

# WHEN YOU COME TO A FORK IN THE ROAD - TAKE IT

REMINISCENCES ON "LIFE AS I FOUND IT"



**John Graham Ward P. Eng. (Retired)**

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# **D**EDICATION

**I Dedicate this Book to my Wife, PHYLLIS JEAN WARD for suggesting that I write it, and for being my Editor-in-Chief.**



**I Dedicate this Book also to my Family:**

- **Stephen John Ward, Irina Astrid Ward,**
- **Robert Raymond Gunea, James Stephen Ward, Anita Cristina Ward**
- **Roger Ward, Anna Ward and his Family in New Zealand**

**May you each find it INFORMATIVE, ENTERTAINING and AMUSING (here and there)  
... but mostly THOUGHT PROVOKING.**

**I had FUN writing this tome – I hope you all will enjoy READING it.**

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# LEST WE FORGET

**MEMORY** is a curious “movie” in sharpest focus when viewing that, which is farthest away!  
Sometimes it needs a little help – a sound, a song, a smell, or a taste.  
Sometimes it is blurred; but the older it is, the more indelible it becomes.



**WHEN YOU COME TO A FORK IN THE ROAD – TAKE IT.**

# PREFACE

**I never knew, and never met my GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.** They were born in the 1850's when **QUEEN VICTORIA** (House of Hanover) was **Monarch of England from 1837-1901**. That was the **VICTORIAN ERA**; the **WARD FAMILY** lived in **Portsea Island, Hampshire** and they were poor, working class people who worked hard to survive and had few of the benefits of life that we now enjoy. **We know very little about their specific experiences since they did not commit their life story to paper; and the verbal knowledge they may have passed on has long since disappeared.**

We know more about the general history of the time, and the evolving **NATIONAL CENSUS** every 10 years has given us a mere glimpse into their lives. There are names, and dates and relationships mentioned but not much substance of the quality or success of their **LIVES**.

**The 1801 CENSUS estimated the population of England and Wales to be 8.9 million, and that of Scotland was 1.6 million. Ireland was not included in the census until 1821. The first Census of England had been carried out by William the Conqueror and published in the Domesday Book in 1086. Under the '100-year rule' it is current UK Government policy that the 1921 Census shall remain unavailable to the public until 2022.**

**I also knew very little about my GRANDPARENTS.** They were born in the 1870's and were lucky if they could read and write. **VICTORIA was still Queen of England** and not much had changed for the average working man at home. Life was still hard and there was little opportunity for a person to obtain the education necessary to rise to the **PROFESSIONAL** careers of **Doctor, Lawyer, Engineer or Architect**. That generation had to live through, or die in the **FIRST WORLD WAR**, which erupted in 1914-1918. **That was the "WAR TO END ALL WARS" and it failed miserably. In fact, World War I only served to spawn World War II (1939-1945) and that was the particular burden of my PARENTS' generation.**

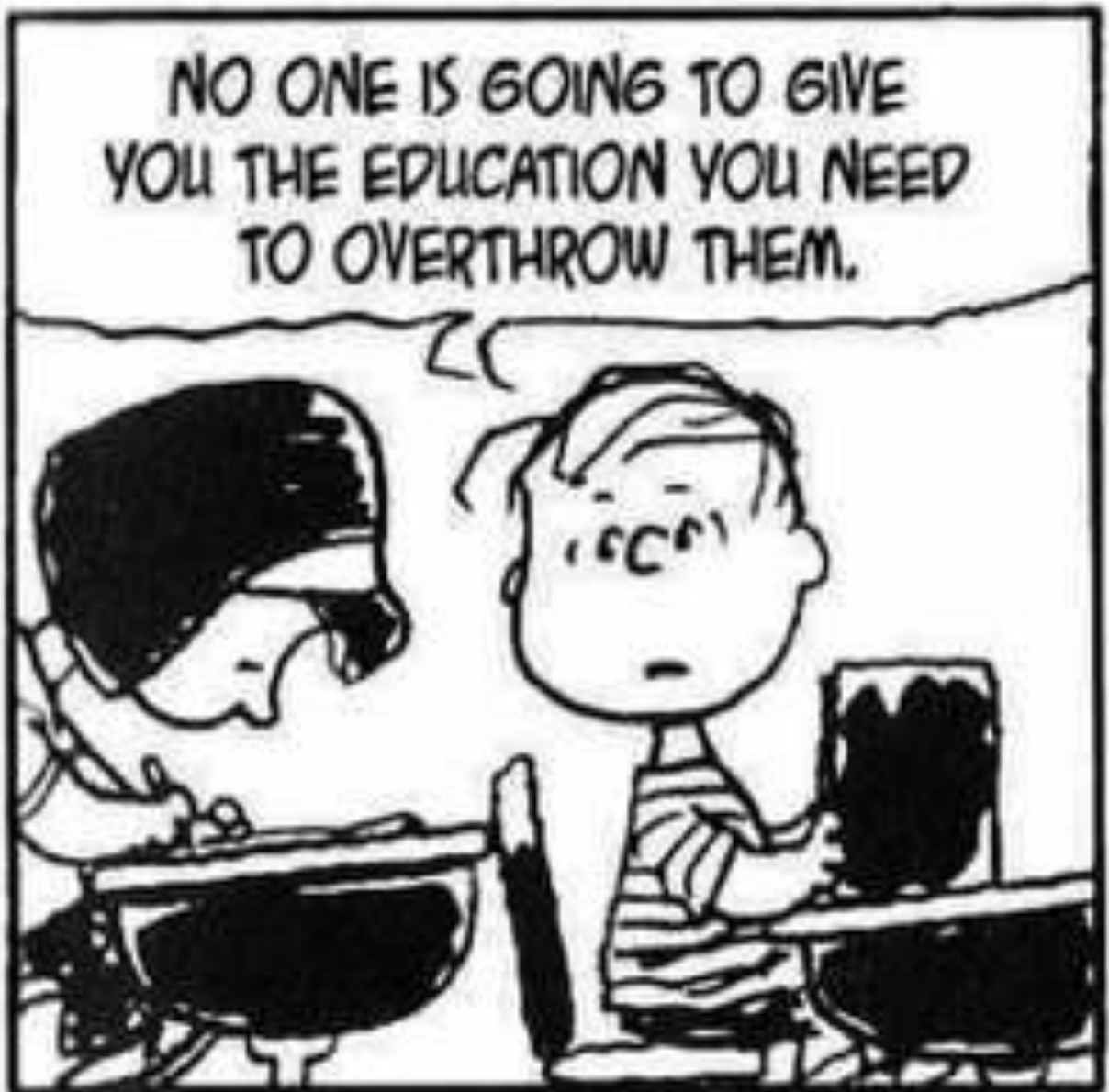
**I know a lot more about my PARENTS' generation.** Their extended family were born around 1910 and had the benefit of a better education than did my Grand Parents, so they had a better standard of living, but this was mainly due to the later societal changes made after **WORLD WAR II**. Moreover, my Parents could read and write well and their opportunity to earn more money meant that they could afford to **OWN their home, and to OWN a car**. My Parents were much more "**mobile**" than my Grandparents, who tended to live their whole lives in or near the area they were born.

**My generation, born in the 1930's, benefitted greatly from the political gains fought for by my Parents' generation. Those gains were better EDUCATION, better EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, better HEALTH CARE, and new PENSIONS and WELFARE BENEFITS for those who found themselves disadvantaged and struggling through life.**

**It has been some 70 years since the echo of WAR died in the distance and LIFE in Britain returned to relative PEACE.**

Our Parents gave us the GIFT of a better LIFE with the opportunity to share that gift with all other people. It is said that "CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME" but we must welcome others into our "home" to share it and show kindness and tolerance in judging others.

**GREED for WEALTH or MATERIAL GAIN by a privileged few will always result in a return to conflict and ultimately WAR.**



# **M**Y FATHER, JOHN HENRY WARD, born October 31, 1910.

The First World War (1914-1918) was a backdrop to his early school years. He was only 8-years old when the **ARMISTICE** was signed on November 11, 1918.

Dad attended **BINSTEED ROAD BOARD SCHOOL** (i.e. managed by an Elected School Board) a few blocks from his home in Buckland, Portsmouth, England from age-5 years old to age 13-years old (1915 – 1923). The school opened in January 1883 as a Board School for Boys, Girls, and Infants. In 1933 the school taught Junior Boys and Girls only, in 1946 Boys and Infants, and 1960 Junior Mixed; then it was named BINSTEED First School in 1975.

As required by law, Dad left school at 14 years of age with only a basic education. Employment opportunities in Portsmouth for young boys just leaving school were limited to Delivery Boy or General Labouring work in construction or at the Royal Navy Dockyard. Apprenticeships were hard to find and often the costs were high and involved a 7-year indenture and service to the employer.

Like his brothers before him, my Dad would have had to find employment in Portsmouth in a “minimum wage” job. His older brother, **William Thomas Henry Ward** (at age 27) had been a “tripe dresser” and later became a “bus conductor”. Brother **Thomas Edward Ward** was a “general labourer”, while his Father and Grandfather were both “Wheelwrights” working for the Southern Railway and in the Dockyard. None of these jobs appear to have been reliable employment, and had to be flexible in dealing with their personal “**FORKS IN THE ROAD**”. Young women worked as “charwoman” or “laundress” or “in service”.

It is interesting to note that my wife’s niece, **TINA TULL**, in her early career was a teacher at this same BINSTEED ROAD SCHOOL some 60 years later. Such an opportunity would not have been available to my Dad in the 1920’s. The school is now a Community Centre and includes the privatized **BINSTEED CHILD CARE SERVICES** Ltd.



