

Past and Present – continuing the Editor’s story of the evacuees Three Stories of “Staying On”

Mary Barnes (nee Bond)

Mary was born in Canning Town and went to Upton Cross School. For a few weeks before war was declared the children would go to school with their gas-masks and packed lunches, all ready to move out. On the morning of September 11th 1939 she and the rest of her class were told that they were leaving London. Mary told her teacher that she was staying so was told to run home and see her mother. Her mother said it would be best to go and it would only be for a fortnight!



was one of the lucky evacuees and enjoyed living with them and their children Valerie and Raymond.

Until she was 15 Mary attended classes in the Baptist Schoolroom. Her mother and sister came to live in Fiddlers Hill, Shipton and Mary moved in with them, but always remained in close contact with the Timms family.

Arriving

The children walked to Upton Park Station and eventually arrived at Chipping Norton, where they were taken to the Town Hall and given carrier bags of food for their host families. From there they were taken by bus to Milton Baptist Church Schoolroom. Mary thought that this was where she would be living! Mary stayed first with Mr & Mrs Martin, and then with Mr & Mrs Ivor Timms, in Pear Tree Close. Mary always said she

Reason to stay

By the end of the war Mary had met her husband to be, Les Barnes. She had the choice of returning to Canning Town or staying here and chose to settle in Shipton, living first in the Swinbrook Road and then Upper High Street. Many will remember Mary working in what is now Costcutters.

In December 1995 Mary visited her old home area in Canning Town. She told her daughter Doreen that she was glad her mother had persuaded her to be evacuated and that her fortnight had turned into 61 years!

The Dolton Family

On her third birthday, 8th October 1940 Margaret Hunt (nee Dolton) left London in the Blitz with her mother for the safety of Shipton. The journey was arduous, but Mrs Win Dolton was joining family who had been evacuated here. On arrival they were given a meal by Sally & Cecil Viner in Church Street and

then made their way to Fiddlers Hill. Here their home for the next 9 years was to be a condemned cottage, now known as Shep’s Cottage. Despite having nothing, Mrs. Dolton managed to set up home with ‘bits and pieces’ given her by family and friends. She was soon joined by her two sons,

who had been evacuated, with their school, to Stanwick, Northants, and her husband Dave. Mr Dolton had been released from demolition work in London and other bombed cities.

The children attended the local school, Dave went to work for Alfred Grove and Sons while Win did a variety of jobs to help support her family.

To stay or go?

At the end of the war the family received

offers from Chipping Norton RDC and West Ham BC for re-housing. A vote was taken and only Mr Dolton wanted to return to London.

They moved to St. Michael's Close. Daughter Margaret still lives and works in the village, brother Raymond is in Banbury and David Jnr lives in Burford. Both Mr & Mrs Dolton are buried in Shipton Churchyard.

John Prentice

“In 1939 my father became headmaster of a school in Hayes, Middlesex and we moved to Uxbridge, on the western edge of Greater London. With the outbreak of war imminent, my parents arranged for my aunt and uncle to take my younger brother and myself as evacuees. So Michael and I moved to one of the cottages at Foxholes, down a narrow lane from Foscote village, on the edge of Foxholes wood.



John and Vivienne Prentice

usually reached Foscote in time to leave the bike in the barn at the end of the lane and catch the bus from outside Snobby Bonds' cottage – the local cobbler. If we were late we had to pedal furiously to the

railway station before the bus!

After leaving Kingham Station the bus stopped at Trimore turn – before turning to Kingham village – and here Monica and Vivienne Rose got on the bus.

At this time my cousin Sheila was also living there, having just finished at grammar school. In September 1939 Michael and I were enrolled at Chipping Norton Grammar School, but how were we to get there? There was a bus that ran from RAF Little Rissington to Chipping Norton, passing through Foscote at 8:15am, which meant a long walk from the cottage. We rode on my bicycle every day, whatever the weather, I steered and pedalled and Michael sat on the handlebars carrying our school bags. We

When I started school I was in the same class as Vivienne, which turned out to be how I met my wife! Stranger still, my cousin Sheila eventually married Dick Rose, Vivienne's eldest brother and so a Rose married a Prentice and later, a Prentice married a Rose. In February 1942 I left school and joined the RAF Apprentice scheme at Halton - not forgetting to take my bicycle! Vivienne and I returned to this area when I retired in 1988.”