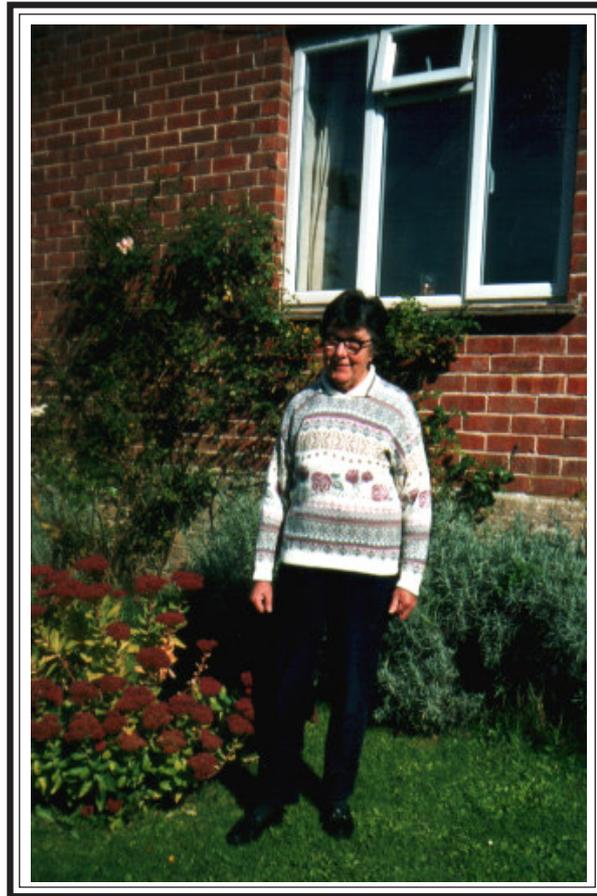


1 CUTLERS CLOSE



BARBARA SMITH

I have lived at 1 Cutlers Close for 43 years. I am a retired widow living in a post war Housing Association House, and currently one of the few tenants in the village. When I moved to the village tenanted properties were the norm, and there were only about 10 dwellings that were owner-occupied.

I no longer have a car but use the restricted bus service to Blandford for shopping, and where connections can be made, to go further afield, which I do occasionally. I also walk and cycle locally, especially to visit the nearest Post Office and a shop at Okeford Fitzpaine, some two and a half miles away, in order to draw the Old Age Pension and do basic shopping.

I am a member of the Village Hall Committee and the Parochial Church Council, having been the Hon. Treasurer and Secretary of the latter for 42 years.

I also play the organ for services at the Church. Ibberton is part of the Benefice of "Hazelbury Bryan and the Hillside Parishes" but since the last rector retired, he hasn't yet been replaced.

I enjoy walking, and gardening, growing all my own vegetables in the plot in front of the house.

As a senior citizen the unhurried quality of life in the village means much to me. The peaceful countryside and beautiful surroundings make for a very pleasant environment and the friendship, help and support from villagers is second to none.

I feel safe living in the village, something that perhaps wouldn't be experienced in a town, and I think all these things far outweigh the slight disadvantages of living "out in the sticks".

2, CUTLERS CLOSE



HENRY AND JENNY BARTLETT AND IRIS GILBY

Situated in Leigh, 2, Cutlers Close is one of four red brick council houses, built in the 1940's. The house is set back from the lane with a long front garden haphazardly planted with shrubs, flowers, and apple trees.

In 1981, Henry and Jenny moved to Woolland View Ibberton with their daughters Jo and Zoe and two ponies, where they lived for 2 years before finally moving to their present home. Both the girls now live in Amsterdam and Jenny's 94 year old mother Iris shares their home. The family is completed by three Jack Russell Terriers, Beany, Sausage, and Digger. Iris Gilby, a retired teacher moved to Sturminster Newton from Cornwall, living in a warden controlled bungalow until in 1997 she joined the family in Ibberton.

Living in a small community made it possible for the girls to have a freedom and independence that they would not have been able to enjoy in a larger town. Their activities mainly centred around their ponies and Apache, a skewbald of great character taught them to ride and kept them firmly in their place when necessary with a swift and lethal buck. Later, when owned by Mary Etherington, Apache was a well known character around the village until his death this year. Jo and Zoe both competed in Pony Club Cup events which entailed towing a pony trailer behind a VW "Beetle" to events all over the South-West. Jo and her grey welsh gelding "My Friend" enjoyed successes in mounted games, show jumping and hunter trials. Zoe followed in her footsteps taking over a feisty little bay mare called "Lucky" and continued competing into senior events with "Shell Bay" a horse who loved jumping but with an inherent hatred of schooling and pigs! In their teens they both took on local part time work. Sporting scarlet hair, Jo went turkey plucking, gardening and window cleaning whereas Zoe was a waitress, petrol attendant and worked as a Care Assistant in a Residential Home. On leaving school Jo took on a variety of jobs, eventually moving into graphic design, but after twice facing redundancy, she headed for Amsterdam where she became Music Editor of Time Out Magazine. She followed this by managing the merchandising for well known bands and touring regularly all over Europe. Currently she is a Product Manager for Sony Records in Amsterdam.

