

Julie Crowe Interview Transcript

GJ: Hi, it's Graham Jarvis and it's the 1st August 2017, and I'm about to interview Julia Crowe at Rusland Cross and talk to about her life in the Valley. So I wonder if we could begin, if you could tell us how you came to live here?

JC: My husband and his father farmed up on Cartmel Fell and they took over from his father in law. They saw this farm advertised for rent under an Assured Lifetime Tenancy. We were shortlisted and ironically we were shortlisted against a neighbour of Raymond's father. I knew nothing about it until the day the Archibald family came to speak to Raymond and his father at Addy fields which is where Raymond and his father farmed and he very quickly came up to the cottage where we were living, and said `are you tidy? Somebody is coming to look at you and if you pass muster, we could have a farm`. So that Tuesday was the day my life changed completely from being a housewife and mother, to a farmer's wife. We came here that afternoon and looked at it and if you'd seen the cottage we had lived in before, it was very small, my furniture, my first impression on walking in was `my furniture's going to look like dolls house furniture` if we come to live here. But I couldn't really say `no I don't like the house`. The option was with me, if I liked the house, Raymond could have the farm. So I just said `Yes, but we will need to buy some furniture`. So that was it, we moved in on the 11th November 1972, and we've been here ever since, so that is 45 years coming up.

GJ: And were you farming before you moved?

JC: Raymond was, his family were. I was born and brought up in Kendal. I met him at a dance and the rest is history.

GJ: Did you come with cows and equipment?

JC: When we got the farm tenancy, Raymond's father had a small milking herd of 17 cows and we brought those with us and we also brought 200 sheep. This was in lieu of wages that Raymond hadn't been paid from leaving school at 15 and coming here at 26, so it was a good start. A local farmer told Raymond's dad on Cartmel Fell (he ran a caravan site, a very successful one), and he offered Raymond an interest free loan for three years to get him started. That's what we bought the rest of our cows with. In those days if you paid £100 it was a very good cow as the average was £70/£80. Another man Raymond used to go to some days, during the daytime working for other farmers, one of them came to us the week after we moved here and said `I've got a lovely little Heifer and Raymond can have it for a rock bottom price. He's been a good worker for me`. We bought the cow off him, it was a red Friesian and we nicknamed her Nervous Nelly right away because she didn't like a brush going by her feet. She did us well. She calved on the 11th November every year for the following eight years and produced a heifer every time. She was well worth having for the £50 she cost was cheap because she really was a good cow. That was how we started and we went to the auction and bought this, that and the other. We had to buy the hay that was produced that summer by the tenants that we took over from and we had to buy the fencing posts and all the wire that they took down to sell in the farm sale. Most of it was rotten old wire but we either bought it or we didn't have anything to start. Then we had to set off and fence round all the fields. So that was how we started here.

GJ Was that the first job?

JC Yes, fencing to make sure. Because it was November the cattle were inside, so it was more to contain the sheep than the cattle at that time. So, yes, it was hard work that first couple of years.

GJ Did you come with some sheep?

JC We brought 200 from his father`s farm.

GJ What sort of sheep were they?

JC Kendal rough fell sheep, which were what his father bred at the time but since then we`ve moved on to other breeds. We`ve still got a couple of old Kendal rough fell and they are becoming a rare breed now. When we came here the girls were five and four, and Carol had her fifth birthday in September. She should have been starting at Leven Valley School and they told us not to teach her numbers or her ABCs. Then we discovered we were coming to here and they decided that they would go to Satterthwaite School instead, so when we came on this trip out to view the farm we went up to the school as well. Alex Taylor was the headmistress, the best headmistress that school ever had, and she said `of course, they will know their numbers and letters? So, within a distance of 5 miles, we had two heads contradicting one another, one wanted them to learn, the other one didn`t. So, I`m pleased to say that both settled in very well. Carol started the Monday after we moved in on the Saturday and Joanne started at the Easter when she was four and a half

GJ How did they get to school?

