spend—spend which has become a nightmare. We can determine to give the gifts of love and warmth and understanding to those we love (and, let's face it, those we don't love quite so well). We can save our cash for the children and the old folk: their need is greatest. Perhaps then we shall greet the bleak days of January better equipped for what we as a people must face.

It will date me if I say that I can remember singing (out of tune!) "There'll Always Be an England". Let's add another song title: "This is Worth Fighting For". Remember (if you're old enough) that in the war time we boasted "Waste not, want not". Let's do it again, and let's start now, in time for Christmas.

Give kindness and thought along with simple gifts. What's wrong with passing on the vase that a friend has always admired? A wash, and it will sparkle, needing only tissue paper and gay wrapping for a present that really does give joy.



And don't forget those who may be lonely. Let them come in and share the warmth and fun. If each family shared the festivity with one lonely person, just think how many would be happier. This might start a chain reaction, and one day it may be you in need of such an invitation. It's worth a thought!

Happy Christmas one and all.

Mrs. V.M. Kirk
Energy Technology Support Group

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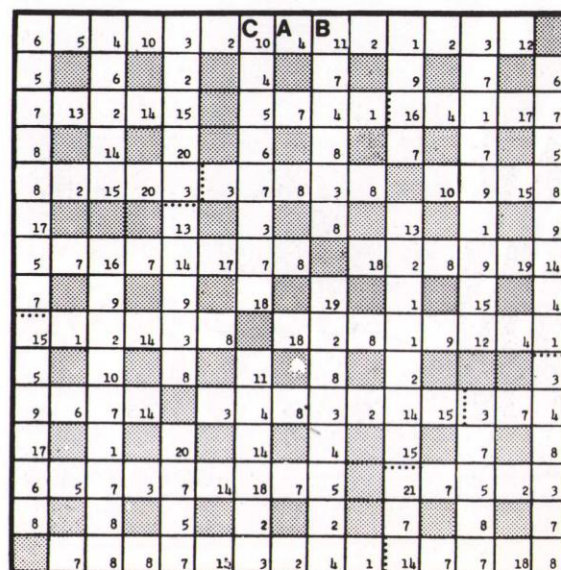


CODE-WORDS

SOLUTION TO
LAST PROBLEM

1 R; 2 E; 3 N;
4 A; 5 G; 6 S;
7 D; 8 T; 9 L;
10 U; 11 I; 12 O;
13 W; 14 H; 15 P;
16 V; 17 C 18 K;
19 M; 20. B.

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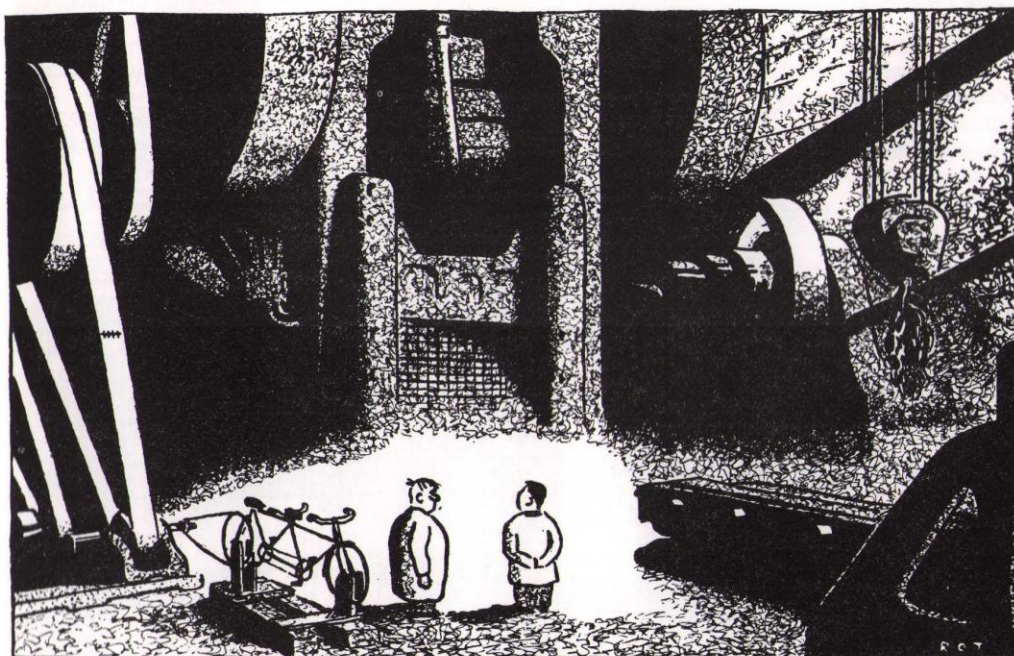
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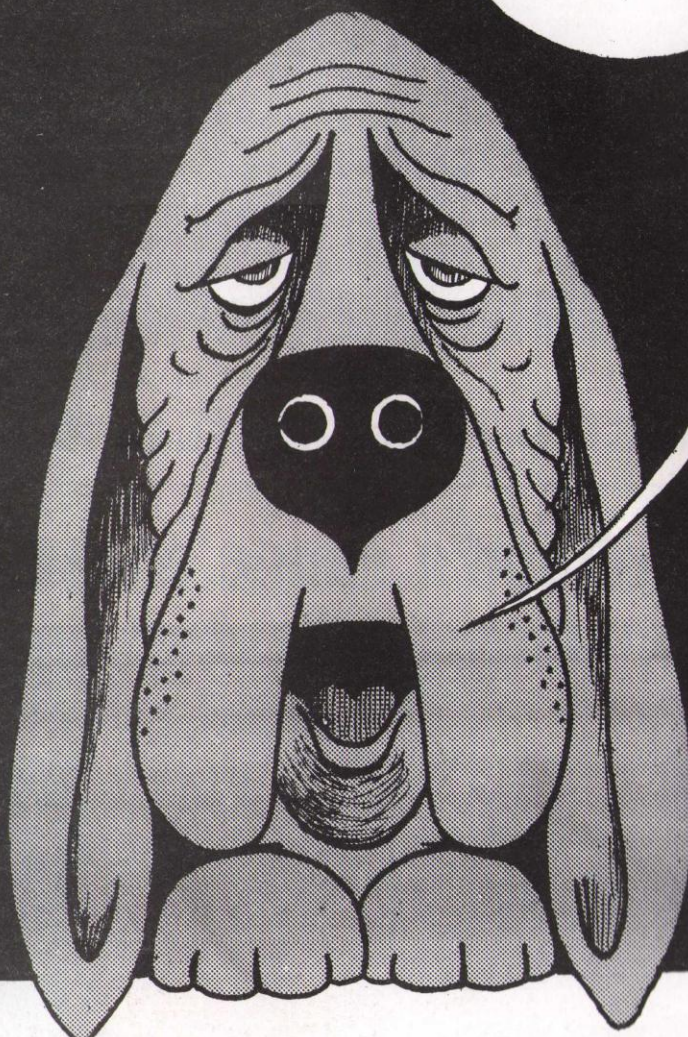
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