

## JOE COWLEY (1926–2011)



Joe was born in Deddington on 16 May 1926 in a cottage in The Stile, the youngest of three children. He went to Deddington School, and on leaving went to work on the farm for Maurice French for over 30 years until Maurice retired. Joe then worked for Thames Water Authority until his own retirement.

In his boyhood Joe was a member of Deddington Church choir, then became a bellringer and took his turn winding up the church clock. He was a very keen footballer, playing his first game for Deddington at the age of 12 and his last game when he was 47. He won many cups and medals during his footballing career.

Joe would play football on a Saturday afternoon at the Castle Grounds then walk to the farm and milk thirty cows by hand before he went home for his tea.

Joe married Joy on 18 March 1950. When they were courting Joe used to cycle down to Clifton and across the meadows to Souldern where Joy lived. Joe enjoyed his gardening. He also used to like playing darts and snooker – and particularly enjoyed Saturdays at the British Legion playing snooker with his friends and downing a few English ales. While working on the farm, Joe was a keen huntsman and could be found walking the hedgerows and fields with his faithful dog, Sally.

Over the last few years Joe's health deteriorated and he became housebound. He spent most of the last year in hospital where he always had a smile on his face for the nurses, who used to spoil him with extra ice cream. Joe spent his last week in a care home. Joe never had a bad word to say for anyone and no one had a bad word for him – a gentle and well-liked person, a true Deddingtonian! The cards and messages of condolence have been greatly appreciated.

*Richard Cowley*