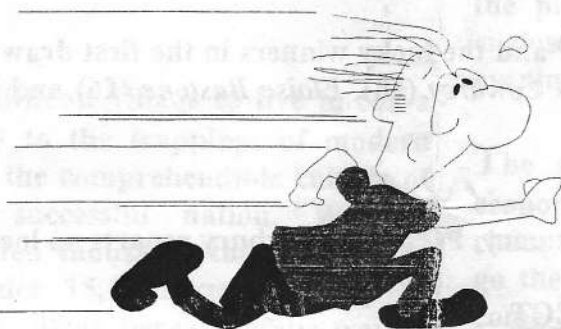


# GRAPES

SPRING - 1997



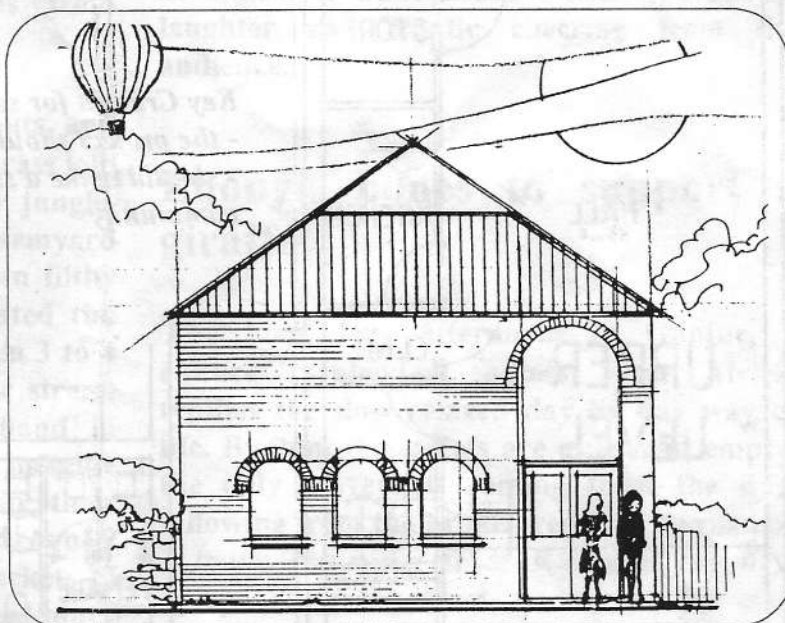
**SUNDAY  
JUNE 15th**

*Yes the Agony Run returns for 1997 ..... with a BIG difference!*

The countdown has begun on this year's fund-raising event which is solely devoted to supporting the New Hall Fund, which currently stands at just over £10,000. Work is currently being undertaken to develop a bid for funding from the "21st Century Halls" fund established by National Lottery support and run by the Millennium Commission.

The Ladies' fete is being combined with the Agony Run which will be held by kind permission of the Parsons' in their field.

Full details in this edition.



# GREAT HINTON

# Great Hinton News .....

## EDITORIAL

1997 promises to eclipse all previous Runs with an adventurous combination with the Ladies Fete and more attractions, all being held in a new location. Success will provide significant boost to the Village Hall Funds and clearly demonstrate to the funding agencies the Village's community spirit and enthusiasm.

In 1996 the village provided assistance to Anthony Putt & Russell Crumpler who took the opportunity to spend part of their time between school and university experiencing different cultures and countries on limited budgets. Their accounts are published in this edition.

