

# VOICES

*of North Devon*



No. 13.

5p

# Contents

VOICES OF NORTH DEVON. EDITION NUMBER 13. SEPTEMBER 1973

Price: 5p

This is North Devon's only community magazine. It is produced each month, by voluntary labour, on a non-profit-making basis. It is for the people of North Devon and for all others interested in our work.

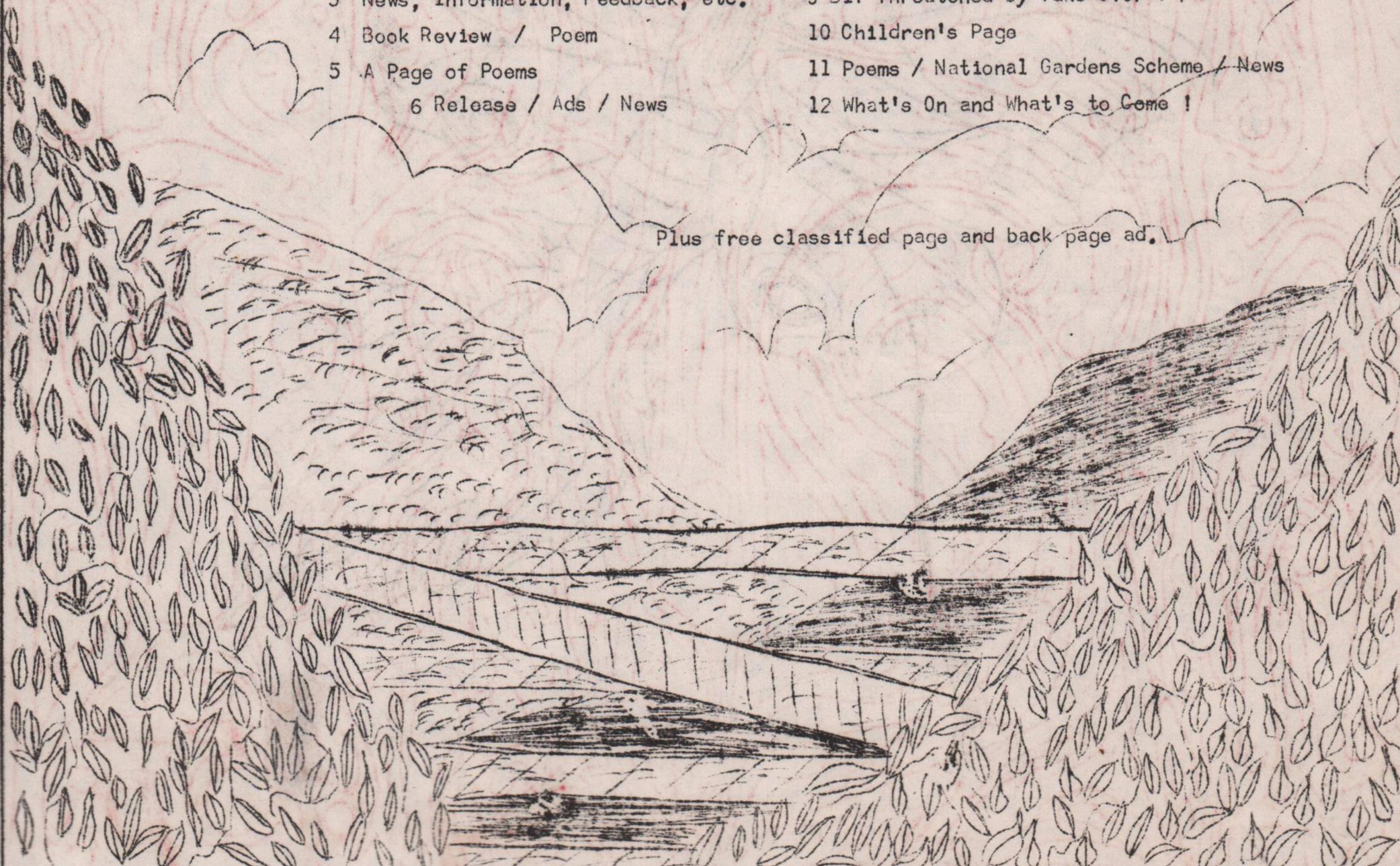
Annual subscription : 75p (including postage)

YOU CAN HELP BY: Contributing your writings or drawings to the mag, selling copies each month, or by sending in small donations each month, to help with our costs, which are rising all the time.

Cover design and contents page by Ann W. Gleave, other illustrations by Ann again and Tony Webb. Thank you to all contributors this month. We hope you enjoy reading this September edition.

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Plus free classified page and back page ad.



WELCOME to this, the September edition of "VOICES". Some of you reading now will be regular local readers, others will maybe just visting the area, some will just have come down here to live. VOICES has been established for over a year now and we thank our new contributors and also those who have kept in touch ever since that first issue way back in last year. Each month, VOICES is read by more and more people, and how good it would be if we could hear from all of you ! Please dont think that this mag is run by a few people for that same few - it is what you the readers make it, and whether you think the mag is good, bad, interesting, boring, varied or "samey", just reflects, in fact, the interest shown in it. We are here to type out what you send in and also to contribute our own ideas - there are no priorities, we print all that we receive, according to available space. VOICES is produced by a varying group of people (Tony Webb, Ann Gleave, William Athol, Barry, John Alexander, Heather, Mike Hepworth and the inimitable figure of Ian Cognito have all helped in that hard work of physically getting the mag produced). VOICES IS FOR YOU, the people of North Devon, and for all others interested in what we are doing. We exchange with other mags throughout the country and abroad, and keep in touch with what is happening outside the area. Please do get in touch soon, and send us that poem or article you've had in mind for weeks but never got round to. Write us letters - we'd love to get a really lively letters page going. Surely you're concerned about something ? Surely you've been moved to comment about something since last month ? Let us know. We'll pass on your ideas through these pages.

ON PAGE TWO we give our considered and collective comment on the recent squat in a Barnstaple council house, and on the facts behind the situation. Maybe not all of you will agree with our conclusions or opinions, but at least you'll agree that housing is our most pressing problem at the moment, and we make no secret of the fact that many of us sympathise with all people who are desperately trying to find somewhere to live - in whatever circumstances they may be at present, no matter who they be, young or old, healthy or in ill-health. Have you any ideas about how the housing situation could be made better ? One of our contributors from time to time is a Borough and County Councillor; what ideas would you give to him to put to the local authorities ? For instance, do you believe that all privately-rented property should be put in public hands (as the Fabian Society have suggested), and landlords compensated in full by government bonds, to make up for the loss in rent ? Do you think this would help to aid many people now in privately rented property who feel insecure, and who very often have to put up with sub-standard conditions ?

ON OTHER PAGES we publish the poems and other contributions from local people. Thank you all. It is always a great pleasure to open the post in the morning and to read what you have sent in. Please encourage your friends to do the same !

