

A Community Newsletter for KINNERSLEY-SARNESFIELD-LETTON-NORTON CANON-BROBURY STAUNTON-ON-WYE-MOUNINGTON-ON-WYE-MOORHAMPTON

NO. 40

SEPTEMBER 1985

PRICE 12p

# What's in a Book?

IF we take away all the second-hand experience we have gained through reading books we would be pale shadows of oursevles. If the only knowledge we had gained was through first-hand experience we would be sadly lacking. Books, magazines, papers - the written word - gives us the tool with which to be free. Language is the medium we use to think with and become human beings - each different, each with dignity.

The ability to read and understand language structures which rarely occur in spoken language is crucial to everyone, especially the young, who face a future which is rapidly being shaped and changed by that amazing invention - the micro-chip. A large solicitor's firm in London recently dispensed with its 25 office staff and replaced them with one highly trained secretary and a computor. The Fiat motor company has a new factory which employs 200 people where once it would have employed thousands. Computors and robots do the work now.

How can we help our children to live in a world which may well be fundamentally different from our own? The demand from industry is for an increasingly educated and skilled workforce - a workforce which is flexible and adaptable and, most important, able to solve problems in collaboration with others. The key to success lies in the ability to feel at home with the written word, whether it be printed on paper or displayed on a computor screen. It is not enough to be able to read out loud a few pages of a 'reading book;' it is not enough to be able to know one's sounds or be able to recognise a list of words. These are skills or techniques which might help us to read. But Reading is much more than that. It is about getting meaning from the print. The print is not the important thing - it is the meaning which the print conveys.

PLEASE NOTE THAT COPY FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF 'SIGNAL SHOULD REACH TRISANNA, STAUNTON-ON-WYE (PHONE MOCCAS 517) NOT LATER THAN THURSDAY. 12th SEPTEMBER.

In a recent study in Bristol, Gordon Wells found that the main reason why so many children were unsuccessful at school was because they did not know what books were for. They came to school having had little or no experience of books. Reading for these children simply becomes that strange, rather pointless activity whereby the teacher checks that they have practiced their pages. These children may learn the mechanics of reading, but they leave school confirmed in the belief that books have nothing to offer them. Reading is never seen as a means of exploring the world of ideas, facts, thoughts and feelings—just another lesson which happens at school. Gordon Wells, along with many others, has found that these children at 5 years are the same ones who, at 16, leave school with only a minimum of education.

Schools can do much to improve the situation by modifying their approach to reading and a number of government-backed reports have been published about the changes which can be made. But the most influential factor which can improve a child's prospects is a caring adult, be it parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or older brother or sister - a caring adult and a book. The best way to ensure that a child feels at home with books is to share one with him. A ten-minute story at least once a day will have more educational influence on a child than any other single thing.

Children who don't read learn approximately 200 new words a year. Children who do read, and read widely, anything from comics to adventure stories, from the T.V. Times to encyclopaedias, learn approximately 2000 words a year. It is not surprising that these are the children who are the most successful in educational terms.

It breaks my heart sometimes to meet children of 9, 10 and older who are frustrated, ignorant, and worst of all, demeaned by their inability to read. Learning to read has very little to do with intelligence, a fact which be surprising to some; it is to do with sharing books and knowing what they are for. For me, it is one of the most significantly human activities I can engage in.

So remember, parents: 'A book a day keeps the remedial teacher away!' or, as a child aptly put it recently: 'GET LOST - in a book.'

Noel Hewitt

#### STAUNTON-ON-WYE PLAYGROUP

The Playgroup's new room in Staunton-on-Wye school will be officially opened by

MR. P. TEMPLE-MORRIS MP

at 10 a.m. on Monday, 9th September.

Everybody welcome to attend from 9.15 a.m. onwards.

Coffee and biscuits.

It is so stupid of modern civilisation to have given up believing in the devil when he is the only explanation of it.

Mgr. Ronald Knox

#### FOR SALE

1 Portagas 13 kg Bottle -£12 - 'phone Moccas 449.

Single bedstead, wooden ends £10 - 'phone Bridge Sollars 659



IN the final paragraph of their article in the July 'Signal' entitled 'Narrow Boat Holiday,' Howard and Mairion Jones recommended anyone wishing to savour the atmosphere of canal travel to explore part of the Brecon and Monmouth Canal. The reason they mention this canal in particular is, of course, because it is the nearest one to Herefordshire - at least the nearest which is still navigable.

