



## YOUNG ARCHER

# Harvest Home

By Diana Cormack

*Harvest home, harvest home,  
We have ploughed, we have sowed,  
We have reaped, we have mowed,  
We have brought home every load.  
Hip! Hip! Hip!  
Harvest-home!*

In the olden days, farmers and farm workers (which included women and children) celebrated at the end of harvesting when the harvest was safely home and stored in the barns. They sang, danced and feasted on the farms and held services of thanksgiving in the churches, not only because all that hard work was over, but also because they had enough provisions to keep them going through the winter months.

But they were also thinking of the following year. Farmers used to leave a row of wheat uncut because they believed that it would make a home for Ceres, earth mother to the Romans, who lived in the fields and protected the crops. (That's where we get the word *cereals* from).

In many European countries the last sheaf of wheat, which they believed contained the spirit of the crops, would be woven into the shape of a woman. This was kept throughout the winter and the farmer would plough it back into the earth when spring came.

Because their life or death depended on the crops, for centuries people all over the world have celebrated the harvest. In Malaysia they made a Rice Baby out of seven stalks of rice and in Poland they made a harvest wreath. The Jewish eight-day harvest festival of Sukkoth is mentioned in the Old Testament. Some of these

ancient customs have had an influence on modern day festivities.

Soon you will be playing your part in the harvest celebrations when you are asked to bring tinned and packaged goods to school. Nowadays few of us have to struggle and strive for the food on our plate, so we collect some together and take it to people who we hope will appreciate it. That is our way of saying thank you.

### Jokes down on the farm

What game do pigs enjoy?

*Pig - pong.*

Why is a horse like a cricket match?

*Because it gets stopped by the rein.*

Why is it hard to talk with a goat around?

*Because it butts in.*

Where does a sheep go for a haircut?

*To a baa-baa shop.*

What does a cow eat for breakfast?

*Moosli*

On which side does a chicken have the most feathers?

*On the outside.*

## How to make friends and influence people

By Kathryn Salomon

**Being a VRH volunteer is a bit like being a grandparent; you have all the fun without all the responsibilities!**

Volunteer Reading Help volunteers visit local Infant and Junior schools to help children learn to read. You don't use any of the school books or reading schemes but choose from a wide variety of reading material and play games together. You work with children who need that little bit of extra attention from a kind adult.

With retirement looming, I contacted VRH. Harriet Watson, the Volunteer Services Manager, interviewed me and took up references including a Criminal Records Bureau check.

There is a short compulsory training scheme before you start, with another session after you have started working in your chosen school. Ongoing training is provided and you can always turn to Harriet or Ruth Hudson the field worker for help.

The volunteer commits to attending the training course of six-and-a-half hours and to

working with three children twice a week during term time for a year. Anyone over 18, from any background, can help. The only relevant qualifications are a love of children, patience and a sense of humour.

I was allocated to Martin Junior School and duly met the Head Teacher, Ms Driscoll and the three eight-year-old children I would work with. VRH provides a box of books and games but those of us who work at Martins are lucky because the public library is next door and the librarians are very helpful.

Being a VRH volunteer is a most enjoyable, rewarding and satisfying experience. It is wonderful to gain a child's confidence and to see them blossom and grow. I, too, have learnt a great many things, particularly about football and the card game Top Trumps!

Contact Harriet Watson 020 7373 7523 for information.

## Olympics in the Cotswolds

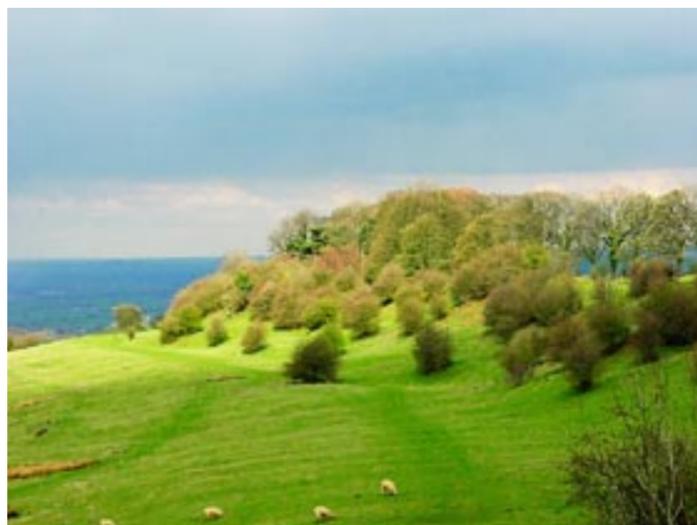
By Daphne Chamberlain

**So modern Olympics started in 1896? Oh no, they didn't. They started about 1612, on a hill in the Cotswolds, near Chipping Campden.**

The blue riband event became shin kicking - wearing pointed clogs, but there was also a lot of swordplay, wrestling, cudgel fights and hurling the pike. There were no surprises in the opening ceremony. That always featured a burst of cannon from a model castle.

Started by a lawyer called Robert Dover and supported by King James I, the 'Cotswold Olimpicks' kept the locals happy every Whitsun and became famous throughout England.

Closed down in the 1820s, when they were seen as definitely not respectable, they were revived in 1951, and are still going strong today.



The view from Dover's Hill Photo by Tony Roberts

(Nowadays, though, shins are padded.)

There were other 'Olimpicks' in England, but the Cotswold games were the ones you had to see.

There is now a plaque in

their honour on Dover's Hill, above the village of Weston sub Edge.

Read more about them in *The First Ever Olimpicks Games*, by Celia Haddon (ISBN 0 340 86274 2).

## Trial run

**Eleven-year-old Melissa Benjamin of Benedict Way, East Finchley, may well have been watching the Olympic Games last month with more than a little enthusiasm.**

Her own talent was spotted at the North Barnet Athletics Championships for Primary Schools, held at Cophall Stadium in July. Melissa won the girls' sprint and long jump for her age group and played a significant part in her Year 6 team winning the relay. On the strength of this she has been invited for trials at the prestigious Barnet Shaftsbury Harriers Club.

Melissa is now a Year 7 pupil at Bishop Douglass Secondary School, having just left Holy Trinity.

## Take a closer look

**One of our regular readers rang THE ARCHER to point out something she had spotted on the BBC 2 programme Restoration.**

It opened with a view panning over the white cliffs of Dover, swiftly followed by a picture of East Finchley tube station taken from the tracks with the archer statue visible in the top right hand corner. Blink and you'll have missed it, but if you happen to have taped any of the recent series, you could freeze frame the beginning for a longer look.

## Open meeting about East Finchley library

By Polly Napper

**Did you know? This year, Barnet council have permanently closed Totteridge branch library. South Friern branch is under threat.**

Our own library is vulnerable because it doesn't comply with the regulations of the Disability Discrimination Act, which comes into force on 1 October.

Do you love your library? Do you want it to stay where it is? Local residents are get-

ting together to form a support group for the East Finchley branch library.

If you'd like to get involved, come along to an open meeting on Wednesday 22 September at 8.30pm, in the first floor meeting room in the Neighbourhood Centre, Church Lane.

### East Finchley Baptist Church

Just off the High Road in Creighton Avenue N2

Sundays at 11.00 am and 6.30 pm

For more information  
please contact the Church Office  
Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: Simon Dyke)

Visitors always welcome

### All Saints' Church,

Durham Road, East Finchley  
Church of England

Sunday masses at 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.

Weekday masses at 10.00 a.m.

Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

The Parish has a flourishing social life.  
Contact the Vicar, Fr Christopher Hardy,  
on 020 8883 9315.

All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.

Experienced singers are always welcome.  
Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>