Zoe loved her time at Hazelbury Primary School and followed her sister to Sturminster High School, but then opted to finish her studies at Shaftesbury. On leaving school she worked for a year in solicitors and estate agents before attending Southampton University where she obtained an Honors degree in Social Sciences and Economics. Immediately after her degree the travel bug hit her and she moved to Vienna as an aupair, where she remained for a couple of years, returning to work briefly in Southampton, before taking a post in Amsterdam with a world wide company of English Language Colleges.

The parents provided the usual taxi service until Jo acquired a Vespa scooter which added a few parental grey hairs. Zoe remained dependent on them for her social life, mostly around Shaftesbury, until she bought her first car and drove herself back and forth to Southampton..

Henry deals in antiques, regularly attending Flea Markets, as well as working as a Courier. Thirty years ago Henry was a member of a folk group called The Famous Jug Band, playing the Jug and Double Bass. The current revival of interest in 1970's music resulted in the reissue of a record on compact disc, that put him in touch with the other group members and they are working on new songs. The band got together this summer and recorded a CD in the Village Hall using an ex BBC Sound Technician with a mobile studio, based at Hazelbury [small world] Henry should no doubt be considered "*the oldest swinger in the village*". Jenny was the Marketing Manager for a local company, recently completing a National Vocational Qualification Level 4 in Management and celebrated her sixtieth birthday this year.

Jenny's mother Iris used to be an active fund-raiser for the RNLI in Cornwall as well as working in the local Cancer Shop. A keen gardener until a fall some years forced her to give up, she now enjoys watching television and listening to the radio in her bed sitting room.

The couple own two rather old vehicles, a Volkswagon Polo and a Volvo Estate Car. There is a limited bus service from the village on Thursday and Saturday, and without their own transport it would have been impossible for any of the family to have got to work.

They are both keen on buying produce from known sources, and shop locally at Goldhill Farm. Child Okeford, have a weekly fruit and vegetable box delivered and buy fish from the local fishman. Jenny likes the atmosphere at the farmers markets and hopes that eventually food produced in Dorset can be marketed under that banner.

Jenny is secretary of the local Cricket Club and Henry was one of the original members of the local pub darts team that reformed the Club, some 14 years ago. He has long since stopped playing, and limits his sporting prowess to playing for a quiz team at the Crown Inn.

Being somewhat "arthritic" and no longer able to ride horses, negotiate styles or hop over fences, Jenny appreciates the millennium gates that have opened up the opportunity to walk through the local fields. Rambling around the lanes and in the fields with the dogs is enjoyable in all weathers but particularly when the meadows and lanes are abundant with flowers and wild life.

They both enjoy the occasional trip to the theatre or cinema and are involved with the local pub quiz team.. Henry likes listening to music and often pops along to local Jazz and blues events. Dining with friends, playing the odd game of cards, visiting the Crown for the occasional jar, and socializing generally, fills their leisure time.

3 CUTLERS CLOSE



SANDRA AND COLIN PURTILL

I moved here, to 3 Cutlers Close on June 5th 1986. It's a spacious three bedroom semi with a large front garden, mostly lawn.

I have four children and six grandchildren. Sharon, Marie and Julie have all got partners and children and live in Blandford, Okeford Fitzpaine and Shillingstone. Colin lives and works in Gillingham, only managing to come home every other week-end.

I'm a part-time cleaner in and around the village and due to a very scant bus service I rely on my car for getting about.

I play cribbage and skittles for local teams and for relaxation I like pottering about in the greenhouse, reading mystery novels and listening to a wide range of music.

4 CUTLERS CLOSE “FIDDLESTICKS”



ANDY, SALLY, ANTONY AND HARRY CRESCI

Andy and Sally live at “Fiddlesticks” with their two boys Antony aged thirteen years, and Harry aged ten, since moving down from Glasgow in 1987. “Fiddlesticks” is the last house on the end of Cutlers Close at Leigh Cross. It is a 1940s red brick semi detached house, and Andy and Sally own land opposite where they have a duck pond and some chicken pens. They have quite a few cockerels who wander about the lane investigating the hedges and ditches with their broods.