BIDEFORD COMMUNITY COLLEGE is one of the several Colleges in Devon in which all the resources of the School are available for community use. Provision is made for activities not only in Bideford and district, but also in a wide rural area extending to Hartland and Welcombe in the west, to Instow, Westleigh in the east and to Monkleigh in the south. The programme is intended to cater for all interests, and any suggestions or requests are always welcome. Why not join this winter ? Classes include such subjects as: Know Your North Devon, Coastal Navigation, Folklore, Fencing, Spinning, Dressmaking, Tennis, Badminton, Woodwork, Craft Workshop, Crochet, Guitar, German, Yoga, Driving, Pottery, Geology, Drama, Maths, Photography, Agriculture, Needlecraft, Gardening and much more. Enrolment is on 20th and 21st of September, or at the first meeting of some courses. Contact the Warden of the Bideford Community College for details and a detailed programme. (We have one in the VOICES office if you would like to see it - it gives details of fees and special reductions of fees etc.)

NEXT VOICES SHOW is on SATURDAY 29th SEPTEMBER. Golden Fleece, Tuly Street, Barnstaple. Starts 8 pm. Let us know NOW if you would like to take part. Singers, musicians, poets, dancers, readers, jugglers, entertainers of ALL kinds are welcome. Let's make it another GREAT evening ! Admission free, but we'll pass the old hat round to pay for the cost of the room. Please contribute as much as you can.

## ILL, UNEMPLOYED, HOMELESS, FRUSTRATED AT EVERY TURN

Maybe you are not one of those on the Housing List of the Barnstaple Borough Council. Maybe if you are on it, your case isn't very urgent. Most likely you are not sleeping rough, or in a car, or in a room with half a dozen others. So you are lucky. But what about the really desperate cases? What chance do they stand of getting a roof over their heads as a result of Council action? It seems to depend on whether your face fits! Everyone on the list will tell stories of how so-and-so from Landkey or Braunton has been given a house, how a small family already in accommodation have been allocated a three-bedroomed house, how another family got a house by asking Mr. Such-and-Such (perhaps a certain Councillor or a certain official is named - the details vary, the theme is the same), and so on. But never can these stories be pinned down: no-one will make a sworn statement naming names, no-one will produce any hard evidence. And there are, it is true, often special circumstances which those who make the allegations do not know about.

So all is well? Hardly. Take the method whereby houses are allocated in Barnstaple Borough. This is done by a small sub-committee of the main Housing Committee, acting usually on the Housing Department. This sub-committee meets in private (not even other members of the Housing Committee itself may attend, leave alone members of the Council in general); it issues no detailed minutes of its proceedings, it gives no reasons for its decisions. It never tells an unsuccessful applicant why he is unsuccessful. Its actions cannot be questioned at subsequent Council meetings. The justification for all this is supposed to be that people do not wish their cases to be discussed in public, and this is fair enough, save that other Councillors obviously ought to know what is going on, particularly where people in their Ward are concerned. And if a desperate case could be told exactly why he was not to be allocated a house, it would remove a lot of the suspicion.

Let us take a specific case. When the last batch of completed houses in the Gorwell Valley were allocated, this particular case was said to have been considered, but no house was offered. This man has NO HOME - he had to get permission from a friend to sleep on a couch in the front room simply so that he could give an address to obtain bail. He was evicted, by a private landlord, with no reason given, from his former bed-sitter. He has a lot of medical evidence to support his application, both on grounds of his own physical health and his mental health, both of which are deteriorating under the stress and the conditions under which he is living. He had applied for one of the plots which the Council intended to sell to private applicants, but they changed their minds and decided not to sell after all - whilst re-housing those who had applied who could prove hardship. This man was not re-housed, officially because since he was not in the first 36 applicants for the sites, he would not have got one anyway. He tried another tack and found, tucked away in a Council estate at Frankmarsh a plot of land which he thought suitable for building on, and applied to buy it. The Borough Surveyor at first advised against the use of this land for housing, since sewers and so forth ran across it, but eventually it was agreed that despite these difficulties, a couple of houses would be erected by the Council. But the man who had brought this to their notice did not have the opportunity of buying the site.

Not long ago, the Magistrates in their wisdom, refused permission for his fiancée to marry him, and this is now being used an excuse by certain Councillors to refuse him accommodation on the grounds that it would be contrary to the Magistrate's decision, which is, of course, TOTALLY INCORRECT. The Magistrate's did not order them not to meet, OR, for that matter, to live together, so there is NO possible justification for the refusal to allocate a house on that ground. It is true that the particular applicant has a police record, but so have many many existing tenants of Council houses, and even people who have committed crimes (for which their punishment was presumably adequate) should not be hounded for the rest of their lives. Yet, at this very time, an Alderman proposes to introduce restrictions which would have the effect of depriving this man of his livelihood, though the Alderman would doubtless strenuously deny that he had this personal objective in mind. One particularly unhelpful suggestion made to the man was that he should go and live with his mother. In the first place, this is not possible, and is undesirable on several grounds - medical evidence shows that it would have harmful effects on the mother, apart from any other consideration. One suspects that the underlying reason for the suggestion is really that since she lives outside the Borough, the applicant, if he went to live with her would virtually be removed from the Borough housing list.

Two weeks ago he took action. He moved into a Council house in Gorwell Valley as a squatter. Now the Borough Council is to seek an eviction order. The house in which he is squatting was formerly occupied by a tenant very much in arrears with rent. On the authority of the Housing Committee a Court order for possession was obtained, effective 1st August. Not until 8th August did the relevant official attempt to enforce the order. In the end, it was 24th August before the tenant vacated it - more than three weeks after the Court order was effective. Now the squatter's case has been considered, not by the Housing sub-committee or the main Housing committee, but by a specially called meeting of the FULL COUNCIL - one supposes that tough nuts need sledgehammers to crack them! It will be interesting to see what happens if the Court authorises his eviction - do you suppose the Council will wait for over three weeks to enforce it?

Here is an example of the social pressures which fall on some people in what is supposed to be a quiet little country town! Ill, jobless, homeless, frustrated at every turn, with no reason given, but still expected to lead a blameless life by those whose own comfortable circumstances give them no twinge of pain, or discomfort, but whose self-righteousness permits them to harry the unfortunate or those who need rehabilitation and help.

.....  
FROM "FUTURES", a paper by Peter Cadogan, read to the London Group THE WORLD FUTURE SOCIETY, 9th June 1973:-

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT in Britain, the State, is sick and will not recover. REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT is dead. The notion that in our kind of society one MP can effectively represent 100,000 people is manifestly absurd and the most able men and women know better than to try. Yet among that 100,000 there are some 2-3,000 professionals and volunteers who can replace, and are now replacing, the single receding MP. They are organising themselves on functional-professional lines and in the new setting of community-politics. Meanwhile the young have invented, and are practising, the ideas and ways of an alternative society. THE ONLY POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE is some forty sovereign city-regional republics supported by self-financing, non-political, national and international utilities. There is NO case for a European super-state.

We hope to publish more of this interesting paper in a future issue. Your comments invited .....

THE ART CENTRE GROUP (Pilton Art Centre, Barnstaple, Next to Pilton Church) are planning to hold an Exhibition of North Devon Arts and Crafts during the week of Sept 24th - 29th. The Centre will be open at the following times to receive entries for display : Sept 17th, from 7 pm. Sept 19th, from 11 am to 6pm. Sept 21st., from 7pm. More details are available from the Secretary at the Centre.

