

TORLA FRANCES WEDD MACKARNESS



Autobiography

(First written in 1963; added to in 1986, 1992, 2011, 2013 and 2014)

Contents

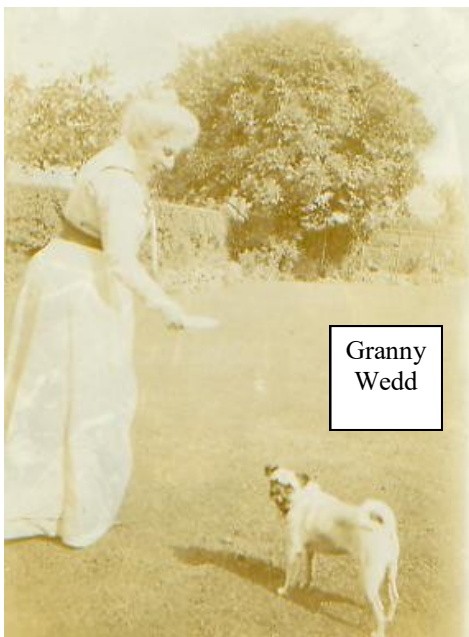
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FAMILY HISTORY AND EARLY LIFE

My father's family lived in South London—Chislehurst/Bromley area. Grandfather, Paul Frederick Tidman, was an East India merchant, had worked in the Far East, and had the CMG [Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George, awarded to Britons who had distinguished themselves in foreign countries]. He and my grandmother Tidman were both dead when I was born.

My father, Oscar Paul, was the youngest of five. He had two sisters, Marion and Ethel, and two brothers, Arthur and Frank. Arthur (a great one for crested silver, bookplates etc) wrote poetry under the name of 'Hart Dumartin' and shot himself in 1924. Frank was a black sheep of some kind, but father of Oliver Tidman, with whom we kept in touch, and who has two daughters. The two maiden aunts kept a school called St Margaret's, in Meads, Eastbourne (at which Lady Tollemache was educated, among others), and later retired but still lived in Eastbourne for many years. Ethel died in about 1934, and Marion ten or more years later. They had both been amongst early students at Girton, Cambridge. There were three Tidman cousins, Ellen, Mary (Mrs Ingle) and Bob. Bob had two daughters; one, Estelle, was killed driving an ambulance in the war, and Beryl is the other. Names that crop up on the Tidman side too are Pope, Chaplin, Elworthy, Kershaw (the maiden name of my grandmother Tidman).

My father was born on 30 11.1876 at 234 Blackheath Park, Charlton, and educated at Rugby. His family lived at Eastbourne. He did some professional acting (I have seen an autobiography of Sir Frank Benson, in which OPTs name appears in Dramatis Personae of some plays. A photocopy of these cast lists is in the Tidman drawer and reproduced on The Mackarness Place website), and



Granny
Wedd

went up to Cambridge rather late. He was at Caius, and read science at first, but finally History. He played golf several times for the University but did not get his Blue.

My mother's family, the Wedds, owned large amounts of land in Cambridgeshire and Essex: the only grandparent I knew, Gank's father, Edward Arthur Wedd, was born on 16 October 1844, and died in 1925. Her mother was Katherine May, born 29 March 1849, died 11 October 1916.

The Wedd family lived at Whitehall, opposite the church at Great Wakering, and had many

business interests. Edward and Katherine's children were Edward Parker Wallman Wedd (Parker or 'Teddy'), Aubrey Pattison Wallman Wedd (Uncle Bobby) and Muriel Agnis Wallman Wedd, my mother. Parker was born in 1883, educated at Cheltenham and Caius, Cambridge. He rowed for the college, and for Cambridge in 1904 (see



Edward Parker, Muriel and Aubrey Wedd in 1891

inscribed oars at Simon's house). He went on to Bart's Hospital, and qualified as a doctor in 1911. He went to France in 1914, not as an M.O. but in the Essex Yeomanry, in which he had held a commission for several years before the war. It was not till 1917 that he was transferred to the RAMC; and in April 1918 he was awarded the MC for '.... By his personal fearlessness and devotion in visiting batteries under fire, he set a magnificent example, never failing to cheer all ranks as he went his round'. (Several documents relating to him are amongst the family papers.) He was killed on July 13 1918, I think when on a visit by motorbike to a friend in another part of the front.

Uncle Bobby was educated at Cheltenham, Woolwich and was a professional soldier in the Royal Engineers.

I think they were all 'Chapel' (Congregational), but certainly Uncle Bobby and my mother became C of E later.



Oscar and Muriel Tidman

The Wallman name possibly came from an ancestor of my Wedd grandmother, although she had been a Miss May of Maldon: John Crown Agnis was also an ancestor.

Oscar Tidman probably met Gank, Muriel Agnis Wallman Wedd (born 3.11.1886) when he was brought to stay at Great

Wakering by EPW Wedd (Uncle Teddy), with whom he was at Caius College, Cambridge. They were married in Great Wakering on 31.7.1913. Their honeymoon was spent camping at Torla in the Spanish Pyrenees (reached, presumably, by train and donkey?) They ran a boys' prep school called Frethearne House in Baker St, London, with Sidney Page. Claude Hulbert, Sir David Eccles (1904-1989), and another well-known comedian of that time, whose name I've forgotten, were there.

My father was briefly in the RNVR [Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve] in the 1914-1918 War, but I've no knowledge of what he did.

After the war Oscar briefly taught History at Uppingham School, but then moved to Sedbergh, a tough Yorkshire school amidst beautiful fells. I think we owned Birks House, above the River Lune, and I was born there on April 11th 1920. I *think* I can remember my parents going off to the opening of the war memorial Cloisters at the school. I also remember walks by the river Rawthey which was only a field away from Birks.



Birks House, Sedbergh in 2012

A letter came to light, from OPT's mother, my grandmother. Written in early 1920, it thanked Oscar and Muriel very warmly for saying she could live with them at Sedbergh. (It sounded a little as if some other arrangement had broken down: MAWT always said of Uncle Frank Tidman, when asked, 'He treated his mother very badly'. I just wonder if perhaps the old lady had been going to live with them.

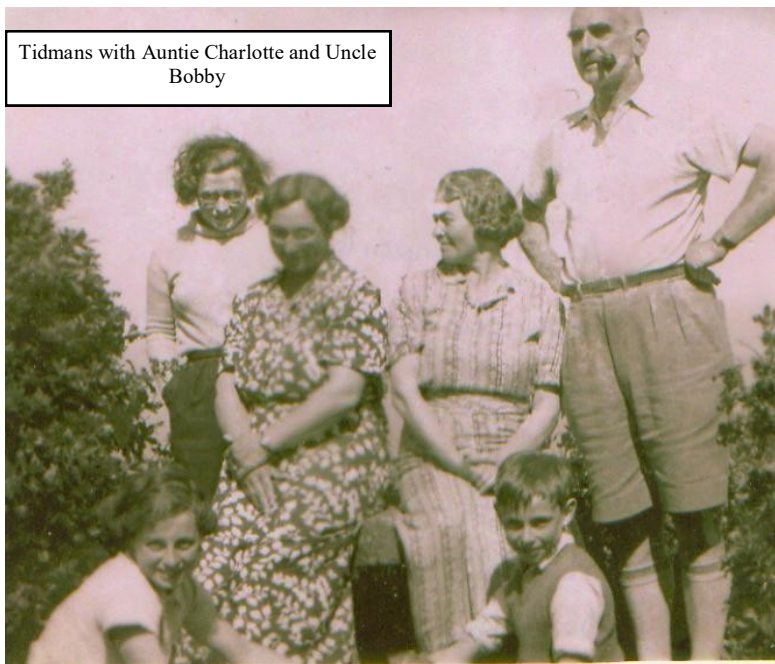
The sad thing is that by the time I was born, in 1920, she must have died; so I only missed having a Granny by a month or two.

Every year we spent a holiday at Great Wakering—train to Tebay Junction, change to London one, taxi to Liverpool Street, and thence to Southend. I was always sick!



Family group with my grandfather Edward Wedd, 'dear old Daddy'

Tidmans with Auntie Charlotte and Uncle Bobby



Presumably about 1924, Oscar went back to Cambridge (Ridley Hall) to train for ordination, because when Mary arrived (1st August 1925) we were at Emsworth, where Oscar was Curate to Oswald Hunt, later Master of St Cross, and father of Catharine Sandford (d. 2011). His wife Char(lotte) was Mary's godmother. Among great family friends were Colonel and Mrs Reeves (whose daughter

ter Peg married Geoff Delafield, and whose son Bill was Uncle Paul's godfather).

