

Published April 2021

# **LIFE, LOVE & MEMORIES**



# **MEMORY LANE**

**PUBLISHED BY AGE UK OLDHAM**

## **WOMEN AT WORK TAKEN FROM A STUDY BY AGE UK OLDHAM**

**Elizabeth Barron**

### **1983 – Present Day**

I started work in September 1983 when I was 18 having stayed at school in the sixth form to do A levels. I started work at the Co-operative Bank in Manchester with a group of other school leavers. I worked in the department dealing with applications for Handycard (the Co-ops retail credit card) and Handyloans. When I first started I was mostly filing applications and correspondence. Later we dealt with the Co-op Bank Visa card and I moved onto customer service dealing with telephone enquiries.

I took maternity leave in 1986 to have my first son and wanted to go back to work part-time but this was before flexi working policies and I was unable to go back part-time and had to go back full-time when my son was 6 months old. My mother-in-law looked after my son but I missed him too much. I stayed for six months and then left in December 1987 to work part-time (4 afternoons and Saturdays mornings) for National Co-op Chemist on Ashton Road, Oldham. A friend got me the job as she also worked for them. I remember I was paid £30.05 a week.

I stayed at the chemist until September 1988 when I got a job with National & Provincial building society on Yorkshire St Oldham. This was also part-time – alternating between morning or afternoon shifts and every other Saturday morning. I worked on the counter until my manager was moved to a new mortgage unit based upstairs in the branch and I was offered the chance to transfer to the new BMOS (Branch Mortgage Offer System) unit. We were a small office of 6 including the manager. It was a very happy office and I still exchange Christmas cards with the colleagues I worked with.

I took maternity leave again in 1992 to have my second son and again went back to work when he was 6 months old although it was easier this time round as I worked part-time. The idea was I would go back to full-time work when the boys were older – however this never happened although I am as busy as I would be working fulltime!

In 1995 the BMOS unit was moved from Oldham to Burnley and I was moved to work in the branch in Rochdale. As I was travelling on public transport I changed my working pattern from mornings or afternoons to working 3 full days Monday to Wednesday. On Thursdays I started helping at Pramtime - the toddler group my son attended with my mother-in-law at our church Roman Road IM Church in Failsworth.

*Continued on next page...*

## Elizabeth's story continued...

The travelling to Rochdale on public transport began to get too much and I used to go past the Royal Oldham Hospital on the 409 bus and wished I could get a job there as I wouldn't have to travel as far. In March 1996 I did and started work for Oldham NHS Trust in the Finance Department in Accounts Receivable doing a job share – same days Monday to Wednesday so was able to continue helping at Pramtime. Finance was based at Westhulme behind the main hospital site. After a couple of years in Accounts Receivable I moved to Accounts Payable. While in finance I completed NVQ Level 3 in Accounting and also completed ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence).

When Oldham NHS Trust merged with North Manchester, Fairfield and Rochdale to become Pennine Acute NHS Trust the Finance Department was merged with the other hospital Finance departments and moved to North Manchester. Although I initially moved to North Manchester, friends and colleagues I had worked with at Oldham were unable to make the move and had been redeployed in other departments at Oldham. It wasn't the same working at North Manchester and I went on the redeployment list. After 3 months at North I moved back home to Oldham and started in January 2004 in Education in the IT Training department as a Learning Administrator where I had completed my ECDL. This was a small department and we were a close knit team and I made good friends. While there I was able to further my computer qualifications and completed Advanced ECDL in Powerpoint, Access Database, Excel Spreadsheets and Word as well as an Apprenticeship in Business Admin Level 3.

I continued to work in IT Training until 2016 when IT Training was disbanded due to a change in qualifications being offered and a reconfiguration of the Education Department to become Learning & Organisational Development. I moved offices to the Education Centre at the Royal Oldham where I still am today.

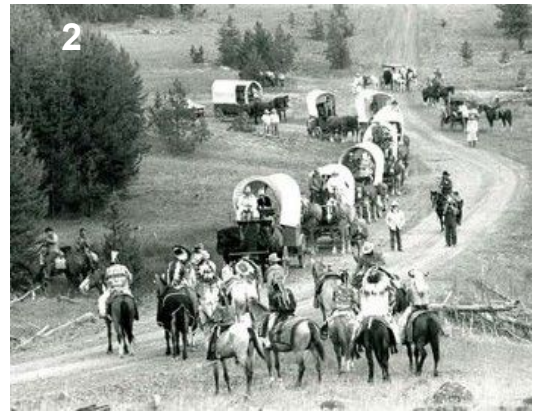
My job has changed considerably since I started as a Learning Administrator in 2004. My main duties involve dealing with enquiries at reception, by email and on the phone, booking staff onto training courses, booking rooms in the Education Centre and maintaining staff training records. While we used to be called the Admin Team we are now called the Business Support Team, which means that we support the rest of the department in all sorts of ways! Pennine Acute has now joined with Salford NHS Trust to become the Northern Care Alliance.