WE'VE MENTIONED "ROOTS" before in a previous issue. This is a very good mag from Edinburgh, packed with comment, news and lots of ads. It costs 10p (The Summer Special) and is available from 6 Lonsdale Terrace, Edinburgh 3. This issue contains a good article on Apprentices and the way in which they are exploited by employers. They cite one case of a girl who was working from 9.30 to 5 in a Hairdresser's for £3.20 a week. There was no lunch hour, no formal training and she had to leave in the end (due to lack of money & overwork) with no qualifications or references. ROOTS has also produced "INDEX", Edinburgh's radical directory. This costs 20p, and recently any profits from ROOTS have gone to pay for the printing of this. We had an interesting letter from Mike Sharples at ROOTS who says that INDEX has not been selling too well recently. It costs only 20p and is packed with information. Although it is aimed mainly at readers in Edinburgh, it contains a lot of information that will be of use to anyone in any area, and covers such subjects as: Help and Information, Press & Publications, Political, International, Kids, Minorities and Oppressed and gives a very useful list of MPs and Councillors, with their addresses and telephone numbers for Edinburgh.

DEVON IN DANGER. A photographic competition sponsored by the Devon branch of the Conservation Society. The aim is to focus attention on the dangers to the environment in Devon. Competitors are asked to pinpoint in visual terms any aspect or aspects of environmental destruction in the county, which could serve as a visual warning. The aptness and directness of the message will be the first consideration in choosing the winner, but technical considerations will also be taken into account. The competition is open to all and there is no limit to the number of different entries. All photographs to have been taken in Devon, not less than 8"x10" black/white. Mark back of print with name and address, location of picture and any relevant information. Send entries to: Michael Evans, 11 The Willows, Shillingford St. George, Exeter, EX2 9QS. Closing date for entries is FRIDAY, 21st SEPTEMBER 1973. 1st Prize: £10, 2nd Prize: £2, 3rd Prize: £1.

THANKS go to Kate of Swimbridge, for the story about Horatio & to all other contributors. We wish that more of you would write to us and tell us what you think of VOICES ! And where are all these interesting articles that we are so often promised ? Maybe the good weather has made literary sloths of you all. !

BE REALISTIC - DEMAND THE IMPOSSIBLE. This is the slogan of the Festival of Peace, organised by the Peace Pledge Union. One week from 6th-13th October. Festival activities include: Concerts, film shows, art exhibitions, balloon race, pageants, carnivals, music, etc. etc. More details from Dick Sheppard House, 6 Endsleigh St., London, WC1. We've got some FREE posters for this festival at the office (107 Pilton St., Barnstaple) if you'd like to display one.

JUST US was formed in August 1972. The band's first engagements were in London; they recorded a "Top Gear" programme for the Beeb which was introduced by John Peel and which contained half an hour of their music. They have since played in Italy and Holland. They appear at the LOBSTER POT on Thurs 6th Sept., and guest pianist will be Keith Tippett. Line-up includes trombone, cornet, bass, sax, guitar and drums.

CELL is the community paper for Truro (Cornwall). Always needs writers, artists and others. Address: 4 Richards Cresc., Malabar, Truro. Costs 10p.

RESIDENTS OF PILTON, BARNSTAPLE will no doubt welcome the arrival of Mr. Lane our new sub-postmaster. He replaces the surly, bad-tempered, un-cooperative, Mr Allen, who did NOT like bikes parked against his wall. Mr Allen no doubt had a "saving grace", but we were never lucky enough to glimpse it. He was about as amiable as a Nazi hangman, and displayed all the charm of a ruptured boa-constrictor.

THE NEW BERRY'S FOOTPATH, is now open. It runs from Pilton Quay to the riverbank of the Yeo. Credit is due to the members of the Barnstaple Borough Footpaths Society, without whose efforts the path would not exist, and to the Borough Surveyor's department who have wrought worthily and well in its construction. No credit is due to Aldermen Thomas and Dibble, who resolutely opposed the retention of a footpath in that locality.

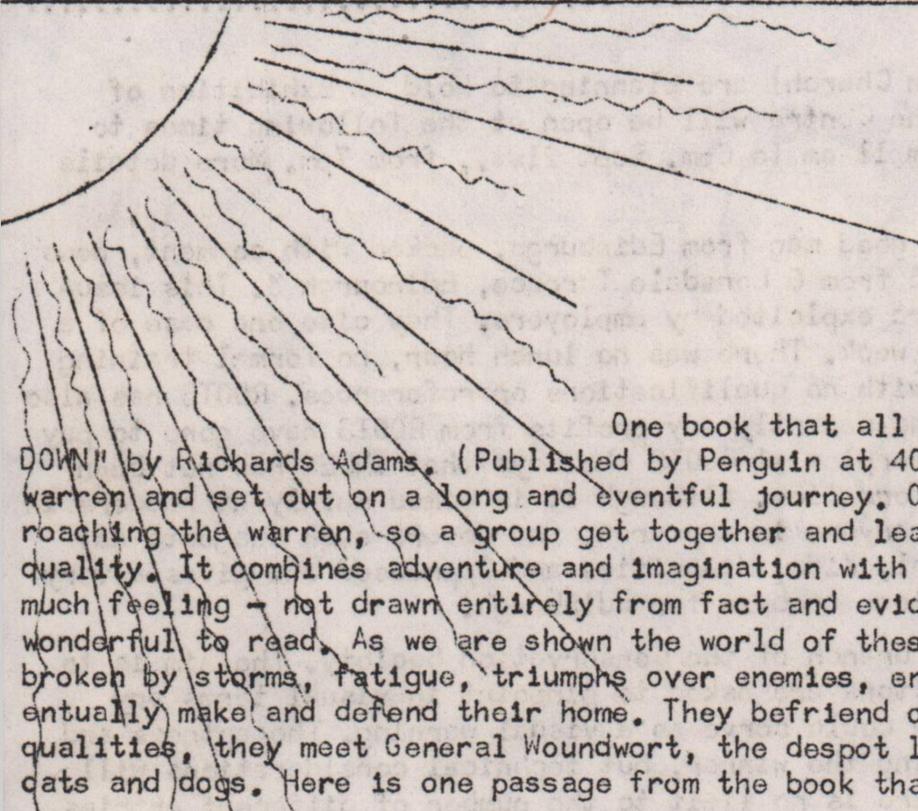
OUR ROVING GOURMAND (French for gutser) recommends the excellent bar snacks at the Queens Hotel, Lynton. The reverse side of the picture is seen at the Mason's Arms, Knowstone (if you don't know where that is, never mind), where, after 35 minutes' wait for an indifferent Hawaiian Grill (the name is far grander than the product) two famished travellers were told a) that not everything could be done at once b) there was only one pair of hands to see to the sandwich and the inference conveyed that either a bag of crisps should have been purchased or a move made to a more welcoming hostelry. For a fair nosh at a reasonable price you might try the Welcome Cafe at South Molton, which, for the rest of this month at least is open until 9.30 pm on Sundays.

HOW TO KEEP THE PUBLIC INFORMED. Somebody wants to start a disco in Summerland Street, Barnstaple. So the Borough Council decides to advertise to give objectors a chance to protest at the idea - they have 21 days in which to do so. Up goes a notice giving objectors a mere 7 days in which to object. When the Borough Council is shown that this is wrong, up go two further notices stating a time-limit of "21 days from the date of this notice". But there is no date on the notice. Red necks in the Civic Centre should, of course, be attributed to the September sun, and not to boobs like this !