JC Bob Bell who used to run a garage up at Oxen Park and also ran the school taxi and he would pick them up outside the door here. I had to walk across the road to the barn door and stand there until Bob came in his taxi. He collected them right up until Carol`s last year at Satterthwaite School, when a lot of children who were not in the natural catchment area of the school started coming from the other side of Oxen Park. Some came from Hawkshead and they were getting the school taxi and there wasn`t room for our girls in it. Ewart Wilson, who used to be at Thwaite Head, was doing the Leven Valley School run and so on his way home he would pick ours up, and there was somebody else, the girls a mile up the road from here. They all got into Ewart`s and he charged us 50p per week for each child to take to school for the rest of the school time. After that, it was round to the Vicarage when they got to secondary school, to catch the bus there. I think they had a very good grounding at Satterthwaite School. When Joanne left, she was one of four who left that year. Two became teachers, one became a social worker and one became an artist. I can`t remember how many left Carols year but it was quite a few.

GJ I guess the school at Satterthwaite closed soon after that, did it?

JC It stayed open long enough for Adam to go there. In Alex Taylors time, she came here in the late fifties, she used to just go to the head forester and say `John, we are getting a bit low on children`. There was a lot more forestry people then and those houses up at Satterthwaite were forestry houses. They used to move people with older children out and bring people with younger children in. The school closed when Adam would be 16 or 17. Jonty (Dobson) would go to school at Satterthwaite wouldn`t he? Can you remember the big party they had when it closed? What would he be 16, 17, 18 or so? Miriam (Dobson) was there too. When it closed they had a big party where lots of old students came back. The one good thing that came out of it was local housing

because they converted the school house and the school rooms, and they made 3 or 4, I don't know, how many houses.

GJ It makes a difference when a school closes?

JC Well in the time we've lived here, when we first came here at Satterthwaite we had a shop , a post office, a pub as well as a church. We've only got the church and the pub left. Oxen Park had a post office and a pub. The pub fortunately has just been taken over again but the post office has gone. There was nothing here at Rusland. At Bouth there was a post office, and that went. It's all just disappearing. We used to be able to catch the school bus into town as long as you were willing to go at eight in the morning and come back at school times. Then they brought the post bus in which was handy for going to town but it didn't give you long in town, an hour or two at the most, but we've got no public transport now. That's one of the downers about living in the countryside. We have no public library now either. We used to have the mobile library come round but that's gone.

GJ When did that go?

JC Not long ago perhaps 5 years. The regular readers have gone.

GJ Did the farm look like this when you came and had they run it in a similar way with a similar sized herd?

JC When we first came here, the previous people had no cows, and they hadn't had as many sheep. We brought more sheep onto the farm than was here originally but they didn't utilise the fell ground which is up on the top. It was always mentioned in the farm tenancy agreement but nobody had ever utilised it so one of the first things Raymond did was to fence right round it and make it secure. He brought it into the farm. That has definitely altered.

GJ How many cows have you got now?

JC We milk an average of forty a day and you get all the followers, you know the ones that are in various stages of growth, and the newest ones. We probably have 120, 130 head and then we have about 360 sheep. So it keeps us busy.

GJ You had a red one I think?

JC That was a throwback. Occasionally we have used a Limousin bull which can be red. We did use a Hereford bull when we first came here. Perhaps the first bull we got, one you very rarely see now, was a Blue Albion, which looked like a Hereford but its coat was a blue/grey. The last time the road from Rusland Cross round to the Church was tarmaced, the council men got very nervous because the bull was just nosy and it used to pace up and down the road while they were working, and lean on the gate and look at them. It was quite funny! They are just like us they are nosy, they want to know what's going on. This little hamlet, when we first came here, was 12 houses. Its only 11 now because one has reverted back to what it was. The one down the road used to be two houses when we came here and they were all bar one, occupied by people who went out to work, and came home at night. We had quite a nice little community but bit by bit. There are four houses round the corner that are just holiday homes for people. The one across the road is a half time holiday let. They let it to help pay the mortgage obviously. We have no community now in this little hamlet that we had when we first came here. We hadn't been here half

an hour, still pulling things out of the back of the van, when the lady across the road came across with a teapot full of tea and a tray of cups, 'It's the last thing that's going to come off van, here have a break', which I thought was a lovely welcome. She was a really nice lady and I got on really well with her. She sadly died of lung cancer but I ended up as god mother to her granddaughter which was nice. Celia lived down the road, Mrs Shorrock, and then you went round the corner and there was somebody in every house bar one and that was because it was up to let at the time. Then it was sold. That was actually the first holiday home.

GjJ The farm looked much the same way, did it, in terms of the milking parlour and the use of the barns?

