

## **MEMORIAL SEATS in the HIGH STREET, STAPLEHURST**

### **BERT AND BETTY SETH**

A memorial seat inscribed in memory of Bert and Betty Seth is in place towards the brow of the hill outside Crown Cottages. The Parish Council and other residents who knew Bert and Betty, appreciated what contribution they made to village life, have found this way to commemorate the couple. The seat was installed in mid-November 2004 and has become a boon as a resting place to those walking up the hill, or waiting for the Cranbrook-bound bus.

Bert, a former lecturer in art, specialising in book history and book binding, came to live in Staplehurst in 1953. His contributions through the years involved dramatics, especially at the Parish Church where a Passion Play written and directed by him was performed at Easter time over many years. He was a stalwart of the Carnival and Fete Committee and Staplehurst Dramatic Society. He was a governor of the primary school. He was a most important member of the Parish Council, serving as its Chairman for six years from 1986 – 1992, during which time he guided the purchase of the old school from KCC, now Staplehurst Village Centre, the home of many village activities.

His daughter Jane said, "My father was always interested in the infrastructure of the village which meant so much to him. He will be so pleased to see that a resting place has been placed in the High Street almost opposite Green Court where he and Betty lived all their time here. I think the seat has been beautifully made and I am pleased that the memorial inscription has been so attractively carved on the seat-back rail. My mother and father would like the design; it has been crafted so well in good quality wood; Bert, all his life, loved craft works. The placement on the hill, with legs on the right shorter than those on the left, is a design that would have pleased his artistic temperament."

### **ALLAN RIMMER, ROGER NICHOLLS AND TREVOR MARTIN**

The seat near to Chestnut Avenue has been funded by the Parish Council in memory of three men who made significant contributions to the well-being of Staplehurst. It was installed in 2009.

Allan Rimmer, a retired teacher, was Secretary to the Staplehurst Society for many years and helped to ensure that historical material was gathered and archived. He was also Chairman of the Carnival and Fete Committee and brought together much talent for this as well as the Creative Staplehurst

Exhibition. He had a cheerful smile, a keen sense of humour and strong powers of persuasion.

Roger Nicholls was Parish Clerk for ten years until 1996 having taken early retirement from the civil service. He oversaw the establishment of the Parish Office and the first steps by the Parish Council towards the computer age. Roger was also Chairman of Staplehurst Footpath Group and Parish Tree Warden.

Trevor Martin brought up his family in Staplehurst with his wife Elaine and was active in a number of village groups. His expertise in finance helped to bring Staplehurst Village Centre on to a stronger financial base during his time as Treasurer. Trevor was a Parish Councillor for twelve years until 2007 and many of these was as Chairman of the Amenities Committee. He gave sound financial advice to the Parish Council. In recent years he helped to cook Thursday lunches at the McCabe Day Centre.

### **SHEILA "TEDDY" DAY**

The seat, installed in 2009 near to Cornforth Close, has been funded by Peter Day in memory of his wife Sheila, known to all as Teddy. Peter came to live in Staplehurst as a young boy in 1935 and joined the local Dramatic Society. Early in 1950 he saw Teddy at a Drama Club meeting at the old Village Hall and decided on the spot that he would like to marry her. They married in 1952 and Peter never regretted it. Mrs Day worked as a local nanny for many years. Teddy was the nickname used by her employer (who was also named Sheila) and this remained with her throughout life.

### **SANDRA BRIFFA**

In January 2011 a bench was placed to the south of the bus stop by Chestnut Avenue by John Briffa in memory of his wife Sandy. John and Sandy raised their family in Staplehurst and she gave much time supporting the community through her work with the cubs, giving love and kindness to all. She was a very special lady who cared deeply for others ahead of herself. As one friend said, "As an ordinary person she was a very extraordinary lady."