

ROWLANDS CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY

**Mrs Jennifer Bussell, 14 Wellsworth Lane, Rowlands Castle,
26 October 2004**

My name is Jennifer Bussell, I was born Jennifer Winnicott on 10-7-36. My earliest memory was when I was living in Cosham, where I was born, with my mother's mother standing behind me having lifted me up to look out of the window. After that, I think the next memory was being shown the cot into which my brother Robert was to be placed, when he was born. I was three, when he was born in 1939. My father was a builder, having followed into his father's company, which was R J Winnicott Ltd, which is going on to-day in the fourth generation now in Rowlands Castle. Obviously it was based in Portsmouth, in Copnor when my grandfather started and moved to Rowlands Castle after the war. The land and buildings were sold in Copnor and came up to Rowlands Castle. We lived in Deerleap, my grandfather had bought the house either late 1938 or early 1939. With the outbreak of war, he decided it would be a good move to get out of Cosham, Portsmouth to come to the country. There were about four families in Deerleap at the beginning of the war and he had to move out of the bigger house in Cosham into my parent's smaller house, because it was wanted by the army. So I had a very, very, happy childhood in Deerleap, with about 11 acres, what more could a child want? People came in to play with us rather than we going out to play. It was a very, very happy time and I was there until I got married in 1961. There were 2 children before the war started and 3 after, total 5. Robert was the next one to me, Gillian was born in 1941 followed by Geoffrey 1947 and Trevor 1951.

My sister and I went to a private school in Havant, Brightside. Robert and Geoffrey went to Bedales. Trevor stayed at Dunhurst and then went over to a school in West Sussex. We all went to the Village Sunday School and that is how we mixed with the Village Children.

After Brightside, I went down to Portsmouth, to the Commerce Department to learn shorthand and typing because I had no idea what I wanted to do. At the end of that time I went on holiday, I came back to my father saying 'Well the girl in the office has left, you had better come in to help us till you find a job or we find somebody else.' I stayed there until I got married. So that was until 1961 having left school at 16, it was 8-10 years. I did not find it a problem working in my father's office, after a few weeks of finding my feet and other people finding I was not difficult to work with and I didn't have any favouritism from my father and grandfather, I was accepted.

There were 3 in our immediate office and another 3 in the outer offices as well as the directors's office. The office was in Copnor, I had to catch trains and buses to get myself to Copnor from Rowlands Castle. I never had a car. It was train down to the town station and then a trolley bus back up to Lake Road and so on up to Copnor. I married John Bussell, who had been farming at Old Idsworth Farm, but when his father died the year before, the farm was sold because he was not able to carry on farming and maintain his mother and younger twin brothers there was obviously death duties to be paid. In his own words he did not know how to farm a small farm, he could only farm 1000 acres. He decided that the only thing he could do properly was to drive a lorry and spent his time doing National Service as an Instructor teaching people how to drive. He felt it was a good point to jump from. At the time, my father

had just bought the brickworks and was looking for a contractor to cart bricks, so it fell into place quite well. So he came into the family, bought his lorry, J M Bussell started under his name. Later, obviously it became J M Bussell Ltd and the lorries grew to 30. In fact, that is how the brickworks and John Bussell came into place.