



KNOSSINGTON IN THE YEAR 2000

A picture of the village and the people who live there

St Peter's Church Knossington



Father Broad with
the congregation of
St Peter's



St Peter's girl choir in the 1960s

Father Hugh Broad

The New Vicarage, Tilton-on-the-Hill

Hugh Robert Broad was born in Milford Haven, one of three children of a cinema manager. He was educated at Milford Haven Grammar School and Cardiff University and later at St Michael's College, Llandaff (the theological college of the Church in Wales). He passed the General Ordination Examination and was ordained in 1972.

His first position was as curate in Tenby, and later he held various curacies in the dioceses of St David and Llandaff, before becoming the Incumbent and Rural Dean in the Llandaff diocese.

He had considered becoming a monk and, to this end, spent a few months in Elmore Abbey, a Benedictine monastery in Berkshire. Deciding the life was not for him, Hugh applied for the position of Rector of Whatborough Parishes, and was inducted in 1990. In 1996 he was appointed Commissary to the Archbishop of West Africa and Honorary Canon of St Peter's Cathedral, Koforidua, Ghana. Hugh lives in the New Rectory in Tilton-on-the-Hill.



Colin Marlow regulating the church clock

Ben and Joan Gibson, Lucy and James

Sconsborough Farm, Somerby Road

Ben Gibson was born in Knossington, he is the only son of Ray and Margaret Gibson who had farmed at Sconsborough since 1947. Ben grew up on the farm, attending school in the village and then Melton Mowbray before going to Loughborough University to study civil engineering. The call of the farm was too great and before he had finished his engineering course Ben moved to Brooksby College to study agriculture.

Joan Gibson had grown up in Rotherby attending school in Frisby and then Melton before going on to Cambridge and then becoming a teacher. Despite both going to school in Melton they did not really know each other until they met at Brooksby where they were later married.

After Brooksby, Ben first worked with his father before gradually taking over the day-to-day running of Sconsborough Farm. Joan followed her career and, as well as working at schools in Leicester, she taught in Knossington village school. Though by the time their two children, Lucy and James, were old enough to go, the school had closed. Lucy and James both travelled first to Langham and now to Oakham where they attend the Vale of Catmose College. Joan is now headteacher of Scalford School.



The Millennium Bonfire on Sconsborough Hill

Sconsborough Farm is a mixed farm and keeps Ben more than fully occupied but he also plays a vital role in the life of the village. Sconsborough Hill has been the site of many celebratory beacons and bonfires and it has always been Ben who has given his time, material and land for the celebrations. The village Guy Fawkes fireworks and bonfire have always been held in his field on the edge of the village and it is Ben who provides the Christmas Tree for St Peter's Church and the tractor and trailer to carry the carol singers. There is one time in village life however that he always seems to miss. He says that he has never been able to attend Harvest Festival - he is too busy with the harvest.

Ben and Joan have both seen the gradual trend away from farming but say the biggest change has been the reduction in the number of children in the village. Lucy agrees but says there is still a reasonable number of things to do, both she and her brother James enjoy the bingo sessions in the Village Hall. Lucy also echoes her grandfather Ray when she talks of the snow Knossington has seen but unlike the adults she enjoys the snow, particularly the igloos her father (Eskimo Ben!) is expert at making.

Michael and Susan Mills, Victoria and Caroline

Spinney House, Somerby Road

In March 1987, Mike and Sue Mills moved into Spinney House, a new home built by Malcolm Griffiths of Oakham. They then bought the adjoining spinney from Sir Henry Tate and also the lake behind their property.

Here, the River Gwash flows down from Cold Overton through the spinney and in the distant past, this stream was dammed by weirs to form two fishing lakes. The Little Gwash then continues on to wind its way through the fields to Braunston and finally into Rutland Water.

Previously the lakes belonged to The Grange and provided both a pleasing view and carp for the table - but when Mike and Sue acquired their lake in 1987 it had diminished to a silted up bog. Using a 1925 Ordnance Survey map for reference, they started months of hard work to restore the lake to its original splendour. Tons of silt were dug out by hand and used to re-establish the banks and the damaged weir repaired. However, the tremendous effort was soon rewarded.

Today, leather and mirror carp, roach and rudd flourish in the clean water. Those especially privileged will catch the iridescent flash of a kingfisher as it darts into the pool. Barn owls, herons, Canada geese, coots, moorhens and various species of duck are regular visitors. Mammals include badgers, foxes and moles.

Mike and Sue are especially proud of their bat population, only discovered when the felling of a dangerous tree by the parish council surprised everyone by revealing a large colony of roosting bats! A visit from the Bat Conservation Trust led to the discovery of many pipistrelles and, even more exciting, Hatter's Bat. The combination of well established woodland and open water provide the ideal habitat for these delightful insectivorous mammals.

Rose Tillson

Dairy Cottage, Somerby Road

Rose Tillson came to Knossington in August 1974 with her husband, Eddie, and bought Dairy Cottage. One of the features of the cottage which appealed to Rose were the beams in the unusually shaped sitting room. The cottage was in a very run down condition, so Rose and Eddie lived with their daughter, Shirley and her husband David Spencer, in The Covert, Braunston Road until the renovations were completed in December 1974.

Rose was born in Leicester and trained as a milliner when she left school. She left the hat trade for shoes and met her husband, Eddie, when they both worked for British United Shoes in Leicester. They had a small wedding in Belgrave Church in 1937 and no honeymoon as they were buying their first house; something of a rarity for young couples in those days.

Eddie and Rose lived in Thornbury, Bristol and, on retirement, chose to come to Knossington to be near Shirley and her family. Rose is very proud of her three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

During Eddie's time as church warden, Rose organised the church flower rota and did the church laundry before handing on those tasks to Gaynor Ryan and Jane Jackson. Rose also remembers cutting up the small pieces of bread

for Communion. Ray Gibson was also church warden, so his wife Margaret and Rose together cleaned the vicarage in preparation for the arrival of the last incumbent; Mr and Mrs. Overton. The cellar was extremely damp and quantities of church papers were found in a soaking wet condition, so had to be thrown out. When Mrs. Overton later gave birth to a baby girl, Rose baked the christening cake.

Sadly, Eddie died in 1984 but Rose continued to take great interest in village affairs and was a member of W.I. for several years and is a regular worshipper at St Peter's.



Eddie and Rose Tillson, left, in the garden of Dairy Cottage

George Cook and Sue Blunden, Gilly and Eleanor

Littledale, Somerby Road

George and Sue were brought to Knossington in 1990 by George's work. He had grown up in Oxted in Surrey and then studied farm management in Cirencester. His first job was as assistant manager of a large 3,000 acre commercial farm in Suffolk. He then returned home and worked with his father on the family farm in Oxted until the farm was given up in 1990.

It was in Oxted that he met Sue whose original home was in Burton upon Trent. She had trained as a blood pathologist before working for the NHS in Surrey.

George moved to Anderson Farm Consulting in Melton Mowbray where he is still working and is the senior business consultant specialising in agricultural financial distress. Sue

moved with him and worked for Dupont, a major international drug company, before going back to the National Health Service. Almost within weeks of arriving in Knossington their first daughter, Gilly, was born. Eleanor their second daughter was born at the end of 1992.

Both George and Sue lead a full life with many interests. George has been a parish councillor since 1995 as well as being a keen golfer, captain of the Fox and Hounds petanque team, an accomplished gun dog trainer and he still finds time to cultivate one of Knossington's allotments and to be the driving force behind the work to keep the Avenue looking as well as it does. Sue and both the girls are accomplished horsewomen. Gilly and Eleanor helping to look after Sue's horse when they return from school in Langham.



George Cook, back, with Knossington Parish Council members; Kim Smith-Bingham, David Spencer, Chappie Cox, Fiona Edmunds and Nigel Gates

Ray and Margaret Gibson

The Old Byre, Somerby Road

Ray and Margaret Gibson moved to Sconsborough Farm after living for the first two years of their marriage in Tongue, Derbyshire. Sconsborough Farm had been bought on the break up of the Knossington Grange estate after the death of Mrs Straker. The farm was very run down and bereft of many of the things that are taken for granted today. There was water, for that had been put in by the estate, but there was no electricity.

Ray and Margaret were mixed farmers but there was no milk. Ray recalls that each day as he went about the farm he discovered more pieces of machinery abandoned and more undiscovered straw ricks. They put land to the plough that, apart from the years of the war, had been left as grassland using the first Ferguson tractor in the village. They employed one full time farm hand but they always had a student from Brooksby College including future farmers from the village.

Margaret had grown up on a farm in Derbyshire. Ray's father had been a Customs and Excise officer in Loughbough.



Ray and Margaret during their early days at Sconsborough Farm

He had attended Loughborough Grammar School and then university where he had studied civil engineering before following an idea that had formed during the many school holidays he spent on a farm. He left engineering and went to Brooksby Agricultural College.

They both continued working Sconsborough and bringing up six children, Linda, Janet, Elizabeth, Anne, Susan and Ben. Ben took over Sconsborough from his father in 1986 when Ray and Margaret moved to the Old Byre.

Ray and Margaret have seen many changes. When they arrived Knossington was a mainly agricultural village. They have seen the numbers of people working on the land reduced and they have seen new houses built. Ray remembers Larchwood being built and he recalls the majority of the first residents being directly connected with the land. They have seen a gradual decline in the number of children. When their children were growing up some sixty or so attended the village school of which Margaret was a governor for many years.

They both remember the controversy in the village when connection to the water mains was being discussed but they also remember the days when all the hedges were kept neatly trimmed by the estate.

They also remember the many days in winter that the village was cut off because of snow and the major effort by the Post Office to bury the telephone line between the village and Somerby to ensure that they were never again to be brought down.

Ray became a church warden in 1950 and continued for 34 years. He became a parish councillor the next year and served on the council for the next 19 years.



Simon Scrivens and Wendy Hanmer

Holly Hedge Lodge, Somerby Road

Simon was born in Portsmouth. His father was in the Royal Navy and, as a result, Simon was educated at a number of different schools abroad before attending Gowerton Grammar School, Swansea, and then Birmingham University, where he read anatomy. Anatomy was not to be Simon's career, however.

On leaving university he joined a shipping company and worked as a distribution manager in various parts of the world. In 1989 he moved to British Transport Advertising as marketing manager, and then a year later, to the packaging manufacturer Polar Cup as European marketing manager. Later he became commercial director, again working in various places abroad. He now works with Michael Saunders of Ladywood Farm at Perkins Foods in Loughborough, where he is factory manager.

Wendy was born in Liverpool, the daughter of a bus driver. She went to school in Liverpool and attended St Edmunds Grammar School and the Metropolitan College of Wirral where she did business studies. On leaving college she worked for four years in a solicitor's office and then joined British Transport Advertising in London. It was there she met Simon. For two years afterwards Wendy worked as sales manager for Thompson Directories and then moved to American Express, where she continues to work as project manager.

Simon and Wendy were married in Winchester in 1993.

They moved to the area because of Simon's job, and lived first at Burley-on-the-Hill.

Robin and Amanda Lee, Emma, Catherine, Alice, Anna, Eleanor and Sophie

Redwood Lodge, 25 Somerby Road

Robin and Amanda live at Redwood Lodge with a grownup daughter Emma, five younger daughters; Catherine, Alice, Anna, Eleanor and Sophie and a menagerie of horses, dogs, cats, guinea-pigs, gerbils and canaries. Three guinea-pig mothers have recently all had babies so the household is still expanding.

The family first arrived in the area in 1986 and lived at Whissendine and then in Wing. In 1991, Robin was appointed head teacher at Knossington Grange Therapeutic School and they moved to their current home. Robin describes the school as "a progressive and successful school for children with emotional difficulties". He is particularly proud of the recent OFSTED report and the growing national reputation of the school.

Knossington Grange, which houses the school, was built in the 1860s as a private hunting box. During the last century, the building had been put to many uses, including a prep school and a billet for officers during World War II.

Robin was born at Ivor, Buckinghamshire and his mother was a Welsh woman from Lampeter. He went to university and trained as a special needs teacher. Since his degree, he has completed two M.A. courses and is currently working on his Ph.D., supervised by Leicester University. However his interests are not purely academic. He played rugby for Oakham for ten years and he is a keen sailor, studying for his Yacht Master's Certificate.

Amanda's father served in the RAF and she was born in Aden, South Yemen and then moved to Singapore. The family finally settled in Grantham. Amanda met Robin because he was a friend of her brother, and they married at Breedon in Berkshire. During her schooldays, Amanda used to run for Lincolnshire but now, with six daughters and their assorted pets, she is kept very busy running their eclectic household. For example, this year the children each had their own real Christmas tree because Emma got carried away with the festive spirit. When Amanda does find herself with a quiet moment, she enjoys doing fine embroidery.

Emma Lee is a mature student, studying for a geography degree at Leicester University. She is hoping to go on to a postgraduate Certificate of Education and make her career in teaching. Whilst at school, Emma represented the county at Under 14 Hockey and she is justifiably proud of being an artist's model. She modelled for Ian Newsham when he was illustrating a children's novel by Dick King-Smith. Emma is getting married to Darren Mills in July and the wedding will take place at St Peter's Knossington.

Catherine has recently started at the Vale of Catmose College in Oakham and Alice, Anna and Eleanor attend Langham Primary and go to school on the bus.

Robin and Amanda feel very settled in Knossington. Robin loves to take his family to the bingo sessions in the village hall, where he can "usually spend £15 to win a Mars Bar".

Brian and Charlotte Eddishaw, Rowan

Little Orchard, Somerby Road

Built in the 1960s, Little Orchard is tucked away from the main road behind Holly Hedge Lodge and Dairy Cottage. As its name suggests, the bungalow was built in an old apple orchard, originally belonging to Knossington Grange. A few gnarled apple trees still remain, including a venerable specimen with a hole in its trunk big enough to accommodate the starling's nest.

Mr and Mrs Eddishaw moved to Knossington 13 years ago from the village of Boothby Pagnell in Lincolnshire. They noticed a For Sale sign on the Somerby Road and had stopped to look for the bungalow. They were immediately struck by the large garden and the setting of the property.

The woodland garden has few visible boundaries and appears to merge into the surrounding trees. A natural spring rises on the lower part of the land and this has been channelled to fill a series of ponds, where frogs, newts and toads thrive. Charlotte has worked hard to foster the woodland feeling of the garden and she avoids the use of sprays and believes that "the odd weed here and there, is not out of place".

Charlotte prefers not to tidy up too much in the autumn as the old seed heads are irresistible to goldfinches and other seed eating birds. All the common tits are regular visitors as well as the less common treecreepers and nuthatches.

Brian comes originally from Nottinghamshire and Charlotte was born in Colsterworth. Their son Rowan is 15 and attends the Vale of Catmose College in Oakham.

He was born in Grantham and after the family moved to Knossington he started in the baby class at the village school.

The family love the seclusion of Little Orchard. As Charlotte says, "It is unique because we've got our privacy, yet we're not totally isolated".

Knossington Grange.



Mel and Jane Dalrymple

The Laurels, 27 Somerby Road

When Mel and Janet started house hunting in the area, they drove into Knossington from Somerby and were immediately captivated by this first view of the village. It appeared to be just the quiet retreat they were looking for and yet it has relatively easy access to the major centres. They moved into The Laurels in April 1992. It is tucked away at the top of a drive with a beautiful beech in the back garden.

The building is an apparently modern bungalow and yet it hides a secret. The main part of the structure was built of stone in 1897 as a generator and plant room to provide electricity for Knossington Grange. In 1965, it was converted for residential use by the owners of the big house. The building was extended and the whole clad in brick, hiding both the original stonework and a stained glass window in the gable end. During recent building work to install an inglenook fireplace and a conservatory, the old D.C. leads were discovered, running from the old generating room up to The Grange.

Mel was born in Stockton-on-Tees but his family left the area during the depression to start a new life in the Yorkshire Dales. He trained as a cabinet-maker with Robert Thomson, famous for fine oak furniture. A small mouse is always carved somewhere on each piece as the signature mark of the craftsman. Mel then joined the army, entering R.E.M.E. and trained as an engineer. He fought in the Korean War, the first ever N.A.T.O. action. In the mid 50's he left the army and went into engineering management.

Now retired, he enjoys playing the piano and is a highly skilled cabinet-maker.

Janet was born in Derby. She was only 15 when her father died and she had to leave school to work at Marks & Spencer in the city. She went on to become the first ever model for M & S, working for Marcus Sieff himself.

She is also an accomplished ballroom dancer and taught at the Alpha Studios in Derby. In latter years, she has worked in accountancy.

Mel and Jane married in 1968 and have lived in eight different homes. They have totally refurbished The Laurels and now feel very settled. The house is just as they want and Knossington "feels like an oasis".

Mrs Jack Pritty

The Quinta, Somerby Road

Mrs Jack Pritty bought the Quinta in 1971. The house was built by Eb Gale after the large estate belonging to Knossington Grange was split up and sold. It was originally called Roseacre to reflect the fact that it was built in the old rose garden. Evidence for this still remains in the form of the beautiful boundary walls and decorative gateways topped with urns. The garage has been made out of the old potting sheds which run the length of the property on the roadside. The garden is almost a secret one, hidden behind high walls and enormous hedges.

Mrs Pritty has extended the house and made the garden beautiful and a haven for wildlife. She likes living in Knossington because "it is pretty and very friendly" and she has many friends in the area.

Nigel and Alison Haynes

Garden Cottage, Somerby Road

Nigel and Alison Haynes moved to Knossington in April 1981. They had both studied at Leicester University before Nigel qualified as a solicitor and Alison was called to the Bar. They had been living and practising in Leicester and had decided to try and find somewhere out of the city to live. Despite first seeing Garden Cottage in the rain and the major works it required they both immediately felt comfortable in the house. The cottage had originally been used by the five under-gardeners of the Grange as a bothy, which explained the one large main room and the five other small rooms.

They entered into village life almost as soon as they arrived. Nigel, despite being a footballer was asked to join the cricket team. Alison joined the village hall committee and was one of the originators of the Village Quiz for the Gordon Barnett Memorial Trophy. The trophy had been instituted for the tug of war competition held at the village fete but as this was a busy time on the farms, manpower for the teams was often unavailable. The idea of the quiz was born and Alison was one of the original question setters. Nigel for many years was chief organiser of the annual Guy Fawkes bonfire held at Sconsborough Farm.

They have both seen changes in the time they have lived here as Knossington has gradually changed from a working to a dormitory village.

John and Angela Carter

White Posts, Somerby Road

John and Angela have known each other since schooldays. John was born in Beeston, Nottingham, and went to school there and in Long Eaton. Later he attended college in Nottingham and Derby, gaining ONC and HNC in mechanical and electrical engineering.

Angela Reader was born in Sawley near Long Eaton and attended school locally. She studied English and art as a mature student, at colleges in Beeston and Melton Mowbray.

The couple were married in Sawley in 1963. John worked for British Rail for 20 years and moved to Melton Mowbray in 1976, taking a job with Pedigree Petfoods. In 1984 John left Petfoods to start his own engineering business in Melton. They had lived in Whissendine for a while before moving to Klossington in 1983. They just liked the feel of the place.

John and Angela have two sons. Tim, the elder, is a self-employed artist and art teacher working in Leicester;



John, Angela, Tim and Nick Carter

he works, inter alia, with stained glass. Nick manages a children's fun farm near Grantham. John's hobby is collecting and restoring old vehicles, samples of which may be seen from time to time around the workshop on the property.

The family's exposure to village life has been enhanced by a number of contacts with sheep from the next field belonging to Bill Lewin of Grange Farm. The first occasion was when two of Bill's rams invaded the garden. Angela was surprised at the strength of the ram she was assigned to hold by means of a length of twine, while Bill captured the second.

"Can you howd it" asked Bill, but he was obviously impressed with Angela's performance because he pronounced that she "should have been in the Land Army".

Angela, who works in a less physically demanding environment as company secretary in her husband's firm, is clearly proud of the accolade.

Darren Mills

Flat 2, The Grange School

Darren was born in London, the youngest of five children of a fitter/welder who worked for the police force, and went to school in Wandsworth.

He left in 1980 and took up an apprenticeship with British Telecom for three years. He then worked with NCR as an engineering supervisor and left, in 1990, to go travelling. He spent 14 months visiting the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. He came back to Europe and did odd jobs for a while, including work during the opening six months at Euro-Disney. He says he could have become Pluto, but didn't consider it to be a career move.

He had made up his mind to get into children's care and took a job for a year working with severely mentally handicapped people, and then four years at a school for children with speech and language difficulties. He now works at the Grange School as a carer and is studying, through the Open University, to become a teacher.

In July he married Emma Lee, daughter of Robin Lee, headmaster of the Grange School.

Perhaps this is a wiser career move!

Laura Regan

Flat 3, The Grange School

Laura was born in St Albans, Hertfordshire but moved soon afterwards to Oadby and, at age four, to Empingham. Her father is a policeman and her mother a teacher.

Laura went to school in Empingham, Casterton Community College and Rutland Sixth Form College before reading for a B.Sc. in psychology at Essex University, graduating in 1999. During her schooldays Laura took part in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and, while going for her gold award, spent half a day per week over a period of one to two years as a classroom assistant at the Grange School. This experience awakened an interest in psychology and prompted her to take her degree in the subject. Laura's intention is to complete this academic year at the Grange and then to go travelling. She hopes to gain experience in a variety of jobs before deciding finally what career to follow. Laura started working at the Grange school in September 1999 and is a carer at White Gables.

Peter Taylor

Flat 1, The Grange School

Peter was born in London and came to the Grange School as a boy in 1977. He was here until 1980 and then returned to London to work. In 1982 he came back on a visit and stayed here. He took a job helping Eddie Gudyer, 12 Larchwood Rise, painting and decorating. A couple of evenings a week he would help the carers at the school and, after a year or so, became a full time carer. In subsequent years Peter studied to obtain qualifications in caring and now heads a unit of eleven boys and four staff, at the school.

Peter says that when he came here as a boy of twelve who had known nothing other than central London, he could not believe the peace and quiet, the beauty and the open space. He fell in love with the country and from then on he felt he wanted to live there. His leisure interest is golf and he is a member of the Rutland County club.

David and Vicky Wood

Churchview, Somerby Road

David was born at home in Coventry. The house was one of the few left standing in a street devastated during the 1941 Blitz. David won a scholarship to Bablake Grammar School but found school life tedious and rebelled by wearing a specially made bowler hat "because my head was too big" rather than the regulation schoolcap. He then went on to study graphic design at Coventry College of Art.

Vicky was born in Rugby. The family lived with her grandparents who were wine merchants in the town. It was here that she learned to love wine from an early age. Vicky, like David was a rebel at school and, disliking most teachers and subjects, found a kindred spirit in the art mistress who encouraged her to send a portfolio of work to Coventry College of Art. She was soon accepted and met David who was a student in the same year. It wasn't love at first sight. "I thought he was a prat". However the relationship blossomed and was sealed by the joint purchase of Citroen Light 15 in 1964. The car that David now drives through the village on fine days.

They married in 1965 on the same day as Vicky's sister to cut down on the cost of the reception so Vicky could afford an Ossie Clarke dress.

David found work at a Knightsbridge advertising agency where he worked with some of the big names of the sixties including Mary Quant and Terence Donovan. He went on to work with Terence Conran and became an advertising art director.

Hannah was born in 1969 and the family then travelled widely with David's job, living in Oslo and Eindhoven.

They moved temporarily to Knossington in 1979, when David worked in Leicester. Their first impressions of the village were the smell of the pig farm opposite and the notorious George Monks, landlord of the pub next door. In those days commuting was unusual and only David and the Watkins were travelling far out of the village to work.