I now run Pramtime and also have a second part-time role as Office administrator at church so I am nearly working full time!

CAN YOU FILL IN THE BLANKS ON THESE OLD TV PROGRAMMES



UP \_\_\_\_\_ DOWN \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ TRAIN

3



\_\_\_\_\_ TOWN \_\_\_\_\_



The \_\_\_\_\_ Experiment



\_\_\_\_\_ OF \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ night at the \_\_\_\_\_

Answers on next page

## ANSWERS TO TV PROGRAMS

### 1. UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS

**Serial 1971 to 1975.**

Set in a large townhouse in Belgravia in central London, the series depicts the servants—"downstairs"—and their masters, the family—"upstairs"—between the years 1903 and 1930, and shows the slow decline of the British aristocracy.



### 2. WAGON TRAIN

**Series 1957 to 1965.**

Stories of the journeys of a wagon train as it leaves post-Civil War Missouri on its way to California through the plains, deserts, and Rocky Mountains. .

It starred Ward Bond as the Wagon Master, Major Seth Adams, although he was replaced in later episodes and Robert Horton as Flint McCullough the scout.



### 3. IN TOWN TONIGHT

An early example of chat show radio, **In Town Tonight** was broadcast on that medium on Saturday evenings from 1933 to 1960. Due to the popularity of the series, on 6 April 1954, the show began a simultaneous broadcast on radio and television. Its introductory sequence had a voice crying "**Stop**" to interrupt the sound of busy central London, before an announcer said "Once more we stop the mighty roar of London's traffic ..." At the end of the programme the voice would say "**Carry on, London**".

### 4. THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT

Is a British science fiction serial broadcast by BBC Television during the summer of 1953 and re-staged by BBC Four in 2005 (Cult Classic)

*See next page for more answers...*

## MORE ANSWERS TO TV PROGRAMS

### 5. DIXON OF DOCK GREEN

It was a BBC Police television series about daily life at a fictional London police station, with the emphasis on petty crime, successfully controlled through common sense and human understanding. It ran from 1955 to 1976. Jack Warner who played Dixon was already 60 when the series began, past the age when a policeman would have retired. Do you remember the line '**EVENING ALL**' as he saluted.



### 6. SUNDAY NIGHT AT THE LONDON PALLADIUM

ITV's flagship variety show that ran for 12 years, boasted the cream of showbiz talent from literally all over the world, including Russian dancers (The Moiseyev Dance Company) magicians, acrobats, comedians, such as Bob Hope, Benny Hill, Spike Milligan and all styles of music from Opera - Luigi Infantino and even Mario Lanza to pop legends like The Beatles, Tom Jones and Roy Orbison, Basically anyone who was a star at the time seemed to be on the show. The show traditionally ended with all the acts congregating on the revolving centre stage with the resident dancers The Tiller Girls. The main compère (Bruce Forsythe and Tommy Trinder) had occasional quality stand-in's Like Robert Morley and Bob Monkhouse and they would host a mini game section in the middle of the show, The best known being "Beat the Clock" which had been imported from America. One edition in 1966 was even video taped in colour to test out for the US market and it was a strange decision by ATV boss Lord Grade to cancel the show in 1967 when that type of programme was still very popular - A decision he admitted was a big mistake years later.



*The first and last verses of this poem have been 'borrowed' from Facebook and Sue, one of our volunteers, has composed the second and third verses.*

## *LADIES OF A CERTAIN AGE*

*I'm normally a social girl I love to meet my mates  
But lately with the virus here we can't go out the gates  
You see we are the 'oldies' now we need to stay inside  
If they haven't seen us for a while they'll think we've upped and died*

*Kids today most probably think we're a bunch of ageing 'has beens'  
But they don't know the fun we had when we were in our teens  
Just wait until they reach our age with their skype and zoom and twitter  
It might make them look good online but it won't make them any fitter*

*We had the very best of times when the 60's were in full swing  
'The Summer of Love', 'Flower Power' and the songs we used to sing  
We may be known as OAPs but there's lots more miles to tread  
That's why we're keeping active and not spending our days in bed*

*They'll never know the things we did before we got this old  
There wasn't any Facebook then so not everything was told  
We may seem like sweet old ladies who may never be uncouth  
But we grew up in the 60's - if you only knew the truth!*

# HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED

## HOW IT WAS



Old Manual Typewriter.  
Do you remember changing  
the ribbon and the keys  
sticking together?