Although there were at one time canals in Herefordshire itself only traces of them remain today, and very few relics of the canal age survive in the county. The heyday of the canal era was from about 1790 till 1840, and during that period a network of waterways came into operation which ultimately covered practically the whole of England and Wales. Two of these waterways were built in Herefordshire and others were planned in the county which forone reason or another never came into being.

Before the canal age goods in Britain were transported mainly by packhorse or by barge along navigable rivers. Short canals were built over the years to link these rivers but the canal age did not really begin until 1759 when the third Duke of Bridgewater drew up plans for a large-scale canal between Worsley and Salford in Lancashire and appointed James Brindley, the leading canal engineer, to construct it.

Within a few years the canal concept swelled to proportions which equalled the similar 'railway mania' of the 1840s. Many of the canals built during this period were the brain-children of over-optimistic backers and were economically unsound from the start, and the two canals actually built in Herefordshire fell quite definitely into this category.

They were both authorised during the same year, 1791. The first was planned to run from Gloucester to Hereford and the company formed to construct it had authorised capital of £105,000. The other canal was intended to run from Leominster to the River Severn at Stourport and its company had authorised capital of £190,000. The object of both canals was chiefly to transport coal from the North Wales coalfields, and a similar canal was proposed to run from Abergavenny to Hereford as an extension of the Brecon and Abergavenny Canal, but this project never got off the ground and a horse tramway was built instead. (A similar tramway was built from Hay-on-Wye to Kington, commemorated by the Tram Inn at Eardisley.)

Before 1789 there was no canal north of Hereford and most commodities were transported up the Wye in small barges carrying about 20 tons. In theory, therefore, the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal should have been a viable prospect, but progress in construction was slow and it was not until 1845 that Hereford and Gloucester were finally linked. From Hereford to Ledbury the canal's course was roughly the same as that of the present-day railway. Beyond Ledbury it turned southward to Newent and this involved driving a tunnel through the high ground in the vicinity of Dymock. From Newent onwards the canal followed the Leadon valley to the Severn at Gloucester.

The Leominster canal never reached Stourport at all but fizzled out a few miles east of Tenbury. Connection with Stourport was eventually completed not by canal but by rail. Neither of the two canal companies ever paid a dividend to their long-suffering shareholders.

It was, of course, the advent of railways which sounded the death-knell of the canals, and by 1840 their day was almost over. Although many of them are still in operation today, mainly as a venue for narrow-boat enthusiasts, most of them have long since disappeared or survive merely as short stretches of weed-choked, stagnant waterway.

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal virtually succumbed in 1881 when the section between Ledbury and Gloucester was closed and a railway (now also closed) built on its track. Nevertheless its course can still be traced in places and is marked on the 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey map. One or two stretches - notably at Monkhide near Stretton Grandison - still contain water, or did last time I visited them. Water-filled stretches of the Leominster Canal still also exist, chiefly between Leominster and Orleton, marked on the map as Main Ditch.

As Howard and Mairion Jones pointed out in their 'Signal' article, a canal boat holiday is the perfect answer for anyone seeking peace and quiet and leisurely travel through unspoiled countryside. In addition the canal towpaths make excellent walking country as they are, of course, perfectly level throughout. During one of the few fine spells we have so far enjoyed this summer I walked for several miles along the towpath of the Grand Union Canal near the famous Foxton locks in Leicestershire and thoroughly enjoyed steeping myself in the atmosphere of a more tranquil and leisurely age.

### Bibliography

Charles Hadfield - 'British Canals' (7th edition, 1984)
David and Charles.

- 'The Canals of South Wales and the Border' (2nd edition, 1967) David and Charles.

Plump oven-ready ducklings. Tel: Anne Cole, Weobley 318260.

Sirs, I have tested your rachine, It adds a new terror to life and makes death a long-felt want.

(Actor-manager Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree to a gramophone company who asked him for a testimonial)

### STAUNTON-ON-WYE NOTES

# STAUNTON-ON-WYE FORGET-ME-NOT

The club had one of the bast days in July for its trip to Minehead. The bus was full and the journey most enjoyable. We called at the Gardenia Restaurant near the Severn Bridge on the way and after having lunch on arrival we spent a very nice afternoon on the sea front. Mrs. Jones was unlucky enough to have a fall, but fortunately she seems none the worse for it. We arrived home at about 9.30 p.m. and there had been no rain either in Minehead or Staunton.