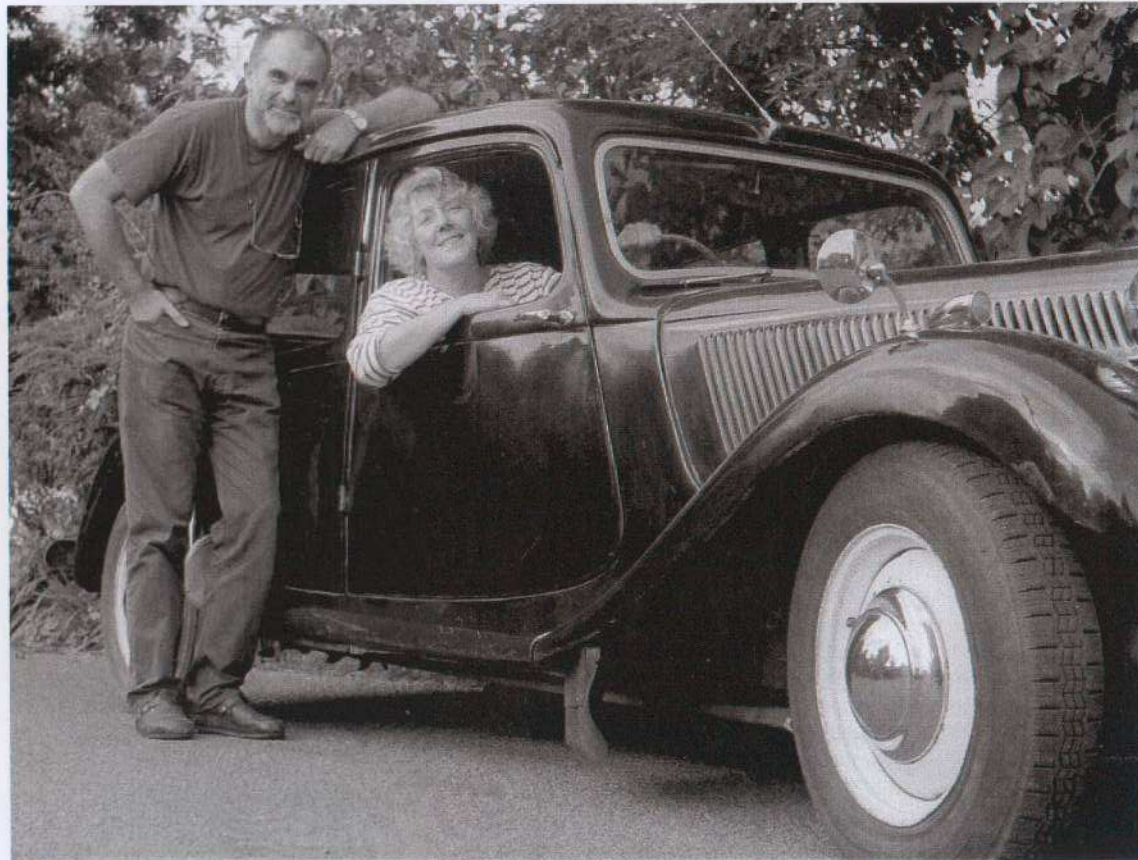
Hannah, who now lives in Eureka Cottage, attended the village primary school and then went on to Vale of Catmose College. At the time all the village children went to Melton for their secondary education and no transport was provided to V.C.C. The family felt strongly that this option should be available and were instrumental in the provision of a school bus to Oakham.

Vicky has been involved in many local activities. She was the first Knossington tree warden and helped collect archives as part of the village history group. She has always held strong political views, being a member of Rutland C.N.D. and demonstrating at Greenham Common.

In more recent years she has trained at Brooksby College as a garden designer. She now devotes her time to her own garden and watercolour painting. She has designed the village map for the Millennium Celebrations.

David was the secretary/treasurer of the Village Hall Committee, and when Gordon Barnett died took over as chairman. He has organised many village fetes and helped with firework displays until he blew off the end of a finger. Vicky has played in the village quiz team since its start and has won the cup for highest individual score.

David now runs a design agency in Uppingham with his daughter Hannah. They have produced this Millennium book.



David and Vicky Wood

Geoff and Rosemary Atterbury-Thomas, and Millie

Manor Court Farm, Somerby Road

Geoff was born in Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia. His father was a parson who went out to Australia to join The Bush Fathers - an organisation giving ministry in the Outback. Geoff can trace his paternal ancestry back to Francis Atterbury who, in 1713, was Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster. Geoff's mother is Australian and can trace her ancestry back to the arrival, on 26th January 1778, of the First Fleet carrying convicts to the penal colony. Geoff's great, great-grandfather was John Small, a convict. Geoff's maternal grandfather was head of the team of mathematicians checking the design of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and was the first person to walk across the top.

Geoff started school in Victoria, New South Wales, and then moved with his parents, at the age of twelve, to England. He attended Ashby Grammar School and moved on to Welbeck College, later joining the Army. He went to Sandhurst and graduated in December 1963.

During the next thirty years he served in many places throughout the world - Borneo during the confrontation with Indonesia, Singapore, Germany, Northern Ireland, Australia, and the Falkland Islands during the war with Argentina. He retired, in 1992, with the rank of lieutenant colonel and, after a brief spell as bursar at a school in Leicester, rejoined the Army as a re-employed regular officer, and is Army Careers Officer for Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

Rosemary Whybrow was born in Colchester, the daughter of a builders' merchant. She followed her schooling in Colchester with a secretarial course, and worked at Essex University as a secretary. She and Geoff met at a Young Conservatives barbecue in 1964, and were married, by Geoff's father, in Colchester in 1966.

*The site of Manor Farm,
The Old Stables and The Saddleback
before conversion*

When Geoff retired from the Army for the first time and obtained a job in Leicester, they looked for a house within commuting range, where daughter Millie could be a day pupil at Oakham School. Manor Court Farm suited perfectly.

Millie is the youngest of their four children, all daughters, and is about to graduate from Leeds University in applied biology. Millie still lives at home. The three other daughters are all married and each has one daughter. Emma, the oldest, is married to a doctor and lives in London. Victoria is married to a research scientist and lives in Camberly, while Sarah, who lives near Ascot, is married to a digital broadcast engineer.

Geoff sailed for his corps in his younger days, and now enjoys cooking as a leisure activity. Both he and Rosemary play golf. Rosemary is the local SAAFA representative and Geoff is a church warden at St Peter's.

Malcolm and Jane Ball

The Old Stables, Somerby Road

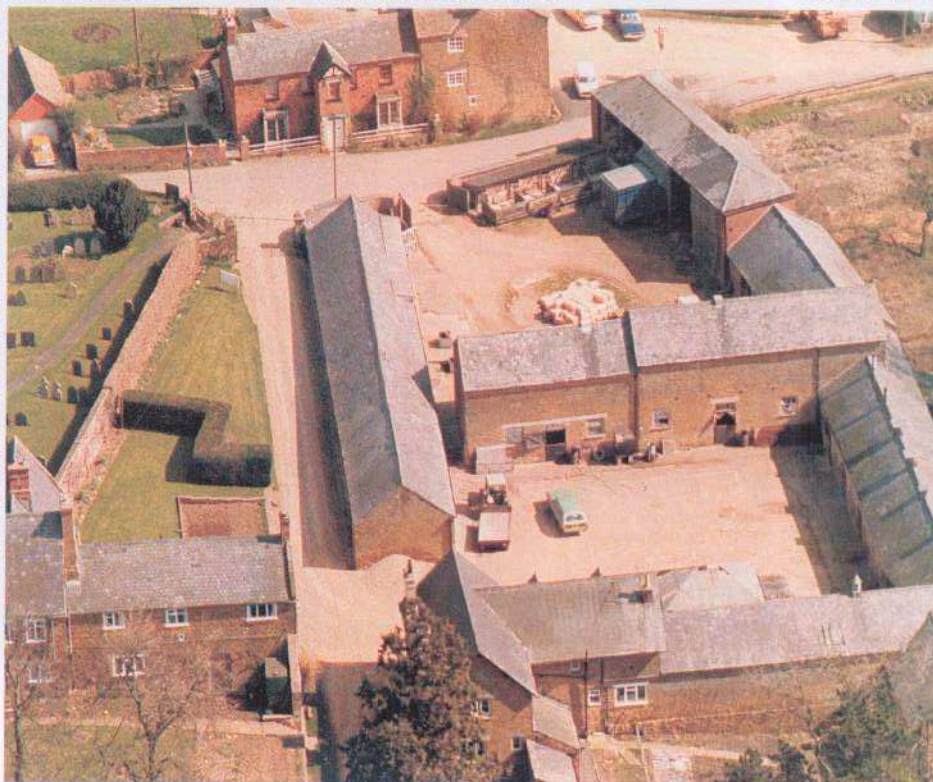
Malcolm, known to everyone as Raz, and Jane moved to Knessington at the end of Malcolm's tour as the Station Commander of RAF Cottesmore. They had spent all their married life on postings throughout the world with the Royal Air Force. Malcolm had served as a pilot in Germany and the United States as well as on many stations in the United Kingdom. They had both grown up in Air Force families. Malcolm's father was originally a seaplane pilot but completed his career as an Air Marshall and Commander in Chief of Maintenance Command. Jane's father had served in the Army in the war and then had transferred to the Royal Air Force as a teacher.

Malcolm had attended Felstead School before going to Cranwell and Jane boarded at Bedford School before completing a teaching degree at Sussex University. It was whilst Jane's father was serving at RAF Cranwell that Jane met

Malcolm who was then training to be an officer. They later married at Cranwell. Jane and Malcolm's two children, Dan and Rebecca, both attended Oakham School and Dan is now an exhibition designer and Rebecca a teaching consultant.

In 1996 Malcolm left the Air Force and worked for a short time in the motor racing industry before becoming a full time flying instructor at RAF Cranwell. Perhaps it is his love of speed that still keeps him interested in the success of the RAF bobsleigh team that he ran for many years.

They have both entered fully into village life. They organise, collect for, and run the plant stall for the annual Open Gardens Day and Jane continues with her service connections as a case worker for the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association.



Sarah and Geoff Ward, Felicity and Matthew

The Saddleback, Somerby Road

Sarah Ward, née Smith, was born in Banbury Oxfordshire. The family lived in the village of Chadlington where her father Reg worked as a groom. They then moved to Hartfield in Sussex and lived only half a mile from Pooh's Bridge, where the famous game of Pooh Sticks was invented.

Sarah moved to Knossington in 1966 when Reg came to work for John Hawkesworth. They lived in Elm Cottage, Owston Road and Sarah attended the village school for one term, taught by Mr Frith. She continued her education in Melton, first at Sarson High School and then at King Edward's. She left school at 16 and went to work for Corah where she trained as a machinist and eventually became the Training Centre Supervisor. She also came second in the Miss Corah competition.

When she was 16, Sarah was involved in a nasty car crash on a snowy Christmas Eve between Braunston and Knossington. Travelling as a passenger, she was thrown through the windscreen on impact and then back into the footwell. Dazed and shocked, she and her friends walked to Knossington where she was taken immediately to Leicester Royal Infirmary. Doctors described her as "the luckiest girl in the hospital". She had clipped her windpipe but the extreme cold had stopped her from suffering major blood loss.

Sarah married Geoff in May 1979 at St Peter's Church, Knossington. They moved into Old Shop Cottage which still had the original shop window and had been empty for many years. Sarah stopped working at Corah when Felicity was born in 1981. She now works as an ancillary assistant at Langham Primary School and for the last twelve years as a Twilight Community Nurse. This involves nursing patients in their own homes in the evening.

Sarah is involved in many village activities. She is the current chairperson of the Village Hall Committee and she also chaired the Playing Fields Committee which raised the money for and organised provision of play equipment for local children. Sarah raised money for the maintenance of the field by running her famous Bingo Evenings.

Sarah's many skills included gold and chiffon needlework. She recently completed a millennium stole for Father Hugh which features passion flowers around a crucifix. She likes to see people joining in and is worried that without this, village life will die.

Geoff was born in Melton and the Ward family lived at Cream House Farm in Somerby, which was his father's business. He attended primary school in Somerby and then went on to Melton Boys' School and Brooksby College. He works at Rearsby Components making car parts but also still works on the family farm with his brother. They keep sheep, rearing lambs in early April and May for their own use and for sale.

In his younger days, Geoff was a keen footballer, playing for Somerby, Pickwell and Petfoods where he often won Man of the Match. He would still like to participate but "the knee won't allow it". He was a member of the famous Knossington team which won the Intervillage Competition at the Rutland Show along with Michael Barnett and Bob Broome.

Matthew was born in 1983 and went to Knossington Primary School for one year, taught by Mrs Robinson and then to Langham when the village school closed.

He is currently at the Vale of Catmose College where he is studying for GCSEs. He plays the alto saxophone and is taking Grade 8 exams soon. He is artistic and while at Langham, he designed a garden for a school and won a county prize. He may follow a career in horticulture but at present he is considering A level options, including Music, Art, Biology and Maths.

Felicity was born in 1981 and attended the village school from 1986 to 89, going on to Mr Clay's class at Langham Primary School. She then went to V.C.C. and from there to take a pre-nursing course at Melton F.E. College. She is now

at De Montfort University taking a Diploma of Higher Education in nursing which involves half theory and half practice in a variety of wards and hospitals.

Felicity describes herself as a party animal. She enjoys her time off with friends but finds nursing very rewarding. "I really feel like I've done something worthwhile when I've been at work". Described by her tutor as having a winning personality, Felicity has recently been invited back to Melton College to speak to the students about nursing. She hopes to work in Accident and Emergency or as a paramedic when she qualifies.



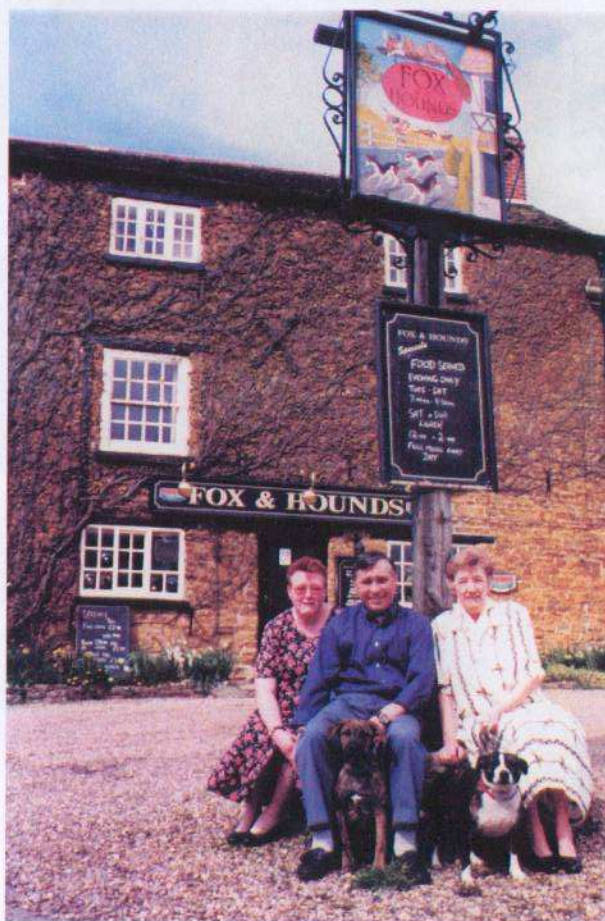
Knossington's victorious Inter-village team at the Rutland Show. Back: Bill Lewin, Geoff Ward, Gary Freckingham, David Barnett and Keith Grey. Front: Roger Exton, Pat Coulson, George Monks, Michael Barnett, Spike Mulligan, and Bob Broome.

Karel Doyle

The Granary, Somerby Road

Karel Doyle moved with her two dogs to Knossington from Hampshire in 1992. She had known the area and had friends in Whissendine but it was the kitchen in the Granary that persuaded her to live there.

Karel is the president of Ponies UK and a member of the BSPS Committee and she works actively as a British Show Jumping Society judge at events throughout Britain and across Europe. Her son Keith also has a major interest in equestrian sport and is a member of the Irish National Team. Karel's other son Kevan is a financial director of a major health insurance company.



Clive and Anne Hickenbotham, Ruth MacCaulay Knight

The Fox and Hounds, Somerby Road

Clive was born in Leicester and left school at 15 to take up an apprenticeship in bakery with Leicester Co-operative Bakery. He worked with the bakery for over ten years and obtained a London City and Guild qualification as a Master Baker and Confectioner. For the next 18 years he worked with a hosiery company, and was a part-time social secretary and licensee at the Leicestershire and Rutland County Football Association Club. He was also a referee in the local football league for eight years.

Anne Knight was born in Bristol and baptised in Swansea. Her father was a stage performer. Consequently Anne travelled the length and breadth of the country throughout her childhood. Anne left school at 15 and started out as a shorthand typist, but after a short time she became a comptometer operator in the wages department of a Leicester firm which made machinery for the hosiery business. Later she worked in the wages office of a Wigston shoe company.

Clive and Anne met in Granny's Nightclub in Leicester in 1972 and were married in 1973. They first lived in Wigston and then came to Knossington in 1988 to take over the pub. Clive has been responsible for a number of innovations at the pub – introducing a children's playground, petanque, barbecues, food service and so on. He has been an active member in most of the pub league games in which the Fox and Hounds participates. In addition, he was chairman of the village hall management committee for two years.

Anne's mother, Ruth was born in Glasgow and moved to Portsmouth in 1946, where she met her husband, Les Knight who was in the navy. He had been a boy soprano in the choir of St George's Chapel Windsor and sung at the coronation of George VI. After demob Les became a professional tenor working the stage and clubs, taking Ruth and Anne on tour with him. Since his death, Ruth has lived with Anne and Clive and helps out in the pub as well as driving to Leicester to cook lunches for company directors. She still loves to travel and enjoys many holidays overseas.

*Anne, Clive, Ruth with
Barney and Tessa.*

Rob Bishop and Terri Martin

The Fox and Hounds, Somerby Road

Rob and Terri took over the Fox and Hounds from Clive and Ann Hickenbotham on the 29th June 2000 and opened for business the next day. Rob was born in Peterborough, the son of a maintenance engineer, and went to Lincoln Road Secondary School and Peterborough College. He then served a five year apprenticeship in milling and electro-plating with Baker-Perkins and then worked for a further three years in the firm. Rob then moved to United Technologies, a wiring manufacturer, as the senior quality assurance engineer, and in the ten years he had this job travelled extensively in Europe. When the company closed down in 1995 he took his present job – a maintenance engineer with Potter and Moore, a toiletries manufacturer. He has a City and Guild in quality assurance and a Diploma in mechanical engineering.

Terri was born in London but went to school in Bretton Wood, Peterborough. After school she worked for two years as a dental nurse/receptionist in Peterborough. Terri met Rob when she went to work in the quality assurance department at United Technologies. Rob was her boss there and, she maintains, still is. The couple moved to Deeping St James in 1997 and have spent the past three years renovating the property.

Terri's parents – Marie, who comes from London and Stan, from Forres in Morayshire – have also moved to the Fox and Hounds. Marie and Stan have run pubs in the past, so their expertise will be invaluable to Rob and Terri, who decided that they wanted to work together again. To start with they tried to find a cafe or restaurant, but found the Fox and Hounds, fell in love with it and managed to complete the deal with the owners in 17 days! Rob has always been a sporty type and ran the London marathon in 1992. He is a self-confessed fanatical fan of Peterborough United football team and is also a keen golfer. Terri has been a horse rider and enjoys reading. Terri tells of Rob's attempts at cooking; his method of making cheese on toast was to put the slice of cheese on the slice of bread into the electric toaster which was laid on its side! His attempt to make chilli was thwarted because the minced beef was red, when the recipe said "brown mince in a pan..."! The couple plan to serve food at the pub. Rob will not be doing the cooking!

Fox & Hounds Old and New



Landlady Mrs Craham outside the pub in the thirties.



Darts Team 1957



Darts Team 1980



Quiz Team 2000: Bill Lewin, Vicky Wood, Roger Collin (captain), Gaynor Ryan, John Merrill and Bridget Broadley.



First and Second Petanque Teams 2000



Grace Baines

4 Somerby Road

Grace was born, the third child of six, in Knossington in 1925, in a cottage in Pebble Alley, now the stables at Fishponds House. Her mother gave birth at home attended by the midwife, Nurse Mills, who arrived on her sit-up and beg bicycle and Dr Mould from Somerby.

Grace's father was a bricklayer who worked for Charlie Spense the builder and her mother is remembered as "a small busy woman - always laughing and smiling".

The Knossington of Grace's childhood encompassed a very different world from the village of today. The children played Tin Lurkey and Fox and Hounds in the street until the irate Mrs Hubbard would call out to them "Stop all that dratted noise". Mrs Bramford delighted the children daily by shaking nearly all her household items out of the window, in the interests of cleanliness.

When Grace started at the village school, Mr Morris was the headmaster and Miss Gregory taught the infant class. There were no school dinners and the Cox children would call out to their mother who would bring mugs of milk and slices of bread to the school fence.

During the 20s and 30s, the village was busy with trades of all kinds. Mr Moyses, the carpenter, made coffins in a brick workshop at the far end of the village, now John Hawkesworth's studio. Grace would visit there with her grandfather and remembers sitting on his lap while he and Mr Moyses discussed the latest goings on. Mr Knight mended the family's shoes and Mr Hudson kept bees in a paddock behind Pebble Alley and sold the honey locally. He was later to come to a sad end - hanging himself in a house in Owston Road. Frank Broome ran a shop and post office, in the cottage now called The Old Post Office, and the telephone was inside the shop. When the doctor was needed in the middle of the night, the shopkeeper had to be awakened by furious banging at the door.

Grace and her sisters and brothers had clothes made to measure by the village dressmaker Mrs Houghton, whilst Alf Houghton kept the butcher's shop in what is now Minty Hill's breakfast room. A clock mender lived and worked in the cottage now owned by Hannah Wood. In outbuildings near



the chapel, wireless batteries were recharged for sixpence.

Mrs Farnsworth kept a grocery shop in the house now called The Old Shop Cottage. She had beautiful black hair down to her waist which she rinsed in beer. She sold a wide range of stock from boots to camphorated oil for earache and "she could get anything". Books could be borrowed from the Reading Room in the village hall, run by Mrs Moyses. There were two pubs and Grace occasionally went to the Greyhound, where Woodview now stands, to fetch a jug of beer for her father.

At 14, Grace left school and went to work as second housemaid at The Grange. She had to live in as her working day started at 4 a.m. Fireplaces were cleaned, floors polished and all downstairs jobs completed before the mistress came down. Grace slept in the attic with another girl who terrified her by her habit of sleepwalking. The maids wore overalls in the mornings for the dirty work but changed in the afternoon into black dresses, white starched pinafores and caps. Mina Stewart, the housekeeper was very strict and there were footmen and, of course, a butler.

During the war, Grace was called up into the Land Army and travelled to Wing Grange to collect her uniform - and for the first time in her life wore a pair of trousers. She was

Grace Baines with her late husband Ted

sent to work on Gwen Smith's farm in Langham where her duties included back breaking potato picking and gardening. She cycled each day even coming home at dinner time occasionally. Grace also worked for Tom Thurman at Manor Farm.

Troops were billeted in Stable Yard and prisoners of war came to work on the farms. One evening Grace and some friends went down to Oakham with a truck load of young soldiers to attend a dance at the Victoria Hall. Unfortunately, when they reached the station, an officer made them get off and they had to walk back home Grace's father was in the Home Guard and much excitement was caused when a servant at Cold Overton Hall was suspected of signalling the enemy from the top of a tower.

Grace married Ted Baines in 1949 at Oakham Registry Office. For their honeymoon they went to Nottingham for the day. Married life began in a cottage adjoining the bakehouse in the Braunston Road, where Mr Doubleday was the baker. The cottage had no running water or electricity. Grace carried all the water needed from the village pump on Main Street and the house was lit by oil lamps and candles.

Ted Baines was born at Greetham and then moved to Braunston. He met Grace at a sixpenny hop at the Memorial Hall in Somerby. He was a painter and decorator by trade and worked in Ashwell Prison for 17 years teaching his skills to the inmates.

In 1956, Whit Ward offered Ted a cottage at 4 Somerby Road. As this house had a cold tap in the kitchen, it was a tremendous improvement. Ted and Grace moved in on a very snowy day. The tractor and trailer filled with all their worldly goods developed a puncture and the journey was completed in a horse and cart. 44 years later, Grace is still living in the cottage.

Grace worked as a dinner lady and cook at the village school in 50s and then did domestic work for Mrs Hollyoaks at Little Orchard. For the last 14 years Grace has helped the Smith-Bingham family at The Whalebones. Grace was born and bred in Knossington and has lived all her life amongst her "family and friends".

David and Jenny Price, Tim and Robert

The Old Rectory, Somerby Road

The Prices moved to Knossington in April 1982 having bought the house in November 1981. They were the first to occupy The Old Rectory after its sale by the Diocese.

They had moved to Knossington from Skeffington and at the time David was a barrister in chambers in Leicester and Jenny was working as a teacher. They both originally came from Leamington where they had met whilst Jenny was at Goldsmith's College in London and David had been studying at Leeds University and Bar School in London.

David went on to practice in Leicester and Jenny to complete a teaching diploma at Leicester University before teaching at Brocks Hill School in Leicester. She gave up teaching when the first of her two sons, Tim, was born and apart from occasional teaching, including a period at Knossington Primary School did not return to full-time teaching until 1986 when she taught at Linden Primary School. In 1995 she began teaching at Knossington Grange Therapeutic School. David worked throughout in Leicester and in 1993 was appointed to the chairmanship of the Industrial Tribunal in Manchester and subsequently after a period in both Birmingham and London was appointed Chairman of the Industrial Tribunal Leicester.