At Emsworth we lived in a gabled semi-detached in Horndean Road, known as The Close. The Cuffies lived nearby, across the road. I think Ted Cuthbert ('Cub') worked at a bakery while Lizzie Cuthbert ('Cuffy') cleaned and cooked for us; and when there were dinner parties, Cub waited at table, as he had been a footman in one or two large houses. I went to a little school kept by a Miss Collinson, in an upstairs room somewhere in Emsworth.

In 1926 we moved to Ascot because my father became an Organising Secretary for the Missions to Seamen, which entailed travelling round a sizeable area, preaching. . When my parents told the Cuffies they were going, Cuffy said: 'Oh, I wish we could come too!' – and that is indeed what happened, thus beginning an association which lasted until Cuffy's death in 1981.

The Ascot house was a newly-built one in a private road called The Avenue. The Cuffies, with their son Mac, lived in a flat over the garage, reached by crossing an enclosed yard. Behind the garden was a swamp. Cub helped found the Merlins football team, and my father was the first president. After a few false starts, we settled for Mary Lancelot ('Naomi' because there was already a Mary in the house) as a sort of lady mother's help. Her father was a canon in Birkdale, Lancs, her sister a doctor, and her brother a clergyman whose son James was assistant organist at Winchester Cathedral, then choirmaster at Durham.

My mother was not happy at Ascot, but made there one lifelong friend, Matti Lyne, the charming Norwegian wife of our doctor Leslie Lyne. Matti was pregnant with Peter at the same time as Gank was with Paul, and I daresay was a great help and support when my father died.

I again went to a little school, round the corner in The Avenue, run by Mrs Spreadbury, wife of a curate. Her son Basil and I used to fight a good deal (I thought he bullied me!) They and the school later moved to Cranbourne Vicarage, but Mrs Spreadbury was not well, and later died. I remember one *extremely* cold winter, during which our tortoises died in their haybox in the hall of our house.

In 1928 two memorable events occurred for my family. Oscar died of pleurisy in the spring: and Paul was born in June. I was not aware of great loss, as I was rather afraid of my father, but was obviously much affected, as I took to stealing money from the Missions to Seamen collecting box, and spending it on sweets etc which I concealed in a den in the garden. A great showdown occurred when I couldn't account for a celluloid duck I'd bought with my ill-gotten gains! My mother's patient questioning eventually resulted in my confessing, and being put off lying and stealing for evermore!

At some time before the move to Eastbourne we had had a Frenchwoman, Mlle. Bird, living with us. But she had gone to run a school in Eastbourne with a friend; and possibly because I was such a pain, I was sent to this school, West Hill, first as a boarder in the middle of a summer term. I was miserably homesick and often in trouble, poorly taught in some subjects but very well in others, notably English and French; I also learnt to swim and roller skate. I liked the school better when the family moved to Willingdon and I became a weekly boarder, where in due course Mary joined me.

My mother, who had never liked Ascot much, decided we should move to Eastbourne, whence my father's family came. A house in East Dean was rejected, and eventually she had one built, Fairlight, Church Street, Willingdon. The Cuffies had a self-contained flat over the kitchen and garage,



but it had no bathroom so they had a weekly bath in one of ours! Some stables went with the house, and they were let out to one Joan Shoebridge, who taught me to ride (though I was never much good), and had some rather rackety male friends!

My mother was busy with the Womens Institute, Mothers Union, Willingdon Dramatic Society, evening classes and so on. Sometime during the Willingdon years, our mother's help 'Naomi' left and Bene Thacker came. I didn't get on with Naomi, but was devoted to Bene. She was a driver, so was able to take us to the beach, tennis coaching etc. The Cuffies acquired an Austin 7, which my mother taught both to drive; I think she lent them some money for it, and they used to repay her in stamps. They had lovely holidays with Cuffy's brother, 'Uncle Alf' Want, and his wife 'Auntie May'. Their son Mac went to the village school.

Mary and I were at West Hill, and Paul at a pre-prep school called St Augustine's. The two Tidman aunts were there to start with, Marion in a hotel and Ethel in a house in Pashley Road with a friend; but she died of cancer sometime in the mid-thirties.

Cub was a butler in the morning and a gardener in the afternoon; Cuffy did the cooking and helped in the garden. There was also a gardener called Noakes, and a cleaning lady whose name I forget.

Gank had several tennis parties and made new friends, notably 'Gran' Pakenham-Walsh and Violet Tyrwhitt-Drake. She and the Cuffies acted in amateur dramatics, and she was President of the WI; I think they were all three in the church choir. The vicar was George Frederick Handel Elvey, known to his wife as 'Petters'.

My mother went on several school-inspecting visits, and was advised by Godolphin, Salisbury, to try St Mary's Calne. I was delighted to go there in Summer Term 1933. Mary followed, and Paul went to St Aubyn's, Rottingdean, which had an excellent reputation.

I was blissfully happy at St Mary's Calne, 1933-38, much admiring Marcia Matthews ('Matt'), the headmistress. The school was then only about 120 strong, with some school subjects having only one teacher. There were two for French, and Matt taught History, Shakespeare and Divinity at various times, brilliantly. (My aunt Marion wrote once to say that the Geography mistress, Carol Rygate (an excellent teacher) was related, by way of the Kershaws (see Tidman family tree), and I saw her until her death.) Another superb teacher was Dorothy Inglis. But I was devoted above all to Phyllis Evans, a

most inspiring Classics mistress.

Friends from then are, or were, Alice Dyson, Althea Roberts (Bailey), Jennifer Morris (Jenkins), Prue Zygadlo, Ursula Boisseau, Elizabeth Allen, Marty Monk; also Eleanor Booker, Peter's first cousin, and Margaret Thorpe and Joan Bennett who lived in Petersfield (both now dead).

One's first terms were spent in dormitories in the main school building—Wordsworth, Murray—and one then graduated to a 4-bedroom in one of the 'Out Houses'— St Prisca's, St Faith's, and most loved of all, St Bridget's, which was near the Town Centre, a charming old house, in which breakfast was part of the deal! We were put in different houses each term, so there was none of the usual House ethos one found in bigger schools and boys' ones. Companies were what we were allocated for our whole school life—Moberley, Osmund, Edmund Rich, Grosstête, Poore (probably all Bishops of Salisbury in the past!)

Chapel (unfortunately situated next to the lavatories) was compulsory morning and evening, and church in lovely large Calne one, which the Lansdowne family usually attended. Lord Lansdowne was the owner of Bowood, in some of whose grounds we were allowed to walk; and also Chairman of the School Governors while I was there. The school buildings were pretty run down—Hall and some classrooms all hotted jobs from in or before the 1st War: but 2 picturesque cottages contained piano practice rooms and Prefects' Room: and one or two more housed the two (deaf and dumb, I think) sisters who did all the School's washing! But during my time there, new Hall, Dining Room, Staff rooms and kitchens were built, and the old workhouse which the School had acquired, demolished, and gardens and lacrosse pitches laid out. There was a ruined lime kiln, a pond in which the biologists caught frogs and other creatures—I think both of these are now gone.

We played lacrosse and netball in the winter terms, in the afternoon, followed by supper, and cricket and tennis in the summer, after supper. At cricket we were coached by a Mr Nunn, who was otherwise a gardener. On Thursday evenings we could do Hobbies—cooking, sketching, dressmaking and carpentry among others. And, on some suddenly fine afternoons Matt would announce that work was cancelled, and we could go out for walks, or sometimes picnics. There were Form Picnics, sketching picnics, whole school picnics to Savernake on special occasions. Miss Jackson, in the kitchen, provided memorable picnic suppers, Harris' factory supplied the most delectable rectangular pork pies (the Harris factory was demolished sometime between 1945 and the turn of the century); and a cake shop called Maslens had glorious Chelsea buns, inter alia. Every Saint's Day we had a thin bar of Milk Chocolate with our elevenses!

Every Ascension Day, we had a General Knowledge paper in the morning, followed by a walk across Bowood to The George at Sandy Lane, for picnic, Fancy Dress competition in the afternoon, and dancing in the evening—to piano music played unflaggingly by some senior girl.

We were never allowed to sleep away from the school in termtime, so Gank had to come and stay at the Lansdowne Arms, or somewhere similar, and we went to Bath, or on the river at Laverton, occasionally to take out Tony Wedd at Clifton. (He was Gank's godson, a distant cousin; uncle of Philippa Gregory.)

