

JACKMANS STORIES

Jackmans' Stories is a project created by One Community Museum, part of Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation (LGCHF). Earlier this year, the Museum began working with the local community to discover the stories of people who live or have lived on the estate and what makes the Jackmans estate a unique part of Letchworth's history.

Letchworth Urban District Council began constructing the Jackmans estate in 1959 and it was completed in 1973. The first residents moved in in 1962 – 60 years ago. The Jackmans Stories celebrates this 60th anniversary.

The Post War Need For Housing

The estate was built as part of a network of new town developments post World War Two. Sir Patrick Abercrombie in his 1944 London Plan, called for new towns to be built around the capital; an answer to the destruction of residential and industrial areas during the war time bombing raids. The resulting 1946 New Towns Act designated 28 new towns across the country, five of which were in Hertfordshire – Hatfield, Stevenage, Hemel Hempstead, Letchworth Garden City and Welwyn Garden City. From Washington, Tyne and Wear down to Crawley in Sussex – the house building programs were immense and changed the layout of England, Scotland and Wales.

Letchworth was a new town, the first foundation stone had been laid c. 40 years earlier at Howard Hall. The town was built on the principles of Ebenezer Howard in his book *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (1898) putting forward the concept that people and nature should live harmoniously together. The town was designed by town planners, Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin. Residential areas were dominated by open spaces with various species of trees and generous green areas. Letchworth was considered a town ahead of its time. Ken and Mary Fennemore who moved here in 1964 – 'What impressed us was the greenswards, the trees and the cleanliness of the place'.



The town attracted large manufacturing companies because of the good road and rail links. Industrial areas were built where they had least impact on the lives of residents. The first firms moved here were Messrs Ewart and Son, Heatley Gresham Engineering Company Ltd, the Garden City Press, WH Smith & Sons, The Arden Press, Lacre Motors and Spirella Co.

Neil Hamilton's family moved to the estate in 1964 and he remembers Works Road in Letchworth being full of large manufacturing factories attracting workers from all over the country – Irving Airchutes, K & L Steelfounders, International Computers Ltd (ICL) and Ogle Design. Neil's Dad worked for engineering company Borg Warner, before the family move to the estate his Dad had to be bussed from Kings Cross station to Letchworth.

The Design

The Jackmans estate was built on the Radburn principle named after the town of Radburn in New Jersey USA, designed by town planner Clarence Stein in 1929. He set out to build a 'garden city for the motor age', America was beginning to wrangle with the increased ownership of cars. The housing development separates cars and people, creating cul-de-sacs for parking and vehicle access to the back of the homes and pedestrian walk-ways between the residential areas at the front. There was also one feeder road for the residential areas; in Jackmans' case this was Radburn Way. By the 1960s, the UK was going through a boom in car ownership and turned to the Radburn principle for inspiration. It influenced many new town development not only in the UK, but all over the world.



Today the estate is a mix of private and social housing with Settle (originally North Herts Homes) being the main landlord. First Garden City Homes also own housing stock, including the 70 unit John Coxall Court built in 2020/21 to replace the Hamonte sheltered housing scheme. Garden City Court is a new care home on the estate, run by Quantum Care, once the site of Lannock School. Settle are launching a new Neighbourhood Model for the estate in Spring 2023 after an extensive consultation and research period has been completed.

In 1962, an Act of Parliament transferred the assets, role and responsibilities of First Garden City Ltd to a public sector organisation – Letchworth Garden City Corporation. Thirty three years later in 1995, a further Act of Parliament wound up the Corporation passing the £56 million estate to Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation. Income from the whole of their Letchworth estate is reinvested into the community.



Clockwise

Map showing different place names area of Letchworth, including Jackmans Plantation – created by Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews

Ebenezer Howard's Three Magnets Principle

London bomb damage – London Picture Archive

Separate Industrial area of Letchworth, c.1910 – Garden City Collection

The pedestrian walkways of the estate



We wish to thank all those residents, past and present, who have taken part in the Jackmans Stories plus Jackmans Community Centre, Kings Community Church, North Hertfordshire Museum, Settle and Letchworth Garden City Homes.



