

Small Beginnings

The Newsletter of the former pupils of the old Barling Primary School is aimed at all ex-pupils, staff and friends of the school.

Special Interest Articles:

- Admissions register for the old Barling School
- Poem by Sheelagh Aranha (née Chapman)
- Reunion group lunches

This edition of Small Beginnings has a new format – what do think of it?

Please send your comments to Lynne Askham

Memories of Childhood

I was born and grew up in Little Wakering and enjoyed a happy childhood. Going to see the cows being milked on Bentall's farm was one of the highlights and also getting a ride with the seed merchant on his van as he delivered his chicken feed and other seeds to the door. The Milkman also gave you rides in his van if you were late for school as long as you helped him deliver milk as well. Sunday School was held in the vicarage, where the vicar (Rev Freemont) taught a group of us, while his wife sat by knitting! A few of us also joined the choir of the church and felt very

important in Cassock and Surplise, and bowing our heads at certain times during the service. Accumulators (batteries) were collected from Claydon's hardware store where they had been put on charge for the radio. Curzon's General Store was where we dashed for packets of crisps when we knew they had been delivered and you were allowed only one or two packets per person, and the next delivery was many weeks away. Meat was delivered to the door by the butcher's boy and newspapers were delivered by two ladies on bikes (Edie Stow and Phyl Alp). Peter Griffiths' dad was the local policeman

and Yvonne Hubbard's dad the local builder. Mrs Dawkins run the Post Office from her house. We used to catch the bus to Shoeburyness Beach and spend the day gathering cockles from the mud when the tide was out, and bringing them home in a large enamelled bucket on the bus. Bats would fly low in the gathering dusk and you were terrified in case they caught in your hair. Hay stacks and potato clamps were around then, and it was great fun sliding down the hay stacks.

Betty Mitchell

School Reunion

The next Barling School reunion will be held at the 'old school' on September 30th 2006 from 6.30 pm onwards.

All are welcome, and light refreshments will be served.

If you have old photographs of school and/or village life we would enjoy seeing them.

Newsletter

*Paul Abercrombie's
legacy of "Small
Beginnings" continues
under the united
editorship of Lynne
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Reunion Group Lunches

A group of Barling School
ex-pupils, friends and
partners occasionally meet
for lunch. All are welcome.

The next lunch is on
Saturday at the Cherry
Tree, Stambridge on
October 14th 2006 from
12.15 until 3.00 pm

Dates for 2007:

January 13th

April 14th

July 14th

October 20th

My Way to School

Do you remember Mowling's corner shop
Where you could buy chocolate crisps and bottles of pop
The factory, the pugmill and wood yard to name just a few
They have all gone to make room for something new.
There was Mrs Dawkin's Post Office in her front room
She'd say "Buy up your stamps quick, I'm closing up soon"
At Cerson's store you could buy Kirby grips, groceries and much, much
more
Half way there, past the parochial hall for social events, lots of fun for
all
Then there was "Rosebank" the house had been empty for years
They said it was haunted, so on Saturdays to allay our fears
We would peep in the windows and poke round at the back
Scrum a few apples, fill up a sack
When Mr Wright bought it and his family moved in
It became less spooky and like a new pin
At Mumford's shop/shed we bought something to suck (after a fashion)
Not sweets of course, they were on ration
When ice was on weir pond we were told not to skate
But being told what to do was something we'd hate
So skating we did with no fear to drown
And often hooked out by a kind Mr Brown
The W.I. hall where I sometimes went with my aunt
Dried flowers, jam scones and "Jerusalem to chant
From Baker's Grave to school, this was my way
I recall it so well, just like yesterday

Sheelagh Aranha (née Chapman)

Fragments of our History

The Admissions Registers for the Old Barling School, 1878-1971

<u>Admission No</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Child's Name in Full</u>	<u>Date of Admission</u>
1	6-2-70	Ellen Eve	9-9-78
2	19-3-71	Annie Eve	
3	30-2-68	Herbert George Watson	
4	15- 5-72	James Watson	
5	13-2-70	Mary Holmstead	
6	10- 3-71	Ellen Holmstead	
7	8- 3-72	Martha Holmstead	
8	21- 2-72	Jane Bell	
9	11- 7-74	Edgar Bell	
10	25-12-70	Emily Eliza Gill	
11	9- 5-72	Annie Hayward	
12	22- 9-72	Alfred King	
13	- 6-74	William Jefferies	
14	19-0-73	William Blackshaw	

With this short list of names and dates, the first Head teacher of Barling School admitted his first batch of pupils on Monday, 9 September 1878. He added other details for each child to the register, such as the name of a parent or guardian and the home address. The oldest of these first fourteen pupils was nine-year-old Herbert George Watson and the youngest, at four, Edgar Bell. More than half of them had been admitted with a sibling. What must their first day in the brand-new building on Little Waking Road have felt like? Pretty overwhelming for most of them, I bet. They didn't have long to wait before other pupils joined them. The following day, Tuesday, 10 September, another seven arrived.

