

Terry Darby

Lifelong Heathen and Stalwart of the Cherry Fayre

In an age when many people leave their place of birth and migrated all over the world, it is nice to talk to someone who has lived a full and happy life in the village. The War had not been won when Terry was born in Common Road opposite the Three Horseshoes. His dad was in the furniture trade, as a french polisher, and his mum came from a family of cobblers, working from the house at a trade which modern materials and third world labour have almost destroyed.

He went to the old school in the village; then to Wooburn and finally left Holtspur at the age of fifteen. His first career was in a department store in Wycombe. Early on he married Joyce, a happy event now approaching its fortieth anniversary. In those days a job was for ever, but after twenty-six years the store was sold and disappeared. So did the job. He then worked for a while in Ealing. Meanwhile, as a hobby, Terry had for years been working as a showman with various friends, working roundabouts, rides and other shows. He took the plunge and went professional eleven years ago and is now doing what he likes doing best – entertaining people and giving them, especially the children, a good time.

It is a big job to look after up to four roundabouts and nearly twenty games. He is out both days every weekend from Easter to October, anywhere up to 150 miles away, and has travelled as far as Glasgow and Northern Ireland to bookings. Of course he was a stalwart performer at our own Cherry Fayre. This is a trade where you set up the site, build your shows, meet the opening deadline, do the job, dismantle and clear up all within the day before moving on ready for tomorrow. Terry also does an increasing amount of work around Christmas. He has done private parties for the Royal Family. He does Flower Shows, School Fetes, Christmas Lights and many private functions. He specialises in, and much prefers, machines from the glorious shows of the Victorian era. Every one has to be checked and cleaned to perfection before and after each show. The rest of the week is for maintenance, repair and office work, especially scheduling jobs. The machines need a new paint job about every four years. He does the flat work, but the important gold requires a specialist involving a trip to Nottingham. In this business the only standard is perfection.

It is very much a family business. Joyce helps. Their daughter Sally, herself a licensed clown entertainer, is a great strength, as was their son Richard, who tragically died last year. Terry is a big man with a big friendly personality. To have him and his business in the village is a great privilege.