

# MEMORIES OF DAMERHAM



JOHN AND KAREN HARRISON

The memories that will always stay with us are of the wonderful community spirit that is still very much present in Damerham. Although we have been away from the village for 11 years, it still feels very much like home to us. We moved into Damerham in 1979 into 2 Eleanor Cottages. The whole row of cottages at this time was derelict and indeed condemned. I can remember being in the house and looking out into the back garden and hearing a lot of rustling and hurried whispering. Some of the villagers on hearing that the cottage had been sold decided to strip the apple trees at the back.

We were fortunate to move in at a time when there was also a lot of young couples moving in to the High Street, who became good friends of ours, and still are to this day. We had our children all within a few years and as a result had a thriving Playgroup and lovely afternoons spent in each other's gardens throughout the village. Pram services held on the Wednesday afternoons at St George's Church and I am certain it nearly always rained so it was always a mad dash to get up there. If there were a lot of us, Michael Powell who was the Vicar, would gleefully rub his hands together and suggest we had the collection NOW. (Just in case we disappeared too quickly at the end).

Then there was the wonderful Children's Christmas Party, which had been a traditional

thing in the village years before we moved there. The annual Jumble Sale and Coffee Mornings during the Year to raise money for the party were a thing that pulled the community together. For some reason it was always me who was left in charge of making the jellies. I can tell you, it was a mathematical nightmare. How much hot water to cold water

Bob Smith. All strategies and team lists were cleverly written down on the back of Bob's cigarette packets. John decided that he would go on a sponsored walk to raise money for a nice roomy adult football kit. So he and Bob worked it all out and John set off from Damerham early one morning to walk across the forest to the Dell in Southampton where he

why when we come back for our annual visits, it's almost timeless: it's like we have never really left.

John and Karen Harrison, Sarah and Katy.



*First Damerham Country Fair July 19 1988*

for numerous packets of different flavoured jellies. Always followed by a sleepless night wondering if they would set or not. Not really a problem as the old Village hall was always freezing during the winter. There isn't a Christmas that goes by when I don't think about those jellies.....

John played for the Damerham Football Club and every week he would painfully squeeze himself into the existing Football strip (he is convinced that it was the Junior team's kit that they wore). Team Captain in those days was

met with the then manager of the Saints, Laurie McMenemy. Through the generosity of the villagers enough money was raised to buy a new kit. That was also the year that Damerham went on to the Cup Final where they lost by only one goal.

There are so many memories that I have of our life in Damerham that I could waffle on for hours. Damerham is such a special village in that you are a community that cares for young and old and certainly welcomed us as newcomers into your midst. I know that this is