15	5- 8-73	Walter John Carey	10-9-78
16	27-7-70	John Watson	
17	27-4-73	George Watson	
18	27-4-73	Harriett Watson	
19	29- 6-70	Eliza Ward	
20	21- 6-69	Alice Hayward	
21	12- 8-71	David Adams	

The surname of the first boy to arrive on the Tuesday, Walter John, was originally written as Kerry, but someone has deleted that and written Carey over it. That day also saw the admission of the first pair of twins to attend the school: George and Harriett Watson, aged five.

22	11- 1-70	Eliza Baker	11-9-78
23	29- 6-72	Honour Baker	

The addition of these Baker sisters, on Wednesday the eleventh, saw the end of admissions for that first week. Many of those admitted during those first three days possessed surnames that were still in the villages 50 and even 100 years later. Sadly, Holmstead, one of the first names in the book, is no longer used as a surname by anyone in Britain, though an Australian branch of the family survives.

That wasn't the end of admissions in September 1878. On the following Monday, 16 September, another 24 were signed in. A further nine came on the 23rd and another two on the 30th, bringing the roll up to 58 by the end of the first month. And new arrivals continued to add to the numbers throughout that Autumn Term and then through the Spring and Summer Terms.

By the end of the first year of the school's existence there were 148 pupils, the last to be put on the register being five-year-old William John Paveling, who was admitted, just before the summer holiday, on Wednesday, 30 July 1879.

148 pupils seems a lot for such a small school. Yet even more arrived in the next few years before many left. Those of us who were used to small classes in the 1940s and '50s enjoyed a lot more room than those who attended in the early years.

There are three registers of admissions to the school. The first book is in a very poor state now, as its pages have fallen apart. Its listing runs from Pupil No 1 Ellen Eve (above) as far as Pupil No 2225 Jean Wigg, who was admitted on 17 July 1939. In the same volume there is a list of 56 pupils without any admission numbers. But these become the first 56 admissions in the second register.

This second book contains first a list of over 600 pupils, starting with Doreen Rumsey, admitted with 17 others on 18 September 1939. It's hard to see exactly how many entries there are, as some of the admission numbers are out of order or entered twice. For instance, the last number on the list is 572 (Heather Jennifer Richards, admitted 19 June 1961), the same number as Roy Keith Johnson, admitted 15 June 1959. And No 621 (Roger Edwards, 24 April 1961) comes before Heather at 572!

From April 1944 onwards most of the entries are in Mr. Learmond's large handwriting. He started a new list at the beginning of Autumn Term 1961, with a new No 1: John David Wyatt. That list runs as far as admissions on 7 September 1971, when eight new pupils, all boys, were admitted: Robert Edward Parkin, Ian Collins, Ian Everard Nilson, Richard Charles Kenneth Pond, Andrew Varty, Gordon Kenneth Harwood, Vernon James Harwood and Charles Thomas Wood. I wonder if, after that, all pupils were entered on the first register of the New School.

There is another, much shorter, register. It records the admissions of 66 'Under Fives' for less than 13 years, from September 1945 to January 58. But when these children reached the age of five, they were recorded again in the main lists described above. Presumably, this separate registering of the under-fives was a requirement that Mr. Learmond carried out for as long he was obliged – and no further – or until he was told not to admit anyone that young.

It is fascinating to read through the admissions registers of the Old School. They contain so many details of our personal and family histories as well as the history of the school and of the villages in which we grew up. The originals are now in the possession of the New School. For anyone who would like to look through them at leisure, there are microfilm copies at Essex Record Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford, (Tel: 01245-430067).

All in all, just under 3000 pupils attended the Old Barling School in its almost 100-year life. I cannot say if the names of any evacuees during the Second World War are included in the registers, though I hope that a future look at the Log Books, which have also survived, will tell us about that and about many other curiosities of our old school.