### 100 CLUB Winners

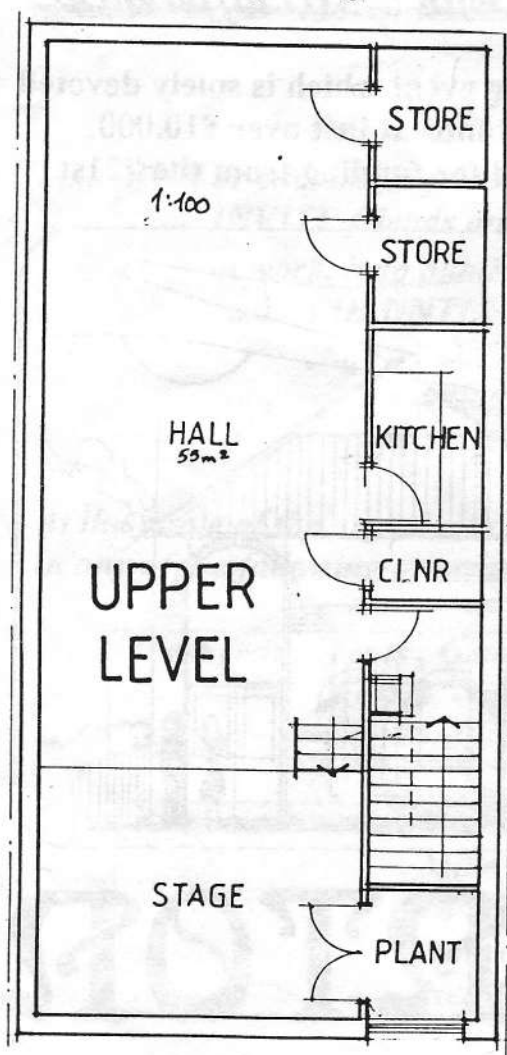
86 people have taken tickets this year and the lucky winners in the first draw were *Mike Evans* (£15), *Carolyn Haynes* (£10), *Graham Cowdrey* (£8), *Eloise Bastone* (£6) and *Spencer Newman* (£4).

### NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Other than a break-in in Keevil in January, PC Mark Newbury reports no local activity.

### THE NEW VILLAGE HALL PROJECT

Chris Munday is heading up this project being run by the Village Hall Committee and thanks to Chris for organising the recent exhibition. The proposal is for a new hall on the existing site.



*How much will it Cost?*

£80,000

*Where the funding coming from?*

The Village £15,000

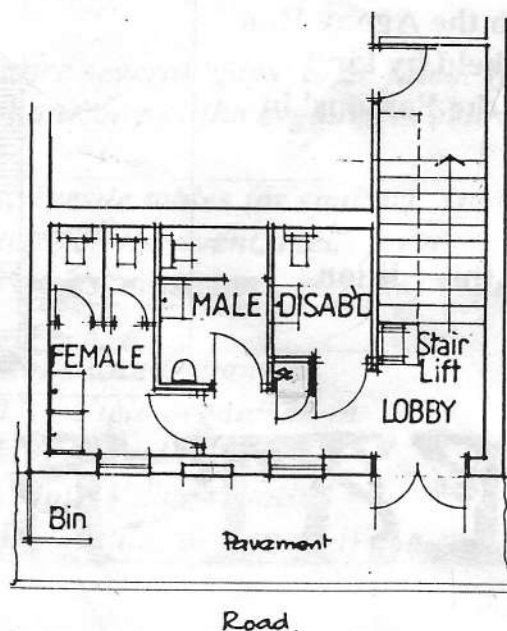
LOTTERY £45,000

Wilts C.C., West Wilts

D.C. & Others £20,000

*Key Criteria for selection include:*

- the project should be well supported by the community
- should make a substantial contribution to the life of the community



LOWER  
LEVEL



## Great Hinton News .....

### Life in Gunjur is unlike any other experience .....

As some of you will know I returned to Great Hinton last August after a rewarding year in a rural village on the coast of The Gambia in West Africa. I taught basic science to three classes and acted as form tutor to Class 8 Darboe in the local school. At the end of the year I took the opportunity to travel around Ghana.

