Win Best Kept Village Award



Competition organiser Mrs Evelyn Ensor presents the Best Kept Village Award to Mr Mike Preston, Chairman of the Parish Council.

Proud villagers in Newbold Verdon have won first prize in the Leicestershire Best Kept Village Competition.

And many appeared on the village green to cheer on the Chairman of Newbold Verdon Parish Council, Mr Mike Preston, as he received a special shield on behalf of the village.

The village was chosen in the first round by a set of volunteer judges from local organisations and they then went through to the semi-final which was judged by all the Mayors and chairmen of borough councils throughout the county.

The Lord Mayor of Leicester chose the village in the final for the best "large" village in the county.

Organiser of the annual competition, run by the Rural Community Council, Mrs Evelyn Ensor said," It doesn't matter what stage a village is at when it is entered in the competition.

"As a judge for over 20 years you don't look for pretty villages with thatched rooves, but a feeling that the village is cared for by the whole community not just the parish council."

Mrs Ensor said that the judges look very carefully at playing fields, cemeteries, village halls and even car parking.

"You can tell where there is community care, even in villages where there are no schools the children are involved," she said.

Villagers in Newbold Verdon, spurred on by a special effort from the Parish Council, made a conscious effort for the award this year.

During the summer even the schools joined in the effort by having a "keep the parish tidy" poster competition and the prizes were donated personally by parish councillors.

Zaire Holiday

The October meeting of Desford Free Church Ladies' Thursday Fellowship was led by Mrs Kathleen Carlton and Mrs Hilda Henshaw gave a reading.

Mrs Helen Butterworth of Kirby Muxloe, who spent a three weeks' holiday in Zaire at the invitation of her missionary friend, Miss Pam Bryan, talked about the area and the places she visited, illustrating these with colour slides, though some had been confiscated by officials.

Bonfire Night In Botcheston

Botcheston Village Hall are holding a Bonfire Night on Saturday 5th November starting at 7pm.

Admission is paid at the gate and is 50p for adults and 25p for children.

During the evening hot dogs, baked potatoes and soup will be available.

Friendship Club Whist

Winners at a 5½ tables whist drive held in Earl Shilton Senior Citizens' Centre and organised by the 65 Friendship Club committee were Mrs J. Hutchinson, Mrs E. Smith, Mrs N. Hampson, Mrs I. Gretton, Mr A. Toon, Mr G. Taylor, Mrs E. Smith, and Mr V. Webb.

Competition winners were Mrs J. Hutchinson, Mrs M. Toon and Mr A. Toon. Proceeds were £7.15 for the hall funds. Another whist drive will be held next Friday.

Institute Whist

Thursday whist drive winners at Earl Shilton Social Institute were Mrs J. Hutchinson, Mrs D. Masser, Mrs E. Smith, Mrs M. Glenn, Mr H. Jordan, Mr L. Whitmore, Mrs H. Beasley and Mrs J. Brown.

Competition winners were Mr A. Brown, Mr E. Webb and Mrs J. Swarbrick.

Mercury photo-news captures more of the best-kept villages

Sweeping to victory

by Claire White

PICTURE book beauty and clean, litter-free streets have swept Cottesmore and Newbold Verdon into the honours at this year's Best Kept Village competition.

So impressed were the judges with the villagers' obvious pride in their surroundings that they awarded Cottesmore the intermediate village prize and Newbold Verdon the large village title.

Cottesmore's sub-postmistress, Mrs. Glenys Larkin, said: "It's naturally a tidy village — people take pride in it all year round. It wasn't just a special effort for the judges."

Should any litter hit the pavement, it will not stay there long. The village employs its own litter-pickers, Gareth Millard and Timothy Lee, both 14. For £1.25 an hour they go round after school and do their bit to keep Cottesmore unspoiled.

Gleaming stones

The judges of the competition, run by Leicestershire Rural Community Council and supported by the Leicester Mercury, were also impressed by the beautiful parish church and churchyard. But rector of St. Nicholas, Mr. Geoffrey Wise, said no special effort went into keeping it spick and span.

The church grounds are maintained by Mr. Dennis Sharpe. He spends his spare time pruning the rose bushes, trimming the hedgerows and cutting the grass.

At Newbold Verdon the residents are equally happy with their success.