I got into lacrosse, cricket and tennis teams, but wasn't much good at the latter two. I became a Prefect, and then Head Girl (done nominally by a vote of the school, but with a Directive by Matt!) In 1937 in the summer holidays, while staying with the Waldos, I got appendicitis, and had it out in a nursing home in Nottingham.

Either when we became sixth-formers or perhaps prefects we were allowed, on some Sundays, to walk to a village church, four in a group. I remember Bremhill, perhaps Derryhill, and Compton Bassett with particular affection.

In 1936 Peter's parents, Cuthbert and Eileen Mackarness, came to live further down Church Street, at Tas Combe. My mother may have got to know them first because Peter's cousin Eleanor Booker was at St Mary's with me.

The only public exam in those days was School Certificate, taken at 16ish; and since it was felt that the stress of the exam and of one's Confirmation would be too much, Confirmations usually took place the year before the exams! My own was interesting: the Bishop of Sherborne, who was to take the service, died suddenly; but happily, Margaret Gibson's father the Bishop of Kimberley was on leave at the time, and kindly agreed to carry out the ceremony. (Margaret Gibson, later Thorpe, was through Sumners and perhaps Milfords, related both to Peter and to Phyllis Evans).



First known photo of P and T together, aged about 17 and 16.

Several years running, we went off to Cornwall for holidays at 'Trevan', Lundy Bay, which belonged to Gank's old friend Walter Adams. Uncle Bobby (Aubrey P W Wedd) and Auntie Charlotte were there too; we played much Rush Patience and had many laughs. Cuffy looked back on those holidays right

to the end of her days. Fresh mackerel would be brought to the door each morning, and also hot rolls. We walked the cliffs, swam, explored caves with W Adams, visited Lands End and other places of note.

One year, 1937 I think, Gank took us on a cruise to Rotterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg, Lubeck etc. We saw the autobahnen and new buildings instigated by Hitler, and were impressed.

We also had many summer holidays at Little Wakering Hall, with the Wedds, sometimes staying in the house, sometimes camping. I spent hours rowing on the pond; we also bathed in the Creek and very occasionally went sailing in Uncle Bobby's boat.

There was a walled garden with a mulberry tree, figs, peaches etc, and a row of walnut trees in the field on the way to the bathing hut. Uncle and Auntie had beloved dogs, and Shetland ponies, but it was a great sadness to them that they were childless. Some years they had John and Richard Newton, the son's of Auntie's sister Anne, and Ivan Newton, who were in India, for the holidays.

My best subjects in School Certificate were English, French and Geography; but I wanted to learn Greek, and try to get to Cambridge. Ursula Cleverly (now Boisseau), Jennifer Morris (now Dame Jennifer Jenkins) and I took the entrance exam in 1938, but in spite of Phyllis' excellent teaching neither I nor Ursula succeeded, while Jennifer got a Minor Scholarship in History to Girton. My mother kindly paid for me to have coaching for three months in London with Betty Wilson (wife of Duncan, later Ambassador to Moscow and then Master of Corpus, Cambridge), and when I re-took the Entrance Exams in April, I was offered places at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford and Westfield, London.

About 1938, we became rather keen on the idea of going back to live at Fowlmere, Cambridgeshire, where at least two generations of Wedds had lived. The Green, their house, was let to some people called Jackson, and they, of course, had to be turned out, but with plenty of warning, and there was no question of their having nowhere to live. We moved in 1939.

I was the one who first had the idea of moving there, but have rather regretted it ever since, as I think the Cuffies, and perhaps all, would have been happier staying at Willingdon, as wartime restrictions on petrol and other things, made life considerably more difficult for them. Fowlmere was much more isolated than Willingdon, Cambridge being 9 miles away. Anyway, they soon fitted into whatever was going on in Fowlmere, though it was rather narrow and clique-y.

The Green needed a lot of alterations, but these were carried out excellently by Herbert Ison's firm. (His cousin, Ernie Ison, was a wonderful carpenter and I spent much time in his workshop, watching him.) One of the front rooms was turned into the kitchen, where Cuffy cooked happily on a Valor (paraffin) cooker. The original kitchen became a scullery; and there were also drawing room, dining room and sitting room, which had a glass conservatory, in which we had some budgies. Beautiful, but too-close copper beeches made the rooms at the back of the house very dark.

Across the front lawn was a room in which we played endless games of ping pong, the Cuffies as usual joining in. The move must have been difficult for them, as I think Mac and Hilda must have been married about the time of the move.

In August 1938 Peter landed at Tilbury, having been in India since January. He was met by me and Gank. In September he started rehearsing for Petersfield Music Festival (Easter 1939), staying with a lady in Sussex Road who had been a cook to Queen Victoria at Balmoral. He was articled to his great uncle Arthur John Coleridge Mackarness.

I went up to Lady Margaret Hall in 1939, and thoroughly enjoyed Oxford life. I was the only one reading Classics at LMH in the first year, and the Greats tutor, Mrs Dale, had gone to do something connected with Scandinavia. So I had my tutorials in Somerville with Miss Hartley and two fellow-students: Ruth Collingwood, who was brilliant, and a girl whose name I can't remember. I really wasn't up to the Greek part of Greats, which I'd only been learning since the age of 16. (Peter, and other boys of his age, had been at it since prep school days.)

I got into the Oxford Bach Choir (conductor Thomas Armstrong, father of Sir Robert who, in 1987, was 'economical with the truth'); played Lacrosse and cricket; learned to skate on the Cherwell in the very cold winter of 1939-40, and to paddle a canoe and punt on it in the summer. I made several friends who have remained so – Alison Smith, 'Thrine Avent, Rosemary Bailey, Mary Kirkman, Liliias Murray (older) and more rarely seen, John Dancy and Alfred Kenyon. (The latter proposed to me!) Alison and Rosemary died during the 1990s, and Liliias later.

At Easter 1939 Peter sang in Petersfield Music festival – Handel's Israel in Egypt with Sir Adrian Boult. I came to see the festival and stayed in the Carlton Hotel – Peter says Gank was there too, watching us as we were becoming close.

Peter came to stay at The Green, Fowlmere, and when two friends and I went walking in Lake District we wrote to each other every day (a letter posted in the morning arrived at teatime). There was a suggestion that we should go on a motorbike trip, visiting cathedrals, but Gank put a stop to that.

Peter was called up the day before his 20th birthday. After this we went our separate ways for some time. (Peter: 'I was on a train and thought 'I'm hooked''.)

I got a Blue for Lacrosse, and was awarded one for cricket—but, because of Dunkirk (in my third term) and other horrors of 1940, we were all sent down early, and I had to cancel the order for my beautiful white blazer! This along with my difficulties with Greek decided me to join the forces instead. Rejected by the WAAF because of poor eyesight, I was accepted by the ATS. (Goodness knows why I didn't try the WRNS, as I was mad keen on ships as a child!)

I spent much of the Long Vac in 1940 driving about East Anglia for the WVS. I often took an architect called, I think, Mr Macdonald Wood, to visit schools.

Eventually I was called up, for initial training at Aldermaston, one of several preliminary Training Units. Huts, blanket 'biscuits', brass polishing, shoe cleaning, marching, PE—all this is well-known from documentaries, books etc. After, I think, one month, I was sent to Bournemouth to a Pay Corps unit, while awaiting a summons to train for what I'd chosen - Kiné Theodolite. This was a complicated way of trying to account for missed aims of anti-aircraft guns, 4.5s and 3.7s. The Firing Practice Camps in which we worked were all by the sea, of course—Towyn, Aberporth, Anglesey, Wigtonshire and the HQ and Training base was at Manorbier. The course started in late autumn 1940, and after Christmas I was posted to a Practice Camp at Ty Croes, Anglesey. I had my 21st birthday there. My good friend Jean Garwood was also there, and our ATS officer was Elizabeth Clerk-Rattray (with whose family, it turned out, Alfred Kenyon had lived before his parents came to England).