Gunjur is a difficult village to live in for a westerner used to the trappings of modern day living and the comprehensible culture of a rich and successful nation. With a population of ten thousand, the majority of whom are under 15, Gunjur can only be described as a village because of its way of life. Thanks to a coastal economy the village is cosmopolitan, with a rich spread of immigrants from across the dark continent and beyond; fisherman from the west coast - Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria; mysteriously swathed men from Mauritania in North Africa; powerful businessmen from Zaire and Zimbabwe; Hindus from India ; aid workers from America and nuns from Ireland.

Put away visions of rustic mud huts and barefoot tribesmen, naked but for a grass loin cloth, hunting wild animals in the jungle. Imagine instead a large collection of farmyard barns, whitewashed occasionally, when filthy with grime, roofed with hot corrugated tin. Imagine sprawling families living often 3 to 4 to each room. Imagine women in the streets washing mountains of clothes by hand in stitched and repaired plastic buckets. Imagine dirty wells, mosquitoes breeding in their depths, surrounded by black female faces of 9 years old or younger. Hauling up buckets of muddy water, inhabited by the odd savoury delight of a worm wriggling away from the light, is a daily chore. Imagine colour, bright sunlight, an ancient lifestyle of sitting back and living for the moment and this is Gunjur.

Night falls quickly near the equator. On the bulge of West Africa the light will fizzle from bright sunlight to moonlit darkness in 30 minutes. In Gunjur, but for the odd, loud, smoky petrol generator and the glowing lamps of poorly lit torches all is black after 8pm all year round. There are no street lamps and no switches on the wall. Hundreds of candles flicker behind meshed windows, cigarettes bob up and down in the street and the pleasant drift of fumes from the glass enclosed oil lamps can be caught on the gentle evening breezes.

The street vendors, part of the 'informal economy', a western categorising label, change their patterns just after dusk. Away go the rice, vegetables and fish platters. Out come the bowls of roasted peanuts, piles of green oranges, juicy mangoes and on a fortunate evening, sugared biscuits, which mark the opening of the open air cinema. 1970's Kung Fu, recent Swarzeneger or 3 hour Arabian epics usually top the bill. The projector is fuzzy and the music booms but the atmosphere tops anything ever shown in The Palace, Devizes. The bad guys go down in a hail of bullets and standing ovations, laughter and frantic cheering from the audience.

### Enough bones to support a giraffe!

The long, lazy afternoons in Gunjur, a culture resplendent across West Africa, typifies the slow relaxed day by day way of life. By 2pm the streets are quiet and empty, the only movement coming from the dust billowing from the broken red laterite road or a truck returning from Kartung, the next village along the coast, a day out for even hardened travellers. The 3rd daily prayer over, Mecca will not beckon until the heat begins to break in several hours time. Apart from the mad dogs, most people are in the cool shade of the mud, palm roofed homes or

# Great Hinton News .....

the more fashionable but oven like, corrugated houses. Rice is the staple diet and mid afternoon, similar to any other mealtime, is the time to eat it. On special occasions there will be a good sized fish or even meat and vegetables aplenty. Most days there is a tonne of rice and a few bonga fish; tasty, cheap but with enough bones to support a giraffe!

Gunjur middle school would fail to reach the lowest category in the recently published primary school league tables. School fees are relatively expensive and most children, who often continue their education at Gunjur into their twenties attend only to avoid heavy manual work in the fields. The teachers are under qualified, underpaid, can often barely speak English and have one method of teaching - dictation and a heavy stick. The classrooms have blackboards and chalk. There is basic science equipment, just two kits for the entire school of 600 pupils, containing a range of beakers, instruments and chemicals. One microscope makes up the most complicated piece of technology. One manual typewriter serves the entire school administration.

