

The Diamond Jubilee

60 years ago, on Feb 5th 1952, Princess Elizabeth was staying in Kenya when she was told of her father's death and of her own accession to the throne. Her Coronation took place the following year, on June 2nd, but 2012 marks the 60th anniversary of her accession - her Diamond Jubilee.

Only one British monarch before her reached this milestone - Queen Victoria, in 1897.

Curiously, a diamond jubilee was traditionally the 75th anniversary of an event, but this was changed for Victoria; strictly speaking, it applies only to monarchs' reigns.

There have been a number of Diamond Jubilees in other countries, most recently that of King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand, in 2006.

Our villages have celebrated Coronations and various Jubilees over the years, and for this special issue of Bygone Bartons we have selected a number of photographs and documents, as well as two fascinating articles on royal themes. Some of you may remember 1953 - possibly the Children's Tea at 4.30pm:-

Rather more of you will recall the Silver Jubilee in 1977 - see pages 13-14 - but if you don't, there is always our DVD available!

And even further back in time, the School logbooks record the singing, in honour of Queen Victoria's birthday in 1901, of 'God Save The King' - the Queen having sadly passed away in January of that year.



The programme for the celebrations, note the 'free television at the Mission Hall'

1937 Coronation



Robert, Derrick, Diana and Barbara Jarvis, Flo Hazell and Sid Cox (and others) putting up bunting in North Street

1935 George V's Silver Jubilee



Celebrating the opening of the new playing fields in North Street, the Scout group, standing at what is now the entrance to Fleming Drive. The celebrations were programmed to coincide with George V's Silver Jubilee

The Coronation? My dear, I was there!!

Barbara Imbert, as told to Denise Roberts

This was the response of Barbara Imbert when I asked her for her recollections of the Coronation on 2nd June 1953. Even today the excitement in her voice is obvious. This is what she told me:

“I lived in Middle Barton but was working in Oxford where I worked most of my life. This couple, Mr and Mrs Gibbs asked a few of us girls if we would like to go with them to London on Coronation Day. They were London people who lived in Marston; I think they had been evacuated during the war. Mrs Gibbs worked with us. So they took four of us. I went with my friend Jo and two other girls. I was about 21; Jo would have been about 17. They asked us if we would like to go with them so we all paid something towards the hire of this car - it wasn't their own car. I didn't know anyone then who owned a car. I remember it was a big old Austin. My friend Jo, me, and two other girls, Joan and Joyce who were sisters and also Jo's cousins, sat in the back. You didn't need seat belts then.



Barbara (left) and her friend Jo

I stayed with Jo the night before we went as she lived in Oxford. We set off at 4 o'clock in the morning. I had never been to London before - none of us had apart from the Gibbs who were driving us. We parked on the outskirts of London at a tube station, but I can't remember which one. We went from there on the tube - another first. I wasn't impressed with the tube at all, I was scared stiff of going underground. I wouldn't want to live in London but it was very exciting on that day when everything was new to us. Did I wear posh clothes to go? No I wore a blue raincoat and I remember I snagged it. I am not sure what material it was; I think in those days they used parachute material to make them. I remember the snag but it was worth it. I don't believe we had any posh clothes then.

Mr and Mrs Gibbs knew London really well, so when we got there we made our way to Hyde Park Corner. And there we stood all morning - and it rained and rained! We bought our rosettes then we bought a mirror on a stick, a periscope thing, so we could see better over everyone's heads.

The parades in the morning were wonderful, so many different ones, marching bands, and many others on horseback. I remember the cleaners came after each lot and swept, and every time a big cheer went up. The cheer that went up for the sweepers after each parade was nearly as loud as that for the Queen. And I remember we all sang "Why are we waiting" to the tune of "Oh Come all ye faithful". Of course it was all so new to us and very exciting.

