Sedgley's
Diamond 60
Sixty years, *sixty* people,
sixty stories about village life
since 1952.

1962

Lesley Guy, All Saints' verger

by Ruth Barnard (his daughter)

In the early Sixties my dad **Lesley Guy** was offered a full-time job at All Saints' as caretaker and verger. His duties involved seeing that everything ran smoothly regarding the care of the church and grounds, and also the church hall.
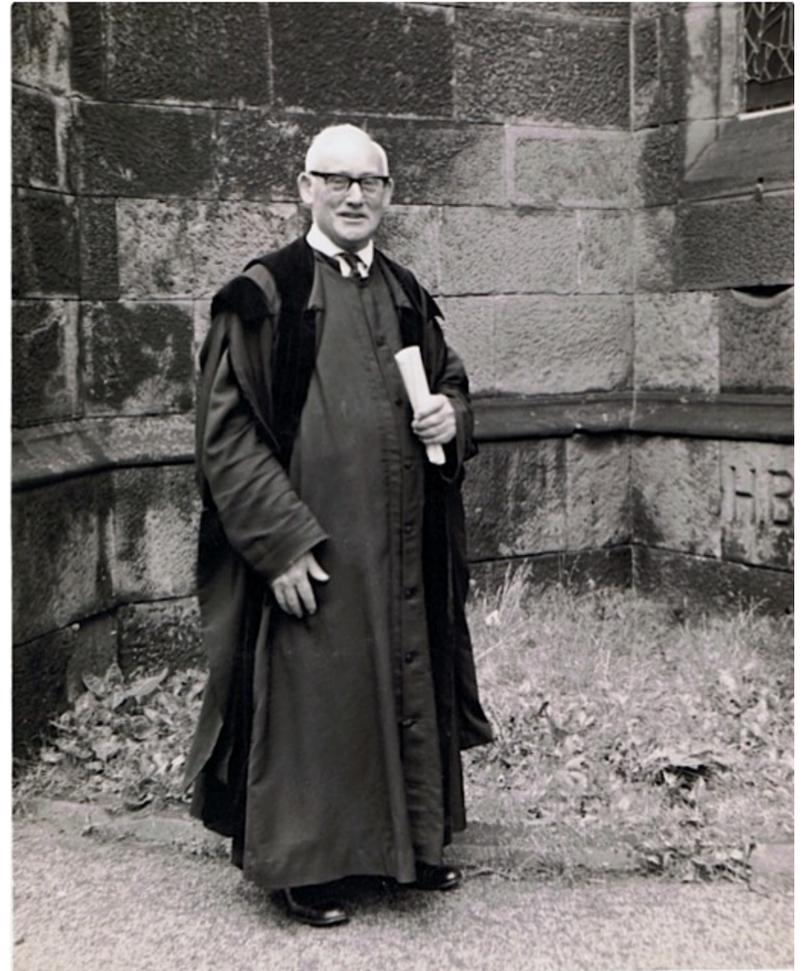
Though the wage was meager to say the least, part of the package was a flat at the rear of the hall. At that time the flat looked onto an ancient and neglected graveyard. Each summer the local lads would be attracted to the horse chestnut trees in search of the best 'conkers'.

We marvelled that nobody was ever impaled on the rusting railing spikes surrounding some of the decaying and sunken graves, as these young boys scaled the magnificent trees for their bounty. Now, the headstones with their weathered and indecipherable lettering have been cleared and a neat little park makes for a much more pleasant outlook.

Dad's workload was huge considering all the cleaning and lawn mowing to be done, plus making sure that bookings for the hall were made, and servicing the needs of various local groups who met at that venue. Visitors, including overseas ones, would seek genealogical help from the parish records, and he was always willing to oblige, often resulting in a donation to church funds.

December 1979 saw the sudden and inexplicable death of a beloved sixteen-year-old grandson Michael - my nephew, a tragedy that took its toll on all of our family, and his ashes now reside in the churchyard at All Saints'.

Dad himself was felled by a massive heart attack in September 1985 - only in his early seventies. Thus ended a life devoted to hard work and religious service. I was by now living in Australia and flew back to the UK for the funeral. The church was packed that day, as so many people came to say farewell to 'Mr. Guy'.

Lesley Guy, verger at All Saints' in the 1960s