

IVY RAINBOW

Ivy Rainbow (née Gregory) was born and has lived all her life in the village. Many of us remember Ivy – the pleasant milk lady with that characteristic deliberate paced walk carrying the milk bottles for delivery. Together with her husband Frank, daughter Suzanne and son Tony, the Rainbows delivered milk to our doorstep regularly seven days a week.

Ivy and Frank were married in 1941, Frank being the maintenance man for Robins of Kidlington Hall; this gives you the understanding why their property is kept in good repair.

Ivy took over the dairy business from her aunt, Elsie Hore in 1956. Since a very early age Ivy delivered milk for her aunt with a yoke and small pint cans suspended from it. At that time these cans were emptied into the jugs left on the doorstep or the jug in the pantry.

The New Street Dairy was the old Farm House down from the Manor House close to the Salvation Army Barracks; up the side entrance and behind the house were the cowsheds where Jersey cows were kept and milked by hand. During the summer the cows walked down the Oxford Road twice a day to the grazing fields in Chapman's Lane. It was while bringing in a load of hay that Ivy's uncle, Theodore Hore, fell off the load and broke his neck. Elsie Hore carried on the milk business with the help of her three men – Bill Wheeler, Cyril Clarke and Jeff Butler (late of the butchers).



Mr and Mrs Hore, 1924

As time went on Mrs Hore was quite keen for Jeff to take over the business, but this he did not do and she was pleased that her niece, Ivy, accepted the offer and that the business was kept in the family.

The cows were sold and Fairview Dairies in St Thomas Street was formed – this was a big step for the Rainbows. They had no problems with the planning authorities, the chief difficulty was conveyance of the milk crates through the village. At first the Hore's old tractor and cart were used, but the age of the vehicle was a handicap. True to type, the Deddington people reacted and a good Samaritan, Mr Course, allowed his bread van to be used in the morning for milk delivery and then he took over the van to deliver his bread in the afternoon. The bulk delivery of bottled milk in crates by United Dairies, Banbury, to Fairview Dairies was made at 5am and here Ivy remarked she had no complaints from the neighbours. Tony and Suzanne had to get permission from the school authorities to help their mother and father with the early morning deliveries before they went to school. Each had a bicycle with a fixed crate on the front containing 12 pints.

Ivy and Frank, with nostalgia, and remembering the tired job of delivering milk daily and in all weathers, repeated how friendly and kind people were: 'come in and have a cup of tea on this cold morning', or 'sit down and warm yourself', but generally it was a fuse had gone, can you read the electric meter for me, can you please take a message, please could you phone, etc.

The Rainbows were often asked by the Police when carrying out their investigations if they had seen anything out of the ordinary on their rounds. They were often concerned when someone hadn't fetched in yesterday's milk, this caused them great concern at times and on a few occasions resulted in tragic happenings. One of the irritations Ivy reports were the naughty boys going round in the evening altering the milk disc and changing 1 pint to 5 pints, resulting in a quandary as to whether they really wanted 5 for visitors or some other reason.

The shop was open six days a week closing at 9pm and they had numerous callers from far afield calling just before closing time. On Sundays they closed at 9.30am and they all went off to Billing Aquadrome for the day during the summer months they had a caravan and enjoyed a complete rest.

The Rainbows delivered milk every day without a break for 17 years – never having a day off – here the Rainbows commented that it is now much easier when delivering milk in Deddington due to the street lighting, in their day it was necessary to carry a good torch.

Tony and Suzanne left the business and that was the chief cause for Ivy and Frank to retire in 1973. Suzanne is still with us in Deddington and has three children. Ivy and Frank have five grandchildren.

Deddington people remember the Rainbows with respect and for their service to the village. The Rainbows remember their customers and are proud of their many letters they received when they retired and especially the candelabra from the residents of St John's Way, Hempton, a clock from the residents of The Paddocks, Windmill Street and Hempton Road area and Suzanne was given some blankets and towels from the Hempton Road area folk as she was shortly getting married.

Bill Marshall

SUZANNE RICHARDSON (1945–2011)

Sue was born in Deddington in 1945, joining brother Tony as the second child of Ivy and Sam Rainbow. She went to school in the village and from an early age was involved with her parents' milk round. She worked for a while at Banbury Buildings at Adderbury, packing greenhouses for despatch. She met Paul in the British Legion Club in Deddington and they married in the Parish Church in 1975. They began married life in Middleton Cheney where Mark was born, but soon moved back to Deddington, to Tawny Cottage in the High Street, and Rachel and Linda joined the family.

Sue became a dinner lady and general helper-out at Deddington Primary School, a job she did for 18 years and which she greatly enjoyed. Later on she helped look after the offices of Philip Allan Updates.

Sue was house-proud, and following a strict and strenuous routine of housework gave her much satisfaction. Her brasses, particularly the kettles, were her pride and joy and the collection took a lot of cleaning and polishing. Enjoying company, Sue offered open house to Paul's workmates and was an important part of the British Legion community. She enjoyed seaside holidays but was always pleased to get back to Deddington. Deeply rooted in the village, born in it, working for it, knowing its long-standing families across several generations, Sue was of the essence of Deddington and will be greatly missed in her community.

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