The service itself was relayed to us over speakers of course, and the new Queen and her husband were on their return journey when we saw them. There were so many coaches and I am sure there were lots and lots of famous people, but then this gold coach came by, and it was so lovely and so very ornate ... They came past and oh we just stood and cried and cried. Well she was so pretty and he was so handsome. We couldn't believe we were really seeing her, she was so young wasn't she, only 25? Then of course there was the Queen of Tonga who everybody remembers, smiling even though she was getting wet in all the rain. It was all lovely, it really was. Some important news was also announced over the speakers - that Edmund Hillary and his Nepalese Sherpa Tenzing Norgay had reached the summit of Mount Everest. The Englishman, Sir John Hunt who led the expedition was also mentioned, but he was one of the party who didn't reach the summit.

And then we made our way to Buckingham Palace. I remember Mr and Mrs Gibbs took us past Harrods first. We hadn't met Mr Gibbs before that day and

he was a bit grumpy and told us girls off when we wanted to look in the shop windows, but it was all so new to us.

When we got to Buckingham Palace, we saw them come out onto the balcony. I can't remember seeing the children Charles and Anne or any of the others because I was looking at the Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh. I think they came out more than once, so perhaps the children weren't there that time. I didn't have a camera in those days of course; you were really rich if you had a camera then. It was so lovely we just cried. It had the same effect years later when I was fortunate enough to attend a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. On that day when the Queen came down the steps I started to blub again, I really did, I couldn't stop. I never thought on Coronation Day that one day I would be lucky enough to go behind those gates to a garden party.



Barbara Imbert

After seeing them on the balcony I think Mr and Mrs Gibbs showed us a little bit more of London. There were these food stalls – well at that time I didn't know what a hamburger was but evidently they would normally have cost about

half a crown. On this day they were charging 7/6d, which was a lot of money. Mr Gibbs, he was a real Londoner, and he had a big argument with the seller, and afterwards he stood there calling out “Roll up, roll up! Come and be swindled” or words to that effect. It was so embarrassing but I will never forget it. But 7/6d was an awful lot of money in those days.

I remember the decorations, mostly on The Mall I think, lots and lots of bunting. Well, I had never seen anything like it. At least Jo lived in Oxford, I was only used to Middle Barton.

Then we decided we ought to make our way to Westminster Bridge for the fireworks display. We thought the fireworks were wonderful and again had never seen anything like it before. They were nothing like as elaborate as today’s fireworks displays of course, but this was just after the war so we thought they were wonderful. And the weather did clear up in the evening.

Another thing I remember was when we were trying to push our way out of the crowd at Westminster Bridge as we had to get the tube back to where we were parked, and all the people thought we were trying to push our way in to the front rather than pushing our way out, and they were a little bit angry and rude.

None of us girls had been to London before that day and I am so glad that I did go. We were terrified of all the crowds but they were all very good humoured, but not so good humoured on Westminster Bridge when they thought we were pushing in. We didn’t leave London until about 11 pm so you can imagine what time we got home, the early hours of the morning. I don’t think we had to go to work the next day. Jo and I have been friends all these years. I don’t know what happened to the other two girls, I expect they are still around; they were a bit younger than me.

Anyway that was my day and I’ll never forget it.”



The Coronation Programme

Ian Thomas - Royal Dressmaker

Barbara Hill

In this Diamond Jubilee year it seems appropriate to reminisce about a significant royal link with The Bartons.

Ian Thomas was born in 1928 and brought up in The Bartons; he attended the Middle Barton County Primary School from 1933 to 1946 and moved on to the Dr Radcliffe's School in Steeple Aston from 1946 to 1949.

This is one of the few photos we have of the young Ian together with his parents at a family wedding.



As he had shown an interest in and talent for art, Ian's parents then enrolled him in the Oxford College of Art, which he attended from 1949 to 1952. In his final year at college Ian developed an interest in fashion which was inspired and encouraged by his teachers.

As a result, on completing his course, he put together a portfolio of his designs and, showing great confidence and initiative for a young man of his age from the country, approached one of the leading London fashion designers of that time. John Cavanagh was impressed with his work and offered him a job at £2.50 a week. Ian felt that he could not afford to live in London on that wage so John advised him to approach one of the larger and more established couture houses such as Hardy Amies or Norman Hartnell, both of whom held a Royal Warrant. As the salon of Norman Hartnell was nearer, Ian walked there, left his sketches and took the train home to Middle Barton.

