

Summer 2020

Edition 41

Small Beginnings

The Newsletter of Friends of the Old Barling School

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Reunion Lunches

*A Group of us meet for lunch every 3 months to
socialise, catch up on news and plan reunion events.*

We meet at:

Castle Inn, Little Wakering

Our Next Scheduled Lunchtime Get-together

*Saturday 10th October 2020
12:15 p.m.*

*Anybody with an interest in our school or
area will receive a Warm Welcome*

Foreword by Richard Kirton

Just look at how the world has changed due to the coronavirus pandemic, from our working culture to the way we even say hello.

The world in which we now live is undeniably different to the one we knew before Covid-19 emerged and spread with devastating speed.

For many of us, living through a pandemic will prompt a personal crisis not unlike the ones typically associated with hitting 50 years old or going through a divorce.

We are questioning everything and reflecting on the reality of our existences. Our lives probably will never be the same again but those born after World War II have generally boasted that we have had the best years through the generations. Until now!!!

Regrettably, our meetings scheduled for Saturday 11th April and Saturday 11th July 2020 had to be cancelled because of the coronavirus epidemic. Let us hope that we can meet on Saturday 10th October 2020.

Our Last Meeting at the Castle Inn

On 11th January 2020

Peter Griffiths

'That was fantastic!', someone said to me - not about our October Reunion, though that was splendid too, but about our lunchtime at The Castle on Saturday 11th January 2020. There were 47 of us there, a record for these three-monthly get-togethers. We were pleased to welcome eight or nine newcomers and others who hadn't been for a while. Yes, it was a jolly, not to say 'boisterous', occasion. Of course many other friends were there in spirit, including two who sent their best wishes from Down Under: Barbara (Bush) Stride from Whangarei, North Island, New Zealand, and Tony Alps from Queensland, Australia.

Sad News

In the final months of last year, we were sorry to lose two Friends of Barling School who were classmates there. In Autumn 2019 we noted the death of Geoff Bell. Geoff did so much for our group in the early days - from his home, these past 50 years, a long way east of Johannesburg, South Africa. From there, he initiated both our newsletter 'Small Beginnings' and our original *barlingwakingvillages* website. Geoff, who was brought up on Kimberley Road, Little Waking, started at our school on January 30th 1939 and left, when he was transferred to Great Waking, on July 23rd 1948.

Then, in December, we lost Arthur Chittock. Arthur (along with siblings Sonia and Gordon) started at our school on January 6th 1947, soon after the Chittock family had moved to Gaol Farm in Barling. He left the school on December 17th 1948, after he had reached the school-leaving age of 15. However, he remained a stalwart of the Youth Club Drama Group for many years, taking lead roles in, for instance, 'Peril at End House' by Agatha Christie, a detective mystery in which he was Hercule Poirot, and the comedy 'The Happiest Days of their Lives', where he played the headmaster role made famous by Alastair Sim. I am sure that I am not the only one to have fond memories of these productions at the Parochial Hall, Little Waking.

' Small Beginnings ' Newsletter

Editor Richard Kirton produced a lovely, souvenir edition of the newsletter for our Big Reunion in October. It is a fascinating read and is now viewable online. If you prefer to look at a hard copy, recent editions of our newsletter may be seen in Great Waking Library. Many memories of life in our villages are still unrecorded. So, if you have any, please do send them to Richard at the e-mail address below.

As a group, we have produced a special edition of our newsletter. It is based on various past memories, articles and interviews with Barling and Waking people and is our way of acknowledging the 75th Anniversary of VE Day.

Villages Websites

Richard has added more photos recently. Do look them up. His history of *Great Waking Rovers F.C., '100 Years in Non-League Football'*, can be read online at http://www.barlingwakingvillages.co.uk/plus/gw_rovers_100years_nonleaguefootball.html

If you have photos of local people or places, please do get in touch, so that they can be added to the wonderful collection on our 'Villages' website.