## Mr Demba had obviously lost his marbles

One thing Gunjur Middle School does have is character and bundles of it. Each morning heralds assembly under the trees outside the headmaster's office. The national anthem is sung unfalteringly and without failure, followed by the daily words of wisdom from staff on duty. One morning Mr Geeba, the art teacher, who could obviously could not speak any French and very little English, stood up to read French poetry. After 10 minutes of barely comprehensible ramble the mood amongst the pupils, standing in the growing heat, had turned full circle and they were blatantly ignoring his ramblings. Even the teachers were carrying on their conversations regardless. Mr Geeba leapt from the stage, ripped a branch from the nearest tree and trapped in a filthy rage, began beating anyone

in the audience that looked vaguely guilty. This was the first week of the new academic year and my first introduction to Gunjur Middle School.

Mr Demba, another strange teacher, usually failed to turn up to classes, and often missed the beginning of term by two or three weeks. Before being finally asked to leave he was apparently one of the schools better maths teachers. More than once I saw Mr Demba teaching to his class with personal stereo headphones either side of his big, black, bearded head. In the first term Mr Demba, dressed in grubby white robes, confidently told me that he was a personal friend of Richard Nixon and had spent the first few weeks of term with Nixon's family in America! He also told me that he had every intention of changing his name to Reece, spelled with three e's! Over the previous summer Mr Demba had obviously lost his marbles. It took Gunjur Middle School almost six months to let him go.

Life in Gunjur is unlike any other experience. No-one can prepare you for the sights, sounds, smells and anxieties and emotions that characterise this totally different environment. Nothing can be related to; the language, the climate, the culture, the people, the food, the roads are all totally strange. At first everything seems backward and illogical but in hindsight I am beginning to understand these differences. At times I struggled to remain in Gambia for the whole year but it has been the best year of my life and Gunjur will always be a special place.

Thank you for supporting me through a fantastic year.

Anthony Putt

*I worked for the charity 'the Marlborough Brandt Group'. For further information please get in contact with them at the address below:*

*MBG, 1a London Road, Marlborough*



# Great Hinton News .....

## Peru and Bolivia

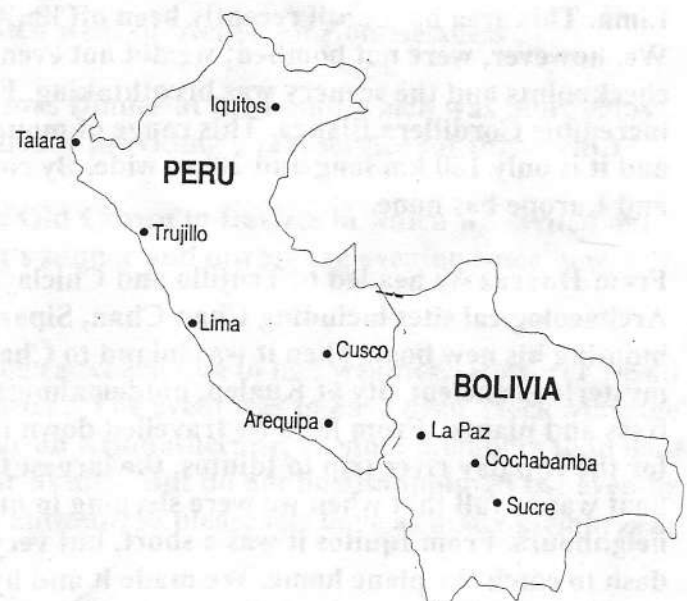


Arriving in a large overcrowded and grotty city in the middle of the night is not exactly the best way to start a three month trip through a small part of South America. By the time we had used our halting Spanish to get a taxi and check into a hostel, that did not even begin to live up to the one star it boasted, we had decided to get out of Lima, Peru's capital, as soon as possible. To be fair the city was not that bad in places but it was not until we returned more than six weeks later that we discovered some of Lima's classier districts and the brand new Macdonalds.