David and Jenny's two sons both grew up in Knossington and, in Tim's case, they felt that, even though he had been born in Leicester, a long term resident of Knossington had been watching over him. Almost immediately after they moved into the village Tim became ill and David's parents came to Knossington to help them whilst they looked after Tim. Many people in the village came to ask after Tim but David's parents were particularly interested in the "old Vicar with the large black hat" who they had seen in the garden and who was never seen again after Tim became well. Was he the Rev Mowbray who had been particularly concerned for the village children who had been struck down by typhoid many years earlier!

Tim and Robert Price went on to Oakham School and then to Coventry and Exeter Universities respectively. Tim went on to follow his mother by becoming a trainee teacher



Tim, David, Jenny and Rob Price

and after law school in Nottingham, Robert followed his father and was called to the Bar. Both sons retain strong links with Knossington with Robert playing cricket for the village team.

In their time in Knossington they have seen many surprises and many changes. When they moved in they discovered that their neighbour Dr John Merrill was married to Jane who had been to school with Jenny.

When they moved to the Old Rectory children still danced around the maypole that was set up in their drive, a tradition that disappeared when the school closed. One thing that has not changed is the Church fete that is still held in their garden each year; particularly apposite in the light of the many years that David was churchwarden of St Peter's.

Their lasting impression:
"We wouldn't live anywhere else".



Maypole dancing at the Old Rectory

Patsy Ward and Michael

Stoneleigh, Main Street

Patricia Mary Ward, née Bryan, was born in Horninghold in 1920 and came to live in Knossington with her parents in 1922 as her father Dick was stud groom to Mrs. Straker of Knossington Grange.

Patsy married Whit Ward in 1950 and has vivid memories of village life over the past eight decades. As a child she lived in the Old School Cottages before moving to one of the grooms' cottages, half of what is now Manor Court Farm, in the Grange stable yard and remembers her father charging threepence for a haircut on a Sunday.

There was a thriving community of tradesmen in the village and Patsy remembers Mr. Moyses the undertaker, Mr Knight the shoemaker, Mrs. Houghton the dressmaker and her son Alfie, who ran the butcher shop and Miss Hume the music teacher, and Mr. Spence the blacksmith at the Forge. The taxi-man was Mr. Bramford, Mr. Barnett was the milkman, the Post Office was run by Frank Broome who was a great source of gossip, as the telephone kiosk was located inside the shop. Frank's brother Charlie was the baker in Braunston Road. The village shop, run by Mrs. Farnsworth, was a second Harrods — it sold everything from a needle to a dress. Mrs Cox, mother of Chappie Cox and Grace Baines, was caretaker at the School, Mr. Clark was the wheelwright and the Greyhound pub was run by Miss Cox.

During the Second World War, the Bryan family were evacuated to Perthshire, for safety reasons as a bomb had fallen near Cold Overton. They had not been there very long when Hess flew in from Germany.

Patsy was employed as a parlourmaid by Mrs Dawson, who lived at the Whalebones, a job she enjoyed and one which prepared her for her war time service life in the Royal Air Force as a waitress.

In common with all young girls of 18, Patsy and her friends enjoyed dancing and would often go to the dances in Oakham. However, Patsy recalls the time when Mrs. Dawson refused permission for the girls to go dancing, but they decided to go anyway and were confronted by the Nanny the following morning who had heard the rustle of taffeta as the girls had crept past her door!



Knossington School staff: Back row; dinner lady Patsy Ward, cooks Mrs Cummings and Mrs Baines, secretary Mrs Firth. Front: Mrs Parsons, head teacher Mr Firth and Mrs Bayliss.

Being a founder member of Knossington Women's Institute, Mrs. Dawson encouraged the girls to attend the meetings, when the annual subscription was 2/6d in 1940 — in the year 2000 it is £15.50. Patsy worked for Mrs. Dawson for three years then joined the RAF

Patsy remembers a circus coming to the village and the village band when Mr. Farnsworth played the fiddle, his son played drums and Miss Hume was the pianist. She recalls the Annual Flower Show held at Whalebones during Mrs. Mead's time, the maypole and whist drives held in the village hall.

Like his mother before him, Michael attended Knossington village school then went on to school in Melton Mowbray. Michael was born in the family home Stoneleigh,

Main Street. Upon leaving school he worked for the Barnetts, The Homestead, Owston Road, but now runs the family farm. His father Whit died in 1988.

Patsy has two daughters, Linda who lives in Oakham and June who lives in 2 Woodside Cottage, Withcote.



Whit Ward, far right front, with Italian POWs and Bill Lewin third left.

Malcolm Stone, Alison and Amy Neal

Sycamore Cottage, Main Street

Malcolm was born in Leicester and attended New Park Secondary Modern school. In 1966 he joined the Army, initially as a rifleman in the Leicestershire Regiment, but was transferred to the Royal Anglian Regiment in signals. He saw service in Aden during the troubles there before demobilisation in 1971. He then worked for British Telecom for twelve years before starting up his own business in communications and security.

He settled in Knossington in 1987, first in Ivy Cottage in the Hollow, then in Nunlea Cottage, Main Street, and now next door at Sycamore Cottage.

Alison was born in Oldham but moved, at the age of three, to Coventry. She was educated at Stoke Park Girls' Grammar School and left at the age of 18 to join the Coventry Building Society. After three years she moved to a secretarial job with Coventry City Council who later sponsored her to study accountancy; she qualified as an accountant in 1993.

After being widowed in 1994, Alison, who was learning to ride, attended a weekend course at Somerby riding school. Malcolm, who was never in the habit of having a drink on the way home from work, having had a bad day, decided on the spur of the moment to drop into the Stilton Cheese in Somerby. There was a lively group in the pub; the subject under discussion was football and someone asked about the result of the Oldham game. Malcolm made some rude remark about being unaware that Oldham had a football team, Oldham born Alison retaliated and the relationship was born.

Alison moved to Knossington with daughter Amy, eight, in 1996, since which time she has become the owner of two horses and a pony which are stabled at Netherfield, and hunts with the Cottesmore whenever time allows.

Amy, who attends Langham school is learning to ride.

Even Malcolm has been persuaded to get on to a horse and is becoming an enthusiastic rider. He has started to hunt, despite previous tendencies to favour the fox.



The story is told that one of Malcolm's employees on her way to Knossington found an injured fox cub on the road. Summoning help from her employer, she took the animal to the vet who treated it but gave a gloomy prognosis of its chances of survival. Survive it did, however, in a kennel with a run which Malcolm had built for it in the garden of Ivy Cottage. As time passed it grew into a healthy young vixen and attracted the attention of a local dog fox who came visiting at night. One night Malcolm released his pet and watched fondly from the window as she trotted off into the night with her beau.

Malcolm was co-organiser of the village fete for three years and was responsible for a number of innovations.



*Alison, Amy and
Malcolm*

Helena Eley

Akler Cottage, 7 Main Street

Helena Eley was born in Epping, Essex. Her father is a mechanical engineer; her parents live in Pilton, near Lyndon, Rutland. Helena started school in Great Glen, Leicester but moved with her parents to India and continued her education there. When the family returned to England, Helena attended Ruddlesworth Hall School near Diss and then, at the age of 13, went to Oakham School.

On leaving Oakham in 1986, she studied Italian, history of art and fine art at the British Institute in Florence. On returning to England she did a six month secretarial course at The Marlborough Secretarial College in Cambridge and spent the next five years working for an advertising agency in London. Wanderlust then took over and Helena spent six months travelling the world. She returned to England and did a two year HND course in interior design at Leeds University. She spent the next six years working as an interior architect with an architectural practice in Newark, Notts.

She is about to be married to a bloodstock agent and will live in Newmarket. Her time in Knossington has been brief. Helena heard about the availability of Alder Cottage from her schooldays friend, Georgina Belton, who owned Nunlea Cottage next door, and bought it in July 1998. She had extensive refurbishment carried out on the property before moving in, in March 1999.

Among her interests are riding, shooting, golf and art. She has hunted in the past and keeps horses at her parents' property.

Bridget and Peter Broadley

The Cottage, 11 Main Street

Peter was born in Glasgow. He served for over 20 years in the RAF travelling the world before his last posting to RAF Cottesmore. Whilst serving at Cottesmore, he met Bridget and they have been married for over 30 years. On leaving the RAF, Peter became a postman working out of the Oakham office before retiring.

Bridget's family have lived in Knossington for several generations. Her father Arthur Hudson was a well known character in the village. He and his sister Una were born at Rose Cottage, now the home of the Ryan family. Bridget has connections with several houses in Knossington. Her grandparents lived in Pebble Alley (now the stables of Fishponds House), in part of Stoneleigh where her grandfather died. Her grandmother then moved to the middle cottage down the Hollow (now part of Chestnut Cottage) and spent her last days in the cottage on Owston Road which now forms part of no. 11.

Bridget's mother was Irish and met Arthur whilst she was working for Mr. Montague at Cold Overton Hall. When they were married they lived at 2 Somerby Road and Bridget, her sister Maureen and brother Kevin were all born there. When she was a young child Bridget went on the back of her mother's bicycle to 8 a.m. mass at St Joseph's Roman Catholic church and then attended Sunday School at the Methodist Chapel in Knossington.

Public transport was nonexistent and the only way of attending local cricket matches was by bike. So Bridget spent many hours on the child's seat of her mother's cycle as Arthur was a great cricketer — a star performer in the village side.

Bridget was a pupil at the village school when Mary Freckingham was the infants teacher and "Boss" Morrison was the headmaster, and later with Mrs White, who lived at

Stoneleigh, and Mrs Bassendine who was the wife of the newsagent in Somerby. After leaving the village school she travelled to Melton on the "utility" bus with slatted wooden seats and no upholstery to Melton Modern Girls' School.

After leaving school Bridget went to Leicester Corporation day nurseries to train as a nursery nurse, where she qualified as a NNEB in 1947.

Whilst Bridget was in Leicester, her mother and father moved house and were the first tenants to occupy a house in Larchwood Rise, what is now no. 17.

From Leicester Bridget went to work for the old London County Council in nurseries in the city and then took employment with a family as a nanny.

She returned to Knossington in 1954 and worked briefly at Corahs before spending the next 30 years as housekeeper for Mrs. Mead at the Whalebones. Her parents moved house yet again to the where Peter and Bridget now live.

In her free time Bridget took part in the amateur dramatic society plays which were staged in the school and for several years provided the Cricket Club teas during summer weekends.

She has memories of the Red Hand Regiment of Ulster and the paratroopers being at the Grange, the Old Manor and the stable yard and the anticipation and intense training for the landings at Arnhem. Then there were the evacuees. One boy from Sheffield was billeted with her grandma Hudson, the Middlewitch family at Churchview and Mr. and Mrs. Gay from London who ran the Post Office in Owston Road.

There was no youth club in the village but the youngsters used to gather at the Forge, in the churchyard or at Thurman's farm. There was tobogganing in the winter at Sconsborough, down at Manor farm or in Burrough Wong.

Bridget is a familiar sight in November doing the annual Poppy Appeal collection in Knossington on behalf of the British Legion.



Mayday celebrations 1958 in Main Street

Barry and Mary Thomas

Woodview, 15 Main Street

Woodview was built on the site of the Greyhound pub and brewhouse. In 1929 Normanton Hall was demolished and the reclaimed material, purchased by a local builder, was used to rebuild Woodview. The house was turned round and given a smart new front to face the road.

When Barry and Mary Thomas moved here in 1967, the house was basically structurally sound. However, there was no running water and other facilities were provided by a bucket in a shed. Investigation of the garage loft unearthed crates of port bottles - empty unfortunately. Thirteen layers of paper were stripped from the dining room walls and work began to make a comfortable home.

Barry and Mary have many fond memories of life in the village as they first knew it 33 years ago.

Then, Eddie Barnett and Cec Lewin both brought their milking cows through the middle of the village twice a day,

and Eddie bottled and delivered milk as well. Five butchers called each week and "everybody knew everybody". Whist drives in the village hall, with "Fur and Feather prizes", were very popular.

Barry and Mary both remember when Frank Broome, Charlie Broome's uncle, and Ettie ran the shop in the house now called The Old Post Office. Frank told the following tale to Barry. A group of huntsmen came to a halt outside the shop and one of them called out to Frank,

"I say, have you seen my brother!"

"I don't know Sir." said Frank, "Who's your brother?"

"The Prince of Wales"

Mary Thomas has produced the parish magazine "Over the Garden Wall" for 23 years. She was also the last chairman of governors for Knossington Church of England Primary School. Both her daughters Karel and Debbie attended the school.



Knossington.

Photo by A. Mathieson, Knossington.

Philip and Judy Worthington and Miranda

The Knoll House Main Street

Philip and Judy Worthington moved to The Knoll House in Knossington in July 1983. They had moved really as a result of Judy starting a business in Melton Mowbray. Philip, who is a chartered engineer had been working in Oxford and Judy had been working in County Durham. They had children at Oakham School, Judy's parent were living in Ashby de la Zouch where she had grown up and although Philip's home was in Leek. Knossington seemed the ideal place to move to.

Almost as soon as they moved they began what turned into a labour of love, to get Knoll House and its garden just the way they wanted. In fact after seventeen years they are still putting in the final touches.

Philip and Judy's children, Nicholas and Catherine and Toby and Sophie live away from Knossington but Miranda their youngest daughter who was born in Leicester, christened in St Peters and originally a member Mr Weeks' Sunday School, still lives at home although she is at boarding school.

Over the years Philip has continued to work as an engineer, Judy however has given up her business in Melton but still works almost full time as a founder director of the University Hospitals of Leicester National Health Service Trust as well as finding time to sit as Justice of the Peace. She was sitting in Oakham Castle every month over the past ten years until that court was combined with the Melton Court to form the Melton and Rutland Court.

Main Street with the Greyhound public house

Mike and Annie Barrett, Chloe and Luke

The Old Hospital, Owston Road

Mike was born in Colne, Lancashire, the son of a headmaster and lay minister. He attended Park High School, Colne and later went to Nelson and Colne College where he took an OND. Sponsored by Courtaulds, he went on to the University of Central London and graduated as a BSc (Hons) in engineering and economics.

He then went to work as a graduate engineer with Courtaulds at their plastics division in Southend and was promoted to engineering manager after one year. He remained with the company for five years and, in 1988, joined Progressive Tooling in Peterborough as general manager. Since then he has developed the business from a local manufacturing company employing 25 people to a major supplier to the European automotive industry with 100 employees. He is now managing director.

Annie Fulford was born in Rochford, Essex. Her father was an insurance salesman. She went to school at King Edward Comprehensive near Rochford and left at 15. For six years she worked in accounts in a building company and then went to Southend Technical College as a mature student to study for A-Levels. Afterwards she worked in the credit control department at Courtaulds plastics division in Southend. She met Mike at a friend's wedding.



The Old Hospital in 1904



*Mike and Annie Barrett
with the Cottesmore at Bleak House*

Mike and Annie's daughter, Chloe, was born in Rochford and later the family moved to Braunston when Mike started work in Peterborough, and son Luke was born. When Luke was two, Annie resumed her education and went to study fashion and knitwear at Southfields College Leicester, where she gained a B Tech National, and then went on to Derby University where she took an HND in fashion and design. Not content with that, Annie went to De Montfort University, Leicester, and gained an MA in fashion.

Both Mike and Annie are keen on maintaining a high standard of physical fitness. Mike used to swim for his school and now runs daily. Annie is a keen swimmer and is an orange belt kick-boxer. Both are enthusiastic horse riders and ride with the Cottesmore Hunt. Annie is interested in sewing and interior decorating. Both

list entertaining, eating out and fine wines among their interests.

They married in Oakham registry office in 1989. Looking for a bigger house than the one they occupied in Braunston, they liked the feel of Knossington and were fortunate to find 2 Owston Road. The house is known as the Old Hospital and has an interesting history. Mike says the site has been occupied by a dwelling since the 12th century but the present building was built in 1820. The "hospital" title comes from the fact that the building was a home for the widows of clergymen of limited means. Although

the house is no longer owned by the Church, there are certain conditions attached to ownership. For example the building must be used as a dwelling, and no alcohol may be sold on the premises. It is a Grade II listed building and all alterations of any kind are subject to planning permission. Mike and Annie have restored the interior to a habitable condition with period character. Annie is certain that the ghost of a grey cat still haunts the house.

Their daughter Chloe went to school in Rochford and then Southfields in Oakham. She now attends Windmill House School in Uppingham and also studies dance and drama at Stagecoach in Melton. She has appeared on the public stage, acting and dancing ballet and pop dance. She is also very sporty.

Luke is also very keen on sport, particularly football, and plays for Royce Rangers under elevens in Oakham as well as for school teams.

Alan and Fiona Edmunds, Alexander

The Green, Owston Road

Alan, whose parents farmed at Market Bosworth, has lived in the Rutland area since 1968, and worked with horses until an accident in 1985 caused him to seek alternative employment. He now works as a sales and marketing manager for a saddlery company.

In the past he broke-in horses and did so for Lady Tate at Preston Lodge and also for Mrs Hawkesworth of Fishponds, including her horse Topper Two which went as reserve to the Montreal Olympics in 1976.

Fiona Rutherford was born in Sydney, Australia and came from Surrey to the area in 1979 to work at the Burley Horse Trials. She met Alan at the Fitzwilliam Hunt Show in 1988. They were married in Peper Harrow church, Godalming, in June 1989. The couple lived in a cottage which Alan had had built in Pilton, Rutland and their son Alexander was born there. They moved to Knossington in 1995.

Fiona's parents now live in Hambleton and Alexander attends school in Langham. A keen horsewoman herself, Fiona is encouraging young Alexander to ride. Fiona has been Clerk to the parish Council for two years.



Fiona, Alexander and Alan Edmunds

John and Edith Weeks

Elm Cottage, Owston Road

John was born in Plymouth, Devon and went to school in Somerset until, at the age of 18, he joined the Royal Army Pay Corps for his National Service. After serving his two years in the Army he worked in the careers office in Rotherham for five years and then returned to Devon and employment in a wholesale fruit and vegetable company. Later he became a press operator in light engineering.

Edith was born in Oldham, Lancashire and was educated there. On leaving school she worked in a jewellers shop until, as was the practice at the time, she had to do some form of work for the war effort. Edith chose to work in a cotton mill for two years.

John and Edith met in Devon through their Christian work, and after they were married, moved in 1976 to a residential job with the Langley Trust at Wing Grange.

During that time they explored the local area with a view to buying a house to escape to in their off-duty time. On a snowy January day they found themselves in Knossington and saw a for sale sign by Elm Cottage.

As they were examining the exterior of the property, a man rode up on a horse and stopped to ask if they were interested in looking over the house. The horse rider was John Hawkesworth, the vendor of Elm Cottage. John and Edith obtained the key and looked the property over. At once they felt the house was warm and welcoming, and they knew they would be happy there. They bought the property and moved here in March 1977.

John took a job as a press operator with Dura at Rearsby and has worked there for the past twenty years.

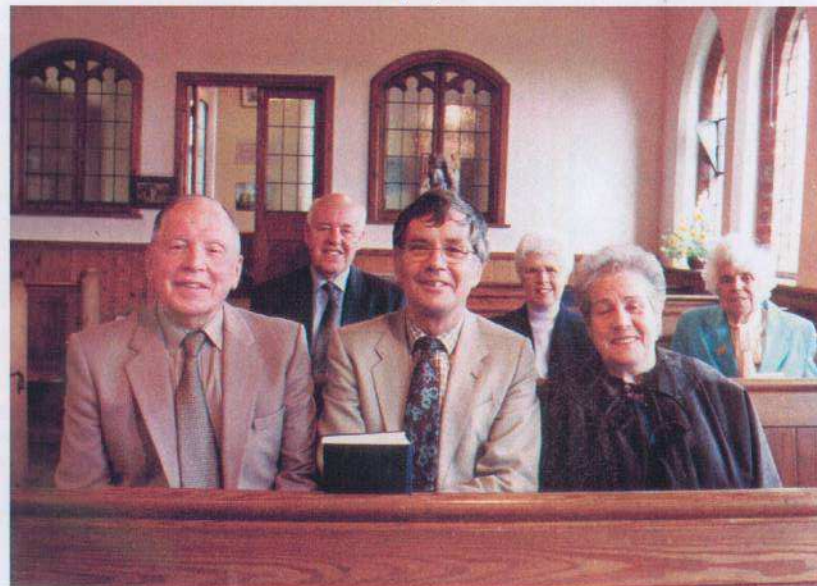
They continue their Christian activities as members of the Methodist chapel and assisted at the Sunday school when it was in being.

They recall with some amusement the occasion when Gordon Barnett, the late husband of Peggy Barnett, the Homestead, who played the organ at the chapel and was a keen football fan, set the chapel clock five minutes fast on the day of the cup final so that he could ensure he got home from the service in time to watch the match on television.

Edith has two grandchildren and one baby great-grandchild who has already become a model - appearing in a television advertisement.

Edith tells of the amazement of her city-born grandchildren when, as children visiting the village, they went to buy sweets from the Post Office - run at that time by Mary Gresswell at 4 Larchwood Rise. They were a couple of pence short and were told: "Never mind, I'll get it from your Gran next time I see her".

They couldn't believe there could be so much trust between people.



*John and Edith Weekes,
front centre and right,
with the congregation of
Knossington Chapel.*

Richard Gears and Isabelle Parkes, Tegan and Sam

The Old Post Office, Owston Road

Richard, from Chelmsford, and Isabelle who was born in Truro, met on the roof of the observatory at St Andrews University on bonfire night. Both graduated first in 1990; Richard has a BSc Hons in Astrophysics and Electronics, Isabelle has a BSc Hons in Physics and Astrophysics. In 1994 Isabelle added a Phd in Observational Cosmology at Edinburgh and in 1995 Richard obtained a PhD in Distributed Control Systems at St Andrews.

They married in 1995 in the church of St Pirren, Perranzabuloe, Cornwall and moved to Ashby Folville. Richard worked for Morris Automation in Loughborough, Isabelle sought a job with a temp agency and was sent to Leicester University to work as a secretary in the physics department. After about two months she was given the task of typing a job advertisement for a post doctorate research assistant for the department - she got the job!



While living at Ashby Folville they decided to learn to ride and chose to learn at the Somerby riding school. During their training they rode past The Old Post Office, which was for sale, and bought the property.

Richard is now self-employed in freelance engineering, designing control systems for wind turbines, turbochargers and the baggage handling facility at Heathrow Airport's Terminal 1. He has travelled abroad extensively.

Isabelle worked the Earth Observation Science Group, partly for Leicester University and partly for the Department of the Environment - measuring sea surface temperatures using satellites and, in the course of this arduous task, spent three summers in a boat off Japan!

Tegan Alice was born in December 1997, and her brother, Samuel William Arthur, arrived in April 1999.

Richard Gear, Samuel and Tegan

Isabelle Parkes and colleagues checking whether the water's warm.



Kate Hall

Coach House Cottage, Owston Road

Kate was born in Loughborough, the daughter of a university administrator and, shortly afterwards, the family moved to Slough. Kate went to school in Slough and attended St Bernard's Convent.

After school she took a year out, doing voluntary work as abbey musician and bookshop assistant at the Iona Abbey. Kate was expected to study maths at university but wanted to be a cellist so she read music at City University, London, graduating as BSc Hons in 1989. Because of a romantic attachment at the time, Kate decided to stay in London and found a job in accountancy with KPMG. Four years later she moved to Windsor and worked as an accountant in the Theatre Royal, Windsor.

After a year she tired of the work and decided to go travelling. She arrived in New Zealand, by way of America and Fiji, and stayed for 18 months running a hostel for backpackers for six months.

Returning to England after a further six months in South-east Asia, she came to Peterborough and did temp work in accountancy throughout Cambridgeshire. Kate's wanderlust took hold again and she travelled to Nepal and then back to New Zealand where, for a while, she worked in accountancy. She returned to England, first to Yorkshire, and later to Stamford and her present job as a management consultant.

Looking to buy a village property, she came to Knossington and found Coach House Cottage. She thought both the village and the house lovely.

Kate lists playing the cello, cycling, skiing and running marathons as interests, and to this she has now added gardening.

*Kate Hall outside
Coach House Cottage*



Hannah Wood

Eureka Cottage, 7a Owston Road

Hannah is the only daughter of David and Vicky Wood of Church View, Somerby Road. She was born in Rugby, and went to school there initially.

The family moved to Holland in 1975 and Hannah attended an international school there. In 1978 the family moved again, this time to Norway, and Hannah went to a Norwegian school for a year. Hannah speaks both Dutch and Norwegian but says she gained little academically from her time in Norway because she was too shy to speak. Shyness does not appear to have been a problem out of school, however. Hannah admits to cycling round the area where she lived until she smelled fresh baking; she would knock on the door of the appropriate house and, being "such a cute little English girl" was always asked in and fed.

