



CROMWELL HOUSE











Two Stalwart Supporters: A Local Profile *interview by Billy Count*

Hilda Kent and Margaret Howse are both talented women. Hilda is an artist and each week creates fantastic three-dimensional displays for the Bush Club, to provide a focal point for the meetings. She uses a variety of materials including her own photographs, models and pastel drawings. Margaret is a keen gardener and has magnificent displays of flowers and a flourishing kitchen garden.

They first met in Witney when both were in the Land Army; Hilda was running a hostel for milkers and recruited Margaret as an experienced milker. Able to work by

hand or operate machinery, she eventually became Hilda's assistant. Hilda moved to Bampton, about 40 years ago, to look after her father who had been evacuated from the south coast during the war and was in lodgings here. She helped in winding up the hostel in Witney and then became the local driving instructor until about 10 years ago.

After leaving the Land Army Margaret came to stay with Hilda whilst "thinking what to do". She worked as a bus conductor for some years before setting up her own private car hire service, retiring in 1988.

Since then and because they had friends already involved and wanted to help, they have both become active supporters of the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund. For the last three years Margaret (Hilda describes herself as "the back-up") has held a sale outside the house on the Morris Dancing day and this year raised over £1600 for the Fund. She helps with coffee mornings and collecting for the charity outside local supermarkets. This year all the money raised locally will be staying in Oxfordshire and they are hoping to fund the training of two extra nurses in areas such as pain control and counselling.

Hilda is a supporting member of the Horticultural Society whilst Margaret is on



the committee; they are both interested in the countryside and the environment. Margaret is the gardening enthusiast whilst Hilda is the "dead-header"! The Society put on two big shows a year, and the committee organise other events like the recent demonstration of flower arranging, lectures and social events for members.

Both women are also involved with BEWG and believe in conservation and planning; "We all care about Bampton and what's happening to it, and don't want it ruined. We want to maintain an environment people would like to live in".

