

Annie Savill - A Free Spirit

The Flight of a Lifetime!

Annie is pictured here, impeccably clad and about to embark on a flight to mark her 80th birthday. It filled her with fear and anticipation, in equal doses and was watched by an admiring audience of friends and entranced passers by! In the most glorious autumnal weather of blue skies and golden fields, the Tiger Moth aeroplane took off from the fields at the Shipton cross-road with Leafield. It gave Annie a wonderful opportunity to experience flying at low altitude over the home and village she loves.



War Time Experience

As she circled the Wychwoods in the passenger seat of the beautiful little Tiger Moth, a vintage plane built in 1943, Annie might well have cast her mind back to 1942, when she joined the WRENS. She had rather an exciting war. She was posted to exotic places like Suez, Alexandria, and Cairo to do serious code breaking and ciphering work, and, as well as the work, there were frequent social diversions hosted by the occupying forces. It was what everyone was doing at the time, she says, and as a young, attractive and vivacious woman she found it a very stimulating time. She was demobbed in 1946, and took up secretarial training in London, which led her to become a secretary in the department involved with lend-lease at

the American Embassy. Annie then took a Cordon Bleu cookery course, which qualified her to run the underground dining room for MP's located right next to Churchill's London headquarters.

A Love of Horses

Annie's parents farmed near Cirencester, and she had her first ride on a horse in a basket aged two. Both her father and her husband were in farming, and after her marriage in 1952, she and her husband lived near Chipping Norton, and hunted with the Heythrop when Ronnie Wallace was Master. When the farm was eventually sold she bought a tea shop in Burford, had it redesigned, and lived above it. Her seriously sumptuous chocolate cake was so delicious; Fortnum and Mason asked her to make it for them to sell!

In 1979 Annie acquired the two cottages in Shipton which now form her home. Naturally she was delighted when one of her foals went on to win at Cheltenham. Annie looks forward to a second opportunity to fly in the Tiger Moth, when she may feel less fearful, but she would still rather view the ground she lovingly tills from much nearer to it!

Peggy Walmsley

The Tiger Moth flight will be repeated in September 2004 in aid of the RDA (Abingdon Branch). If you would like the flight of a lifetime contact Camilla Harvey on: 01993 830908