Our next trip will take place in October. So far we haven't decided where to go, but we hope for another special day.

#### ALEXANDRA ROSE DAY

Collections in Staunton-on-Wye for Rose Day amounted to £31.30 and for the whole county £3106.25.

Most of the collection wasin aid place her by a rota of volunteer of the blind and we thank every- cleaners. one who contributed.

#### P. McCann

Bert Brown has ben taken to Ashmoor in Kingswood for convalescence after his recent illness and we hope he will make good progress.

We were very grieved to hear of the death of Mrs. Rita Williams and we send our condolences to Bill and family in Southport.

#### STAUNTON-ON-WYE AIR RIFLE CLUB

We are looking for new members. If you are interested either come along on Tuesday nights at 8 p.m. in the Village Hall, commencing on September 10th, or ring Hereford 269184. Rifles are supplied.

#### STAUNTON-ON-WYE PLAY GROUP

The committee of Staunton-on-Wye Playgroup would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone who participated in the conversion of the old school kitchen into a new room for the playgroup, which will commence on 4th September.

They would also like to thank Mrs. Jane Bryan and Mrs. Joy Trumper for their devoted time and hard-working efforts to make the project possible.

The official opening will be on Monday, 9th September at . 10 a.m. and everyone is welcome to come along.

Mrs Percy Jones has recently relinquished the job of cleaning the church at Staunton-on-Wye. She has carried out this task single-handed for over twelve years and the Farochial Church Council extend their grateful thanks to her for her devotion to the job. They are hoping to replace her by a rota of volunteer cleaners.

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Lines written in anguish by Mairion Jones-temporarily constant to a wheelchair with a broken leg.

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This is Gareth
And my purpose you can guess An article for Signal;
Two hundred words or less.
You choose the subject matter
It matters not a jot
So long as by tomorrow
Your effort I have got. (ouch)

Well, cheers now my dear, I hope you're feeling fine, Give my regards to Howard, Now I must get off this line.

The telephone receiver
At last I put it down
And sat for several minutes
Upon my face a frown.
I took my pen and paper
My biscuit and my tea
Sank back into an armchair
With my glasses - now let's see....

Shall I write about my teaching? Or my childhood spent in Wales? My life in Norton Canon? The imagination fails....

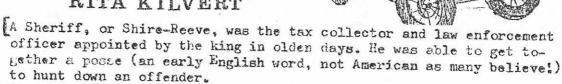
I awoke to irate voices
'Oh Mum, you are a creep
You haven't writ a single word
Instead, you've been asleep!

I am so sorry Gareth
I've tried, I've really tried,
But all my good ideas
Are locked away inside.
So an article for Signal'
I'm afraid you have not got
But this little bit of doggarel
Indeed, a lot of rot!
But maybe it will cover
A space, or little line
And encourage other writers
To do better work than mine!

(Old Chinese proverb say 'Woman with broken leg in plaster should keep writings to herself.)

Mairion Jones

A day in the life of ...



The duty of to-day's sheriffs is more ceremonial, the civil law enforcement side of the job being carried out by an under-sheriff, appointed by the sheriff, who is responsible for the work of the bailiffs, and, of course, the criminal law by the police force. One duty of the sheriff is to attend executions but, fortunately for me, capital punishment was not in use during my term of office: In Canterbury it was traditional to elect a new sheriff each year, the office going to the most senior councillo r who had not previously been sheriff.

The day dawned clear and bright - just the weather for a garden party. The children were excited as they had been included in the invitation to the garden party at Broadstairs.

The morning was spent on last minute preparations, I still had the buttons to sew onto my matching dress and coat outfit - (Why do I always have to finish my dressmaking in a rush?) bought the material from the market at least a fortnight beforehand to be sure to have it ready! Then we had to clean and polish the car - it had to look as smart as us.

