

"Notty Owram"

The Story of the Northowram Scarecrows!

By Alison MacGrath



Once upon a time there was a little girl, called Sally, whose friends were all away on holiday for Easter. Sally could not go on holiday as she lived in a pub in Northowram and holidays, like Christmas or Easter, were the busiest time for her family.

This Easter it was raining and cold so Sally was playing in the garage. She was rummaging through old boxes filled with Christmas decorations, beer mats and the like. There was nothing worth playing with and Sally was bored, she sat back on her heels and tried not to cry.

Suddenly she heard a quiet voice say "why are you so sad"?

Sally looked round, there was no one there!

"Who said that"? She asked, startled. "Me", came the soft reply.

Sally jumped to her feet, equally curious and scared, curiosity won. Sally peeped behind some old rolled up banners stacked in the back corner. She did not know what she expected to find, but there was only an old scarecrow leaning against the wall. She stared at the scarecrow which was dressed in an old green parka with a black helmet on his head. The scarecrow did not seem alive.

"Did you just speak", Sally asked in a high pitched squeaky voice?

"Yes", the scarecrow said softly.

"What's your name", she asked?

"They call me Notty Owram", he said still leaning against the wall as if he had not moved since he was placed

there a very long time ago.

"If you can speak can you move as well" she asked?

"We can only move when there are no humans about" Notty said.

"We! Are there more than one of you?"

"Not in here, but in other garages, sheds and barns around the village there are plenty of us. You see we don't get used to scare the crows anymore, so we just sit and wait to be useful again".

Sally thought that was very sad, "how lonely you must be just sitting here collecting dust".

Sally was called in for her tea then "I'll come back tomorrow", she whispered to Notty as she ran off with a hop and a skip, no longer feeling bored. She could hardly wait for tomorrow she had so many questions to ask Notty.

After that Sally spent every spare minute with Notty and the days flew by. Back at school Sally confided in her best friend, Sheila. Sally said "it is so unfair that the scarecrows never get out anymore. I think we should have a special day when everyone's scarecrows can be out in the sun and lots of people can come and admire them".

And so the first Northowram Scarecrow Event was born. All the scarecrows came out in their best clothes and everyone loved seeing them.

Even though Sally and her family have moved on now, every year on May Day Bank Holiday weekend we remember her and what she did for all the Scarecrows of Northowram.

See if you can spot Notty today on your way around the village.