SADIE MORGAN - Teacher at Barling School 1937-1942

Here's a story from Little Wakering and Barling. Early in the Second World War, there was much talk and fear of a German invasion. So, a meeting was held in the Parochial Hall. People became very worked up about the threat. One man came up with a surprising suggestion. He said that any German soldiers who came into the village should be treated politely and invited in to have a cup of tea and a piece of cake. What? Then he explained: he had more than enough arsenic to put in all the cakes that were offered. This was told to me recently by Sadie Morgan, now Sadie Jones, who recently celebrated her ninetieth birthday. Sadie taught at the Old Barling School from September 1937 to 1942. There were four teachers on the Staff when she started: Mr Shepherd (Head), Mrs Shepherd, Miss Eva Riley and Sadie. At 21 years of age, she was in charge of the whole of the Infant School: one long room with children from five to seven-plus. She

divided them into three sections: Baby, Middle and Top. She loved the playing-field – "Delightful! Beautiful!" – as the town school in Aberdare, where she came from, just had a yard for the children to play in. She found Barling very different from where she had come from, having been used to Welsh choirs and a lot of concerts. She said: "It was completely different. I did wonder if I would stick at it, but I was able to adapt and did quite well, I think." Until the War got under way, she would sometimes go and stay with Miss Riley on Foulness Island at the weekends. Foulness seemed like an outpost of the British Empire to her. Three or four other teachers came for a few months during the War, accompanying some boys and girls who were evacuated from Dagenham to the Old School. She recalls that the evacuees were "very lively". Around this time Sadie witnessed a massive air-raid on Shoeburyness, where

there was a substantial military establishment. It took place on a Sunday, while she was enjoying her birthday party. So, her mum and dad's idea that bombs were falling all around her in Essex wasn't far wrong.

"I remember that it came on the radio that Hitler was on his way over. Well, the school was emptied in five minutes. Parents came running and arrived in trucks and cars to fetch their children. Boys on bikes reckoned that they could see German soldiers coming down on parachutes. But it was all a false alarm." "I thought the air-raid shelters in the playground were ridiculous. They wouldn't have withstood much. Yet the school was a very strong building." The school's governing body had a dilemma while Sadie was there. A vicar was one of the governors and, with a colleague, he proposed that it become a church school. Fortunately, as far as Sadie is concerned, this proposal was resisted by the governors and others in the villages and no

such change took place. She remembers the Barling Post Office in the house next to the school playing-field. Sadie knew well the Snow family who lived there, including Mrs Snow, who ran the post office, and her sons Reg, a twice-decorated bomber pilot, and Les. At first Sadie had lodgings at Dunrovin, the house of the Ladbroke family. Living there were elderly Mrs Ladbroke, her son-in-law Malcolm Mumford and his wife Edith (Edie), who was Mrs Ladbroke's daughter, and their daughter, Yvonne. Sadie also stayed for a while with the Prior family (Mr and Mrs Prior and their infant son, Mick) in their bungalow up towards Little Wakering Corner. Halfway through the War, she returned to her hometown of Aberdare in south Wales, 23 miles north of Cardiff. Her early life had been spent in this town in a valley. On one side you could see the lights of the buses and cars winding up the hill

at night. Over the opposite hill was Aberfan, scene of the dreadful disaster of 1966. She had been educated at a local primary school and then Aberdare Grammar School. At eighteen, she went to a teacher-training college in Barry, where she obtained her Teacher's Certificate. Then, as her first job, she was appointed as a teacher at Barling School. When she returned to Aberdare in 1942, Sadie started up three nursery schools and then taught at a primary school, where she eventually became Deputy Head. She retired from teaching in 1977. She spoke of meeting her husband, also a teacher: "I was travelling to work for a time and we met on the bus – very romantic!" They were to have a son, Rhidian, who is a musician. In July 2006 Sadie returned to Barling for the first time in 64 years. She visited the Old School and the New School, where, among others, she met Yvonne (Bradbury)

Bridge, one of her pupils from the 1930s. Yvonne, who lived with her parents and sisters opposite Mrs Ladbroke's house, said; "I wouldn't have recognised her. In those days she was dark-haired with a round face and wore glasses. We lived opposite Mrs Ladbroke's and so saw a lot of Sadie. She was a very nice teacher, who, as well as being the Infants teacher, took music lessons and played the piano and sang well. We had a big air-raid shelter dug in our garden and Sadie would often come over with the others at Ladbroke's to stay in there during air-raids." Finally, an amazing coincidence. Sadie (Morgan) Jones now lives with her husband in Maidenhead, next door to her son, whose partner's daughter is the School Development Adviser of the 'new' Barling Magna Community Primary School. After all these years Sadie is connected once more to the villages and the school in rural south-east Essex.

Peter Griffiths

**LITTLE WAKERING, BARLING AND GREAT WAKERING ARE ON THE WEB!
THIS NEWSLETTER CAN ALSO BE ACCESSED**

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<http://www.barlingwakeringvillages.co.uk/index.html>