

Reflections of Mervyn 11th June 1934 – 25th April 2017

A series of memories from those who knew him well



He wound the Pensford Church clock since the 1960s and only handed over a few years before his death

Mervyn was the first man in the Mothers Union and he believed very firmly in their work and baked 4 or 6 cakes for sale at each meeting, found raffle prizes and always set up the room

He bought a minibus specifically to enable transport for Mothers Union outings and his other 'ladies' groups'

Mervyn mowed grass in Pensford, Chelwood and Compton Dando for years... refusing all payment and bought bulbs for planting.

He rescued a homeless man early one bitterly cold morning from the porch at Chelwood Church, saving his life, he took him home, gave him a home, for several years, whilst desperately trying to sort him out

Mervyn played the organ at Pensford Chapel for years until it finally closed

Mervyn cooked a full Sunday lunch and gathered 3 or 4 elderly ladies together each week

He delivered Nutgrove Farm eggs to me every week

Mervyn made a huge bread tin of the most delicious cheese scones for all my social events and fundraisers and even for Meg's funeral

He was always looking for ways to help anyone and he always prayed for ways to reach out and make friends

Merv was always motivated by his faith in God and the real belief that he was here to work for that God – be His hands and loving, caring heart. Merv took every opportunity to join in with all events always providing cake and whatever else he thought helped. He was very open-minded about different religious groups and denominations meant little to him, he was only interested in the belief in Jesus.

Thank you Merv ... you were a wonderful friend.

Jane Flowers, Pensford

I am not sure when Mervyn came to Chelwood to play the organ in St Leonard's. I have been in Chelwood for 46 years and Mr Witer was the organist then but I don't think for long – so I think Mervyn must have been in Chelwood for at least 40 years.

During that time, he had seen several generations of Chelwood children grow up from when they were just starting school to playing, for a least one of them, at her wedding and never a charge.

Mervyn started a children's choir in the 1980s and about six or seven children from the village would turn up on a Friday evening for practice and ready to sing on the following Sunday, and some of them read the lesson. Choir practice always seemed to be on bright sunny evenings and Mervyn would be in church playing away, the children singing and the shaggy old English sheepdog from Church Cottage would come wandering in, lie down and stay till the end.

Mervyn always knew the liturgy of the church – Have I got the right colour Mervyn? Have I got to get the big candle out this Sunday? He always put me right.

Sundays in Chelwood Church are not the same now that he has gone. I would turn up before a service and he would be playing the organ and as soon as he came to the end of the piece he was playing, he would come down to the back of the church and say: 'What's new then Ann, anything?' How I miss that.

Mervyn nearly always played the chorus twice but I fear we will not have a repeat of Mervyn.

Thank you, Mervyn for all your time and generosity.

A Chelwood Churchwarden

Mervyn contributed so much to our community – he was always after apples from our Bramley tree for his fabulous apple pies [pastry made with butter], in the days of church fetes and morning markets

As well as all his church work, he was well known for his Post Office work [he was based in High Littleton] – when we moved to Compton Dando in 1987, a friend from Cheshire was confused about our exact address and simply wrote 'David Brunskill, Bristol' on the envelope. It duly arrived with us, with a pencil note on the envelope: 'Mervyn says try Compton Dando'

Mervyn was a devoted Christian and a great character.

David Brunskill, Compton Dando

Mervyn was always cheerful and hard working. His cheese scones made especially for the churchyard cleanup. His cakes donated for any fundraising event in the village, and then, of course, demonstrating his concern for others: his care for the chap, Peter, whom he tried to help when he found him homeless and confused in Chelwood church porch. Mervyn really tried to help him and certainly gave him several chances at sorting out his life before he had to accept that Peter was going to live life his one way and not necessarily follow Mervyn's advice or example.

Mervyn, as a very young man, went to lodge with Alice and Reg Taylor in Whitchurch, they had no children and Merv became their son. They all moved to Pensford, which became Merv's true 'home' where he became a well known and loved part of the community. After Reg died, Alice and Merv moved to High Littleton where he was a postman for the area ... this gave him freedom to get to know everyone, help them where and when he could and generally become part of their community... delivering unofficial messages and packaged and relaying news and views. Merv was a wonderful neighbour wherever he lived ... to have Merv next-door was to have a 'gem'! Always available to help, cook, give lifts, or simply have a chat, and of course, he always had all the news and was a tonic with his sense of humour and endless stories. BUT, as we all know, he was also infuriating, stubborn and determined!

Mervyn lived and cared for the Taylors until they both died.