

## **Bramham Millennium Characters : 1 James [ Jimmy ] and Dolly Mullen**



Born in Regiskin , County Cavan , Eire on 25 . 1 . 1917 , the son of a farmer, Jim came to Yorkshire in 1957 , living first [ for 6 years ] at Walton on the Wighill road before settling in Bramham . Soon after his arrival in England he married Dorothy [ Dolly ] , also from Co. Cavan , at Wetherby Church . Their four daughters [ Elizabeth , Sylvia , Heather and Sandra ] have presented them with six grandchildren , all living within easy reach.

Jim & Dolly 's first home in Bramham was at what became Prospect Farm Cottage , in those days the farmhouse for Prospect Farm , a Bramham Park mixed farm producing cattle , sheep and crops. The farmer , Alan Smith, lived at the Manor House , but , as he was a sick man , Jim was the farm manager , working all days and all hours. On Alan Smith 's death , the Estate took the decision to sell the farmyard and about 12 acres for housing development [ Prospect Bank ] , and the house separately , thus taking away Jim and Dolly 's home and employment after 5 years. At this point Jimmy went to work at Westminster Plant Hire on Thorp Arch Trading Estate , where he spent the 18 years until his retirement in 1986.

Throughout his 36 years in Bramham to the Millennium , Jimmy has been one of its best - known --- and best - loved and respected --- citizens . Few would not recognise the hunched figure on the little motor bike as he zoomed from one job around the village to another. It was a matter of great regret when , in his late 70 's , Jimmy had to give up his bike . Not that this stopped his gallop , though he now had to rely on Dolly to run him about in their car , somehow appropriate for a couple so close. For both have made a great contribution to the village , working with a will for others and for the community.

Jimmy 's work has never seemed to stop , even when they were bringing up four teenage girls . Both he and Dolly have been pillars of the church , attending All Saints regularly , she at times on the church council , he a sidesman , and both running the produce stall at the Christmas Fair. Indeed , produce has been a large part of their lives , with Jimmy running several allotments at either end of the village [ and giving a good deal of their yield to a great many grateful recipients , whose delight would be to find a cauliflowers and some tatoes on their doorstep , left as if by magic by a modest donor ] . Both Jimmy and Dolly have for years been well - known around the local vegetable shows , at Tockwith , Shadwell , Thorner , Bardsey , Collingham and Tadcaster , winning a hatful of prizes each summer with their vegetables [ Jimmy ] and flowers and cakes [ Dolly ] .

Both Jimmy and Dolly have been employed in the village , Dolly in Mrs Cofling 's old shop next to the Red Lion , and Jimmy for the Wittingtons at the Old Hall , the Pembertons at Windmill House , the Heatons at Bramham Lodge , and many others. In fact , he would never refuse to help anyone out if he could , and has a host of Bramhamers in his debt for the good turns he has done them --- always with such modesty you would think they were donors and he the recipient ! Quietly , Jimmy has made his contributions to village life , more so than almost anyone , yet with an unvarying , self - effacing courtesy -- cutting grass and tending the plants in churchyard , old folks ' shelter and surgery for years.

For all that Jimmy has contributed to Bramham 's good , adding to its appearance and quality of life , it is nevertheless the man who is respected and admired , the Irish brogue unspoilt after all these years in Yorkshire , the care for other people , the utterly genuine modesty which seems to place himself last when others hold him among the best , the most likeable , the foremost of Bramham 's folk.