

## Juliet King-Smiths delight at seeing ingenious Scarecrows 2019

Report by Stella Beecher

On Wednesday 30 Oct 2019 we residents of Frampton Cotterell and Coalpit Heath were able to truly express and honour the memory of our distinguished historic celebrity , author Dick King-Smith. His daughter Juliet King-Smith kindly travelled to visit us and spent the whole day here, she had a very busy itinerary. Juliet viewed the large range of scarecrows in the morning, enjoyed a tasty lunch in the local cafe, walked around old countryside haunts, met residents, read to local children, signed books and was given a tour of St Saviours Church by the Rev Colin Lunt. Juliet's face lit up when we arrived at the shops in Church Road, and saw their scarecrows.



*Figure 1 Just Binnie at My English Home*

“Just Binnie “ sitting in a comfortable chair gazing out of the window from My English Home was the first scarecrow which caught Juliet's eye. Juliet was also immediately wanting to go on a shopping spree in the shop itself but we pointed out that there were a lot of other scarecrows to go to see so time would not allow this!

The next shop was the butcher's, Molesworths, with a scarecrow “The Mouse Butcher”. Juliet enjoyed a long chat with the friendly butcher, who explained that they had thought carefully about choosing an unusual book instead of the very famous ones from the 140 he had written. The butcher's wife had sewn the toy mice for their display.



*The Mouse Butcher*



*The Queens Nose*

The Gingerbread café had a scarecrow with “The Queen's Nose” book as their inspiration, this time she had a gingerbread nose.

When we reached The Finger Eater scarecrow Juliet shivered, and admitted that this story always made her feel a bit squeamish and she wondered where on earth her father had got such an idea from. Juliet's camera was being clicked in overdrive by this stage.



*Juliet photographing the Crowstarver*

Further along Church Road Juliet peered from the bridge down into the high River

Frome flowing along, and kindly posed by the Sophie scarecrow on the bench outside St Peter's Church. Juliet had explained to me when we had met before that the series of six Sophie books were based on her mother, Dick King-Smith's wife Myrle, she had shared her husband's love of all animals.



*Juliet with Sophie*



*Juliet at the C of E school*

Our next stop was "Sophie's Snail" in the grounds of Frampton Cotterell Church of England School. Juliet and ourselves were so pleased to see so many of the children's own drawings of the snail hung on the fence. Juliet has told us many times that she would be very happy to come to read some of the Dick King-Smith stories to a class, and answer any questions about her father or being a child on a farm.



*The Crowstarver*



*The Foxbusters*



*The Hodgeheg*



*Aristotle*



*The Water Horse*



*Rats of Meadowsweet Farm*



*The Crowstarver*



*The Adventurous Snail*



*The Adventurous Snail*



*The Crow Starver*



*2The Adventurous Snail*



*The Golden Goose*



*Emily's Legs*



*The Water Horse*



*The Sheep Pig*

A huge boar called Monty had given Dick King-Smith the idea for the story of the The Sheep Pig, later the film Babe. Monty had lived close to the GWR railway line and so this setting with a model railway was very appropriate.

Grand Prize Giving Sat 2 Nov 2019 11.00 am. Brockeridge Centre.

The winning scarecrows were :-

1st The Adventurous Snail , (wooden log segment )

2<sup>nd</sup> Lost Cat Aristotle, ( Witch flying on wall )

3<sup>rd</sup> The Water Horse ,( painted on a garage door. )

## Comments on her visit by Juliet King-Smith:

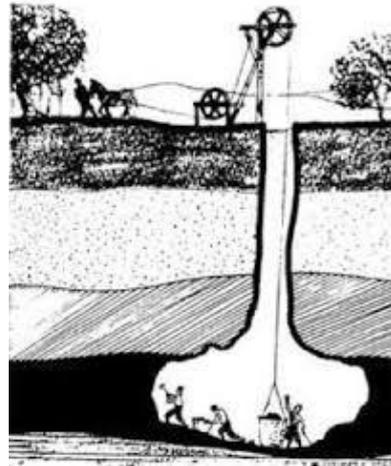
“Thanks for a terrific day on Wednesday. It was so nice to be in Coalpit Heath again. I loved the brilliantly-imaginative scarecrows and am composing an email about the competition and the proposed commemorative sculpture to interested members of the family, to let them know how you and your community are keeping Dad’s name in the public eye - well done!”

“I enjoyed the delicious lunch too and was amused to remember myself in the nextdoor hairdresser’s, with nasty, uncomfortable rollers in my hair, under an over-heated dome hairdryer, in a teenage attempt to doll up before some party or dance or other!”

“The two local volunteers gave me a splendid tour of the parts of the farm we could get to. I think they were amused to be taken into the woods by me, having never ventured there before. The two woods now seem to have become one and were rather different from what I remembered, but we are talking 60 years ago and there are huge trees there now.”

“The gathering in the hall that used to be the primary school went very well, I thought, and it was nice to meet some locals and their kids and to read, ostensibly, to the children, but I noticed the parents and helpers seemed to enjoy listening in too. It was good to meet the vicar and to visit the church for probably the first time since my sister’s christening there in 1948!”

“All best wishes, Juliet.”



Blackberry Brake woodland , humps and bumps caused when early coal bell pits collapsed.



A final look at the last beautiful fields.