Norman Hartnell offered him a position at £3 a week so Ian accepted and, after the first six months which he mostly spent in the telephonist's room waiting to be given something to do, he started helping one of the tailors with classic designs for coats and skirts. Ian had a bedsit in Pimlico but came home to his parents in Middle Barton at the weekends.

Ian's father, Bert, was a local builder and his mother Ada, known as 'Doll', worked in what was then Cox's grocery shop on North Street (now part of 'The Bartons', 17/19 North Street). Both were naturally quietly proud of Ian, their only son, and Doll gave her customers updates on his progress. I remember as a child being privileged to be invited in to the Thomas' home, Markby House in South Street, to see some of Ian's fashion design sketches.

As Ian joined Hartnell in Coronation year there was plenty to do and Ian worked on some of the emblems for the Coronation robes. As Norman Hartnell himself preferred to work on the more glamorous evening and formal fashion, Ian had plenty of scope to design day dresses and classic tweeds.

Ian stayed with Hartnell for seventeen years and became Chief Designer. In 1969 he decided to branch out on his own. Three weeks before he left Hartnell, the Queen asked to see Ian at Buckingham Palace and thanked him for all the work he had done and, wishing him good luck in his new venture, presented him with a pair of gold cufflinks engraved with the royal coat of arms as well as a signed photograph.

Setting up his own fashion salon was a struggle initially with Ian having to 'moonlight' cleaning for an interior designer in order to keep going.

He was surprised when, some six months later, the Queen's dresser, Miss Margaret ('Bobo') Macdonald, telephoned and asked him to submit half a dozen sketches for the next overseas Royal tour. They were accepted and success followed.



In 1973 Ian was awarded the Royal Warrant and became one of the three established designers to the Queen alongside Norman Hartnell and Hardy Amies, creating two complete wardrobes a year for Her Majesty. A Royal Tour could mean as many as six changes a day so the Queen needed dozens of outfits. In the various interviews which Ian gave to the press over the years he stressed that the Queen was very discerning and that her clothes were designed to be functional and practical with special emphasis on 'workability'. The clothes he designed were very much classics which could be worn for a number of years with hemlines being altered as necessary from time to time to meet the needs of his economy-minded royal client.

Ian would make visits to Windsor Castle for fitting sessions and to Buckingham Palace every two to three months. At a fitting session, which could take up to one and a half hours, in order to assess the 'workability' of dresses and coats, the Queen would raise an arm, as if to wave, to check that the garment fell naturally back in place when she lowered her arm. She would also make a point of sitting in the dress to ensure that it did not ride up.



Ian's designs were generally in comfortable natural fabrics such as wool, silk, cotton and linen in light or bright colours to ensure that the Queen would stand out against a crowd. One exception was a stunning black dress with a tight velvet bodice and full taffeta skirt which he designed for the Queen's meeting with the Pope in the Vatican in 1980.

Although Ian regarded 'fashion' as the least important aspect of his designs for the Queen, in 1976 he did create for her an informal evening outfit of slubbed silk culottes at a time when culottes were considered 'trendy'. In 1986 he designed for her a striking evening gown with a slit skirt based on the traditional Chinese Cheongsam which apparently impressed her Chinese hosts

In his time designing for the Queen Ian gradually introduced a softer more flattering look but always in classic styles which would not date.

Over the years Ian enjoyed many informal conversations on everyday topics with the Queen during fitting sessions, but especially on the subject of horses, sharing with Her Majesty a love of horses and also dogs. The Queen gave him a corgi, called Frisky, which he treasured, and once rearranged the time of a fitting so that Ian could lead his mare and foal into the ring at the Horse of the Year Show.

Ian was still a country boy at heart and was happiest riding, breeding and showing horses or just 'mucking out' at his farm. He was a proud class-winner at the Royal Windsor Horse Show. After living for a while in Boddington House he later moved to a small farmhouse at Sutton-under-Brailes.

