

Whilst Heriot still maintains much of its old-world charm the village school has taken great steps into modern day techniques. In 1982 the school won 1st equal prize in the Scotsman magazine competition and last year (1983) were beaten by one point in the Evening News computer competition. There are many varied activities and clubs for such a small community and although membership may be few they make up in enthusiasm what they lack in numbers. The womans rural put on a "Good Old Days" Revue in 1981 and went "on tour" to Toxide with the Show. Last year they celebrated their 60th anniversary. In 1982 they won the Dalkeith Show cup for the best composite entry.

The Womans Guild functions successfully, annually holding a ceilidh and a Sale of Work to provide funds for the church. The present football club are in the 1st division of the Borders amateur league and whilst the badminton club runs along quite successfully each year the Bowling club has had to be temporarily closed due to lack of response this year. The play school is managing to function twice a week although the number of pre-school age children has decreased lately. The Brownies were started in 1983 and is much enjoyed by the members, as is the newly re-opened Sunday School. The Youth Club is now into its third year and is much enjoyed by the older children, particularly the summer camp last year. Mention must be made of our Drama Group who have for the past three years put on their versions of Cinderella, Dick Whittington and Aladdin playing to packed houses each night.

There is a sheep dog trial every summer and amongst our farming community are several breeders of championship level sheep dogs.

The annual sports day has developed into quite a competitive event between the "village and the country" with challenge cups presented to winning teams — one for adults and one for the children. Last year the event stretched over three days to include orienteering, netball, football, bowls and darts in addition to the usual racing events.

Last summer the community council provided flowers and shrubs and the villagers planted out beds in an attempt to soften the bleaker corners of the village and although we are still a long way from becoming winners of the "Britain in Bloom" competition it certainly provided a spot of colour to the community and passing tourists.



## SHIELINGS

The movement of people and their livestock to the high pastures in summer goes away back to prehistoric times and was widespread throughout Europe.

The word Heriot itself, according to the learned Dr. Milne comes from the Gaelic word "airdh" which means "shieling". The letter H has been prefixed for easier pronunciation and euphony.

On the high ground estate of Raeshaw, on Heriot Water, which includes the hill farms of Overshiels and Nethershiels, both in the neighbouring parish of Stow, the sites of some of the old summer shielings can be traced. Indeed, the two above named farms take their names from the original shielings there.

In Scotland in by-gone days, whole settlements or "ferme toons" would be temporarily deserted with the advent of summer, when the population would move with their animals to the shielings. This was an eagerly awaited and happy event, especially after long, hard and often hungry winters followed by bleak barren springs. The men having repaired and put in order the rude turf huts and faulds, would return to work the unfenced fields, now unmolested, in the absence of the sheep and cattle. During the long summer days the women would milk the ewes and make cheese, knit and spin. The children, as was the custom in those days, all had their tasks. The elder ones would guard the sheep on the hill, or as the old ballad has it, "tae wear the tod (fox) frae the flock on the fell". But it was not all work and no play, happy hours would be spent guddling in the hill burns for trout. A welcome addition to the staple diet of