# The WARD FAMILY HOME

#35, Jersey Road, Buckland, Portsmouth, Hampshire, England

My Grandfather was WILLIAM GEORGE HAYWARD WARD, born in 1875. He and my Grandmother EMMA ALIZA ANN WARD (born in 1874) lived at 35 Jersey Road, Buckland, Portsmouth, England. In 1910, their large family consisted of 8 Daughters and 4 Sons (including my 6-month old Father). They also fostered in 1917 another young boy, Montague Richard Mortimer, my Dad's 5-year old cousin whose father died in World War 1.

Obviously, conditions were rather cramped living in this small Industrial-era terraced house with the typical "two-up & two-down" configuration and a "privy" in the back yard. There was a small kitchen extension added to the rear of the house. All heating and cooking were fuelled by COAL. ELECTRICITY was not yet available in the BUCKLAND district until the 1930's.



VICTORIAN TERRACED HOUSING: #35, JERSEY ROAD, BUCKLAND, PORTSMOUTH

My Grandfather WILLIAM GEORGE HAYWARD WARD was trained as a Wheelwright and, at that time, worked as a Plate Layer for the Southern Railway in Portsmouth.

A "Plate Layer" or "Trackman" is a railway employee whose job is to inspect and maintain the permanent way of a railway installation. The term "Plate Layer" derives from the plates used to build the railway track, in which the wheels ran between the rails – not on top. Inspecting and maintaining the track, including all its component parts such as rails, sleepers, fishplates, bolts, etc., are the chief responsibility of the Plate Layer. Their duties include greasing points, and generally watching for wear and tear.

# The FIRST WORLD WAR

The "War to End all Wars" was the bloodiest war in modern history. In this conflict, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire (the Central Powers) fought Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy, Romania, Japan and the United States (the Allied Powers).

Thanks to new military technologies and the horrors of trench warfare, the First World War produced unprecedented levels of carnage and destruction. By the time the war was over, and the Allied Powers claimed victory, more than 16 million people (soldiers and civilians alike) were dead.

The War was fought for four years on land, sea and in the air until the Allies finally defeated the Central Powers and Germany surrendered at 11:AM on November 11, 1918. The Treaty of Versailles was signed in June 1919.

Unlike the SECOND WORLD WAR, the impact of aerial bombing in the FIRST WORLD WAR was not felt as much by the British civilian population as in the BLITZ of 1940-1941 (known as the BATTLE OF BRITAIN). Germany's aerial bombing campaign against Great Britain in the First World War, with London as its primary target, was the first sustained strategic bombing campaign in history.

These raids, using ZEPPELIN airships, bomber aircraft, and seaplanes, ran from December 1914 to August 1918 and resulted in almost 5,000 casualties. British civilians in the Second World War suffered almost 10 times that number of casualties.

On the morning of January 19th, 1915 two German Zeppelin airships, the L3 and L4 took off from Fuhlsbüttel in Germany. Both airships carried 30 hours of fuel, 8 bombs and 25 incendiary devices. They had been given permission by the Emperor Wilhelm II to attack military and industrial buildings. The Emperor had forbidden an attack on London due to concern for the Royal family to whom he was related.

The two German Zeppelin airships crossed the Norfolk coastline at around 8.30 pm. Then the L3 turned north and the L4 south. The incendiary bombs were dropped to enable the pilots to navigate to their chosen locations in Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn where they dropped their bombs. Nine people were killed, and some buildings were damaged, but there was immense psychological effect of the raid on the population (who were accustomed to battles being fought by soldiers on the battlefield NOT in the City).

Morale dropped in Britain and people feared further raids and believed that a German invasion would soon follow. Further raids were carried out on coastal towns and London during 1915 and 1916. The silent airships arrived without warning and, with no purpose-built shelters, people hid in cellars or under tables. There were 52-Zeppelin air raids on Britain, claiming the lives of more than 500 people.

## THE FAMILY AT WAR

Although there was no compulsory conscription in Britain until 1916, several of my extended family enlisted in the British Army & Royal Navy to fight early in the war. I have researched the following history of my two GRANDFATHERS in the military clashes of 1914 – 1918. Thankfully they both survived, though millions did not.

In 1914 my Paternal Grandfather WILLIAM GEORGE HAYWARD WARD (age 38) enlisted in the PIONEER BATTALION, whose military function was described as “light engineering”. Their Battalion COLLAR BADGE was a crossed “pickaxe and rifle” as show below. (The Pickaxe was used as a tool or a weapon as needed.)



My Grandfather,  
William G.H.  
Ward

## PIONEER BATTALIONS IN THE GREAT WAR

### Organized and Intelligent Labour

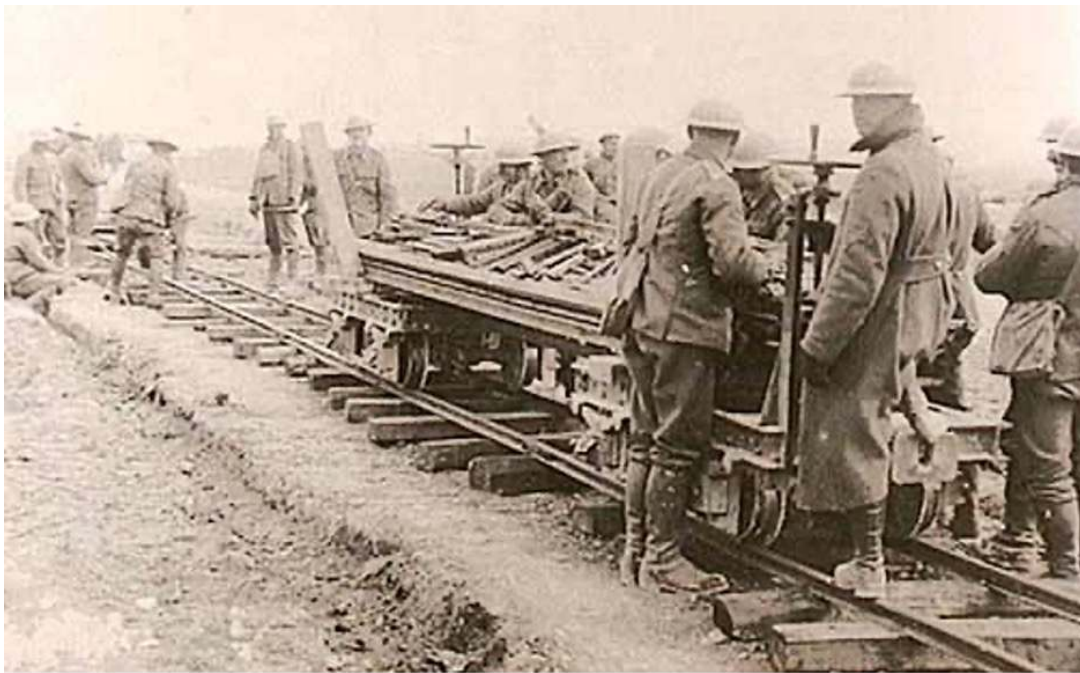
Pioneer battalions, created as an expedient in 1914, were a new concept in the British Army. Intended to provide the Royal Engineers, with skilled labour and to relieve the infantry from some of its non-combatant duties, **Pioneers became the workhorses of the British Expeditionary Forces.** The Coldstream Guards and over three-dozen Country regiments each created at least one pioneer battalion.

Several New Army battalions were raised specifically as Pioneers, while others were converted Territorials or Kitchener units formed originally as conventional infantry. **Adopting a badge of a crossed rifle and a pick, these battalions wired, dug and constructed revetment trenches in all weathers and in all terrain. On many occasions they abandoned their working tools and fought alongside the infantry in repelling enemy attacks. In their efforts to stem the German offensives of 1918, several Pioneer units fought to virtual annihilation.**



Often confused with the Pioneer Corps of the Second World War, the work of the PIONEER BATTALIONS in the First World War has been largely ignored or misunderstood. Far from being the units of the aged and infirm, these sixty-eight battalions played a major role in the Allied victory in November 1918.

They also built temporary RAIL TRACKS to transport supplies and troops to the front.



# WHO WERE THE POMPEY PALS?

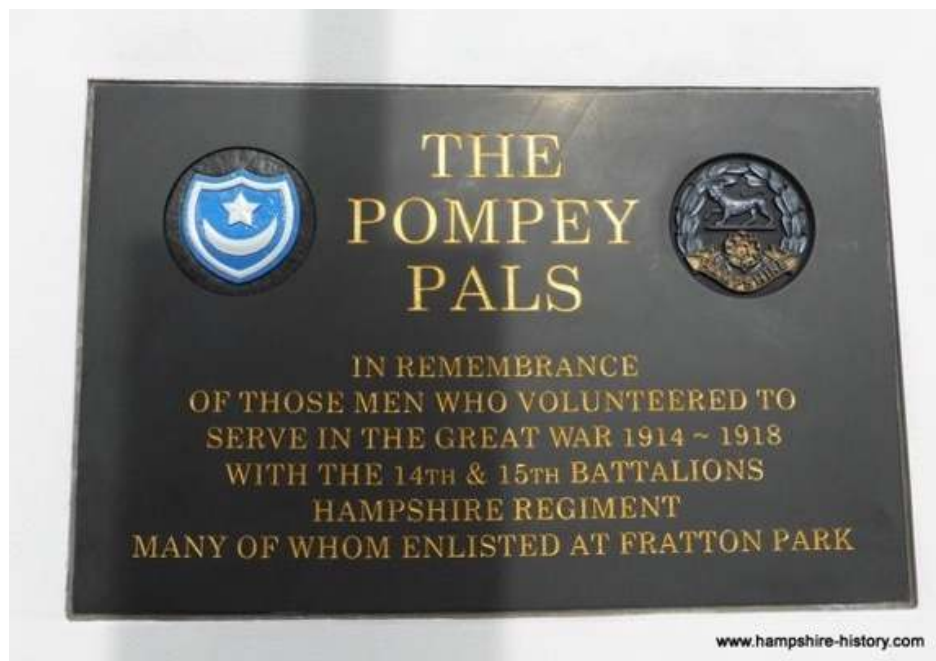
At the outbreak of WORLD WAR ONE Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, believed that the key to success would be overwhelming manpower and so he set about looking for ways to encourage men of all classes to join the army. This was in contrast to centuries of military tradition as Great Britain had always relied on a smaller yet highly professional army. Previously officers were always drawn from the upper classes and other ranks mainly working class. General Sir Henry Rawlinson suggested that men would be more inclined to enlist in the army if they knew that they were going to serve alongside their friends and work colleagues.

