

SCHOOL MEMORIES

Taken from the Memories Project interviews collected by John Cook

Salt Sellar attended school in Cuddesdon and remembers Mrs Edwards (headteacher) and her daughter Sally. Afterwards Salt went on to Garsington School where Michael Royal was headmaster. With fondness he remembers Jam Roly Day on a Friday (Swiss Roll with chocolate custard) and less fondly the canings he received. Cuddesdon children waited at school for the big bus from Garsington – they also drunk the leftover milk at the end of the day!

Marion West remembers school dinners cost 5/- per week, left overs were taken to Mr. Cox in the bungalow across the road for his chickens. Mrs. Jenkins the dinner lady gave us chocolate mice at Christmas. PE was to Music & Movement on the radio or games and apparatus in the playground. Great excitement when the climbing frame came, as was when the swings were put up in the Rec. We danced around the maypole. Miss Potter visited for music, she played the piano the children played either tambourines or triangles. Mr Vine came for art and crafts, we made village characters in paper mache, and also worked with clay. I knitted a pair of grey socks on four needles and a cravat in royal blue. The nit nurse dressed in her navy blue uniform was Nurse Fleet who drove a Morris Minor.

Gladys King remembers that the Head Teacher at the school lived in Watlington and took the bus to Garsington, then walked up the hill and across to Cuddesdon (in all weathers). The assistant teacher used to cycle from Kidlington.

Joe Glead remembers staying with Mrs Siddall (Head teacher) for 2 weeks in the School House while his mother was in hospital with a slipped disc.

Mrs Edward, head teacher said “We don’t have so many of the seasonal games though. At one time near the end of winter the children played with whips and tops, and occasionally there are conker matches in the autumn.”

SCHOOL MEMORIES

From a school reunion

Notes and memories recorded from a school reunion lunch held on 11 April 2017 in the Old School (now the home of John and Elizabeth Cook).

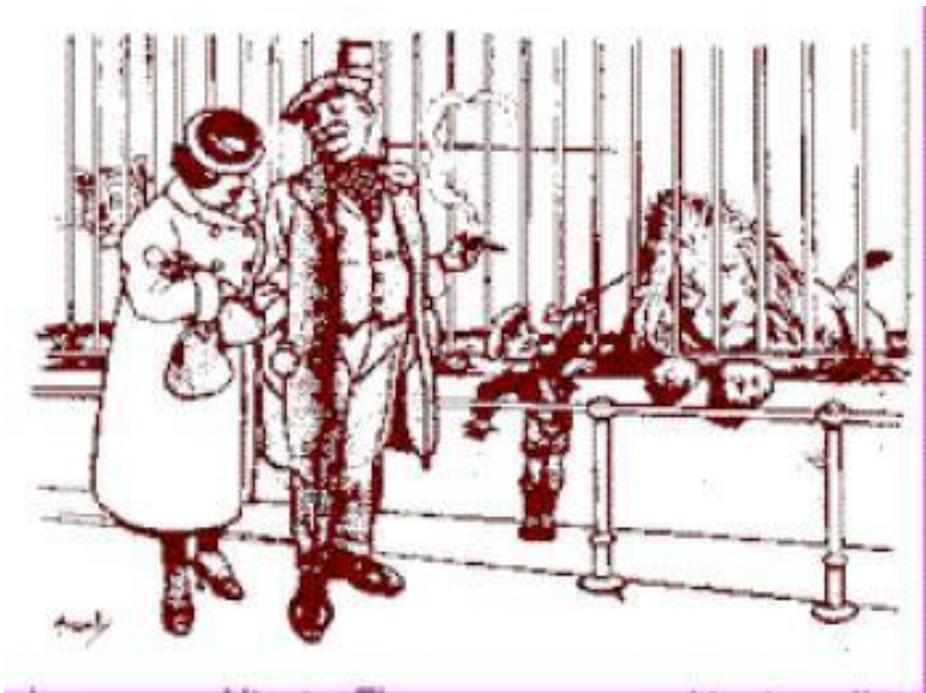
The old school friends who met to reminisce were: Colin Dimmick, Patricia Lockey, Cynthia Bates, Mary Hooper, Janet Hemming and Mary Bell

