

A TRIBUTE TO PETER ARBON, LATE OF BRANDESTON

Peter Arbon, one of Suffolk's great characters, has died at the age of 88. Resident in the village of Brandeston for virtually his entire life he had, latterly, been well looked after at Allonsfield House Care Home, in Campsea Ashe, where he passed away on Sunday, 12 April, 2015

The youngest of a family of 13 children, Peter was the last surviving member of his generation of Arbons. He first attended the village school, then Framlingham Modern only to leave, as many did, at the age of fourteen. He had, as a youngster, helped out on the Brandeston Hall Estate. The War Years apart, when he worked for the family at Monewden Hall when they relocated, temporarily, to Aldeburgh his entire working life was spent at Brandeston Hall, once it was established as the Junior School of Framlingham College.



Peter enjoyed a fearsome reputation at horticultural shows around the County, invariably coming away with a guaranteed haul of medals and certificates for both vegetables and blooms of immaculate quality. When not exhibiting himself he was much in demand as a qualified show judge. He served some 60 years with the village bell-ringers group and his name was rarely absent from the crib and steel quoits team sheets at the Brandeston 'Queen' – nor from that of the Earl Soham 'Falcon' bowls team. Peter was also a keen motor-cyclist and always easily identifiable as such, on the highways and country lanes of Suffolk. He once wrote off a Honda 125, legend has it, by running it up a tree in Earl Soham (a story probably embellished in the re-telling!) Indisputable though is the fact that, at the age of 84, he promptly invested in a replacement!

Bob Williams (Hon OF)
(For the EADT - appeared in print in the 20/04/15 edition)

Subsequently there was a ceremony to unveil a plaque at Brandeston Hall on 29 June 2015. The following article appeared in the East Anglian Daily Times on 1 July 2015

School honours 'invaluable' Peter

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A plaque to mark 50 years of dedicated service of a former groundsman at Brandeston Hall school was attended by 80 members of the community on Monday.

The service followed the death of Peter Arbon at the age of 88 in April.

A keen gardener, Mr Arbon had worked on the grounds of Brandeston Hall since the age of 14, when it was still a private residence and long before it became a school in 1948.

He retired at the age of 74 but maintained good links with the school, and the cooks would often prepare meals to be delivered to his home in the months before his death.

Headmaster at Brandeston Hall, Martin Myers-Allen, said: "He was invaluable. When he left he was held in so much regard, I think he



■ Reverend Graham Vellacott (left) and headteacher Martin Myers-Allen (right) join Peter Arbon (centre) to unveil a plaque in memory of his uncle, also Peter Arbon, who was head gardener at Brandeston Hall School.

Pictures: SIMON PARKER

was cradled to the gable by Brandeston Hall.

"He loved the place. He has been a strong link between the village and the school.

"He didn't have a bad word to say

about anyone. He was a highly respected Suffolk gentleman.

"The plaque was to mark loyalty. Somebody who has spent 50 years of his working life working for one school, that's a huge commitment.

Youngsters can expect to have five or six careers in their life so I think that needs marking."

The plaque was officially unveiled on Monday in front of an audience of Mr Arbon's family, local residents, members of the church and the school community including past employees.

It reads: "In memory of Peter Arbon, head gardener, who lovingly tended the gardens at Brandeston Hall for five decades."

"It was a very respectful service," said Mr Myers-Allen. "It's right next to the tennis courts where he did most of his work.

"He worked here before it actually became a school. He was here throughout it all.

"I would like to think that he's sitting there looking over it now."

An album of photographs taken by Mr Arbon, showing the change in the grounds in the 50 years he had been maintaining them, was put together by his nephew, also called Peter Arbon, and will be kept in the school's library.

Below are a couple of photos taken by Bob Williams



