
Lillington Local History Society



Our thirteenth on-line newsletter: May 2022



We congratulate

Her Majesty on achieving her Platinum Jubilee.



24 March 1988: The opening of the Royal Priors

Images Coventry Live

CORONATION YEAR MEMORIES

Wednesday, 6th February 1952 began without any special significance and lessons proceeded as usual at Milverton Senior School. Morning break arrived and one of the girls who lived nearby was anxious to give us the shattering news that the King had died. We asked the teacher whether this was so but she did not know the answer. These memories come flooding back at this time of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We later learned that King George VI had died and radio programmes were replaced with solemn music. The death of the King and the proclamation of the new Queen were closely linked the one being solemn and the other with exciting.

Many years later I visited the Curfew Tower at Windsor Castle, where there is a campanile and its tunes were displayed on a wall. One was "God Save the Queen" which had been crossed out and replaced with "God Save the King" which, in turn, had been amended back to "God Save the Queen". There is never a fraction of a second between two reigns and we began to wonder what the new postage stamps would be like.



Meanwhile, the preparations for the King's funeral were being made, which was to be on the Friday of the following week: there was no television in this area, so I had to follow it as best I could on the radio, though at that early age there was much I could not fully understand; we had been told that the school would remain open on the day, but on the day before, we were told not to attend since there had been a central heating breakdown, so we did get the time off after all.

So, the solemn music continued with gun salutes in the background and the striking of Big Ben fifty-six times for each year of the King's life. The new Queen had been proclaimed and now the build up began for her Coronation arrangements. As the event approached, the newspapers and magazines were full of it and even our comics featured it. We learned about such as the Ampulla, the Sceptres - one with the cross and the other with the dove - , the Curtana and the Gold Coach. Popular songs reflected it and from the top to the bottom of the Parade red, white and blue banners hung from each of the central lamp standards. Shop windows were appropriately decorated and one even had its frontage wall painted to celebrate the event. Over the main entrance to the Regent Hotel figures depicting the sovereigns from King George I were on display with that of Queen Elizabeth II in pride of place at the front.



When the great day of Coronation came, we were not disappointed as three families viewed a small (by today's standards) black and white television set to see the Queen for the first time that day as she drove through the main gates of Buckingham Palace in the Gold Coach. The date of Tuesday 2nd June 1953 had been nominated as the most likely to bring with it good weather ("Queen's weather" as the Victorians termed it) but in the end it rained a lot without dampening the

general enthusiasm. Queen Solote of Tonga was a very popular figure, as she refused to have the hoods of her carriage raised, since that would have obstructed the crowds' views of her. There were no motorised vehicles in the procession and the troops taking part did not wear waterproofs since this would have obscured the pageantry of the occasion.



The Coronation Service was based on the Anglican Communion Service and memorable parts of it included the Queen's entry to the Abbey in the Grand Procession to Parry's "I Was Glad" with the interjection of the Vivats (Vivat Regina Elizabetha). The crowning moment was spectacular, though the most sacred part of the service was the anointing; later there was the swearing of allegiance to the Queen, beginning with the Duke of Edinburgh.

Later that year, my family did obtain a television set, which broadcast just one channel - the BBC - and as new channels were introduced there was the quandary as to whether this justified replacing a perfectly good set with a newer one.

When the crowning took place, the shout went up, "God save the Queen, long live the Queen, may the Queen live for ever". We did not know then that the Queen's would be the longest reign in British history and what a marvellous example she would be in uniting our country.

GRAHAM E. COOPER

CHILDREN CELEBRATING THE CORONATION IN FANCY DRESS

The young girl dressed up as "Good Queen Bess" is Ann Mills (my wife). The photograph was taken in the back garden of her next-door neighbour Mrs Cooke in the South Nottinghamshire village of Bunny. Mrs Cooke who was a schoolteacher in Nottingham made the costume for Ann to wear at a special Coronation event held at Bunny Hall.