THERE IS NO TRUTH IN THE RUMOUR that Terry Austin is to be voted "Taxi-Driver of The Year" by Barnstaple Borough Council. It is equally untrue that Mr. Terry Austin has stated that the Barnstaple Borough Council is the local authority he most admires. For our part, we agree with both of them !

SUNDAY, AUGUST 26th was the day when Heather gave birth to a baby girl at home in Dolton, after keeping us all in suspense for over a week. All at VOICES wish them every future happiness and a good and healthy life. Xavier will now be back at school - hard luck, Xavier. Natalie is cultivating a taste for drawing and listening to Ann's TERRIBLE jokes. She actually asked her to REPEAT one last week. (Have you heard the one about Bing Crosby and Walt Disney...?) 3

# Watership Down



One book that all lovers of the earth and of wild-life should read is "WATERSHIP DOWN" by Richards Adams. (Published by Penguin at 40p). It is the inspired story of a band of rabbits who leave their warren and set out on a long and eventful journey. One of their number has prophesied that a terrible danger is approaching the warren, so a group get together and leave, not knowing where they are heading. This book has a magical quality. It combines adventure and imagination with a deep understanding of rabbit behaviour. Richard Adams writes with much feeling - not drawn entirely from fact and evidence, but coloured with a story-telling and sympathy that is wonderful to read. As we are shown the world of these real and fascinating rabbits, we follow them through long journeys broken by storms, fatigue, triumphs over enemies, encounters with man, and deep into the Honeycomb warren where they eventually make and defend their home. They befriend other creatures to learn from them and make use of their special qualities, they meet General Woundwort, the despot leader of a dictator-state warren, they fight off stoats, foxes, cats and dogs. Here is one passage from the book that I particularly like:

"Rabbits are like human beings in many ways. One of these is certainly their staunch ability to withstand disaster and to let the stream of their life carry them along, past reaches of terror and loss. They have a certain quality which it would not be accurate to describe as callousness or indifference. It is, rather, a blessedly circumscribed imagination and an intuitive feeling that Life is Now. A foraging wild creature, intent above all upon survival, is as strong as the grass. Collectively, rabbits rest secure upon Frith's promise to El-ahrairah. Hardly a full day had elapsed since Holly had come crawling in delirium to the foot of Watership Down. Yet already he was near recovery, while the more light-hearted Bluebell seemed even less the worse for the dreadful catastrophe that he had survived. Hazel and his companions had suffered extremes of grief and horror during the telling of Holly's tale. Pipkin had cried and trembled piteously at the death of Scabious, and Acorn and Speedwell had been seized with convulsive choking as Bluebell told of the poisonous gas that murdered underground. Yet, as with primitive humans, the very strength and vividness of their sympathy brought with it a true release. Their feelings were not false or assumed. While the story was being told, they heard it without any of the reserve or detachment that the kindest of civilized humans retains as he reads his newspaper. To themselves, they seemed to struggle in the poisoned runs and to blaze with rage for poor Pimpernel in the ditch. This was their way of honouring the dead. The story over, the demands of their own hard, rough lives began to reassert themselves in their hearts, in their nerves, their blood and appetites. Would that the dead were not dead! But there is grass that must be eaten, pellets that must be chewed, hraka that must be passed, holes that must be dug, sleep that must be slept. Odysseus brings not one man to shore with him. Yet he sleeps sound beside Calypso and when he wakes thinks only of Penelope.

Even before Holly had finished his story, Hazel had fallen to sniffing at his wounded ear. He had not previously been able to get a good look at it, but now that he did, he realized that terror and fatigue had probably not been the principal causes of Holly's collapse. He was badly wounded - worse than Buckthorn. He must have lost a lot of blood. His ear was in ribbons and there was any amount of dirt in it. Hazel felt annoyed with Dandelion. As several of the rabbits began to silflay, attracted by the mild June night and the full moon, he asked Blackberry to wait. Silver, who had been about to leave by the other run, returned and joined them."

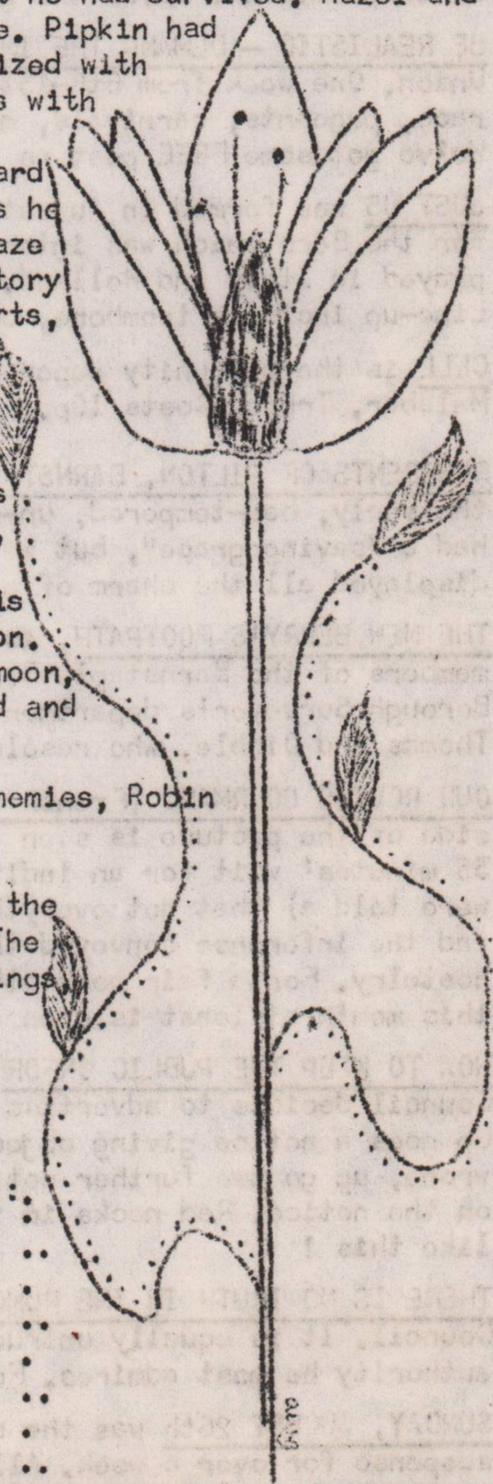
(Notes: FRITH - the sun. "God" of the rabbit world. EL-AHRAIRAH - Prince with a Thousand Enemies, Robin Hood of the rabbits, full of cunning and trickery. SILFLAY - go out into the open to eat. HRAKA - rabbit droppings.)

Richard Adams has studied rabbits for a long time, and has a deep love of the countryside. He researched deeply and drew a lot of information from R.M. Lockley's book "The Private Life of the Rabbit." - Anyone who wants to know more about the migrations of yearlings, about pressing chin glands, chewing pellets, the effects of over-crowding in warrens, the capacity of buck rabbits to fight stoats, or anything else to do with Lapine life, should refer to this remarkable work.

Ann W. Gleave.

The writings of a fool are  
foolish,  
the writings of a prophet  
are wise,  
the writings of the void  
are immortal.

Leslie Harris : Bideford.



A

FLOWERS

The flowers face the morning  
Their thoughts are globes of light,  
Their roots hold fast the darkness  
Dreaming in the night.