In the summer they came asking for volunteers to train as for a new branch of AA Gunnery—an early form of radar, but then called Fire Control. This consisted of a Transmitter and a Receiver, connected to the guns on an AA site. It still required a Plotting Officer (ATS) and other RA ones in the Command Post, but its great advantage, of course, was its total independence from daylight sightings of aircraft., so back to Manorbier went Jean and I and several others. We had a course there, then one at the Northampton Polytechnic, London. We were billeted in Kensington. This course in elementary electricity and magnetism successfully completed, we moved to Watchet, in Somerset, for another 3 months., and were then passed out as TIFCs (Technical Instructors, Fire Control) qualified to teach ATS girls to man the Receiver cabins on

gunsites. From there, Nan Bower and I were posted to Lytham S Anne's, then I went to sites round Manchester.. No-one knew quite what to do with us, or what rank we should be: but eventually I was made up to Sergeant and sent to a large camp at Devizes, where I assisted an RA captain in training large numbers of girls to be Fire Control operators (or some such name). There I found Alf, who was a PE officer.

I thoroughly enjoyed that posting, but sadly, Devizes closed, and we were sent to the much less enjoyable training centre at Oswestry. However, I did see much of the magnificent countryside of Shropshire and Wales, on my bike, from there.

I had by this time applied to go to OCTU (Officer Cadet Training Unit); I passed the interview and eventually went to the Edinburgh one in the winter of 1942. PJCM was in Edinburgh (stationed with First Anti-Aircraft Division) too, and we saw a bit of one another. OCTU was hard work; but we had afternoons off, and went into Mackie's for most un-wartime-like teas! We lived in some University Halls of Residence called Craigmillars. We had to have our uniforms made before we were quite sure we'd passed, on the understanding that, if we didn't, we wouldn't have to take them up!

I passed out at last, with one pip (2nd Subaltern), my made-to-measure uniform and the privilege of travelling first class on the railway! After a Plotting Officers course in Oswestry, I was posted to 518 (M) Heavy AA Battery, 139 Regiment, on the Humber, protecting Hull. Regimental HQ was at Healing, near Grimsby, Battery HQ in Hull I think, and my Off-site at Barrow-on-Humber, across the river. Before very long the other ATS officer disappeared ('Para. XI', ie pregnancy) and I was the only one for a while. But before long we were moved to Weston Underwood, a site outside Derby.

In January 1943 Paul was killed instantly while cycling near Fowlmere, and Peter and I went to Fowlmere, till the Inquest (which I attended) and funeral were over.

In May the whole battery went to Whitby for Firing Practice, and Peter and I got engaged. I had told him I imagined us married. He wrote to me proposing (June 1 1943), and I replied by telegram: 'Yes. If you wire put 518'. (To distinguish it from other Batteries.) Then he appeared!

We were married at Fowlmere, on 8th September 1943, by Uncle Francis Hughes, assisted by the Rector, O G Bolton (grandfather of James Dyson). After a lovely honeymoon in Borrowdale and Robin Hood's Bay, it was back to Derby/ Notts until, sometime early in 1944, the Battery moved to Caister-on-

Sea, Great Yarmouth. This was the site I probably enjoyed most. At Caister, I really got to know my fellow officers and ATS girls. Audrey Boden (Eckford) and I were there mostly, but sometimes it was Liz Travers and I, while Audrey was at BHQ, which she hated. Our Junior Commander there was Toni Wilder, a New Zealander from Hawkes Bay; but on our site, beside Audrey and me, were Captain George Harper, Bill Ashcroft Hawley, and Jack White—Audrey and Jack remaining friends till their deaths.



We were at Caister for D Day. The enormous American bombers, Flying Fortresses, used to come over in late afternoon, very low, and in very great numbers. We had no means of knowing where our husbands, brothers, fiancés were, whether they had survived or not, for several days—which, of course, was nerve-racking. Wilma's brother was killed during this time in the Far East, I think.

When I was in charge of the ATS on the site one day, a girl called Pottle fell from the radar aerial she was cleaning, and had to be rushed to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital with head injuries. Surprisingly she survived, but I don't think ever fully recovered.

That autumn it was decided that three of our batteries, only, were to go over to take part in the defence of Brussels: and 518, being the most junior, was disbanded. Several of our girls and I were posted to 483 Battery, and in November or December, after a night in a Southampton school, we crossed the Channel to Antwerp, and travelled by lorry to Brussels where, to my huge surprise and delight, Peter turned up—and we were allowed to spend the night together!

Next day we went on to our mainly tented site at Veltem Beyssen, where we spent a cold and muddy winter defending Brussels. German planes flew over us on New Year's Day 1945 (Ardennes offensive). During this time there were once-weekly visits to the Public Baths in malines, about 4 inches of tepid water, then out for the next person!

A ghastly thing happened. Some of our ATS, returning from a dance in an army lorry, were caught on an ungated level crossing by a train. A fellow officer, Joan Liddell, and several ORs (Other Ranks), including ones who had come from 518, were killed outright or died later of burns. We went to their

funeral in the snow at Louvain, and to visit the others in hospital in Liege. Peter and I had several 24 hours together, and a leave in January. I felt a little guilty that, because Peter was due for it, I also had a week's leave at Fowlmere—no-one else in 483 had yet had it, of course. More enjoyable were the occasional weekends at the Wynens' house outside Brussels. (They had befriended Peter and his fellow Camouflage expert at a café in Brussels, and they too remained friends long after the war.)

After a bout in hospital with tonsillitis, I was eventually confirmed 'Para XI' (pregnant), discharged and returned home to the Green to await Simon's arrival, via Hook of Holland and Harwich. Peter was occasionally in the UK, and was in fact on a course on Salisbury Plain when Simon was born at Stella Maris NH, Cambridge, on September 10th 1945.



Paul having been killed in January 1944, there was nothing much to keep the rest of the family in Cambridgeshire, with P and T knowing they'd be in Petersfield. My mother must have begun negotiating for a house in Petersfield (helped by 'Uncle' Arthur Mackarness) during that winter: for in January or February 1946 we all (Gank, the Cuffies, Mary, Simon and I) moved to 7 Weston Road. Gank did a minor conversion, and established herself and Mary upstairs, the Cuffies part up part down, and ourselves ditto. I cooked on a Valour Stove in the tiled entrance passage: there was, I think, only one bathroom, but the Cuffies must have had a downstairs loo, as well as the use of the upstairs one.

Peter was demobbed and returned home, to much rejoicing, in February 1946, and had immediately to prepare for his Law exams, as well as working in the office of Mackarness and Lunt, as an articled clerk. Cuffy helped my mother and me with cooking and cleaning, and Cub became one of the four Hall Porters at HMS Mercury, Leydene—a job for which he was wonderfully fitted. They must have been happy to be so near the Wants, in Portsmouth, although they had left Mac, Hilda, Pam (then about 5) and then Mike in Cambridge.

Mary worked first at Bedales and then at Westmark Camp, doing farming. She was also busy with Gilbert & Sullivan, and amateur dramatics. She then went out to Canada driving Sunday School vans, and first met Al. When she came

back a year later, something went a bit wrong, and she started nursing at St Thomas'. (First at Hydestyle, near Godalming.)

Peter joined the Gilbert and Sullivan, my mother St Peter's Choir and the WVS Hospital Car Service: and thanks to her babysitting, Peter and I were able to join Petersfield Choral Society, conducted by Tim Lane, and accompanied by Mrs Boniface.

I cannot remember just when, but within a year or two, and having attended the Law School at Guildford, Peter passed all his exams—very much to his credit, as we had many broken nights, and hectic days.

In June 1947, Tom was born at a Nursing Home at Hillbrow, and we began to think about moving somewhere a little bigger. Houses were very hard to come by then: but because we were able to buy Sheet Service Station as well as Sheet Farm House next door to it, we were luckier than most people. The rent for the garage (paid by K. Cobham Chadwick) covered the mortgage payments. So we moved in 1948, when Tom was 1, and our quarters were let, first to Dilys and Philip (Admiral) Sharp and Douglas, and later to Derek, Mary and David? Forster. Derek, a submariner, was tragically lost when HMS Affray went down in the English Channel.

My mother, who was a tremendous support to me with the care of the two little boys, bought part of a field above White Cottage (the re-named Sheet Farm House) and, with the help of Frank Childs of E. Canterbury Ltd, build a charming bungalow, 19 London Road, which included a large bed-sit for Mary and her grand piano. No sooner were they installed, however, than Mary went back to Canada to see Al, and returned engaged to him! The wedding was soon: July 1954, at St Peter's, with the reception held in the upstairs Assembly Room of the Red Lion. Tom, who was then at Whitford Hall, Mary Booker's school, was a page, and Kate (born 1950) old enough to attend.—I'm not sure if Libby (born 1952) was there. After a honeymoon here, the newlyweds returned to Beaverlodge, Alberta. Just after that wedding, P and I had our first holiday alone, in the Green Ford Van (in which we slept) to Switzerland. (The kind grandparents looked after the children.)