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The Build



In July 1955, London County Council and Letchworth Urban District Council (LUDC) agreed that farmland along Letchworth Gate to Baldock Lane, already designated as a new 'town area' would have housing built for 5000 people and after 10 years, the estate would be managed by LUDC. This farmland was known as the 'Jackmans Plantation'. The Baldock bypass, built later in 1967, helped connect the town and village. Initial designs were for 12 houses per acre of land (for comparison, Baldock Recreation Ground is 12 acres) with blocks of flats positioned in among housing areas.

Jackmans was a social housing estate managed by LUDC and built to provide much needed housing for both Letchworth residents and people moving to the town for work. In 1962, Colin Seymour, although a young boy remembers "how many 'new' kids there were like him, the same age and from all parts of the country, especially London". Like today, there were simultaneous private and public housing developments. When the Fennemores came to view their new home, they asked a builder which was the Jackmans estate, he replied - "this one, I don't build for capitalists, I build for workers - this is the council estate".



Building began in 1961 with each housing section following the alphabet, Allison, Bayworth and Chatterton being built first. The early residents moved into their new homes whilst it was still a building site. Colin and his parents moved from Chiltern View, Letchworth to a home in Allison as early as 1962. Ken and Mary Fennemore moved from London to their Allison home that same year - the first few weeks felt like they were on holiday. Brian Williams and his family moved to Allison in 1964.

Neil Hamilton was 8 years old in 1964, when he moved with his family from Stoke Newington into their new home in Chatterton - "it felt like I was living in a building site; although noisy and dusty, it provided a wealth of undiscovered places to play and hang out with new friends".

Denby, Ellice Fleetwood and Goldon were built from 1965 onwards. The houses along Radburn Way were also under development by this time. Marian and Bert Melton moved from London to a house in Denby in 1965; there was little chance of being allocated a council house in London and Bert had found work at K & L Steelfounders. At first, Marian remembers looking from her bedroom onto open fields and hoped that after 2/3 years they would be able to return to London. That was over 55 years ago!



From 1965, building began on Hamonte (now demolished), Jarden and Kyrkeby with new residents moving in from 1966/67 onwards. This area of the estate featured residential blocks of flats intermingled with houses.

The Ivel Court development along with Hadleigh began in 1969, with the precinct area of shops, Community Centre and the Carousel (now demolished) opening between 1970 and 1971. The housing developments of Lannock, Maddles, Newells, Oakhill, Parkside, Pryor Way, Quills and Rundells were already underway with residents moving in from 1968/69 onwards. Before the shops opened, Neil Hamilton and his brother would run errands to a small holding on Baldock Road for fruit and vegetables, at times balancing a 56lb bag of potatoes on the crossbars.



Once Ivel Court was built, the developers focussed on the other side of the Radburn Way and began to build Swanstand and Townley. In 1972, Brian and Julie Dean moved from Letchworth to initially a flat in Swanstand before moving to a house. Upper Maylins, Vincent,

Whiteways and Yardley were also under development. Maureen and Ray Palmer, moved from Kyrkeby to Yardley in 1971. Maureen remembers walking to Ivel Court with her young sons, looking over at the development and wondering when they would be able to move in.

The estate originally had three schools - Radburn Juniors, Lannock Juniors and Willian Secondary School. With changes in attendance figures and educational facilities nearby, a decision was made to close Willian in 1991 and the two junior schools merged into Garden City Academy in 2009. Woolgrove Special Needs Academy opened in 2012.

The social housing development of the Grange (1947) and Jackmans estate (1961) provided much needed housing and improvement in living standards for many of the early residents.

