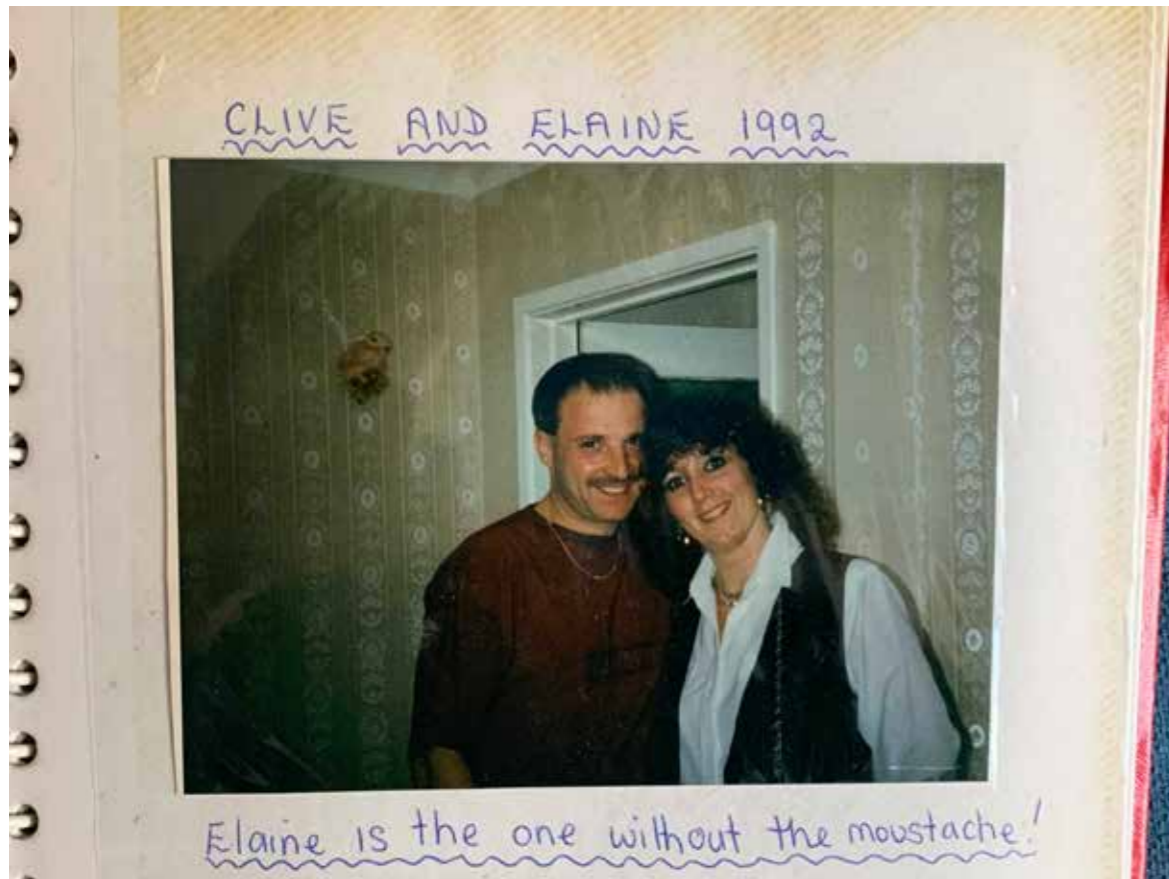


Fostering children for 34 years Elaine and Clive Snook



STARTING MARRIED LIFE IN MAIDEN BRADLEY

"I moved to the village in 1977 when I married my Husband Clive Snook. Clive was one of 10 children to Mary and Percy Snook and lived opposite the Village hall. Clive's dad, Percy, was born and lived in the same house until he passed away. There were two shops, and the village school was still open when Clive was growing up."

"When we first got married the Old School was a Clothing factory where I used to make Trench Coats, run by Rita and Graham Stevens. We applied to be Foster Carers but were told that we were two young (I was only 17 years old then.)"

"We lived at The Square and were paying £1.00 a week rent. Then in 1980, we got a Council house which we have now bought."

VILLAGE LIFE

"I became the Pre-School Leader for the Playgroup and we renamed it The Owlets. (I used to collect owls at the time.) We won grants and raised over £5,000 for much needed equipment and changed from a Play Group to a pre-school, around 1998. We had to go through an OFSTED Inspection and 'won the plaudits of the education inspectors.'"

"Myself and later my son Sean also helped to run the Village Youth Club that was in a hut at the recreation ground and helped to raise money for the swimming pool."

Owlets Sail Through

The Owlets are celebrating at Maiden Bradley after a much-needed lottery grant transformed their small village playgroup, and won them the plaudits of education inspectors.

The community-run group gives under-fives their first taste of schooling, three mornings a week in the village hall.

"The group has been running for at least 18 years," explained current playgroup leader Elaine Snook.

As with many of these village groups, they have just recently changed to a pre-school group – a change forced on playgroups by the nursery voucher system, no longer with us.

It is a registered charity, and relies on fundraising to keep its standards high.

"We desperately needed to upgrade our furniture and equipment," said Elaine.

They applied to the National Lottery and the Rural Development Fund – successfully. They were soon told that their plans could go ahead.

As a result, the National Lottery gave £3,000 and the Rural Development people provided £1,000.

New furniture, learning aids, books and educational toys were all needed for an impending OFSTED inspection.

The staff and committee sailed through.

"The pre-school provides a caring and welcoming environment' and 'the staff provide a stimulating, well-organised environment' or 'the partnership with parents and carers is a strength of the nursery' were all glowing testimonials from OFSTED.

Playleader Elaine Snook gained 26 distinctions in her diploma in pre-school practice at Warminster College. Now she is looking forward to the future.

"We are continuing to actively fundraise to add improvements, including the outside play area.

Our picture shows Elaine Snook (right) and her assistant Jenny Lucas (left) using some of the equipment that the National Lottery helped to buy. The class, (left to right) Harry Russell, Jessica Haines, Maria Marchiewicz, Bethany Stevens, Isobel Higgs, Benjamin Godley and Paddy Paxton, wave a thanks for their new bits and bobs.

DON'T FORGET

PERSONAL CHRISTMAS CARDS



FOSTERING CHILDREN IN MAIDEN BRADLEY

"We began to be assessed as foster carers and continued to foster for 34 years we had well over a 100 placements . Some several times some for several years and some siblings but mostly teenagers. We have a small album of photos about Maiden Bradley and our family that Social Services used to introduce us to new foster placements. We are still in touch with many children that always praise living in our lovely village. Some love to come back and visit with our grand-children and now have several great grandchildren. We gave up fostering after 34 years."

Mandy and Randall's wedding day

Mandy was our very first foster child

She is now grown up and has three children of her own Keanne and Robin you have seen with "Uncle Sean"



This is Baby "Elaine" Our Foster Grand daughter.



Our Son Sean he is 12 years old. We have been fostering children of all ages since he was a baby.



Charlotte is 14 she has lived with us for 5 years.

