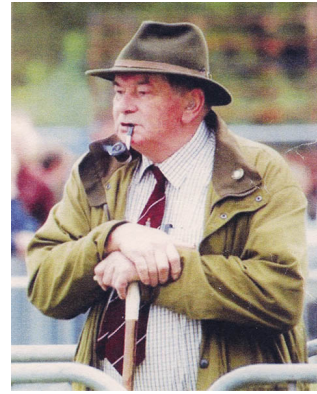


George Fenemore 1946-2022

George Edward Fenemore was born on 12 August 1946, the third child of George and Kathleen Fenemore and brother to Margaret, Ruth, John and his baby sister, Fiona. He spent a happy childhood on the family farm at Warkworth and farming ran through his blood.



Hand in hand with his love of farming came his passion for the countryside, spending his pocket money on the Observer books that founded his immense knowledge of birds, insects and plants. He went to Overthorpe Hall School which he regarded as an unnecessary evil that took him off the farm. As a young man he developed a love of riding, hunting regularly with the Bicester hunt, became a half decent shot and was not too bad at catching the odd trout. Social life revolved around Brackley Young Farmers where he was chairman and won the Northamptonshire county rose bowl for shearing on numerous occasions.

George gained a certificate in agriculture from Moulton Agricultural College where he made many lifelong friends in spite of a major distraction, Northampton General Hospital, where he met Bryony, a student nurse, and gained a further degree in drain pipe climbing. They married in July 1969 settling in to a small cottage on the farm where two years later I made an appearance followed a year later by Alison.

George was always very much his own man and when, out hunting, he heard of a farm up for rent he grasped the opportunity to strike out on his own. After an interview in London with Mr Goshen and armed with his hunting reference he was offered the tenancy at Home Farm, moving in in the spring of 1974 and setting out to modernise the quite dilapidated farm. The summer of '76 brought the birth of Elisabeth, known as Tizzy, and the drought.

George soon embraced village life and became an active member of the community: a parish councillor and chairman for a number of years, chairman of the Deddington Charity Estates and the Hempton Common Land Charity; member of the Deddington Players, a real family affair with Dad, Tizzy and grandson Ben all playing parts; one of the first stallholders at the farmers' market selling honey; chaired North Banbury Farming Club and the Warriner Choral Society.

He served as church warden for more than 20 years, seeing in and out three vicars and their curates, as well as being very involved with the rural chaplaincy. For nearly forty years, he sang in the church choir, with practice every Friday evening and church every Sunday morning, even during harvesting, a cause a bit of friction between us, but he always had his way and the combining got done.

He also loved writing about the farm and the countryside for the *Deddington News* and the *Four Shires*, which gave him the opportunity to have a go at the farmer bashers. He would spend hours in the office, typing away with one finger in a haze of pipe smoke. 'What do you think to this', he would ask, reading out a few paragraphs of his latest article? When told, 'You can't say that', he would reply, 'Why not? That will stir them up!' Many people who never met him have said they felt they knew from reading his articles.

Above all he loved the farm. He knew every corner, every bird, animal, insect and plant and worked hard to farm hand in hand with nature and to enhance it. He loved his Cotswold sheep – lambing and combining were his favourite times of the year. He loved listening to blackbirds singing, his workshop robin and the return of the swallows. He loved his bees, swearing he never got

stung because he managed to smoke his pipe, even under his veil. Most winters saw him in the workshop making hives and his own badger-proof bee hive stands. And his favourite job was driving his combine, the Green Goddess. Dad was always a big active man and he struggled as age and ill health crept up on him but never lost interest in the farm, checking daily what was on that day's agenda, always followed by, 'anything dead?'

George was found unconscious having fallen on the steps going up in to the yard while watching the swallows and died two weeks later in Oxford at the John Radcliffe.

His Young Farmers membership card had written on the front, 'Good Farmer, Good Countryman, Good Citizen'. A fitting epitaph, I believe.

Chris Fenemore