JC The barns, the buildings as such are almost the same. We had to put the pipeline in for milking and the concrete pad that is outside the yard where the big bales are now stored, that was the edge of the field. We levelled and put the concrete base in because the laws keep altering on animal welfare, which is a good thing. They weren't happy if a cow was to do as they had done for centuries and just stayed indoors through winter and have the food and the water put in front of them. They said and I totally agree that they needed exercise every day. It was becoming more and more of a struggle to produce hay because you need a minimum of four good hot sunny days. So we switched over to silage which probably costs us more because we have to pay contractors to do it. But it meant that it was a method for the cows to get out, to go for a walk and we didn't allow them free access back in to the building. We would leave them out for maybe four or five hours and then bring them back in, let them have a rest, milk them and then turn them out again for a couple more hours of an evening. Then bring them back in for the night especially if the weather was really atrocious. Those are the only real differences that we've made to the place. We've replaced gates and gate stoops, fencing. The land is as it was. It's getting a lot wetter in the bottom now because of this bunding across at Hey Bridge. Its pushing more water our way but apart from that the land is pretty much as was. We keep putting all the wall gaps up.

GJ The work down at Hey Bridge, is that a good thing?

JC Well it is from their point of view because they are trying to get the sphagnum moss back. I can understand that. It's a raised mire and we want to keep it but I think they didn't talk enough to the local people before they went ahead with it. Bull in a china shop sort of attitude. The one thing that has really altered since we came is here is the headage of deer. We used to see 15 or 20 on our fields when we first came here. You can multiply that up to 150/160 head at any one time roaming on our fields so consequently it costs us more to produce grass as we are feeding them as well. We communicated with Hay Bridge management about this and they came back with 'They are wild animals, what can we do about it?' Someone else said you want to get a gas gun but how long would they put up with that booming before everyone was objecting to the noise. Nothing against the deer, I just wish they'd not come in their hundreds onto our spot. It's hard work trying to feed them and our own livestock. It's down to Grizedale getting a lot busier, there's a lot more people every weekend or even every weekday. There's cars zooming past here with bikes on the roof or on the back. Good for them, they are getting healthy exercise but the deer are coming out and they are moving down the valley and we are getting far more. I know Raymond drove down one night and saw them. The way he drove into the field split them into two lots and he said there was 80 in one lot and seventy odd in the other lot. One lot went over the bridge, the other lot swam the river to get back and all he had done was drive down there because someone had popped in and said 'do you know how many deer there are down there. He drove down there and peeped on

his horn and off they went. The poachers are a nuisance as well because they come after the deer.

GJ Is that a recent thing?

JC No, it's always gone on but its more intense lately. When we first came here, poachers would have a gun with a silencer on so it was a quick death for the deer. Now they come with lurchers and they are cruel because they rip the throat out of the animal. Last summer Carol came over one Saturday morning and a vehicle was coming down the valley just as she came into our fields at the farm. She pulled into the side to let this vehicle through and when she moved forward her front wheel punctured. She got out and realized that the wall gap that was down had blood on it. She looked a bit further and the other side of the road, the deer guts were lying there. He had slaughtered it there in the middle of the road and just abandoned the innards there. It turned out that they had killed two that night, one where they must have been disturbed because they just threw it over into the wood and left it. A couple of weeks later, they did actually catch somebody off ? ?? ground a with carcass and dogs and everything in the back but another vehicle got away. That was last year. Unfortunately the courts don't know how to deal with them – a hundred pound fine and off you go. They have no thought of the damage that they do. I would have said `what about paying the farmer to put his wall gap up again?` It's the sort of thing they don't take into account. At £30 a metre and a 6 meter wall gap, it's £180 gone. Give us the old poachers who just poached to fill the bellies of their families. The modern day ones are just out for however much money they can get. And from the poachers I think it led onto a lot of Landrovers being stolen or attempted to be stolen. There has been three actually stolen and another two that we are aware of that they interfered with that were disturbed. They are coming from all over, they are coming from the North East, coming from Manchester area, everywhere.

GJ Do you ever have any help on the farm?

