

ROBERT (BOB) STEVENS (1921–2004)

Robert was born on 5 May 1921. He would joke, 'as my birthplace was Paradise, Banbury, if I never make it, I've already been'. At Banbury School he won the *Victor Ludorum*, and played rugby for Banbury RUFC, becoming its President in 1966. An enthusiastic spectator, he went to Twickenham for England matches and even to Paris a few years ago for a World Sevens event. As a King's Scout, he lined the route in London at the coronation of George VI in 1937. Bob served in the Royal Air Force during the Second War. As a Special Constable he was present in Bladon Churchyard at the burial of Winston Churchill.

After working for Barclays Bank, he became a teacher, first at Banbury, followed by the Windmill Secondary Modern, and finally retiring from the Warriner School, having served there as Deputy Headmaster and also Headmaster, respected as 'strict but fair'.

He made significant contributions to Deddington life in the Rifle Club, as a Royal British Legion trustee, a Feoffee, and Chairman of the Parish Council on which he served for over 20 years. He was once reprimanded by an old Deddingtonian 'It's a town my boy, not a village!'

Bob's garden was a pride and joy. Having often spent every daylight hour there he was told, 'it's a lovely garden to sit in' his rejoinder being, 'when do I have time to sit in it?' Bob died at Katharine House Hospice on 29 September.

David John

JOSEPHINE MARGARET STEVENS (NÉE WEST) 1927–2014



Josephine (José) Stevens died peacefully on 12 February at the age of 86 following a major stroke several days earlier. She was born on 9 August 1927 at the Red Lion, Deddington, the eldest of Charles and Gertrude West's three daughters, and continued to live in the village to which she was so proud to belong for all of her life.

José attended Holcombe House School and then went on to Banbury County School. On leaving there she trained as a shorthand typist and bookkeeper, securing employment as secretary to the RAF at Hopcrofts Holt.

She then became manager at Deddington Requisites and subsequently worked at the Holcombe Hotel, both businesses being founded by her parents. On New Year's Eve 1949, José married Bob Stevens, a teacher at Deddington's Windmill Secondary School and later at the Warriner, enjoying 54 happy years together.

Deddington Church was very important to José: she was christened and married there; helped as a Sunday School teacher; was church warden and member of the PCC; and remained thoroughly involved with both worship and social aspects including stalwart membership of the kitchen team.

But she also contributed significantly to other areas of local life. José was a teaching assistant at Bloxham Primary School and served as both governor and governors' secretary at Deddington Primary School. She helped at the Health Centre's Baby Clinic and organised Meals on Wheels for 20 years. She was also elected as a Parish Councillor. After Bob's death she fundraised for Katharine House Hospice and latterly made a strong contribution to the Parish at War project.

However, above all else, José was always devoted to family: as daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother, to all of which roles she brought so much love and happiness.

Charlie and Gill Stevens