The Jackmans' Stories of those early residents reveal an air of excitement and hope for a positive future. The night before Brian Williams family moved in, he came with his father to their new home and slept in sleeping bags on the wooden floors. The removal van arrived the next day. Colin Seymour remembers his Mum being really happy that the house and everything in it was new. Neil Hamilton remembers their home in London had consisted of three ground floor rooms, in a 3 storey house. They went to the public baths and a public launderette. To have the whole house as a family with washing machine, kitchen with fridge, bathroom with inside toilet, garden and nearby open countryside was magical and idyllic. Lisa Melton remembers the family drove back to see relations in Islington regularly and they began to feel like 'country bumpkins' and couldn't wait to drive back home to Letchworth.

The shared experience of those who first moved into the Jackmans estate and went onto create a strong sense of community is a source of enormous pride for many. The children of those first residents have an equally strong attachment to the area, the same can be said of those who have moved onto the estate ever since. Whether people lived on the estate for 2 years or 55 years, their connection to the area remains as strong as the sense of community.



Clockwise

Radburn Way in snow, late 1960s - Garden City Collection

Building foundations, early 1960s - Garden City Collection

Ivel Court, early 1970s - Garden City Collection

Actor Sam Kidd cutting the ribbon at the opening of the estate 1961/2. The gentleman behind him wearing a chain is Charles Sax, Chairman LUDC - Garden City Collection.

Aerial Shot of the estate, late 1960s - Garden City Collection



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JACKMANS STORIES

1960s to 1970s

Ken and Mary Fennemore Allison



Ken and Mary Fenemore were one of the first 40 couples to have move onto the estate by 1964. Ken had applied for several new council estate developments, but they liked Letchworth – “What impressed us was the greenswards, the trees and the cleanliness of the place”. They moved from a two bedroomed flat in London to a new three

bedroomed house in Allison surrounded by countryside – the first few weeks felt like they were on holiday! Ken was able to continue his career working for the Post Office and Mary became the Secretary for the Community Centre.

The couple lived on the estate all their lives and were the original members of the Jackmans’ Community Association. Their pride for the estate was summed up in something a local builder said to them in 1964, after they were unsure where the Jackmans building site “ I don’t build for capitalists, I build for workers – this is the council estate”. Ken and Mary have sadly both passed away.

Brian G. Williams Allison

Brian’s family moved to No. 3 Allison in 1964. His parents had been on the London Council waiting list for 12 years and accepted the Letchworth property without seeing it. They were one of the first London residents; he remembers the neighbours at that time, the Blows family were at no. 1 Allison and the Seymores, at no. 2 Allison.

The night before the family moved in, he came with his father to their new home and slept in sleeping bags on the wooden floors. The removal van arrived the next day. Some of Allison, Bayworth and Chatterton were still under construction.

He remembers standing on the hill level court is now built on and looking across to arable fields full of hay/straw bales; he and his friends used to play on the bales until the Farmer chased them off. Shortly after the family moved in, he and his mother had to walk to the old Letchworth Hospital (Pixmore Avenue) to get a Doctor to come out and see his Dad, who had been taken ill. There were no telephone boxes on the estate at that time. He played football for Jackdaws and their home ground was near Upper Maylins. The football teams would meet up on the Carousel grounds, so named because it was shaped like a carousel.

He went to Willian School along with his younger brother, Charlie. Brian’s two daughters went to Radurn School and a count up of the housing areas he and his family have lived in comes to an impressive 12 – Allison, Bayworth, Denby, Elllice, Fleetwood, Jarden, Kyrkeby, Hadley, Hamonte, Maddles, Oakhill and Golden.

Brian is proud to have grown up and live on the Jackmans estate.



Denby, Elllice, Fleetwood and Golden – Garden City Collection

Colin Seymour Allison



Colin has lived on the estate most of his life. He moved here with his parents in the 1962 to a new house in Allison; the family came from Chiltern View, Letchworth. His Dad worked for Hertfordshire Rubber Company and Mum, Meridews and later, Shelvoke & Drury, all three were big employers in Letchworth. He remembers his Mum being really happy that the house and everything in it were new and how many

‘new’ kids there were like him, the same age and from all parts of the country, especially London. He was in the first year of Willian School, 1962; his daughter was in the last year of the school in 1991.

