

Dial Post 1939 onwards

Since my last effort, I have remembered a few more things about Dial Post School, which might be of interest. Where is, or was, the school? It stood at the end of Swallows Lane where the four bungalows now are; opposite, in the triangle formed by Swallows Lane and the old A24 road, was the Schoolhouse. The school had a very short life, built about 1920, closed in the 1960s and demolished in the 1970s. Dates are approximate only, but you get the idea.

Once a week the pupils took their rush mats to the village hall for P.T. - some of us managed to fall off their mat!! The hall was also the venue for less popular occasions, medical inspections, inoculations for various nasties, and horrors: the DENTIST. Many of us had teeth pulled in the little room which is now the kitchen, sometimes a wail of pain would be heard from there, though the perpetrator would never admit to it!

The school was surrounded by fields, and I remember when the Council Houses were built in the field to the North. The first thing to arrive was a large 8 wheel lorry loaded with bricks, which the driver unloaded, himself, by hand; it took most of the day! All the work was done by hand, a concrete mixer being the only machine on site. I do not remember any spoil being removed, unlike today, when vast amounts of earth are carried away and a great deal of mud created before any building takes place!

A few more memories before we move on in time. Those of you who are quick will have noticed that I was born in the year that war broke out; I don't think I can claim responsibility for this event! Apparently, while the Battle of Britain was going on overhead I was secure in a pram in the fields while the family were out working. I wish I could claim to remember this, and that it affected my life forever and I could sue the government for stress endured as a result, but sadly not so.

The earliest thing I remember is being blown into the pond at Thistleworth at about two years old. Mother was on hand to pull me out; no doubt she regretted this precipitate act many times afterwards! Cecil Longhurst was often working in and around the house and I used to 'Help' him all the time, his tools were always missing! I remember having measles; it must have been quite bad to stick in my mind. The only other thing I remember was a septic thumb: I cut it on a swaphook borrowed on my way home from school, and bound it up with the silver strip dropped by the R.A.F. to confuse German radar; we all had some in our pockets. My thumb went black, we called on Dr Dickins on Sunday night, he lanced it and I don't remember any more about it, except that it was painful. As I said before, no wonder I am somewhat cautious!!

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