

June Brenda Smith (1943-2017) was the daughter of Ray Smith, the butcher, whose shop was in Lake Lane, opposite today's Dial Close. They lived at Mapletrees, Yapton Road, Barnham, before moving to Yapton. June was a qualified teacher of Ballroom and Latin American Ballroom and ran the Chichester Sequence Fiesta Dance Club. She married Yapton-born David Ruffle in 1966 after a 6 year courtship. As a young adult, she was asked to talk to the pupils at Barnham School about school and village life around 1957 when she would have been aged 14 and these are her notes:

“Life in Barnham 1957 June Smith

The school was situated on Yapton Road – opposite the village hall, which was also used as a class room as pupil numbers reached in excess of 100.

Mr Hooton the head teacher was very advanced in his teaching methods – incorporating all aspects of village life into our lessons. This attracted publicity, hence the filming by Pathe Pictorial. We went out in small groups to interview villagers, and take measurements of buildings etc. then use the information in our lessons.

We had a good variety in subjects including Country & Ballroom dancing – a love of ballroom dancing has stayed with me and I qualified to teach this at adult education for a number of years. The girls were taught all forms of needlework. On reaching 13 years of age the boys would go to Arundel for an afternoon of woodwork instruction. The girls would go on the bus to Aldingbourne for domestic science. We were taught general and personal hygiene, laundry and cooking.

My Mum was the cook supervisor and worked at the school for over 20 years – arriving on her cycle at 8.30a.m. to prepare and cook lunch for children and staff. At this time she was assisted by Mrs Delacour, and Mrs Hersey supervised the children. We had wholesome and balanced food. Mum used to have to work out the calories and nutritional value for each meal, and keep within budget.

School leaving age was 15 and at that time we stayed at Barnham until that age. I was very fortunate in that I went to Littlehampton Secondary Modern at the age of 13, where I studied commercial subjects for 2 years. I then got into the 2nd year of a 2 year course at the newly opened College of Further Education at Crawley.

I have many memories of Barnham School, one of which was the Christmas carol singing. We would call at several houses and sing carols, eventually

receiving mince pies (HOT) at the last house. We raised a lot of money for local charities.

Games lessons were held by the houses in Marshall Close, and the annual sports day was on a field at Barnham Court Farm.

There were several shops in the village – Murdoch's was just along the road from the village hall. It was a grocery & general store, but also had a haberdashery. Earley's the butcher, (still in the same place) & Court's stores past the Station, plus others.

Public transport was very important – very few had cars. I used to cycle to school, as we had moved to Yapton. The No.64 bus ran from Bilsham to Chichester and the No.65 went from Slindon to Bognor, plus the trains.

There was quite a large Bakery run by the HOLT family, which was in Lake Lane. A large part of the village was Nursery land owned by Barnham Nurseries and the eastern end of the village was CROFTWAY Nursery owned by the TOYNBEE family. Both of these companies exhibited at the Chelsea Flower show with great success."

Sandra Lowton

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