JC Only us. Occasionally, when we first came here the hay timing was great because the local community really pulled together in those days. Chris from the bottom of the hill, there was a family at Middle Dale with 3 boys and 3 girls, and the three boys, one used to come for two years to help and in the summer time, he used to spend his time pulling ragwort up the other side of the river it was horrendous. The fields were yellow with it and he came down every Sunday. It was before we had this kitchen altered (it was two rooms at one time) and I can remember Anthony sitting on the floor in that corner. He wouldn't sit at the table with us to have his dinner. He sat on the floor and said `no, I stink of ragwort`. But they did a darned good job because that field that runs from the bridge up towards the Show Field was yellow and they spent all their time doing that. They would come to help at hay time or they would muck out or whatever. We have had odd helps but we've never had a helper. Carol is helping as obviously we are getting old. She's a sheep person, no two ways about it. She has always been interested in sheep and when she is not working or busy with family, she will be here among the sheep. Adam gives us an odd day a week but that's all it is. He's got to make his own living somehow. No, we have never had a regular help. The previous but one tenant before us, because the tenants before us were only here for two and a half years, and he almost dropped dead on the farm. He had an aneurism and they took him into hospital and he died a couple of hours later. They soon moved away. But the ones before them were the Johnsons who were here from the war years right through to 68 or 69. Mrs Johnson used to have lodgers. There was definitely two lodgers, Wilf and Stan, they both worked on the forestry. They put in those Christmas trees across the bottom of the back garden as a windbreak.

People who followed in after the Johnsons were Threlkeld's auntie and uncle. It were another brother, who came up from the Blackburn area, and they knew Jennifer's parents at Satterthwaite, and then Arthur's parents at Bowkerstead. His family came up but they went back down and Uncle Chas? , he died. They were only here, as I say, two and a half years. Not much history for them.

GJ Are you part of the WI now?

JC Aye

GJ Have you always been?

JC No. When I lived on Cartmel Fell, they didn't have a very active WI and they weren't forward in coming and saying `come and join us` or anything like that. But within a few days of moving in Frances Newby, down the road, said I'm not going tonight as its the annual meeting but why don't you come along to our December meeting, it's the Christmas meeting to see what you think of us. I joined the following year so I've been a WI member for over 40 years and I've got a certificate the prove it (laughs). I thoroughly enjoy it, I think it's a good organization, its non denominational, it's not political and everybody fits in. No `oh, you can't join, you are not ...whatever`. Our present president, we only found out last year, had actually been, well we knew she had taught at Victoria High School but what we didn't know was, she had taught at the WI national college and at Denman . She's a crafty person which suits me as I like craft of all sorts. Yes it's a good organization. I'm involved in the produce, I go to shows and that and sell the produce.

GJ Are most people WI members around here?

JC There are some people who never join in with the community, and never do anything that benefits the community, but they are few and far between. You get an invite then it's up to you whether you go along or not. Some people it doesn't suit. I once said to Carol, it's a good thing, why don't you come? She said I'm not old enough yet. It still has this old woman's image. Until you go somewhere like London where we've got loads of teenage members down there. In a city, the WIs just exploding. I think people don't give you a chance, they just say no it's not for me and they don't even look to see what they are doing. It started as an education for rural women, for them to learn how to do things they wouldn't otherwise do. I mean you have got to stop and think about education, it was few and far between in our grandmothers and great grandmothers time and it's been going in this country for over a hundred years now. I think it's done its job. Everybody still thinks of it as jam and Jerusalem. It's stupid, because a lot of WI women don't have a clue about making jam!

GJ Was the education in terms of some of the crafts taught?

JC It's not just crafts, it's the speakers we have. We have such a varied outlook on the speakers. They come from any walk of life. Just in the last year, we have had someone who was a radiologist at the local hospital and he was able to explain things, that maybe we had been in and had something done but not really understood what they have done with us. He was able to explain it. Then we will have somebody who been a charity worker in Africa who could tell us how wonderful the women are in Africa. The Mothers Union in Africa is doing the work that the WI did here. Any subject and we will have somebody coming along. Sometimes it's just somebody giving a cookery demonstration or we'll use our own members. Rachel (Lumsdon) is brilliant at basket making, she did a class last year and she had them all enthralled and listening and that's the way

it is. The subjects are so wide and varied. There was somebody on genealogy and there are a lot of people interested in that now. I sort of did a little bit but never got into it properly. There's a guy who comes and talks to us at various times who is in the mountain rescue. He does a lot of things and he's got a lot of other interests as well. There is another guy and all he wants is to photograph every wild orchid that will grow in the Lake District. He said how many there is. There are hundreds of them, and he finally achieved it two years ago when he got his last one. He's waiting for someone to discover a new one now! It's good.

GJ Did the Mothers Union ever exist?