Simon attended a free Nursery, run by Vida Hine (then Mrs McWilliams), but it closed before he was 5, and could go to Sheet Primary School. Tom and Kate followed him here, but Libby's first school was Downleaze, to which she could go before being 5.

Aunt Virginia Mackarness lent us the money to build on to White Cottage a playroom, cloakroom and two small bedrooms for the boys. After we left, White Cottage was let to Mrs Wilkins from Childs Bookshop, then to Miss Hutson and Miss Lemon (ex M & L). It was sold to Janet and Harry Stapleton, who did much improvement work; and in 1993 they sold to John and Margaret Batstone. (Now Mattingleys.)

At White Cottage, we several times had London children to stay, along with other Petersfield parents: and also university students and army cadets from overseas, for Christmas. Mansur Satchu, the Dankaro brothers (Nigeria) and Keki and Feroza (India) are the ones I specially remember.

We moved to 70 Heath Road in 1957, having rather outgrown even our extended White Cottage. Before long, Gank became (understandably!) lonely, so she came to live in the right hand side of the downstairs of 70 Heath Road, while we kept the Rumpus Room but otherwise lived upstairs. A wooden outside staircase led up to our kitchen/dining room, and a basket on a string conveyed milk etc.

Tom and the two girls were upstairs. When Pe. was born (rather a surprise!) we had a bit divided off from our room for her room and phone room.

Cub died, probably in 1963, and Cuffy almost immediately gave me **invaluable** help in caring for Gank, who was suffering from dementia. Cuffy used to come up to 70 Heath Road nearly every day: and for several months we would drive Gank to



Cuffy's bungalow in The Causeway, to spend the day. We owed her an immense debt of gratitude.

After Gank died, we reclaimed the two big downstairs room, and let the rest first to Miss Ruegg, and then to Helen Tyler. When we finally moved, in 1970, we sold 70 to Mike and Lee Edmonds, who later sold it to Dorothy Colles and Heather Child.

When Pe was 7, at Littlefield after Dunannie, I started a two-year Teacher Training course at King Alfred's, Winchester. Friends made there and kept are Joan Hickman and John Seabrook (who lodged with us for a time).

My first job, in 1969, was part-time in the special unit of Petersfield Secondary Modern School, but I only lasted one term there. That summer term I started at East Meon Primary School, assisting Cath McNair in the Infant Class. I spent over eight years there, very happily, for one year full time in charge of the middle class, and then (because of Andie's accident and the need to be able to drive Ollie over to see her) back to part time, sharing the job with Beth Stevenson. That was changed to a full day at East Meon (top class) and another at Buriton (ditto), but I wasn't enjoying myself, so I retired in 1977. Thereafter, I did a little private coaching, but had no difficulty finding other occupations.

Much happened while we lived at 70 Heath Road, including Patience's birth, Simon's departure for Bristol University and Tom and Andie's wedding. With Simon and the three girls, we then moved down the road, to 54 Heath Road, which we bought from Dr and Mrs Jeffries' executors. This was the only time in my life that I'd had an Aga, and we adored it. We also had a polythene lined swimming pool, which gave great pleasure.

One memorable event at 54 Heath Road was Kate and Richard's wedding, when the marquee blew down during the Reception, after a spell of stormy weather. One guest broke a leg and was hospitalised, and Horace Thorpe suffered concussion. Not funny.

During all these years, Peter took on many jobs: churchwarden at Sheet, founder, with Elsa Bulmer, of Petersfield CAB, Treasurer of the Petersfield Orchestra, member of the Council of St Monica's, Woking (all of which will be in his autobiography). When he eased off at the firm to 3 days a week, he became server at the Holy Communion every Friday. He was for many years a Home Office Prison Visitor at Kingston Prison, Portsmouth, and, when he reached retiring age, became a Chapel Visitor there, as did I and others. Perhaps nearest his heart was Consequences, a charity set up by Shirl Marshall to support the families of offenders.

Since this is *my* autobiography, I ought perhaps to list my interests during those years: Petersfield Choral (60 years), Chairman and later Treasurer of the Handicapped Society (later PSSSN), Gardeners' Club, Friend of the Physic Garden and occasional Warden. Assistant at Maria Affleck Graves' 'The Spice of Life' health food shop.

The garden at 54 Heath Road took quite a bit of time, as did that at 8 Herne Road, to which we moved in 1988, shortly before Libby died. (She saw it when we'd just bought it, but not with our furniture and belongings in. We bought it from Maurice Garner as his mother was in a home, and she died soon afterwards.)

Marian Ellis, Daphne Coxon and I used to meet every Thursday morning for over 40 years; sadly both now dead, but Marian some years after Daphne.

After stopping teaching in 1977, I started on an Open University course. One then had to do two Foundation Courses; so I did Social Sciences and Arts. Both required week-long Summer Schools, at Keele and Warwick respectively. The next one was a Level 3 course and very hard, the C19th Novel and its Legacy, for which I only got a 3rd. (I did that one because Ruth Conybeare also wanted to do it: otherwise I'd have chosen a Level 2 course.)

For one of my later courses I went to York for Summer School, but am not sure which. Next, I think, was the C17th historical course, very enjoyable, my tutor being Liz Saxon, a friend of Jenny Sandys, it turned out. The political and religious aspects of that century were particularly confusing: but the architecture was **lovely**: Wren, Chiswick, Burford, Inigo Jones, the Cromwellian chapel at Littlecote: P and I had many happy outings to see churches and houses. After that, I did several courses with Mavis, all on C15th, then C14th church art. (The C14th course wasn't available until we'd finished the C15th one!) Our tutor was Rosemary Baird, which whom Mavis had already done one course, and with her, two other tutors and several students we went on a week's course to Florence with the OU Travel Service—marvellous. We may also have visited Siena and San Gimignano that time—or it could have been later. On that trip we became friends with Florence Pilkington, whom we later visited at Newark, and with whom we still exchange Christmas cards! Mavis had previously done 'The Enlightenment', so had now probably completed her requisite number of courses for an Honours Degree; while I needed one more for an Ordinary, and another for an Honours. Mavis and I went on a Prospect tour to Umbria and 'The Marche,' for Urbino, Perugia, Orvieto and other lovely places; and later she, Delphine and I had a week in Rome, in the autumn, when we were still able to eat outside on many

occasions. The Vatican Raphaels, Sistine Chapel of course, several churches, Baths of Caracalla, Ostia and one site near which we had a meal with Sheena (Cameron) were especially memorable.

I then did my last Ordinary Degree course—tough but interesting, about Politics and Religion in Siena, Florence and Padua (quite different) - after which we went to a degree Ceremony at Brighton. Libby and Paul came; but she had just begun to get her jaundice back, and before long was back at the Hammersmith and then home before her death in October.

I now needed 2½ 30-point courses or 1 60-point one to upgrade to Honours: so did one more Italian Art (exam in PFC ground, Fratton) and finally Continuing Latin, with Dr Watson who taught at PHS, and tutorials and Basingstoke for which I had lifts with a new friend, Bunty. The exam for that was at Southampton FC ground! I finally emerged from many years' study with a 2:1 Honours Degree!

Holidays

We had some wonderful ones on the Continent: first tent, then Trailer Tent, finally Caravan, in Venice, Rapallo, Rhine, Dordogne, Austria etc. When the (then 4) children were small, we twice hired a bungalow outside St Agnes, Cornwall, helped first by Josephine Kiddle, then by a Sheet girl. Our very first package holiday was with Patience to Agios Nicolaos, Crete, and Rhodes.

In 1987 I had a mastectomy, with 3-month, 6-month and then annual checkups. I didn't need radio- or chemo-therapy.

(Written in 1992)

I thought it might be amusing to record all the (rather trivial) things I do, which together take so much time:

Ongoing: addressing and delivering or posting, birthday cards to about 200 members of our Blind Club (stopped 2004)

Keeping the accounts of the Mission Committee of St Peter's (stopped 1995)

Keeping the brass in the vestry polished (stopped?)

Having Andie to stay Saturday night, every 4th week (also every Tues. pm, and most of Sundays – this of course shared with P)

Monthly: Making the tea or coffee for a great many young mums and babies in St Peter's Hall. Joined Insight in 94, so gave up the Monday coffees. Changed to 15 Oaklands Road in 94, then 40 Rushes Road.