After leaving Willian, he went to college before joining the army and served 9 years. When he left the military, he returned to Letchworth and the Jackmans estate, working his whole career as an Engineer for BT, later Openreach. Now retired, there is no where else he could imagine himself living. His Mum sadly passed away in 2021 at the age of 91, still in the same house in Allison the family had moved into in 1962.

In 60 years time, he hopes the estate stays as it is – friendly, close community and a great place to live.

Neil Hamilton Chatterton



Neil lived on the Jackmans estate from 1964 to 1968, he was 8 years old and has many fond and clear memories.

The family moved from Stoke Newington; prior to the move his Dad, who worked for Borg Warner in Letchworth, was travelling up daily via coach from Kings Cross. From the 1960s to the 1980s, Works Road in Letchworth was full of large manufacturing factories attracting workers from all over the country – Irving Airchutes, K & L Steelfounders and International Computers Ltd (ICL). Like Neil’s Dad, many workers were bussed into the town daily under the London overspill scheme, before relocating.

The family moved into 31 Chatterton and Neil still remembers their neighbours, the Emsons on one side and the Ralphs on the other. He was particularly envious of Steve Emson who could climb the Jackmans’ lampposts!

Their home in London had consisted of three ground floor rooms, in a 3 storey house. They went to the public baths and a public launderette. To have the whole house as a family with washing machine, kitchen with fridge, bathroom with inside toilet, garden and nearby open countryside was magical and idyllic. Neil remembers for the first few months it felt like he was living in a building site; although noisy and dusty, it provided a wealth of undiscovered places to play and hang out with his new friends! A mobile fish and chip waggon visited roads on the estate each week.

He, his younger brother and friends would walk to Pixmore School (the original school on Pixmore Avenue). The brothers ran errands to a small holding on Baldock Road for fruit and vegetables, at times balancing a 56lb bag of potatoes on the crossbars. Although the family moved to a different road in Letchworth after four years, he was still able to attend Willian School until he was 16 and kept his Jackmans’ friendship group. When he left school, he joined Hertfordshire Police Cadets and later the Police.

In 60 years, he hopes the community still finds comradery in the shared experience of living on the estate. In the 1960s everyone was skint, all were young families and kids of all ages hung out together.



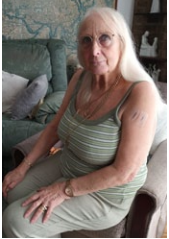
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JACKMANS STORIES

1960s to 1970s

Marion Melton Denby



Marion had never heard of Letchworth when she and her husband Bert moved from London to a house on Denby in 1965. Bert had found work at the K & L Steelfounders factory in the town. When they first moved in, Denby had just been completed and work was beginning on Ellice and Fleetwood. Marion could look out over open fields from her bedroom. This was a view she did not relish and was hoping the couple and their two young daughters would be there for 2/3 years before being

given the opportunity to return to London, once more social housing had been built. That was just over 55 years ago!

Bert remained at K & L Steelfounders for many years whilst Marion worked initially in the small Ivel court supermarket before moving to Sainsburys where she remained for 26 years. She became the store Shop Steward and an active member of the Trade Union movement, in particular the Union of Shop, Distillery and Allied Workers attending all their conferences.

Social responsibility was important to both her and Bert. They dedicated many years to Jackmans Community Centre and were part of the group who established the Jackmans' Tenants' Association; she was Chair of the Association for 17 years and Bert did a lot of work for the Community Centre. He sadly passed away recently.

Marion has seen many changes on the estate, some welcome, some less so. The decision to close Willian School in 1991 upset many residents and combining Lannock and Radburn Schools into Garden City Academy (2009) has changed the feel of the estate. She organised many events at the community centre and helped organise the Fun Days between the Grange and Jackmans estate. She has many great memories of families who have come and gone. In the 1980s, she remembers hearing continuous loud bangs one afternoon, they turned out to be gas explosions at the British Oxygen Company. Her and Bert jumped in the car to collect the children from the open air swimming pool, driving in the opposite direction to a line of traffic heading to watch the event!