Richard and I had chosen to come to Peru, and to a lesser extent Bolivia, for several reasons. The main point of the trip was to visit the huge wealth of archaeological sites that the countries had to offer. Some of these can only be seen from the air, such as the amazing 200m long geoglyphs in the Nazcan desert depicting a huge variety of animals from whales to microscopic spiders scraped into the desert, as well as geometrically perfect lines and shapes miles long. Ancient sites such as Machu Picchu nestling in the mountains and at the finish of the four day Inca trail hike. Other sites such as Tiwanhuaco and Sacsayhuaman, are at the centre of a convention shattering debate suggesting that civilisation existed before the last ice age<sup>NB</sup>. Apart from these and other sites such as Chan Chan the worlds largest adobe brick city the countries have so much more to offer. For example Peru, which is five times the size of Great Britain contains over 85% of the worlds differing types of identified ecological zones. The world's second largest chain of mountains, The Andes, rises up from the coastal desert strip, which is the driest in the world ( it is the northern section of Chile's Atacama desert ). To the East of the Andes, which reaches over 6000m in places, is the Amazon Jungle. It is here that most of the countries flora and fauna is found. Peru is home to some 1700 species of bird , more than twice the number found in Europe, Australia or North America. Bolivia offers attraction that are similar and just as astounding.

So what did we do?

Well in brief we got out of Lima as quickly as possible and headed down the coast to the Nazcan desert ( we arrived about a month before the Earthquake). Here we had a stomach churning flight over the Nazca lines and then headed inland to Arequipa. Around Arequipa we saw sights such as The Colca Canyon, debatably the world's deepest, smoking volcanoes and the Andean Condor, Definitely the world heaviest flying bird at around 10 kilos. We also drove to a point that, at 4820m above sea level, was higher than anywhere in Europe, so as to gaze at a valley full of volcanoes. From Arequipa we headed inland to Lake Titicaca, Tiwanahuaco and Bolivia.



## Great Hinton News .....



### MACHU PICCHU

The Lake, at a height of 3820m above sea level, is the worlds largest being over 200miles by 150 miles. Among the things we did in Bolivia was to visit La Paz, the world's highest capital at 3645m and walk the incredible Takesi trail. During this hike we traversed the snowline heading down into the high jungle and cloud forest where hummingbirds danced in front of our faces and birds of prey flew within metres of us.

From the Lake we headed inland to Cusco by train ( it only derailed once on the way ). Here we saw the remains of the Inca Empire's heartland, walked the Inca Trail, visited Machu Picchu (above) and got very drunk in a Pub run by an Englishmen, two nights running.

From Cusco we left the Tourist circuit heading through the Central Peruvian highlands to Lima. This area had, until recently been off limits to foreigners because of Terrorist activities. We, however, were not bombed; we did not even have to pay any bribes to get through the checkpoints and the scenery was breathtaking. From Lima we headed North to Huaraz and the incredible Cordillera Blanca. This range of mountains contains 57 peaks over 5700m in height and it is only 180 km long and 20km wide. By contrast North America has three such peaks and Europe has none.

From Huaraz we headed to Trujillo and Chiclayo . Here we saw a huge variety of Archaeological sites including Chan Chan, Sipan and Tucume where Thor Herydahl is building his new boat. Then it was inland to Chachoypayas and a five hour climb to the mysterious ancient city of Kualep, hidden almost in the clouds and completely overgrown with tress and plants. From here we travelled down into the jungle catching a small banana boat for the two day river trip to Iquitos, the largest town in the world not accessible by road. The boat was so full that when we were sleeping in our hammocks our elbows would touch our neighbours. From Iquitos it was a short, but very delayed flight to Lima Airport and a mad dash to catch the plane home. We made it and by 10.00 pm on Christmas Eve I was sitting in the Linnet enjoying my first proper pint in three months.

# Great Hinton News .....

So there you have it, my trip to Peru and Bolivia. It was without a doubt one of the best experiences of my life, despite the odd bout of diarrhoea and a few unwholesome Peruvians. If anybody does want to find out more about my little adventure or even wants some advice for their own trip to Peru I am around until early May. I also have a complete set of photos with descriptions that people are welcome to have a look at. At the moment I am aiding in the construction of about 1000 mattresses a week to fund my next trip to Syria, Jordan and Egypt in May. By the time I get back I hope to have a really good tan and to have seen a few more interesting places.

