



# The **WORLD** in our street

Interview with

## Allen Farrington – Party Balloons

Allen started the business 25 years ago. He represented H & J Supplies in City Road – selling electrical goods and they were also a distributor for cycles.

He was born in Croydon in 1934 and is a Crystal Palace supporter. He was educated there and then went to Essex and Constable Country in the 1940s.

He was aged about 30 when he went to Scotland as a freelance agent to sell radios, he sold millions of them and was up there for about 5 years. He then decided to start a sandwich business.

He got married at the age of 28 in Surbiton and he and his wife Val had two sons – Roland and Paul. Roland works at Shell and has two children- he got married at Hoole Hall and Allen supplied the balloons of course! Sadly, Paul passed away in 2000 in a diving accident in Cornwall, he founded the company CEX (Entertainment Exchange).

Val's family was originally from Surrey but they moved to New Zealand. Allen was in the RAF and he put an entry in the magazine "Picture Goer" in order to get a pen pal – he got about 50 letters and one was from Val!

After Allen left H & J Supplies he started to run a "Party Time Singles" club. At first it was held on Monday nights at a pub on City Road, then it was at the Mercure Hotel.

They used to get around 100 people at first and there have been a few weddings resulting from the club. Northgate Arena had just opened and so they approached Allen to run a singles club and they used to get about 300 people there and have beach parties.





**BROOK STREET**

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From there, the club moved to the Plantation Hotel and they also held clubs at two hotels in Wirral.

A friend suggested that he should do kissograms and so they did this for 4 years.

Originally, Allen opened a shops at the bottom of Brook Street at the station end and they sold lots of party stuff but then they were offered the current building by a Mr Danzak and so they moved. The entrance was originally at the back of the shop.

The shop is open Tuesday - Saturday 10am – 5.00pm. They get a lot of regular customers but also a lot of word of mouth. They obviously do a lot of weddings and parties and the most popular balloons are the 6 ft. number balloons and the 80's dressing up outfits. They do the balloons for the boats on the River Dee, there are 12 tables which have sets on each boat.

Allen really enjoys running the business and has no intention of stopping soon!