They feed upon corruption  
They feed upon the sun  
Their eternity of living  
Lies only in their young.

We live upon their bounty  
On what they throw away  
Were ever they to leave us  
That's the ending of our day.

Though we were born to serve them  
As all things living must  
They do not seem to see us  
They offer us no trust.

Do they even know we cheat them,  
I cannot think they care  
When all of us are dying  
They'll be waiting for their share.

From: Josephine. Dolton.

\*\* \*\* \*

RUSH HOUR

They come, they go  
A torrent of living souls  
Dull and life-less  
With motionless expressions,  
They seem so boring  
So utterly irresolute,  
like a stream of lemmings  
On the way to their death,  
No passions, no joys  
No anguish, no pain,  
No gladness, no sadness.  
No nothing.  
No, not anything  
Just a boring madness  
That depresses the mundane onlooker.

From: M.W. James. Ilfracombo.

\*\* \*\* \*

LIFE IS PLEASURES SMALL

I felt the sun smiling at me  
And watched the flowers nodding  
There were no clouds as I could see  
for life was gently prodding.

Urging and showing me happiness  
And slowly I began to wake  
Realising joy was for the best  
All revealed for me to take.

Now I've seen and drink deep  
All the pleasures that life bestows  
Are offered freely for me to keep  
Life has all the beauty of a rose.

The warmth and perfect colour  
And gentle fragrant scent  
So now my life is fuller  
And my pen is nearly spent.

From: Karen Trick. Barnstaple.

\*\* \*\* \*



stand on your knee  
try to be free (man).  
curl up your toes  
Whatch how peace grows (far out)  
buckle your thumb  
don't hit your mum  
dig up the road  
shoulder your load (nico one).  
have a cup of tea  
and you'll be up all night.

From: Ann On and Sue de Nympho. Commuting.

\*\* \*\* \*

Two Poems by John Alexander : Bideford

The Special Branch came  
running through the door  
knocked me about  
pushed me on the floor;  
called me a traitor  
called me a political whore,  
said it was their duty  
their special chore,  
to make me see sense  
and to make me adore  
the system.

Hours later.

The Special Branch  
went out the door,  
left me on the floor  
lying in blood;  
but I  
still believed in freedom.

\*\* \*\* \*

The Rise to Fame of Jesus Christ

The lonely man  
with his wooden cross  
walks down the road  
on the path to nowhere.

This lonely man  
hangs  
from his wooden cross  
dead,  
on his way to somewhere.

That man  
without his cross  
is no longer  
lonely.

\*\*\* \*\* \*

WHY ?

Why are you smiling ?  
I'm not,  
Why are you happy ?  
I'm not,  
Why are you loving ?  
I'm not,  
Why are you killing ?  
I'm not,  
Why are you praying ?  
I'm not,  
Why are you living ?  
I'm dead.

From: Leslie Harris. Bideford.

WARNING TO MOTORISTS. Ann has started driving lessons. KEEP OFF THE ROADS on Thursdays between 12 and 1 pm. Drive safely !

A vegetarian restaurant is also planned for BARNSTABLE, and suitable premises are being sought at the moment. If you can think of anywhere that would be a good place, then let us know and we will pass the information on to the people who are trying to get the idea started.

A new head shop has opened recently in EXETER, near the old iron bridge (St. David's). They sell dresses, tops, clothes, incense, perfumes, pottery, candles, posters. They are looking for someone to make clothes for them and they plan to open a vegetarian restaurant in the near future. Call in and see them if you're ever in Exeter.

LOBSTER POT, INSTOW. Sunday September 23rd. Last Antiques and Crafts Market of this season. 9.30 am to 5 pm. THE NORTH DEVON MOVEMENT is sponsoring a slide show in the Guildhall, Barnstaple on October 17th at 7.30pm. Admission adults 15p, children 10p. Slide include several of the recent Raft Race on the Taw, plus many more of local people and places. Do please try to arrive early - there will be a rush for the best seats, and all the raft racers will be there to see themselves on the big screen.

LARGE GARAGE or premises at a reasonable rent is required for use as part-time workshop. If anyone can help please contact "VOICES". WHOLEFOODS. Wholewheat flour 6p lb., good quality brown rice 12p lb. Muesli and honey coming. Orders taken for all those FOR SALE. Ibizan Hound puppies, hunting dogs of the ancient Egyptians, keen, tireless hunters, will course or point and retrieve. I have a free puppy for a suitable home as well. Cardigan Corgi puppy, very good pedigree but has show fault. Nominal price to pet home. Old English Mastiff puppies ready soon. Pedigree kittens, persians and strainers, various colours. Yellow dog ferret. 3 months old. PLEASE RING DOLTON 366. A FEW BACK NUMBERS OF VOICES STILL AVAILABLE at 27p each, plus postage. No's 1,2,3, 11 all OUT OF PRINT. Sorry. Only a few copies of 4 and eight still available, so hurry. VOICES is compiling a list of crash pads for emergencies. We stress emergency use only. List not for publication. But call to see us if your need is urgent. We will try to help.

MORE ADS AND YET MORE ADS (aren't we a busy little lot !)

MRS. BETTY POWLS. We were all saddened to hear of the tragic death of Mrs. Betty Powls, mother of one of our writers, in Portsmouth on September 6th. We send our sympathy to her family and friends, and wish Mr. Powls success in his new job and home.

Their address: 1 Eglon Avenue, London, W9 3PR. Tel: 01-289-1123. Release.

Meanwhile, back at the "Big R", medical and psychiatric advice, including pregnancy counselling is offered, both from trained members of the staff and consulting G.P.'s and psychiatrists who recognize the need for those services to be made available outside the existing institutional framework. As I'm sure you realize, to provide any real assistance to 350 people a week requires quite a substantial budget - we presently employ a staff of 12 and weekly expenditure is approximately £500. We receive no government or local authority funds and consequently depend on individual contributions to keep us going and to preserve our independence and flexibility. If we are to meet the growing demands for our services, we need your help. Our goal is to develop a recurrent income base through deeds of covenant and bankers orders. Do read CONNECTION. It gives a more detailed picture of Release. Thanks for all your help and support in the past. We hope that you will continue to support us in the future.

"The work goes on. We continue helping with any problem that is brought to us - over 350 enquires a week. We provide free legal advice and assistance on arrests, squatting, social security, tenancy difficulties and immigration problems. In addition, we are dealing with one in eight of the 10,000 cannabis arrests in the country, and consult and refer our clients to over 100 solicitors throughout the British Isles. We are constantly fighting abuses of authority whether it be a social security officer's refusal to grant authorized benefits, or allegations of police misconduct. We are still the only voluntary organization dealing with problems of individuals detained in foreign jails for cannabis offences. We have accumulated information on countries in Africa, Europe and the East and have now published our findings in a book called the "Truckers' Bible". Ronald Bell, M.P. for South Buckinghamshire claims this publication is a do-it-yourself manual for drug smugglers and has questioned Home Sec. Carr on the subject. The Sunday Express and the Daily Telegraph have also joined the bandwagon. Threats of confiscation are in the air, but we still have copies of this controversial epic. Available from Release - 40p + 5p postage and packing.