The *New Website* can be reached directly here: <http://www.barlingwakingvillages.co.uk/plus/>

The Home page has a button marked *Original Website* to take you to our old site, but the latter is still directly accessible here: <http://www.barlingwakingvillages.co.uk/index.html>



'The Anchor' Public House Burnt Down



**"The Anchor" Public House, High Street, Great Waking
(Photo taken circa 1900)
Courtesy of Doreen Mills**

Transcript from 'Southend Standard', dated Friday 11th December 1903

Nothing remained of 'The Anchor', Great Waking, on Friday morning, except some brickwork supporting the chimneys, surrounded by the charred remains of the structure. It was a very old two-storey house, constructed mostly of wood. Mr. Charles Deeks had been landlord for nearly three years. The occupants of the house on Thursday were Mr. Deeks, his two daughters, a lady-friend who was staying with them, Mr. Deeks junior, and two men lodgers. Towards two o'clock in the morning of Friday, Mr. Deeks awoke, to find smoke in his room. He heard a cracking and snapping noise and looked out of the window to see the flames running along the boards of the building. He rushed to the room occupied by the young ladies (under which the fire appeared to have started), in the front part of the building, and found that the fire had already reached there. He dropped out of his window into the backyard, falling on his hip. He secured a ladder, placed it against the window, and brought down the ladies, who were screaming with terror, one by one, also his son. One of the lodgers went to the window, and, it is reported, said "I know I am bad, but I don't think I am bad enough to be burnt alive". He, therefore, jumped out, followed by the other lodger. Through the kindness of Mr. Bishop, the members of the family and the Misses Deeks lady friend found a temporary home. The place was now blazing furiously, and messengers on horseback were sent to bring the Fire Brigades. Mr. Deeks junior, rode to Shoebury to fetch the Garrison Brigade and Mr. Wedd's coachman set off to apprise the Southend Brigade that their services were required. Pending their arrival, measures were taken to prevent the fire from spreading. The Inn adjoined a house on the right-hand side, and there were a brick washhouse and wooden stable close in the rear. Fortunately, there was a pump in the back yard, and from this water was procured and thrown onto the buildings. Mr. Deeks worked hard, and was rendered valuable assistance by PS Totterdell, PC Law, PC Chapman, DR Raper, Messrs. John Mobbs, Outen, Beadle, and others.

The liquor in the house helped the fire on its way considerably. Bottles of spirits went off like little cannons, and tubs of beer boiled over.

The Southend Brigade got the call about 3.30 and were on the spot with dispatch: their arrival being witnessed by a large crowd. The place was down by this time, and there was nothing left to do but put the flames out which necessitated playing on them until nearly six. Four men went on the steamer, and nine on the escape tender. Two men were left in charge of the fire station, and at four the ship hotel fire alarm rang. They turned out with the hose cart, but found it was a false alarm, caused owing to the high wind making a contact. The Garrison Brigade did not arrive.

The house was the property of Miss Martha Harris and Mrs. Mitchell and was leased from them by Messrs. Wells and Perry, of Chelmsford.

Mr. Deeks estimated his losses at between £400 and £500; more than half being covered by insurance.

The members of the brigade attending were Capt. Garon, Lieut Harvey, Chief Engineer Willingale, Engineer White, Firemen Wood, Thorogood, Edwards, Norton, Finch, Sawkins, Calvert, Barker and J Ayres.

'The Anchor' Public House Rebuilding

Southend County Petty Sessions

Transcript from 'Southend Standard', dated February 1904

Mr. F W Powell (Messrs. Wand F Gregson) applied for the Bench's approval to plans for alterations at the anchor, Great Wakering. He said it would be remembered that the house in question was damaged by fire a short time ago, it was, therefore, necessary to make certain alterations which, he thought the bench would agree, would be a great improvement, the new part would be entirely erected upon the Original licensed site, some of the rooms would be made higher and additional convenience would be provided in the way of bedrooms. The Plans had already been approved by the local authority; the bench approved the plans.

Southend Observer and SE Essex Gazette Feb 23rd, 1905 reported that at Rochford Petty Sessions held on Feb 16th the licence of the Anchor Inn Great Wakering was transferred to Mr. J W Partridge.

