

Thanks for the Memory A Trip through the Local Dialect

A conversation with Jeff Broxholme set me thinking about local pronunciation and dialect. I am off on a wander through some of the lanes and hope you will help add to my collection of local words and sayings.



“Wer bist gwine?” says he.
“I byent a gwine nower. I be just a coming baäck.”
“Yer, you come alonga they how-zen crost there and tek a cup a tey oodn’t?”

My Journey

I will start my journey at Chippy, or is it Chip’ Norton? Then down the A44 to Enstun and along to Cum (definitely not pronounced Coombe as it only has one ‘o’.) From there I found my way to Ensham, down the way to Stan’ Harcut and on to Sou’ lie. The next village on my route was naturally Nor’lie and back up to Field town (Leafield to you and me). Oh, I nearly missed out Field Assats and Chawlbry, that would never do.

Years ago, when the roads we know were no more than tracks, each village had its own pronunciation and words, so what was spoken of in one place might not be recognisable in the next village. It is hard to imagine that once the straight mile linking Field town to Shipton was just a series of tracks through the forest infested with rogues and vagabonds.

So on with my journey. *“Arternun”* says I to the bwoy-chap loppeting in the burra by the ghet. *“Whose old bwoy bust thee?”* Up I clombered and joined he, but tripped and smollocked at his fut.

So off sets we across the close *“How you do scart along”* says I.
“I be maggled and varneigh fammuld and it be dimpsey too.”

A Challenge to Fred

Do any of our readers have memories of wearing shic shac? I understand that this is the oak leaves worn on May 29th, oak apple day commemorating the restoration of the monarchy in 1660.

This poem was supposedly written in honour of a gate in one of the Wychwood villages:

*Is this the best ghet a man can afford
Hung with a chain and tied with a coord
Is this the best ghet that goes into the clover
Neither opens nor shets, and you can’t
ghet over.*

I am sure that the real ‘locals’ will be quick to correct me on most of this, so I look forward to printing you own version of the local dialect in our next issue - over to you all and especially Fred Russell from Ascott!

Christine Halliday