After an early lunch everyone washed and changed for the event. Ross, aged 9, looked very smart and grown-up in hig high-fashion flower-power shirt and matching tie and a beige velvet suit - (Noone would ever guess it was made from a remnant from the curtaining stall.) Lorraine, aged 7, looked very pretty and demure in her first shopbought dress, a white 'Swiss Maid' style with pretty ribbon trimmings. Strict instructions were givennot to get dirty as she rushed to show herself off to her friend next door. When I had dressed it was time to get out of its case, kept under the bed, the crowning glory to any outfit for an official engagement the chain of office. Solid silver shields linked by a heavy silver chain, and to bang from this, the most beautiful crest in enamelled silver - The crest of the City of Canterbury. This chain of office had been designed for men to wear - portly and well built men - not for my 5 foot tall size 10 frame. I always had to attach loops to the shoulders of my clothes to take the hooks I had stitched to the chain to prevent it from slipping forward and leaving the crest hanging in an undignified way somewhere around Shoulder pads were also essential in even the lightest my knees. clothes as the weight of all that silver (about 151bs) cut uncomfortably into me. Still, this was a small price to pay for the honour of wearing it.

We all piled into the car and Rod drove us down to Broadstairs. As we got near to 'The Lawns' where the garden party was to be held we were all surprised to see people lining the route and waving. We drove slowly along the narrow roads - police and traffic wardens were directing the cars. Rod signalled to turn

right to the 'Garden Party Car Park,' when a traffic warden jumped forward and directed us to a car park to our left. Rod wound the window down and started to explain - 'No you can't part there, it's private!' he was being told, when I leaned forward and said sweetly 'I believe that is where we are meant to park.' He looked into the car and saw the chain of office, and almost fell over himself in embarrasment and confusion as he realised his mistake, and we were directed to the correct car park.

The cars were all parked in neat rows along the sea wall, and as we stopped a policeman came over to open the car door and salute me as he held it open for me. I felt like royalty!

As we walked away from the car we all looked back secretly smiling - parked amongst all the Rolls Royces, Daimlers and Bentleys, our shining little green Morris 1000 Traveller looked as proud as any other car in the car park.

When we arrived at 'The Lawns' the Town Sergeant of Canterbury was already there and offered to take the children to the tea tent where all the town sergeants had gathered. It was his duty to escort the Sheriffs on civic occasions but acting as 'baby-sitter' did not really fall within his province. However, as this left Rod and me free to meet the other dignitaries invited from all over Kent, and the children enjoyed his company, we were happy to let him take them.

Do you know how a gathering of civic leaders breaks the ice at official functions? Well, they discuss and admire each other's Chains of Office - and of course, it was agreed that the Sheriffs of Canterbury's was the finest on this occasion!

A very hot afternoon was pleasantly passed chatting and drinking champagne when suddenly we noticed people were watching something going on in the centre of the garden. Murmurs of 'How sweet' and 'Aren't they lovely?' made us, and the couple we were talking with, - the Mayor and Mayoress of Hythe, -decide to see what was There, surrounded by an admiring crowd, were Ross, happening. Lorraine, and another little girl, the daughter of the Mayor and Mayoress of Hythe. They were giving an inexpert display of The velvet jacket and tie discarded, the once-white gynmastics. dress now grass-stained, and the other little girl equally dishevelled. Had they perhaps been sipping champagne? They were certainly showing-off as if they had, and they hadall obviously been thoroughly spoiled in the tea tent, as the tell-tale remains of strawberries on their faces and clothes clearly showed. Fortunately, they were not the only ones whose mood was relaxed by the champagne, and as everyone seemed to think it was an enchanting thing to have happen at the High Sheriff of Kent's Garden Party, and Mayoress of Hythe and I decided to just move away and leave them to their audience!

The sun was getting low in the sky as we walked away from 'The Lawns,' the children were quite sleepy, possibly the gymnastics but I think more likely the illicit sips of champagne. We collected our faithful car, now one of the last in the car park, and drove through the streets of Broadstairs where people still stodd to wave us on our way homewards. What an afternoon! and what a tale for the children to tell at school tomorrow!

### REUNITED AFTER HALF A CENTURY

A brother and sister who had not seen each other for nearly fifty years were recently reunited when Mr. Leo Becker of Staunton-on-Wye welcomed his long-lost sister Wereonika, who visited him at Staunton after they had been out of touch since the outbreak of war in 1939.

When the Germans invaded Poland on 1st September, 1939 Mr. Becker was serving in the Polish army and his sister was a school-girl. Like her brother, she is now married with a family, and she still lives in Poland, whereas he has lived in England since the end of the war.

