

Diamonds are Forever

Jack and Joan Howard-Drake were married at the church of St Michael at the Northgate in Oxford on 26th April 1947. The times being what they were, the bride and bridesmaids wore borrowed dresses.



Jack had returned to his job in the Ministry of National Insurance after demobilisation and had been posted to Oxford where he met Joan working in the office there. They honeymooned in Switzerland after a bumpy journey on a much-battered French railway and returned with change from £30-all the money they were able to take out of England!

Shorne Me the Way to Go Home

After a time in rented accommodation they bought a house in Meopham in Kent, later moving to the nearby village of Shorne. Jack commuted to London, having moved to Whitehall, where he had a varied career in the Colonial Office, the Cabinet Office and the Home Office. Meanwhile Joan concentrated on bringing up their three children and taking an active part in village life. Shortly after moving to Shorne Jack was posted to Northern Ireland as member of the Northern Ireland Office and Joan

joined him there. They were there for two years and then spent four or five years back in Kent before Jack's retirement. As Joan was brought up in Oxford and her parents were still living there, their thoughts turned to Oxfordshire and they found a house in Sinnels Field in Shipton.

Many Local Activities

They count themselves very fortunate to have settled in such a welcoming village making many good friends and joining in many local activities, especially the Local History Society, of which Jack was chairman for a number of years. Both Joan and Jack have also been involved in local and family history at the county level, Jack as chairman of the Oxfordshire Local History Association and Joan as chairman of the Oxfordshire Family History Society.

Their elder daughter lives near Aberdeen, their younger daughter in Gloucestershire and their son near Amersham. They have eight grandchildren and wonder what the future holds for them, growing up in a world so different from that in which they married sixty years ago.

Jack Howard-Drake

Congratulations Lesley and Richard!

Lesley and Richard Blackwell, who we featured in our last issue, completed the **London Marathon**, crossing the line together at 5 hours 15minutes. Along with two other runners they raised more

than £6,000 for their chosen Charity, *Children with Leukaemia*. As a small 'thank you', the Charity gave them a massage and a meal at the Banqueting House in Whitehall.