

The lead story in Feb. 2010 edition of Clubnews was dedicated to the news that on 21st January 2010 close family and friends of Edith Ash gathered at the Pink & Lily public house to celebrate the occasion of her 100th birthday. It was certainly an honour and privilege to be asked and for most present it was also a unique experience, for how often in a lifetime can you expect to be invited to such an occasion? How many sports clubs can boast of having an active member who is 100 years of age? Son Colin and his wife and daughter had flown in from Vancouver to pay homage to Edie on her very special day.

Edie's Story

She was born into the world Edith Knight at Mundford in the county of Norfolk and was the fourth of a family of 8 siblings. She seems to have inherited her father's genes for he himself lived to one month short of 100. He was the Clerk of Works at nearby Lynford Hall where his role was to oversee the workers on the estate. So, while the terrible conflict of World War 1 was raging, Edie's early childhood was spent in the relative tranquillity of rural Norfolk.

However, that was not to last. The end of the war brought changes to the old social structure and her father decided to take up the job as a manager at Tilmanstone Colliery in Eythorne near Dover, which meant uprooting the whole family and moving down to the area of the Kent Coal Fields.

It is worth noting that the colliery had its own green and it was here that the family are thought to have got their first introduction to the game of flat green bowls. At the age of 14, Edith leaves school and enters domestic service in a big London house where she remains for 6 years.

In 1936, Edith is married to George Brookes who is employed at the mine as a Fitter.



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We know that the 30's and Second World War years must have been hard times during which to raise a family. Never-the-less, they brought into the world two children, a fine boy named Colin, followed some three years later by a dear little girl who Edith called Carole.

In later life, son Colin's business took him to many parts of the world. This presented Edith with the chance - at which she of course jumped - of visiting all sorts of exotic places, including Africa and Canada.

The year is now 1945, and Edie is still only in her mid thirties when



tragedy strikes. After a long and difficult illness, her beloved George dies of what the family believe was cancer. Edie is now faced with the daunting prospect of having to support herself and her two youngsters. Thankfully, younger sister Phyllis is the manager of the Post Office in nearby Elvington and is able to offer her a job, which Edith decides to accept.

Then in 1970, Edie remarries at the age of 60 and she and Jack Ash go on to enjoy 22 years together before she is widowed for

the second time. Edie decides to share a home with her sister Phyllis and they take up residence in a little bungalow at a place called River which is a suburb of Dover.

After about 6 years when that becomes a bit much for her, she finally agrees to come and live with Dennis and Carole in Great Hampden. Phyllis was to become a regular guest to the household and for many years the two sisters were to be found side by side, watching the bowling and enjoying each others company.

It must have been around 1950, with the kids no longer a 24 hour a day job, when she and Phyllis took up bowls. Ever since, Edith has maintained a long and distinguished presence in the game. Her major success was achieved many years back when she was a finalist in the All England Ladies Indoor Pairs. It was she who introduced Dennis and Carole to the sport.

She joined 'Risborough in 1993 and only stopped bowling about eight years ago, although members of Foxhills IBC will remember her bowling indoors since that time.

To this day, Edie is an ever present spectator and attends most of the club's social events. Whenever you are on the green, just look up and more often than not you will see her sitting in the place that everyone regards as her seat. Sadly, what is different nowadays is that no longer can sister Phyllis be at her side but her little dog Holly is always a welcome sight.

She remains a remarkable lady. She pulls her weight with the household chores and enjoys a bit of gardening; still likes a glass of sherry and is never happy to be other than last to retire to her bed at nights; she steadfastly refuses to be excluded from the chance of a bit of fun. She is always cheerfully responsive to any greeting coming her way.



At their January meeting, the GPC unanimously agreed to honour Edith with a Life Membership. There is no doubt that this recommendation will receive resounding support at the next AGM.

We all have much to envy and indeed learn from her quiet contentment.