Another memory of her time in Norway is of playing in the forest behind their house on Oslo Fjord in an abandoned firing range, a relic of the Nazi occupation.

In 1979 Hannah's father moved back to England and a job in Leicester and the family settled in Knossington in Churchview. Hannah remembers being upset that she had to leave behind her bicycle.

Hannah went to Knossington School for a year and then moved on, first to Vale of Catmose College and Later to the Sixth Form College in Oakham. After school, Hannah attended what is now De Montfort University, Leicester, to study combined arts, but she lost interest and left after two years to work as a graphic designer in her father's business in Up-pingham. She had no formal training in the job but was clearly a success because she is still working there.

Her earlier memories of Knossington include, on May Day celebrations, dancing round the maypole. The maypole was sited on the gravel drive to the Rectory.

"I was the May Queen's assistant," she recalls. "I wanted to be the May Queen, but they wouldn't let me", she adds sadly.

Having had her arm broken by a rounders bat at the tender age of four, she has never been keen on sports, but paints and draws beautifully and has exhibited her work in Leicester City Gallery.

She also designs cards and wrapping paper and does illustrations for such well-known companies as W H Smith and Marks and Spencer.

Hannah moved into number 7a - so numbered because, when Melton Borough Council decided, in their wisdom, to renumber all the houses in the village, they missed out Eureka Cottage completely and had to allocate it an "a" to avoid having to renumber the complete street - in 1996.

"It's the smallest house in the village but it required extensive refurbishment," grumbles Hannah.

There is little doubt that the house would have undergone major change in any case as Hannah stamped her own personality on the property - it is currently decorated in a series of bright, powerful colours.

In her earlier years Hannah was a member of the youth club in the village. She now plays regularly in the Fox and Hounds' team in the local pub quiz league. She is an accomplished cook and keen gardener. She drives a 1972 Wolseley which her father restored.

"He bought it off a blind salesman", she laughs. "The salesman claimed he had a feel for a good car!"



Hannah Wood setting off on a cake hunt in Oslo.

Gary and Evelyn West

15 Owston Road

Gary and Evelyn West came to Knossington in 1987 from Borneo, where Gary had been working as a pilot for an oil company. Since leaving the RAF in 1976 the Wests had lived and worked in many faraway places including Nigeria and the Far East.

Back in England Gary started to work out of East Midlands Airport. He had to live within an hour's drive from the airport and on a good day from Knossington it took just 45 minutes. They were not complete strangers to the area having previously lived in Oakham when their children attended Oakham school. Any previous knowledge of Knossington was based on their daughter Sue's claiming that the Fox & Hounds was known as an after hours drinking hole. Gary and Evelyn decided Knossington was the place for them.

They quickly became involved in village life. After Gary volunteered to clear the waste ground behind the Village Hall he soon found himself chairman of the Village Hall Committee. Gary supervised the refurbishment of the hall installing a new roof and windows, and a much needed new heating system. He has also organised the annual village fete for many years, becoming famous for his schedules and military precision. After the Village Hall Committee, Gary took over the mantle of clerk of the Parish Council.



Owston Road in the 1920's



Gary West in the cockpit of the Vickers Vanguard



Frances, Steven, Evelyn, Sue and Gary

Meanwhile Evelyn has not been a shrinking violet, winning an election to become president of Knossington Women's Institute which she strove to make more light-hearted and relevant in an attempt to attract the younger women of the village. She has also been working for many years raising money for LOROS.

Two of Gary and Evelyn's children have been married at St Peter's. Sue married Ian Morrell in August 1989. A very hot day that saw the tarmac melting on the roads as she walked to the church. The wedding was conducted by the vicar at the time Michael Wall, the motorcycling minister, who had been Sue's French teacher at Oakham School. Their second daughter Frances married Simon Holdsworth here in 1995 after meeting him at a London blind date party and were featured in the Daily Mail. Son Steven married Pauline Herron of Dulwich in Ireland.

Gary co-piloted the last ever Vickers Vanguard flight, into Brooklands, before retiring from flying.

He has spend many of the wee hours fishing at Rutland Water, once winning £100 for catching a prize golden trout. He's been so successful Evelyn can no longer stand the sight of trout. Gary and Evelyn have not slowed down in retirement. They spend their spare time birdwatching, walking and cycling, and Gary has been known to lay a mean bit of crazy paving. They also enjoy travelling, having visited China, Australia and East Africa. Gary just lets someone else do the flying now.

Knossington Cricket Club

Knossington Cricket Club 2000



1952: Sir Henry Tate presenting the cup to Doug Jacobs



1954: Doug Jacobs, third left back,
and Bill Lewin front centre

Peter Witchell

The Old Schoolhouse, Owston Road

Peter was born in Bromley, Kent, the youngest of three children. He went to Oundle School where he became top academic scholar and top musician. In those days, says Peter, it was assumed that you would follow an academic career, so he went up to Oxford to read maths, which was his best subject. He maintains that, if you really want to do music, "It will get you in the end", and so it proved. During his time at Oxford Peter took part in every available musical opportunity and had a wonderful time.

After graduating with an MA in maths he studied at the Royal Academy of Music and is a GRSM and LRAM. In 1971 he moved to Sherbourne School as Assistant Director of Music.

In 1978 he came to Oakham School as Director of Music and moved into the Old Schoolhouse in Knossington. He is now head of Academic Music at Oakham School and is also an HMC Inspector of Music. His other interests are the theatre and travel; he has travelled to nearly all European countries and several counties in the Middle East, and gets involved in most of the stage musical productions at Oakham School.

He does not, and never has, owned a television set. This, however, has not prevented him from being hounded for non-payment of a television licence. He relates the story of how he convinced the man who came to the door demanding payment, that there was no television set in the house. Some weeks later, however, a different man arrived on the doorstep demanding "that the business be sorted out, once and for all".

Peter saw red and gave the poor fellow a verbal roasting before sending him on his way. The man was then observed trying to find an entrance to Bow Cottage next door Peter had, of course, purchased that property, had the two cottages knocked into one, and had the front door blocked up in the process - so there was no front door. Clearly chastened by his encounter with Peter, the man quickly gave up his search and went off.

Although Peter is certainly no absent-minded professor, he does seem to have difficulties with parties. He tells of arriving, complete with box of chocolates for the hostess, at a party in Oakham only to find he was in the wrong house. Again, in Knossington, he arrived, this time at the right house, but 24 hours late.

Gaynor and Paul Ryan, Alice

Rose Cottage, Owston Road

Paul was born in Edinburgh and attended school in Glasgow until the age of ten. The family then moved south and Paul moved to Whitgift School Croydon. From there he went to Exeter University to read for a B.A. in Economics and then trained with Peat Marwick in London as an accountant and gained his FCA.

Gaynor was born and educated in Devizes before taking a degree in Biology and Chemistry. After graduating, she took a post graduate teacher's certificate at Goldsmith's, University of London and taught at Seaton Seaford and Abbey School for Girls in Reading. Gaynor is proud of the teddy bear, now with one eye and slightly bald, she won in a beautiful baby contest. Years later she was surprised to find that the baby who had come second became her sister's husband.

Paul and Gaynor met at Exeter University and were married in 1975. Their daughter Alice was born in 1979 and Gaynor retired from teaching.

In 1986 Paul was appointed finance controller with Next at their head office in Enderby and the family moved to



Knossington. When Paul became finance director of Mothercare he stayed in London during the week. When he then became finance director of Budgens, also in London, he was Knossington's first daily commuter to the capital via Peterborough. He is currently finance director with the Oliver Group in Leicester.

Paul is a keen cricketer, even being mentioned in Wisdens as a schoolboy, and has played cricket for the village team. He also enjoys playing golf.

Gaynor is a member of the W.I. and has served as secretary, has been treasurer of the Playing Fields Committee and is still keen on raising funds for its upkeep. She is a keen gardener and flower arranger, organising the church flower rota and exhibiting at the local flower show.

Alice was born in Reading and attended school in Pangbourne until she was seven and moved to Knossington - right next to the village school. When she was ten, the village school was closed and Alice moved on to Oakham School. After spending a year out, she is now at Christ's College, Cambridge reading for a B.A. in English literature.

The oldest part of Rose Cottage is a timber frame construction with wattle and daub infilling. The hay loft which is still accessible from the kitchen indicates that the house was a working farm and possibly dates from the late 17th century. The house formed part of the Cold Overton estate and was sold in 1919 to cover death duties. It was bought by Mr Barnett, great grandfather of David and Michael, who retained the adjacent fields and then sold the house separately. Gaynor has found fragments of Stamfordware from the Saxo-Norman period 800-1200, and numerous bits of broken clay pipes whilst digging in the garden.



Gaynor and Paul Ryan

The village school through the years



The class of 1925 with Patsy Ward, third right, second row.



Top right: Ben Gibson, first left, and Michael Ward in front of Mrs Parsons in 1960.



Right: Mr Firth with staff and pupils in 1969.

Mr Trundle
with the junior
class in 1973



Infant class
1973 with Mrs
Spendlove



1979 with
Mrs Darroch



Christmas
1987



The last day at Knossington Church of England School, July 1989. Headmistress Mrs Robinson, far right

Anne Hulse

8 School Cottages, Owston Road

Anne moved to Knossington from Littlethorpe on 1 January 1971. She was born and brought up in Leicester. After leaving school, she went into photography, then into textile design and back to photography before taking to the road and becoming a professional driver. She held a PSV licence and was a familiar sight in the area, driving Nesbitt's buses.

Anne's all-consuming hobby was cricket. She admits that it was to the exclusion of most other pursuits but is now making amends. She joined Leicester Ladies in about 1952 and stayed with them, on and off, job and other commitments allowing, until she came to live here. In 1986 she was a selector for the East Midlands.

Having given up cricket, she now has time for her many other hobbies and interests including music, mostly classical; books- historical, factual, autobiographies, opera etc; videos documentaries, old musicals, opera, ballet; wood-carving and art. Anne is a founder member of the Kiri-te Kanawa Appreciation Society and was a founder member of the Rutland Amateur Theatrical Society (RATS).

Despite being born in the heart of the Midlands, she is passionate about ships and the sea and has recently been down to see the start of the Tall Ships Race. Her hero is Lord Nelson.

If she won the Lottery, she would like to move to Devon or Cornwall to be near the sea but, until then, is quite happy in Knossington.



Owston Road as it used to be.

John and Mary Dawson, Emma and Paul

2 School Cottages, Owston Road

John was born one of two sons of a farmer in Frisby-on-the-Wreake. The farm had been worked by his grandfather and is still in the family. John went to school in Frisby and later to Melton Modern Boys' School. He left at the age of 15 and went to work on the family farm.

In 1969, dissatisfied with life on the farm, he started work with Leicester County Council. Later he became a long-distance lorry driver and eventually started up his own haulage business. He now works as a case-maker and packer for specialist export goods.

Mary Owens was born one of the eight children of a Tilton-on-the-Hill ironstone worker. She attended Tilton school and later went to Sarsons School in Melton Mowbray, also leaving at age 15. Mary went to work in Leicester, first in the hosiery business and later in the shoe trade.

John and Mary met at Asfordby Youth Club. Mary had gone along to the Club with her friend who, at that time, was John's girlfriend; that romance was to prove short-lived. Mary denies vehemently that she stole her friend's boy, but the young man was completely besotted and they were married in 1970. They have lived all their married life in the same house in Knossington.

They have two children and both attended Knossington school. Emma went directly from Knossington School to Vale of Catmose College, Oakham; Paul went to Langham school when Knossington closed, and then to Vale of Catmose. Emma, who lives in Somerby, works in an interior design shop in Oakham and also is a self-employed cleaner. Paul still lives at home and works as a plasterer.

Mary has worked at the Grange School as an assistant cook for about ten years and also works as a cleaner in the village. She is well-known for her selflessness and kindness towards some of the older residents in the village. Both John and Mary reflect wistfully on the changes they have seen in the village in the past 30 years. They cite in particular the demise of the village shop which was in the Old Post Office, the Post Office which was run by Mrs Gresswell in a shed in her garden at 4 Larchwood Rise, and the village school.



John Dawson with Emma and Paul

Searle Kohberg and Peter de Barra

3 School Cottages, Owston Road

Driving north along a traffic clogged A1, Searle decided to take a country detour and discovered Rutland. The undulating countryside reminded him of the Yorkshire Dales and Devon and he was hooked. After a six month search, he first saw the cottage on a fog shrouded February day.

As soon as Searle decided to make Knossington his second home, a series of connections and coincidences made him feel as if fate had been playing a hand - "as if the cottage was there, waiting for me to find it". He already knew Anita Linsell who had lived in the Hollow.

A close friend immediately recognised the name Knossington because she was a descendant of the family who had actually lived in the Whalebones and erected the Cetaceous objects as a gateway from which the property gets its name. Peter had a friend Bill, whose brother had served in the army with John Hawksworth, so another Knossington connection emerged.

Searle was born in Manitoba, Canada and his family came from Eastern Europe stock. He has Polish, Russian and German antecedents. Growing up in the mid west of Canada has had an influence upon Searle. Protestant work ethics in a hard working agricultural community have produced "a hospital corners kind of guy".

Searle came to school in London in 1968 and retained his Canadian accent, against the odds, in a bid to preserve his identity. He went on to study for a B.Sc. in geology at Imperial College, London and worked as a geologist for ten years. He then made a complete change in his career, achieving an M.A. in Films and Television Studies (Westminster) and an M.A. in History of Art (University College, London). He is now the Professor of the Moving Image at Portsmouth University, where he teaches three days a week and is responsible for the B.A. course in film and video production.

Peter de Barra grew up in Ireland. His home is in London but as an international architect he travels widely. He specialises in the development of large scale resorts and hospitality/entertainment complexes. His work has taken him all over the world, including Romania, Ethiopia and Los Angeles. He also contributed to the redevelopment of Manchester city centre after the devastating bomb explosion.

Searle bought 3 School Cottages in 1992 and has worked hard to restore the period details. A fireplace dating from the 1880's has been installed.

An English elm floor has been laid in the dining room and blue slates in the kitchen. He believes the three cottages to have been built for school teachers although other sources point to tied cottages for agricultural workers. The property was once part of the Grange Farm estate.

Because of his background, Searle feels at home in Knossington. Carol singing on the tractors reminds him of childhood hay rides and he describes the village as "an important space for us". He loves the interesting mix of people and that this is still a working farm community.

Peter looks at the village with more professional eyes. He would like to see an active tree planting programme and is worried about the neglect of the more mature specimen trees and the quantity of ivy which threatens to overwhelm them. He would like to see the development of a wild flower meadow in the part of the churchyard and some sympathetic tree planting in the graveyard, to enhance its peaceful atmosphere.

William Lewin

Grange Farm, Owston Road

William Cecil MacGregor Lewin, known by everybody as Bill, was born in the house, Grange Farm, in which he still lives. His sister Islay who lives on Cold Overton Road was also born at the farm.

Bill attended the village primary school when Mr Morris was the headmaster and Mary Freckingham was the infants teacher. Mr Morris lived for a time in part of the Whalebones and then at Fern Villa. "Boss" Morris was rather fond of using the cane! From the village school, Bill went to the Boy's Modern School in Melton and then attended Melton Technical College.

As farming was a vital industry during the war, Bill worked with his father on the family farm and one of his jobs was the twice daily milk round. Milk was delivered in

bottles of half pint upwards apart from the third pint bottles delivered to the school. The price in winter was "thruppence a pint and tuppence ha 'penny in summer."

The Lewins also maintained the village water supply system before municipal water was piped to the village. Water came from Sanderson's Orchard, now Gibson's caravan site, to settling tanks in the paddock opposite Dairy Cottage, Somerby Road. The pump housed in the little brick building, pumped water into the reservoir on the Sconsborough Hill and then into cast iron pipes through the village. Apart from this water supply, many of the houses had tanks which stored the rain water from the roofs. This was used for washing, and there were many wells, and the village pump.

Bill remembers electricity and gas being produced for The Grange.

During the severe winter of 1947, Bill took full churns of milk, with tractor and trailer, cross country to John O'Gaunt. When this route became blocked, full churns were collected from various farmers and again taken cross country to the Old Plough at Braunston where they were collected by lorry. After off-loading the full churns, Bill went on to Oakham to feed the outlying cattle, collect mail from the Post Office, before returning to Braunston to pick up empty churns for the following day. There was no postal deliveries for a fortnight due to the roads being blocked.

At this time, Knossington had been supplied with an experimental snow plough which was attached to the front of the Nuffield tractor. No heated cabs in those days and at 4 o'clock on a winter's morning, no amount of clothes can prevent the cold penetrating the body.

In the 50s, together with another Knossington resident, Michael Bennett, Bill earned his beer money by installing wiring in some of the village houses for electricity.

There was a thriving cricket team in the village and Bill was a member of the cup winning team as well as being the holder of the horticultural society cup for the best display of chrysanthemums.

Reg and Rita Smith

16 Owston Road

Reg was born in Kirby Bellars. Reg's father was a groom and by the time the young Reg was ready for school the family had moved to Rockingham where his father was groom at the castle. "Times were very hard in the 30s", says Reg, "Lots of people were going out of business". As a result, Reg's father moved from job to job and Reg attended a number of schools. At the age of 17 Reg volunteered to go

into the Navy, "because it looked like they were going to make me a soldier", he says.

At the end of his service in 1948, he returned from the Far East to Cottesbrooke, Northants, where his family were living. It did not take long for the ex-sailor to notice the blond girl walking down the lane next to the family home, and pretty soon he discovered that the lady in question was Rita Harris from Guilsborough, near Northampton, and that she worked as a nursery maid in the big house across the road. In fact, if Reg looked out of his window, he could often see Rita at the nursery window. Eventually Reg managed to persuade Rita to go to the cinema in Northampton with him one Sunday afternoon and the romance was born.

Rita worked under a very severe nanny who would ensure that she obtained the maximum work out of the maid. On many a Saturday night Reg had to wait patiently until his lady had been released from duty.



Reg Smith

After about a year Rita found a new, less demanding job as a nanny, in a village on the other side of Northampton. The problem now was the couple had to rely on the infrequent bus services to get together. Reg tells the story of one occasion when Rita suddenly realised that she wouldn't have enough time to walk the three miles to catch the last bus back to her work. Reg put the worried Rita on the crossbar of his bicycle and pedalled as fast as he could to meet the bus at the main road - only to arrive just after the bus had gone. Their last chance for Rita to get back to work in time and keep out of trouble was to cycle the few miles to Northampton in the same manner, hope the policeman wouldn't see them, and hope that Rita could catch a town service bus to somewhere near her place of employment. They arrived just in time, and Reg, "who still had a couple of bob in his pocket", retired to a pub conveniently located by the bus stop, to restore his energy.

Reg and Rita were married in Guilsborough in 1951 and shortly afterwards they left to go to the Banbury area where Reg had obtained a job as a groom.

Thereafter they moved wherever Reg's job took them and eventually arrived, in 1966, in Knossington where Reg was groom to John and Hyacinthe Hawkesworth at Fishponds House. At first they lived in Elm Cottage, then at Greenfields, and now at 16 Owston Road.

They have three daughters. Celia, the eldest, was twelve when the family arrived in Knossington, and went to school in Melton. Sarah, who lives with husband Geoff and their two children at 5 Somerby Road, and Alison, the youngest, both attended school in Knossington before going on to Melton. Both the younger girls were married by Canon Green in St Peter's. Celia lives in Australia.

Reg and Rita have four grandchildren. Rita has been a member of the Knossington Women's Institute for over thirty years and was president for eleven of those. She has been a member of the Village Hall Committee for about thirty years and currently is secretary. Reg used to be a keen cricketer and, until a couple of years ago, spent his spare time working in his immaculate allotment.

Derek and Pat Horrocks

Priory Farm, Owston Road

The Horrocks came to Knossington with their two daughters Lindsay Jane and Carol Anne from Lancashire but their journey took some time and included three years in Kenya where Derek worked as a biochemist for the East African Veterinary Unit after gaining his PhD and time in Bedford where he worked for Unilever.

They found Priory Farm in 1969 whilst they were living in Whissendine and Derek was working for Petfoods in Melton and Waltham. They had been looking for an old house and although the previous owner had carried out some renovation they decided it was for them. Although they are unable to date the house accurately, their deeds date back to 1750. They believe it to be much older. In fact the two stone seats, sedilas, at the rear of the house make them feel that it was probably built from stone recovered from Owston Priory.

Almost as soon as they arrived in the village they began running the tombola that they still run today. They also hold the annual coffee evening to raise funds for the Christmas tree lit each year by the Methodist Chapel. Pat is the chairman of the League of Hospital Friends who are instrumental in raising money for the Oakham Hospital.

Derek retired in 1987 and immediately embarked upon a Technical Horology degree course at Manchester University. he gained his degree in 1990. In 1996 their youngest daughter Lindsay was married at St Peter's church.

Knossington Women's Institute



2000: Amanda Lee, Ros Wood, Julie Wood, Alice Cox, Islay Fishwick, Gaynor Ryan, Pat Harvey, Shirley Spencer, Jane Jackson, Dot Freckingham, Evelyn West, Sue Blunden and Barbara Hartley.



Margaret and Ann Gibson, Alice Cox, Evelyn West and Minty Hill sewing the millennium tapestry



1973: Rachel Harby, Cheryl Brown, Jo Bell, Lola Marlow, Rita Smith and Alice Cox in a performance of 'The Stardusters'.

Peggy Barnett

The Homestead, 19 Owston Road

Peggy Holvey was born in Cold Overton and, in 1954, married Gordon Barnett, farmer, from Knossington. They were married in Owston church and lived in Owston till Gordon's grandfather vacated The Homestead in 1958.

Gordon was, before his untimely death at the age of 52 in 1982, an active and popular member of the community. In

addition to being a parish councillor, he was a member of the village cricket club, the village hall committee, the Conservative club, the youth club, and played the organ in St Peter's.

He initiated the annual Christmas carol singing round the village and the placing of Christmas lights on the leylandii

tree at the Methodist Chapel. Both of these traditions marked their 50th anniversary at Christmas 1999.

Peggy tells the story of when Gordon went to the church one snowy winter evening, to practise playing the organ. Daughter Julie was sledging with other children in a field on the edge of the village when she heard the church bells ringing and rushed back home to report to her mother that "someone had died because the bells were ringing". The mystery was solved some time later when Gordon returned home sheepishly to tell his story. He discovered, after his organ-playing practice, that he had locked himself in the church, and decided the only way he could attract attention to his plight was to ring the church bells. Fortunately Mr Pryke, the farmer who lived next to St Peter's, realised there was something amiss and investigated, releasing the hapless Gordon.

Peggy and Gordon had three children. Sons David and Michael both live and work in the village. Julie, born in Oakham Hospital, was both baptised and married in St Peter's. She now lives in Lamley, Notts.



*The Homestead
fifty years ago.*



Julie, David, Peggy and Michael Barnett



Gordon, Chappie Cox and David, hanging the Christmas tree lights in 1961



Four generations of Barnetts: Edward and William with Gordon holding the young David.

David and Diane Barnett, Lewis and Hayley

21 Owston Road

David, eldest son of Peggy and Gordon Barnett, was born in Oakham Hospital and baptised in Owston church. He was brought up at The Homestead, went to Knossington School and later to Sarsons School, Melton.

Leaving school in 1974, he joined Tractormotor Services (now TMS) as an apprentice and gained a City and Guild qualification in agricultural mechanics. After the death of his father in 1982 he teamed up with brother Michael to run the agricultural contracting business. In 1983 he married Diane Copley, a farmer's daughter from Little Dalby, at St Peter's church. The couple, who had met originally in the Fox and Hounds, lived in Little Dalby for six years until their

present house was built in 1989 by David Cox, the son of Chappie Cox, 15 Larchwood Rise. One of the various services provided by the contracting company is snow clearance and the villagers have, from time to time, good reason to be grateful for David's presence. He is often called upon to provide assistance round the village where there is a need for one or other of his machines and this help is always willingly and freely given.

David and Diane have two children, son Lewis is 14 and daughter Hayley is 12, both born in St Mary's Hospital, Melton Mowbray. The two currently attend Vale of Catmose College, Oakham.



Aerial view of the Homestead and 21 Owston Road.



Hayley, David, Diane and Lewis Barnett

Bob Broome

Fern Villa, Owston Road.

Bob, son of the late Charlie and Millie Broome, was born at Ding Hills Farm, now known as Frog Hollow, Cold Overton Road, Somerby. He attended school in Somerby, Melton Boys' Modern and Fernlea School in Melton Mowbray.