The glamorously casual look we'll never see—below, Ian Thomas's sketch of the slubbed silk culottes he designed for the Queen's informal, at-home evenings. Right, back to the drawing board for the next collection



The man who put the Queen into culottes

Royal clothes used to be so stiff they stood up on their own. Royal protocol was pretty starched, too. But as the regal circles relax around a confident, smiling Queen, so the clothes she wears become more casual. The man responsible for some of these soft and pretty fashions is Ian Thomas, the new, younger name in British fashion. Here he talks to Shelagh Massie about his and the Queen's fashion philosophy

HER Majesty the Queen, glittering in stiff, jewel-encrusted satin, sheathed in richly embroidered brocade . . . the look that has graced a thousand royal occasions. But picture the Queen in drifting chiffon, floaty organza, feather-light crepe-de-chine . . . romantic, gently flattering and very feminine—and there you have the unknown private image. A softly pretty one reserved mostly for family and friends.

The man behind this new, soft look is a 46-year-old unassuming bachelor called Ian Thomas, one-time assistant to Norman Hartnell.

"Not many people have heard of Ian Thomas," he admits disarmingly. The most important and prestigious exception is, however, the Queen. For over the last six years he has become one of the busiest—though remained the least well-known—of her three principal designers. The other Royal Warrant holders are, of course, Norman Hartnell and Hardy Amies—referred to politely by Ian as "Mr. Hartnell" and "Mr. Amies".

Ian Thomas himself looks refreshingly unlike the popu-

In 1977, the Silver Jubilee year, the Queen made a personal award to Ian as Member of the Royal Victorian Order (MVO); this was later advanced to Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order (LVO).

Ian designed the Queen's outfit for Prince Charles' wedding to Princess Diana in 1981 and later her wedding outfit when the Duke and Duchess of York married in 1986.



In all Ian spent twenty-three years as Dress Designer to the Queen. His clients included other members of the Royal family such as Princess Anne and the Duchess of Kent as well as other prominent public figures such as Margaret Thatcher.

Ian Thomas died on 2nd June 1993 following a second heart by-pass operation. His funeral service was held at St Mary's Church, Steeple Barton and later a Memorial service was held in Westminster Abbey.

Footnote: the newspaper cuttings used in this article were first published in the 1970's and 1980's; we have been unable to trace any copyright subsisting and apologise for any breach thereof.

The Bartons celebrating the Queen's Silver Jubilee



The parade of floats along North Street

THE BARTONS JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

A prize will be given for the Best Decorated House in the Bartons — judging will take place on the morning of the 11th of June.

Monday	May 20th	7.30 p.m.	"Gang Show" by the Golden, Celia and Rowena, in the Alice Marshall Hall, Ashin 50p, Children 15p.
Tuesday	May 31st	7.30 p.m.	
Wednesday June 1st	5.55 p.m.		The Bartons on Nationwide, BBC 1 TV.
Sunday June 5th	2.00 p.m.		Dog Show, at the School.
	6.00 p.m.		United Joint Service of Thanksgiving for the Silver Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, at St. Mary's, Steeple Barton.
Monday June 6th	10.00 p.m.		Bonfire, at The Lays, (follow the sign at St. Mary's Church), with free Bar-B-Q — parking in the reeland by St. Mary's Church.

Tuesday June 11th	1.30 p.m.	Assembly of Floats etc. in field behind the Post Office.
	1.30 p.m. — 2.00 p.m.	Judging of the Floats by "Silver Jubilee" (Henry Charles), Frank Beckwith (Carpenter's Arms) and Mrs. Dancer.
	2.00 p.m.	Grand Parade of Floats, Fancy Dress, Decorated Bicycles, Prams, etc. from Post Office, via North Street, Woodway Road, Farners Road and Workin Road to the Sports Field.
	3.30 p.m.	Judging of the Fancy Dress by "Silver Jubilee", Mrs. Dancer and Mr. Harris.
	4.00 p.m.	Cakes and Certificates will be presented.

Sports, Competitions, Side-Shows, Ice Cream
Bring your own picnic — free liquid refreshments.