In 60 years' time, she feels a strong and caring community is important for the estate's future. It is important the interconnecting pathways and park land are maintained and accessible for pedestrians of all ages (young and old should be able to use scooters on them); these pathways do more than connect each residential area, they make everyone who uses them feel part of the community. They give access to family, friends, open spaces and local amenities – all are responsible for the space they share.

Marion has two daughters, grand children and great grand children who all live close by. Her daughter Lisa Melton, still lives on the estate along with her children and grandchildren. Lisa's story follows.



Ivel Court, early 1970s – Garden City Collection

Lisa Melton

When Lisa first came to live on Jackmans she remembers the open countryside surrounding the house and how open it felt. The family drove back to see family in Islington regularly and they began to feel like 'country bumpkins' and couldn't wait to drive back home to Letchworth. Her Gran lived on Popham Street in Essex, the street featured in Ken Loach's 'Kathy Come Home' film in 1966.

She went to Radburn School and remembers the cold concrete swimming pool. Once Ivel court was built, her and her friends would hang out there and knew the 'grown ups' in the shops were looking out for them, especially 'Nan' in the launderette. The community centre was always busy with lots of events for all ages. Her Dad, Bert, was part of the Community Centre for many years and is remembered with a plaque and a rose in the garden. He had planted the rose to remember a young girl who had passed away; it now remembers them both.

She has lived and worked on the estate all her life and has children and grandchildren living nearby. The estate is part of her soul and she is very passionate about keeping the strong community base and the friendly feeling. The estate has grown with more and more house building, that in turn, leads to more and more cars and parking issues.

If she returned in 60 years, she would like there to be a limit on private house building. The estate was built to provide social housing for those who needed it. The character and community feel has developed because of that fact and there should be a 'real attempt' to keep the balance between social and private housing or the character of the estate, built up over 60 years, will be ruined.

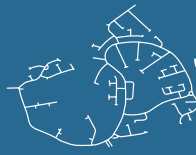
Helen Currie Kyrkeby

Helen moved to the area from Finchley, London when she was only 3 weeks old in the early 1960s. Her Dad had been offered a job at Borg Warner in Letchworth and the family moved to a house on Kyrkeby. Her Mum was a nurse and worked at the hospitals in Letchworth and Hitchin, before taking a position at the Lister Hospital in Stevenage.

Her and her two brothers went to Willian School and Highfield. Their parents were heavily involved in the Irish Community and social life was centred around the group. Her Dad helped out at the Sports Centre running the weekly lines for 4/5 football pitches. She remembers playing out on the estate with friends and feeling very safe because she knew the local adults were looking out for them. Like many people who had their childhood on the estate, the Jackmans Community Centre events were important and included the Saturday Morning Pictures and the Jackmans' Disco. She remembers the 1977 Jubilee when all the streets were closed off and a big street party was held.

Like her mother, she has had a long career in health care. After her parents had both passed away, she moved from a 3 bedroomed home on the estate to flats on Kyrkeby and Newells. Some parts of the estate are scary at night and Helen chose to finally move away when she became worried for her safety, especially when returning home after late night shifts.

In 60 years she would like their to be more facilities for young people and crackdown on drugs.



1970s onwards



The Standing Stones, Ivel Court - Garden City Collection

Ann Courtney Ivel Court

Ann moved to the estate from Lowestoft in Suffolk in the early 1970s, after her husband was offered a job in Letchworth. She remembers taking the first pay cheque to go shopping in Letchworth. The retailer on Leys Avenue wouldn't accept the cheque, as the address was in Ivel Court on the Jackmans estate!

The estate has always been very open and friendly. Ivel Court and the Community Centre are important local facilities; she feels the centre needs to cater for the older age group more. She shops in the local supermarkets and doesn't really visit Letchworth town centre. She still feels very upset that they shut Lannock school, with all the new house building the current LGCH Academy will have more pressure on places. It is important that Jackmans' children should always be able to attend local schools.

If she returned in 60 years, she would want there to be a limit on house building and there to be more community spirit.