He left school at 15 to work on his father's farm. In 1972 the family moved to Fern Villa and continued to farm their 100-plus acres. Bob's sister Judith is married and lives in Frog Hollow.

After the death of his mother in March 1998 and father in November 1999, Bob continues to run the farm, which is totally dedicated to livestock.

Bob was a keen sportsman in his younger days, playing football for Somerby and Pickwell for over twenty years. He also played for Langham and Melton Mowbray.

"It says something about my ability," he jokes, "that the season after I gave up, Somerby won the double!"

But for the pressures of work on the farm in summer, he would have played cricket too. He was also a member of the Knossington team which took part in the Inter-village competition, and remembers well the occasion when, under the captaincy of the publican from the Fox and Hounds, the team won the competition, and £50 each in the process. The publican had the last laugh, however, because the victorious team drank their prize money in his pub.

More recently he has turned his hand to less physical games, playing dominoes for the Fox and Hounds and taking part in pub quiz league as a member of the Stilton Cheese, Somerby team. The Broome family has been associated with Knossington for a long time. Arthur Broome, Bob's grandfather, who died in the late 1960s, was the baker.



Charlie Broome

Charlie who, alas, just failed to see the year 2000, was one of the leading characters of the village. He was particularly noted, not only for his love of whisky, but also for dispensing it to others in over-generous quantities and at whatever time of the day an excuse could be found. Michael Stokes of Ivy Cottage tells of the time he walked unsteadily home at 11 o'clock in the morning from Fern Villa, and much of the spirit had had to be hidden in a plant pot.

"He was known to do a bit of poaching in his time", says Bob. "He loved shooting and wasn't fussy about whose land it was on".

Millie, Bob's mother, was also a well-loved character in the village. She was born Millie Wade, in East Norton. For years she was a member of the Knossington Women's Institute, a parish councillor, opened her lovely garden in aid of church funds, took an active part in the village fete, and held a fundraising sale for the W.I. in the garden at Fern Villa.



Bob Broome, front centre, captain of the Pickwell football team, including Geoff Ward second from left back row.

Minty Hill

Woodland View, Owston Road

Minty Hill (née Thurman) was born in Cold Overton but as a very young child moved with her parents to Manor Farm in Knossington in 1915 and lived there until the family retired from farming in 1954.

The Thurman's had farmed at Manor Farm from the 1890's; sheep, milking cows, pigs, working horses, chickens and geese. Minty looked after the poultry and the eggs were boxed and sold wholesale - one receipt dated 1st June 1939 shows that 90 dozen eggs were collected from the farm for which they were paid £5 0s 2d less collection charge of one shilling and sixpence, a total of £4 18s 8d (£4.94).

The milk produced was made into Stilton Cheese which was sold to Staffords of Leicester for approximately one shilling per pound (5p) and for that price it had to be good! The cheeses were taken by horse and float into Leicester. Butter was made for family consumption only.

Minty attended the grammar school in Melton but as there was no daily transport, she was taken into Melton on Sunday evening in the trap and had to stay in lodgings until Friday evening. Eventually buses were introduced. In the autumn whilst waiting for the school bus, the pupils used to gather walnuts shed from the trees at the front of Walnut Tree House and go to school with green and brown stained hands.

During the 1939-45 war Minty worked on the farm as a member of the Land Army and recalls that they were fined five shillings (25p) for showing a light in a roofed building - a tiny paraffin lamp with half inch wick burning in the cow hovel. The light was permissible to cross the yard but not in the shed. She also remembers that they were directed by the War Ag Committee to grow a crop of flax for the fibre not seed, which had to be pulled by hand - no machinery, as long fibres were required. War Ag also required a crop of potatoes - on Knossington soil! But the weather was wet and harvesting difficult. No more potatoes from Manor Farm.

Minty moved to Woodland View, which her far seeing grandmother had purchased in 1915 from Mrs Houghton, whose husband had been the village butcher. The present breakfast room had been the shop. When work was carried out on the roof the date 1846 was found scratched in the lead flashing. The stone part of the house, including the stained glass window, was added in 1871 by Robert Scott, using remnants taken from Owston Abbey.

Moving from the farm didn't mean retirement for Minty. She became a nurse and stayed in the profession until she retired officially.

In 1968 Minty went to Canada for a holiday. She caught the bus to Melton to catch the train. When she came back three weeks later the bus service had been discontinued.

The Thurman family has always been associated with

Methodism in Knossington. Thomas, Minty's father, was a local preacher for many years and Minty is currently the treasurer of the Chapel. She's also an active member of the W.I., the local Leisure Club and a member of the village hall management committee.

In 1978 Minty married Gilbert Hill. Although Gilbert did not live in Knossington until the marriage, his family connections with the village went back a very long way to when his maternal great grandfather, Benjamin Hill was listed in the 1871 census as being a grazier and baker living at the Bakehouse. Gilbert's mother's maiden name was Hill but no relation to his father's family.

The family came from Lincolnshire in the early 1900s to farm at Bleak House. They then moved to Burton Lazars and, from there, Gilbert used to visit his aunts who were

still at Bleak House. He would bring them to Knossington chapel and it was there that he met Minty. Later Gilbert married and moved to farm at Great Ponton but kept in touch with Minty. After 35 years, his wife Alice died and later he retired and then he and Minty were married. Gilbert came to live in Knossington until his death.

In remembrance of service to the village by her father and Eddie and Gordon Barnett, Minty gave Knossington its playing field in 1992.



Minty Hill, left, at the site of the new playing field

Michael Barnett and Clare Fawkes

25 Owston Road

Michael, second son of Peggy and Gordon Barnett, was born at home and has lived all his life in the village. He was baptised in St Peter's and attended Knossington School and Sarsons School, Melton.

He left school in 1976 and started working for his father in the agricultural contracting business. On the death of his father in 1982, his brother David teamed up with him and they continue to run the business together. He lives with Clare who comes from Langham and worked for 16 years at the Grange School.

Michael, with David, were founder members of the Knossington team which took part in the Inter-village Competition which was held at the Rutland Show, Burley-on-the-Hill. The hotly-contested competition which consisted of tug of war, obstacle course, shooting and football, required a team with much strength and stamina. Knossington was well able to produce such a team - they won the first competition, and £50 each as a prize. The real winner was the landlord of the Fox and Hounds, who was also team leader, because all the prize money seems to have been spent in his hostelry that night.

Michael is also a keen and able footballer at Leicestershire senior league standard. He plays currently for Oakham Imps and it seems you can never open a copy of the Rutland Times without seeing a picture of him on the sports pages or a glowing account of his goal-scoring prowess as "veteran striker".

Veronica and Michael Hubbard

Greenfields, Owston Road

Veronica Long was born in Oakham and went to school first at Closefield prep school which was in Burley Road where Simmons the optometrist is now situated. She then attended the Franciscan Convent in Melton Mowbray, leaving in 1956 to work at County Creamery in Oakham.

Married in 1964, she has three children. Daughter Clare, who lives in Oakham, married Richard Brown, son of Philip and Cheryl Brown, 13 Larchwood Rise, and has two children. Cecilia, the other daughter, lives in Coventry and has a son. Veronica's son Michael lives at Greenfields with his mother.

Veronica works as a housekeeper for John and Hyacinthe Hawkesworth at Fishponds House, next door, and moved to Knossington with Clare and Michael only when the house became available in 1991. Michael, who was twelve years old when he came to the village, attended Vale of Catmose College until the age of 16 and now works as delivery manager for Somerfield supermarket, Oakham.

John and Hyacinthe Hawkesworth

Fishponds House, Owston Road

The Hawkesworths bought Fishponds House in 1955 from Mrs Moyses, whose husband's grandfather built it in the middle of the 19th Century. He was a carpenter by trade who walked from Tilton to Knossington every day after work to build the house with his own hands.

Hyacinthe, usually known as Pussy, is the niece of Sir Henry and Lady Tate, who lived at Preston Lodge in Withcote. It was from staying there that the Hawkesworths got to know and love Knossington.

At the time they came to Knossington John was working as a designer in the film industry and he drew up the plans to enlarge the house himself. The building work was done by Stimpson and Son from Somerby. The senior Mr Stimpson found out that Kibworth Old Hall was being demolished and almost all the bricks, doors, mouldings and windows for the rebuilt and newly christened Fishponds House came from that property.

In the 1960s the Hawkesworths bought four condemned cottages from Mr Broome and Fishponds Cottage and the stable yard were built on the site. In 1987 Greenfields, the cottage next to Fishponds House, and some fifty acres to the south and east of the village were acquired.

John Hawkesworth had joined the film industry at the end of war after service in the Grenadier Guards. He started working in the art department but soon turned to producing and writing for both films and television. Amongst his many successful productions were the highly acclaimed Tiger Bay, Upstairs Downstairs, The Duchess of Duke Street, and Mrs Harris Goes to Paris. He retired from full time producing in 1994 but he still writes and has become a professional painter with six one man exhibitions to his name. He has served as a church warden at St Peter's for 14 years and has served on the Parish Council both as a councillor and as chairman.

Pussy Hawkesworth has been the driving force behind the Rutland Red Cross for a considerable time and has also been the secretary of the Cottesmore Hunt Pony Club. Her family is Welsh and she inherited the barony of Cemaes in Pembrokeshire some twenty years ago. In Wales she is known as the Lady Marcher of Cemaes.

Tim and Margaret Lester

The Holt, 24 Owston Road

Tim and Margaret came to live in Knossington in January 1990. Tim once admitted that he had always wanted his own five bar gate to lean on and admire the view; The Holt fitted the bill perfectly.

Tim was born in Waddesdon, near Aylesbury, Bucks, the son of a farmer who was to lose his livelihood in 1927 because of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, necessitating the slaughter of all his cattle. Tim's father became a milk buyer for Nestlé, little suspecting that his son was destined to follow him into the company.

Margaret, née Marsh, met her husband-to-be while they were both studying at Bristol University. Tim graduated as

BSc Eng and then served for two years National Service in the RAF. He served as an engineer in Germany during the Berlin airlift. Margaret, meanwhile, graduated as BSc Geog, took a teaching diploma and taught until they married in 1951. At that time women teachers had to leave the profession when they married.

Tim had accepted a job with Nestlé working as an engineer in the head office engineering department and continued with the company until his retirement as production director of the milk division, 40 years later in 1989.

They have two daughters and the family has lived in a variety of places in England, and also in Ireland, Jamaica

and Switzerland. Both daughters are married, and Tim and Margaret have five granddaughters.

They came to Knossington from Banstead, Surrey, on Tim's retirement. Tim is a church warden at St Peter's. Keen gardeners, they have opened their garden to the public, as part of the village open gardens scheme in aid of church funds, every year since becoming resident.

Both are members of the Rutland Decorative and Fine Arts Society; Tim is the film-maker and projectionist. In addition, his travel films are often shown at functions in the village hall, again raising funds for St Peter's.



Margaret and Tim Lester

Bill and Elizabeth Collin, Roger

Manor House, Owston Road

The Collin family moved to Knossington from Scraftoft in 1979. They were no strangers to the area as Bill already had land at Braunston. Bill is a rose-grower - growing approximately 200,000 plants for the wholesale market, and part time farmer with Roger. He began his horticultural education at the Midland Agricultural College, Sutton Bonington, but at the end of his course it had changed its status and was part of the University of Nottingham.

Elizabeth hails from Quenby - the daughter of a farmer. Bill recalls that in the days when they were courting, they sometimes cycled from Quenby to Oakham to visit the cinema, opposite the Somerfield supermarket. They left their bicycles leaning against the wall, no locks or chains, and were still intact when they were ready to bike back to Quenby - those were the days.

Much of the Collin family farm was purchased under compulsory purchase by Leicester City Council just after World War II for the princely sum of £65 per acre. This altered the character of the village of Scraftoft - housing estates where farms had been, bringing the associated problems, vandalism and trespass and so the family moved to Knossington.

The Collin family farm approximately 600 acres around Knossington, stretching from Owston Road through to the

Wisp (Braunston-Tilton road). Arable crops - rape, wheat, barley oats, flax and borage. The only livestock are sheep, producing a crop of lambs in April/May. Roger attended Beauchamp College in Oadby and then successfully studied at Nottingham University for a BSc in agriculture.

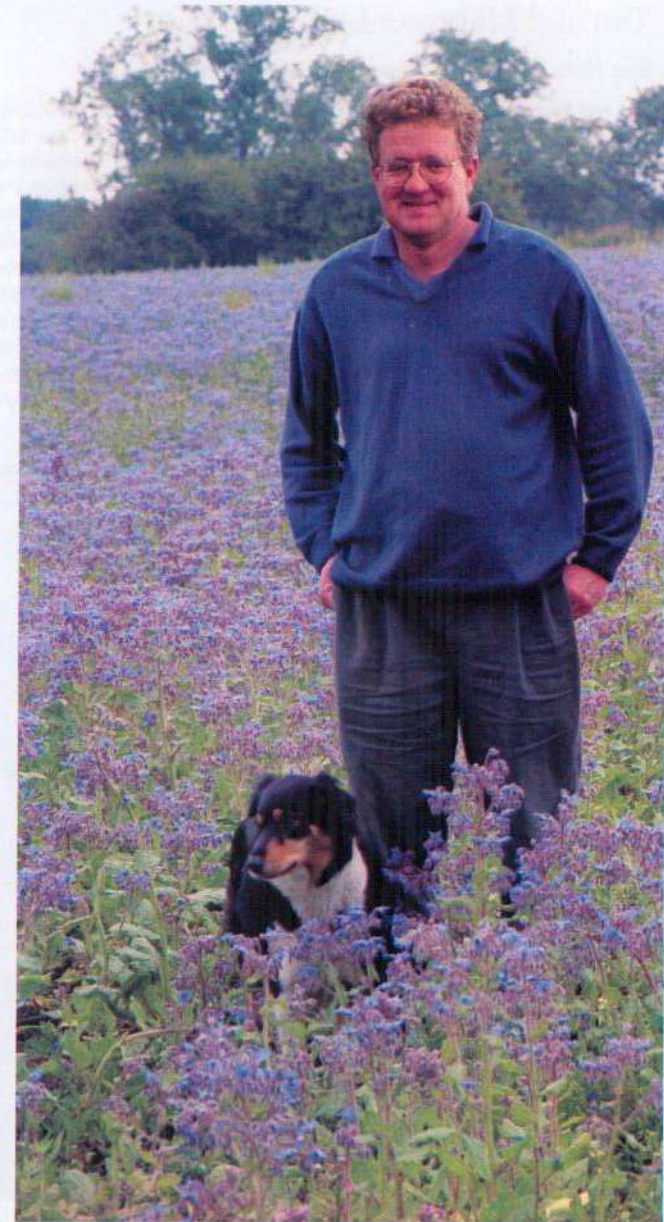
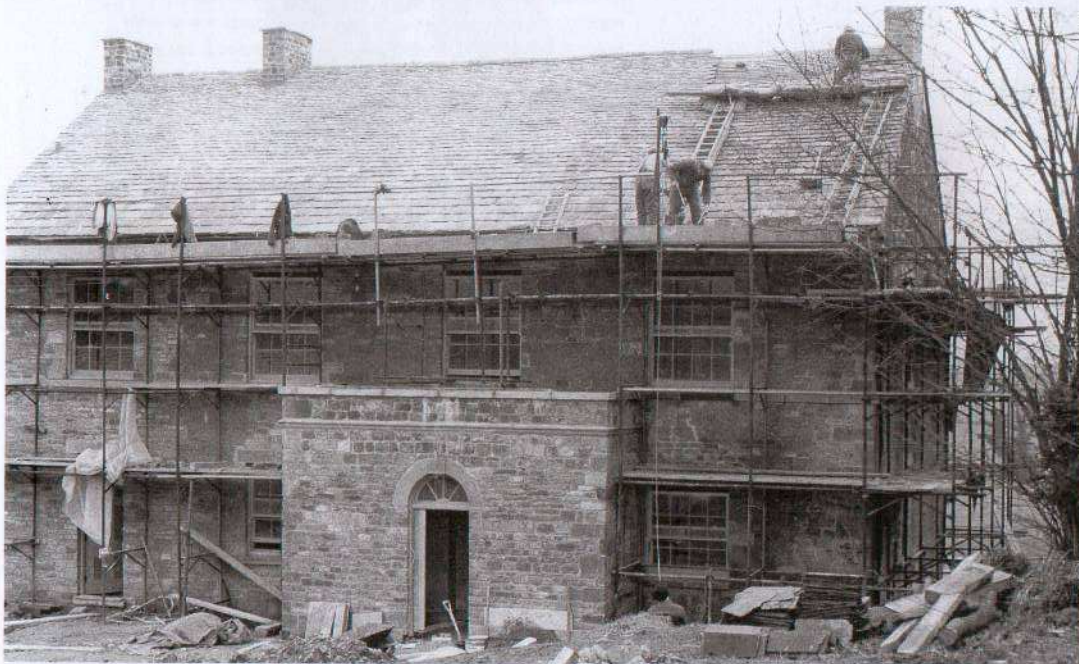
Roger has been captain of the quiz team at the Fox & Hounds for some years and in 1998/9 led them to victory in the Knockout Cup as well as being champions of division one. He is a keen supporter of Leicester City football club and enjoys watching cricket - at one time he played for the village team.

Christine Collin

Manor House Cottage, Owston Road

Christine went to Portland High School, Leicester (now Leicester Girls High School) before taking a secretarial course in London. She now works as secretary to her father.

Christine is a keen horsewoman and, during the season, hunts with the Cottesmore Hounds. She is keen on tennis, swimming and walking her dog.



Roger Collin and Daisy

The restoration of the Manor House

Kim and Fiona Smith-Bingham, Marina and Charlotte

The Whalebones

Kim, son of a bloodstock agent living in Gloucestershire, was born in Oxford. After St Ronans prep school in Kent, he went to Eton and then Grenoble University where, in 1975, he gained a Diplome de Langues et Lettres. He then went off to Argentina and worked for a year on cattle ranches.

On his return to England he worked for Tattershalls horse auctions in Newmarket before going off yet again, this time to Switzerland, where he remained for six years, working in the ski clothing business.

Fiona Macdonald-Buchanan's parents also lived in Gloucestershire. Kim and she knew each other as children. Fiona went to school in Bourton-on-the-Water and Broadway before going off to boarding school at The Manor, Great Durnford, and Heathfield near Ascot. She then did a course in history of art, attached to the British Institute in Paris. Thereafter Fiona worked at the Thai Embassy, for a theatrical agency in London, in South Africa, and then at the Old Vic organising sponsorship and fund-raising. After a while as a freelance organiser of sponsorship and fund-raising she did the research for a photographer on a book on the City of London and was about to start on another project on Wall Street, when she met Kim again and went with him to Switzerland.

Kim says they met at a racecourse when he was wearing a hat, so Fiona, for the first four hours, thought he still had hair. They married in 1984, lived in London for a year, and then moved to Knossington and into the Whalebones. Initially, Kim admits, they were looking for a property in Gloucestershire but couldn't afford the prices. They have never regretted their decision to move here.

Kim ran his own skiwear business in the village for five years, using the old school building as a warehouse for some time. He now works for Quicksilver as a salesman of health equipment for horses.

Both their daughters were born in London and both went to the Knossington Montessori nursery school and Brooke Priory. Marina, the elder, is now at Tudor Hall, Banbury; Charlotte goes to Winchester House, Brackley.



On the day of their move into the Whalebones, the family arrived after the unloading of their possessions was under way. Kim was rather surprised to see a short, elderly man directing operations with purpose and vigour

"This goes in the kitchen, take that to the dining room" and so on.

Kim, having introduced himself, asked the man who he was, to be told "I'm Bob, I work here".

"Well, what do you do here?" asked the new owner.

"I clean the boots, clean out the fires, empty the bins and feed the chickens" Bob replied.

Despite the fact that there were not to be any chickens to look after, Kim and Fiona could hardly do anything other than keep on such a dedicated employee. He was, of course, Bob Cokien of 16 Larchwood Rise.

Kim has played cricket for the village since he took up residence here and has recently become a parish councillor, but it is through his work with horses that he is best known. He was Master of the Cottesmore Hunt from 1994 to 1999.

Unsurprisingly, he has a wealth of stories of the hunt, but perhaps his favourite is the tale of the first time he was asked to look after Prince Charles. Kim's brief was to offer the Prince a glass of port and then take him to join the field at Ladywood. At first all went to plan and the pair arrived on horseback at the corner of Ladywood to be confronted by an irate local farmer, armed with a shotgun! Apparently the then Hunt Master had upset the farmer and the latter was not going to allow any hunting on his land.

"But," Kim said, "I have the Prince of Wales with me".

"I don't care if you've got the Queen herself with you," was the reply, "No b****r gets past here!"

The original whalebones

Michael and Julia Stokes, Charlotte

Ivy Cottage, The Hollow

Michael has known Knossington well for many years. During his schooldays he spent many happy holidays with his friend Michael Reynolds in Cold Overton and the pair have been firm friends since. Mr Reynolds remembers getting into a number of scrapes and close calls as a consequence of the friendship. He recalls an incident in which the young men were lucky to survive when Michael cornered too fast in his MG motor car. Luckily the car did not turn over. It missed a car travelling in the opposite direction and the intrepid Michael straightened up and carried on as if nothing untoward had occurred.

He has not always been so lucky. While skiing he had a nasty fall. The ski instructors deemed him uninjured and he hobbled back to the ski lift and returned to his accommodation - his leg had been broken in three places. On another occasion he fell off his horse and broke both wrists. He has, in the past, been a good customer of the Fox and Hounds. Born in Peterborough, Michael went to Kimbolton School and it was there he met Michael Reynolds.

Michael admits he was not academically inclined and he left school to join the horse trade, starting work in Maidenhead and later moving to Newmarket and Lincoln. After some years training and teaching he set up his own livery yard and riding school in Wansford. In 1981, after 25 years at Wansford, he gave up running the business to become Hunt Secretary for the Cottesmore Hunt, eventually moving to Knossington in 1993.

Julia Lyons, who was born in Cheshire, was keen on hunting and it was while hunting with the Fitzwilliam in the mid-sixties that she met Michael. They were married, in 1967, in Wansford. Julia worked at the stables in Wansford until they gave up the business. She then took her present job with an estate agent in Leicester. They have two daughters. Caroline, the elder, works in London as a nanny; Charlotte, also a nanny, lives at home and works in Melton Mowbray. Julia no longer hunts but Michael and both daughters ride with the Cottesmore.

Tony Best and Adele Jones, Charlie

The Red Cottage, The Hollow

Tony and Adele arrived in Knossington in December 1995. At that time Adele was working in Peterborough, Tony in Leicester so they were looking for somewhere to live which was convenient to both. They found The Red Cottage, fell in love with it, bought it and have never regretted their decision, despite hearing tales from the taxi driver who brought them to the village of the "Headless Horseman of the Hollow"

Adele was born in Aden while her father was serving there in the RAF. She has a younger brother and they have lived in Bermuda and in the Middle East. After attending boarding school at Morcott Hall, Morcott, she took a BSc Hons degree in occupational therapy at a branch of De Montfort University.

Tony was born in Chester but spent much of his boyhood near Hinckley. Leaving school at the age of 16, he went to Loughborough to study art and design and gained an HND in graphic design. He is now the creative director of a Leicester company working, with a team of seven, mainly in the design of large shop interiors. By coincidence, Tony's first job was to design an exhibition for the skiwear company owned by Kim Smith-Bingham of The Whalebones.

Tony and Adele's baby, Charlie George Jones Best, was born in Leicester General Hospital on the 11th December 1999 and now lives with his mother and father in the Red Cottage.



Tony, Charlie and Adele

Peter Burman-Lloyd and Paul Abraham

Chestnut Cottage, 6, The Hollow

Peter is a native of Poole in Dorset. He first came to Leicestershire with his employer, Major Weber-Brown, when he took a weekend cottage at Wardley. When the Major gave up his London residence and made Leicestershire his home, Peter bought a house in Uppingham and he and Paul established a garden from a building site - this stood them in good stead as they have now made a delightful garden at Chestnut Cottage where they moved in November 1997.

Peter spent two years in Australia, first as valet to the Governor of West Australia and then working on the boats plying the west coast, before coming back to England for family reasons. He then returned to service as Major Weber-Brown's butler.

Paul Abraham did his retail training with the John Lewis Partnership, Harrods and business college in London. He worked briefly in Corby whilst living in Uppingham but is now working with the American company, Lands' End in Oakham.

Both Peter and Paul are enthusiastic cooks and keen gardeners. Peter is renowned for his souffles.



Peter Burman-Lloyd

Simon Weber-Brown

Bleak House, Knossington

In 1987 Simon Weber-Brown was looking for somewhere to retire to after a career in the Army and some 34 years in the City when he found Bleak House. Leicestershire was not new to him for his mother's family had come from Great Bowden near Market Harborough. His father's family farmed in Somerset. He grew up in London and before Eton he attended Maidwell Hall in Northamptonshire.