Across the country thousands of eager young men flocked to serve their King and country and soon battalions comprising of those who had enlisted together in local recruiting drives, with the promise that they would all be able to serve alongside one another, sprang up. The popular press of the time dubbed these as PALS BATTALIONS.

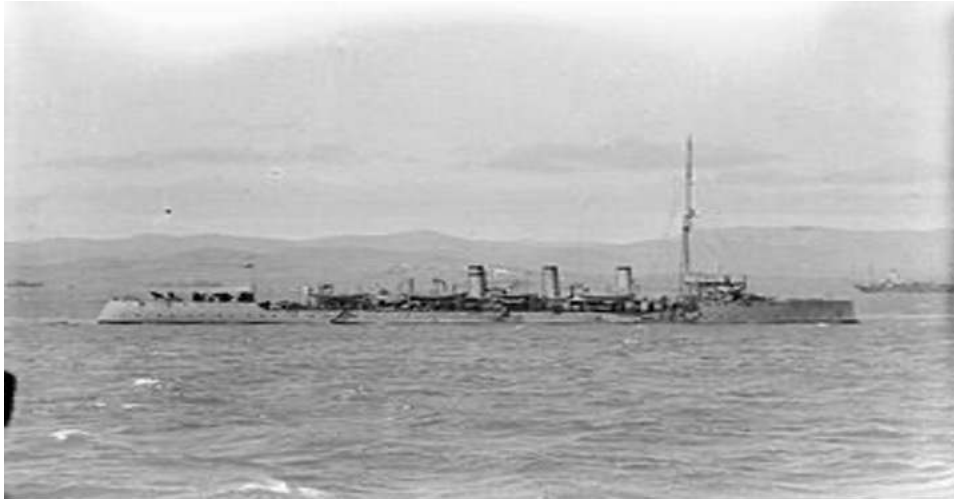
In August 1914 the Portsmouth Citizens Patriotic Recruiting Committee chaired by the Lord Mayor J H Corke called upon the men of the city not already occupied in essential war work to form Portsmouth's Own battalion. It was not long before the city, including the surrounding areas of Gosport, Havant, Cosham, Petersfield etc. had raised two battalions.

Formally known as 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> (Portsmouth) Battalions Hampshire Regiment like the other Pals battalions which formed a major part of Kitchener's 'New Army' they saw service on the Western Front from the middle years of the war and would face a baptism of fire on the killing grounds of the Somme.

By the end of the war, over 1,400 of the Pompey Pals had made the ultimate sacrifice.



**My Maternal Grandfather, FREDERICK EDWARD BECK was born January 26, 1876. Like my Paternal Grandfather William George Hayward WARD, he was also 38 in 1914. Grandfather BECK was a career sailor and a Chief Stoker in the Royal Navy. In the FIRST WORLD WAR he served on HMS Forward, a scout cruiser built in 1904 in the shipyards of Fairfield Shipbuilding & Engineering Co. in Glasgow, Scotland.**



**HMS Forward**

**In 1914 HMS Forward was transferred to the 7th Destroyer Flotilla on the Humber River Estuary in search of German battleships and Zeppelin airship bombers. On December 15, 1914 she was at Hartlepool, Durham along with HMS Patrol and the 3rd division of the 9th Flotilla, while the 4th division was patrolling off Whitby, Yorkshire.**



**HMS Patrol**

On the morning of December 16, 1914, the German battle cruisers SEYDLITZ and MOLTKE and the cruiser BLUCHER shelled the coastal Town of Hartlepool in Northeast England.

Hartlepool has a tidal harbour, and at low tide it was difficult for the British cruisers to get out to sea. That morning the destroyers HMS Doon, HMS Waveney, HMS Moy and HMS Test had been sent out at 5:30 am and had reported that the shallow water conditions made it risky for the cruisers to come out.

At 8 am, the German ships appeared off Hartlepool and opened fire on the fortified town.

Their initial targets were the two gun emplacements that protected the harbour, but they soon opened fire on the docks and harbour entrance. HMS Patrol was able to get out to sea (where she was hit and badly damaged), but HMS Forward was delayed due to the German barrage. When she did finally get out of Hartlepool, the German battle cruisers had already turned east to make their escape. HMS Forward was ordered to keep in touch with them, but the Germans soon escaped into the mist.

A total of 130 civilians and military personnel were killed and more than 500 were wounded when German warships fired more than 1,000 shells on the Town in only a few hours



SMS Seydlitz



SMS Moltke



SMS Blücher

## MILITARY TACTICS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

### TRENCH WARFARE.

When World War I broke out in August 1914, both the Central Powers and the Allied Forces believed that it would be over by Christmas of that year. One of the most important reasons that the First World War lasted so long was the failure of the **Schlieffen Plan**.

The Schlieffen Plan was an operational plan developed by the Germans to take over France and Belgium and carried out in August 1914. It was devised by and named after German Field Marshal Count Alfred von Schlieffen, who served as Chief of the Imperial German General Staff from 1891 to 1905.

The plan relied upon rapid movement. **The resistance of the Belgians and the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) prevented this.** Russia had also mobilized its troops quicker than expected. Within 10 days the Russians had invaded Germany, which meant that the Germans had to switch troops away from western Europe to hold up the Russian invasion.

Stalemate developed along the Western Front because the tactics of offensive warfare had not developed while the technology of defensive warfare had. It is also argued that the stalemate happened because the Germans did not put enough faith in the Schlieffen Plan.

In the autumn of 1918, Germany and its allies were exhausted. Their armies were defeated, and their hungry citizens were beginning to rebel. **As early as the 29<sup>th</sup> September, German General and Strategist Erich Ludendorff decided that a cessation of hostilities must be sought.** The need became more urgent as Germany's allies began to drop out of the war.

The German government approached the United States with a request for an armistice. They hoped that this would be based on the 'Fourteen Points' laid down in January 1918 by US President Woodrow Wilson as a foundation for 'peace without victory'. By October

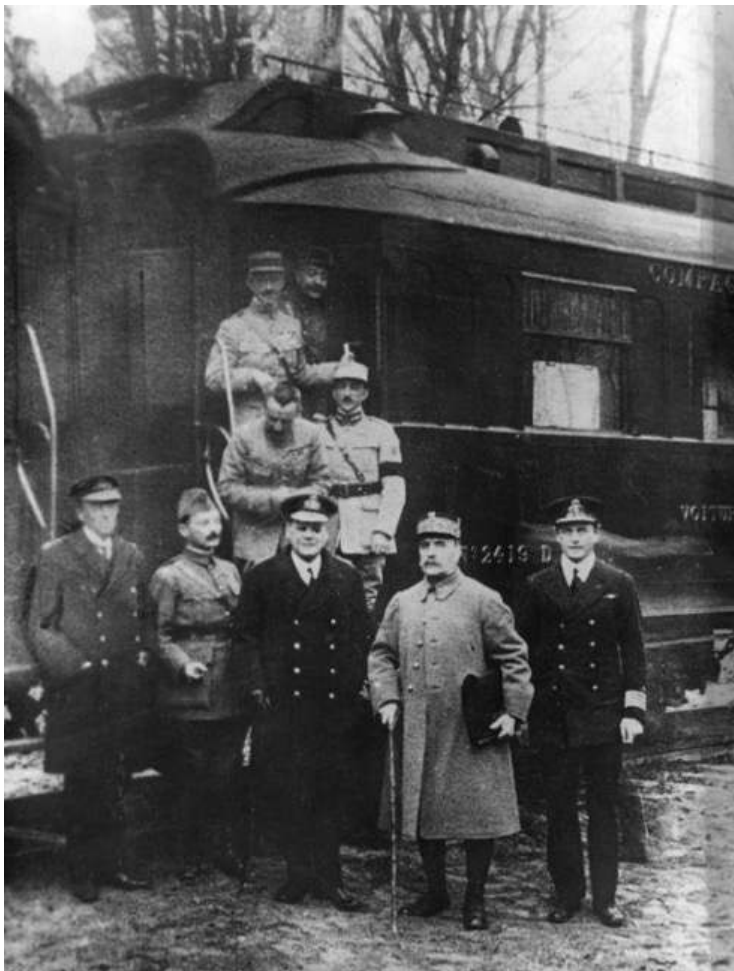
however, with their troops bloodily engaged on the Western Front, American attitudes had hardened.

**The armistice negotiations were not in fact conducted by the Allied governments, but by their Commander-in-Chief, Ferdinand Foch. He ensured that its conditions made it impossible for the German Army to recommence fighting.**

**The required abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the formation of a democratic government in Germany were necessary adjuncts to the armistice. The Generals ensured that the new Socialist government was tarnished with the humiliation of the defeat for which they themselves were responsible.**

## **A** RMISTICE DAY

**On the chilly morning of November 11, 1918, German and Allied leaders gathered in a railway car in a forest near Compiegne, France. Germany had suffered stinging defeats in the Allied hundred days offensive, and the German economy was in shambles. After three days of negotiations led by France's MARSHAL FERDINAND FOCH, the time had come for Germany to admit defeat.**



**Germany signed the Armistice agreement in Marshal Foch's personal railroad carriage.**

The Armistice would bring an end to fighting in World War I.