Taking two ladies to the Blind Club (stopped 99) and helping there (stopped)

Twice: Sitting in the hospital as receptionist for the Counselling Service – showing clients in. (Stopped since 95)

Twice: Going to practices of the new, secondary, morning Choir (discontinued)

Weekly: Having Andie for Tuesday pm.

Ringling handbells (and performing when required) (stopped)

Petersfield Choral Society (stopped 2006, after 60 Festivals!) and Thursday Singers (only for 1 year)

2005 on – about monthly (with Mary Snuggs), hospital flowers (existing ones), Rowan and Cedar wards.

From 1990s on – selling mint stamps for Sudan Christian Association. All Lend and Friendship Lunches, Christian Aid dos, and privately.

Up to 2005 – occasional visits to Frews and Jessie Tidman.

2005 – 1 hour per week at Petersfield Infants School, hearing 5-year-olds read. Miss Gowlett's Rabbits.

For years! P and I visited Peta Coxon in St Peter's Court every other Monday 5.30 pm, for whisky and sherry.

Chronological highlights

1993 was a memorable year. The Carders said they were all coming over for our Golden Wedding, and we arranged for them to take Jenny Sandys' house (she had her hip operation on June 22). On June 30 P and I met the Joneses and on July 18 we all went to Les Bruyeres, including Jess (Portsmouth-Caen overnight with cabins). We three returned on July 28th. On August 19th Jones' arrived back before P and I left for Gatwick. Ken and Doreen were also there, to meet all the Carders except Judith. They picked up a Carlton, and I navigated Mary home by way of M23, M25 and A3. On August 28th they met Judith at Heathrow (from Mexico via Paris) and also had Paul for the weekend so that all 23 of the family were together for the great Golden Celebration Meal on

Bank Holiday Monday, August 30th. Organised by Di, Kate, Carders and the men, it took place at The High House at lunchtime.

<i>Al Carder</i>	<i>Simon Mackarness</i>	<i>Tom Mackarness</i>
<i>Mary Carder</i>	<i>Di Mackarness</i>	<i>Andie Mackarness</i>
<i>Judith Carder</i>	<i>Louise Mackarness</i>	
<i>Mary-Clare Carder</i>	<i>Daniel Mackarness</i>	
<i>Andrew Carder</i>		

<i>Richard Perry</i>	<i>Eric Jones</i>	<i>Paul Mathias</i>
<i>Kate Perry</i>	<i>Pe. Mackarness</i>	
<i>Jess Perry</i>	<i>Helen Jones</i>	
<i>Laura Perry</i>	<i>Ben Jones</i>	
<i>Susannah Perry</i>		<i>and P and I.</i>

We had a wonderful lunch, many games of soft tennis took place, and some swims. At teatime, Judith gave some brilliantly-coloured Mexican blankets, including one specially made for us with our names on; and M-C distributed some very acceptable gifts from Canada. Weather was perfect, many photos were taken, and it was altogether a wonderful day.

On the actual day, September 8, and for the three succeeding days, we had parties at 8 Herne Road, for just under 200 people. (All recorded in album made by A and E Stevens). The food was excellently supplied by June Carlyle-Scott; and it would all have been most enjoyable but for the illness of Di and Susannah.

After all had gone back, P and T had a celebratory trip to Syria with Jules Verne.

1994

January – Pe and Helen came for a week. April – P and T, Tom and Andie to Carvynick, joined by Paul for a few days. July – Jones' new sleeping arrangements: P in caravan, T in garage. (The addition of the Utility Room in early 1993 made the garage comfortable, with carpet, curtain, wardrobe, chest and bed.) P, T and Laura to Les Bruyeres, after Booker weddings etc, and back with Jones.

Richard Mackarness' health giving cause for anxiety, P and T arranged a 23-day trip to Australia, but P went a fortnight early, to support Patrick. P and T met in Perth for a 2-day stay; a week at Mount Martha, 3 days in Adelaide, 3 outside Brisbane with Andersons, and 3-4 days back at Mount Martha. Flight home 8

hours to Singapore, 1½ hours wait, 13 hours on.

Autumn 1994 – slight discomfort with eating turned out to be a cancerous growth on the oesophagus; and after several postponements, I had this ‘large and dangerous operation’ (surgeon’s words) performed by Mr P Weaver on January 5th 1995. Because of needing Intensive Care (which caused the delays), it was done in Queen Alexandra Hospital, where I had a private (but very noisy) room. Several delightful female chaplains visited me, as well as the family, and I had a flood of flowers and cards. I was walking as soon as all tubes but one were removed, and came home a fortnight after the operation.

It was to take six months to get over, and the first few weeks were tough, trying to replace the lost weight. PJCM was a marvellous nurse and cook, but I was soon glad to take over some of the cooking. People came for short visits; I walked a bit every day, joined the other Oldies at the Friday communion, and rested after lunch. In March I was allowed to drive and cycle; and at the first checkup after 7 weeks, Mr Weaver was satisfied with my weight and progress (8 stone, which was what I’d been before the op – but previously 9 ¾ stone). Light gardening was allowed, and I did a lot of reading.

(1998 – still needing to eat Little and Often, weight constant at 8 stone, dizziness in the mornings and occasionally at other times. Some discomfort, though during 98 the right ear soreness (due to Vagus nerve having had to be cut) disappeared.)

In March 1995, the large hawthorn hedge in the field was breached in several places and then cut much lower – presumably for Kebbells to run roads etc through. We can now see many more houses at Herne Farm than we could! Things moved fairly slowly on this front through 96 and 97, but in the first half of 98, much building material appeared on the Bepton Down side of the hedge, several new houses and a transverse road were built. Our escallonia hedge, though thin in places, is gradually thickening up, and will be allowed to grow a bit taller next year. Great burst of activity May, June – on field getting smaller all the time, a new road more or less to the hedge appeared.

1995

Simon’s 50th celebrations at Sheet Village Hall.

Our holidays:

April	Carvynick
November	Nile Cruise with NJV (£295!)

1996

Golden weddings for: Zygadlos (broni died in '97), Pennys, Mattinglys, Ellises, Eckfords

1997

Jones here Jan/Feb
P+T to Hammamet for a week

April – Carvynick
August – Les Bruyeres

November – City Break, 3 nights in Bologna. Visits to Padova and Ravenna.

1998

Our holidays:

February – Bahrain

February – Bena Vista, nr Estepona (HPB) for 2 weeks

April – Carvynick

May and July 1998 – Andie and Di both had 50th birthday celebrations, A at home, and Di in the Avenue Pavilion.

August – Les Bruyeres with Jones.

St Peter's closed for Reordering: C Lowson became Archdeacon. Walker Wingsail went into liquidation.

The Jones resigned their jobs in Bahrain in June 98, and stayed at Les Bruyeres until Christmas, with a Trailer Tent trip to Italy in September. They used Croydon houses in Oxford and Bath, and visited various friends. Bringing the loaded TT down from North Wales (after they'd bought 38 South Bank Road, Liverpool 7), they were smashed into by a lorry, car and TT written off. The Dewhursts gave them a Datsun Bluebird, and they got another second hand TT.

In April, coming down the M6 again, another Polish lorry wrote off the Bluebird. Neither time were they injured, which was a miracle.

They have decided to stay in Liverpool at least for a year. The rest of the story is theirs.

We visited them in May, staying at Runcorn/Warrington Post House, then saw them again at Braithwaite HPB in June. Visited Beatrix Potter's cottage, Ravenglass-Eskdale Railway, etc with them, and P and I visited Normal Leach at Haveerigg and our friend from Madeira, Hilary Gatenby at her bungalow high above Ambleside.

Daniel, Kate and Susannah have also visited the Jones. Helen and Ben started at Northway School in September.

One day in the late 1990s, when I was at home at Herne Road, someone rang from the Mackarness & Lunt office asking if I remembered Private Winkworth! Of course I did, and shortly Jessie and her husband ? Denby were having tea with us. They had been on an outing from their home in Chandlers Ford, when they passed the office, and Jessie remembered the name! We've been in touch occasionally since, and P and I had tea with them at Chandlers Ford once. But, sadly, Mr Denby died fairly soon, so that poor Jessie's two happy marriages both ended in premature deaths.

1999

Holiday at The Swan, Lavenham, in order to see Jess (Norwich), Anne Coxon, D Inglis (Bury St Edmunds) and Pam Bickerton (Whepstead). Santa Isabel, Funchal, VJV, for 1 week.

