



## **MELFORD MEMORIES**

### **Of Long Melford Life**

#### **Pauline Bragg [2023]**

My name is Pauline Bragg, I have lived in Long Melford for ni-on 25 years so didn't go to school here. I was born in Lincolnshire and lived in many places Hampshire, Hertfordshire being the last place I had lived, before I came to Long Melford.

When my husband and I retired from being publicans we moved here and started a gardening business. I got to know quite a number of the residents within the village. From here I got to know a gentleman called Roger who was setting up what we called a good neighbours scheme, and after I started driving for the good neighbour scheme by taking people to hospital, or with other appointments, even shopping as well. For the last 15 years along the way, somehow I got conned into starting a coffee morning that just took off and is very successful from about half a dozen people to this morning, where I believe we have 40 residents. It's a way for elderly people getting out of their houses and coming along and having a chat. Some might be a little younger than themselves which always works extremely well. I believe our good neighbour scheme in this village is the largest and the most active in Suffolk. It is certainly held up as an example to new bodies were we are very well supported. We keep recruiting. Hopefully we will be going on for many more years.

I also get involved in the plant sale which is part of the library spring fair. We have a lot of fun getting our plants together and selling them, making lots of money for the library. My husband is one of the litter pickers in the village which is a volunteer operation. We both still volunteer during one night in some months during the winter for the film night. As you gather, it's a very busy active village and these are only the things with which I'm involved.

I know lots of people in the village. I'm one of those go to people. Lots of people will phone me asking where can I find this or how can I get help for that? Or, do I know of somebody in a certain trade to use?

Long Melford has changed a lot, and I think there are upwards of about 400 houses at least, possibly more which have been built. Currently they're building a new site at the other end of the village along Station Road soon it will no longer be named a village but a town with all the new construction which is currently being allowed. Since I moved in, my house being nearly 200 years old and currently beginning to show the cracks which are appearing in my home being one of the oldest in the village.

There is a very good bus service running to and from Sudbury on a regular basis. There used to be a railway service running through Melford before the Beacham cuts in 1952/53 leaving now only the embankments which remain. These are used for leisure activities like walks and cycling along currently.

*(Question) We all know what the National Health Services have gone through recently, but have you noticed or are there changes since you first came, as the NHS was first brought about after the second world war?*

When we first came here there were absolutely excellent doctors whenever you needed them, over the years it was good until I think one of the doctors left to try alternative medicine and then one of the doctors had an accident then caught COVID, the practise has not been so good over the last few years, however it's picking up again now. I think many health services around the country have gone through similar measures and are improving.

#### **West Suffolk Hospital.**

Three or four years maybe, after we moved here, I had breast cancer and West Suffolk Hospital was absolutely excellent. I cannot fault them for anything and I've had subsequent treatments too, but they been just brilliant. West Suffolk Hospital have a very wide area that they cover up to Newmarket, Braintree etc, so many patients and areas to cover and to treat.

*(Question) Are there any other things that you would like to mention about the village itself?*

I think some of the small shops we used to have changed. There used to be a small green grocers, a gift shop, a Spa shop but all gone, and many more antique shops of course, which is why Lovejoy was filmed here, of course. Currently we seem now to be inundated with coffee shops and hairdressers.

I think there's probably quite a few of us in the village to be honest who all think it's a lovely village to live in. It really is, and busy, but most importantly, community orientated. Always has been ever since we first came to live here and got to know many of the inhabitants.