JC, Yes, it's only just folded in this area. When we came there was a Rusland Mothers Union, a Satterthwaite Mothers Union and at Colton. Rusland and Satterthwaite joined together and had an average of 30 to 40 members and then Colton joined in. It dwindled because members grew older or died and nobody was coming in at the younger end to replace them. We ended up two years ago closing our branch. I'd been treasurer for 15 years and we only had 6 members and 3 of them were infirm so there wasn't much point hiring a room every month to meet. It was decided it would close but we still have access to the diocesan level which is a means whereby you can still pay your subscription and you get your monthly newsletter and things like that. They have 3 or 4 meetings a year in different places so that outside members can go and meet and have a chinwag. That's something else that we have lost. The Young Farmers no longer exists now but when our girls were little they had 90 members in Rusland Young Farmers and they used to come in from Lowick and Hawkshead, Bouth and all round. It disbanded about 20/25 years ago. There were just not the people to take office. Now our youngsters go to Lowick if they want be in the Young Farmers, Lowick or down to Cartmel. There is nothing else near. It's only when you are doing something like this that you realize what we have lost in the valley.

GJ Could there have been more people working on the land then and more young families?

JC Well in the Johnson's time there would be five or six men not sadly working all day, every day but definitely evenings and weekends whereas now it's one man with a bit of help now and then. There was the Wilkinson twins, one did the milk side and one did the sheep side. I suppose machinery has done that. No horses pulling ploughs now. You get on your tractor each morning and away you go. It's amazing how many don't have sheep dogs now but have a quad bike instead and they roar around on that. There's not the young people now. You only have to look up and down this stretch, what have we got? One lad is at school in our bit? They can't afford to buy the houses, that's the top and bottom of it. I mean the family with the child still at school were only able to buy that house because he had a motorbike accident and he got the compensation. I don't know where we will go when we retire because we would love to stay in the valley but we couldn't afford to. The price we could afford, it will probably be a back street in Barrow or somewhere which neither of us wants to do. We will just have to wait and see. That's in the future.

GJ Have there been any good changes do you think?

JC Well, for some people. Some people have got mains water. That came through in the early nineties.

GJ Have you?

JC No. We've got a good private supply up in the wood which Raymond maintains. The Parish Room only got water when the water came through in the late nineties or early two thousands. The Parish Rooms got mains water and put flush toilets in. Before it was earth closets and Francis Newby used to carry a can of water to meetings to make drinks and wash up. They put the telephone underground as well. I wish they would do the same with the electric wires because since the telephone went underground we've had one break of service. That's definitely a good thing.

GJ You'd like the electricity underground?

JC Well apart from anything else, the trees can't fall down and break the wires, can they? That's the main problem. When the power goes down it's usually because a tree has fallen across the wire and snapped it. Then they have to search to find where it's at which take all day in some places. They used a mole plough to put the telephone line in. It didn't take that long and we've not had any interruptions since. The electricity only came here in the late fifties. Mrs Johnson and Francis Newby were actually wallpapering the staircase here when the news came of the Manchester United air crash so that's how I can pin down when the electric came here. The Broadband is pathetic. Something was going to be happening on the news tonight that they were bringing it to more rural areas but I'll believe that when I see it.

GJ That's one of the changes you'd like to see is it?

JC Well, I can access the internet but it's so slow. You switch on and you wait, and you wait, and you get on line, then there is not enough power. When Raymond wants anything doing I prefer to do it in a morning because, it's quite ironic, if you get it done before 12 o'clock, America's not on line so it's a bit faster. Once America comes on line at 12 o'clock our time, forget it it's a snail's pace. You might as well dial up. It's because we are too far from the exchange here. If you went all the way around the wires, it's probably over a mile away which is too far. Yes, that's the one thing that's missing really.

GJ We talked about how you came to the valley, the changes in farming and some changes in the numbers of people, the types and ages of people in the valley, are there any other changes?

JC Traffic's a lot heavier but really I think most things look the same. You could take a picture 30 years ago and it wouldn't look much different now. There are not many places you can say that about.

GJ How about the Church, is the role of the Church changed at all?

JC Well, I must admit I've slipped. I was a keen church member and then things started altering. Different people moved into the area, joined and started taking over and poo-pooed the locals who had been here for generations who knew how things had been done before. Knew the way like even a basic thing like setting up the alter for a service. To be told that you are doing it wrong by someone who has only moved in five minutes ago, and you been a churchwarden for twenty years, is a bit ironic.