**The total number of military and civilian casualties was more than 41 million: there were over 18 million deaths and 23 million wounded, ranking it among the deadliest conflicts in human history.**

The Armistice would take effect six hours later, at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, of the 11<sup>th</sup> day, in the 11<sup>th</sup> month. The delay allowed time for the news to travel along the Western Front.

**Terms of the Armistice included:**

- **Germany's surrender of military weapons and hardware;**
- **Release of Prisoners of War;**
- **Immediate evacuation by Germany of occupied lands in Belgium, Luxembourg, France, and Alsace-Lorraine and other occupied territories;**
- **The Allies would occupy land in Germany creating a neutral zone along the Rhine River.**

**The Armistice was a short-term agreement intended to end the fighting.**

The signing of the **Armistice** was greeted with varied responses. In many Allied towns and Cities - especially those freed from enemy occupation - there were scenes of happiness. However, the celebratory mood was tempered by the grief of the many thousands who mourned for the war dead. Away from the Western Front, the signing of an armistice did not necessarily mean an end to conflict. Fighting continued while peace negotiations got under way.

After it was signed, the Allies gathered in Paris to draft the more comprehensive **TREATY OF VERSAILLES**. That treaty required Germany to accept responsibility as the aggressor and for loss and damage suffered. It was signed the following year.

**The Allies tallied their dead and wounded. The war to end all wars was over, but in the process, a generation of common young men distinguished themselves with uncommon heroism and valour.**

# BETWEEN THE WARS:

In the 1930s, War was in our PAST and War would be in our FUTURE.

The First World War and its subsequent peace settlements gave rise to new ambitions, rivalries and tensions. People had high expectations that the post-war peace settlement would create a new world order and ensure that the slaughter of the First World War was never repeated. The Treaty of Versailles, signed in June 1919, created the League of Nations - an international body intended to promote peace and prevent war.

However, the Treaty was an uneasy compromise as each of the victorious Allies - Britain, America, France and Italy - looked to pursue their own interests. Germany was forced to surrender territory, disarm and pay for the war's damage. **These divisive conditions were criticized as overly vindictive by many in Britain and America.**



The Treaty's terms caused immediate outrage and lasting bitterness in Germany. Their sense of defeat, humiliation and injustice would have a significant impact on German foreign and domestic policies and calls to revise the terms of the Treaty became a major aspect of international politics in the 1920s and 1930s.

**The period between the two world wars was one of instability and insecurity.**

Political, economic and social unrest was made worse by the collapse of the international economy in 1929. This became known as **THE GREAT DEPRESSION**. The instability and insecurity of the 1920s and 1930s gave rise to political extremism in many European countries. People looked to authoritarian leadership as a political alternative. **Fascist leader Benito Mussolini came to power in Italy in 1922 and almost all aspects of Italian life came under State control.**

**In Germany, Adolf Hitler became Chancellor in 1933 and established a totalitarian one-party state under the Nazis.** Political opposition was violently repressed. Hitler exploited the popular belief that Germany had been humiliated after the First World War. He promised economic recovery, national revival and that Germany would return to international prominence through a revision of the Treaty of Versailles.

**Germany withdrew from the League of Nations in October 1933. In 1935, Hitler announced German rearmament and re-introduced conscription, which was prohibited under Versailles. The ultra-nationalist governments of both Italy and Germany each pursued aggressive foreign policies of territorial expansion that threatened to destroy the world order established by the post-war peace settlement.**

**On 3 October 1935, Italy invaded Abyssinia (present day Ethiopia).** Both countries were members of the League of Nations, and Italy's aggression compelled the League to intervene. However, Britain and France struggled to coordinate an effective response. They imposed limited economic sanctions, which only pushed Italy away from Britain and France and into closer co-operation with Germany.

**Encouraged by the weak response to Italy's attack on Abyssinia, Hitler sent troops into the Rhineland on 12 March 1938. This demilitarized zone had been established under the Treaty of Versailles as a buffer between Germany and France. Britain did not see the occupation as a threat to its interests or overall security and did not respond militarily.**

France, already politically and militarily insecure, was left feeling isolated internationally and did little to resist the occupation. Hitler's success in the Rhineland encouraged him to pursue an even more aggressive foreign policy. Intervention in the Spanish Civil War, which broke out

in July 1936, reinforced the divide between Italy and Germany on one side, and Britain and France on the other.

The Italian, British, French and German leaders met in Munich on 29 and 30 September 1938. They agreed to accept German annexation of the Sudetenland and the British secured a peace pledge from Hitler. Czechoslovakia was not invited to take part in the discussions but was forced to accept the Munich Agreement. Hitler's ambitions for German expansion became increasingly evident throughout 1938. German troops marched into Austria on 12 March and, with the enthusiastic support of most Austrians, the country was annexed to Germany the next day.

However, there was little international resistance to this Anschluss, which many viewed as a natural union. Today, with the power of "hindsight", one might wonder why many nations in Europe and the Western World did not recognize the RED FLAGS that were waving in plain sight and warning that any Dictator, like Hitler or Mussolini (or Putin today), if his territorial invasions are not repulsed and punished immediately, will continue with aggressive actions to enhance his power.

In the case of Britain, there was a complacent ignoring of Germany's intentions and this miscalculation encouraged Hitler to lie to England's Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain in the "Peace in Our Time" letter signed by Hitler in September 1938. Maybe Britain was too content with its own acquisition of Empire.

Neville Chamberlain brandishes the letter from Hitler promising "Peace in Our Time".



## **B** RITISH CLASS SYSTEM - up to 1939



The Social Structure of the United Kingdom has historically been influenced by the concept of SOCIAL CLASS, which continues to affect British society today.

## CLASS DISTINCTION

Up until the outbreak of War in 1939, British Society had retained a rigid Class Structure, with the educated middle and upper classes tending to believe in their own moral and cultural superiority over the working classes. Proper models of behaviour were seen to emanate from the "UPPER CLASSES" of society, including correct pronunciation, table manners, appropriate dress and even the courting of wedding partners.

With few exceptions, the holders of Power and Authority came from an Upper Class background and had a Public School education. They saw themselves as the guardians of culture, and those lower down the social order seldom questioned their position. It was a social and cultural hierarchy that was largely self-policed, with members of different classes rarely willing or able to move to alternative social groupings. It was expected that people would conform to the values of their peer group, and any attempt to transcend this hierarchy was restricted by social convention.

British society, like its European neighbours and most societies in world history, was traditionally (before the Industrial Revolution) divided hierarchically within a system that involved the hereditary transmission of occupation, social status and political influence. Since the advent of industrialization in the 1700s, this system has been in a constant state of revision, and new factors other than birth (for example, education) are now a greater part of creating identity in Britain.

Although definitions of social class in the United Kingdom vary and are highly controversial, most are influenced by factors of wealth, occupation and education. Until recently the Parliament of the United Kingdom was organized on a Class basis, with the House of Lords representing the hereditary Upper-Class and the House of Commons representing everybody else. The British Monarch is usually viewed as being at the top of the social class structure.

British society has experienced significant change since the Second World War, including an expansion of higher education and home ownership, a shift towards a service-dominated economy, mass immigration, a changing role for women and a more individualistic culture, and these changes have had a considerable impact on the social landscape. However, claims that the UK has become a classless society have frequently been met with scepticism. Research has shown that SOCIAL CLASS influences SOCIAL STATUS in the United Kingdom.

The biggest current Study of Social Class in the United Kingdom is the **GREAT BRITISH CLASS SURVEY in 2011** by **Professor MIKE SAVAGE (London School of Economics)** and **FIONA DEVINE (University of Manchester)**.

They devised a new way of measuring **CLASS**, which doesn't define class just by the **JOB THAT YOU DO**, but by the different kinds of **ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL RESOURCES** or '**CAPITALS**' that people possess.

Participants in the study were asked about their **income**, the **value of their home and savings**, which together is known as '**ECONOMIC CAPITAL**', their **cultural interests and activities**, known as '**CULTURAL CAPITAL**' and the **number and status of people they know**, which is called '**SOCIAL CAPITAL**'.

**More than 160,000 people completed the survey. This is one of the largest ever studies of class in Great Britain. The new model includes seven classes:**

**1. ELITE:**

This is the most privileged class in Great Britain who has **HIGH LEVELS OF ALL THREE CAPITALS**. Their high amount of economic capital sets them apart from everyone else.

**2. ESTABLISHED MIDDLE CLASS:**

Members of this class have high levels of all three capitals although not as high as the Elite. They are a gregarious and culturally engaged class.

**3. TECHNICAL MIDDLE CLASS:**

This is a new, small class with high economic capital but seem less culturally engaged. They have relatively few social contacts and so are less socially engaged.

**4. NEW AFFLUENT WORKERS:**

This class has medium levels of economic capital and higher levels of cultural and social capital. They are a young and active group.

**5. EMERGENT SERVICE WORKERS:**

This new class has low economic capital but has high levels of 'emerging' cultural capital and high social capital. This group is young and often found in urban areas.

**6. TRADITIONAL WORKING CLASS:**

This class scores low on all forms of the three capitals although they are not the poorest group. The average age of this class is older than the others.

**7. PRECARIAT: (Blend of "precarious" and "proletariat".)**

This is the most deprived class of all with low levels of economic, cultural and social capital. The everyday lives of members of this class are precarious.

# **T**RADITIONAL WORKING CLASS...?

My Father and Mother both came from working class backgrounds and had to struggle, as most young people did in those days, with very limited **EDUCATIONAL CAPITAL** by age 14 when they “graduated” from the local School. Management of British schools in the late 1800’s and up to the 1940’s was inefficient and ineffective and did not offer **SECONDARY (Grammar School)** or **TERTIARY (University)** education to the population irrespective of their social standing or financial resources.

