Grass Roots: Jane Hanson

The blades go round and the short whirr of the lawnmower being pushed backwards and forwards breaks the silence. Our neighbour sighs loudly.

This is sweaty work and the mower is an old style manual version. Before gardening became techno – electric, with everything is geared to save time and effort. Maybe that is the difference between then and now. Time was slower and looking back to that summer afternoon it was precious too.

The scent of freshly cut grass drifted over the hedge, it seemed to mingle with the warm sunlight to create the essence of a summer day .

I could hear the mower stop and a bin full of damp grass cuttings being emptied.

I was 16 and studying for an exam. I looked up from my book and appreciated the moment of perfect stillness. It was as if all noises were amplified by the July sun. The dry scratching sound of the dog’s paws on the path as it padded past.

That particular perfume of freshly cut grass made my mind wander and think of the happy days spent at the school sports field on Sports Day.

Lying in the long grass at the edge of the playing fields watching other pupils competing in a race and laughing with a friend.

The grass was warm and smelt of hay, it left marks on our bare legs and arms. As we lay belly-down we picked a stem of grass and chewed the tender shoot at the end. We listened to the distant shouts and cheers pierced by the teacher’s whistle calling for attention, or the bang of the starting gun.

Yes, the smell of grass never fails to transport me back to those days where moments were not constrained by the limitations of minutes and hours .