

## Memories by Marion Richardson

I am looking through some old photographs from my childhood. It is difficult to decide which memories to choose to write about because there are so many. However, I have to include ones about sailing. My father had a great love of sailing and he talked about it so much that my mother said to him one day "If you feel so passionately about it, why don't you buy a boat!" The result was that one day we all went down to Bridport harbour to see a boat called "Esmeralda" and I was surprised to learn that she belonged to us, my father had bought her and here she was moored up to the harbour wall. I remember climbing down the ladder and stepping on board with the rest of the family and that was the start of finding my "sea legs". Esmeralda was an open boat with two sails. The hull was clinker built and varnished. That is all the detail that I can remember. Later, Esmeralda was sold and replaced by Daisy.



This photograph was taken on my new little Brownie box camera and used by my mother in a Christmas greeting full of pictures and writing by all the family. Daisy was much bigger and had a cabin with two bunks and a little galley. There was also a tender called Bud, a small rowing boat used to row out to Daisy on her mooring in the middle of the harbour. Every Easter holiday was spent painting the boats and all the Summer was spent sailing whenever my father's work commitments and the weather allowed. And when my father was too busy we children could amuse ourselves rowing or sailing round the harbour in a dinghy of which we had about four.



Of course sailing was a major feature of family holidays and these two pictures were taken at Salcombe. My father and eldest brother Peter sailed from Bridport to Salcombe and Mother drove there with Eleanor, Richard and I. We had the trailer on the back piled high with tents, equipment and supplies. We camped on a farm by the estuary and spent the days on the boat sailing trips up the estuary and out to sea. And swimming of

course, which is so different diving off the boat rather than walking into the water from the beach. The dog is Trixie and one abiding memory is of her falling into the water as she scrambled to get from Bud into Daisy.



This was our last family holiday before Peter emigrated to New Zealand and this formal picture was one of the “lasts” before he went.

When I was at primary school we did a play. I was the Queen of the Fairies and my friend was Puck. I don't remember much else except that we did do a lot of intense rehearsing and it was staged in St. Mary's Church hall in Bridport. And we wore “Make Up”. Very exciting. My arms and legs were covered in a thick layer of artificial tan and it took two baths to remove it all afterwards.



Richard, who is seven years my senior, was always good at making things and always keen on boats. So, of course boat building was bound to come sooner or later. His first attempt was made out of orange boxes and did not stay upright. His second attempt was much more sophisticated and he presented me with a little dinghy all my own. We called it Mayfloat. My friend and I spent many happy hours rowing Mayfloat up the river and back. We were not allowed in the harbour and definitely not out to sea as my parents quite rightly deemed this a safety issue!

Richard eventually emigrated to Australia with his wife and sons in 1982 and there he built a proper boat in which they could go cruising, and he built their house and much beautiful furniture.



As well as sailing, camping was a regular holiday favourite and in August 1963 I went with my parents to Wales. We visited many castles and did a lot of walking. Here we are following a stream to its source up the mountain side. We also camped in Scotland more than once, and on Dartmoor and Exmoor and in the Lake District.



I was now nineteen and a student in London. This picture of my father and I was taken in September that year and must have been a Sunday from the way we are dressed. My father was a lay preacher at Chardsmead Baptist Church in Bridport and a deacon. Regular Sunday worship was a normal part of family life for us. He was a GP, working in a practise in Bridport for fifty years before retiring at the age of 67. This picture was taken in the garden of their house in Burton Bradstock. It was a large new bungalow which they designed themselves and moved into when I was 17.

Previously they had lived in a large old rented house in the main street in Bridport for about 25 years, from which the practise was run. When the lease ran out they decided to buy and were very pleased with the decision. They lived there through their retirement for the remainder of their lives. Their attendance at Chardsmead continued for a long time but eventually they started to attend St. Mary's Church in the village and seemed happy with that.

This is my maternal Grandfather, the Rev. Fred King. He was a Baptist minister and in his time had churches in Bristol, Liverpool and Tooting in London. He and my grandmother retired to Worthing and eventually mover to Bridport to be near my parents where they were cared for by my Auntie Winnie. She was no relation to them but was my father's sister. He continued to preach at Chardsmead for many years. This picture was taken on his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in June 1965. Of course all the family gathered at his house in Bridport for the occasion and the local press took this picture. He was very proud to be 100 and also of his telegram from the Queen. A few weeks later he died and I was also celebrating my coming of age on my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. There are some strong memories for me of the two emotions combined.

Two years later, after I had qualified and was working in London, I met Neil and we were married in St. Mary's Church in Burton Bradstock. We lived in London, Salisbury and Oldham and then came to Greenford Magna in 1982.



**Marion Richardson** (nee Stanford)