It remained for the **SECOND WORLD WAR** and the ensuing **SOCIAL / POLITICAL MOVEMENTS** to create the environment to permit and encourage the education of all young people to the point where all the population can be self-supporting, and also intellectually / politically informed to ensure that British society becomes responsible, inclusive and sustainable.

All they needed to succeed in life was a better **EDUCATION** and reliable **EMPLOYMENT**. That was coming in the form of the Second World War...



**My Mum & Dad  
strolling in North  
End, Portsmouth  
(circa 1935)**

The following article from HUBPAGES NETWORK in 2016 describes the same experiences and opinions from a lady in Birkenhead, on Merseyside, in the 1930's as my family had living in Portsmouth. Unemployment, poverty and lack of education were massive problems for Britain at that time. This ultimately resulted in the deposing of the Conservative (Tory) Government led by Winston Churchill in 1945 and election of the (progressive) Labour Party under Clement Attlee.

Social Equality has improved in the last 50-years, but there is still a long way to go to eradicate POVERTY and to achieve EQUAL OPPORTUNITY for all.

## **WORKING CLASS LIFE IN ENGLAND IN THE 1930'S.**

The 1930s in England was a time when the British government rode roughshod over the working class.

In Birkenhead, where my mum and grandparents lived in the 1930s, there was a lot of unemployment. Many working-class people lived in abject poverty. **Workers and the unemployed alike marched in protest. They marched because of the harsh reductions imposed by the government. They were experiencing a huge fall in their already poor living standards.**

**During this period wages were reduced.** The already miserably low benefits for the unemployed were also cut back. These drastic cuts resulted in millions of the working class living in abject poverty. They were thrown into the most appalling conditions of poverty and deprivation imaginable.

**The government carried out these attacks all in the name of national economic measures.** These economic measures were a vicious attack on their lives and livelihoods. While massive reductions were taking place, the government spent millions of pounds on armaments, preparing for a war that would involve the slaughter of millions of the working class - including the working class of other countries too, and all in the interest of CAPITALISM.

**It was felt that the government and employers had no idea what the imposition of these reductions did. Hard-working families had to live with the harsh effects of less money coming into the home, and it seemed that no one even cared!**

### **"THEY DIDN'T"**

This was the background of the thirties that my Mum, who was born in 1919, was experiencing as an eleven-year-old. I began this article in response to the question: **'How did people in your family save money in the 1930s?'** The question is easily answered in two words: **'They didn't.'**

**My Parents and my Grandparents both lived in rented accommodation all their lives.** My Mum was the eldest of 10 children and they lived in a small **"two-up and two-down"** terraced house. **The girls slept in one bedroom and boys in the other. My Grandparents slept on a settee that converted into a bed downstairs in the front room.**



My Grandfather worked in the shipyards most of his working life and, even though he had a job, times were very hard. In the shipyards some jobs were beginning to be automated. This resulted in fewer workers being needed for some of the jobs and people were being laid off.

## HEALTH

Two of my Mum's siblings died in infancy. In the 1930's Britain did not have a National Health Service. It cost 2s/6d to see a doctor, which is about \$300 CAD based on 2022 Exchange Rate. This sounds like a ridiculously large amount today, but at that time, even when it was a matter of life and death, if you didn't have 2s/6d, you didn't get to see a Doctor.

As a result, it was not uncommon for people to lose a child in infancy. Many died because of Pneumonia, from which two of my Mother's siblings died. Even if the fee of 2s/6d could be found, it was often not enough. After the doctor was paid there would be the cost of the medicine. The extra expense of medication often just could not be found. **Penicillin was not readily available in those days. Many quite commonplace illnesses which we treat with antibiotics today, were fatal back then.**

**In 1948 the National Health Service (NHS) was born.** From then on everyone in Britain could see a Doctor when they needed to. A visit to the Doctor was free to everyone at the point of service. If the necessary treatment involved a stay in hospital, or an operation, you got it. **The NHS benefit meant that health care was now free at the point of service.**

Even if your treatment required that you saw a specialist, you could see one on the NHS free. You might have to wait for an appointment, but the consultation was free.

**When the NHS came into being in 1948 even the prescriptions were free.** At last medical care was free and based on need rather than on ability to pay. Of course, in fact the NHS is not free because our taxes pay the bills, but no one is denied access to treatment because they can't pay. Being poor and ill is no longer a death sentence like it was for so many in the 1930's.

It is terrible when people need medical treatment and cannot get it because they cannot afford it. It is so wrong in any society when we let people die just because they lack the money to pay for care. When we have treatments available that would save lives, we should use them. Not just to rich people who have the money to pay for them.

### **RECYCLE EVERYTHING**

Hessian sacks holding 56 lb. of potatoes also served other purposes. I remember going to our greengrocer and asking for one of the empty sacks. My mum and I then used the Hessian sack as a foundation to make a peg rug. We placed that rug in front of our fireplace and it served us well for years. Making a peg rug was a skill that my mum learned as a youngster in the 1930s and she passed that skill on to me.

### **PEG RUG Woven on old Sacking**

**Nothing was wasted if it could be put to use for something else later.** Working class families wasted nothing, absolutely nothing. Potatoes at the greengrocers came in Hessian sacks that contained 56 lb. of fresh produce. The grocer sold the potatoes straight from the sack. Because everything you bought was a necessity, you learned to waste nothing. Many items were often used more than once and by more than one person.

**This was the time before cheap plastic bags and things were often sold without packaging. In the shop items would often be weighed out and put loose right into your shopping bag. Some things would be put into brown paper bags or wrapped in newspaper.**

When you got home the stuff that was in paper bags would be taken out of the bags and put away in their containers. Biscuits for example went into the biscuit barrel. The paper bag that the biscuits came wrapped in was straightened out and folded up. The folded paper bags were then put away ready for use to wrap something else up in it.

When things came tied up with string, the string would be untied, not cut. The string would then be wound up and put away to use again. Jumpers and cardigans would be hand knitted, not shop bought.

When they got too worn to hand down, then the garment would be unpicked. The unpicked wool was re-used to knit a new jumper or cardigan.

Often the unpicking would not be enough to make a whole new garment. This resulted in many striped garments. The garments were striped because unpicked wool from several different garments was used. I remember unpicking jumpers and rewinding the wool back into balls ready for use again.

The unpicked wool would be all crinkly as it held the shape of the knitted stitch. But this would not show when reused in a new garment. Unpicked wool would also have knots. This was because where the garment had worn it had holes in it. The original wool would be broken, so new wool was tied to the old.

### **EVERYTHING THAT COULD BE RECYCLED OR REPAIRED WOULD BE.**

When socks got holes in them, the socks would be darned, as would any woolen garment. I remember using a wooden mushroom inside my sock when I darned up holes. I actually enjoyed weaving the wool in and out and making the darn close knit and sturdy. My darns would outlast the socks any day. Without that mushroom it was so easy to end up with pricked fingers and bloody garments.



**A Darning Mushroom**



**Cobbler's Last (This is like the one my dad used)**

### **MAKE AND MEND**

All kinds of garments would be re-used or re-purposed. Worn out adult clothing would be cut down to make children's clothing. Before an item was got rid of, any buttons zips or elastic would be removed so that they could use on something else.

When items could no longer be reused as clothing then they would be used for other things. The material might be too shoddy for clothing but could still be useful as cleaning rags or cut up to make Peg rugs.

Shoes were often mended at home. Most homes at that time had a Cobbler's Last. Even in the 1940's and 1950's a Cobbler's Last was still a common item in most working-class homes. I can remember my Dad had a sheet of leather from which he would cut soles or heels to mend our shoes. He would fix the new sole or heel onto the shoe using the cobbler's last to hold the shoe in place. Dad would put the shoe on the last while hammering in the tiny nails to hold the sole or heel in place.

I remember the excitement when the rubber stick-on soles came out. The stick-on soles were so much less trouble than having to fashion soles from leather. The stick-on soles either came with glue in a small tube or they were already coated with adhesive.

#### **FIRST UP BEST DRESSED**

Clothing and footwear were made to last and had to be looked after properly, often being handed down to the next person in line. My mum was lucky in this respect; being the eldest of the ten children she often was the first one to wear an item before it began its journey down through the family.

It was not unusual for outer garments such as overcoats to be worn indoors in the wintertime as often fuel for the fire could not be afforded. The inside of a house could be as cold as the outside, with ice building up on the inside of the windows.

They had a penny in the slot gas meter for the gas, which was used for lighting and the gas stove. If you didn't have a penny for the meter, then you didn't get gas.

There is a saying that I think dates back to this time and it is '**First up best dressed.**' This saying means that if for example there were four girls in the family, and only three pairs of knickers (panties), then the first three to get up and dress would be the ones who would get to wear knickers that day.

**NO "HIRE-PURCHASE": SEE "UNCLE" INSTEAD.**

Like so many of that generation we only bought what we could pay for. Neither my grandparents nor my parents ever had anything on credit. There was no CREDIT or Hire/Purchase (H/P) in the 1930's and 1940's.

The PAWNSHOP, also known as UNCLE'S or the POP SHOP, was the go-to place for working-class people. The symbol for a Pawnbroker was three balls hanging outside the shop. I am not sure where the symbol came from or why they used it for a Pawnbroker.

There is an old joke about what the three balls stood for, and that is "Two to one, you won't get your stuff back".

Items of value would be taken to the Pawnbroker, who would give you a loan for a fixed rate of interest. If you paid back the loan and the interest in the time agreed you could redeem the item. People pawned all kinds of articles to raise much needed cash: some of which were never redeemed, and which were later sold off by the Pawnbroker to get his money back.



# POST WORLD WAR I (1925-1938): THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The Great Depression in the United Kingdom, also known as the Great Slump, was a period of national economic downturn in the 1930s, which had its origins in the global Great Depression. It was Britain's largest and most profound economic depression of the 20th century. The Great Depression originated in the United States in late 1929 and quickly spread to the World.