RELEASE, having weathered political and financial storms, have now completed their newsletter, "CONNECTION". This contains useful articles, ideas, news, ads, etc., including Mail Order goodies. Copy available at VOICES office. Here is most of the text of a letter VOICES has just received from RELEASE:

(From the "Compassion", the official magazine for the "Beauty without Cruelty" Society)

"OLD JOHN THE HERMIT"

Old John the Hermit climbed up the hill;  
He was weary and footsore, tired and ill;  
He was old and weary, ragged and poor,  
As he came up the hill, to Heaven's door;  
The door stood open, but narrow and straight,  
And St. Peter stood at the wicked gate.  
As each one came he opened it wide,  
And checked their names as they went inside.

Old John stood aside for his coat was torn,  
And he looked at his boots all patches and worn.  
But Peter called him to come to the gate,  
"And give me your name, to keep the book straight.  
"We pay no heed to the clothes that you wear,  
For once you're in Heaven there's plenty to spare.  
Poverty, riches, creed and race -  
Here have no meaning, by Heaven's grace."

Old John the Hermit knew not what to say,  
For he'd never been christened, so he turned away;  
But Peter, well knowing what troubled his mind,  
Came over and stopped him, tender and kind:  
"I can still let you in - look - the door's opened wide,  
Just tell me the name of one friend who's inside:  
A welcome from parents, old friends - or old foes?  
Surely in Heaven there's one of those?"

Old John looked on, a sad smile on his face:  
"I never got on with the human race;  
I know naught of my parents, I ne'er had a wife;  
It seems I've no share in Eternal Life."  
St. Peter was puzzled, he scratched his old head.  
Then, "Ah! You've forgotten! Let us try," he said.  
And he called to the Herald: "Ho, pass the word down,  
For friends of Old John to make themselves know.

So the Herald blew once on his trumpet of gold,  
And all over Heaven his mighty voice rolled:  
"Is there anyone here who's a friend of Old John?  
Who's lived in the woods those sixty years gone?  
He waits at the gate - he whom one friend can save -"  
But Heaven was silent, as still as the grave,  
And never an answer came then to his call,  
For a friend of Old John, who'd no friends at all.

So Peter turned sadly, "We's done what we can -"  
Then he stopped as he looked at the bent old man.  
For over the hill came a far, faint sound,  
And a rustling and pattering from all around,  
But still no voice, while time stood still,  
Yet the faint sound grew clearer from over the hill,  
And Old John sobbed as he bowed his head,  
"I never thought my friends'd be here," he said.

Then out of their burrows and out of their holes  
Came sleepy dormice and chattering voles,  
Little brown rabbits and wide eyed hares,  
Soft little birds who'd been caught in snares,  
Spiky old hedgehogs and squirrels and mice,  
Little grey ducks who'd been trapped in the ice:  
All the small creatures he'd spent his love on  
Came racing and tumbling to greet Old John.

And over the hill with his ears pricked high,  
Barking and yelping as though he would die,  
Came the one who had made that far, faint sound:  
A little white dog, with nose to the ground,  
He came like the wind and he ran straight on,  
Into the arms of Old Hermit John.  
So many creatures you ever did see,  
All twisting and squoaking in ecstasy.

St. Peter? He laughed till his eyes were wet.  
He cried, "That's the best joke I've heard yet.  
No friends in Heaven, you thought? - Old John,  
You had the idea of Heaven all wrong;  
For love is Heaven, and Heaven is love,  
And to enter Heaven your love you must prove,  
With your creatures around you all doubt's at an end,  
Heaven's door is wide open. Come in my friend."

F.W. STRINGFELLOW.

\* \* \* \* \*

\*  
\* Are moths not living leaves  
\* Butterflies breathing flowers?  
\*  
\* The moth who walks on my hand,  
\* has a lion's mane  
\* with gold leaf paper wings.  
\* Antennae greetings, gently waving.  
\* Round and round  
\* he dances  
\* walzing a summer song  
\*  
\* Then,  
\* fluttering like a leaf, drawn backwards  
\*  
\* Home! home!  
\* to the light and the sun.  
\*

From Gwon, with love. Sunny Bank, Muddiford.

\* .....

\* It was unfortunate that the NORTH DEVON MOVEMENT had to  
\* cancel its Handicrafts Fair, which was arranged for the  
\* 31st of August. Very little interest was shown in the Fair  
\* by craftspeople, and the response just did not justify the  
\* hiring of the Queens Hall, Barnstaple. However, the North  
\* Devon Movement is now making plans to hold a big Fair near  
\* Christmas-time, so if you are interested in taking part,  
\* please let them know. Their address is on the Free Back  
\* Page service. The Christmas Fair will be open to all  
\* craftspeople, individuals and groups, even antique dealers,  
\* sellers of books, prints etc. Let's hope it will be a great  
\* success.  
\* .....

CAN YOU PLEASE HELP?? ??

\* Accommodation is URGENTLY required for young working  
\* couple. Anywhere in North Devon. Whole house or large  
\* self-contained flat. No children. Good references  
\* available.  
\* They are staying in one room at a friends house at the  
\* moment, but cannot stay there indefinitely.  
\* Please help if you can. Ring Barnstaple 5665 (Office hours)  
\* or write to J.L. Vigor, c/o 107 Pilton Street, Pilton,  
\* Barnstaple.  
\*

\* .....oooo00oooo,.....

Could it happen ? .... Was it really going to happen here in Devon ?  
 Yes ! it must happen.  
 The time is right, the place is superb.  
 Here in North Devon we're going to have the first whole earth fair.  
 Have we come here because we're tired of competition & materialism ?  
 Have we decided to live another way ? .....  
 Competition usually leads to conflict; competition produces with its fat wife capitalism oceans of things we're told we need, but don't really.  
 Acres of shoddy goods; tin can motorcars, badly built flats, cottonwool bread, concrete car parks, offices & motorways.  
 We're told we must keep moving round the country from city to city to get a higher wage..... if you want a house that is...  
 Where do you then live ?  
 In a house or flat with twenty other people who can't afford the astronomic rent or the 200 year mortgage.  
 Have you noticed how rents or house prices are highest where most money is being made.  
 We're tired of being used as consumer markets for goods we don't really like or need, to keep some distant profiteer in airline tickets.  
 So what do we do ? .... We move to the far South West.  
 Some of us were even lucky enough to be born here !  
 From now on we'll share our possessions; help each other; bake our own bread, grow our own food, make our own clothes, keep animals & bees,  
 Warm ourselves by the sun, build our own houses, use our skills and shared efforts to create what we need ..... only what we need.  
 The ideas and enthusiasm of a handful of pioneers, plus Greg's determination & vision, took root in the Spring.. by early Summer the green pushed through