GJ Were you a churchwarden?

JC I was Churchwarden. I was Church Secretary. We had a lovely old couple lived round at Rusland Vicarage. Max was treasurer and secretary and every factotum you could think off in those days, and sadly he went downhill very quickly. He was taken ill mid-November and he died in the January. It was very rapid which left the Church with nobody. We were all floundering and didn't know which way to so I got made secretary, Tolbert Williams became treasurer and Angus Adams and I were both agreed to be church wardens. I stuck at that role until 96/97. There was a lot of friction is the best way to describe it in the PCC at the time and I felt, I'm not having any more of this. So I stood down. The Vicar we had at the time had been extremely ill. He'd had a 5 way bypass operation, so we relied on locums. Some were good, some were indifferent. I think that's when things started changing. We were lucky in that we got a lady vicar who was with us for 7 or 8 year. Then she had to retire because of her age. We got a vicar at Hawkshead and we were linked in with Hawkshead then. Stephen Fry was at Hawkshead. He then moved on to Keswick I think, and from here, we got John (Dixon), who we've got now. He's an absolutely brilliant vicar but I became ill and I sort of slipped from then on. I've never really gone back which is sad. I just got out of the way of going. I've still got my faith, I just don't feel the need to go to church anymore, which is what a lot of people think now. You go what I call the necessary evils, the christenings, the marriages and the burials. Apart from that, I don't think the role is as dominant as it used to be, which is sad because we have a beautiful church in a beautiful setting. The only thing that has altered there is the church yard which was extended in 2000. I don't think anything else has changed.

GJ Are there any changes you would like to see personally, or for the valley, or family?

JC The changes I'd like to see would be impossible but to put some more houses up for locals but there's nowhere to put them at affordable prices. Our younger daughter, when she got married she had no choice. She had to leave the valley because there was nowhere for her to live.

GJ Would your children, would Adam like to stay in the valley?

CJ He would like to, there's no two ways about it but it's the age old question. Where do you get the money from to buy? If he couldn't buy, there's no tenancies available. What there are, they are usually (I'm talking about farms now) are already sorted out who they are going to let it too before they advertise it. Or like that one up at Borrowdale last year was just split up and they sold the farmhouse off. The land goes to all the local farmers which is good in one way because the land stays in farming.

GJ It stopped another family making a living?

CJ I once jokingly said if I won the lottery, and as I don't play it I'm not going to win it, 'if I ever won the lottery I'd buy you all a house. Where would you want it to be?' She said you can buy this spot for me. Joanna, she's in New Zealand, has her own set up over there.

JD While we are talking about children, my children often talk about you and all the crafts you taught them at school.

JC I love that! I used to go into school, well it started off as one afternoon, Friday afternoons. Then the teacher decided the children were too tired on a Friday afternoon for crafts so we moved it to Wednesday morning. While I remember, Philip at Danes How, he took to knitting and according to his sister, he is still knitting the same scarf he started with me. (Laughs!) Twenty Five

years ago! It keeps growing and it's his way of relaxing. She said it's crazy, I know when he is tense, the knitting comes out and he starts again. She asked him `are you never going to finish that? No, because, I've forgotten how to cast off!` Macramé, sewing, I did all sorts with them and I loved it. I only ever had a battle with one child, and when he realized what I was doing wasn't actual school work, he complied, which I thought was great. I just left him to do his own thing and eventually he realized what we were doing. There has always been somebody doing craft at school. Jenny Askew did it before me. She did it for a lot of years but this was a community thing. The community went into the school and were made welcome. The nearest you get to it now is when somebody goes in as a teaching assistant and helps with reading or something like that.

JD What about all the costumes you used to make?

JC Oh, I'd forgotten about that. I remember making some bat wings for someone just out of nylon and some wires. I had great fun with that. Then somebody more professional took over. I can't remember who that was but somebody. I was sick one year and couldn't do it and somebody else took over and I thought, that's it, I'm not doing it again. That was far better than mine. Mine were more like fancy dress should be, something you've pulled out of the ragbag where you make something out of nothing. These were freshly bought fabrics and things.

JD Those plays were amazing weren't they?