Peter's 80th Birthday Celebrations

Started with Peg and Eleanor entertaining us for lunch at The Bear, Hungerford, the week before. While there, we heard Laura and Louise's good A level results. On the day, 25 8 99, lots of local friends came in, to eats by Kate and Di, and cakes by June Carlyle-Scott. Greyish, but fine, so that when Janet St. arrived in her wheelchair we could sit outside and chat.

28 8 99 was Relations and Closest Friends day (without the Ellinghams, as John had died very suddenly the week before). Ron Granger came again, and also Ursula Everett and her twin Hugh Foster (flown in from BC that day). It was so hot that we had to retreat to Under the Apple Tree!

The next big happening in 1999 was Mary Carder's visit, October 5th – fetched by Tom from Heathrow, she didn't go away at all, because of a suspect leg –

her friends came here: the Jones for two nights (with the Perrys), Daphne Masterton for three (with Stephens), St Thomas' friends one day, SMC ones another; Moppy Smith, and the Newtons here; and a pub lunch with Josephine Kiddle. On 21 October, Simon took us both to Heathrow, and didn't need to park, as I went in with her. She had (we think) misread the 24-hour clock, and arrived two hours late! But as the plane was delayed one and a half hours, she got on! – talk about Guardian Angels! She saw the newly-restored St Peters (first service on October 3rd: Giles' Induction end of October).

As well as John Ellingham, Maurice le Blancq died, and Christmas cards brought news of the deaths of George Bugden and Ralph Denby (Pte Winkworth's husband).

The Jones came for Christmas, and house-sat 31 Tilmore Gardens while Ollie was in Scotland. They all spent New Millennium's Eve with us and Andie, and all but Ben stayed awake till midnight!

Sally Hickman continued to clean for us every Monday morning, despite many family worries.

2000

Paul's engagement to Jan Tudor in January gave us a great deal of pleasure.

The Kebbell development moved much nearer, and a small mountain range appeared beyond our fence, excavations from roads and services we think. It will go back later, we imagine.

April 2000 – my 80th birthday. We kept open house all day, and 76 people came, and four (who were off to China) a few days previously – so that made an appropriate number!

In May or June, ? Marston (Harry Roberts' great-grandson) planted up the 15ft 'Cordon Sanitaire' on Kebbells' behalf, with trees and shrubs. A horrific crop of weeds grew up between them including the dreaded Japanese Knotweed, which was spotted by Jonathan Bailey.

In August, the foundations for the nearest house to us were built, and Kebbells blocked off both ends of Herne Road, which then became a contractors' yard.

The Jones came for a week at Christmas, sleeping and breakfasting in Ollie's house, as before. They were delighted to get a snowfall which lasted, and made

snow-dog, -cat and –dinosaur here.

2001-January—3 houses very near us are nearly (outwardly) finished, and in July, Karen and Jeremy Kay, with Sebastian, aged 18 months, moved in. After a slight misunderstanding re. a TPO on the new trees, between Kebbell and the Council, we got on well with them, and later, in mid-September, saw their Ben, aged 8 days.

In March/April P and T spent a week in Brussels, where we met the remaining members of the Wynen family, who were so good to P in the war. Andre and his wife at ? beside the Meuse, and the widow of Jean. (Nichole we have seen from time to time in England, and we visited once, on our way to the Rhine with Judith Carder.)

Carvynick was, as usual, in late April with viits to the Baileys and the Eden Project, Chapel Portth and Truro. P and Tom had short games of golf, and the Fox's Revenge provided some agreeable suppers. The cold at that time of year, and our increasing age, led us to change from April to September, and from No. 28 to a big bungalow near T and A's, from 2002.

Mary Le Blancq and Dickie Parsons had become engaged in December, but we had several 'What Larks!' outings through the spring and summer, with Mary—Loseley, Hinton Ampner, the Vyne, Grey's cottage at Itchen Abbas, Church Norton and West Dean Gardens, Polesden Lacey among them. (Some may have been in 2000, autumn and summer.) They were married on August 25th, in a packed St Peter's, with P giving Mary away, and Tom driving them in his blue Daimler.

Tom took Ollie and Andie to Luton on Friday August 31st, for their annual visit to Evie; Ollie looking frail (and with advancing Alzheimers) and Andie well. But when I returned from Choral on September 6th, I found Evie had been trying to contact Tom, as Andie had become unconscious during the evening. He drove up through the night, was told she had had either a brain haemorrhage, or seizure due to her original brain damage. She never regained consciousness, and mercifully died on the morning of Saturday September 8th.

Letters poured in; the cremation was in Scotland, with a Service of Thanksgiving in St Peter's on September 21st.

Marian Ellis had not been looking well for some time, and in June was diagnosed as having inoperable cancer of the pancreas. She lost a great deal of weight, became tired very quickly, and by September was unable to eat anything. But the most distressing thing was to see the pain she had about the

shoulders and back of her neck. I saw her on Thursday September 10th; on the 20th she wasn't well enough, and on Saturday 22nd we got a message to say she wasn't expected to live through the night, and she died on 22nd or 23rd. Clive asked to see us early the next week to tell us he'd like us to be the only non-family mourners at the cremation at Chichester. This was on Thursday 27th, just a fortnight since my last visit; and because I had my leg place cut out later that morning I didn't join P at the Thanksgiving service in St Mary's Sheet. Both services were beautifully conducted by Chris Peal.

Marian and I had been meeting regularly, mostly on Thursdays, for nearly 50 years, with Daphne till her death, and then just with each other.

Mary le Blancq and I met most Tuesdays, and some Fridays (at Brewers) till her death in January 2005.

2003

Diamond Wedding in September, for which Mary and Judith Carder came. Hot, dry weather. photos in album. Windowed marquee provided by ?

Judith with Perrys, Mary with us: Jones slept in marquee!

3 days Open House, 'Diamond Fizz' and nibbles. Collections for CQ and Ghan Agona Swedru. (200 altogether?) 1 day's rest, then a SMC mini-reunion, bigger than usual because of marquee.

The family gave us 10 days in Sorrento as a present, whence we visited Pompeii twice, Oplontis, Herculaneum, Naples Museum and Capri.

Weddings of Jess and Mark, Laura and Hilmar are recorded elsewhere, by their own families. Also 1st and 2nd degrees for Jess, Laura, Louise, Daniel and Silver Weddings for Andie and Tom, Richard and Kate.

9 Cremorne Place (written in November 2011)

In July or August 2010, after I'd decided to sell the bungalow, miss out on another house, and try for a Retirement Home, Jane and David Burstall came, at their request, to look at 8 Herne Road. They were then homeless, and lodging with Joy Clarke at Restalls, Steep, till the house they were buying became vacant. The bungalow was too small for them; but they said Joy Clarke's daughter-in-law's mother, Mrs Arblaster, had moved out of her Cremorne Place flat, which was for sale, they thought. David B found out the

details, and rang me the next day, Sunday; the flat was to go onto Henry Adams' list on Monday. Tom secured me the first viewing on Monday morning. Rosemary Swan had already shown me Joan Swan's flat, and I liked the feel of the place, and the flat in itself: but the living room did not have the south or south-west aspect I wanted. No. 9 had the main bedroom facing east, and view to the Downs towards Harting and ensuite bathroom; kitchen window due South but little view; living room and second bedroom west. There was also a shower and loo, and a spacious hall. I was able to say Yes immediately (provided H Adams could sell the bungalow). 8 Herne Road sold for £450,000, 9 Cremorne Place cost £225,000 (with maintenance charges of £2,000 p.a.)

I received much help for everyone, and moved on 5th October 2010. Existing carpets, decorations etc were tolerable, all except the violently-papered walls in the two bedrooms, which Graham and Colin Read soon painted over! In due course, I had new carpets for Living and both bedrooms, keeping the practical hall and passage ones. The living room was a little small, but the hall helped, as did the small bedroom, once Daniel and Erin had removed the spare beds to their new house. (I bought a zedbed-type, and three thick connected poufs for the floor, when both Jones brothers overnighted on their way to or from Les Bruyeres via the Portsmouth ferry.)

2011—Life in Cremorne Place

There are 28 dwellings, 10 in my building, 18 in the bigger one, and 2 in what looks like a house on College Street. Marjorie Pottington has been here from when the place was built—15 years, but everyone else came later, and only Audrey Clarke and Joan are Petersfield residents.

We do our own washing, food buying and cooking, and are responsible for the interior of the flats: stairs, passages and garden are maintained by Hadrian, the company which manages the place. (The rubbish bin area has been inadequate during 2010 and 2011!) We are on our third Development Secretary now in November 2011—Maureen, Sue and now Beverley.

