

HANKERTON – QUEEN'S SILVER JUBILEE

In the years preceding the Silver Jubilee Hankerton had seen its native elm trees fall victim to Dutch Elm disease and the village was looking very bare. It was decided to celebrate the Jubilee not only with a barn dance at Common End Farm but also to buy some trees to replace the vast number of elms which had died and been felled. The activity was organised by Bunny Lees-Smith and Beryl Williams of Dolmans Farm, it is thanks to Bunny that we have the information below.



As the land upon which the planting would take place was highway property the Highways Agency were approached, they agreed and not only would allow the planting but would also provide their tree consultant to advise the right locations and species and best of all they could provide at cost the trees from the county nursery.

At the time no fence or hedge existed along the boundary between Follyfield properties and the road (Windmill Hill Road). The trees were planted with the help of village children. Initially all seemed to take but over a couple of years it became clear that some of the locations were poor ground and some died. Many survive today and this is their story.

Group 1 – On the south verge between the Priory and the junction of the road to Eastcourt. Here were planted 3 beech trees spaced well apart. A couple of years later all three were mowed down by accident and one was replaced. This still exists along with the recent addition of green telephone boxes.

Group 2 – just south of the entrance to Rookery Farm lane, on the west verge. Two trees of unknown species were planted and they still exist but are incorporated into the small copse.

Group 3 – At the boundary with Follyfield and Windmill Hill Road 3 Horse chestnut trees were planted on the east verge. Many of you walk past these trees every day, they are behind Follyfield numbers 1, 2 and 4 with number 2's tree being legally inside the garden.



On the west verge nearly opposite the entrance to Follyfield a conifer was planted together with a sycamore at the entrance to Follyfield, both still exist.



Group 4- At the junction of Down lane and Vicarage Lane 2 trees were planted. A conifer and a copper Beech. Unfortunately the conifer did not survive although a replacement was planted and presumably the soil was not suitable because it died as well. The surviving Beech is on the left above.

Group-5 A silver birch was planted at the east end of the bus shelter.

So 45 years on these trees that we know so well are celebrating their planting day.

Bunny Lees-Smith and Anne Goodyer