



Cleeve Prior Chroniclers

Coronation Day, June 2nd 1953 –Lin Hawkins

A wet Coronation day started for us with the news of Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing reaching the summit of Mount Everest.

My Dad was in Stratford –upon-Avon Hospital at the time, so along with my mum, brother Rob and sister Sue, we went in the morning to our great Aunt Kates house [Mrs Kate Fairfax who lived at the Kot, the house next to The Mill House] and watched the procession and ceremony on her small black & white television. I remember the queen of Tonga waving to the crowds in an open carriage getting very wet. Other neighbours and friends were there watching and the room was very crowded.

The rain Cleared by the afternoon and we all met at Mill Lane in our fancy dress costumes. There was a procession down the village to Long furlong, the field behind the kings Arms, where we all took part in the sports & games. The last event was the tug of war for men & boys, followed by a prize giving the sports winners and the best fancy dress costume



Mike Selby's fancy dress 1953

Then it was off to the War Memorial Hall for tea.

The adults had to bring their own cutlery, and the tea was spread out for them in the hall itself, the children's tea was laid out on trestle tables in the undercroft. We used the cutlery & plates belonging to the school and drank squash from coronation mugs we had been given. I think everyone had ham salad, jelly and cakes for tea, plus alcohol for the adults.

In the evening there was a firework display at the school and a social, with games and dancing in the War Memorial Hall. It was here that I sang accompanied on the piano by Mike Selby, the 50's chart hit how much is the doggy in the window. Mr Jack Lloyd from Mill House told me I had done very well and gave me a shilling.