Stanton Parish History Recording Project

Personal Reminiscences File:- PR001

From Gracie Parry (nee Rhodes)

I was born in Stanton upon Hine Heath at Rock View, opposite the pub. My parents ran the village shop which sold almost everything that was needed in those days. We also had the bakery where my father, and later my brother, made wonderful bread and cakes. I can remember my mother putting up the boxes of groceries which were then delivered by my father in a van for many miles around us. The bakehouse had a very large coke fired oven and I well remember waiting outside for the school bus leaning against the wall to keep warm. Many people in the village had 'acid batteries' to run their radios an they would be brought to the shop to be recharged – I suspect that a few ended up with holes in their clothes from spillages when carrying the battery, how things have changed.

Some winters, when there had been heavy snowfalls, the van would get stuck and people would walk to the van in order to collect their groceries – not sure how they knew as few had telephones, and there were no mobiles, but obviously the grapevine worked well.

At harvest time my father would make a corn sheath out of bread which would I would deliver for it to stand by the altar in church for the harvest festival celebrations.

There were 3 farms in the village, the one had a pond (which as a child I thought was a lake) and when it froze over we used to make a super slide on it – no health and safety in those days!

I'm now 86 so all of this was during the 40/50s

After school we would play 'kick the can' in the road, as there was very little traffic – this involved having an old can which one of the children would kick, the others would all run and hide with the last one to be found being the winner. As I recall, nowhere was out of bounds as we would hide in neighbours gardens, sheds or back yards and as long as no damage was done nobody minded at all.

Swimming was in the local river, mainly in the mill pond which at times could be quite deep and provided a wonderful facility as well as a place to fish for tasty rainbow trout.

At Christmas some of the village people would bring their Christmas poultry, mainly geese in those days, to be cooked in the large bread oven which could hold maybe 7 or 8 birds.

My parents were Gertrude and Alfred Rhodes, my brother was Arthur and they now all lie at rest in Stanton churchyard.

Gracie Parry
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