Brian and Julie Dean Swanstand



The couple moved to the estate in 1972 when the buildings and surroundings still felt very new. Initially living in a flat in Swanstand, they moved to one of the original Prefab houses on the estate. Both their grandparents were original Letchworth residents, dating back to 1910. Brian's Great Grandad had been a beer seller in Stotfold, whilst Julie's were in the military.

When they first moved here, Gangland Manors from the East End of London had a lot of influence on the estate. At one time, the estate had a bad reputation for gang fights and football supporter 'punch ups' after matches in London.

Brian worked for Foster Industrial Company and Julie has had various administrative roles in local businesses. They remember fondly all the stores in Letchworth and the bustling town centre - MacFisheries, Downsway and Fine Fare.

They feel the estate has changed a lot but there remains a strong sense of community and it is a safe place to live. The fields bordering the estate make it feel very open, whilst the houses and precinct layout makes it feel intimate and quiet. The additional housing developments are changing the character of the estate and the age range of residents is becoming unbalanced, with most being from the older generations. They feel there needs to be more young families and people choosing to move to the estate and remain, improving local facilities will help this.

Jo Levy

Jo's family came from Jamaica in the 1950s. The family first lived in Hitchin before moving to a bigger house on Baldock Road in the 1980s, on the edge of the Jackmans estate.

She didn't want to leave Hitchin and left many friends behind. Although only a couple of miles away, she initially felt 'very black' in Letchworth and the odd one out. She soon made lots of new friends when she attended Fernhill School and remembers the disco at the Community Centre and the Sportsman's Pub. She also remembers 'Fine Fare' supermarket and 'Passadenas' who sold sweets and vegetables. She would see her old friends occasionally during interschool netball matches and when she went shopping in Stevenage or socializing with friends.

She has lived in Letchworth all her life and is very proud of the town - "it is a good place to be". To her, the estate seems to have lost some of its sparkle and is run down, looking tired. If she returned in 60 years she would hope there would have been more investment in local facilities, especially things for youngsters to do. It would be good if people didn't judge each other as much as when she was growing up.

Jenny Marshall

Jenny has lived on the estate since the 1980s. Her family originally came from Barbados and she has lived in Letchworth all her life.

She remembers the 1980s as a time of change in Letchworth with many of the large factories shutting down and a number of 'out of town' developments being built. A lot of her first neighbours had moved to the estate in the 1960s and still remain. She likes the Jackmans' sense of community and that neighbours look out for each other - that has never changed.

She feels the estate is looking tired and the general upkeep of public and private areas is not the same as it used to be. In 60 years time, she hopes it will feel more 'loved' again and the residents play a part in looking after the area better, as it is unique.

Ann Nessling Upper Maylins



Ann moved to the estate at the age of 7 in 1969/70 when her Dad found work at Armcole Co, a local engineering company making tubes. She and her sister couldn't believe the garden and the space around the house. The family were the first to move into their Upper Maylins home. Both siblings attended Lannock School, she remembers how 'ultra safe' she felt on the estate. Her and her friends would hang out at the play areas adjacent to every flat, meeting at the play concrete mushrooms. The Community Centre was part of her childhood and she remembers the Saturday morning cinema. There was also a 'birthday club' when each child would be given a present. She went into Letchworth regularly and remembers being scared of the Ebenezer Howard statue on Broadway roundabout and running past it.

Apart from a short period at Milton Keynes, she has lived on the estate all her life. She is now in her 50s and has 8 children and 16 grandchildren, most of whom live locally. She finds the estate quite violent now with fights breaking out between youths.



JACKMANS STORIES

1970s onwards

Terry and Margo



Terry and Margo moved to the estate in 1975 with two small children. They met at the Henry Ball Rooms, now the Hermitage in Hitchin. They like living here and the sense of community is important to them. In 60 years, they want the estate to maintain the open feeling with easy access to the countryside. The environmental feel of the area is important to them.

Maureen and Ray Palmer Kyrkeby and Yardley



Maureen was originally from London, whilst Ray was from Borehamwood. The couple had a son and were living in Borehamwood when Ray was offered a role with ICL (Dataset) Letchworth.