[Note: the licence, still held by Mr. Charles Deeks had been held in abeyance until rebuilding was completed. Mr. Deeks decided however not to continue at the new Anchor, and this accounts for the transfer referred to above.]

Tricycle Race at Little Wakering Hall

Article by Bernard Cooper



The following photographs show David's and Bernard's Great Grandfather John Cooper, winning a tricycle race at Little Wakering Hall Village Fair and the prize that he was awarded. Bernard's story came about following the request for information regarding the identity of the chimney sweep tricycle photograph, further down.

The prize was a glass jug with a silver cap around the rim. He was very proud of his prize and it has been handed down through the family.

My Uncle Albert was working in Kent during the early 1920's. He saw an advert for the sale of a tricycle and decided it would be just right for his father John. The idea being that his father would ride it to the local brick field where he worked which was approximately one mile from his home. Albert bought it and returned to Shoeburyness by train from Kent. His father was very pleased with it and rode it frequently.



In the village it was tradition to hold a Village fair at Little Wakering Hall each year. One of the events organised was a tricycle race. John thought it would be a good idea to enter which he did and came first.

Local Chimney Sweep on his Tricycle

Article by David Bailey



Hilary Wilson handed me this delightful picture of a local chimney sweep which she obtained from Peter Huxter.

The tricycle that he is riding looks similar to the one that Bernard Cooper's Great Grandfather, John Cooper was riding at the Little Wakering Hall Village Fair in the 1920's.

We think the terrace house in the background was opposite the old Post Office in Great Wakering where Den Cooper lived in the house on the right, next to a Mrs. Rivers, who by the way sold toffee apples in season.

We have been trying to identify the chimney sweep, so far without success. If you think that you can identify this man, please get in touch with us, via our [Contact Us](#) page.

Victorian Chimney Sweeps

Chimney sweeps were often depicted in Victorian literature as heartless, abusive scoundrels, typified in the book *The Water Babies* by Charles Kingsley.

With the development of newer brush equipment and the end of child labour, the profession changed its image to one of agile and good-natured men, as depicted in the book series *Mary Poppins* and the Walt Disney film adaptation. In the film, "Bert" was

played by Dick van Dyke and sang the song "Chim Chim Cher-ee", which won the Oscar for "Best Song" in 1965.

Wedding Day Superstition

By Richard Kirton

In order to earn some cash, at the age of 15 and at weekends, I used to assist a chimney sweep in Sutton Road, Southend. His name was Victor Andrews and initially he used his wife Esme's trade bicycle from her greengrocer and florist business. His business grew quite quickly, and Victor managed to afford a small van in which to carry the tools of his trade.

I was also a wedding photographer for five years in the late 1960's and worked for Ray Callow who ran Regency Studio in Southchurch Road close to Southend High Street. It used to be considered lucky for a bride to see a chimney sweep on her wedding day and Ray remembered his early days when he would hire out a chimney sweep to attend several weddings. It was also considered to be good luck to shake hands with a chimney sweep or to be blown a kiss by one.

Villages Websites

Peter Griffiths

Our new website, Barling and Wakering Villages Plus is expanding all the time, and as site-manager Richard Kirton adds new photos frequently. If you have any pictures showing people or places in the area, please do get in touch. We would love to add them to the thousands already there. It is easy to get from the new site to the old one and vice-versa.

The new one can be reached here:

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

The Original Website can be reached here:

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

Please share your stories with our members who will be delighted to hear them.

Website Statistics Report

Richard Kirton

Again the report below shows that first time visits are still higher than returning visits. All of the averages have increased since last reported here and it was Saturday and Sunday that page-loads were high. The Website Statistics Report is automatically generated on a weekly basis and is still a valuable tool.

Weekly Stats Report Summary: 27 July 2020 - 02 August 2020

Daily Traffic Breakdown

	Page Views	Unique Visits	First Time Visits	Returning Visits
Mon	16	11	7	4
Tue	62	18	16	2
Wed	20	16	14	2
Thu	23	18	17	1
Fri	62	16	14	2
Sat	24	16	14	2
Sun	78	39	38	1
Total	285	134	120	14
Avg	41	19	17	2

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