## HOW IT IS NOW



Now on a Lap Top, work can  
be saved, photos added.  
Emails sent together with  
access to the world wide web.



VCR Player  
(Do you remember  
going to rent films?)



1970's music centre

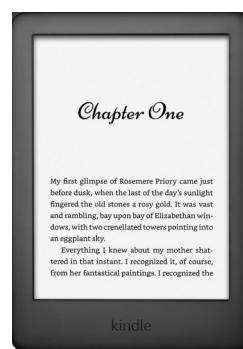


1940s Radio

Over several years starting in 1894 the Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi built the first engineering complete, commercially successful wireless telegraphy system. On 25 March 1925, John Logie Baird gave the first public demonstration of televised silhouette images in motion, at Selfridge's Department Store in London. What would all the inventors who were involved in the making of these early listening devices and many others that have followed in their wake think of the way things have developed over the years?



Books take up space



Book Reader

Now all your  
books can be  
saved on one  
small device but  
will the 'Book  
Reader' ever  
fully replace the  
printed version?



*Hot Cross Bun Recipe and interesting Easter information from  
Jean Ryder*



## **HOT CROSS BUNS FOR EASTER**

MAKES 18

### **BASIC BUN DOUGH**

1lb Strong plain flour

1 lev tsp each of ground cinnamon, nutmeg and mixed spice.

½ tsp ground mace

½ tsp salt

1oz fresh yeast

2oz castor sugar

5fl oz milk

3oz unsalted butter, plus extra for greasing

1 egg, lightly beaten

3ozs raisins

2oz candied peel – chopped.

### **BUN WASH**

A little beaten egg, 2oz caster sugar, 5tbsp water.

OPTIONAL: Marzipan for crosses

## *Hot Cross Bun recipe continued...*



### **METHOD:**

Put the flour, spices and salt into a large warmed mixing bowl. Crumble the yeast into another bowl, add 1 heaped tsp of the sugar and 4.1/2ozs flour from the first bowl. Pour the milk into a jug and make up to 9 fl oz with boiling water straight from the kettle. Using a wooden spoon, mix this hot liquid into the yeast mixture. Go slowly to make a smooth batter. Leave in a warm place to rise and froth up, this takes about 20 mins.

Mix the rest of the sugar with the remaining flour and rub in the butter. Form a well in the centre and put in the egg and the frothy yeast mix.

Mix to a dough with a wooden spoon. Turn mixture out on floured surface and knead for 10 mins, adding more flour as required until the dough is coherent and tacky, but not sticky.

Using a clean, dry mixing bowl, grease with butter. Place dough in, cover with damp cloth and put the whole thing inside an oiled polythene bag. Leave to rise until double in size. Approx 1-3 hours, depending on room temperature.

Punch down the dough and knead in the fruit and peel. Roll out dough into a long sausage shape on floured surface and cut into 18 discs.

Shape into round buns, place them on baking sheets. Leave room for them to rise and spread.

To finish, brush buns with beaten egg. Leave the buns to prove for about 30 mins. Preheat oven 230oC450oF/gas mark 8. Bake for 10-15 mins. Meanwhile, boil the sugar and water together until syrupy. Brush over buns with syrup when they emerge from the oven.

**OPTIONAL:** A cross can be made on top of each bun using small strips of marzipan. **If you brown the marzipan be very careful, it will easily burn.**



# HAPPY EASTER

**Do you know:**

The significance of the Easter Egg.

Apparently, the egg is an ancient symbol of new life and has been associated with Pagan festivals celebrating Spring.

From a Christian perspective, Easter Eggs are said to represent Jesus emergence from the tomb and resurrection. Eggs are painted red to symbolise the blood that Jesus shed on the cross.



# NATIONAL SERVICE

## Peacetime

Under the National Service Act, introduced in 1947, healthy males aged 18 or over were obliged to serve in the armed forces for 18 months. After the outbreak of the Korean war in 1950, the length of service was raised to two years – more onerous than elsewhere in Europe. In practice national service was a catch-all for men born between 1927 and 1939 whose childhoods had already been overcast by economic depression, wartime bombing and evacuation. Although its abolition was announced in 1957, it continued until 1960, and the last conscripts were not demobbed until 1963.