Andy and Sally are both musicians; Sally is a freelance Viola player and a member of the “Bourne Quartet”. She is also a Professor of Violin and Viola at the Royal Marines School of Music in Portsmouth. Andy plays the tuba in the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and is also Professor of Tuba and Euphonium at the R.M.S.M. in Portsmouth.

The family own two cars and rely one hundred per cent on them as their lives involve travelling many thousands of miles at unusual times of the day and night. Each day the two boys make use of the buses provided by the county to travel to and from their schools at Hazelbury, and Sturminster Newton.. The family usually shop in Blandford and Sturminster Newton.

When the boys were younger Sally ran a playgroup in the village hall and now both the boys play for the Village Youth Cricket Teams which often involves Sally and Andy in helping to ferry the teams to matches. The boys are keen on all sports and are both active at Wimborne Rugby Club. Antony also plays for Okeford United Football Club under fourteen’s team, so Andy and Sally spend most of their “freetime” on some cold touchline watching the boys. Andy is involved with the village shoot, and enjoys a little shooting when time permits.

MARSH FARM



STANLEY, PATSY, AND YOUNGEST DAUGHTER BELINDA HARRIS

Marsh Farm is an old greystone farmhouse similar to that of most smaller farmhouses in the area with four rooms up, four down and two attic rooms in the apex. The roof, although originally stone tiled, is now slate, but the few remaining stone tiles are incorporated as coping in the Purbeck Stone wall that now encircles the roadside entrance to the house, as well as the roof of the front porch, both added by Patsy's father, Arthur Foot in 1961. He also carried out some internal alterations, and the old Cheese room was converted into the kitchen. Arthur, and his wife Ruby had moved from a neighbouring Mount Pleasant Farm on his retirement in 1961, having purchased Marsh Farm which at that time had only 36 acres. Prior to that Arthur's sister and her husband farmed there since approximately 1920.

The farm buildings remain almost unspoiled, the cobb farmyard wall being a feature with only a covered stockyard and haybarn being added to the existing buildings. The old pigstyes to the north of the house have been replaced by a stable block. The acreage is now approximately 70 acres. The pond and yew trees are centuries old and untouched. The outside Privy still stands - although now unused!

In 1980, the Old Dairy and part of the cowstall was converted into a flat for Evelyn Harris, Stan's mother. This accommodation is at present occupied by a young couple who do part-time work on the farm. In 1968 Stan, Patsy and daughter, Charlotte, moved into Marsh Farm after the Foots built "Littlemarsh" bungalow to complete their retirement. Katherine and Belinda were subsequently both born at Marsh Farm. Charlotte and Katherine carried on the family tradition by both marrying Blackmore Vale Farmers. Anyone who travels the lane that runs through the farm with the pond on one side and the house on the other, will see that Stan and Patsy share their life with a wide variety of livestock. Lakeland Terriers, Nettle, the working collie, foxhound puppies in the summer, horses, sheep, the ancient breed of Longhorn suckler cows, and a motley collection of free range poultry, geese, several breeds of ducks, all shapes, sizes and colours of bantams, hens and cockbirds. The poultry, which the Harris' call "traffic calming" divide their time between yard, pond and the muckheap that holds a predominant position by the side of (or almost on) the road, and are a "must" for sightseers on a Sunday.

Belinda, although technically still living at home is at present frequently not around, having graduated, and travelled, she is currently in a job away from home, but will undoubtedly return to Dorset once she has made her fortune!

Stan and Patsy are both from farming stock that goes back to forever, on both sides of their families. Patsy's ancestors would have all come from within ten miles of Ibberton, her father's mother taught at Ibberton Village School. Stan and Patsy have a small herd of suckler cows and as Stan deals in sheep there are always plenty about. By today's standards he is considered an old fashioned farmer, using hardly any spray or fertiliser, and very little machinery beyond a wheelbarrow. He would much prefer to go back to his beloved carthorses.

Patsy has always loved horses and been very involved breaking and schooling, until this year, when old age is creeping up. She was also Chief Instructor of the local Pony Club for nearly 30 years, and still does some teaching at home.

Transport is currently a small Peugeot car, necessary for weekly shopping, a VW Mann Lorry and ancient Landrover, both vital for transporting horses, sheep, and cattle. The Landrover is used for feeding in the winter. Stan drives lorry and landrover to markets or sales on at least two days per week. Patsy does most of her shopping, weekly, in Sturminster Newton but is forced to go to Tescos in Blandford about once a month which she loathes!. Stan is on The Parish Council, and Churchwarden of Woolland Church (Woolland being the next door smaller village, and seemingly in need of support). He is also President of the Village Cricket Club, as its first matches were played at Marsh Farm when the Club was reformed many years ago. Patsy makes endless cakes for raffles and stalls for whoever is raising money for whatever event!