The Beckers were a farming family from Brodnica in the north of Poland not far from Warsaw, in the part of the country which was occupied by the Nazis when Germany and Russia carved up Poland between then when the fighting ceased. Mr. Becker fell into the hands of the Russians when the Polish army disintegrated, but was eventually released and managed to make his way to Britain where he joined the Free Polish Army under the command of General Sikorski. He served throughout the war in Britain and France.

By the time the fighting was over he had lost touch with his family and although he knew that his father had died in Poland in 1941 and that his elder brother had been killed in Normandy he was never able to find out what had happened to his mother, although he believed that his two sisters were still alive somewhere in Poland.

It is only recently that, with the help of the International Red Cross, he has been able to make contact with his younger sister who, after many difficulties connected with visas and other formalities, has at last been able to come over to England to visit her brother in Staunton-on-Wye.

She arrived on 14th August and so, after nearly half a century, brother and sister are at last reunited.

#### WEDDINGS

Congratulations and best wishes to Terence Smith and Jean Ridge of Staunton-on-Wye, who were married at Staunton on the 15th June.

Congretulations and best wishes also to Stephen Jones of Creden-hill and Tina Layton of Monning-ton-on-Wye who were married at Monnington on the 6th July.

A politician is an animal who can sit on a fence and yet keep both ears to the ground.

H.L. Mencken

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## NORTON CANON LADIES' SOCIAL CLUB

WHAT a dreadful summer this has been! So when Mrs. Barbara Ridge invited Club members to a barbaque in her garden on the 5th August we feared the worst - that it would have to be cancelled, if not for rain then for wind.

In the event the day and evening proved to be above average. The barbeque grills were burning well by eight o'clock and Barbara's patio was soon filled with the chairs and chatter of about twenty members.

It was a delightful evening with food expertly cooked by Nora and John Medcraft, helped by Gwen Absolam, all of whom had helped Barbara with the preparations for such a big party. Of course, we were all wrapped up as if for carol singing at Christmas but no matter; a cheer and vote of thanks to all involved in an unexpected August meeting.

The September meeting, Monday the 9th, will be at Norton Canon Village Hall at 8 p.m. There will be an interesting talk by a representative of Pleasance and Harper (Hereford) Ltd., the jewellers. Refreshments and raffle as usual.



I am just going to pray for you at St. Paul's, but with no very lively hope of success.

Rev. Sydney Smith

His money is twice tainted: 'tain't yours and 'tain't mine.

Man is the only animal that blushes - or needs to.

Mark Twain

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#### RECIPE

#### WINTER CORDIAL

Ingredients:

- 4 desertspoons fine oatmeal
- 1 lemon
- 2 desertspoons demerara sugar
- teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 quart boiling water

Mix oatmeal, sugar and ground ginger together in a basin. Grate the rind of the lemon and gradually pour in boiling water, stirring the whole while. Put in a pan, add lemon juice and simmer for 10 mins. Strain and serve hot.

### READER'S LETTERS

It seems to have become a habit for 'Signal' to accept articles without a proper signature, and with only a pseudonym. general articles this may be an amusing literary device, but when they stoop to personal and pointed criticism of a specific individual who has previously published signed articles himself, thought and propose that, as a general it seems to us that the 'Signal' is being used in an unpleasant way by people who wish to criticise but do not wish to put their name to that criticism. We are, of course, referring to the 'Country Dweller' of the last issue.

Could not the Signal make it its policy in the future to accept only properly signed articles for publication?

> Noel and Elizabeth Hewitt Thatch Cottage, Norton Canon.

I was interested in the continuing discussion on conservation and country matters in the August 'Signal.'

For many membhs now I have understood that the 'Signal' wanted to publish controversial matters of local interest to provide stimulating reading.

The original article was therefore appropriate. The article in the August issue coyly signed 'A Country Dweller' seems to use an unnecessarily personal attack.

I would not be writing had the matural courtesy of a signature rean observed.

Sara Higginson

TITORIAL COMMENT :-

You may or may not be in sympathy with the views expressed in the above. latters because, as is so often the case, there is usually another side to the issue. In most cases 'Signal' would prefer contributors to sign off with their own names but we feel that, if we

were to make this a cast-iroh rule, a serious falling-off in both the quality and quantity of contributions would result. For many a good 1 ason there are some who genuinely wish to avoid any personal publicity, so why should they be discouraged from writing?

We have given the matter considerable rule, anonymity will be the right of all who wish to comment on any subject of general interest, e.g. travel, personal experiences, folklore, hobbies etc., but if the article pertains to contentious issues or identifiable people or places, the author's name must be appended. If we have inadvertently offended any of our readers please accept this apology.

