

## Goodbye Emmie's

Saturday May 26<sup>th</sup> was a very sad day; it was the end of the village newspaper shop that had served Bampton people for well over 60 years by the Bishop and Papworth families.

We all knew this great shop as Emmie's but it was renamed this by Tom and Sylvia when they took over the running 28 years ago. This name was in honour of Tom's mother Emmie Papworth, nee Bishop, who had run the shop for 24 years before that. In her day it was 'Bridge Street Stores - Grocer's and Newsagent's', but as Tom says 'everyone used to say they were just popping to Emmie's, so we just called it that'.

But before that, it was run by Tom's uncle, George Bishop, who had an interesting way of running the business - from the window seat of the old Wheatsheaf Public House. This was over the road in what was Bampton's (most recent) old Post Office. George had a good bell on the shop door, and when he heard this ring he would leave his pint - or his empty glass, as he is remembered as the man who could down a pint in record time - to come and serve. Customers would have a much longer wait today given the present traffic on Bridge Street.

In the 1930's Emmie Bishop used to run a grocery round from the shop serving the neighbouring villages. This was one 'horsepower', as it was her horse 'Kit' that pulled the cart. Tom said in a recent film interview for Bampton Community Archive, that he thought it was rationing after the war that killed this off, as 'with rationing there was nothing for her to take round'.

But if that wasn't enough Emmie was also a village postwoman, fondly remembered as ever cheerful and friendly. But Tom too was no slacker, he combined running the business with being a Fireman, and in those days he was on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. He later became Officer in Charge of the Fire Station in 1977, a position he held until he retired in 1996.

Both Tom and Sylvia were born in Bampton, Sylvia's family running the Eagle Public House in Church View. This is where she met Tom, who would come in for half a pint on his way home after his shift at the Fire Station, which was then based in the Town Hall.

Budgen's now sells newspapers but it will never compete with Emmie's, who regularly stocked a staggering 700 to 800 different titles of magazines. And it was a family friendly shop too; as Tom says his top shelf dirty magazines were all about gardening!

We thank Tom and Sylvia for all the service they have given and wish them a long and happy retirement - but 'Emmie's' will be so sadly missed.

(Information kindly provided by Janet Rouse @ Bampton Community Archive)

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*By Jane Wallis*

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Emmie and her sister Rose and their horse, Kit



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(Information kindly provided by Janet Rouse @ Bampton Community Archive)

Emmie Papworth (nee Bishop)



## Emmies – A big thank you Tom and Sylvia

*By Fenella Gray MBE*

I don't know how old I was when I first went into Emmie's, but I must have been quite young as I could barely see over the counter to choose my sweets! In those days it was called Bishop's Newsagents, and with George and Emmie behind the counter.

When Emmie died, Tom took the shop over and changed the name to Emmie's. I think everyone in Bampton knew Emmie Papworth so it was a really a nice thing to do for his Mum.

It still seems strange to go past and not see the papers hanging up outside the shop with the honesty box. There are not many places in the UK, if any, where you can still have honesty boxes, and shows that Bampton is still a good place to live.

This note is just to say a big thank you to Tom and Sylvia from the village for all the years we have enjoyed getting our papers delivered and just being such a friendly cosy newsagents to visit. I think that I can speak for everyone in wishing you both the very best in your retirement - just relax and enjoy it.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Zara for taking on the newspaper round now. Don't forget you can purchase the papers in Patrick Strange's Butchers Shop after 9am.



**THANK  
YOU**