The summons came a few weeks after the medical, delivered by the postman in a plain brown envelope, with the instruction that the prospective recruit had to report to barracks for the start of ten weeks of basic training. For reasons no one can now remember, the first day of soldiering was always on a Thursday.

Overnight, the national servicemen had to learn a new language. 'Blanco', 'spit n polish', 'rifle oil', 'pull throughs', and the dreaded 'bull' and 'jankers'. Once they had been shaved and kitted out - all within a few hours of arrival - the rookie national servicemen all looked identical, even if, back in the barrack room, every man was still an individual.

The arena for the breaking in of these young men was the parade ground. In squads they learnt how to obey orders instinctively, and to react to a single word of command, by coping with a torrent of abuse from the drill sergeants.



Kit laid out ready for inspection

If you did National Service and would like to share a short story about your experience for one of our newsletters or would like it to become part of your Life Story Book

**Contact: 0161 633 0213**



1950's Post Card

*This is the first article in a series of famous Oldhamers.*

## **Barbara Knox MBE (Coronation Street's Rita)**

Barbara Knox was born in Oldham on 30th September 1933.

Her maiden name was Brothwood and she was a schoolgirl contemporary of Eileen, one of our former Life Story volunteers, both attending St Patrick's Roman Catholic school, Oldham.

Children in those days used to play out a lot and Barbara, Eileen and other girls who lived on Timber Street particularly enjoyed dressing up and putting on outdoor concerts for their neighbours. Eileen remembers that Barbara, in common with the other children, loved performing and often took the lead.

Her father worked as a moulder at Platt's Foundry before becoming a fireman and her mother worked in a mill.

Barbara's first job after leaving school aged 15 years was as a telegraphist in the Post Office, a position which no longer exists. She later worked in offices, shops and a factory.

During this time she took part in amateur theatre until Carl Pemberton who ran Oldham Rep., asked her to appear in a production of "The Boyfriend" in 1962. This was her professional stage debut.

She first played the role of Rita Littlewood in Coronation Street in 1964 when she appeared for one episode as a friend of Dennis Tanner. She returned in 1974 as Rita Bates, the common-law wife of Harry Bates, and since then her character has been married three times; to Len Fairclough, Ted Sullivan and Dennis Tanner.

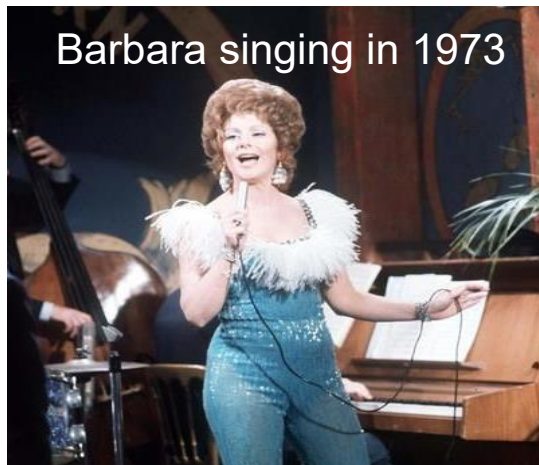
Since the departure of her friend, Eileen Derbyshire, who played Emily Bishop from 1961 to 2016, Barbara is the longest serving cast member behind William Roache, who has played Ken Barlow since the first episode in December 1960.

In real life Barbara has been married twice. She married Denis Mullaney in 1956 in Oldham and had 3 children, Maxine, John and Amanda. They divorced in 1977 and later that year she married John Knox whom she divorced in 1994. Barbara now lives in Knutsford.

Continued on next page...

*Continued from previous page...*

Barbara is also known for her singing and has sung many times in episodes of Coronation Street, usually at celebrations in the Rovers Return. In 1973, she cut an LP for Philips Records entitled 'On the Street Where I Live'.



### Barbara in Coronation Street over the years



*Look out for more articles on famous Oldham people supplied by one of our longest serving Life Story volunteers, Rosemary Bailey.*

## LOOKING BACK IN TIME—OUR TOWN

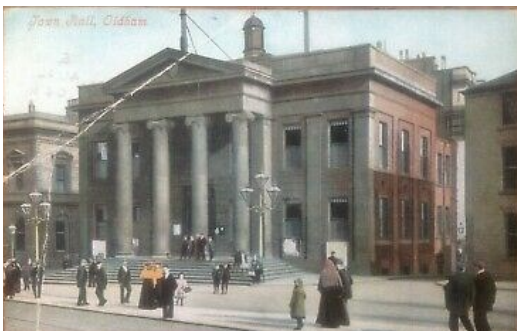


**The Victoria Market**

Opened in 1908. Sadly a major fire in 1974 devastated the old market hall and damaged many of the adjoining shops. It was a massive blow for the town.