The boy photographed in the playground of Lillington Infants School is my late brother Rob. Our mother Millie made his costume of a State Trumpeter for a competition at the school.

Les Markham

THE SILVER JUBILEE

The Silver Jubilee of Elizabeth II was celebrated with large scale parties and parades during 1977, culminating in June with the “Official Jubilee Days”, when many streets in the UK had their own celebrations.

About a week before the event, members of the group organising our Street Party in Newnham Road, visited each house to register the names of the men, women and children who wished to take part.

A neighbour who was returning from working in Coventry on the day of the party, found he could not drive up the road to his house because of the Street Party road closures!

There was no shortage of volunteers to prepare food, decorate the street and organise games for the children. We were all encouraged to attach overhead banners with Union Jacks across the street from house to house. Neighbours met to organise the sewing of them.

At the party there were many games and races for children, including a Fancy Dress Competition which my daughter and a friend took part in. Karen was dressed as the White Rabbit, and her friend won the event dressed as a gypsy – with large hooped earrings!

My neighbour said that her 3 year old sister wore a butterfly outfit. “ I remember her pink wings well. Fortunately it was a dry day so nobody got wet! It was such a happy time, a great atmosphere – a day I’ll never forget!”

There were long tables, neatly laid for a sit-down party with lots of jellies, cakes, sandwiches and other delicious food – as my daughter remembers! “Mum we were all very excited – I remember it so well, and there was music and dancing too!” Karen enthused. Her favourite part of the afternoon was the games and races. Jubilee cups and coins were distributed as reminders of the day. *Kathy Hobbs*



THE QUEEN VISITS NOTTINGHAM

I was a little girl when the Queen visited Nottingham in 1955. There was huge excitement at my Nan's, as the royal motorcade was due to come along the main road near her little terraced house. If she was lucky (or, possibly, unlucky), Her Majesty would receive powerful aromas from three of Nottingham's major industries at the time - giant whiffs of tobacco from Player's cigarette factory, less than a mile away. (The smell permeated my childhood and I've always loved it.)



Then, pungent and heady vapours from Shipstone's brewery, beside the route. Magnificent, huge Shire horses, harnesses jangling, used to pull Shipstone's wagons right up to the 1970s, leading processions of crawling motor traffic. And finally, and perhaps causing Her nose to wrinkle somewhat, tallow from Gerard's soap factory right beside the road. Gerard's was eventually taken over by Cusson's, makers of Imperial Leather soap. My Nan could enjoy these scents every day!

The great day came, with lovely weather. Mum, Nan and I hurried to the roadside early, but not early enough. The crowd was already about 4 deep and all I could see was a dim forest of legs, and hear a lot of shouting. How was I going to see the Queen? I began to cry, and Mum picked me up - suddenly, there were loud, comforting voices and we were being threaded through to the front. We were clear of the forest, I could see everything! Not long after we heard a roar from further down the road, people were waving and cheering, then the motorcade of big, shiny black cars appeared, and slowly came towards us. I was jumping with excitement, waving my little Union Jack. Then - there was the Queen, aged 29 in 1955, wearing a bright yellow 'New Look' dress, bright as the day, with a very full skirt, a matching bolero, long ruched gloves, and a small close-fitting yellow hat which suited her dark hair so beautifully. She looked all around her, waving, then saw me looking up. And smiled straight at me. Her little Charles and Anne weren't much older than me. It's one of those indelible memories, clear as a film clip. *Judith Cooke*

A CORONATION MEMORY

In 1953 I was 5 years old and attended the Richard Hallam Primary school in Leicester. I was asked to make a drawing of the Queen and was given a picture of her, seated, with her arm bent across her. I remember struggling to draw the arm, and, especially the hand, as it was in the picture. I really felt that this 'pose' was beyond me. The teacher must have realized that I was the kind of child whose efforts had to look the same as the print, so I was finally relieved of the task and allowed to join the rest of the class drawing and colouring 'Union Jacks'.

