

# 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
- News of the big reunion
- Memories of The Castle Inn
- Evocations of old Southend

## **Reunion Lunches**

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

We meet at the Castle Inn, Little Wakering from 12.15 to 3.00 pm

### **Remaining Dates for 2013-2014**

July 13<sup>th</sup> 2013  
October 12<sup>th</sup> 2013  
Jan 11<sup>th</sup> 2014  
April 12<sup>th</sup> 2014  
July 12<sup>th</sup> 2014  
October 11<sup>th</sup> 2104

*All friends and partners are welcome.*

## **Barling School Reunion**

A reunion will be held at 6.00pm  
on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2013  
at the Community Centre, Great Wakering  
(the old school)

Catch up with your old school friends

There will be refreshments, photographs, displays and plenty of time for chatting!

## Memories of Southend

Peter circulated details of a website featuring photos of Southend which can be found at [https://www.facebook.com/video/embed?video\\_id=10151656661743151](https://www.facebook.com/video/embed?video_id=10151656661743151)

Many people commented on the photos and a few discussions took place on line which revealed some interesting recollections.

I've put those with common themes together as mini-articles which appear throughout this and the next edition.

*Lynne (ed)*

### The Castle Inn

My knowledge of the Castle only goes back about 70 years. Of course I remember the tea rooms and tea gardens and the charabancs (coaches ) that came from Southend Seafront having been conned by the touters into believing there was a castle there.

The first landlord I remember was Bill Bridge who had a son Don who went into the Merchant Navy. At the back of the Car park was a range of stables, left over I believe from when it was a Coaching Inn. I also remember Francis and Micky Hills who opened the tea rooms as a truckers' cafe when all the dust carts going to the tip went down Little Wakering Road. His wife Janet still runs several pubs in Southend and has recently taken over the Esplanade on western esplanade, although in tonight's Echo there is a planning application to knock it down and replace with a 4 story hotel. 30 odd years ago Cally Smith took it over. He was a tough East End no nonsense guvnor who like most east enders liked boxing, he staged open air tournaments in the gardens which at that time were at the back of the car park.

During the very dark days of the Second World War Barling had its own garden and allotment society which supported the iconic phrase, 'Dig for victory'. The Society run by none other than Adam Learmond used one of the old stables.

Since then Landlords have come and gone, a bit interspersed with fires and other happenings.

*Laurence Street*

I can remember my Grandfather George Hubbard used to attend meetings of the "The Grand Order of Buffalos" association or club for many years around the 1940/50s and people who had mortgages with them would go to make there to make payments.

*Yvonne (Hubbard) Flower*

I remember a lot of what Laurence does about the Castle. We had a donkey in our back garden, when we came back from Wales after the war. Our garden was waist high with nettle and grass. My dad was mates with Bill Bridge, who used to have a donkey that he used to put in the orchard behind the tea rooms. Dad borrowed it to get the nettles down in our garden.

There is a photo somewhere of me on the donkey. I reckon that was the first sit on a mower in Wakering.

Francis I remember more as I was in my teens, and used the Castle as our second home. She used to take in young girls who had got in the family way. On a Saturday you would have Willie on the piano, Peter Waller on drums, sometimes it would be my old mate Ray Mott, sometimes Bob Petley would give you a vocal. Francis had this African Grey Parrot that used to walk around on the bar, it used to swear, we used to give it beer and it would get drunk. The tearooms would hold a disco now and again. Sunday lunch time we would have our scrumpy. Francis would get us the roughest she could get for us. A few of them and off down to our track at the seawall to ride for our local cycle speedway team BARLING BRIGANDS. CAN YOU BRING IT ALL BACK PLEASE? HAPPY DAYS

*Les Gilkes*

Willie, I think, was Bill Buskin who at some time after Frank Carey and his family vacated Ruskins Farm (near the old school) lived there. Bill played in many of the seafront pubs

*Laurence Street*

I remember Frances's African Grey Parrot that used to like a drink or three. He used to drain the empties in the crates outside the back door. It's wings had been clipped so it couldn't fly but it used to walk up and down the bar and help itself to a wee dram from anyone's glass that was left unattended.

He went for a walkies down the middle of the road, drunk as a lord. He couldn't walk a straight line. Twice, I remember, someone had to go and retrieve him as he was holding up the 4B bus.

Frances was very partial to the TV soaps and sometimes left the bar unattended. One of the regulars used to serve the cliental until East Enders or Coronation Street finished. Willie, on the piano, used to break into "Georgia on my Mind" every time Pam and I walked in. It is her favourite song and he always got a pint for his rendition.

*Mick Prior*

I do remember the Castle quite well because as a family we lived at Wick Farm for the first ten years of my life, and Victory Cottages after.

I always thought "Willie" playing the piano had a surname of WILKINSON!! Am I right or wrong?

As for the Castle Pets, do you remember "Candy" Frances's big black Standard Poodle ? I do vividly.

When at the age of eleven I had a paper round. I had to cycle to Edie Stow's paper shop at the corner of High Street and Twyford Ave and pick up **one** paper to be delivered to Mr. Jonson who lived at Glebe Farm Barling. Good money in 1961, 1s 0d per day for a six day week = 6 bob a week.