**Inside the Old Market Hall**



**The old Town Hall**

Build designed by George Woodhouse in the Greek revival style and extended in 1880. It had a tetrastyle Ionic portico, copied from the temple of Ceres, on the River Ilisos, near Athens. After the council moved to the new Civic Centre in 1977 it stood empty for many years.



**Market Place 1960.**

In the background you can see a bus at the top of Manchester Street. It's hard to tell in black & white but the island looked lovely in colour.

### **St Peter's Precinct (known as the windy city)**

Shops included: Tesco opened in 1968. The Post Office was moved from Union Street. Whittaker's Jewellers can just be seen bottom left of the picture, There was also a Ladies underwear shop, Jingles Hairdressers, a wool shop, Norweb showrooms, Job Centre and a café that was very popular.



It was going to be built in two phases. Instead, a private company took on Phase 2, and learning the lessons of its predecessor, made the precinct fully enclosed. This was opened in 1981. 12 years later, St Peter's Precinct was replaced by Spindles Shopping Centre.

**WHAT HAPPENS AT WORK, STAYS AT WORK  
OR  
DOES IT?**

**Did anything happen at work that you can share with us**

**Examples:**

Did anyone famous visit your place of work, did you play a part in the visit?

Did you go to any interesting places relating to your job?

Did you work at a famous place?

Do have any funny stories you can remember from your working life?

If you have a short story that you would like to share with us

**CONTACT: 0161 633 0213.**



# People at Work

*On the next page Sue, our Poet, tells her story....*



*Now read Sue's story, it is true and it is funny:*

## **MY WORKING LIFE**

Before I retired I worked for the Valuation Office in Manchester and my job was to visit commercial and industrial properties to measure them so that they could be assessed for business rates.

Some years ago a new Asda store opened in Rochdale and I made arrangements to inspect it accompanied by my colleague, Janet.

When we arrived the manager very kindly provided us with a plan which showed the layout of the store and warehouse and then he left us to get on with it.

It took a couple of hours to get the job done and we were just finishing in the loading bay when I noticed an extension which wasn't shown on the plan. I went to measure it whilst Janet went to tell the manager that we had finished. A few minutes later she came rushing back, closely followed by a very flustered manager, telling me to come out of the 'extension'. When I said that I hadn't finished she informed me that I was actually in the back of an articulated lorry which had backed up so that it was flush to the loading bay and which was due to leave for Birmingham!

We had a good laugh about it although I don't think my boss would have been too happy if he'd had to arrange transport back to Manchester for me. On the other hand I suppose he could have decided to leave me there!

The week before that happened we had been to a warehouse in Bury and when we arrived it appeared to be empty. Janet stayed in the car whilst I went to see if there was anyone around but as I got out of the car my foot caught in the seat belt and I shot out of the door and landed on the floor. Janet hadn't seen this happen and, when she realised I'd disappeared, she came to look for me and found me lying there with my foot still trapped. She seemed quite concerned until I told her I was fine and then, like good friends do, she just burst out laughing!

**Incidents like that were just hazards of the job**

*by Sue Livesey*

# PETS CORNER

This week we are having a change and taking a look at animals from books, films and television over the decades:

## RIN TIN TIN

The first Rin Tin Tin was a shell-shocked pup found by American serviceman Lee Duncan in a bombed-out dog kennel in Lorraine, France.

Duncan named the dog after a puppet that French children gave to the American soldiers for good luck. Rinty's first screen role was playing a wolf in *The Man from Hell's River* (1922), His first starring role was *Where the North Begins*,

*followed by other silent movies, sound movies and radio. Rinty died in 1932 and was buried in Paris, and honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.*

*The dogs used in the Adventures of Rin Tin Tin, from 1954 to 1959. were bred from the original Rinty's bloodline, and this continues today, with the dogs being bred at El Rancho Rin Tin Tin in Latexo, Texas. The current Rinty is Rin Tin Tin X, while other line dogs are trained as service dogs for special needs children.*



## LASSIE

Lassie Come Home is a 1943 MGM movie directed by Fred Wilcox. It stars Roddy McDowall, Elizabeth Taylor, and dog actor Pal. It tells the story of a dog who travels hundreds of miles to be reunited with the boy she loves. It is based on the 1940 book *Lassie Come-Home* by Eric Knight.



