

## Celebrating special people

Picture a smiling, happy go lucky woman on a bicycle, stopping every few yards to chat to someone, delivering a meal, visiting a sick person, collecting for charity, or just being an active, caring member of Milton village, and you have Vi Miles. There is not a single person who does not appreciate the selfless generosity, boundless enthusiasm, and enduring trustworthiness which characterises Vi's 40 years of living in Milton.

Undoubtedly, Vi's passion for people is a reaction to the austere and loveless childhood years she spent in a children's home as an orphan. Milton village is Vi's adopted family, and she is the self-styled mother of all who live there. She says her real life only began when she came to live in this parish in the 1960's. Her first home was in Fifield, and then she met and married the love of her life, husband Don, and moved to Milton. After a while Vi's son Keith was born, and she could lavish the love and attention on him, that she never experienced herself. Now Vi is the proud grandmother of Keith's two daughters, and has a real family to call her own.

Vi developed her enduring reputation for being everyone's helper almost as soon as she started living in Milton. She volunteered to do the house-to-house collection for the Red Cross, and in the process, knocked on every door in Milton and became acquainted with every villager that way. The Red Cross rewarded Vi's efforts with a certificate of commendation



### Violet Miles Milton's Mother

in 1963. Vi's strong Christian faith has helped her to see the good in everything. She single-handedly raised £1000 for the church and acts as the sacristan in Milton church. Her heroic efforts on behalf of the church were rewarded in the Jubilee year 2002 with an invitation to tea with the Bishop of Oxford. However, not all of Vi's actions are completely charitable. Terry Hartley recalls the days when he had a turkey farm and was trying to get rid of a particularly obnoxious door-to-door salesman. At Vi's instigation the man was

rolled in turkey feathers! Unsurprisingly, he never returned!

Vi's husband Don, used to look after the bookings for Milton Village Hall, and after Don died Vi took over that job. She has a soft spot in her heart for the Village Hall, after all, her wedding was only the second wedding to take place in the Hall. Vi's good works were rewarded with a Citizenship award from the Rotary Club of Chipping Norton in 1998.

As a former ATS girl, Vi will turn her hand to anything, and is completely undaunted by illness or injury. During the years of milking cows the awkward beasts sometimes stepped on her feet, and have left her with lingering foot troubles. During a routine surgical procedure she suffered a stroke, and had to regain her speech, movement and ability to ride a bicycle. A lesser person might not have had the perseverance.

**Peggy Walmsley**