I have two Meals on Wheels per week—one hot, one frozen—£3.30 each, and pleasant, if unexciting. Occasionally I get a supply from Cooks at Midhurst, but more often from Waitrose or Marks & Spencer. The latter's 2 for £10 are admirable, and the wine helps with my stock. The Sunday and lunch rota continues: S + D 1st, I 2nd, Tome 3rd, I to Perrys on 4th and when they're not on the boat; and on weekdays there's usually one or more lunches out—Evangeline, Delphine, the OU group, Ewings, Brian Robinson, and others. Most days I walk to Waitrose, library, church, charity shops etc—and to Perrys and Tom's when Sunday lunch is there.

Sally Hickman comes for an hour on Monday and an hour on Wednesday—and keeps the flat sparkling!

The Sudan Church stamps operation will be handed over to Chris Tully after Christmas, as my Macular Degeneration in left eye makes it difficult for me to see the denominations of stamps. I support Mission Support Group, Friends of Petersfield Hospital, Mothers Union etc. Macmillan Coffee Mornings when possible, and attend Physic Garden and Petersfield Society ditto. What a boring life it sounds! - but much enlivened with help and visits from family, including Emily, Lucy and Sophie.

Patience comes down for 2 nights nearly every month and, as mentioned before, Eric and David often sleep over on their way to or from the ferry.

I find myself much better off than I've ever been (perhaps the £450,000/£225,000 homes), which has enabled me to give something to many projects I'd have like to help before, but didn't seem to have the money! I would love to hand more over to children and grandchildren, but feel I must keep a good cushion for possible Nursing Home fees in the future.

As the Sunday 9.30 Holy Communion is too early for me nowadays, I go across to the lounge on Wednesdays for the shortened service (Joy E, Gill H, bill G, Shirley Pickup, Wendy Gillum take it, and occasionally Will Hughes). On Fridays I go to St Peter's at 11, where we are usually about 12, with Peggy Roberts and Geraldine M. Hoare on duty. Some may go because they prefer the 1662 Prayer Book. I only go then because of the timing.

2013—Life as a Nonagenarian!

I am extremely fortunate to have full use of all 4 limbs, a pretty good memory, hearing much helped by aids, and sight kept reasonably good by 3 Lucentis injections, followed by monthly check-ups at Arnolds.

I can walk to Simon's, Tom's and Kate's—though from the latter 2 I welcome a lift home.

I have my Kindle for reading and watch far more TV than I used to with Peter, and time needed for the garden. My 3 greatest friends, Prue Zygadlo, Marian Eliis, and Mary le Blanc are all dead: Sue Rotherham, Mickey Mattingly, Delphine still here: also, later friends such as Jo Frew, Evangeline, Sue Upton and many more: and of course I have the very great fortune to see Simon, Tom and Kate every week, and Patience nearly once a month. I love visits from Jess

and Lucy, Laura, Emily and Sophie, Mark and Hilmar when free, Susannah and Andy, Louise, Steve and Ellen, Daniel, Erin and Joel, and the two young Joneses and partners. Patience and Eric sometimes both come, also David and Eric—but my little spare room is adequate for short stays!

Sally comes twice a week and keeps the flat sparkling; and Helen the Hair about once a week.

I visit Averil Davis (with Motor Neurone Disease) and my neighbour Eileen Thomas; see Ebba Fryer, Marie Macmillan and Marjorie Pottington sometimes, and Jo Frew often.

2014

Sister Giles, known to me by name as a friend of Sheila Harper and Mary le Blancq) came to live in The Spain in 2013, and joined our Bell Hill Ridge group. A set of amazing coincidences emerged:

1. The Foreword to her book 'The End and the Beginning' is by Iona Wake Walker.
2. When her mother became a Catholic, Lorna Wishart (née Garman) was her sponsor. (Kate and I are both reading 'The Rare and the Beautiful' - lives of the Garmans.)
3. I remembered that Lisbet Blackwayt, 2 or 3 years above me at St Mary's Calne, had become a Catholic nun near Arundel. She turned out to have been Sister Giles' Novice Mistress, to whom she was deeply devoted!
4. Because of the talks she gives to Parliamentary Wives, she became acquainted with, and then a close friend of, Catharine Sandford! What next? The Meals on Wheels, once delivered by friendly volunteers, with the accounts being done by Biddy Turner, was taken over by Apetito employees, always late, and unable to supply the frozen meals. So I gave them up, and have occasional Oak Farmhouse ones.

Since the Hauers moved to Hillbrow Road Liss on August 13th 2014, and Emily started at Petersfield Infants, they come to tea with me after school on every other Wednesday, and sometimes Ellen joins us with her mother or grandfather. The old Penguins and Puppies are still popular.

The Girls Who Went To War

Some time in **2014**, Duncan Barrett and Nuala Calvi, researching for their book *The Girls Who Went To War*, came to see me, having been given my name by 'Thrine Avent, an ex-WRN.

I told them all I could, but mine was a slightly ‘bitty’ ATS career, as I was first a Kine-theodolite operator, then a rader instructor, before going to OCTU and joining 518 Battery, as a Plotting Officer. However, I gave them Jessie Denby’s name and number, and they paid her numerous visits—with the excellent results you see in the book. All the ATS chapters are labelled ‘Jessie’; she gives a very thorough account of 518 (and later 483) ?MHA Battery.

I joined them at Barrow-on-Humber (first mentioned on p99) in 1942, when the bombing raids on Hull were mostly over: then moved to Weston Underwood, Derby, from which I went on Marriage Leave in September ‘43: back to Weston Underwood, or another site in the Derby/Nottingham defence ring; then to Caister-on-Sea, the off-site of the Gorleston BHQ (p195).

I was the only ATS on duty at Caister when Corporal Pottle fell off the aerial she was cleaning (p197); and I visited her a few times in the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital—from which few people expected her ever to emerge.

D Day came, and for a few days there was no news from PJCM: we all went to a special service in the damaged Yarmouth Parish Church; and before long, good news began arriving, and later, every teatime, enormous V5 Flying Fortresses used to fly over site, very low, on their way to assist in the Allied advance.

Like Jessie, I was posted to 483 Battery when 518 was disbanded (p230): and crossed from Southampton to Ostend, and thence by truck to Brussels, where PJCM showed up!

I think my place—the site on which we were eventually settled—was called Veltem Beyssen, but the conditions were much like hers at Winksele Delle (p234) - bath once a week in Public Baths in Malines, Ablutions under Canvas!

(p239) New Year’s Day 1945—Operation Baseplate bombers flew over us veryfast, and very low: and there was talk of us ATS being evacuated to UK if things got worse. I think it was the Ardennes Offensive (p240). In the level crossing accident, one of my fellow-officers in 483 was killed, at least one ex 518 ATS: and several more very badly injured, in hospital in Louvain, where I visited them.

Close Petersfield friends

Marian Ellis (died 2000, 22/23 July)
Delphine Olphert

Mary le Blancq (died 2005, January)
 Mickey Mattingley
 Mavis Snowden

It might be interesting for people to know where my non-Petersfield friends came from.

Eastbourne—1930-39 D Corbett (died 95)

St Mary's Calne—1933-39 Prue Zygadlo

Sue Dudley Smith
 Margaret Brockway
 Anne Eggar
 Martie Monk (d)
 Joan Bennett
 Margaret Thorpe
 Sue Rotherham
 Collette Fairfield
 Heather Dillon
 Helen Lefroy
 Alice Dyson

Staff Margaret While (d.)
 Phyllis Evans (d.)
 Dorothea Inglis
 Nina Morrison

Oxford 1939-40 Alison Smith (d.)
 Rosemary Bailey (d.)
 Thrine Avent
 John Dancy
 Alfred Kenyon (d.)
 Lillas Murray (d.)
 Mary Kirkman

Army 1940-45 Jack While (d. 1997)
 Audrey Eckford
 Wilma Cranston

King Alfred's 1967-9 Joan Hickman
 John Seabrook

Open University 1977 –86 Florence Pilkington

Past inhabitants of Petersfield: Joan Morris
 Hazel Rogers (and Michael—died 2003 or 4)
 Priscilla Goodfield
 The Andersons (Brisbane)
 The Leggs (Clayton)
 Pauline Morrell
 The Longs (Rosalind died)
 Linn Buss, Chicago, who stayed with us
 several times. Died of pancreatic cancer
 2.98.