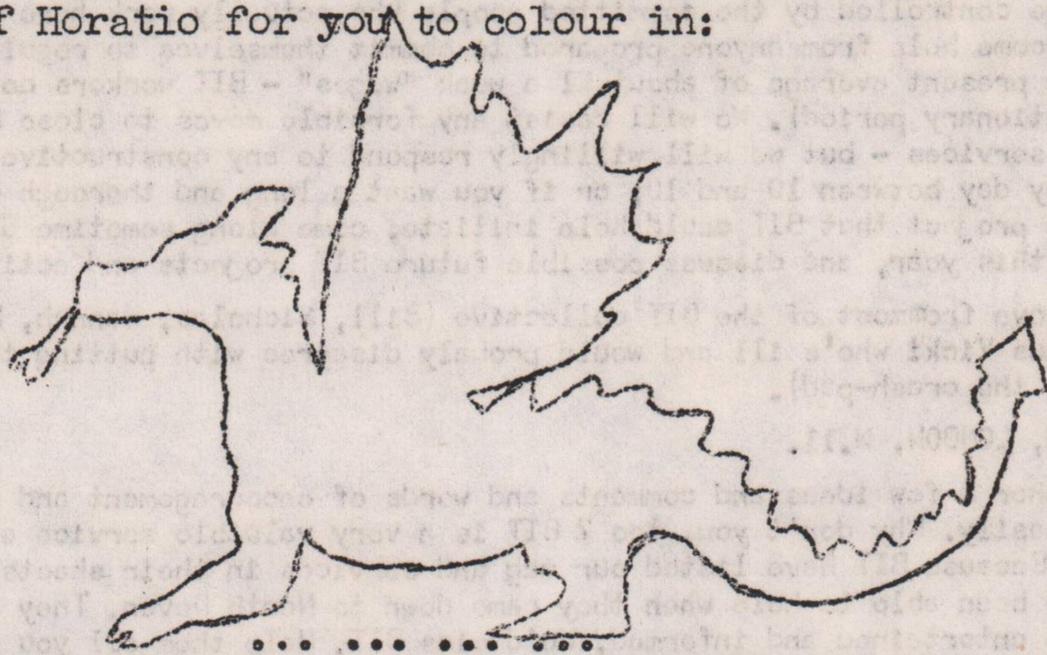
Trenchers start digging; the dome & the band stand take shape ... word is passed around ... ideas have become actualities.  
 "This is going to be wonderful."  
 The first day: some people rushing around still building primitive shelters of odd bits of timber & polythene.  
 Some have used local materials entirely; earth walls, conical timber framed roofs covered in turf and ferns.  
 Other people stand around looking slightly lost.  
 Trenches for organic waste & grease traps are nearly complete.  
 Someone might fall into the latrine trench.  
 So get some poles, suggests a volunteer .... From where ? say the others.  
 Well . . . . . trees ?  
 In the early evening the mixed sounds of talking, singing, cooking and hammering are suddenly eclipsed in a tidal wave of sound.  
 "Feel that sound !" cry the aural cripples.  
 Both wave and dark contract the hillside.  
 Wood fires light up oases, tented & faced.  
 Warm nests in a black sea night ; every nest different.  
 The all invading tidal wave striking through, eroding their difference saddens me ..... This communication can't be turned off !  
 In the morning bread making begins; aromas and wood smoke drift through the clear air, the sweet down air !  
 The purple sea below ... distant yet present ... near at hand, near your eyes, alive in your eyes ! ..  
 Your poet eyes steeped in the ocean's ancient harmonies.  
 Your reassuring level kiss shy lover ... by sky transformed, by wind moulded.  
 A tumbling, gorgeous, patchwork, erotic landscape, falling away to mysterious green combs; rising to browny blond coppery fields -  
 Wild herbs and flowers everywhere.  
 Huge black cauldrons of unknown steaming fluids.  
 In the lower field, a stove pipe flue sticks the sky.  
 The bread oven turfed at base glows in red orange embers; your hands kneading dough.  
 Stroll around; unpredictable people, their eyes meet more now.  
 Rarely condemning; the spirit has moved in.  
 May it overflow !  
 Eye to eye, eye to earth.  
 In the early afternoon two people sit down to make music near the dome.  
 Others join in like bees.  
 Soon their clapping drumming cross beats force dancers to their feet.  
 Spirit becomes sound, sounds make more, feeding the legs and hands and arms.  
 The crowd snakes the field, a spark becomes fire.  
 In this I love my kith and kin, the earth dwellers.  
 Patterns emerge like those of the cobalt ocean.  
 On the surging crests of distant waves, we are the tribes once more !



Here is a short story for you, written by Kate of Swimbridge:

"The dragon stirred and as he relinquished his scaly coils to the sunlight, he remembered. This was no ordinary dragon, this was Horatio - the bastard son of Mathilda and Horaco of the opposing McDonald and Campbell clans. But now, they were behind him and Horatio was alone and involved with his own personality. And what a morning it was! Below, the loch gleamed and the mountains that surrounded him were iron grey in the dawn sunlight. The dew-laden grass beneath him was cold and fresh, which set Horatio's body tingling in anticipation of the new day. On mornings like this, the past was irrelevant. He was living purely for the enjoyment of the present, for if he thought upon the dangers and decisions of the future, his life would be clouded. But there he was, lying in the sun on a beautiful morning, contemplating upon the ways in which he could bring to the world all his peace and love. He was a happy dragon. He was Horatio and prepared to live forever."

Here is Kate's drawing of Horatio for you to colour in:



No doubt many of you will have spent some time watching birds flying about near your home, or watched them as you travel about from place to place. Have you ever wondered about birds that migrate every year, that leave this country to travel thousands of miles to find warmer weather during our winter, when food is scarce? For thousands of years, people have watched the great yearly movements of birds and wondered about what makes them do it. Now we know that whole populations of certain species shift northwards and southwards with the seasons. Insect eaters take advantage of the bloom of food in northern countries in spring and summer, rear their young and then seek better areas when the weather turns harsher and makes their food scarce. Some land birds travel vast distances over the sea. The Pacific Golden Plover which nests in Alaska and Siberia wings its way 2,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean to Hawaii. (Can you find those places I've underlined, on a map?)

How many kinds of birds can you name? Can you also say what kind of food they eat? Here are a few names to start your list: SWALLOW : CUCKOO : STARLING : BLACKBIRD. There are thousands more! Although you won't see nearly that many species in a day!

You may have seen some birds bathing in water, but did you know that some kind take DUST baths? This probably helps to rid the body of unwanted parasites. Live lice have been taken from dust baths regularly used by chickens.

Please write to us and let us know what you would like to see on your page NEXT MONTH. We would also like to see your drawings, or any stories or poems that you write. If it's published, we will send you a FREE copy of "VOICES" for you to keep.





## FREE BACK PAGE COMMUNITY SERVICE

Information for this page always wanted. Personal and trade ads are all free.  
Ring Barnstaple 5665 or write to us at 107 Pilton St  
Barnstaple.

### Information Services, Societies, etc.

**VOICES SERVICES** will try to help with any problem. Contact VOICES Info/Help service by ringing Barnstaple 5665, calling round to 107 Pilton Street, Barnstaple, to Toadstool in Bideford and Barnstaple markets.

**FOR LEGAL ADVICE** call in the Coffee Bar, 108 Newport Road, Barnstaple. Open Thurs, Fri, Sun, Mon - 7-11pm. Sat 2pm-11pm or ring Barnstaple 5078 at any other time.

**THE SAMARITANS OF NORTH DEVON** will listen to your problems in complete confidence. In despair or suicidal? Ring Barnstaple 4343 - a 24 hour service for you.

**NORTH DEVON VOLUNTEERS** - serving the community in all sorts of ways. 6 Gammon Lane, Barnstaple 72158.

**NORTH DEVON MOVEMENT**: active group of people working for and in the area. Membership only 12½p from the Secretary at 107 Pilton Street, Barnstaple Bp1 5665. Write for a free copy of their newsletter, details of pamphlets etc.

