

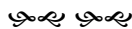
Small Beginnings

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

Special Interest Articles:

- Reunion Lunches
- Memories of Mr Learmond
- A visit from a convict
- Joe Mowling's shop

The editor would like to apologise for the lack of the Small Beginnings newsletters during the past couple of years. She had problems with her old laptop which clonked along at an extremely sluggish pace. At its life's end it took hours (no kidding!) to produce a single page Word document. However she has now bought a new laptop which is efficient and speedy, so putting the newsletter together isn't the major chore of previous times. We may even be able to add photos to the newsletter!



Reunion Lunches

A group of us meet for lunch every few months to catch up on news, and socialise, but also to plan the main reunion events.

We have changed our venue now meet at the Castle Inn, from 12.15 to 3.00 pm

Dates for 2011:

October 15th

Dates for 2012:

January 12th

April 19th

July 12th

October 11th

All friends and partners are welcome.

Reunion News

At previous lunches various aspects of the next reunion were discussed. David Bailey suggested that we should consider a different format for this one. For instance, an attractive way of holding our reunion might be to enjoy a meal together at a suitable venue in the villages or in Southend.

A small committee was established to look into possibilities for another reunion. It was led by David and consists of Olive (Bradbury) Cooper, Barbara (Smith) Elliot, Val (Mott) Ridley and Maureen (Abrey) Pett.

It was proposed that, at the three-monthly lunches, we should have a raffle, as a way of adding to our funds. Vi (Mitchell) Sivell will arrange one for future get-togethers. Hopefully, that will be a further inducement for people to join us at The Castle Inn.

If you have any ideas as to how our next reunion could be organised or any suggestions of a suitable venue, please do get in touch with David or anyone on his team. Even just one sentence will be welcome. Currently it has been decided to delay a reunion

Adapted from an article by Peter Griffiths

Barling School Reunion

Memories of Joe Mowling's Shop

Joe Mowling's shop was opposite the Castle Inn in Little Wakering. Joe's wife and daughter ran the shop in the daytime and Joe took over in the evenings.

He sold sweets in jars, soft drinks, tobacco, cigarettes and cigars.

When Joe ran the shop in the evenings, he started about 7.30 pm. Local people like my dad, Harry Mitchell, used to go in the evenings, play cards and pick the teams for the football club. They used to play football on the Wick Meadow against the Great Wakering team.

Sometimes George Ladbrook would visit when he was home on leave and he to go to Joe's shop. He was the chauffeur for the Duke of Windsor (Edward VIII) and would tell Joe stories of his life with the Duke. Mr Bentall from Wick Farm used to go to the shop and play cards or talk about the farm.

In the summer they used to sell lovely ice cream made from custard powder.

Vi (Mitchell) Sivell

The editor was given this at the last reunion lunch and some of the group saw it. It was discovered that Joe's great grandson, Martin Walker, was in the pub and he gave further information. The following is a synopsis:

Joe's wife was called Agatha and they had two children, Len and Phyllis. They bought the shop in 1926.

Phyllis worked at the Ranges (Shoebury?) and used to take cigarettes with her in a suitcase to sell to the other workers.

Joe died first, and Agatha left the shop to Phyllis.

Martin and his family still live in the family home where the shop was in the front room. It is 179, Little Wakering Road.

We were babes born in a village that cared
Where joys and trouble alike were shared
Neighbours were saviours in our hour of need
No-one talked of money or thought about greed
Crime was unheard of, PC Griffiths just smiled
No names were taken, nothing was filed
Vicar Freeman baptised us, and taught us our prayers
Nitty Norah came monthly to look in our hairs
Our four roomed small school with playground all round
Gave us an education that was strong and sound
Started us out on the rocky road of life
Teaching us to cope with the pain and the strife
Everyone that went there would say, I am sure,
That Mr Learmond and his teachers could not have
done more

We all went our ways, some to countries far away
Others, of course, decided they wanted to stay
All in all we turned out to be not a bad bunch
That's why we meet up now and then for a pub
lunch

Just to chat, tell tales and remember old times
Swap photos and news, somewhere along those
lines

It is just as if no time at all has passed us by
We will remember each other until the day we die
Some of the others have gone on ahead
Sweet memories of ours say that they are not just
dead

So when comes the day that we meet our fate
They will be there waiting at heaven's gate
And they will say to each of us "Come on in"
Now the Barling School reunion can really begin

Sheelagh (Chapman)Aranha

Barling School Registers

Back in October 2007 ex-pupils of Barling School gave the new school a bound set of the registers dating back to September 1878.