Simon was called up for National Service in 1947 and after a period at Eton Hall he was commissioned into the Coldstream Guards. His career in the Army took him across the world; he spent time in Palestine before going to Australia to be ADC to Field Marshall Slim who was the Governor General. He retired from the Army in 1963 and he recalls that almost the last task he had was to play a major role in the planning, arrangement and execution of Sir Winston Churchill's state funeral.

His entry into the City after leaving the Army was the second time he had followed his father's example for his father had served in the Army and was badly wounded in the First World War before becoming first a stockbroker and then a merchant banker. Simon worked first as a stockbroker and then as the chairman of a Lloyds syndicate.

Whilst working in London he found time to hunt regularly from Melton Mowbray which led him to buy a small cottage in Braunston in 1975. He finally retired in 1987 and started on the task of enlarging Bleak House. The first major building works were completed by Browns of Stamford and even today, between his many other interests, he is still managing to put the finishing touches to the landscape of a house with one of the finest views in the village.

Paul and Susan McCreesh, Sam and Hannah

Walnut Tree House, Braunston Road

Paul McCreesh was born in London, the son of an accountant. He attended Campion Grammar School in Hornchurch and then Manchester University where he read music. He graduated as an MusB in 1981 and taught music in London for about 18 months before moving to Leicester to take up a teaching post at the Leicestershire School of Music. After about six years he became a freelance conductor; he also runs a freelance choir and orchestra. He travels extensively, largely in Europe and the USA, but is best known for his recordings. He quotes "the countryside and old English furniture" as his other interests.

Susan Jones was born in Swansea where her father was a teacher. After attending Bishop Gore School in Swansea, she too went to Manchester University to study music and it was there that the couple met. After graduating in 1981 as an MusB, Susan taught for 4 years before becoming a freelance singer.

Paul and Susan married in Swansea in 1983. They have two children; Sam is ten and Hannah, six. The family lived in Wartonaby for a time before moving to Long Clawson. The children currently go to Old Dalby school. Both, not surprisingly, are musical.

Paul and Susan spent some time looking to buy an old property in a nice village, and eventually found Walnut Tree House. They bought the property in 1999 and are having extensive repairs and refurbishment carried out on the property before moving in, which they hope to do at the end of July 2000. The house, which dates back to the early 17th century, is something of a mystery. It is a puzzle why a building of such architectural quality should have been built in Knossington c 1600. The building was modified in the period 1690-1700 and again in 1830.

Paul says that there is a reference in the Knossington history, by A B de Mowbray, of the name of a William Peck being carved on a beam in the house. This might link the house to the "Over House", owned by the Peck family; the name Walnut Tree House did not appear till the 1850s. No such beam has been found during the refurbishing work. The house was modified again in the mid-1950s when two windows from Martinthorpe Hall were added.

Montessori Nursery

Knossington Village Hall



Ann Gibson, third left, with staff and children of the nursery

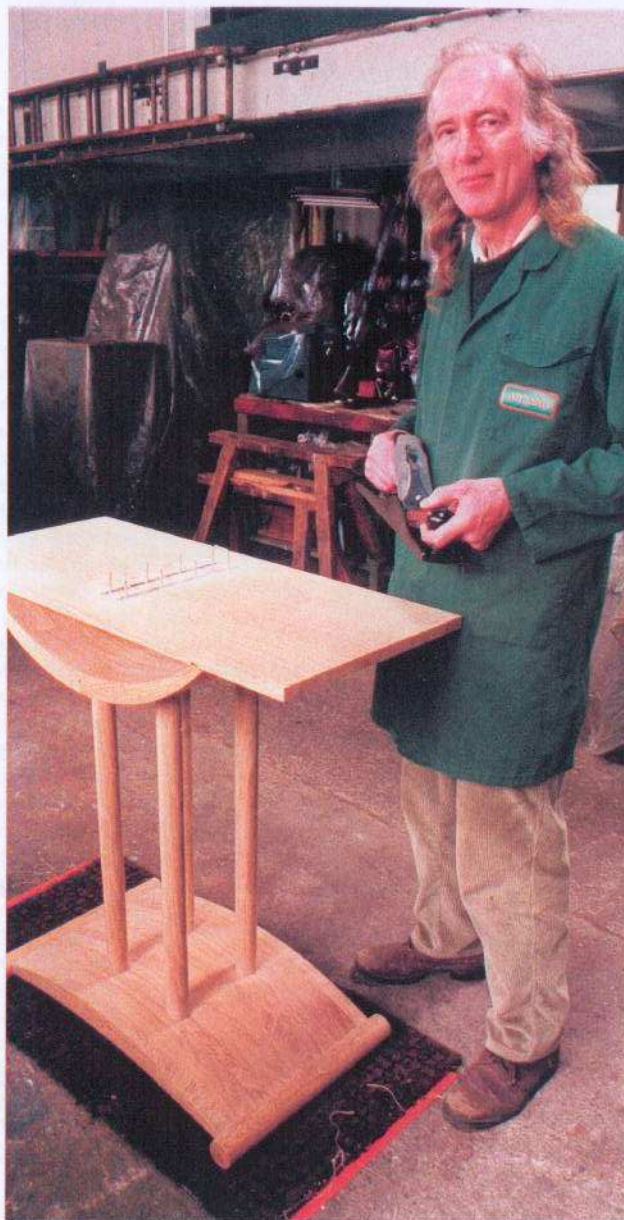
Kev and Julie Glover

The Olde Shoppe Cottage, 2 Braunston Road

Kev, Julie and their daughter Hannah moved to Knossington from Syston in October 1995.

Kev is a self employed printer working from a local rural industries complex; Julie is a seamstress and Hannah is studying for A Levels at Stamford College. They came to the village to find a quieter life but the day they were moving in, the furniture van with the ramp down and the front door wide open, someone decided to move a flock of sheep. The sheep looked in but decided to move on. The Glovers stayed.

Both are interested in the history of the village and have assembled a collection of postcards, pictures and newspaper clippings. Their house formed part of the Cold Overton estate and like Rose Cottage was sold in 1919 to pay death duties. It was bought by Mr Farnsworth and was run as the Supply Stores until the early 60s. When the shop closed the place was renovated and returned to residential use. As well as their normal day jobs, Kev and Julie deal in collector's china, specialising in finding obscure designs and patterns.



Stewart and Jane Jackson, Edward

The Forge, Braunston Road

Stewart Thomas Arrand Jackson and Jane, née Gunby, were married in 1969 and came to live and work in Knossington ten years later when the house and workshop known as The Forge came on the market.

Stewart was born in Bottesford, Lincolnshire, while Jane and their son Edward were born in Leicester. Stewart is a precision engineer and heads the family business, Arrand Engineering, in partnership with Jane and Edward. Stewart's hobbies are model engineering and woodwork and his skills can be appreciated as he made the case in which the Millennium Book is displayed.

Jane trained as a chiropodist but now works with Stewart. She was on the Village Hall Committee in the 1980s and is a member of the Women's Institute, having been secretary for five years. She is also on the Parochial Church Council and launders the linen used during the Communion Service.

Edward attended Knossington Primary School, then Vale of Catmose College and Sixth Form College in Oakham before going to the Scottish Agricultural College in Ayr. Edward has a keen interest in rare breeds of poultry and works in the family business.

Stewart Jackson at work on the lectern for the Millennium book.

Ginnie Humfrey

The Old Bakehouse, Braunston Road

Ginnie Venn was born in Mattingley Green, Hampshire, the daughter of an Army officer. She was educated at St George's junior school in Ascot, then at a convent in Folkestone and later in Broadstairs.

At the age of 18 she got a job as assistant matron at a boys' prep school and also taught geography to the bottom form. Her duties included looking after the ponies which belonged to the headmaster's children, so she also taught the boys to ride. After three years she returned home to Hampshire and later became a general dogsbody to a farming family "I got the job because I could drive", Ginnie explains. "I had to drive them everywhere."

Earlier in the spring of 1939, Ginnie was asked to make up a team at pony club trials. In the same team was Charlie,

the man who was to become her husband, and they married in Ecchenswell, near Newbury, in 1953. As an Army wife, Ginnie travelled extensively and lived in a variety of places including Libya, Northern Ireland and Germany. Charlie retired in 1967 and the couple farmed, first near Lowesby, and later at Newbold.

After the death of her husband Ginnie bought the site of the old bakehouse from Miss Carrington-Smith, late of The Walnuts, Braunston Road and had the present house built. It's the 28th house she has lived in since her marriage.

She has a son, who is a stockbroker and lives in Cirencester, and a daughter who is married to a stockbroker and lives near Oundle. Ginnie has four grandchildren.



The Old Bakehouse.

Jack and Sally Knight, George and Richard

The Covert, 30 Braunston Road

Jack and Sally moved to Knossington from Burrough on the Hill in October 1999 and say that they have lived with the builders ever since.

They moved to Knossington to be near to Oakham where both George and Richard, their two sons, attend school. As well as working, Jack, a packaging consultant in Loughborough, finds time to coach Oakham Town rugby club for whom the two boys play. In fact the whole house revolves around rugby.

Sally, who trained at Brooksby College as a farm secretary and was the secretary to Burrough Estate before switching careers and becoming a computer trainer.

Jack and Sally are keen gardeners who are looking forward to the challenge of creating a new garden.

David and Shirley Spencer

Bramley Cottage, Braunston Road

David, born in Leicester, attended Birstall County Primary and Junior schools. His parents moved to Woodhouse Eaves in 1951 and ran a grocery shop there until their retirement in 1972. David then studied at the Humphrey Perkins Grammar school, Barrow-upon Soar and later at Birmingham University. He served two years' National Service in the Royal Signals and then returned to work for Corah Ltd who sponsored him through the Leicester College of Art and Technology (now De Montfort University). He is a fellow of the Textile Institute, an associate of the Clothing Institute and a Chartered Textile Technologist. He became an evening lecturer at De Montfort University, rising, in the 1970s, to senior lecturer. He retired in 1999.

Shirley Tillson was born at home in Birstall - delivered by her grandmother on the first night of the blackout of the Second World War. She attended the Birstall Infant School and then the Thomas Rawlings Grammar School for Girls at Quorn. After completing a course at the Loughborough Secretarial College, Shirley started work with the Leicester County Council library service and was at the Leicester Library headquarters for five years. David and Shirley had known each other as children but it was not until they met again, first in the Leicester Library and later at a Young Conservatives function in 1958, that romance blossomed. They married in St James The Great, Birstall in March 1962.

They have a son who lives in Oakham; two daughters - one living in Oakham and one in Leicester - and four grandchildren. In 1971 David and Shirley bought The Willows from Mr Gudyer, father of Eddie Gudyer, 12 Larchwood Rise. The property came complete with wooden bungalow and occupant, Fred Vines, one of the well-known characters of the village, in the grounds. They renamed the house The Covert.

Later, David's parents moved into the bungalow and lived there until shortly after Mr Spencer Snr died in 1998. In late 1999 the bungalow was demolished and Bramley Cottage was built in its place. Shirley's mother, Mrs Rose Tillson, lives in Dairy Cottage, Somerby Road. Shirley has been a member of the Women's Institute since she became resident in the village and is currently serving as president for the third time. She was secretary of the Conservative Association and also taught in the Sunday school. She is a member of the Parochial Church Council. David was also a member of

the Conservative Association and served as chairman after the late Sir Henry Tate, Preston Lodge, relinquished the post.

Shortly after becoming resident in the village David became a parish councillor and has been on the council ever since. He has been chairman a number of times. He is, perhaps, best-known in his capacity as the coordinator of the Rutland and Leicestershire Panther Watch. The Rutland Big Cat has been spotted locally on a number of occasions. David himself came face to face with the creature in broad daylight while walking his dog near The Covert. It was spotted again crossing the Carriageway during a hunt.



Nigel, Nicola and Victoria Spencer, centre front, on the carol singing trailer in 1975.

Ewart and Janice Mounteney, Philip and Helen

Netherfield, Braunston Road

Ewart was born in Stocking Farm, Leicester and went to Beaumont Leys Secondary Modern School, leaving at 15 to take up an apprenticeship as a roofer in the building trade. His father was an engineer pattern maker at the British United Shoe Machinery Company in Leicester. When the building trade became stagnant, he took a job in a hospital as a theatre porter, and later started a course to become a theatre technician. He did not complete the course but became a fireman instead. 16 years later he was injured and was transferred to administrative duties at the Glenfield headquarters. After a further five years he regained his fitness and was transferred to his present post as a fire-fighter at the Oakham station.

Janice Walker was born in Otley in West Yorkshire where her father was a painter and decorator. She went to school in Otley at Prince Henry's Grammar School and left at 17. For the next 23 years she worked for Midland Bank, including at the Oakham branch, and now works for both Simmonds Grant, solicitors, and National Westminster Bank, both in Oakham.

In 1975 both Janice and Ewart happened to be in Benidorm on holiday. Janice was with a girlfriend and attended a barbecue where a photographer was recording the occasion. Next day the two girls were examining the collection of photographs from the previous night's events and noticed a photo of Ewart, who was having a holiday to celebrate his 21st birthday, and his male friend. Janice announced to her companion that the pair of men were the best-looking fellows they had seen, and therefore the men would have to be told that they were the chosen escorts for the remainder of the holiday.

This accomplished, Ewart and Janice were married in 1977, in Rawdon parish church, West Yorkshire. The couple lived first in Belgrave, Leicester and in other places in the Leicester area before moving to Knessington when Ewart came to work in Oakham.



*Ewart Mounteney in the uniform
of the Oakham Fire Brigade*

Since moving into Netherfield they have made many improvements including the building of a lake at the bottom of the garden. Although she is still very fond of horses, Janice no longer rides. She remembers when she and Ewart first went out together, she persuaded her boyfriend to go riding. Ewart, who had never been on a horse before, was extremely nervous but he had the last laugh because Janice's horse could not be persuaded to move.

Janice enjoys swimming and diving while Ewart's games are football, cricket and rugby. Ewart is proud of his grandfather who played football for Preston North End and Birmingham City, and cricket for Leicestershire.

Ewart and Janice have two children; both were born in Leicester. Philip, who attended school in Melton Mowbray, is currently reading chemistry at Leeds University. His sister, Helen, went to Langham School and now attends Uppingham Community College. Helen is already an accomplished sports-woman. She was a silver medalist in the javelin in the English Schools competition in 1999 and hopes to compete internationally. She has signed on with Birchfield Harriers at Alexandra Stadium, Birmingham, and is currently being trained in athletics by the number five coach in the country, with two British under-23 champions and the under-17 English champion.

The family is known, in jest, to the Freemans, Windmill Farm, as the "Townies", and retaliate by referring to their neighbours as the "Carrot Crunchers".



*Helen, centre, winning the javelin silver medal at the
Schools Competition in 1999*

Jim and Gill Freeman, Stuart and Janette

Windmill Lodge, Braunston Road

Jim was born at Brooke House, Braunston and Gill, née Ward, at Withcote. They were married at Withcote Church, alas now redundant, and lived in Braunston where their son Stuart was born. In November 1969 they moved to Windmill Lodge where they farm 175 acres and a further 175 acres at Preston Lodge. Stuart now works with his parents on the land - looking after a large flock of sheep and crops of wheat, barley, oats and beans. Jim and Gill also have three daughters; Angela and Ruth who have married and moved to Cottesmore and Greetham respectively, and Janette who is studying for A Levels at Rutland Sixth Form College. Angela was married at Launde Abbey and Ruth at Knossington parish Church. All the children were pupils at the village school.

The windmill from which the farm takes its name was built in 1849 and the house in 1851. The mill was operational until the late 19th century. An advertisement in the Stamford Mercury of 7 July 1854 stated that the miller, Mr Edward Clark, had added steam to his mill but by the early 1900's the mill had been demolished and all that remained when the Freemans took over was a stump roofed with corrugated iron. The bricks were perished and what was left was removed. One of the mill wheels is now sited at the end of the driveway, with a sign Windmill Lodge attached.

Gill's sister Ruth is married to David Duffin and they live at Lodge Farm. Her brother George Ward lived in Knossington for many years until he recently moved to a nearby village, but his familiar face is still seen around the village as he tends some of Knossington's beautiful gardens. Andrew, son of Ruth and David, lives with his wife and family in Larchwood Rise. Sally, daughter of Ruth and David, lives with her husband and family at Ingles Cottage. Gill's aunt, Mrs Patsy Ward lives at Stoneleigh.

Steve and Sally James, David and Daniel

Ingles Cottage, Braunston Road.

Stephen was born in Halifax, Yorkshire, and was adopted by a doctor and his wife who lived in Cheltenham. Steve's adoptive father became a lecturer in pharmacology at De Montfort University. The family lived then in Wigston and later moved to Frisby-on-the-Wreake. Steve went to school in Frisby and then attended Sarson's and King Edward VII schools in Melton Mowbray. He left school at 16 and took a one-year course, under the Youth Opportunities Scheme, at Brooksby College.

He was unable to obtain a suitable job on leaving the college and set himself up as a self-employed farmworker. During 1983/4 he attended a day release course at Brooksby College to take a City and Guild qualification. He won the cup for best student in beef and sheep. In 1987 he got a job as herdsman at Brooksby College and worked there until made redundant ten years later.

Sally Duffin, daughter of David and Ruth Duffin, was born at home in Lodge Farm. She went to school in Knossington before moving on to Sarson's and King Edward VII schools in Melton. She left in 1979 to work on her father's farm. The couple met at Brooksby College in 1987. Steve had started there full-time and Sally was attending a course in milk production. They were married in St Peter's, Knossington in October 1992 and went to live at Brooksby.

On 20th August 1996, in Nuneaton Hospital, Sally gave birth to twins - David and Daniel. The births were in Nuneaton because the boys were six weeks premature and that hospital was the nearest with two available incubators. The family moved to Ingles Cottage on Lodge Farm, late in 1996. The boys start school at Langham after Easter 2000. Sally, in addition to being a busy mother, works on her father's farm. Steve works on a pedigree beef unit at Tugby.



David and Daniel



David and Ruth Duffin, Charlie

Lodge Farm, Braunston Road

David was born at Furze Hill, Owston, where his father farmed. He went to Knossington School and then to Melton Secondary School, leaving at 14 to work on his father's farm.

Ruth Ward was born in Withcote and went to school first at Owston, and then at Melton Grammar. She left at 16 and went to work in a bank. David and Ruth met at David's auntie's house.

They were married in 1955 in Withcote church and moved into Lodge Farm. They had seven children, all of whom attended Knossington School. In fact, for 27 consecutive years there was a Duffin child at Knossington. All the children except Charlie continued their education at Melton Mowbray; Charlie went to Vale of Catmose College, Oakham. Charlie's last day at Knossington was the last day the village school existed as a school.

The farm is run very much as a family business. Ruth and David's eldest son, Andrew, who lives with his own family in 3 Larchwood Rise, works on the farm; their youngest son, Charlie, lives at the farm and daughter Sally lives with her husband on the farm also. Ruth and David have 15 grandchildren.



A Duffin family picnic

Mike and Jan Saunders

Ladywood Farm, Braunston Road

Mike, born in Leicester in 1946, attended Fosse Boys' School and left at the age of 16 to work for his father's company in the wholesale/retail fish and poultry business. He spent a number of months with his uncle on a trawler, fishing in Icelandic waters. He maintains that his father was trying to dissuade him from making a career in the fish trade.

At the age of 18 he started his own food business and subsequently built up a group of six companies in a variety of businesses from food to packaging. The group was sold to a plc in 1997 and he now sits on their board. Jan's father was a quantity surveyor for the Coal Board.

Jan was born in Sheffield and went to school in Darfield, South Yorkshire, and later completed a course in catering and hotel management at Rotherham Technical College. From there she worked in Harrogate and St Andrews, Fife, in hotels. Jan then took a job at the Langdale House Hotel and Country Club where she met Mike while he was staying there. They were married in Wistow, near Great Glen and started to look for a house with land where they could keep their horses. They found Ladywood.

Both Mike and Jan hunt locally. In addition, Mike hunts the hedgerows with a Harris hawk and a cocker spaniel, working together. On one occasion the hawk was being exercised by the groom and escaped. It was later found, sitting in the road, by a local painter and decorator and taken to the police, who happened to be attending a traffic accident in Oakham, but not before a friend of Mike had seen the bird in the painter's vehicle. The friend telephoned Mike that evening and mentioned the hawk. Mike's call to the police was, as is now always the case, diverted to the central call centre in Leicester and it took a lot of time to finally locate a policeman with a list of missing birds. Mike was offered a whole variety of birds - parrots, budgies, canaries, pigeons and so on, each offer being refused with a reiteration that the missing bird was a hawk. Finally, to the policeman's great surprise, a hawk was found on the list. The bird was later retrieved from the Greetham falconry centre.

Lizzie Needham

Ladywood Farm

Lizzie was born in Oakham, the daughter of a farmer. She went to school at Uppingham Community College and in 1996 went on to do a farm secretarial course at Brooksby College.

On leaving Brooksby she worked with horses at Castle Bytham and came to Ladywood Farm in August 1999, as groom. She lives in the groom's quarters at the farm but considers her parent's farm in Normanton, Rutland to be home.

Robert and Dawn Jarrom, Christopher, Samantha and Thomas

Ladywood Lodge

Robert was born in Owston. His father was a process worker at Pedigree Petfoods, Melton Mowbray. Robert went to Knossington School and then Sarson's and King Edward VII schools in Melton, leaving in 1974 at age 16. After school he went to work for Derek Spence at the Forge, Braunston Road. Robert is now a civil engineering contractor.

Dawn Gray came to Knossington with her parents in 1975. They moved from Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake and went to live at Netherfield, Braunston Road. Having been to school in Sileby, Dawn also went to Sarson's High School and King Edward VII School. After leaving school she worked for John Hawkesworth, Fishpond House, as a part-time groom and then went to work as a groom for Mr Wales at Ladywood. She has also worked as a barmaid at the Fox and Hounds.

Robert and Dawn met at Dawn's aunt's house at Tilton-on-the-Hill when Dawn was about 14. The young Robert was doing some work there. Their first date was at a barbecue in East Norton. They were married in St Peter's, Knossington in 1985, by Rev Henry Evans. The newly-wed couple went to live in Owston, next door to the house in which Robert had been brought up.

In 1989 they bought the derelict Ladywood Lodge. While the house was being refurbished, Robert and Dawn lived in a caravan on the site. They moved in just before Christmas 1990. By this time, son Christopher and daughter Samantha had been born - both in Oakham Hospital. Their third child, Thomas, was born in Leicester General Hospital in 1991. All three children were christened in St Peter's by the Rev Evans. Christopher, having been to Langham school, is now at Vale of Catmose College. Samantha and Thomas are both at Langham, having started their education at the Knossington Montessori nursery school, run by Ann Gibson (daughter of Ray and Margaret Gibson, The Old Byre, Somerby Road) in the village hall.

Horses have been central to Dawn's family for generations. Her great-grandfather reared horses near Rugby and at Brooksby Grange. Dawn's mother, until her tragic death in a riding accident in 1989, was a keen horsewoman and

had encouraged Dawn from her childhood. In fact, Dawn started riding at the tender age of two years. At the age of ten Dawn rode in the Horse of the Year Show at Wembley, and was already showing horses at the county shows. She competed at Wembley again at the age of 15. She has competed in hunter trials and in show jumping, but her main forte is showing and she has won the British Show Pony Society championship consistently for many years.

Since her marriage, Dawn has bred show ponies. She won the East of England championship and came second at the Royal Show, and has been very successful with in-hand showing. In addition, Dawn has hunted all her life since the age of five - first with the Quorn, and latterly with the Cottesmore. She is encouraging her children to follow suit. All three children have ridden since they were two years old; the boys still hunt but no longer show. Samantha, however, shows every sign of equalling, if not exceeding, her mother's record.

From the age of four, Samantha has been showing and is always placed in the first three. She now rides a 13-hand pony, both side-saddle and astride, at international qualifiers. She hopes to qualify for the Royal International Horse Show at Birmingham and for the Horse of the Year Show at Wembley.

Dawn owns about 30 horses and ponies and does her own breaking. Both she and her husband are qualified HGV drivers.

Robert's hobby was motorcycle trialling but paternal responsibilities have put an end to that. He still has a love of old motorcycles and owns a fine example.



Dawn and Samantha riding sidesaddle at the Cottesmore Boxing Day meet 1999



Robert Jarrom hedgelaying

Suzanne Cove

Ladywood Lodge, Braunston Road

Suzanne was born in Hitchin. Her father was a director of construction at Pendennis dockyard. Because of the nature of her father's job, the family moved location frequently and Suzanne attended several schools in Hitchin, Birmingham and Plymouth.