Most of Stan and Patsy's lives revolve around the Portman Hunt. Stan is Chairman of their Supporter's Club, and between them they organise an enormous number of fund raising functions all the year round. This in turn, forms most of their social life. The whole family ride and hunt, although Stan no longer follows hounds on horseback. Patsy still does and runs a small hunter livery yard at Marsh Farm.

The Portman Hounds always hold their last Vale Meet at Marsh Farm, usually on the second Wednesday in February. There is always a large mounted field which includes visitors from neighbouring hunts and a huge crowd of foot followers, many of them from the village.

KITFORD FARM



LITTLE-MARSH FARM BUNGALOW



LEIGH LODGE



ERNIE AND MAUREEN HAYES

In 1979, Ernie and Maureen purchased the bungalow when they were still London Publicans, to use as an “escape” from the “hurly burly” of City life. They believe the bungalow was built by Will Miller’s father, and that many years before, on nearby ground there used to be Parish Houses, a forerunner of Council Housing.

Over the years they have made many improvements to the bungalow, all done by their own hands (Ernie is the Chargehand and Maureen the labourer!). They have created a garden with different focal areas. The front garden has mature shrubs, trees, and in spring the grass is carpeted with snowdrops and daffodils. Ernie has made a wind chime, and hung bird feeders, to attract the many different feathery visitors. A more recent addition is their kitchen garden and flower beds adjacent to the sheltered patio area surrounded by a collection of large pots all planted out with a colourful cacophony of plants.

They have three sons, Tony, Gary, and Jeff, and they now look forward to entertaining their four grandchildren when they come to stay.

Ernie was a Scientific Instrument Maker, specialising in film, working for Plessey’s and the Ministry of Defence, whilst Maureen as an International Telephonist was one of the original “Hello Girls” until they moved into the Pub Trade.

They make frequent visits to London to visit their disabled son Tony, and often bring back his dog, Meggie, for a holiday. They recently had to have Lady their terrier put to sleep, and both miss her terribly.

They own a Shogun 4 x Wheel Drive vehicle, and generally shop in supermarkets in Blandford, but also support the shop at Shillingstone that caters for everything from papers, to homebaked bread, and is soon to have its own “hole in the wall” banking facility.

Although they are often called away at short notice Maureen still manages to help with the cricket teas and make jam. They also grow their own vegetables.

In his leisure time Ernie likes to pop up for the odd pint or two at the Crown, whilst Maureen enjoys sketching, painting, embroidery, crochet, and knitting. Ernie uses recycled material to create bird feeders, chimes, and wrought iron artifacts as well as finding time to make models for the grandchildren.

The village is their haven, and Leigh in particular seems to have a character of its own that has changed little the years; the lane still echoes to the sound of tractors, animals, and children playing.

BULLBANKS



OLIVER, GEORGINA, CAROLINE AND SARAH CHAMBERLAIN

Bullbanks is situated near the bottom of Leigh Lane. It used to be thatched and was originally two workers cottages. When Oliver and Georgina Chamberlain bought it in 1996, it was owned by Mick Robertson and used as a weekend cottage. It had two rooms up and two down with a lean-to on the back. The Chamberlains have modernised the cottage, adding another two rooms up and two down, making it a family house. They have also enlarged the garden and built a wooden two storey garage. At some time the original thatch had been replaced by an ugly concrete tiled roof.

Mick Robertson had farm buildings built on the twelve acres of land that now belong to the cottage.

The Chamberlain family number seven in all. Oliver is a Land Agent and works in Wimborne. He has held a commission in the Territorial Army for the last 26 years, and is currently ranked a Col. Yeomanry which takes up a lot of weekends. Georgina is a jack of all trades, among which number, secretary, cook, china restorer, and is at present framing pictures. She also help a friend run a catering business.

Caroline is in her second year at Durham University reading Geography, and Sarah is in her final year of A levels, at a local school.

The family dogs are an elderly Jack Russell called Tussell, and a Flatcoated Retriever called Willow, both thoroughly enjoy going shooting and the more walks the better!

A Welsh Cob called Bobby, is at present on loan, as Caroline is very rarely home long enough to get him fit.

The farm unit and 12 acres are rented by a local farmer, David Winder, who keeps sheep, cattle, pigs, geese, and a very greedy goat called Pandora. There is usually a fox or two in the area and in the summer months they spend far too much time watching the cubs playing in the field in front of the house.

FOOTNOTE

Bullbanks was originally known by the name of "Bulbanks" as in Bulbarrow.