I think Leicester LEA must have purchased the most inferior Coronation mugs to give to schoolchildren, as mine is now crazed, discoloured and the transfer image worn. For many years I also had a silver 'Coronation' coach and horses which I loved because the wheels actually turned!

Dearne Jackson



STOCKWELLS

Walking down Cubbington Road to February's meeting of Lillington Local History Society, I was surprised to see the name N H Stockwell above the window of the corner shop at No 2 Lime Avenue. The property is currently being renovated and the original hand-painted sign had been uncovered when the Artisan Floors sign was removed.



The N H Stockwell on the sign was Norman Harry Stockwell who kept the corner shop during the 1950s and 1960s. Norman was born in Leamington on 20th August 1914, the son of Harry Friend Stockwell, a Plasterer, and Edith Sarah Warwick, a Milliner.

Harry, born on 5th June 1882, and Edith, born on 26th May 1881, were married in 1909 and, in 1911, lived at 17 North Villiers Street. Sadly, Harry died in 1918 at the young age of 36.

By 1921, Edith and Norman, then aged 6 years and 8 months, were living at 28 Ranelagh Terrace where Edith was running a Boarding House. There was one boarder living with them – Joseph James Crick, aged 41 from Norwich, who was working as a Printing Machine Minder at the Courier Office in Bedford Street.

Norman Stockwell had a varied work life before becoming a shopkeeper. In October 1929, at the age of 15, he appears on the Great Western Railway's Register of Uniformed Staff. He was a Lad Porter at Leamington & Warwick for almost three years until he was discharged on 17th September 1932, appearing on the Register of Staff Discharged Through Trade Depression and Promised Reinstatement.

On the 1939 Register, Norman was still living with his mother, but by then they had moved to King Street where they were living with Edith's second husband Caleb Cooper, a Gas Fitter, whom she had married in 1926. In 1940 Norman joined the RAF, presumably for the duration of World War II. Edith, Norman's mother, died in 1965.

In 1940, Norman married Iras (or Iris) Emmeline Davies Lynn who was born in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire on 1st May 1914. Iris was the third of six daughters of James Lynn, a Postman, who had previously served in the 18th Hussars, and Emmeline Florence Davies. In 1921 the family were living in Mansfield Woodhouse; by 1927, however, the family had moved to Leamington and were living in Hawthorn Road. In 1939 Iris was living at 14 Portland Road with her mother and her younger sister, Rita. In the 1939 Register, Iris was listed as working as a Ladies Outfitter and Salesman and Rita was a Ladies Hairdresser. James, their father, had died on 6th March 1933 and Emmeline, their mother died on 17th August 1941.

Norman and Iris lived at 14 Keith Road for the early years of their marriage, before moving to 3 Aldwick Close in the mid 1960s. They had two daughters, Glenys, who was born in October 1943, and Rosemary, who was born in October 1948.

Norman Stockwell died on 26th June 1973 aged 58, Iris lived until 2nd May 1997.

Sources: *Ancestry, Find My Past and Kelly's Directories*

Denise Watson

AND FINALLY.....

A note from the Editor

This, the thirteenth edition of the on-line newsletter, is to be the last.

In September we revert to our eight page print edition, published three times a year.

I would like to thank our many readers and contributors for their support over the past two years.

Altogether, we published 48 articles and four specials. That is a notable achievement and a great tribute to the Lillington community.

Please keep remembering and writing, researching and sharing through the newsletter. Every recorded memory is a further piece of the jigsaw that is Lillington's history.

Chris

In addition, we should add our grateful thanks to Chris Rhodes and his team for so faithfully producing these on-line versions of the Newsletter which have proved of great interest, and duly recorded for posterity.

GRAHAM E. COOPER AND OTHERS.

This Newsletter is published by the Lillington Local History Society, c/o Lillington Free Church, Cubbington Road, Leamington Spa, CV32 7AL The views expressed in the Newsletter are personal to the contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Society.