



KATH COOPER

THE LADY WITH THE BIKE

Kath was born in Milton under Wychwood and moved to Ascott-under-Wychwood in 1958 when she married Tom, who worked for Mr Badger at Crown Farm. During the war, and until her move to Ascott, Kath worked on the land for Richard Hartley, Manor Farm, Milton. One of her funniest memories was when she and the carter, Joe Hedges, set off with the horse, Boseley, and the cart. They stopped at the top of the Close, the carter went home for his lunch bag and she went down to the barn. On their return the horse and cart were missing. They searched for sometime and eventually someone reported that the horse and cart was tied up to a gate at the gas works in Ascott Road, Shipton, which is now Bowerham.

The bike Kath is still riding today, she bought from Puffer Willis the Sadlers in Shipton in 1937 for £6. 7s. 6d. Over the years Rowley Harpwood has kept her bike in good running order. Raleigh were most interested to hear from Kath that her bicycle was still in daily use and wrote to her saying "These 1930's cycles are obviously becoming collectors items and one similar to the cycle you have is in the National Cycle Museum in Lincoln." She hasn't kept a record of the exact number of miles she has covered but has cycled to places as far afield as Witney, Moreton-in-Marsh, Bourton-on-the-Water and Chipping Norton. She can be seen everyday on her bike in the village.

On one of Kath's trips to Milton, she noticed in one of the meadows in Ascott Lane a ewe lying on her back, "So I gets off my bike, catch hold of the ewe, pull her over on her legs, hold her steady and when she walk away, on my bike I gets and carries on to Milton". Anyone who knows Kath must be struck by the remarkable number of friends that she has and many have experience of her willing and generous nature and readiness to provide help from those who need it. Kath's prescription for fitness is "GET YOURSELF A BIKE"