

## Two Life Experiences

It isn't the privilege of everyone to have two life experiences in two consecutive years, but such indeed has been my lot.

In July 2006, I suddenly

developed heart trouble and was taken to the Horton Hospital. After reading such horrifying stories of dirt and neglect in hospitals it was an agreeable surprise to find that the Horton was spotlessly clean and staffed by charming and solicitous nurses.

### Roaring like Bulls

The first night there was bedlam! Old men roared like bulls and old women screeched like peacocks to attract the attention of the few nurses. There was no room for me in the medical ward, so I had to stay the rest of the night in the admission ward. Around midnight the babel ceased and we were all able to sleep, or at least to be at peace.

My going to hospital was unexpected and we had to wait over three hours for the ambulance, as they were attending to 'emergencies'. On the way the men measured my heart-rate, which gave a figure of 167, faster than I thought a human heart could beat! While trying to stabilise my heart rate they tried 'rat poison' (Warfarin), which produced dramatic internal bleeding, so hurried injections followed and then injections of a compound of digitalis seemed to work and I was discharged after two weeks. My niece took me over to the Old



Prebendal House; I was very kindly looked after there, but had to sell my much-loved flat in the courtyard and live permanently in the nursing home, or so I thought but another surprise was in store.

### Floods at the Old Prebendal

Late in July 2007, the rain came down in torrents. I was hurried out of my room in the Old Prebendal, close to the River Evenlode, which had overflowed its banks into surrounding fields, our garden and come pouring into my room. We gathered in the Residential sitting room; by teatime the fire brigade produced a large tractor and trailer (courtesy of Mike Hartley) to transfer us to the New Beaconsfield Hall, while places were found for us in nursing homes around the area.

That evening I was taken to a private family home on higher ground just outside the village. They were kindness itself. I am writing this whilst staying with them and waiting to hear where I am to go. What an adventurous life for an old woman of 95, who thought she would "stay put" until the end of her days!

I must pay tribute to the amazing kindness of everybody who cared for me, and in particular to my lovely niece, an angel from heaven to whom I can never be sufficiently grateful.

**Diana Kramer**

*Mrs Kramer is now staying at Middletown Grange in Hailey.*