

## MBE for Beryl Friend of the Queen?

‘Services to Local Government’ is the wording on the citation of the MBE awarded to Beryl Brown in the New Year’s Honours List, but we all know that she received it for her work as Library Manager in Milton. For thirty years, until her retirement on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007, Beryl was the face of the Library, greeting everyone with a smile, helping people find just the right book, reading to the children, mounting displays in the windows and stamping all those books.

### Library Triumph

As far as Beryl is concerned, the award acknowledges all the hard work put in by *The Friends of Wychwood Library* when the threat of closure loomed in 1998. Told that they would need to raise £30,000 before the County Council would consider changing the closure plans, the Friends managed to raise a massive £35,000, which secured the future of our Library and led to its refurbishment and extension in 2001. Beryl first heard that she had been nominated for an MBE when she returned from holiday in Chile in November. The letter had been lying on her mat for ten days, with a request for immediate confirmation that she was willing to accept. Husband Brian rang the Cabinet Office to find out if they were too late to accept, but all was well. Even then she was unable to share her secret with anyone. The press are informed of

recipients 12 hours before the official announcement and Beryl did not know for sure that it was true until the Oxford Mail rang and congratulated her.

### Guernsey Girl

Beryl is a born and bred Guernsey girl and was there to celebrate the New Year and able to share her exciting news with her family. The Guernsey press were very disappointed that no-one from the Bailiwick had been included in the awards list this year. Beryl was able to correct that and hit the headlines herself the next day. She and Brian were guests at the Bailiff’s New Year’s Day celebration and Beryl has lost count of how many glasses of champagne she has enjoyed since the celebrations started.

### So...Back to the Palace!

So now Beryl has to find *another* hat and posh frock for another visit to the palace for the Investiture. In the words of granddaughter Annabel:

“Granny, are you a good friend of the Queen and will you be going for tea with her often?”

We would like to add our congratulations to all those that Beryl has received already. She is so proud that the library has become the hub of the community and will continue to succeed under the expert leadership of Ruth Gillingham.

**Christine Halliday**

