

Arrad Foot Residents Contributions

John Brodie Kay (1894 – 1969)

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This article about Brodie Kay has been written as a result of conversations with local people and researching newspaper articles.

One of the more interesting characters to have lived in Arrad Foot in the last century was John Brodie Kay. He was the son of Richard Kay, born in Ramsbottom in 1856, who became a policeman and served in many different parts of the country. Richard Kay married Esther Slater from the Kendal area in 1886. They lived in 1911 in Ulverston Police Station, by which time he had become a sergeant.

Brodie was born in 1894 and in the census of 1911 he was listed as an engineer in an iron works. He was obviously a talented engineer because he is reputed to have been part of the team assembled by Sir Henry Segrave to set a new water speed record in June 1930. Having set a new water speed record of 98.76 mph on his first two runs, his boat Miss /England 11 crashed and Sir Henry died as a result of his injuries.

Brodie's father Richard died in 1916, and his mother Esther and Brodie moved into Brookside Cottage, Arrad Foot. Brodie led a colourful life and had the garage in Greenodd. He also had a Rolls Royce car, some say red some say white, which he used to drive round the countryside. In his later years he used to chauffeur Lady Edgerton of Gawithfield, on holidays, even as far as France. He is reputed to have built an inspection pit in the garden of Brookside to service cars there including his own.

He was also thought to have been involved in a secret development that was based at Newland and concerned research for Vickers Ltd during WW11.

Brodie was a great naturalist, even owning a fox, and it is believed he got to know Sir Peter Scott and even helped him to design and build his house at Slimbridge. His mother Esther died in 1940, but Brodie continued to live in Brookside Cottage until his death in 1969.