

ONCE AGAIN we've had a very late autumn this year. In my opinion a warm autumn is better in the garden than all the summer flowering, with Michaelmas daisies, chrysanthus and dahlias in full riotous flower. What is more, one can at last get a fork into the ground which has been impossible for so long. Now that we have had the first frosts the flowers are beginning to look a bit unhappy, but we are going to be able to pick the first brussel sprouts for lunch. There was a gap of only a fortnight since we picked the last of the runner beans, and there was nothing in the garden to eat.

We had a glut of broad beans in the summer which are now safely frozen. New potatoes did really well, but unfortunately the slugs found them before we were able to eat them all. We did grow three in a tub, but of course they did not last long. The same thing happened with the carrots. Those I grew in the greenhouse were great, although the ones we grew in the garden were a much better flavour – but – the slugs had more than their fair share.

IT'S REALLY nice to see the photos of the newest residents in our area and I was interested that the three little girls all have 'Grace' in their naming. Is this a sign that the old names are making a comeback? The other three names, Daisy, Esther and Florence, are also quite traditional. I like them. My parents only gave my sister and I one name each. I didn't mind the name, but felt very left out as all my classmates had two. I therefore 'invented' a second name for myself and felt very much better about it.

The Harvest Service was well attended, and even I, who cannot sing, was able to do so thanks to Bill Hillman playing the organ so well and others singing loudly enough to cover my out of tune efforts. Thanks to all those who helped make it such a success [full report on page 5].

I PERSONALLY have not seen anything unusual in the way of wildlife lately, although I noted a considerable shortage of butterflies over the summer. On the other hand, talking to a friend in Swalecliffe, she said that she had more in her garden than usual. Again, I have not heard a single cuckoo, but others not that far away have heard lots. During early October a neighbour rang me and said to look out at hundreds of House Martins performing a wonderful ballet. Unfortunately it was chilly and damp out and the copse and her house were in the way. I really do get lazier. The other spectacle which is still taking place if I care to turn my head and look out of the window is a snowstorm of gulls following the plough in the fields. It really is amazing how many birds arrive within a few minutes of ploughing beginning. When the tractor driver stops for a break, the birds sit on the ridges with only a few taking to the air at any one time, but as soon as the



My VIEW

By JOAN GOWER



Graceful names and ballet dancing House Martins

plough is in action again they are all whirling in the air and finding, in what would look to us to be solid mud, what must be enough food to keep them all going all day.

The verges in New House Lane are still being kept in good order thanks to the Parish Council, and the photos in our first Hilltop calendar, taken by Richard Armishaw, reflect the beauty of the area. We are so lucky to live here.

FINALLY, on behalf of those of us that attended the fortnightly services at St. Faith's I would like to note that we are extremely upset by the impasse that has been arrived at between the Church and the Hilltop Community Association. At this moment it seems that this could go on for years without any breakthrough. We are all hoping and praying that some solution can be found.

That's all for this time. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Hope to see you at our Christmas carol service at the hall on Wednesday 20th December at 7.30pm.

Joan