Growing up in London, Maureen hated the area for the first year, she missed her family back in

London, She remembers looking out over the A1 south from Radburn Way wishing it would take her back to London. That was 55 years ago.

They remained in the Kyrkeby house for 5 years and their second son was born. For health reasons, they were able to move to Yardley in 1972 with the help of Dr Leigh and the council housing officer, Mr Fitton. The building of the houses in Yardley/Vincent were delayed because of a builders strike. When they finally moved into Yardley there was an apple tree which was planted by the council, the apple tree is still there producing fruit.

The third child, a daughter, was born when they moved into their home in Yardley, they were all very settled (especially Maureen). The two sons attended Radburn School and then went onto William School. Their daughter attended Lannock School then went onto Knights Templar School.

The areas outside their house became a children's playground with a grass area dedicated to Marbles, the Radburn Way underpass entrances were goals for football and the undulating ground towards Whiteways became an impromptu skateboard/chopper bike park known as 'The Waves'.

Ray remained at ICL(Dataset) for a number of years then went onto other employment; before he retired he worked for the Heritage Foundation at Spirella Building and Plinston Hall in the facilities team, a role he really enjoyed. Maureen worked in retail locally including Fourbous on Ivel Court and the Coop Dairy at the Creamery office Letchworth.

The couple are part of a very close knit community who support and look out for each other. Although the estate has grown and has had changing social issues, it remains a great place to live. They are frustrated with the stigma of 'Jackmans estate' being told in the early days "you Londoners have taken all the jobs", any problems here are the same as all over the country, not just on the 'Jackmans. For those reasons, in 60 years time they both hope people will continue to respect living on the estate, look out for their neighbours, try and keep the estate tidy and appreciate what they HAVE rather than regretting what they don't HAVE. Ray had a stroke a few years ago, which left him with sight loss - "I don't look at what I can't do, I look at what I can do".

Clockwise

Yardley and Vincent - 1977 Silver Jubilee Street Party - Garden City Collection

Walking towards Swanstand and Parkfield - Garden City Collection

The first houses overlooked open countryside - Garden City Collection

Lynda and Lee Palmer Allison, Kyrkeby and Yardley



Lynda and Lee grew up on the Jackmans estate, they live in Biggleswade today, but have very fond memories. Lynda's parents are Ken and Mary Fennemore and Lee's parents are Maureen and Ray Palmer above.

They both attended Radburn School and William Secondary School. They remember attending

discos at the Community Centre, the Tuesday night and Saturday morning film club and as they got older, the Sportsmans Pub (renamed Carousel). Although they knew each other growing up they didn't become a couple until they were 19, when both were working in Letchworth.

Lee remembers attending summer clubs at the Creamery during the 6 week school summer holidays and skateboarding down the back of Whiteways leading into Lannock School. "Everyone knew everyone" and he remembers playing football on Lannock School playing fields "then making our way down to chippy and grabbing a bag of chips before setting off home". There was great excitement when Don Revie and his England football team turned up at the Creamery for a one off training session - between 1974-1977. There could be up to 40 children hanging around in a group, never getting up to anything mischievous, just having fun.

For Lynda, her family always had dogs and the countryside and woodland backing onto Allison were both safe and a wonderful asset. Ivel Court was a place for daily essentials with a green grocers, grocery store, clothes shop, library, doctors, and launderette. She went to Letchworth's parks and swimming pools regularly.

In 60s year time, they want people to remember the estate with pride - it has a strong community full of people who care for each other and work hard.

Harry Tote Kyrkeby and Townley

Harry moved to the area as a young man from Rainham in Essex in 1972. He was working at Heathrow Airport at the time when the house he lived in was due to be pulled down for new housing. He visited the job centre and saw lots of vacancies in a place called Letchworth, he didn't know where the town was.

He moved up to the area, found work and married. The open and accessible countryside around the estate, then and now, has always impressed him.

He remembers talking to an original resident about a new development and both complaining "we don't want any of those Londoners here"! He had to pinch himself how lucky he was.

