



**Sedgley's**

**Diamond 60**

*Sixty years, sixty people,  
sixty stories about village life  
since 1952.*

1995

## Noah's Ark Mother and Toddler Group

*by Jenny Lavender and Linda Edwards*

Late in 1994, Revd Peter Ashby asked for volunteers to start up a Toddler Group, as the church didn't have one at the time. After much talk and deliberation, four of us decided we would. Kath Apperley, Linda Edwards, Jenny Lavender and Elisabeth Little got our heads together and decided to call the new venture 'Noah's Ark Mother and Toddler Group'.

We planned to meet on Tuesday mornings from 9.30am to 11.00am in the Church Hall, with a charge of 70p per session to cover refreshments and crafts costs. We asked for donations of toys (and anything that was available really!) and we had a donation of £100 from the PCC to help with larger items.

The Tuesday we opened on 10th January 1995 was very cold. Snow was on the ground and we didn't expect anyone would come; despite this but we had two Moms come to register, which was great.

The Mothers Union was approached to help in the kitchen with the refreshments - and Audrey Russell and Eileen Sherwood joined us on the opening day. I think all we did that morning was sit and chat with our new members.

On our first birthday we had a service in church led by Revd Peter Ashby, and a party in the church hall afterwards with Father Christmas, done admirably by Les Inett.

We were able to do annual summer trips until 2009 when costs became too high. These included the Safari Park, Hatton Park, Hoo Farm and Dudley Zoo. We also had a Teddy Bears' Picnic in the church grounds on July 18<sup>th</sup> 1995. We have an Easter Bonnet Parade every year, as well as a Christmas Carol Service in church, Christmas Party and end of term party in July.

We have been successful in obtaining a number of grants from the Birmingham Foundation, which have enabled us to renovate the ladies toilets, build on-stage storage and construct a ramp up into the church hall. We have also made donations towards the fire alarm system in the church hall and paid for refurbishing the kitchen. Here we are 17 years later with 40-plus children attending and a waiting list.



**Noah's Ark Mother and Toddler Group.**



**One of the many activities.**



**Group founders: Kath Apperley, Lis Little, Jenny Lavender, Linda Edwards.**