## MR ED

The TV show in effect had two leads operating as a comedy team. The title role of Mister Ed, a talking palomino, was played by gelding Bamboo Harvester and voiced by former Western film actor Allan Lane. The role of Ed's owner, a architect named Wilbur Post, was played by Alan Young. The Posts lived in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles. Many of the programme's gags follow from Mister Ed's tendency to talk only to Wilbur, his skills as an obnoxious and inconsiderate troublemaker, and his precociously human-like behaviour that far exceeds anything those around Wilbur expect of a horse.





## SPORTING GREATS:

### MANCHESTER UNITED - THE BUSBY BABES 1956-1957



Talent worth a fortune in transfer fees: Back row—Whitefoot, Colman, Foulkes, Wood, Byrne, Blanchflower, Edwards. Front row—Berry, Whelan, Taylor, Violett, Pegg.

The Busby Babes were notable not only for being young and gifted, but for being developed by the club itself, rather than bought from other clubs, which was customary then. The term, coined by Manchester Evening News journalist Tom Jackson in 1951, usually refers to the players who won the league championship in seasons 1955–56 and 1956–57 with an average age of 21 and 22 respectively.

#### **THE MUNICH AIR DISASTER:**

Duncan Edwards, tipped to become one of United and England's greatest ever players, and Captain Roger Byrne were among the players killed on the afternoon of 6 February 1958. Other players killed were Geoff Bent, Eddie Colman, Mark Jones, David Pegg, Tommy Taylor and Liam Whelan as well as Manchester United staff Bert Whalley, Tom Curry and Walter Crickmer.

Some of those fortunate to escape with their lives went on to become some of the most successful figures in the history of Old Trafford, from manager Matt Busby to former record scorer Bobby Charlton, while the likes of Albert Scanlon and Dennis Violett also continued their careers at the top.

Johnny Berry and Jackie Blanchflower were both injured so severely that they never played again.

Matt Busby was seriously injured and had to stay in hospital for more than two months after the crash, and was given the Last Rites twice.



## SPORTING GREATS

### FRANK SWIFT



#### **Frank Victor Swift**

**Born:** 26 Dec 1913 in Blackpool

**Height:** 6ft 2ins.

**Finger Span:** 11¾ Ins.

**Died:** 6th Feb 1958

Was an English footballer, who played as goalkeeper for Manchester City and England. After starting his career with local clubs near his home town of Blackpool in 1932 was signed by First Division Manchester City, with whom he played his entire professional career.

Swift broke into the Manchester City first team in 1933, previously having worked in a gasworks.

He took part in the club's run to the 1934 FA Cup Final and became the youngest keeper to appear in the final. The club triumphed 2–1 against Portsmouth.

Three years later Swift won a League Championship medal, after playing in every match of Manchester City's championship-winning season.

War denied Swift several years of playing in his prime, though during wartime he was chosen to represent his country in international matches.

After the war he made his competitive international debut, playing 19 internationals between 1946 and 1949.

Swift retired in 1949, taking up a career in journalism as a football correspondent for the News of the World.

**He died, aged 44, in the Munich air disaster after reporting on Manchester United's European Cup match against Red Star Belgrade.**

*At the end of March we bid farewell to one of our valued members of staff:*

## **Julie McBride**



Julie, with volunteers  
Joan Holmes and Sue Livesey

**Julie is moving onto pastures new, but her skills, enthusiasm and fantastic sense of humour will be staying in Oldham.**

**She is one of the reasons that Life Story work in Oldham has had such a high profile over the years. As an advocate for people with dementia who had no family or friends to support them she was like Miss Marple trying to find out background information and more about their likes, dislikes. She recognised how important this was to make sure she was representing their views properly.**



**She worked hard to develop opportunities for Life Story work, starting with funding to employ a part-time Life Story Project Worker, and the project has continued to develop and is much envied in other parts of the country.**

**We will all miss her and hope that she will keep in touch...and that she will contribute to a future Pet's Corner with her dog Jack.**



Life Story work in Oldham has been recognised locally and nationally. Julie is pictured with the Life Story steering group receiving a Pride in Oldham Award in 2005 and with the Life Story steering group and Veronica Jackson, the Director of Social Services.

**PUBLISHED BY AGE UK OLDHAM  
LIFE STORY VOLUNTEERS  
EDITOR  
JOAN HOLMES**



# Life Story

Every life has a story...

