

## **East Brent Parish History Group**

### **Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2013**

#### Meeting Notes

The EB Parish History Group met on 3<sup>rd</sup> July and discussed the following topics.

#### Future Talks

There was much support for the suggestion that the Group should have more talks from outside the Group such as that recently given by Pat Hase on George Reed. Various speakers were suggested with topics varying from the Workhouse through Bridgwater Carnival to Postal History. These will be considered and a schedule made available. Other suggestions for topics would be very welcome.

#### W.I. Tablecloth

A tablecloth made by Jean Bowman of the W.I. has been donated for the History Group to look after for posterity. It was made in the late 1970's and shows scenes from East Brent amongst which are: St. Mary's Church, War Memorial, Rossholme, Rooksbridge Chapel, Knoll Inn, Schools, Harvest Home scenes and many more are depicted including some houses which no longer exist and even the flagpole on the Knoll. It will be photographed and made available by appointment, if anyone would like to take a look.

#### Ken Huett's Memories

Back in April, I briefly mentioned a discussion with Ken Huett and I have now had chance to review what was discussed.

After a failed start as an apprentice Painter/Decorator, Ken worked for Westland at Oldmixon and was there for more than 40 years before retiring. He remembers Bristol Beaufighters being made at Oldmixon during WW2 and afterwards, they made Prefabs. Ken spent some time at BAC Filton working on various aircraft for Westland. He did his National Service in 1948.

Ken remembers at least 20 farms existed in East Brent in his younger days. Amongst them were those farmed by – Frank Fisher, George Hill, Percy Ham, Roger Champion, Metford Popham (Lord of the Manor), Frank Woodward and Ralph Hill who also delivered milk.

Ken recounted thoughts of all the shops and businesses that once thrived in the Parish including :

- Post Office which also sold clothing and hardware,
- White House Filling Station (does anyone have a photograph showing the pumps?),
- Saddlers in Old Bristol Road,
- Hodder's Market Garden in Church Street,
- Picking Blackberries for Robertson's Jam to earn money to go to Bridgwater Fair.

During WW2, Ken recollects Metford Popham's Shire horse needed putting down after shrapnel from a bomb caused serious injury and a landmine which blew in the door of a bungalow. The resident was unaware or unconcerned until he got up in the morning and discovered there was no door. This bungalow is opposite the old Cheddar Valley Dairy site where John Rigarfsford now lives. Ken's memories prompted a great deal of very interesting discussion within the Group. More memories will be reviewed in future editions.

#### Sharing Your Experiences

The above is very typical of the sort of experiences that we would like you to share with future generations. If you would like to share your experiences, please let us know and someone will come and discuss it with you. All these memories could possibly form an audio archive and be compiled into a book about local people and families in the Parish. We would not expect you to reveal anything confidential but those little anecdotes would be of great interest. The following is how you could get started :

- Create a Timeline of your life – write down key dates,
- When and where you were born?
- Who were your parents and grandparents?
- Do you have any amusing stories about them and yourself?
- How did you come to be living in the Parish?
- Your friends, relatives, holidays, work and hobbies all form part of your life story.

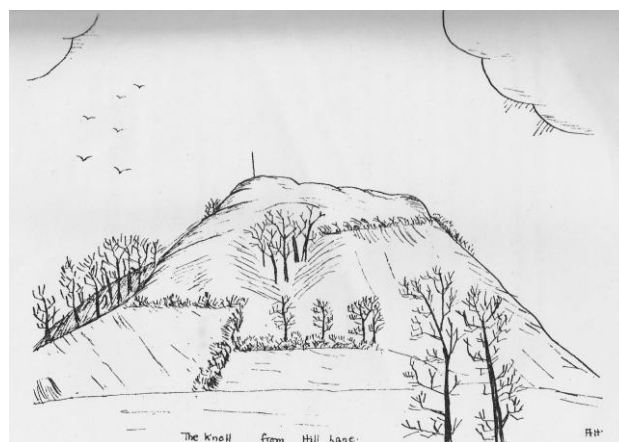
Childhood, family life, school days, meeting your partner and getting married etc.

Photographs are a very important part of your story. Go through your photo albums and select the photos of people, places and events that have featured in your life. On the back, note details of who, when and where the photograph was taken. If you allow it, we can scan the photograph and photograph any additional memorabilia such as awards, medals, paintings etc. Copies of these will be provided for you to keep.

The above is taken from a more detailed note compiled by John Rigarlsford. Please let me know if you would like a copy or would like to discuss your memories.

REMEMBER – many feel that their experiences are of little importance but just the opposite is true. Records of the more public events and experiences are generally well documented but the details of what life, love and labour was really like is rarely recorded. Historians of the future would love to study these details. Wouldn't you just love to know what day to day life was like for your ancestors?

An excellent example of this is recent further discussions with John Ham. John has provided much information about the Parish particularly during WW2. He has provided a copy of a booklet prepared in Coronation year entitled "The History of East Brent". The initials "D.H." are on the front cover and "Denner & Co., Wells" on the back cover. There are a few drawings including one of the water system installed initially by Rev. Denison and this one of the Knoll from Hill Lane. A facsimile copy and/or text version can be made available. This and John's memories will feature in later reports.



### Future Meetings

There will be no meeting in August, the next meeting will be on **Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013** and thereafter on the first Wednesday of each month. A scanner can be made available to scan any documents/photos.

All are welcome, please do come along. There are many stories to be told.

Colin Loader

Tel. 01278 760713, Mob. 07931 429927

e-mail: [ebphgroup@talktalk.net](mailto:ebphgroup@talktalk.net)

Parish Council Website: <http://eastbrentparishcouncil.org.uk/>