

# 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:***

- Our new website
- Reunion Lunches
- Happy Memories
- Lest we forget

## **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

### **Dates for 2015**

April 11<sup>th</sup> 2015

July 11<sup>th</sup> 2015

October 10<sup>th</sup> 2015

*All friends and partners are welcome.*

## **Our New Website**

I would like to thank everybody for their confidence and prompt replies to queries.

I have set up the new site as follows:

<http://www.barlingwakingvillages.co.uk/heritage/>

There are navigation buttons on each site for ease of navigation, although they all differ slightly.

I have had to republish the latest two sites entirely.

*Richard Kirton*

## **SMALL BEGINNINGS Newsletter**

I have been editing Small Beginnings newsletter since the spring of 2004 and, because of deteriorating health, am no longer able to carry on. I also think that the newsletter would benefit from "fresh blood", so am hoping that someone out there will take the job on.

*Lynne (Marshall) Askham*

## Lest We Forget

### How Great Waking Primary School honoured the fallen and remembered the sacrifices of the survivors from 1914-2014.

The year 2014 is a time when the anniversary of the outbreak of World War One is remembered and the ending of World War Two 70 years ago was celebrated.

The staff and pupils of the school decided they should do something very special to commemorate this very special period in the life of this very special village - not something to glorify war with bombs and bullets but to show the progress of the area achieved under exceptionally difficult times, to reflect the outstanding courage and fortitude of every man, woman, boy and girl as they made their way through life.

A mosaic was created showing these facets to adorn the outer wall of the school near the entrance. Funding was obtained from the Heritage Lottery Fund and professional help obtained.

Work started and research started into the life and times of local people who lived and worked through the years. This is how I came to be involved. My wonderful friend Hilary who really works more than tirelessly for the betterment of young lives in this area asked my help.

I remember vividly the happenings of WW 2. I was 4 years of age at the outbreak of this horrific war and lived and grew up in Little Waking Road. I provided the school with an account of boyhood memories of Barling and Waking at this time.

How there were few cars, everything was rationed and everyone had ration books, there were no street lights or road name plates, no lights were allowed to be seen at night. How we watched enemy bombers, doodlebugs and V2 rockets pass overhead going to bomb London and other cities only to be intercepted by iconic Spitfire and Hurricane fighter planes from Rochford, Hornchurch and Biggin Hill attack and destroy many who hurtled to earth in flames.

Hilary asked three other ladies and myself to the school to answer questions from children. I had had no briefing and didn't know what to expect.

I have always held the school in high esteem but this morning I was simply blown away by the wonderful behaviour and demeanour of the children of Waking. Their questions were so well presented that I was totally overwhelmed.

A display was made in the school foyer which I was able to contribute towards with a few war time relics (apart from me).

On a beautiful autumn morning, unveiling day came and I was honoured to be invited. We were treated to cakes and coffee from the school kitchen. A good crowd gathered with some invited guests. The mayor of Southend had been invited and gave a moving and poignant address based on a theme, "We must never forget". Other speeches followed.

The Mosaic looked resplendent in the autumn sunshine, is very large about 25 feet long and 6 or 8 feet high. Unveiling was by one boy and one girl. Again they stole my heart. They were so confident, so well poised and spoke with faultless clarity. They were a tribute to the school.

It was a wonderful day not to be forgotten, and as we remember armistice signed at the eleventh hour of the

## Lest We Forget cont.

eleventh day of the eleventh month and remembrance Sunday, we must never forget.

We must never forget the uncountable numbers of service people who gave their lives during World War 1 and the vast numbers who were injured in body and mind. The people of Malta were dubbed the nurses of the Mediterranean because they were well placed to receive casualties from a wide area and provided 27 hospitals with 25,000 beds.

The people who died during World War 2 and other conflicts, the 453 who gave their lives for freedom in Afghanistan and all those who return changing wounds.

WE MUST NEVER FORGET.



*Laurie Street*

There's a lovely photo of the mosaic at [http://www.barlingwakingvillages.co.uk/plus/lest\\_we\\_forget.html](http://www.barlingwakingvillages.co.uk/plus/lest_we_forget.html)

Unfortunately it's too large to print here

Ed

## Sad News

May (Mumford) Duncan passed away on Saturday morning 8<sup>th</sup> November aged 99 years. The Funeral Service took place on Friday, 28 November at St Marks Church, Hamlet Road where she attended for nearly fifty years. Her burial followed at All Saints Barling. May attended Barling School and came to several reunions.

Pauline and Gordon Chittock have moved.  
Their new address is  
6 Magnolia drive  
Rendlesham  
Woodbridge  
Suffolk IP12 2GB

Does anyone remember the ESLER family and what happened to them? The parents were Samuel ESLER and Amy, nee AUSTIN, who married in the Epping area in 1926, but were definitely in Barling by 1932.

