

HISTORIC AYLBURTON — 6

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Despite the early frost and a cold night Adrian and Lesley Bishop kindly gave me a tour of their handsome house in Millbrook Green.

Although not a listed building Milling House has its roots in the 17th century when a mill at Millend is recorded on Park Brook. Beams in the loft certainly attest to this early date. By 1717 an anvil works is recorded on the site being then replaced by a grist (corn) mill by 1759. Later Victorian photographs show villagers with their children amongst a mountain of apples working on a cider press on this site. The house was originally owned by the Lydney Park Estate.

Even more fascinating perhaps is the former occupant from the 1970s, Betty Fairfax Horsfall, daughter of Captain Frank Rushby, of Sharcott Manor, Wiltshire. She died on 4th July 2000 aged 93. She was a keen botanist, but had been denied the possibility of studying the subject at university because her father felt that a university

education was unbecoming for ladies.

In 1946 she married Ewart Douglas Horsfall, MC, DFC (1892-1974). She was his second wife. He was a champion Oxford rower and ace flyer in the First World War. Benjamin Bathurst had been a close rowing companion of Ewart in his Oxford boating days. In 1948 he was manager of the British Olympic rowing team.



Ewart Horsfall, in the winning Oxford crew 1913

Betty re-designed large areas of Lydney Park Gardens with exotic plants and completely restored Milling House from top to bottom with extensions and many wonderful features. She left a substantial bequest to the Horsfall Rushby visitor centre at the Ness gardens in the Wirral. She wanted the Botanic Gardens at Ness to rival those at Kew in terms of its collection and research. She also bequeathed paintings to the Art Gallery in Liverpool - the city where Ewart was born.



Milling House, Millbrook Green