Getting back to Candy, in the summer he would lay outside the pub and I SWEAR he was waiting for me, I would peer from Mrs. Mowlem's shop to see if he was there. If he was I would take a run up and go as fast as my bike could take me, needless to say he did get me once, sunk his teeth in my leg and pulled me off my bike.

I don't love black poodles, even if Frances did give me a brandy and a bag of crisps after hearing the commotion and me crying. Also I think dad may have been given a pint or two to forget my encounter with Candy

*Ray Beadell*

## Memories of John Cerson

I believe Micky Cerson was the son of John Cerson who also lived in Coronation Close, John in turn was the son of Arthur Cerson who lived in Victory Cottages. John is of interest to us. He was a plumber by trade and worked for many years for Hubbards. As we know Barling Youth Club had a Drama section and produced plays and pantos. They were presented at the Parochial Hall. The producer was Doris Lindon, who had been a professional actress and also ran a Theatrical Dress Hire business at Westcliff. My job was stage manager which including making scenery and props.

One of the pantos was Cinderella which involved a Coach. Somehow John got involved in helping make this, which was mounted on a pram chassis so we could pull it across the stage on an unseen piece of cord.

Doris's husband Tom was involved in producing plays professionally and asked if he could borrow the coach which was agreed to. It went on tour and somehow or other got lost and was never seen here again. We also did Treasure Island I think and we built a Galleon (boat). John and I built it on large rockers so we could rock it from behind to simulate a rough sea.

Rehearsals generally finished about 9.30 pm. John and I then started building the scenery and worked until about midnight

*Laurence Street*

## The Photos 1 – Music at the Odeon

Lynne (Marshall) and Bob Avery remember the Beatles playing at the Odeon in 1963. Lynne queued all night for tickets and Laurence Street was on duty backstage while they were playing. The car park at the side of the Odeon was turned into an operations centre with a Police Caravan, St John caravan, refreshment facilities and much more. Kids queued or slept in ever decreasing circles in the car park.

Southend police had a noise machine which was intended to register the noise emitted from vehicle exhausts in decibels; the limit for cars was 80 dbs. This was set up in the auditorium. The dbs whilst they were playing was reckoned to be equivalent to the sound of gunfire!!

Mick Prior recollects some "real music" at the Odeon Louis Armstrong, The Count Basie Orchestra, The Stan Kenton Orchestra and Jazz at the Philharmonic with Roy Eldridge, Coleman Hawkins etc. The Stan Kenton Orchestra put on a great performance. Having such a large brass section, they were a bit on the loud side. Stan asked the Odeon staff to turn off the sound system.

## The Photos 2 – Going Out

Peter Griffiths used to go to the Sorrento coffee bar, and Lynne (Marshall) Askham used the Jacobean, the Capri and the Shades. (Mod hangouts) The Black Cat was the rocker café. Bob Avery used to ride his Vespa GS down from Ipswich at weekends to spend happy Saturday evenings in the Capri and Shades. Laurie Street threw trouble-makers out of all those coffee bars! Jackie Bowler reminds us that those of us who had no transport had to catch the 4B bus home which left the town at 10.00pm, or the 4 to Landwick at 10.30pm and walk to Barling from Run Corner.

Barbara (Stride) and Ken often went to the Palace, the repertory theatre at Westcliff, and on one occasion a man was featuring in a play they were watching and many years later he played the part of Arthur Fowler in Eastenders.

## Sad News

Cynthia Keen died in the spring

Micky Cerson died recently (in May) after being diagnosed with bowel cancer. Micky was in the same year as Terry Metcalfe and can be seen at <http://barlingwakingvillages.co.uk/barling/BarlingSchoolFootball1965.htm> kitted out for the school football team 1965/66.

Micky grew up with his parents in Coronation Street and is the youngest brother of Barry, Peter, Patricia & Christine.

## Discussion Point

I have noticed that in recent times "Small Beginnings" contains more memories of the villages and people than the school, which is what the newsletter was originally for. I have no objection to the way it's going and, as far as I know, there's no other vehicle for these delightful items of interest.

However, I'd be interested to know what others think. Please let me know.

We could, as Peter has suggested, have another "Jot down your memories" at the next lunch and focus it on the school.

*Lynne, Editor*

## The Photos 3 - Work

I have strong memories, also evoked by these photos, of the boating pool, where I worked for two long summers, and Tomassi's, where my wife, Pat, worked in the holidays in the mid-1950s.

*Peter Griffiths*

I worked in Woolworths on a Saturday in 1963, then had holiday jobs at a fish and chip restaurant opposite the Kursaal, a beach stall, and later at Thoroughgoods restaurant. These were in addition to helping in my mother's (Kay Marshall) shop. Wish I still had that energy!

*Lynne (Marshall) Askham*

Ken's Mother worked as a chef in a hotel that was on the left going down the High Street...the name escapes me at the moment.

*Barbara (Stride) Bush*

## 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 the website)

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