As far as I can make out, there were at least five children:

Gwendoline, born 29 September 1927

Douglas Norman, born 17 March 1930 (admitted to the school under the name Norman)

David, born 24 March 1935

Dorothy (who is named in two photos on our original website), probably born sometime between 1934 and 1936

Leslie (nicknamed 'Sammy'), born 24 January 1941

There may also have been an Eileen, born 1926

Tony Alps has sent a photo taken in 1947 or 1948 on Mucking Hall Road, where the Alps family lived, as also did the Esler family - at 1 Olive Cottages. Dorothy's school photos can be seen on the website

*Peter Griffiths*

## More Happy Memories

I remember visiting and spending many happy hours with lady called Nurse Snow who lived in Little Wakering Road (1945 ish). She had been the matron of a cottage hospital in London and I still have a book of Tennyson's poetry and an Edith Cavell book she gave to me. I would love to know more about her – she was so caring and kind  
*Yvonne (Hubbard) Flower*

One of my most enduring memories is of long hot summers over the creek and forever being chased off Gaffer Mumford's cockle barge and sheds. It was a wonderful childhood and sadly lost now there is too much political correctness

*Jo Rowland (Sandra Cornwell)*

One of my first memories of Barling School was from the winter of 1946-47 when there were heavy snows. One playtime I was in the back playground when I saw a man clamber over the gate onto the bank. He ran over and grabbed one of the older boys, pushed him down and rubbed his face in the snow. Then he did the same to another boy (in those days children stayed at Barling School until they were 14). The man was Mr Pavelin. Why had he done it? Because these lads had been bullying his sons  
*Peter Griffiths*

Barling Brigands cycle speedway club every Sunday at the sea wall. Sunday evenings spent on Peter Cary's barge, "The Persevere"

*Jack Chapman*

So many happy memories - playing on the rec with Hazel Crump, Curly Cerson, Chris Appleyard, and Joss Griffiths. Later, when we'd moved to Little Wakering, spending summers at the creek learning to swim and getting filthy with that black mud. Early years at Barling School with Denise Kiss, Laurie Punnet, Roger Snow, Roger Abrey, Roy Deeks and Diane Beadell.

*Lynne (Marshall) Askham*

Birthday parties during the 1950s in the Parochial Hall, with Les Gilkes, Bob Petley and Stan Witton in tight jeans and Tony Curtis haircuts, singing Elvis songs and using the cleaner's broom as a guitar  
*Sheelagh (Chapman) Aranha*

## Wintry Memories-1947.

At the start of 1947 I was eleven, I have often said I lived in Victory Cottages.

The cottages were higher than the road, a grass bank led down to the road. Across the road there were no houses or other buildings just a stumpy elm hedge which was cut regularly by Mr Bentall's workers. We faced east, beyond the hedge there was just open fields for miles right over to the sea.

I don't remember when the snow started but this winter was undoubtedly the worst I remember locally.

It snowed and it snowed and it snowed, coupled with this the wind was very strong from the north east which made for blizzard conditions, swirling the snow like a corkscrew. There was soon many feet of snow which was augmented by the fact that when drifting snow meets a hedge it builds up not at the face of the hedge but behind it, on the road side. There was soon so much snow the road was impassable.

I think rock salt was unheard of, certainly none found its way onto the roads round here. Vehicles were much smaller than now, from what I remember a reasonable size lorry wasn't much bigger than Ford Transit.

We dug caves into the snow like igloos. Actually once inside out of the wind it felt quite warm certainly less cold. We were still feeling the effects of the war years, everything was still rationed including clothing warm clothes were short supply, if not by rationing by money. Money was short in Victory Cottages and particularly so at number 16. Newspaper was a useful insulator. We put folded layers inside our shoes or boots if we could afford them. We also put layers of newspaper between the blankets of our beds and as many coats as we could find on top.

Life went on. We still got to school by sliding along the road. We all held hands and went along or across the road like a snake. We went on the ice at the Puggy or more correctly went through the ice and got wet through.

There was little traffic able to move so the danger from vehicles was slim. Roads were not gritted so the snow just became packed which turned into ice. Long slides appeared, sledges were made by hand and used to haul logs and anything else.

We still got supplies, our village bakers, there were three then, seemed to get enough flour to make bread.

Bentall's had a local milkman who lived in Kimberly Road. He used to deliver from two churns carried on the handlebars of his bike. He carried two jugs (one held a pint and the other a quart). He just decanted what you wanted from his jug to yours. (Infection never heard of it. The milk came straight from the cow).

As far as I remember we had no coalmen actually in Waking but several came from the railway sidings at Shoebury ( All coal came by rail then) Jim Sterry had a horse and cart, My Offord came with a lorry. He was a lovely man, always helpful. I remember him saying to my mother, "Mrs Street if I have to carry it all the way on my back you will have coal". He never needed to go to this length but we always had coal.

Then one day a lorry appeared (Jim Church's I think) loaded with a gritty mixture. Two men stood on the back and spread shovels of the mixture about the road. This didn't actually melt the snow but gave vehicles a grip. Jim Church had the sand pit at Barling. I think the mixture was something we now call 'Hoggin', a sort of dirty sand.

This was the beginning of the end of the great freeze but it had lasted weeks and weeks. All the kids I knew had a whale of a time but never once missed school.

*Laurie Street*

## Wintry memories-1963

The boots of policemen doing point duty froze to the road.

The Seafront was part of my foot patrol beat so I remember it. The Police station then was in Alexander Street so just at the top of Pier Hill. The Police Land rover spent the time towing buses up Pier Hill.

There is an old countryman's tale that says it gets warmer after it snows-true actually. Another says picking frozen Brussels warms your hands. I never noticed it. Mine just froze like my boots.

*Laurie Street*

I remember everything around the village being frozen and white for months in 1963, but can't remember missing school because buses (to the Girls' High School) weren't running There's a saying here in north Essex that a very cutting, chilly wind is lazy – it's too lazy to go round you, so "it goo strite froo".

*Lynne (Marshall) Askham*

I remember 1963. It was very icy. I was 18 years old and worked at Southend Airport. I cycled to there and back home 5 days a week and fell off my bike many times.

If I were to do it now, it would probably kill me....but I was fit then.....

*Graham (Val's husband)*

### VILLAGES WEBSITE

<http://www.barlingwakingvillages.co.uk/plus/>

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