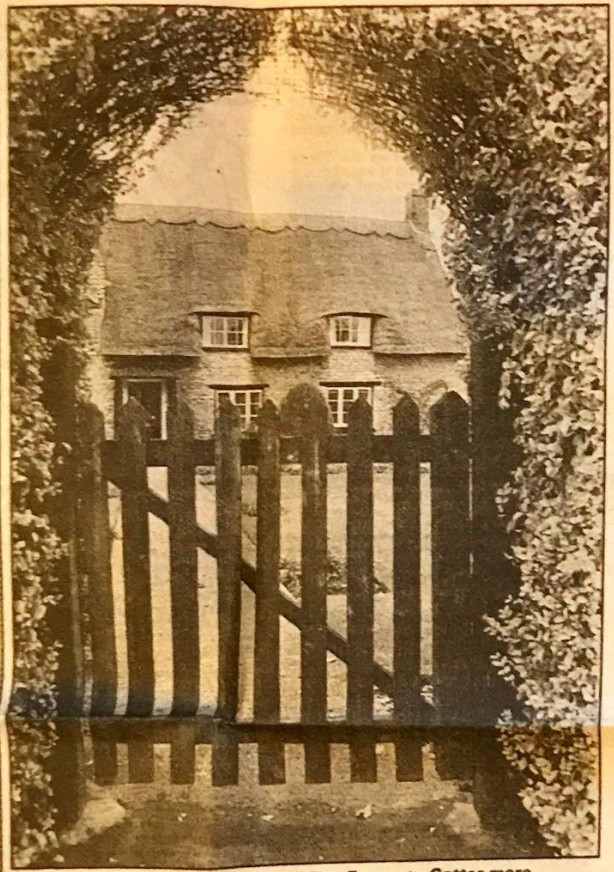
But the rows of gleaming stones, shiny doors and blooming window boxes show it was not only natural charm which won the judges over.

Mr. Leonard Jordon and his wife Ivy spend hours sweeping the outside of their house and tending their plants.

Down the road at Church Farm, Mr. John Vernon is devoted to keeping his 18th century cottage as close to its original splendour as possible.

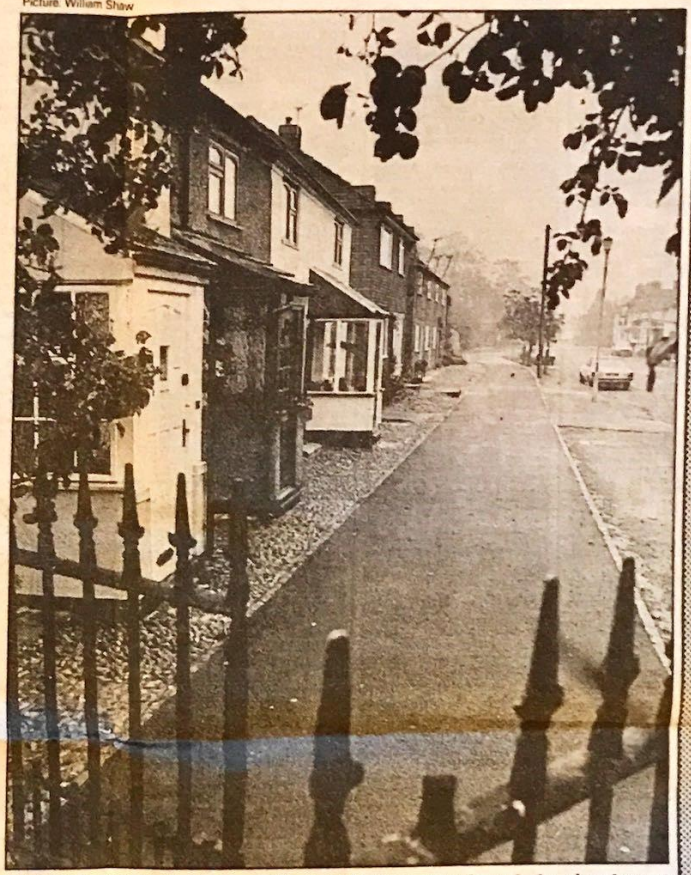
Outside the home of Mr. Arthur Hurst and his wife Rita is a beautiful flower design in pebbles. "She designed it, I did the work," said Mr. Hurst.

A special award for past winners of the competition went to Market Bosworth.



PICTURESQUE: The thatched Lilac Farm at Cottesmore

Picture: William Shaw



SPICK AND SPAN: Main Street, Newbold Verdon, seen through the church gates



SUCCESS: Mrs. Evelyn Ensor presents a plaque to Newbold Verdon Parish Council chairman Mr. Mike Preston.



WINNER: Cottesmore Parish Council chairman Mrs. Muriel Critchley (right) receives the village award



SPECIAL: Mr. Dick Symonds, chairman of Market Bosworth Britain in Bloom receives a plaque from Mrs. Pat Butler.

WEATHER LOG

BINGO