

Pamber Heath Village News

An occasional newsletter written by Raymond West ©

April, 2006

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Evelyn Bailey dies at the age of 98

It is with great sadness that I report the death of a much-loved person, who was probably the last one alive that had lived in the village since the early 1900s. Evelyn Bailey died peacefully at the Bethany Residential Home on Good Friday the 14th of April, 2006, aged 98 years. Evelyn, named Elizabeth Evelyn Wells, was born at Shirley Cottage, Pamber Heath Road on February the 12th, 1908. She was the daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Wells. Her father was a sailor in the Royal Navy and at one time the chief stoker on a destroyer. Evelyn attended Silchester School until she reached the age of 14 years then spent a considerable time at home looking after her mother who had become ill. After her mother died, Evelyn worked as a domestic for the Parson at the Parsonage in Silchester Road. She went with him to continue working for him for a further year when he moved to Froxfield, Marlborough. She returned home and it was not long before she married Harry Bailey, who worked as a carrier. Evelyn had evacuees to stay in the Second World War and devoted her time to bringing up her four children - Margaret, Barbara, Alan and Valerie. Harry's business became a furniture

removal business and his van was a common sight in Pamber Heath. He became known locally as 'The Midnight Carrier'.

The couple spent their later years together at Shirley Cottage and after Harry died, Evelyn continued to live there alone. She loved the old cottage and treasured the memorabilia of her father's navy career. She was an independent lady and managed to stay there even after a bad fall. However, age eventually got the better of her and a year or two ago she went to live at the Bethany Residential Nursing Home in Pamber Heath Road, where she spent her last days. It was fortunate that her memories of the village were recorded and I was able to see her several times some years ago as she helped with my research into the village history. She had many friends in the village and beyond and was a much-loved character. The funeral is to be held at 11am on Tuesday the 25th of April at the United Reformed Church, Tadley. Many will long remember her friendly and kind disposition for years to come and will be greatly missed by family and friends. See the Memories and Pictures page 1 on my web site for a photo of Evelyn and Harry.

April, 2006

Funeral of Evelyn Bailey

The funeral of Evelyn Bailey was held on the 25th of April, 2006 at the United Reformed Church, Tadley, attended by about 100 mourners. The service commenced promptly at 11.00am with the arrival and procession of the coffin, which was borne by four men. The coffin, which was topped with a lovely arrangement of flowers, was then placed at the front of the church on a pair of trestles. A welcome was given to all by the officiating minister Marcus Hall of the Pamber Heath Gospel Hall. After a short prayer, the hymn What a Friend we have in Jesus was heartily sung, followed by a reading of scripture by the minister. The grandson of Evelyn (Chris) then stepped up to give a tribute in which he gave details of Evelyn's life, mentioning her good sense of humour and love of gardening. Although he found it emotionally overwhelming and had to pause from time-to-time, the tribute he gave summed up what others had found - that Evelyn had touched and enriched their lives with her kindness and friendship. An address followed by the minister, pointing out that Evelyn as

a Christian believer had the promise of eternal life and exhorted others present who were not believers to consider following a Christian life. Then there was the closing hymn: How sweet the name of Jesus, which was again sung with great fervour. A closing prayer ended the service and the coffin was then taken out to the prepared grave in the churchyard for internment. Many lovely floral tributes were on display alongside. All present gathered around and the coffin was then lowered. It bore the inscription: 'Elizabeth Evelyn Bailey - Fell asleep 14th April, 2006 - Aged 98 years'.

A short service followed at the graveside, committing the body to the ground, closing with a prayer. Many then took advantage of the invitation of refreshments across the road at the Methodist Church Hall. Grace was said by Alan Stroud after which all partook of the excellent buffet that had been provided. Tea was served and there was then the opportunity to renew acquaintances and meet new people.

The news items on this page were published on my web site but now grouped together here in this PDF document