Russell Crumpler.

NB. If anyone is interested in finding out more about the possibilities of Hanncock's civilisations before the last ice age I recommend the reading of Graham *Fingerprints of the Gods*. From the point of view of a History student and someone who has seen some of the sites mentioned he makes some very good points and the book is fairly east reading.

## LADIES CLUB

We have had yet another interesting year, starting with the Fete in July which raised £350 for 'The Trowbridge Contact Centre'. This is a centre which enables separated partners to be with their children under a roof instead of having to be out in all weathers. It also enables supervised visits between the children and their parents.

Our meetings began in September with an evening of filling shoe boxes with gifts and necessities for children in war torn countries such as Bosnia and Romania. These were then delivered all over the world by the 'Operation Christmas Child' organisation.

In October we learnt some fascinating facts about English Cheeses from Mr Barnett of Steeple Ashton. This was followed in November by a demonstration of 'Scandinavian Tapestry Weaving' by Elizabeth Holmgard. She is a very talented lady and has tapestries hung in several well known places.

The carol singing in December raised £72 which went to 'Action on Homelessness'.

As usual there was a good turn out for our Xmas Dinner at the Lamb which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. (Thank you to husbands for providing a taxi service for this event.)

In January there was a skittles evening at the Old Crown in Devizes to which we invited our husbands. We all enjoyed a good ploughman's supper and during the evening some new talents were discovered.

Unfortunately our February meeting had to be cancelled due to bad weather. However we all piled into Audrey's home and had a good chatter! The event was to have been 'Neck Massage' by Mrs Hawtin who had spoken to us last year on Aromatherapy, so more members than usual turned up. (Audrey managed to find seats for us all!) But do not be disappointed the evening has been rescheduled for the next year in the autumn, so please lets have as many members as possible for this session.

Finally in March our husbands were allowed to join us yet again for our Gourmet evening



# Great Hinton News .....

when we were entertained by Michael Walden from Keevil who showed slides and talked about his sailing trips to the 'Festival of the Sea' in Bristol last May and then to Iceland later in the summer.

Our final meeting this year is the AGM and Bring and Buy on Wednesday 16 April at 8.00pm.

Village Hall AGM - 8 p.m. on 7th May. All are most welcome.

## THE EVENT

**When:** Sunday 15th June starting at 11:30

**Where:** Parson's Field (on the left handside going out of the village to Steeple Ashton)

**Events:** Agony Run (Start/Finish in the field) + Tug-of-War Competition

**Refreshments:** Barbecue, Beer Tent, Teas, Cakes

**Stalls:** Car Boot Sale, Raffle, Skittles, Bottle Stall, Cake Stall, Flower arrangement tombola,

**Attractions:** Steam train, Bouncy Castle, Maypole dancing, + many more to be arranged.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

..... ***RUN** or encourage friends or relatives to run*

..... ***INVITE** friends and family to the village for a great day out, mention it at work, help publicise the event locally.*

..... ***VOLUNTEER** your services on the day or in the lead up*

..... ***CONTRIBUTE** cakes, bottles, raffle prizes. items for the village car boot*

..... ***ATTEND** on the day*

*At this stage of the organisation there are several 'gaps' to be filled. If you can assist in any of the following areas please phone one of the organisers below.*

***We Need:** Tents , Generators, Trestle tables (or similar), Sponsorship for medals, Celebrity to open the event, ideas for more attractions (e.g. craft stalls, displays, musicians, etc), Raffle prizes.*

***Who to contact:** Kevin (870906) - Run Organiser  
Mike (870607) - Field organisation  
Diane (870519) - Food & Drinks  
Audrey (870586) - Village Stalls  
Neil (870153) - Skittles & Tug-of-War*