

Ethel Quinton, June 1923 - April 2013

Ethel was one of 9 children, with sisters Nelly, Dolly and Violet and brothers Bert, Bill, Basil, Tom and George. We are not quite sure which house she was born in, but we know it was definitely in the village. The year was 1923 - a hard period and time when there was much poverty

Like so many of her contemporaries on leaving school aged 14, she went into service, working at first for the McMasters family in Hasketon. Short of walking to and fro, there was no other way to go, than by bicycle. And so began a life long relationship with the bicycle which went everywhere with her. Indeed she found herself on the wrong side of the law, on one occasion when cycling back from Woodbridge, without lights: p.c. Moody giving her a stern ticking off! Her fondness of her bicycle, led to her becoming the post lady for the village and beyond, cycling out to Burgh, the Gull, and numerous other outposts - a job she really loved, out in all weathers.

She was 26 when she married in 1949. Bob was a village boy and we like to think that they met through Grundisburgh Football Club: he played and Ethel supported from the touchline. Actually she did more than just support: she kept the ref in order and the linesman too! She also did football teas with Vera for many years. Their first home as man and wife was with Bob's parents in Meeting Lane, when Sally was three months old they moved to Vine Cottages. Here Barry and Judy were born and lived until 1970 when Ethel and Bob moved into Orchard End. Ethel had given up being a post lady and for a time she worked at the mushroom factory at Debach, like many mums she found seasonal employment in the fields and orchards around the village.

When not working and looking after the family, she relaxed by knitting, Not surprisingly, she was an Ipswich Town fan and season ticket holder. The hard working life that she led in her later years to the onset of severe arthritis which affected her ability to get about. Bob had died in 1990 and Ethel had over 20 years of living as a widow on her own but the family were never far away, regularly popping in and keeping an eye on her. But late last year she needed more care and Ethel moved into Witnesham Nursing Home, where she was well looked after. She discovered she could sing - something she had not done before and she spent many a happy hour, singing her way through old favourites such as "You are my sunshine" and "Show me the way to go home".

Based on words by Clare Sanders and her son Barry