Britain had never experienced the boom that had characterized the US Germany, Canada and Australia in the 1920s, so its effect appeared less severe. Britain's world trade fell by half in 1929–33, the output of heavy industry fell by a third, employment profits plunged in nearly all sectors. At the depth of the Slump in summer 1932, **registered unemployed numbered 3.5 million**, and many more had only part-time employment.

Particularly hardest hit by economic problems were the industrial and mining areas in the north of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Unemployment reached 70% in some areas at the start of the 1930s (with more than 3 million out of work nationally) and **many families depended entirely on payments from local government, known as the dole**. Politically the Conservative Party dominated the era and the Labour Party was seriously hurt.

With more companies laying off employees than hiring new ones, thousands of unemployed men and women turned to government relief for help during the Great Depression. Known as the Dole, these payments were small and only provided about half of a person's total nutritional requirements.



# CREATING NEW JOBS IN BRITAIN

## THE NATIONAL ELECTRICITY GRID

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, **NIKOLA TESLA** established the principles of 3-Phase high-voltage electric power distribution while he was working for **WESTINGHOUSE** in the United States. The first to use this system in the United Kingdom was **CHARLES MERZ** of the **MERZ & MCLELLAND** Consulting Partnership, at his **Neptune Bank Power Station** near Newcastle Upon Tyne. This opened in 1901 and by 1912 had developed into the largest integrated power system in Europe. The rest of the country, however, continued to use a patchwork of small supply networks.

In 1920 only 6% of British homes were connected to electricity supply and the cost was prohibitive. There was, however, a new Industry about to be created in Britain: **THE NATIONAL ELECTRICITY GRID.**

In 1925, the British government asked Lord Weir a Glaswegian industrialist, to solve the problem of Britain's inefficient and fragmented electricity supply industry. Weir consulted Merz, and the result was the **ELECTRICITY (SUPPLY) ACT OF 1926**, which recommended that a "**national gridiron**" supply system be created.

This Act created the **CENTRAL ELECTRICITY BOARD**, which set up the UK's first synchronized, nationwide **Alternating Current grid**. **The Grid was created with 4,000 miles of cables- mostly overhead cables linking the 122 most efficient power stations. The first "Grid Tower" was erected near Edinburgh on July 14, 1928 and work was completed in September 1933, ahead of schedule and on budget.**

**It began operating in 1933** as a series of regional grids with auxiliary interconnections for emergency use. Following the unauthorized but successful short-term paralleling of all regional grids by night-shift engineers on 29 October 1937, by 1938 the grid was operating as a **NATIONAL SYSTEM.**

**The growth by then in the number of electricity users was the fastest in the world, rising from three quarters of a million in 1920 to nine million in 1938. It proved its worth during the BLITZ when South Wales provided power to replace lost output from BATTERSEA and FULHAM power stations in London.**

The grid was nationalized by the **ELECTRICITY ACT 1947** which also created the **BRITISH ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY**. In 1949, the British Electricity Authority decided to upgrade the grid by adding 275 kV links. Not everyone was convinced of the benefits: The advancing gangs of pylons inspired vociferous protests in Britain's beauty spots, and the objections then are echoed today in disputes over similar large projects. **Nevertheless, the grid had its desired effect and by the start of the Second World War 66% of homes was connected. It was the beginning of a system that has linked the British together more intimately than ever before.**

## **PUBLIC LIGHTING**

Some of the first public gas lighting in Britain appeared in London's Pall Mall, in 1807. By 1850 it had been adopted by towns and cities across Britain. The lamps were relatively efficient and cheap to run, and were seen to help increase public safety and reduce crime. At first, the lamps were lit by a lamplighter. The lamplighter would set off at dusk and light the lamps using a wick on the end of a long pole, returning at dawn to extinguish the lamp using a small hook. Lamp lighting was an important job and a respected profession – often passed down from father to son, although the job was also done by women.

In the 1930s, the clockwork Controller was invented, which lighted the lamps automatically. Although the lamplighter was no longer needed to actually light the gas, the mechanism still had to be wound regularly, the glass in the lamp cleaned and parts repaired and replaced.

Gas was used to light streetlamps until the 1950s when it was replaced in most areas by electricity.

For nearly a century the light from burning gas came from a simple upright flame. Most of the light was directed towards the ceiling – often away from where it was needed most. People experimented with lots of different types of flame including multiple jets, and fan-shaped flames. As demand for better, brighter lighting grew, the burners inside street lamps increased in size and number until the lamps became gigantic – as tall as a grown adult, especially in busy locations.

But an important invention by the Austrian chemist Carl Auer von Welsbach in 1880 led to a revolution in gas lighting - the development of the incandescent gas mantle. A mantle consisted of a fine gauze impregnated with rare earth metals. When heated to a high temperature this produced a much, much brighter light than a naked flame. A mantle was also introduced in the early 1900s that could direct light downwards.

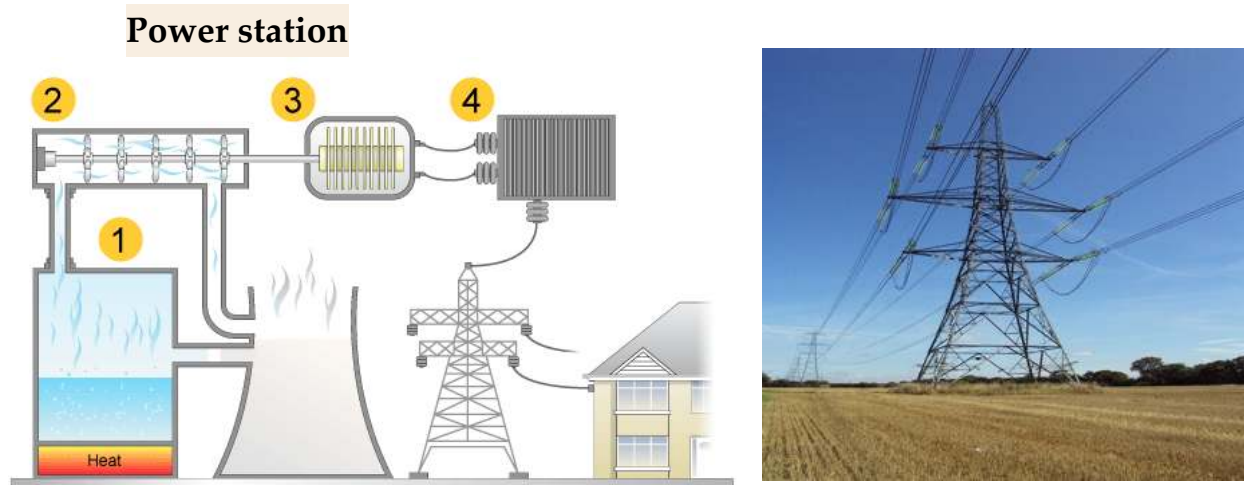
The mantle became widely used in the 20th century, once its design had been perfected and was less fragile.

These developments came at an ideal time to help gas resist the competition from the newly emerging electricity industry. Millions of street lights meant that the cost of a change to the infrastructure to electricity would always be enormous and the invention of the mantle so improved the performance that gas street lamps held sway for a very long time, whilst electric interior lighting became increasingly popular from the 1930s.

# THE NATIONAL GRID

## At the Power Station

Power stations are built in order to generate electricity. The illustration below shows the main steps involved.



1. Water is turned into steam in the boilers
2. The steam drives the turbines
3. The turbines spin the generators, which produce the electricity
4. The electricity goes to the transformers to produce the correct voltage

The energy needed to boil the water comes from fossil fuels or nuclear fuels. Renewable energy resources such as wind and wave power may drive the generators directly.

## THE NATIONAL GRID

Electricity is transferred from power stations to consumers through the wires and cables of the National Grid. When current flows through a wire some energy is lost as heat.

Ohm's Law:  $E = I \times R$  (volts = amps x resistance, ohms)

The higher the current, the more heat is lost. To reduce these losses, the National Grid transmits electricity at a low current. This needs a high voltage.

Power stations produce electricity at 25,000 Volts. Electricity is sent through the National Grid cables at 400,000, 275,000 and 132,000 Volts.

Step-up transformers are used at power stations to produce the very high voltages needed to transmit electricity through the National Grid power lines. These high voltages are too dangerous to use in the home, so step-down transformers are used locally to reduce the voltage down to safe levels. The voltage of household electricity in Britain is 220-240V @ 50 Hz and 115-127V @ 60 Hz in Canada.

## **FORK IN THE ROAD: CONSTRUCTION OF THE NATIONAL GRID**

In the mid-1930's my Dad was able to take advantage of the employment opportunity offered by the installation of the infrastructure for the expanding NATIONAL GRID in the Midlands of England.

He was able to commute by motorbike to join the construction crews working in Yorkshire. This work would have earned him much higher wages and allowed Dad to plan to get married and start a family.

By 1936 he had achieved this goal and was back in Portsmouth on a permanent basis and employed in a steady job with the local **PORTSEA ISLAND MUTUAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETY (PIMCO)** organization. That allowed him to fulfil his new obligations as a father and husband.



**John Henry Ward  
and  
John Graham Ward**

## **M**OBILE TRANSPORT IN THE 1930'S

Dad was very fond of his MOTORBIKE, which he often rode with his younger cousin, "MONTY" on the pillion. MONTAGU RICHARD MORTIMER was my GREAT-UNCLE, whose father, WILLIAM JAMES MORTIMER was my Grandfather's Brother, who had died in 1917 when Monty was 5 years old, and Monty's Mother had abandoned him. So my Grandfather, WILLIAM GEORGE HAYWARD WARD, took Monty into the Family home.