He first moved into a flat in Kyrkeby, then managed to swop for a house on Townley. He now lives in John Coxall Court. The Townley house became home to 20 foster children over the years - something he is very proud of.

In 60 years he wants the estate to keep its early character with 'no trouble and no drugs'.





JACKMANS STORIES

1970s onwards



Wendy Frankson

Wendy is 'born and bred' in Letchworth and has lived on and off on the estate. She moved back five years ago, initially into a flat and now has a house. Her three children all attend the Letchworth Garden City Academy.

It has always been a friendly estate and having the school nearby, makes it feel like a community for the young and old. There needs to be more for young people to do and after school clubs. A lot tend

to hang out in groups riding dirt bikes on the grass areas and walkways which is a nuisance.

In 60 years time, she hopes there will be more events/clubs planned for all ages, especially teenagers.

Carlene Symonds

Carlene is in her 30s and has lived on the estate all her life, she is the granddaughter of Marion Melton, daughter of Lisa Melton and sister of Maxine Melton. She grew up in the 1990s and remembers being part of a large groups of kids who played outside all day or hung out at friend's houses. Neighbour's doors were always open and there would be jugs of juice or ice lollies left out for them. There were a few fights between local council estates, but nothing as violent as today.

Once she became a Mum, she moved to a flat and now has a house. She has never felt the need to go into Letchworth very much and shops at local supermarkets or buys most of her clothes/presents online.

She doesn't like other people's ignorant perception of the estate and the assumption that because you live there, you are a 'druggie' or on benefits. The estate has a loyal and strong community and is protective of their own. In 60 years time, she wants the bad reputation to go and the Community Centre to remain the 'heart' of the estate.



Clockwise

Celebrating the 1977 Silver Jubilee – Garden City Collection

Flats on the estate – Garden City Collection

Walking along Radburn Way, Maddles – Garden City Collection



Maxine Melton

Maxine is the granddaughter of Marion Melton, daughter of Lisa Melton and the sister of Carlene Symonds, she is in her 20s and has lived on the estate all her life. Her family have always lived near each other and family ties are important. She went to Radburn and Highfield School and has lots of friends locally.

The estate feels very safe with everyone knowing each other and looking out for you. She mainly goes shopping to Stevenage, she feels the shops in Letchworth are really bad. She likes going out with friends to Hitchin or Stevenage.

In 60 years time, she wants the estate residents to be less suspicious of new people and for the shops and Ivel Court to remain the heart of the community.

Trish Newton and Carol Ward John Coxall Court



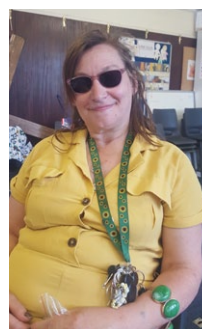
Trish is retired and moved to the estate from Stevenage in 2022. She likes the friendliness of the area and the facilities. She uses the local shops and community centre on Ivel Court all the time and they are a great resource. She is a member of Letchworth Garden City & Baldock Lions Club which she really enjoys.

She feels more time should be taken to focus on the needs of young adults, for recreation and vocational purposes.

Carol Ward – after her husband passed away, Carol moved to John Coxall Court in 2020. She enjoys the friendly community and as she can not drive, likes the shops and facilities on Ivel Court.

In 2020, John Coxall Court replaced the Hamonte sheltered housing scheme. It is named after the late John Coxall, a much-revered local figure and First Garden City Homes committee member.

Janet Unwin Jarden



Janet moved to Jackmans when her son Peter was 9 months old in the mid 80s. It was a great area for bringing up children with a strong sense of community and her son attended King's Community Church Youth Club from a young age. Janet had been a local Disco Champion in the 1980s. The Community Centre and shops were and still are a great resource. She lived in a house in Jarden, before moving to a second house with a garden. She made the difficult decision to leave the estate after her home was burgled and problems with trespassers. However, she returns regularly to meet old neighbours and friends, "the estate feels like my second home".

In 60 years, she wants the estate to be more peaceful and neighbourly.