She left school at 16 and did a one-year course in breaking horses and point-to-point, under the National Vocational Qualification Scheme. She followed this with another one-year course at Duchy College of Agriculture in Cornwall, gaining a National Certificate in Management of Horses, before completing a further year's NVQ course at a riding school in Devon.

She is a qualified instructress. Suzanne came to Knossington in July 1997 and is groom to Dawn Jarrom.



Suzanne Cove

Johnny and Sophie Weatherby, Isabella, Jack and Max

Preston Lodge

Johnny Weatherby was born in Oxford, the son of a London stockbroker living in the village of Whaddon in Buckinghamshire. He went to Eton and left in 1977 to join the family horse-racing firm - Weatherbys Group Ltd - and is now chairman. The group was founded in 1770 by James Weatherby from Newcastle, and is still family-owned.

Sophie Cliffe-Jones was born in Birmingham and went to Malvern Girls' School. After school she worked as a window display designer in London and met Johnny at a party. They married in 1993, in Alcester, Warwickshire.

They lived first in Stratton Audrey near Bicester but were looking for a house within an hour's drive of the

Weatherbys Group head office in Wellingborough. It probably owes more to Johnny's love of hunting than to chance that they found Preston Lodge, which looks out on Owston Little Wood - 77 acres of the best cover in the country.

By the time they moved in, Isabella had been born. Jack was born in 1996 and Max in 1998; both were baptised in St Peter's. Isabella attended the Montessori nursery school, which is held in Knossington village hall and where she is followed now by Jack, and now goes to Windmill House School in Uppingham.

Johnny became Master of the Cottesmore Hunt this season; he describes it as hard work but great fun.



Johnny Wetherby, far left and Sophie above.

Erika Tozser

Bungalow 1, Preston Lodge

Erika was born in Debrecen, Hungary, the daughter of a surveyor. After school she studied at university in Hungary and has a degree in architecture. She went on to study environmental engineering but completed only one year of the course so far.

Erika plans to emigrate to Canada or Australia, so she decided to find a job in England where she could learn English. She applied through an agency for a position as an au pair, and came to the Weatherbys' at Preston Lodge in July 1999.

"England is fine", she says when asked for her impressions, "but the sun doesn't shine enough".

Erika spent Christmas with her family in Hungary and plans to take her exam in advanced English in June 2000.

Judy Williams

Bungalow 2, Preston Lodge.

Judy was born in Market Harborough, the daughter of a technical draughtsman. She went to school in Kibworth and then attended Market Harborough High School, now Robert Smythe School.

On leaving school she took a position as a working pupil on a farm in Devon where she lived with the family and worked (unpaid) with the animals - principally horses. Although none of her immediate family was connected with the horse trade, she notes that her grandfather was a horseman and others in the past had also been associated with horses. "Horses are in the blood," she says.

After her year in Devon, Judy returned to her home area and found employment at the stables of Mr and Mrs (now Lord and Lady) Kimball, Great Easton Manor, Great Easton. Judy remained in the job for 21 years until the stables were closed down. She then came to Preston Lodge as groom to the Weatherbys, in June 1999.

Reece, the last baby born to the village in the twentieth century

Brett Bishop and Leanne Knight and Reece

1 Woodside Cottages

Brett was born in Leicester. His father was a council worker. Brett went to primary school in Leicester and, after the family moved into this area, he attended Sarson's School and King Edward VII School in Melton Mowbray.

He left at 16 to become an apprentice bricklayer and worked for Welds Magnus for three years before branching out on his own as a bricklayer and builder. He continues as a partner in a building company.

Leanne Knight was born in Leicester too but the family lived in Asfordby. Leanne went to primary school in Asfordby and then attended Longfield High and King Edward VII schools in Melton. She left at 18 to work in a solicitor's office in

Melton Mowbray, and later worked in Oakham, also in a solicitor's office.

The couple met through friends in 1995 and set up house together two years later. Baby Reece was born on 20th December 1999 - which makes him the youngest resident in the village at the beginning of the year 2000 and the last child to be born to the village in the 20th century.

Brett's father bought No 1 Woodside Cottages in 1985. He died in 1998, leaving the property to Brett and his sister. Brett now owns the property and is extending and modernising the house.



Nick and June Rook, Katie, Matthew and Rachel

2 Woodside Cottages

Nick, whose father was an engineer living in Tugby, was born in Leicester Infirmary. The family moved to Billesden soon afterwards, and Nick went to school there and in Kibworth, leaving at 15 to work in a butcher shop. After nine years he moved to Key Market in Oakham and then Baxters, the butcher. He gave up butchery and took a job for a few years with Leicester County Council Highways Department. He became a butcher again, working with such well-known local names such as Forryans, Prykes and Driver of Halstead. He now works for Westlands Poultry of Leicester.

June is the younger of two daughters of Patsy Ward, Stoneleigh, Main Street. She was born at home in Knossington and went to the village school. Later she went to Sarsons School, and then to King Edward VII School, also in Melton.

After leaving school June went to work at Corah's in Oakham. Nick was up a ladder, helping his father to paint the house when his sister brought home her friend June. Nick was smitten and later asked June to go out with him. They were married in St Peter's, Knossington, in April 1977 and have lived in 2 Woodside Cottages since then.

They have two daughters and a son, all living at home. Katie, the eldest, is a secretary, her brother Matthew is a farmworker and Rachel is still at school. All three went to Knossington School and, when the school closed, to Langham School and then Vale of Catmose College, Oakham.

When Nick and June moved into Woodside Cottages there was no mains electricity to the house. Electricity was supplied by generator. It was supposed to shut down automatically when the last light was switched off but did not always work. Nick ruefully recalls having to walk down the garden, whatever the weather, dressed in his nightclothes, to switch the machine off. Thankfully this is no longer necessary but, the couple observe, the most immediate change they noticed when finally connected to the mains, was the quiet in the evenings "You could hear the wind in the trees and the owls hooting," says Nick.

They notice the drastic reduction in the number of trees in the area since the Dutch Elm disease decimated the elm trees in the 1970s.

June, Rachel, Katie and Matthew Rook



Doug and Gert Jacobs

1 Larchwood Rise

Gert and Doug have lived in Larchwood Rise since the houses were first built in 1948. They were the first tenants to be given keys and when they moved in the road was still unmade.

Mrs Jacobs was born in Knossington in one of the cottages which stood near the village hall and then lived with her family, the Harrisons, in what is now known as Red Cottage in the Hollow. She recalled that when they were children, the field where the Rise houses are now was the place where the Sports Day was held and that the parents scrubbed and cleaned the hovel, now the garage of Cox's house, so that teas could be served after the sports. Gert attended the village school.

Doug was born in Six Mile Bottom near Newmarket and moved to Knossington when he married Gert in 1947. Their wedding was the first to be conducted at St Peter's by the Rev. Day.

Gert and Doug have three daughters; Ethel Anne, Janet and Mandy, all of whom attended the village school and Sunday school. Ethel Anne is married and lives in Stamford. Janet is married and also lives in Stamford. Mandy is married and lives at Tilton-on-the Hill. They have three grandchildren and a great grandchild of whom they are very proud.

Gert and Doug are keen gardeners and both play bowls.

Margaret Sumner

2 Larchwood Rise

Maggie came to Knossington from Yorkshire in 1960 to work as a groom for Mrs Mead at the Whalebones. Whilst working here she met her husband Geoff and they were married in Yorkshire. They moved into one of the school cottages and eventually into the house where Maggie now lives.

Maggie's two daughters, Helen and Jane, attended the village school and then Melton Senior School. Helen is living in Melton with her family and Jane is in Oakham. Maggie is very fond of dogs and is a keen member of the local dog training club.

Andrew and Pat Duffin, Adam, Melissa, Emma and Sophie

3 Larchwood Rise

Andrew Duffin is the eldest son of David and Ruth Duffin of Lodge Farm, Braunston Road. He was born in Oakham Memorial Hospital. Andrew went to Knossington School and then Sarson's and King Edward VII schools in Melton Mowbray. He left school at 15 and went to work on his father's farm. A few years later, in addition to working on the farm, he started to do freelance contracting farmwork and hedge-laying.

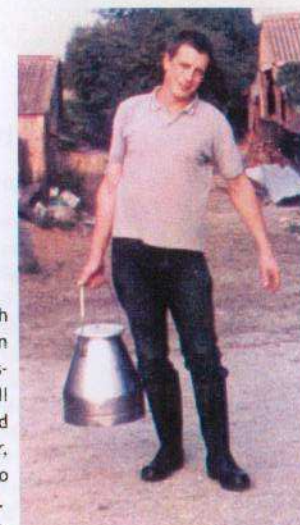
Pat Hayden was born in Melton Mowbray Hospital. Her father was an electrical engineer in Syston, as was her grandfather "Grandfather must have been one of the very first of his kind," says Pat. "They had the electrical shop in Syston".

Pat went to primary school in Syston and then attended Roundhill High at Thurmaston. She then went to Wreake Valley College in the very first intake of pupils. Pat left school at 15 and found employment as a trainee interlocker in a knitwear factory in East Goscote. When the factory closed down she went on to do similar work in Syston.

The couple met first at a friend's party in 1982. "He wouldn't dance with me," Pat complains. "He said he couldn't dance". Pat does not admit to having anything to do with it, but the same friends later arranged for Andrew and Pat to get together again on a blind date. They married in 1984 in St Peter's, Knossington.

Their first home was in Braunston and they moved to Knossington when 3 Larchwood Rise became available. They have four children, all born in Leicester General Hospital.

Knossington School closed the term before their son, Adam was of school age so he went to Langham and is now at Vale of Catmose College. He likes farm work and helps on his grandad's farm at weekends. He also shows great interest and ability in maths and computer work. The eldest daughter, Melissa, is also at Langham and is keen on sport, cross-country and netball in particular, and regularly reads in church. Emma, also at Langham, is musical and plays in the school orchestra. Sophie starts school in the autumn term. Andrew is keen on DIY and has made several improvements to their home.



Andrew Duffin

Mary Gresswell

4 Larchwood Rise

Mary was born in Noseley, near Billesdon, and came to Knossington in 1954 when her only child, June, was eleven years of age.

When Knossington Post Office closed, Mary decided to take over this important service and opened a new post office in a wooden hut in her front garden. Mary met the cost of the shed herself and opened for business on 8th May 1958. She delivered the mail for ten years and retired on 28th October 1988.

When she was interviewed on Radio Leicester about her life as a post mistress, she remembered delivering the mail one very icy winter morning when she put woolly socks over her Wellington boots but had to resort to crawling on hands and knees to cross the main street as it was like a sheet of glass. Having finished the postal delivery, she was back in the post office ready for business by 9 a.m. Her faithful companion was Penny, the dog who barked to alert Mary when a customer arrived in the garden. Mary would then bustle out of her house and into the shed ready for business. Mary offered a cheerful, friendly and efficient service for thirty years and her retirement was marked by a party for her in the village hall. Mary has two granddaughters, Gail and Dawn Sumner.



Mary Gresswell with the village post office in her garden



Bob and Bev Nix, Christopher and Jonathan

The Elderberries, 5 Larchwood Rise

Both Bob and Bev were born in Leicester. Bob's father was an engineering manager. Bob attended Rushymede School until 1963 and then Charles Keene College, Leicester. Afterwards he obtained an engineering diploma at Leicester Polytechnic, now De Montfort University. Bob then went to work in the offshore oil and gas industry. He had a short career break in the late 1970s but is now back in the industry as a specialist in valves.

Bev Simmons was also born in Leicester and went to school first in Syston. Later she attended Longslade Grammar School, leaving in 1971 to do a one-year pre-nursing course at Melton College. After one year working in a children's home in Yarmouth, Bev returned to nursing at Leicester Royal Infirmary.

Bob and Bev met through mutual friends in 1971 and were married in St Peter and St Paul, Syston in 1974. They lived at first in Syston then moved to Frisby-on-the-Wreake and later to Twyford where they ran the village shop; Bev was the postmistress.

They moved to Knossington in 1980 and Bev, indulging her passion for horses, got a job as groom to the Johnsons at the Whalebones. She continued in the job even after the Johnsons moved to Preston, Rutland. She now works as a secretary in an estate agents in Oakham.

Bob and Bev have two sons. Christopher born in 1986, and Jonathan was born in 1992. Both boys went to Knossington School and then Langham. Jonathan is still at Langham and Christopher is at Stamford Boys' School. In his younger days Bob played rugby for Syston; young Christopher played for the Oakham under-12s.

Bev was a member of the Knossington W.I. and played badminton locally. The family owns a pony and Jonathan shares his mother's enthusiasm for riding. Bev tells of Lucinda Green, née Prior Palmer, the international eventer, who, shortly after she was married, came to stay with the Johnsons at the Whalebones. Someone had rigged the newly-wed's bed. There was great mirth in the house when the ensuing crash announced that the couple had retired to bed. Apparently not everyone saw the funny side. Just recently Bob's father and mother have moved into the flat attached to the property.

Pat Coulson and Ann Taylor

6 Larchwood Rise

Pat was born in Langham, the son of a painter and decorator. He attended Langham School and then Oakham Secondary Modern School, now Vale of Catmose College. He left in 1957 at the age of 15 to take up an apprenticeship with Thornton Bros, Oakham. After seven years he took a job at Uppingham School. In 1969 he worked for a short time on the production line at Petfoods in Melton, and then started his own painting and decorating business which is still in being.

Ann Taylor, née Pearce, was born at her aunt's house in Rotherby near Melton Mowbray, while her father was serving in the Army in North Africa during the Second World War. She attended school in Rotherby and later at King Edward VII Grammar School in Melton. Leaving school in 1958, she studied for one year at Melton College and then went to Leicester to work as a secretary at Everards Brewery. She has also worked with Prudential Insurance and now works at Lands' End in Oakham as an auditor in the warehouse.

Both Pat and Ann have been married previously and were divorced; Pat had no children but Ann has two sons and a daughter, all living in the county, and three grandchildren.

Pat and Ann met, through mutual friends, at Netherfield in 1991 and Ann came to live in Knossington in 1994. In 1972, Pat and a team of skilled friends started to build the house in which he and Ann now live; working in the evenings and at weekends. It took 16 months to complete. "It nearly killed me!" Pat says. He recalls one notable story of that period. The foundations were to be put in by Gordon Barnett, late husband of Peggy, but Pat was informed that the job had to be completed within the morning of the chosen day - the F.A. cup final was to be shown on television that afternoon. Pat too, has always been a keen sportsman. In his younger days he raced grass track motorbikes and participated in the sport of falconry with his goshawk. He played football for Langham until 1976, cricket for Langham and Tilton, and now for Knossington. He has also played badminton but he now plays golf. His hobbies are winemaking, wood-turning and, most of all, gardening. Ann is also a keen gardener. In past times she was a member of the Mothers' Union and the Women's Institute, and also went to keep-fit classes in Somerby. They enjoy holidays in the Lake District or abroad.

*Top: Ann Taylor at work in Lands' End
Below: Pat Coulson (right) painting the
village hall with Duane Hartshorn*



Michael and Lola Marlow, David

8 Larchwood Rise

Michael and Lola Marlow's first house in Knossington was the Lodge at the entrance to the Grange. They had moved there in 1962 from Langham, their first home after getting married in St Peter's in Knossington. When they moved Michael was working as an agricultural engineer with Rutland Farming. Lola, who had previously worked with animals at Ridlington and for the Gibsons at Sconsborough Farm, was now looking after her growing family. They moved to Knossington with the four eldest of their six children; David, Saxon, Sean and Robin. Colin and Rebecca were born whilst they were in Knossington.

Lola's home was originally in Bexley and Michael had grown up in Ellistown on the western side of the county. He had moved to the area with his mother and attended Oakham Secondary School before working at Barleythorpe as a gardener, moving on to Windmill Farm, then to Rutland Farming.

During their time in Knossington Lola has worked hard for the village. As well as bringing up six children she has found time to work in the village school, set up and run a youth club in the village hall, serve as a parish councillor and start "Over The Garden Wall" the monthly parish council newspaper still produced today. She recalls that as well as providing a source of information about all that was happening in the village it also contained crosswords puzzles and articles. She remembers fondly the days when there were many more children in the village.

She was also the verger of St Peter's and a member of the PCC for many years, latterly as the secretary. In 1990 Michael retired and they moved away from Knossington to Launde Abbey where Lola became the resident housekeeper and Michael was in charge of maintenance. They spent five years at Launde before retiring for a second time in 1995 and returning to the Lodge where they lived until their move to Larchwood in the autumn of 1999.

They have left a Marlow presence at Launde for Sean is today the head gardener. David too is a head gardener at Leigh Lodge and Saxon is the managing director of the tractor company Michael set up some thirty years ago. Colin now works on the care staff at the Grange School and maintains the clock in the tower of St Peter's, Robin is a heating engineer living in Market Overton and Rebecca lives in Somerby.

Malcolm and Helen Miller

9 Larchwood Rise

Malcolm, the son of an aero engineer, was born in Derby and attended Long Eaton Grammar. He studied accountancy at what is now Trent University, and at a large firm of chartered accountants. He qualified as a chartered accountant in 1984 and worked in a number of industries. He was, at one time, group financial controller at Corah and set up the sale of the company to Coates Viyella. He was also responsible for the revamping and development of Wigston College. He is now group financial director of Ariel Industries in Leicester. Part of the group is better known in Leicester as Steels and Busks, a company which used to make small metal fasteners.

Helen Archbutt is the daughter of a farmer in Kibworth. She attended the Robert Smythe School in Market Harborough and then worked in various companies, including Corah, while studying accountancy at what is now De Montfort University. The couple met in 1990 while both were working at Corah.

Helen qualified as a management accountant in 1992 and she and Malcolm were married in Oadby in 1994. They worked together again when Malcolm called his wife in to help with the project at Wigston College. Helen now works for National Car Rentals in Leicester.

They moved to Knossington from Derby in September 1999. They wanted to be nearer to their workplaces and Helen, being a country girl, wanted to live in a village rather than in the city. They looked at many locations before finding the place which was just right.

Keen gardeners, they were pleased to find such an extensive garden at 9 Larchwood Rise. Malcolm admits, somewhat ruefully however, that he hadn't bargained for the Leicestershire clay soil, and is finding it heavy going.



Malcolm and
Helen Miller

The move to Knossington has not gone as smoothly as they might have hoped. On the Saturday night, one week before their move, Malcolm was locking up at about midnight when he discovered a fire in a wheelie bin in their driveway. The cause of the fire was not established but it was well under way and discovered just in time for Malcolm to be able to bring it under control. The boundary fence and adjacent trees were badly burned, and the former had to be replaced in the week before the move. Two weeks after the couple's arrival in Knossington, their cooker blew up. Fortunately their luck seems to have improved since.

Fred and Helen Macey

11 Larchwood Rise

Fred and Helen moved into their newly built house in 1974. Fred was born in Somerby and Helen was born in Syston. Both are now retired. Fred enjoys fishing, gardening and photography. For many years he wound the church clock. Helen is an enthusiastic hunt follower - beagles, fox hounds and mink hounds. She is keen on natural history and undertakes a survey of garden birds for the Leicester Garden Bird Survey organised by the Leicestershire Libraries and Museum Service.



David and
Pat Lynas

David and Pat Lynas

10 Larchwood Rise

David, son of a policeman, was born in Beverley, East Yorkshire. He attended school in Beverley and Bridlington, leaving at 16 to work in the construction industry. Later he was to work on the building of Rutland Water. In 1977 he went to work for Hull City Council Highways Department and has worked for a number of councils since. He now works for Leicester City Council as a highway survey technician.

Pat Knight was born in Stamford but from the age of one month lived in Market Overton where her father founded Markon Engineering company. Pat went to school in Market Overton and later attended Rutland High School, now Oakham Sixth Form College, till she was 18. She then found employment doing secretarial work in Melton Mowbray.

David and Pat met through mutual friends and married, in 1978, in Burrough on the Hill. They moved initially to the Hull area but in 1981 they moved south again, this time to Knossington.

Pat worked for Rutland District Council and took a qualification in local authority housing management before becoming employed by Harborough District Council. She has now retired.

David and Pat own a 43 acre smallholding off the Wisp where they grow vegetables for their own consumption. The grazing land is let, but in 1999 they planted six acres of broad-leaved trees. They have four dogs which were trained to the gun. David no longer shoots, but Pat still goes beagling.



Eddie and Rosemary Gudyer, Sarah and Jennifer

12 Larchwood Rise

Eddie was born in Ridlington, the son of a hedgecutter. He attended Ridlington School until, at the age of ten, he moved with his parents to Pickwell. After a short time at Somerby School he went to Melton Modern Boys' School and later Melton Technical College where he studied for the building trade. At the age of 18 he took an apprenticeship with Clarks the builders in Oakham and then was employed by Stimson of Somerby for 24 years. He then took a job at Uppingham School for six years. For the past 20 years he has been employed at The Grange School in Knoxxington. His family moved to Knoxxington in 1957 to The Willows, now The Covert.

Rosemary Atton was born in Braunston where her father farmed South Lodge farm. She went to school in Braunston and then Oakham at what is now Vale of Catmose College. At the age of 15 she left school to work on her parents' farm until her father retired. Rosemary was then 22 years old and went to work as a delivery van driver at Whittles, the high class grocer in Oakham. The shop is now Walkers, the newsagent.

When Rosemary's father retired the family moved to Netherfield where some redecorating was required; a certain young painter named Eddie Gudyer came to do the work. Rosemary married the young painter in St Peter's in 1971. They moved into 12 Larchwood Rise and have lived there ever since. The house was built by Simson and Wallace. Peter Simson lived at 19 Larchwood Rise and was best man at Eddie and Rosemary's wedding. Rosemary worked at Corah in Oakham until she became a full-time mum. She now works as a seamstress at the Grange School.

Daughter Sarah was born in Peterborough Hospital. She attended Knoxxington School and later Vale of Catmose College. She then completed a one-year course in hairdressing at Melton College but went to Leicester to do secretarial work. When the company ceased trading, Sarah found a job at the Old Plough in Braunston where she worked in a variety of roles for eight years. In 1998 she decided to set up her own cleaning business. Sarah was married in St Peter's on 17th June 2000.

Jennifer was born some three years after her sister, in Rutland Memorial Hospital, Oakham. She also went to Knoxxington School and Vale of Catmose College. In 1993 she went



The marriage of Sarah to Graham Cooper, the first wedding in St Peter's this millennium.

to Brooksby College to do a one-year course in animal care, and followed this by getting a job at the Waltham Pet Centre where she still works.

Eddie and Rosemary recall, with much amusement, that Eddie's father used to terrorise the neighbourhood by tearing around the roads on his way to and from his hedgecutting, on a motorcycle and sidecar. The motorcycle was a powerful Norton E52 and when he was riding it, Eddie's father used to tie newspapers round his legs to keep the rain off, and wore an old leather flying helmet with the straps loose and flapping in the slipstream.



Sarah and Jennifer with other villagers at the fete in 1998

Philip and Cheryl Brown

13 Larchwood Rise

Phil was born at Grange Farm, Owston and started school in Owston but after three days there all the pupils were transferred to Knossington and Owston School was closed.

Cheryl was born in St Helier, Jersey and came to Knossington in March 1964 to work with horses at Manor Farm and then at the Whalebones.

Phil and Cheryl were married in St Peter's in April 1966 and moved into Creran, Somerby Road, where they lived for three years before moving to Larchwood Rise. They have two children, Michelle and Richard, both of whom went to the village school. Michelle was married to Andrew Hudson in the village church in October 1995 and now lives in Northampton. Richard is married with two children and lives in Oakham.

Cheryl describes herself as a housewife but has many interests including birdwatching and gardening. She has taken an active part in village life including the W.I. and served on the Village Hall Committee. Phil is a fitter-welder and for many years worked at the Forge. He is a keen and knowledgeable aero-spotter and, along with Cheryl, attend air shows whenever possible.

Sid and Dot Freckingham

14 Larchwood Rise

Sid Freckingham was born at the Rose and Crown pub in Somerby, now the Stilton Cheese, and moved with his parents to Knossington in 1933. Sid's father was a builder but on the outbreak of war he worked for the railway in Oakham, in charge of feed for the horses. The family lived in the house which is now 11 Main Street and Sid remembers rearing rabbits there for food. He befriended Mrs Straker at Knossington Grange and he and his friends were allowed to walk over her land to watch the wildlife. During the 1939-45 war, Sid was the youngest member of the Knossington Home Guard and, being the only one of the unit with a bicycle, was made dispatch rider. His duty was to summon all the other members of the unit to the mustering station - the village hall. He worked, at the time, at Lewin's Grange Farm and deliv-

ered milk to the paratroopers who were billeted at the Grange. He remembers the paratroops lined up at the Rectory on the day they flew off to Arnhem.