- Some children walked long distances to get to school.
- There was a 'Nit Nurse'. The dentist would come to inspect our teeth. There was tuberculosis.
- Walking 'round the ground' – a walk from Cuddesdon to Great Milton, then on to Denton and back to Cuddesdon.
- The Mill House – the grandparents of Mary Hooper lived there. They would walk into Oxford.
- As children Mary Hooper and Janet Hemming lived on The Lane.
- In the school the boys' and girls' toilets were outside – at the back. Washbasins and the cloakroom were to the right of the front door.
- Ordinarily the school had two classrooms and two teachers. In WW2 when evacuees arrived from London, a third classroom was opened up for them and the school employed an additional teacher.
- About 50 years ago there was a party at Wellbourne in Cuddesdon. A women's cricket match was held in the field and tragically, Edie Pickett's mum died after being hit on the head by a cricket ball.
- Everyone seemed to be related to one another in some way.
- Playing in Bishops Wood – which was woodland then and was surrounded by a wall. We were trespassing!
- Parkside – there were 12 families initially.
- Cynthia Bates was the first baby to be born in School View in 1934.

- We were sometimes very naughty eg knocking on doors using bits of string. We called one girl “Black Nancy” because she was dirty.
- Nellie Atkins, who wore a headscarf and rode a bike, was widowed when her husband died at the roadside as he cycled back from work.
- We had to learn the poem ‘The Lion and Albert’ by heart. ***
- The school closed in 1972
- There was a flagpole in the school playground
- We all took part in maypole dancing.

Lynda Ware

[The Lion and Albert](#)



There's a famous seaside place called Blackpool,
That's noted for fresh air and fun,
And Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom
Went there with young Albert, their son.

A grand little lad was young Albert,
All dressed in his best; quite a swell
With a stick with an 'orse's 'ead 'andle,
The finest that Woolworth's could sell.

They didn't think much to the Ocean:
The waves, they was fiddlin' and small,
There was no wrecks and nobody drowneded,
Fact, nothing to laugh at at all.

So, seeking for further amusement,
They paid and went into the Zoo,
Where they'd Lions and Tigers and Camels,
And old ale and sandwiches too.

There were one great big Lion called Wallace;
His nose were all covered with scars —
He lay in a somnolent posture,
With the side of his face on the bars.

Now Albert had heard about Lions,
How they was ferocious and wild —
To see Wallace lying so peaceful,
Well, it didn't seem right to the child.

So straightway the brave little feller,
Not showing a morsel of fear,
Took his stick with its 'orse's 'ead 'andle
And pushed it in Wallace's ear.

You could see that the Lion didn't like it,
For giving a kind of a roll,
He pulled Albert inside the cage with 'im,
And swallowed the little lad 'ole.

Then Pa, who had seen the occurrence,
And didn't know what to do next,
Said 'Mother! Yon Lion's 'et Albert',
And Mother said 'Well, I am vexed!'

Then Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom —
Quite rightly, when all's said and done —
Complained to the Animal Keeper,

That the Lion had eaten their son.

The keeper was quite nice about it;
He said 'What a nasty mishap.
Are you sure that it's your boy he's eaten?'
Pa said "Am I sure? There's his cap!"

The manager had to be sent for.
He came and he said 'What's to do?'
Pa said 'Yon Lion's 'et Albert,
'And 'im in his Sunday clothes, too.'

Then Mother said, 'Right's right, young feller;
I think it's a shame and a sin,
For a lion to go and eat Albert,
And after we've paid to come in.'

The manager wanted no trouble,
He took out his purse right away,
Saying 'How much to settle the matter?'
And Pa said "What do you usually pay?"

But Mother had turned a bit awkward
When she thought where her Albert had gone.
She said 'No! someone's got to be summonsed'
So that was decided upon.

Then off they went to the P'lice Station,
In front of the Magistrate chap;
They told 'im what happened to Albert,
And proved it by showing his cap.

The Magistrate gave his opinion
That no one was really to blame
And he said that he hoped the Ramsbottoms
Would have further sons to their name.

At that Mother got proper blazing,
'And thank you, sir, kindly,' said she.
'What waste all our lives raising children
To feed ruddy Lions? Not me!'