PHOTO TAKEN OUTSIDE # 35 JERSEY ROAD, BUCKLAND, PORTSMOUTH, UK.  
(NOTE THE ABSENCE OF HELMETS, GOGGLES, PROTECTIVE SUITS OR REINFORCED GLOVES...!)

### **A FORK IN THE ROAD - COLLISION**

Rumour has it that Dad had dated two of the BECK sisters then living in the small village of Waterlooville, some 10 miles north of Portsmouth. The first was Ellen Grace Beck, the older sister of MYRTLE PHYLLIS BECK to whom Dad eventually got engaged.

One day, after visiting his fiancée, Myrtle, at the BECK FAMILY residence in WATERLOOVILLE, Hampshire, Dad was in a broadside collision with a motorcar and was badly injured with facial damage and taken to hospital. He recovered but was removing broken bone fragments from his nose well into his old age! Decades later my Dad was very resistive to my buying a BSA BANTAM 150 c.c. 2-Stroke motor bike I needed to get to work, but he finally agreed.

# HOME SWEET HOME: 52 HEWETT ROAD, COPNOR, PORTSMOUTH

In spite of my Dad's motor cycle accident (or perhaps because of it) my Mum & Dad married in September 1935.

The happy couple was living in a very respectable rented apartment at 52, HEWETT ROAD, North End, Portsmouth at the time. This home was more "middle class" than the long-time family abode in Jersey Road, Buckland only 1.3 miles away.

In an "immaculate conception", I came to join the fledgling WARD family "very quickly" on March 7, 1936.



52, Hewett Road, North End, Portsmouth (with the RED DOOR)

So, my Dad took a lower-paid job as a MOTOR DRIVER ROUNDSMAN for the **PORTSEA ISLAND MUTUAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETY (known as PIMCO)**. In other words, he was a MILKMAN and delivered bottled milk to the customer's doorstep every day in a motorized cart (known as a MILK FLOAT). This was not an occupation with much prospect of advancement.

At this time money was probably in short supply in the Ward household. We have all "BEEN THERE, DONE THAT" at some point in time.

Founded in 1873, the Society was known as the PORTSEA ISLAND MUTUAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETY (PIMCO) until 1998, when it became SOUTHERN CO-OPERATIVES. The principal activities of the Society are food retailing and funerals.

(My parents paid 1-Penny per Week for all of their adult lifetime into an Insurance Policy to fund their own Funeral. They died in 1985 and 1987 and the pay-out on the insurance policy was insufficient to cover the cost of a modest funeral.)



A vexing problem with aluminium capped milk bottles on the doorstep was that small birds would “peck” a large hole in the top and drink the milk. Large birds would then knock the bottle over, breaking the glass and spilling all the remaining milk...!

# PEACE IN OUR TIME?

**APPEASEMENT** is the name given to Britain's policy of accepting German expansion in Europe in the 1930s. It developed in response to Britain's assessment of its political, economic and strategic situation and was heavily influenced by strong anti-war sentiment.

Britain's renewed re-armament programme was not yet complete. Support from the Dominions was uncertain and France, Britain's ally in Europe, was weakened by political and economic crisis. Most Britons were desperate to avoid the destruction of another world war, a view shared by British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. Chamberlain sought to find a peaceful solution, but appeasement had its limits. **Once Britain began to see German demands as a direct threat to its security or the security of its Empire, the tone of British policy began to change.**

**The Munich Agreement in 1938** removed the immediate threat of war and gave Britain time to continue preparing for a potential war. **Yet Hitler's confidence only grew after Munich. He was certain that Britain and France would not use force to resist further German expansion. In March 1939, German forces occupied what remained of Czech territory. This convinced Britain and France that there were no limits to Hitler's territorial ambitions. They were now determined to prevent German domination of Europe - by force.**

**Recognizing that Poland was likely to be Germany's next target, they gave guarantees to defend Polish independence.** Britain and France, who had renewed their entente in February, began joint military planning. Both countries continued re-arming and **in April 1939 Britain introduced peacetime conscription for the first time in its history.** However, war was still viewed as a last resort.

**As Germany completed its conquest of Czechoslovakia, another crisis was developing over the city of Danzig (present day Gdansk).** Poland was one of several new countries born out of the First World War. The new Polish state was given access to the sea through a 'corridor' carved out of German territory. **The former German city of Danzig was established as a Free City run by the League of Nations to serve as a major port for Polish trade.** The creation of an independent Poland and the loss of Danzig created lasting resentment in Germany.

**(This all sounds FAMILIAR today as we watch the Russian invasion of UKRAINE...!)**



NAZI RALLY IN 1939

In October 1938, the German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop met with the Polish ambassador Josef Lipski to discuss Danzig's return to Germany. Discussions became more forceful at a meeting between Hitler and Polish Foreign Minister Józef Beck on 5 January 1939. However, the Poles refused to back down - Danzig was an issue over which they would fight. Polish resistance to German demands strengthened after Britain and France issued their guarantees to defend Poland's independence in March 1939. In April, Hitler ordered preparations for the invasion of Poland. He strengthened ties with Japan, the main threat to Britain's Empire in the Far East, and in May he signed a military alliance with Italy.

#### **WORLD WAR II (1939 – 1945) BRITAIN & FRANCE DECLARE WAR ON GERMANY**

Neville Chamberlain broadcast this announcement to the nation at 11.15am on 3 September 1939.

**“A British ultimatum demanding that Germany withdraw its troops from Poland had been delivered earlier that morning and expired at 11.00 AM without a reply.”**

**Britain was once again at war with Germany.** The outbreak of war did not come as a surprise. Tensions in Europe had been building for years and there was a growing feeling that German aggression needed to be confronted with force. The British reluctantly accepted that war was necessary to stop Hitler. Germany represented a direct threat to British security and the security of its empire. Accepting German domination of Europe had grave implications for British status and survival.

**Britain went to war in 1939 to defend the balance of power in Europe and safeguard Britain's position in the world.**

This proved to be a major **FORK IN THE ROAD** for most people. The world was about to be changed forever. The outcome would NOT be good. Unlike World War I, we knew this war would NOT be over in a few months. Indeed, this war would last for some 6 years – and then it would need two atom bombs dropped on Japan to convince the Japanese Military to surrender.

**T**HERE WAS NO PEACE IN OUR TIME...!



**RAF pilots at THORNEY ISLAND flew Bristol Beaufort Torpedo Bombers**

## **THE BLITZ IN PORTSMOUTH, HAMPSHIRE - 1940**

During the 4-year period of the Portsmouth Blitz 930 people were killed, 1,216 hospitalized and a further 1,621 suffered less severe injuries. It is estimated that almost 10 per cent of the City's 63,000 homes were destroyed and approximately 6,000 were damaged during 1,581 air raids.

On the 24th of August 1940, **THE PRINCES THEATRE** in Lake Road, was bombed during an air raid whilst a matinee performance was taking place. Due to communication problems no air raid warning was given, **8 children were killed in the bombing and many more were injured.**

My wife, **PHYLLIS WARD (born MONK)**, at age 4, recalls running to the **AIR RAID SHELTER** in the back yard of #34, St. James Road, Emsworth as German Luftwaffe bombers flew low overhead to drop bombs on houses in nearby streets.



Her home in **EMSWORTH**, Hampshire was near to **RAF THORNEY ISLAND** and **RAF TANGMERE**, which along with the **ROYAL NAVY DOCKYARD** at Portsmouth were regular targets for German **LUFTWAFFE** bombers during the **BATTLE OF BRITAIN** in 1940.



**Heinkel He111 German Bomber - Shot down in 1940**

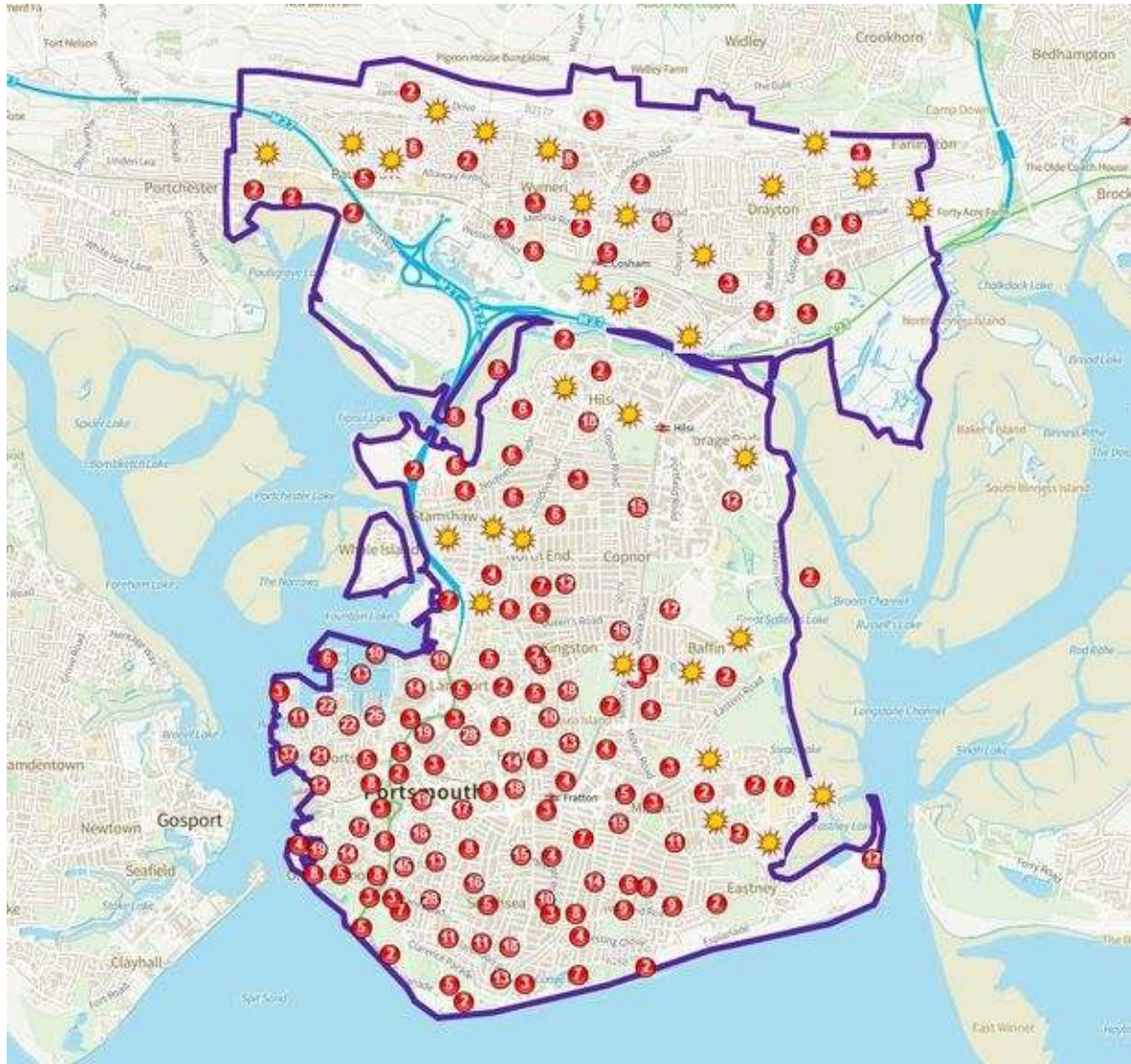
Although locations such as the naval base, military installations and factories were undoubtedly the primary targets, aerial targeting at that time was not particularly accurate, especially during night time raids when visual methods could not be used, other methods such as dead reckoning or radio triangulation were used instead, as a result large numbers of civilian residential areas were hit as mentioned above.