JC You've missed something Graham. We used to have a whale of a time. In fact I've got a picture in the drawer there. If I showed you, Adam would never forgive me, of Adam dressed up as a fairy. His fairy dress was made from Joanne's wedding underskirt. It was quite funny and he had a wig on and it got in the paper, it was either 20 or 25 years since his sister had last performed on that stage in the same play, a primary school play. I kept it and he never forgave me for keeping it. It's just one of those stupid things that you do.

JD Was that in the Theatre in the Forrest?

JC Yes, it was. I know when Carol and Joanne started it was in Satterthwaite Parish Room and somebody put a couple of bamboo canes across. There used to be old light fittings on the walls and you could put a cane in. I think they had been the old gas lamps and they had literally just cut them off so there was a pipe. So they put these curtain, they weren't very heavy curtains as the whole thing would have collapsed. They had a little stage that somebody had obviously made with plywood and what have you. When the kids were ready, all you could hear was feet banging on these boards. Joanne was very shy which is quite ironic when you think she has become a school teacher but she never wanted to be front stage. She would be prompter or help with the costumes. She was always like that and we finally managed in her last year to get her on to the stage. By then they had moved up to Grizedale but we had Young Farmers things there. Presentations and what have you. The WI went there but you see Bill Grant was a real valley man and he was in charge at Grizedale. When they opened the Theatre in the Forest they realized at the last minute, within two or three weeks of it opening, that all they'd got for seating was these rock hard benches. So he came to the WI and asked them if there was any way they could make cushions for it. Then the President, who was Miss Dickinson from Barkhouse Bank, her brother had a upholstery store in Lancashire somewhere and she appealed to him to and we got the fabric and the foam. We made these great big long cushions for all the benches in the theatre. His way of saying thank you was to let the school and the WI have it for a peppercorn rent whenever they wanted to put any performances on. When he retired, the new guy literally shut the valley out. The

last time I went into the theatre, I was disgusted because it was a no smoking theatre and yet there on the stage, was an ashtray 12 inches across piled high with cigarette stubs. The Forestry people were having meetings in there and they weren't cleaning up after themselves. It was an absolute disgrace. Whether it's still like that, I don't know.

GJ How about healthcare?

JC We have two directions, either go north to Hawkshead or as I do, south to Haverthwaite. Hospitals, we are equidistant between Kendal and Barrow. For outpatients, we do have a branch in Ulverston. For old people's care there used to be a nursing home at Colton. That's long gone but there is still one down at Haverthwaite.

GJ Were there more surgeries?

JC No, there were actually less because Hawkshead has been there all along but Haverthwaite, when we came here, it was in a caravan outside the doctors house. Then he built the surgery across the road. Then he left but it was his building so he sold the building for a house. The surgery moved into the secretary's house at the other end of the village. In the meantime the new doctors built the present surgery. When we only had one doctor, we now have two at the moment. We did have three but one's left to become a university lecturer. There's another one coming in October., but they split their time between Haverthwaite and Greenodd. There is a surgery down at Greenodd. There was a surgery there and then for ten or twelve years there was nobody. Then our surgery opened up in the village hall to run that there. After that you are either into Ulverston or to Flookborough or Grange. We are well catered for. You see some of these inner city people when they say ring up for an appointment, you have to be dying to see them within a fortnight. You very rarely wait more than a day down here to get an appointment. So yes we're lucky.

GJ Were their district nurses or midwives?

JC Yes, one of them lived at Oxen Park, still lives there but she has retired now. Raymond had a bad appendicitis a lot of years ago now and his wound was weeping. He had to have it dressed every day and Zella used to come and tidy him up every day. Midwives? I don't recall having a midwife after Helen Adam. I might be wrong! I'm getting ancient and forgetting things.

GJ Where did you have Adam?

JC I had Adam at Barrow and the girls were both born at Kendal like I was. I had Adam at Barrow and that hospital had only been open a couple of years when I had him. It was excellent at the time. They really looked after us. I had him on the Thursday and it was Bank Holiday that weekend so it was peaceful. We came home and nobody was about. I've got a picture somewhere of Raymond. The poor lad must have been exhausted driving up and down to Barrow every day, as well as doing his farm work. There is a picture of him sitting on a chair in the front room with curtains drawn with Adam, and they are both fast asleep in his chair. That was the day I came home from the maternity unit.

GJ Well we've been talking for more than an hour and quarter so thank you very much and thank you Janet Dobson for doing the recording . Thank you for your time.

JC You are welcome.

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