Conservation as an issue will be with us always but, for an interval anyway, correspondence on this subject must now close

Through the Signal' I would like to thank everyone who supported the Cheese and Wine on Saturday, 10th August at Bulmers Lake.

We raised £225 and now have £325 in the 'Pat Austen Fund'. I would especially like to thank everyone who helped for their hard work on the night, Bulmers for allowing us the use of the beautiful setting of the Lake and orchards and John and Margaret Worle who made it possible.

We look forward to your support and help with future events.

> Eve Lane 4 Kitty's Lane, Norton Canon,



# Church Motices

Services during September

#### Sarnesfield

8th 10 am Holy Communion - special preacher Revd Alan Betteridge (Bible Society)

22nd 10 am Morning Prayer

#### Norton Canon

1st 9 am Holy Communion 8th 9 am Morning Prayer - special preacher Revd Alan Betteridge (Bible Society)

15th 9 am Holy Communion 22nd 9 am Family Service

#### Staunton

1st 11 am Holy Communion 8th 11 am Morning Prayer 15th 11 am Holy Communion

#### Byford

1st 9.30am Holy Communion
15th 6.30pm Special Thanksgiving
Evensong with Hereford
Church Singers

#### Monnington

8th 9.30am Holy Communica

#### Letton

8th 11 em Family Communion 29th Harvest Festival - preacher Canon Austin Masters.

(Flease Ac's charge of date from that announced in the last Quarterly News Sheet. The preacher will be Mr Christopher Whitmey of Fownhope, a least call mamber of General Synod, as a service will be followed by a Flagaman's Supper).

Sandar 5th Musical Evening with Sandar and Army Songaters at Weobley Charter in aid of the Bible Society

Section 17th Norton Canon PCC

Section 17th Norton PCC

Section 17t

### BIRTHDAYS

A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

#### Norton Canon

Julian Lane	9th	Sept
Timothy Absolam	llth	11
Mark Ridge	16th	77
Lance Deem	21 st	17
Thomas Absolam	23rd	11
Michael Cole ) Peter Cole )	26th	. 17

#### Kinnersley

Hannah Corbett 21st Sept

#### Letton

Abigail Gill 29th Sept

#### Sarnesfield

Lyndon Synock 15th Sept

#### Moorhampton

Julia Price 7th Sept Rodney Evans 17th "

#### Staunton-on-Wye

Shelly Andrews Matthew Powles	3rd 12th	Sept
Jenny Bradshaw Lesley "	20th	11
Michael Smith	21 st	11

#### Brobury

Timothy Bulmer 29th Sept

When your friend holds you affectionately by both hands you are safe, for you can watch both his.

Ambrose Bierce

Little girl (to visitor coming for the weekend) 'We are all so glad you have come to see us. Only this morning at breakfast Daddy said to Mummy that you were all he needed.'

# COUNTRY AND WESTERN



with

LOUISIANA'



at Staunton-on-Wye village hall

on 11th October

8--late

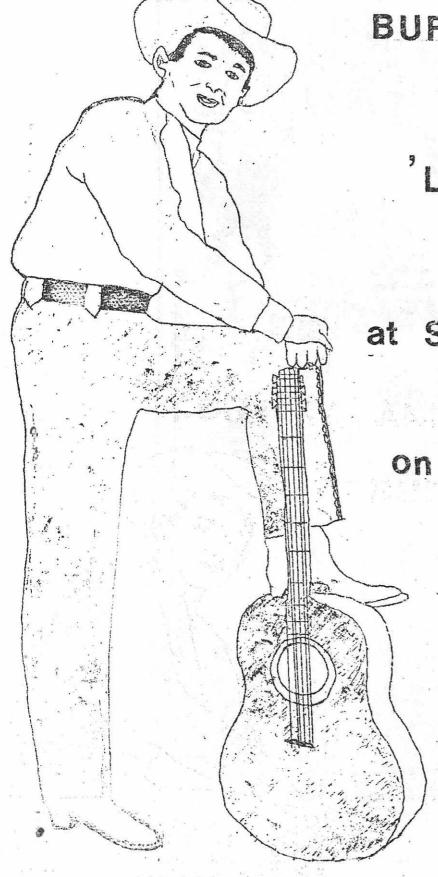
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