



MELFORD MEMORIES

Marilyn Green [2023]

I was born in Norwich at the Barracks where my father was in the army. We travelled abroad to many countries like China, Germany and various other places until my father left the army and settled in Long Melford 1959. I was eleven years of age, coming up to twelve at that time. I was the eldest of three.

Personally, I did not get my early schooling here in Melford, I started school when living in Hong Kong having gone to sixteen schools in all as father was in the services. However later when living here I went to Sudbury High School for girls leaving there at the age of fifteen.

My first job was working for Bush Boake Alen, working in the dept making diabetic sweets, Rinstead pastels dept., as well as toothpaste. I remember filling in the tubes and lipsticks etc. I was only here for six months. Then went on to Holloways in Lavenham, dealing with cosmetics. Jobs in those days were very easy to find. I travelled here to work on the bus, or I rode my bicycle during the summer months.

The lifestyle was very different to what it is now. As my mother had a part time job, I helped my mother by looking after my siblings during the school holidays etc. The village used to be an awful lot different. On a Sunday there were no shops open, and it was very quiet with no cars on the roads or in the street, which mostly were empty of traffic. It was very quiet. I did not attend St. Mary's, the large church in the village on the green but I did attend the United Reformed Church which had a very good Sunday School for the children. It is now closed; it was situated opposite the George and Dragon as well as being a play school where my four children attended.

There are less pubs open now, but more shops tend to be open for longer hours today. For leisure activities we used to go for walks up to the Green or around the church or get a bus into Sudbury for more leisure pursuits. Of a night-time, my friends and I often went into Bury St Edmunds as it was a larger town and more going on to interest us. I met my husband here as he already knew many of my friends. I was married at the age of eighteen, and moved away to live in Gedding for a couple of years after we were married.

My husband then acquired a job working at Hyde Hall for Sr. Richard Hyde Parker and started on the farm but then moved into helping in the house and on the estate where he used to do the handy work, which was required around the estate, he also did some of the gardening too, there was always work to be done there. He worked here for over thirty years even after he retired.

I currently belong to the W.I. and the Good Neighbours' scheme for some years now. I used to do outside catering running a Tea room in the village during the nineties as there were many Antique Fairs where many visitors used to come as well as the Antiques shops being open. I did all the baking for outside catering too during the 90's.

The bus service is not as good as it used to be as they used to run every half an hour. I remember when the trains stopped running. There was a level crossing gate at Listen Lane. The line went through to Clare and Cavendish and into Bury St Edmunds running through Lavenham en-route. During this time, I started working for Holloway's in Lavenham where they made many products.

Not many people owned a car in those days however my parents did not, and it was only when my father was very ill, I remember my mother taking a driving test when she was 56. My husband never used to have a car either until in later years.

When we first moved here, we were under a Sudbury Doctor, which was very good and if you could not get in to see them, the doctor would come out to see you from the waiting room. One did not have to make an appointment you just took your turn and waited for him to see you. Now if you cannot get an appointment here, we can see the same doctor in Lavenham, but it just means one must get into Lavenham. This is where the Good Neighbour's scheme come to their own, as they can take you if you do not drive.

My family are all living nearby, my daughter lives in Cornard but works in Melford at the Co-Op, and my three sons also live and work close by too. This is wonderful as if I ever need anything they are there to give a hand or help me.