**FRIENDS OF THE EARTH**: Sec.: Jill Connelle. Tel: Exeter 73954.

**CONSERVATION SOCIETY**: Devon Branch: Secretary, Jeff Pearson. Tel: Exeter 51329.

**TRANSPORT 2000**: Exeter Branch. Jeff Gale, 42 Northornhay St., Exeter 79447. Works to press for better public transport, especially railways and low-impact transport. Wants to open more footpaths, foot-streets and resist "nobility of labour" at all levels.

**SOUND AND LIGHT THEATRE**: Colour posters available. Unique theatre in music and colour. Contact David & Christine Sawyer, Knathorn, Morchard Bishop, Crediton. Tel: Copplostone 262.

**PAUL OLIVER** would like to hear from people interested in or committed to setting up a craft & conservation based communities. Contact at Dartington College, Totnes, Devon.

**PILTON ARTS & CRAFTS GROUP**. Art Centre, next to Pilton Church, Barnstaple. Permanent exhibition. Tutored and un-tutored classes, social activities. Contact the Secretary at "Coplw", Strand Lane, Ashford, Near Barnstaple.

**SHELTER**, local representative for this action group for the homeless is: George Harris, 9 Willow Tree Road, Rumsam, Barnstaple. Tel: Barnstaple 72337.

### BUYING : SELLING : ETC

**TOADSTOOL**: Records, cassettos & players bought & sold. Loons, T-shirts, jewellery, incense, Devon crafts, health foods, perfumes, books & mags. (Let us sell your goods). Market stalls at Barnstaple on Fri, Shop at Bideford Market (arcade) on Saturday with sounds and coffee. Lobster Pot Market on Sundays at Instow.

**THE GREEN DOOR**: Arcade Road, Ilfracombe. Devon crafts, bric-a-brac, books etc.

**GUITAR LESSONS** given by experienced teacher, patient with beginners. Folk & Classical. Terms: 35p solo, 20p group. Ring Bideford 4610.

**JOHN ARMSTRONG**, whose name does justice to his teeth, has his watch makers shop in Buttgarden Street, Bideford. For all your watch and clock requirements. Jewellery, curios, antiques also bought and sold.

**CLARION PRINTERS**: Posters, tickets, business cards, duplicating, typing. All at UNBEATABLE prices! 107 Pilton Street, Barnstaple. Telephone Barnstaple 5665 for a quotation or to place your order.

**PORCUPINES**: good bookshop. Member of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association. 19 Pilton Street, Barnstaple. Also at Bideford, Barnstaple and Lobster Pot (Instow) Markets. Books, prints, paintings, maps. Good selection of childrens' books, fiction, poetry, travel etc. etc. Write for a copy of their catalogue.

**THE BLIND OF DEVON** make beautiful basketware, knitware and much more. Contact John Hinman, Social Services Dept., County Hall, Exeter, Devon.

**SURF CHAT**; first edition NOW ON SALE! A new surfing magazine with news and views on surfing in North Devon. Plus 2 pages of photos. 5p plus 3p postage from Brian Adams, 176 Moreton Park Road, Bideford, North Devon. ON SALE IN TOADSTOOL.

**VERA GILSON**: Astrologer, Ethical Tarot Reader, Psycho Palmist, Numerologist, Clairvoyante. Lectures day or evening. Private readings by appointment. 14 Alexandra Road, Barnstaple. Telephone Barnstaple 5031 (STD Code 0271)

**COGNITO DISCO**: going "eeh, eeah! give over!" and asking for contributions. 3578ab Seag Lane Mows, Grimsby. Anytime after 6 on Thursdays. 5-day closing every seventh Wednesday in the month ending in "S".

### MAGAZINES : SERVICES : ACTION : ETC.

**CIRCLES**: Exeter mag. 10p from 40 Old Tiverton Road, Exeter.

**ARCADE**: Entertainments guide to Somerset, Bristol and Bath, also has local news, reviews, poems. 4 Ruborough Road, Bridgwater. Tel: Bridgwater 55384.

**BIT INFO/HELP SERVICE**: (See page 9 of this VOICES), 146 Groat Western Road, London, W.11. (01-229-8219). They need money to keep going. And they must keep going! Send your ideas, information, news etc.

**CONSERVUS**: Good inexpensive newspaper. Conservation & action towards better, more humane living standards for all human and other animals. From: Environment Office, Devonshire House, University of Exeter. 3p stamp for a copy.

**FREE BOOKS LIST** from Keith at 30 Haslemere Road, Crouch End, London N.8.

**RELEASE** for advice on the law. 1 Elgin Avenue, London W.9.

**UNCAREERS**, 298b Pershore Road, Birmingham 5. Directory of Alternative Work. Details of many community and self-help groups Tel: 021-440-4146.

**BIRMINGHAM PEACE CENTRE**: 18 Moor Street, Ringway, Birmingham B4 7UD, also NUTSHELL at the same address.

**BRITISH HOMEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION**: Homeopathy offers an alternative to heavily drug-based medication, treats the whole person. Practising homeopaths addresses from the Association at Basildon Court, 27a Devonshire Street, LONDON, WIN 1RJ.

**WEST HIGHLAND FREE PRESS**: Kyleakin, Isle of Skye. Phone Kyleakin 250.

**ROOTS**. Edinburgh mag. Also produces "Index", the radical directory. From 6 Lonsdale Terrace, Edinburgh 3 (Mail only)

**HELP** - 031-554-6908 (phone messages)

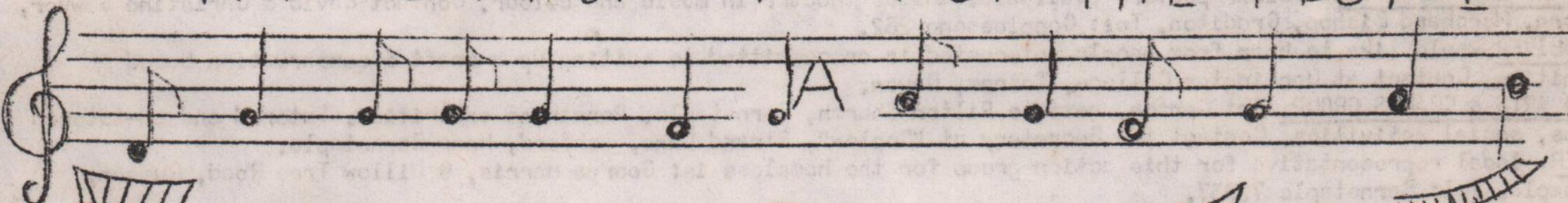
**CANNABIS ACTION REFORM ORGANISATION (CARO)**: 65 Edith Grove, London, SW 10. 01-352-8938.

ONCE AGAIN WE RUN OUT OF SPACE? SORRY TO ALL THOSE WE'VE HAD TO LEAVE OUT. LOCAL INFO ALWAYS NEEDED. BYE NOW \*

VOICES OF NORTH DEVON

PRESENT

BY POPULAR REQUEST A FAMILY  
EVENING OF LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT  
BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE PEOPLE OF  
THIS COMMUNITY - FOR THE PEOPLE



FREE CONCERT

OF POETRY - FOLK - SONG - ETC

AT THE GOOD OLD GOLDEN

SHALE CE

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DO COME & DO YOUR THING

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