Dot Burton was born in Willerby, Yorkshire. In 1939, when Dot was only eight years old, her mother died. Dot's father was in the RAF so she, together with her brother and sister, moved to Paignton, Devon, to be cared for by their grandparents. Later when their father remarried and was posted to the Leicester area, the children joined him and the family lived in Lockwood Cottage. Life was hard at that time. There was no water or electricity at Lockwood Cottage. Water had to be carried to the house and cooking was done on a coal fired range with a built-in tank for hot water. In 1954 Dot's stepmother died, leaving six children between the ages of 18 months and 11 years. Dot's sister was already married and her brother was in the Royal Navy so it fell to Dot to look after the children. About two years later she was allocated a council house and she and the children moved into 14 Larchwood Rise.

Sid went to Knossington School and then Melton Modern Boys' School; Dot attended Melton Modern Girls' School. Sid and Dot had known each other since childhood; romance started to blossom when Sid took Dot to visit her sick father in hospital. They were married in St Peter's, Knossington in June 1959 and lived together in 14 Larchwood Rise with the six children.

They have three sons of their own; Tony who lives in Oakham, Gary who has his own building business and lives with his family in Somerby, and Adam who was born at home in Larchwood Rise and lives in Northern Ireland. Sid worked at Lewin's farm for 15 years and then at Ruddle's brewery for 40 years, latterly as a brewer.

Dot was a dinner lady at the village school from 1968 until the school closed in 1989. She has also worked in the kitchen at the Grange School since 1968. Sid has always been a keen cricketer and was a founder member of the Knossington team. All the boys played for Knossington too, and Gary still does. For many years Dot was responsible for the cricket teas. She continues to be involved in the serving of teas, but has transferred her allegiance to the annual fete. She is a long-standing member of the Knossington Women's Institute. Sid and Dot have three grandchildren.



Sid and Dot's wedding day, June 1959

Chappie and Alice Cox

15 Larchwood Rise

Ernest William Cox was born on 17th February 1930 in Pebble Alley Knossington. Pebble Alley no longer exists but was a row of houses situated between 16 Owston Road and Grange Farm. Baby Ernest was his grandma's first little grandson, although she had granddaughters, and so she called him her "Little chappie". He has been known as Chappie ever since.

The Cox's are a long-established family in the village. Chappie's father, a bricklayer by trade, and his mother are both buried in Knossington cemetery; his grandfather and grandmother are buried in the church yard of St Peter's. Chappie attended Knossington School and later went to Melton School, leaving at the age of 14 to go to work for Mrs Straker at Knossington Grange as a gardener. He also worked for Mr Thurman, Minty Hill's father, at Manor House Farm and for Gordon Barnett at the Homestead. At one time or another he has worked on all the farms in Knossington. He claims to be the last farmworker to have been employed in the village. All the farms are now worked by the farmers themselves and their families; mechanisation and the cost of labour have long since made the farmworker a rarity.

Despite the fact that he will celebrate his 70th birthday this year, Chappie still works as the estate manager at the Grange School, having come full circle to return to the place of his original employment.

Alice Felstead was born in Melton Mowbray and met the young Mr Cox at a Circuit Youth Fellowship function in Melton in 1960. They were married two years later and went to live in Pebble Alley. In 1963 they were able to move into a council house - 15 Larchwood Rise, the house they have occupied ever since. The council houses were built in 1948; most were sold off to the sitting tenants in the 1980s.

Alice at the village school



Alice and Chappie have two children and two grand children. Their son, David, runs his own building business, and daughter Susan is a pharmacist. Both were baptised and married in St Peter's, and both now live in Oakham. Alice worked as a secretary at Knossington School and later moved to the Grange School where she is now school secretary. From 1966 until 1996 Alice was a Sunday school teacher; the Sunday school was held at the Methodist chapel and closed down when, in 1996, the number of children attending dropped to three. Alice is a long-standing member of the Women's Institute and has been treasurer for nearly twenty years. She was also a member of the Mothers' Union when it was in being and has served on the Village Hall Committee since the early 1970s, much of the time as treasurer, which she is still. She has played the organ at the chapel since 1982 and has been an organ player in St Peter's for ten years.

Like his wife, Chappie is a stalwart of village life. As a young man he was active in the youth club, the men's club,

the village football team, and the cricket team. In later life he has been chapel property steward for 20 years, has served on the Village Hall Committee for 15 years where he is the main organiser of the annual fete, has been a parish councillor for 20 years, and vice-chairman for 18 years.

He still finds time to play in the pool team, look after the chapel grounds, organise the Christmas tree lights at the chapel and the carol singing round the village every Christmas.



*Chappie, right,
with Russell Brown
and Dave Baxter*

Bob and Ida Cokien

16 Larchwood Rise

Robert William Cokien was born in Leicester on 21st July 1909; he was, therefore aged 90 years when seeing in the year 2000. The third of five children, he left school at the age of 14 and went to work as an errand boy in a fishmonger's shop. At the age of 16 he was promoted to van driver and in two years was driving a lorry; he continued to do so until required to retire at age 60. He then found a job as a delivery driver for Ruddles Brewery - his driver's mate was Sid Freckingham of 14 Larchwood Rise. He finally gave up driving in 1974 and became a general handyman for Kim and Fiona Smith-Bingham at Whalebones, where he became well known in equestrian circles.

Ida Read was born on 15th May 1911 in Somerby. Ida's father was a carpenter and she was the sixth of his 13 children. She went to school in Somerby until she was 14 and then looked after the other children while her mother went to work as a cleaner. At the age of 18 she went to work in a shop in Leicester. On one occasion she was asked to help serve teas at a cricket club function in a cafe in Humberstone Park. Also helping at the tea was a young man who, clearly impressed with the looks of his companion, stole a kiss - very forward in those days. They were married on 25th November 1933 in the Chapel in Somerby by the Rev Coleman.

The newly-wed couple lived first in Kibworth and later in Somerby. In 1952 they moved into 16 Larchwood Rise and have lived there ever since. They had three children but, tragically, their first daughter, Daphne, died of meningitis at the age of six - a terrible loss which, they agree, nearly broke Bob. Their daughter Jenny, who lives in Oakham, and son Andrew in Melton, have produced between them five granddaughters for Bob and Ida. Three of the granddaughters have, in turn, given them two great-granddaughters and two great-grandsons.



Bob and Ida celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary in 1998 and were proud to receive a telegram of congratulation from HM Queen Elizabeth II. A short time later Bob was in the stable yard at the Whalebones when Prince Charles was preparing to ride with the Cottesmore hunt, and was reintroduced to the Prince. The pair had met on previous occasions. Bob said to Prince Charles "Thank your mother for her telegram".

In her more able days Ida was a member of the Knossington Women's Institute and, with Bob, a member of the Conservative and Leisure Clubs. A keen cricketer, Bob played for the village team. He was a key organiser of the village fete when it was held at Whalebones. Bob was on the Village Hall Committee, along with Minty Hill when, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Tate (late of Preston Lodge), the first committee was inaugurated in 1952. Bob continued to serve on the committee until 1972 and then rejoined in 1992 as the Cricket Club representative, and with Minty, is still serving. Ida doesn't get out so much now but Bob is a familiar sight, walking his little dog round the village and waving vigorously with his walking stick to all passersby who know him - and there are many of those.

Bob and Ida Cokien

John and Sue Sills and Edward

17 Larchwood Rise

John and Sue Sills moved to 17 Larchwood in 1982. They had both grown up in Leicester where, after attending King Richard III School, John had worked principally as a clicker in the shoe trade and Sue had worked as a nursery nurse. They had moved to Knossington from their first house near Stone Lodge, Tilton to give their children an opportunity to build friendships out of school. Their three children Neil, Sally and Edward all attended Knossington School before moving to the Vale of Catmose College in Oakham although both Sally and Edward also attended Langham School.

John continued to work in Leicester although Sue gave up work to look after the children. Sue occasionally worked at Knossington Grange before returning to work full time at Launde Abbey where she still works as one of the key members of the community turning her hand to everything. John joined her at Launde and he now works as Launde's gardener, handyman and groundsman.

Both John and Sue have led busy lives outside work. Sue is now a parish lay reader assisting Father Hugh across the whole Whatborough group of churches. She also finds time to organise and conduct regular pilgrimages. John spent over twenty years in the Leicestershire and Derbyshire Yeomanry before transferring to the Royal Observer Corps where he spent eight years at the Observation Post on Cold Overton Hill.

Neil is now an accomplished professional musician having completed the training he started with Leicestershire Arts at the Royal College of Music. Edward hopes to follow his brother by joining the Corps of Army Musicians. Sally after spending time teaching English on the Zimbabwe/Mozambique border is married to Ali and they live and work in Leicester.

Peter and Maureen Parker

18 Larchwood Rise

Peter, the son of an engineer, was born in Tilehurst, near Reading, and was educated at Battle Secondary Modern School. He left school at 15 and joined the Army just before his 16th birthday. He served for twelve years in the Royal Army Medical Corps, mostly in Germany, but also for two years in Cyprus. On leaving the Army he worked first with the Red Cross as a technician dealing with medical aids for the disabled, and later as a care assistant with the social services. In 1985 he commenced a course in psychiatric nursing at Charles Frear's College of Nursing in Leicester, qualifying in 1987. He now works as a psychiatric nurse in the Leicester area.

Maureen Gee was born in Potters Marsden near Leicester. After completing her schooling at Heathfield High School she worked in the hosiery trade. Later, despite being a busy wife and mother, she commenced psychiatric training and worked for a couple of years in general nursing at Leicester Royal Infirmary. On completing her training she worked in psychiatric nursing at the Carlton Hayes Hospital, in time becoming a hospital sister. In 1981 she took a job as the manager of a church project for the homeless and those with mental health problems, and continued the work for 16 years. She now works for mental health in the community as team leader in a housing association looking after the housing needs of people with learning difficulties.

Peter and Maureen met at Foxton Locks where Peter had a houseboat. Peter bought lunch and Maureen felt obliged to return the compliment at a later date, inviting him to her house for a meal. "He is the man who come to dinner and never went home", jokes Maureen.

Both Peter and Maureen were married previously. Peter has a daughter, at university in London, and a son living in Leicester; Maureen has two sons and two daughters and 15 grandchildren. Three of the grandchildren are the surviving girls of the Donnachie Quadruplets of Leicester; sadly the boy did not survive.



Peter and
Maureen Parker

When Peter and Maureen first moved to this area they lived in Braunston. When their plans to open a nursing home foundered they looked for alternative accommodation. 18 Larchwood Rise was the ideal answer, particularly with its large enclosed garden for their dogs, and they moved in late in 1992. There was a lot of snow that winter and Maureen recalls how impressed they both were with the friendliness and community spirit in the village, and with the help they had from neighbours. Peter admits to having been accident-prone all his life and they remember, with great amusement, such incidents as the one which occurred while they were on holiday in Cromer. Peter, walking briskly, head down, collided hard with a lamp-post. Although in severe pain from the impact, he had the good grace to apologise profusely to the lamp-post before continuing on his way. The affliction may be hereditary. Son Russet had parked his car in the drive at number 18 one night but when he looked out in the morning, there was no sign of the vehicle. It was later discovered on the opposite side of the street, at the bottom of the hill, to where it had gently rolled during the night.

Mick Cox and Mary Halestrap, Sian and Mathew

19 Larchwood Rise

Mick was born in Melton Mowbray. His father, a native of Melton, was a computer operator at Pedigree Petfoods. Mick went to school in Melton, ending his schooldays at King Edward VII School at the age of 16. The next two years he spent travelling with a fair, returning to Melton to work as an ambulance driver at the Melton Day Care Centre. For a time he worked for a company making wheelchairs, and later as a bus driver. In 1989 he was married and in the following year went to Florida for about a year, in an unsuccessful attempt to find work. On his return to England he found work valeting motor cars and then became a professional entertainer, travelling the country with a company putting on a game called *It's A Knockout*. Mick moved to Knossington in 1994, is now divorced, and is presently unfit for work.

Mary Halestrap was born in Swindon, Wiltshire, the daughter of a computer operations manager. She was educated at St Joseph's R. C. Comprehensive and the Tamwadd Dance and Drama School, but she had also worked professionally from the age of five, dancing, acting and taking part in television commercials. After school she attended the Welsh College of Music and Drama, graduating at the age of 21. She found a job with the BeeZed Theatre Company, which is based in Frisby-on-the-Wreake, and travelled the country entertaining children with Theatre In Education. The BeeZed company also stages *It's A Knockout* and it was here that she met Mick.

Following a serious motor car crash in 1997, Mary has been unable to work full time, but manages to do some work. Mick has two children; daughter Sian and son Mathew, who both go to school in Somerby. Both Mary and Mick fell in love with Knossington. They are particularly impressed with the friendliness of all their neighbours. "Everyone looks out for everyone else", says Mick.

The large garden at the property is home to a small menagerie - chickens, rabbits, fish, stick insects and even a snake. Their aim is to be self-sufficient on the lines of the television programme *The Good Life*.

One animal which is missing is their dog, Zak, a rottweiler, who died a short time ago. "He was a big, soft, friendly thing", Mary recalls. It seems, however, that Zak defended his territory quite fiercely. One day a man called to deliver a pamphlet. Finding no letter box in the front door, he attempted to deliver the pamphlet through the open small window. Zak, who had been asleep on the sofa below the window, awoke to find a hand appearing through the window, and with a loud barking, leapt to engage the offending intruder. Fortunately the dog failed to make contact with the hand, but the latter's owner made a rapid exit, leaping over the garden gate in his haste.



Top: Mary, Mick and Zak. Above: Mathew and Sian

Mabel Ilott and David

20 Larchwood Rise

Mrs Ilott's parents, Alfred and Louisa Houghton moved from Braunston to Walnut Tree House where they ran a butcher's shop. Mabel was one of eight children, four boys and four girls. She is the youngest and was born at Woodland View. The family moved from Walnut Tree House and the two youngest children were born at Woodland View.

Her father died when she was a year old, leaving her mother with eight children and a business to look after. No state benefits in those days. When the house and business were sold, the family moved to a cottage, now demolished, near the Old Post Office.

Mabel attended the village school and then went to Uppingham to work for a baker confectioner for 2s 6d (15/-) a week. She looked after the children of the baker's family for a time before going to London as a nanny. Then she returned to Uppingham. Meanwhile she had met her future husband, Bill Ilott, a milkman with United Dairies, working in the West End. They were married and lived in London where their elder daughter Jill, now at 3 Cold Overton Road, was born. When the bombing in London started in earnest, Mabel returned to her mother in Knossington and Bill, a true Cockney, stayed for a while. When the milk round was wound up, Bill joined his wife and they rented 2 School Cottages from the Grange estate for half a crown a week. Bill got a job with the railway in Oakham at the provender store, earning £1 a week. Oakham was the distribution centre for all the horse fodder requirements for L.N.E.R. After a while he became a platelayer with the railway, which paid more money and life became easier.

In the early 1970s Mr and Mrs Ilott and David moved to their present home. Sadly Bill died in 1999. Margaret and David, the two younger children, were born in School Cottages. All the children attended primary school in the village. Jill and Ron Meadows were married in the village church and their four children attended the village school. Margaret was married in St Peter's but moved away. David is a fully trained carpenter working out of Peterborough. He is not married and lives with his mother.

Ivan and Diane Hill, Matthew and Amy

1 Cold Overton Road

Ivan, from Saltby near Melton Mowbray, married Diane, who was born in London, in 1981. The wedding was in Ilkeston and they went to live in Long Eaton. Later they moved south to run the Oddfellows pub in Harpenden. Ivan did not take to town life, and after three years they moved back to the midlands, eventually settling in Knossington in 1991.

Diane has been employed in clerical work and Ivan, with his HGV qualification, has driven lorries for a number of years; he now drives buses. They have helped in the local pub and have assisted with the village hall fete. They have two children - Matthew, who is a factory worker and lives at home, and Amy who is a 10th year student at Vale of Catmose College, Oakham.

The family is perhaps best-known in the village as the owners of late lamented Basil, the American pit bull terrier which, as the most friendly of dogs, illustrated the anomalies of the dangerous dogs legislation of the mid-1990s.



Diane and Ivan Hill

James Simpson

5 Cold Overton Road

James, known to everyone as Steve, was born in Burrough on the Hill but moved with his parents to Knossington in 1929. They originally lived in one of the cottages in the middle of the village now demolished and replaced by the two modern houses, Elm Cottage and the Green. They then moved to what is now 7 Owston Road. Steve, his sister Nina and brother Peter all attended the village school before going on to senior school in Melton.

On leaving school, Steve was employed in the gardens at the Grange, under Fred Gates. Military service took him to many places including Norway and Arnhem. Although not a paratrooper, Steve admits to having done a few drops. After demob, he resumed work in the Grange gardens but upon the death of Mrs Straker and the sale of the estate, he took employment with local builder Charlie Spence and later with Geoff Spence, Woodhall Duckham and finally with his brother Peter. He worked with Peter until he retired.

Steve recalled the wartime searchlight station down Owston Road, describing it as a bread van which was reached by climbing steps. There was much excitement when enemy planes approached and even more when bombs were jetti-



Steve, left, on Sconsborough

soned nearby. He also remembered going to look at a crashed German plane. Like every one else at this time, he and his family listened to the 9 o'clock news on the radio. The radio was powered by accumulators as there was no electricity available in the village. The accumulators were charged by Mr Warrington who had a motor in the end of the outbuildings belonging to Walnut House. He thinks that the cost of charging the battery was 6d (2½p).

When eventually electricity became available, it cost £20 to have the house wired up. But this was only downstairs. Upstairs oil lamps were the order of the day, the oil being purchased from Farnsworth's shop, now Old Shop Cottage, Braunston Rd.

Steve didn't have to go far to spend his sweet coupons, he just nipped next door to Mrs Broome's shop, and the post office was a couple of doors away at 9, Owston Road, now incorporated in no. 11, and bread was baked at Broome's, later Doubleday's, bakehouse in Braunston Road.

Gardening was Steve's great interest and he always had a good show of flowers. Sadly due to arthritis, he is now no longer able to cope with seed sowing and picking out.



Mrs Simpson at the Church fete



Village children with the T.A. Searchlight Battery in 1938. Back: Betty and Alan Chapman, Chappie Cox, Sid Freckingham. Front: Nina Simpson, Islay Fishwick, Bridget Broadley, Peggy Devoy, Sheila Cox and Grace Baines

Islay Fishwick

Dunroamin, 7 Cold Overton Road

Islay was born at Grange Farm Knossington and lived there with her parents and brother Bill (still there) until she embarked on her nursing career. Along with Bill, she was expected to help around the farm and maintains that the animals were her playmates. She was a pupil at the village school and then attended King Edward VII Grammar school in Melton.

Her nursing training began at the Corporation Day Nursery, St Martins Leicester in 1943. There were a good many of these day nurseries and trainees were moved from one to another. In 1945, having gained N.S.C.M. qualification, she moved in April to undertake General Nursing training at Leicester Royal Infirmary and in 1949 added S.R.N. to her name. From June 1949 to June 1951, Islay served in the Queen Alexander's Nursing Corps. After six month's experience at Wheatley, Oxen dealing with head injuries, she was assigned to nursing on troop ships - taking troops to various parts of the world and returning to the U.K. with casualties and families of serving men. She saw service on the EL Nil to Singapore, Empire Fowley around the Mediterranean, Port Said, Tobruk, Algiers, Malta etc, Empire Orwell taking troops to Singapore, Korea and Hong Kong, and Empire Test to East Africa taking troops to Mauritius. Her two years service were completed at Cow Glen Military Hospital, Glasgow.

In 1952 Islay moved to St Catherine's Hospital, Birkenhead before returning to Knossington to look after Grandma Lewin who lived at Dunroamin. From August 1953 to 1960 she did the night shift at the War Memorial Hospital, Melton, cycling to Somerby to catch the evening bus and

then biking back the following morning at 7 o'clock. Islay spent six months nursing at the Children's Convalescent Home at Hornsea (the children were from Leeds and Sheffield) before taking up an appointment at Catmose Vale Hospital, Oakham where she stayed until 1966 when she moved to R.M.H. and then in 1977 to St Mary's Melton. In 1987 she retired from full time nursing at St Mary's but spent the next five years as a Macmillan nurse.



Islay in the uniforms of Queen Alexander's Nursing Corps at Wheatley in 1949

Islay joined the Natural History Society and was mammal recorder for the area for a number of years. She was for two years President of Knossington W.I. a position which her mother had held for many years. She is still an active member and a member of Oakham W.I. market. She keeps poultry, is a keen gardener, enjoys sewing of all kinds, cooking and photography. Islay has had several photographs published in the County W.I. calendar.



A

Abraham, Paul	43
Atterbury-Thomas, Geoff & Rosemary	10

B

Baines, Grace	14
Ball, Malcolm & Jane	10
Barnett, David & Diane	35
Barnett, Michael	38
Barnett, Peggy	34
Barrett, Mike & Annie	20
Best, Tony	42
Bishop, Brett	52
Bishop, Rob	12
Blunden, Sue	4
Broadley, Bridget & Peter	18
Broome, Bob	36
Brown, Philip & Cheryl	58
Burman-Lloyd, Peter	43

C

Carter, John & Angela	8
Cokien, Bob & Ida	60
Collin, Bill & Elizabeth	40
Collin, Christine	40
Cook, George	4
Coulson, Pat	55
Cove, Suzanne	51
Cox, Chappie & Alice	59
Cox, Mick	62
Cricknet Club	25

D

Dalrymple, Mel & Jane	7
Duffin, David, Ruth	49
Dawson, John & Mary	30
de Barra, Peter	31
Doyle, Karel	12
Duffin, Andrew & Pat	53

E

Eddishaw, Brian & Charlotte	6
Edmunds, Alan & Fiona	21
Eley, Helena	18

F

Faukes, Clare	38
Fishwick, Islay	64
Fox & Hounds	13
Freckingham, Sid & Dot	58
Freeman, Jim & Gill	48

G

Gears, Richard	22
Gibson, Ben & Joan	3
Gibson, Ray & Margaret	5
Glover, Kev & Julie	44
Gresswell, Mary	54
Gudyer, Eddie & Rosemary	57

H

Halestrap, Mary	62
Hall, Kate	22
Hammer, Wendy	5
Hawkesworth, John & Hyacinthe	38

Haynes, Nigel & Alison	7
Hickenbotham, Clive & Anne	12
Hill, Ivan & Diane	63
Hill, Minty	37
Horrocks, Derek & Pat	32
Hubbard, Michael & Veronica	38
Hulse, Anne	30
Humfrey, Ginnie	45

I

Ilott, Mabel	62
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J

Jackson, Stewart & Jane	44
Jacobs, Doug & Gert	53
James, Steve & Sally	48
Jarrom, Robert & Dawn	50
Jones, Adele	42

K

Knight, Jack & Sally	45
Knight, Leanne	52
Kohberg, Searle	31

L

Lee, Robin & Amanda	6
Lester, Tim & Margaret	39
Lewin, William	31
Lynas, David & Pat	56

M

MacCaulay Knight, Ruth	12
Macey, Fred & Helen	56
Marlow, Michael & Lola	55
Martin, Terri	12
McCreesh, Paul & Susan	43
Mills, Michael & Susan	3
Miller, Malcolm & Helen	56
Mills, Darren	8
Montessori Nursery	44
Mounteney, Ewart & Janice	47

N

Neal, Alison & Amy	17
Needham, Lizzie	49
Nix, Bob & Bev	54

P

Parker, Peter & Maureen	61
Parkes, Isabelle	22
Price, David & Jenny	15
Pritty, Mrs Jack	7

R

Regan, Laura	8
Rook, Nick & June	53
Ryan, Paul & Gaynor	26

S

Saunders, Mike & Jan	49
School, village	27
Scrivens, Simon	5
Sills, John & Sue	61

Simpson, James	63
Smith, Reg & Rita	32
Smith-Bingham, Kim & Fiona	41
Spencer, David & Shirley	46
Stokes, Michael & Julia	42
Stone, Malcolm	17
Sumner, Margaret	53

T

Taylor, Ann	55
Taylor, Peter	8
Thomas, Barry & Mary	19
Tillson, Rose	4
Tozser, Erika	52

W

Ward, Geoff & Sarah	11
Ward, Patsy	16
Weatherby, Johnny & Sophie	51
Weber-Brown, Simon	43
Weeks, John & Edith	21
West, Gary & Evelyn	24
Williams, Judy	52
Witchell, Peter	26
Women's Institute	33
Wood, David & Vicky	9
Wood, Hannah	23
Worthington, Philip & Judy	19

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