3,000 pupils who had attended the old school were recorded, and the records were well received by the head teacher of the school.

The first name on the register was Ellen Eve who was admitted to the original school at the age of 8, and the last one is Charles Wood who was admitted in September 1971.

From an article in the Yellow Advertiser, Oct 4th 2007

Sad News

Since the last edition of Small Beginnings, it is with regret that we have some deaths to report:

Geoff, husband of Sandra (Cornwell) in September 2009

Gerald "Joss" Griffiths in November 2009, brother of Peter, John and David, son of Vera and Ken

Dawn (Gilkes) Smith daughter of Joyce and Harry and sister of Les, Maureen and Joy in November 2009

Joyce (Burgess) Gilkes in February 2010, wife of Harry and mother of Les, Maureen, Dawn (see above) and Joy

John Edwards, former teacher at Great Wakering School in March 2010

Blaise Aranha in April 2010, husband of Sheelagh (Chapman)

Of Interest

I recently read a novel called "Witch-Water Country" by Gary Kilworth. It's an early book of his, set in the Rochford area and is the story of children growing up on the local marshes, with the flood of 1953 as the finale. Gary Kilworth's family roots are in Essex and he is a well-known science fiction author. I found it very evocative of the area.

Lynne (Marshall) Askham

Miss Riley and her involvement with The Scripture Union.

Those who remember Miss Riley will agree that she was a lovely Christian lady, and I remember her kindness to the Cobb family at Dam Farm, Lt. Wakering. Speaking personally, she became more than a teacher, a gracious friend, particularly through the S.U. meetings I think. These were held at the little Mission Hall just along the road from the school I believe - our last visit to Barling confirmed that the building had been demolished. The Cobb children all attended the Sunday School at the Mission, and mum and dad often came to the morning and evening services. I wonder if others recall the Mission activities.

Ernest Cobb

If you would like to contribute to
"Small Beginnings"
please contact:

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The day an escaped convict paid us a visit

Living at Landwick Cottages at the time (although I don't know the exact year of this incident) we children were happily playing outside when a police car drew up and the police spoke to our mums (our dads were at work).

Apparently they told our mums to stay indoors as a convict had escaped and was seen heading this way. "Foxy Fowler" they called him.

However our mums got us in as told, but as soon as the police car disappeared down Oxenham Farm Road we all went out, mums as well, and waited for the police car to come back.

After a while we saw the police car and when it got nearer it stopped. We thought the police were going to tell us off. However they only wanted to tell us that they'd got their man, so we were safe. In the back of the car we saw this man handcuffed to a policeman. They had picked him up on Rushley Island. One of the neighbours asked the policeman if he would like a cup of tea, but he declined. We went back to the games we were playing but obviously this was the main talking point for many months to come.

Janet (Mead) Rodmell

The village website

contains copies of past newsletters, and photos from various reunions.

There are also many photographs of people and events in Little Wakering, Great Wakering and Barling villages, and Barling School.

It is easy to navigate around and is well worth a look.

Terry Mumford works very hard to maintain and add to this excellent website which can be found at <http://www.barlingwakeringvillages.co.uk/index.html>

(if you are online, click on the address to go to website)

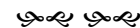
Mr Learmond

Adam Learmond was a large rounded man with a big smile and an even bigger kind heart. He came from Aberdeen to our small village with his parents and moved into the Barling School House. Besides heading the school staff and teaching the top class children he also looked after his elderly parents with devoted care.

Mr Learmond was respected by his pupils and always had time for worried parents. He obviously felt at home in the area as he spent the rest of his days there.

I remember that at Christmas everyone in his class received a present from him. A generous man we will not forget.

Sheelagh (Chapman) Aranha



The other day on the radio, I heard the theme from the film "Genevieve" which was made in 1953 and starred John Gregson, Dinah Sheridan, Kenneth More and Kay Kendall.

I was immediately transported back to Mr Learmond's classroom where we seemed to watch the film on many, many occasions, sitting on little benches. I guess it must have been a treat, kindly arranged by Mr Learmond, but I can't remember why or when it was shown.



Does anyone else share similar memories?

Lynne (Marshall) Askham