A donation has been made to the Bartons Section Fund for a summer evening to Sorelle Gardens, Wincles.

The Committee hope you have a happy day in the Bartons.

The Programme



The Barton Abbey Float

1887 Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee Celebrations

Steeple Barton
Her Majesty's Jubilee Celebrations. June 27th 1887

Amateur Athletic Sports.

In Amateurs Only !!

- i. Flat Race $\frac{1}{2}$ a Mile
1st Prize 5/- 2nd 2/6
- ii. Hurdle Race - 7 Flights
1st Prize 4/- 2nd 2/-
- iii. High Jump. 1st 3/- 2nd 1/6
- iv. Broad Jump. = 1/- = 1/6
- v. Flat Race $\frac{1}{4}$ Mile
1st Prize 4/- 2nd 2/-
- vi. Race for Women only
1st Prize 2/- 2nd 1/6
- vii. Race for Youths 17 years of age.
1st Prize 4/- 2nd 2/-
- viii. Sack Race 100 lbs. 1st 1/- 2nd 1/6
- ix. 100 yds Flat Race 1st 2/- 2nd 1/6
- x. Leap Frog Race. See 1st 2nd 3rd 4th
1st Prize 5/- 2nd 2/6

Sides limited to 6 persons an each.

- xi. Throwing the Cricket Ball.
1st Prize 2/6 2nd 1/-
- xii. Race for Boys 10 Years of Age & Under.
1st Prize 5/- 2nd 2/6
- xiii. Flat Race One Mile.
1st Prize 11/- 2nd 5/-
- xiv. Climbing a Pole. Prize a Log of Mutton.

There will be a "Scratch" Cricket Match for a New Cricket Ball, also a Queit Match Double Single

1st Prize 5/- 2nd 2/6 3rd 1/6 for single match

Residents of Steeple Barton, Middle, Sewell, and Wistock Barton are alone Eligible for the above Contests and Prizes.

Entries for any of the above should be sent to Wm. W. Smith on the 23rd of June at The Schools after that hour on The Sands

W. W. Smithwell
Vicar, and Chairman of the Committee
June 22. 1887.

Middle Barton School celebrating other Jubilees, Coronations etc.

Extracts from the school log books

1897, June 22nd. Holiday being the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

1897, June 28th. The children have been entertained at Barton Abbey today in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

1901, 31st January. The Vicar sent a message expressing his wish that the schools should be closed tomorrow February 1st, as a mark of respect to the memory of her Late Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria.

1901, May 24th. The children sung 'God Save the King' in honour of the birthday of Queen Victoria'.

1902, 25th June. Gave the children 3 days holiday owing to the preparations for celebrating the Kings' Coronation.



Class photos from c1909-10

(No entry for the death of the king in 1910).

1911, June 16th. School closed at end of afternoon session for Coronation holiday (one week).

1911, June 26th. School reopened June 26th.

Unfortunately, we don't have log books for post 1935.

Bartons' History Group Publications

- 'The Changing Faces of the Bartons'** £8.50
by Audrey Martin
Includes pictures of people, streets, houses and events from Victorian times onwards
- 'Middle Barton School – Aspects of School Life 1866-1996'** £2.50
by Audrey Martin
A terrific read with photos and turn-of-the-century quotes from the school log-book
- 'Middle Barton – a village walk'** £0.80
Alerts you to sights you may never have been aware of before
- 'It Happened in the Dorn Valley'** £3.50
A vivid account of life in the Bartons during WW2 through the eyes of the Women's Institute.
- 'The History of the Bartons' by George Laws** £2.00
An overall history starting 1000 years ago
- 1920s prints** £1.50 each
Fox Lane, Mill Lane, North St, South St, Worton Rd and the School
- Silver Jubilee Celebrations in the Bartons (1977)** £5.00
A compilation of three films taken during the celebrations, now on a single DVD
- Barton Abbey** £1.00
An updated (2010) leaflet now in colour
- Bygone Bartons, Vols. 1 & 2** £3.00 each
The first two of the series

All publications available from Rosemary Wharton tel: 01869 347638