

Dorothy Jamieson

I started my working life as a caterer, and after the birth of two daughters returned to work at Bedford College as a lecturer, gaining my Certificate of Education, and a Diploma in Further Education, by part-time study. Some of my most enjoyable experiences were when I taught on the City and Guilds course for part-time teachers. They were such diverse groups, wood-carvers, sociologists, nurses, hairdressers and more. Some of my groups of youngsters from Mark Rutherford School were memorable too.

When I took early retirement, in 1992, one of the first things I did was join the National Trust volunteer team of garden guides at Stowe Landscape Gardens. I have been a National Trust volunteer and a perpetual student ever since.

After some years their archaeologist, Gary Marshall suggested that I took an interest in the Tudor buildings at Willington, which led me to the northern edge of the Greensand Ridge and which I still find fascinating. I published my book 'Willington and the Mowbrays' as Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, volume 95, in 2019. I had thought that Latin was a complete irrelevance when I was at school, but many years later surprised myself by working from original medieval Latin documents; I had a lot of help from friends and staff at Bedfordshire Records. Another surprising thing is that I took a second degree without taking a first one. Leicester University accepted me on a Master of Arts Research Degree in English Local History which I successfully completed.

Perhaps my proudest moment was when Willington Local History Group was founded so that the National Trust's Willington Volunteers could receive a Heritage Lottery Grant of over £8,000, in about 2005. The Grant paid for a spectacular Timeline (in the Stables), a lovely interpretation board (by the National Trust Car Park), a survey of the Stables by Nicholas Cooper, and a Heritage Trail of the village.

When I was asked to do some research into the Greensand Ridge, north of Sandy, in about 2020, I jumped at the chance and two very enjoyable years was the result. Lots of lovely people shared their specialisms, memories and knowledge with me and I hope that many other people will enjoy reading what I wrote. My booklet, entitled 'Lives and Landscapes - on the north end of the Greensand Ridge' went live on the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership website in the Resources section, in Mid-May 2022, so it is readily available.

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