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Decades-Old Honeymoon Letter Discovered Under Tree Reunites Family with Forgotten Memory

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A long-lost letter from 1955, discovered beneath a tree in Wolverhampton, has been identified as a honeymoon inquiry made by a local man, thanks to his surviving relatives who stepped forward after news of the find circulated. The note, which had been tucked away for nearly 70 years, has now offered a touching glimpse into the past.

The letter, dated January 1955, was addressed to a “JR Gwilt” of Stafford Road in Fordhouses and was sent from Ashleigh Court, a hotel in Torquay, Devon. It outlined accommodation rates for an upcoming stay, ranging from six to seven and a half guineas per week (approximately £140 in today’s currency), including meals. The document came to light during a routine garden clearing carried out by gardener Adam Elshaw at a nearby property.

Following local media coverage, Carole Griffiths, the niece of John Raymond Gwilt, confirmed the letter was indeed linked to her uncle. She explained that he and his wife, Barbara, had married in April 1955 and were known to have a fondness for Torquay, a location they frequently visited, particularly during Mr Gwilt’s childhood.

“It’s definitely him enquiring about their honeymoon,” Mrs. Griffiths said. “They always loved going to Torquay.” She added that Mr Gwilt had lived at the home where the letter was found prior to his death around a decade ago, describing the find as both “exciting” and “unexpected.”

Mr. Gwilt had initially lived at the Stafford Road address with his family, who operated a butcher’s shop there, before relocating to Woodthorne Road in Tettenhall – the property where the letter was eventually uncovered.

Mr. Elshaw, who unearthed the letter a few weeks ago, noted that the current homeowners were unaware of the letter’s existence. It is believed the document may have fallen outside during a recent house clearance following the deaths of Mr and Mrs Gwilt. The house was sold within the last year.

David Gwilt, son of the late John and Barbara, expressed gratitude to the gardener for his care and curiosity. “The letter meant an awful lot to us,” he said. He and his sister Jane

appreciated the opportunity to reconnect with a piece of their parents' early married life.

The story has sparked conversation among family members and the local community, with Mrs. Griffiths noting how the unexpected find created surprising connections, including mutual acquaintances between her church and Mr. Elshaw. "It's a small world," she said, reflecting on the chain of events that brought the letter back to light.

While the letter's journey from a 1955 hotel in Devon to a modern-day garden in the West Midlands remains partially unclear, its sentimental value has become unmistakably clear to the family it once belonged to.