The Germans also believed that heavy civilian casualties would put pressure on the British Government to find a peaceful resolution to the war. German bombers often dropped their bombs early over populated areas to avoid the heavy anti-aircraft defences close to their intended military targets, but the result was the same - massive destruction in residential and commercial areas, with all parts of the city being affected.

To the understandable outrage of local residents, less populated areas such as Hayling Island were deliberately used as decoys for the German bombing runs. Temporary buildings were constructed, and the lights were left on during raids, also fires were lit to imitate the effect of incendiary devices. Using these tactics bombers were tempted to drop their bombs onto Hayling Island instead of Portsea Island thereby saving many lives in the more densely populated Portsmouth areas.

The bombs dropped onto the City of Portsmouth were a combination of high explosives and, more commonly, incendiary devices designed to cause fires. According to German records as many as 40,000 incendiary devices were dropped during the major raid on the night of the 10th - 11th January 1941. There were additional casualties in Portsmouth Dockyard and other naval or military establishments.

## THE WORLD WAR II BOMB RAIDS MAP



In WW2 German bombs killed or injured more than 3,000 people in Portsmouth, destroyed or damaged buildings and broke water mains, gas pipes, sewers, electricity cables and telephone lines, which made rescue work and fighting the fires more difficult. In Portsmouth today, visitors and residents can see new buildings built on many of the sites where these bombs fell, often standing among pre-1939 buildings.



Councillor Steve Pitt, Portsmouth's Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development, said:

"This is a very different anniversary to the kind we have had in previous years, but we felt it important to reflect and remember a very significant event in the city's history; especially with the current restrictions and ongoing impact of COVID-19.

"The eyewitness accounts and log book entries for the evening [of January 10] provide an insight into the timeline of the air raid, but it is the interactive map and the extensive locations of bomb sites that is so startling."

Sheila Duce lived in Eastney during the raid, and told Portsmouth City Council:

"You heard the screaming of the bombs coming down and the awful explosions, and you were just so thankful you know, that it wasn't on top of us."

Records manager at Portsmouth History Centre, John Stedman said the night of January 10 and 11 was Portsmouth's "grimmiest experience" in the gruelling war.

According to Mr Stedman, survivors discovered large parts of Portsea, Landport and Southsea as smoking ruins. Portsmouth Guildhall, six churches, a hospital, three cinemas and most of the Commercial Road, King's Road and Palmerston Road shopping centres were all damaged by the raid.

The day afterwards, LORD MAYOR OF PORTSMOUTH, SIR DENIS DALEY delivered a message to the people of the City. The same message was shared by the current Lord Mayor, Councillor Rob Wood, on Monday (January 11) 2021 at 5pm.

In his message, Sir Dennis Daley said:

"We are bruised, but we are not daunted, and we are still as determined as ever to stand side by side with other Cities who have felt the blast of the enemy, and we shall, with them, persevere with an unflagging spirit towards a conclusive and decisive victory."

Portsmouth, home to the Royal Navy, was a prime target for bombing raids by the German Luftwaffe during the Second World War.



Portsmouth's GUILD HALL SQUARE was a prime target and was "gutted" by fire. To some extent the city was prepared for the bombing raids; 25,000 ANDERSON SHELTERS were supplied by the government, but it is difficult to establish exactly how many of these were actually erected. City Engineers installed some 14,000 but many of the shelters were delivered to householders to erect by themselves.

In addition to these, 123 SEMI-UNDERGROUND TRENCH SHELTERS were built, as well as more substantial brick-built shelters. Tunnels cut into Portsdown Hill were also used as shelters. It is widely believed that the death toll would have been significantly higher, were it not for the preparation taken to provide these private shelters and the work undertaken by the Civil Defence services.

The City was also heavily defended with searchlights, anti-aircraft artillery, barrage balloons and fighter aircraft.

Many of Portsmouth's great buildings were either damaged or destroyed during this period and some would argue, along with other British Cities damaged during the Blitz that the architecture of Portsmouth has never fully recovered. Portsmouth Guildhall was severely damaged by fire after incendiary devices hit it and many items such as paintings were lost. The Royal Garrison Church in Old Portsmouth was also severely damaged.



**SOUTHAMPTON, HAMPSHIRE received similar damage during the "BLITZ", NOVEMBER 30, 1940.**

**Other damage included 30 Churches destroyed, 8 Schools destroyed, 1 Hospital destroyed another badly damaged, 150 Pubs and licensed premises destroyed and the principal shopping areas such as COMMERCIAL ROAD and PALMERSTON ROAD were virtually obliterated.**

**On the night of January 10, 1941 my cousin, Michael Hume and my Aunt Ellen were sheltering in an ANDERSON AIR RAID SHELTER at the rear of their house in Portsmouth, when a German bomb hit their house and trapped them inside the air raid shelter. ROYAL MARINES from the local Eastney Barracks eventually rescued them by digging them out, badly shaken and mentally affected by their ordeal.**

**From 5pm on January 10, 1941, through to the early hours of January 11, 172 people were killed and hundreds more injured or made homeless as a result of the attack, in which thousands of explosives landed on the city.**



Penny Street, and Edinburgh Road, Landport, Old Portsmouth, Hampshire.



## **FORK IN THE ROAD – VOLUNTARY EVACUATION TO PURBROOK**

During the Second World War, many children living in big Cities and Towns were moved temporarily from their homes to places considered safer, usually out in the countryside. More than 15,000 were sent overseas to Canada, Australia, New Zealand & South Africa as well as the United States.

The British evacuation began on Friday 1 September 1939. It was called 'OPERATION PIED PIPER'.

My Father JOHN HENRY WARD was conscripted into the British Army in 1940 so my Parents arranged for my Mother and me to move to Purbrook and live with her younger Sister, EDNA CELIA BECK who had recently married JOHN WILLIAM JAMES SIMMONDS, also a resident of Purbrook.

From 1940 - 1946 my Mother MYRTLE PHYLLIS WARD and I lived with my Aunt EDNA SIMMONDS and Uncle JOHN SIMMONDS in their small semi-detached house at #9 PARK FARM ROAD, PURBROOK.

Uncle John was a Leading Draftsman in the Royal Navy Dockyard in Portsmouth and was, therefore, exempt from conscription for military service since his job was design & construction of naval warships. Grandma LAURA BECK (62) and Grandpa FREDERICK BECK (64) lived only 100 yards away, at #1 WESTBROOK GROVE, and I would visit them occasionally.

My Uncle John had no children at that time, but my cousin LINDA CELIA SIMMONDS, was born on March 9, 1942. They also had one black cat, which I loved to hug. That was a mistake, as I found out several years later. Eventually I became aware that I was allergic to "cat dander" and, as a youngster I had many serious Asthma attacks that kept me home from Primary School for long periods.

In my teenage and adult life, I participated in many sports and had no health problems until my 50's when I lived near "sour gas" wells in Alberta, Canada and I was prescribed bronchial inhalers by my Doctor, which I used for some 10 years. A main cause of asthma seems to be air-borne pollution. Eventually, I moved to "cleaner air" on Vancouver Island, BC and had no further asthma attacks.

I still avoid cats...!

# **E** VACUATION FROM PORTSMOUTH IN 1940

Fear that German bombing would cause civilian deaths prompted the government to evacuate children, mothers with infants and the infirm from British towns and cities during the Second World War. Evacuation took place in several waves. The first came on 1 September 1939 - the day Germany invaded Poland and two days before the British Declaration of War. Over the course of three days 1.5 million evacuees were sent to rural locations considered to be safe.

**EVACUATION**  
OF  
**WOMEN AND CHILDREN**  
**FROM LONDON, Etc.**

**FRIDAY, 1st SEPTEMBER.**

Up and Down business trains as usual with few exceptions.  
Main Line and Suburban services will be curtailed while evacuation is in progress during the day.

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY,**  
**SEPTEMBER 2nd & 3rd.**

The train service will be exactly the same as on Friday.

Remember that there will be very few Down Mid-day business trains on Saturday.

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY**

# **T**HE FIRST WAVE OF EVACUATIONS

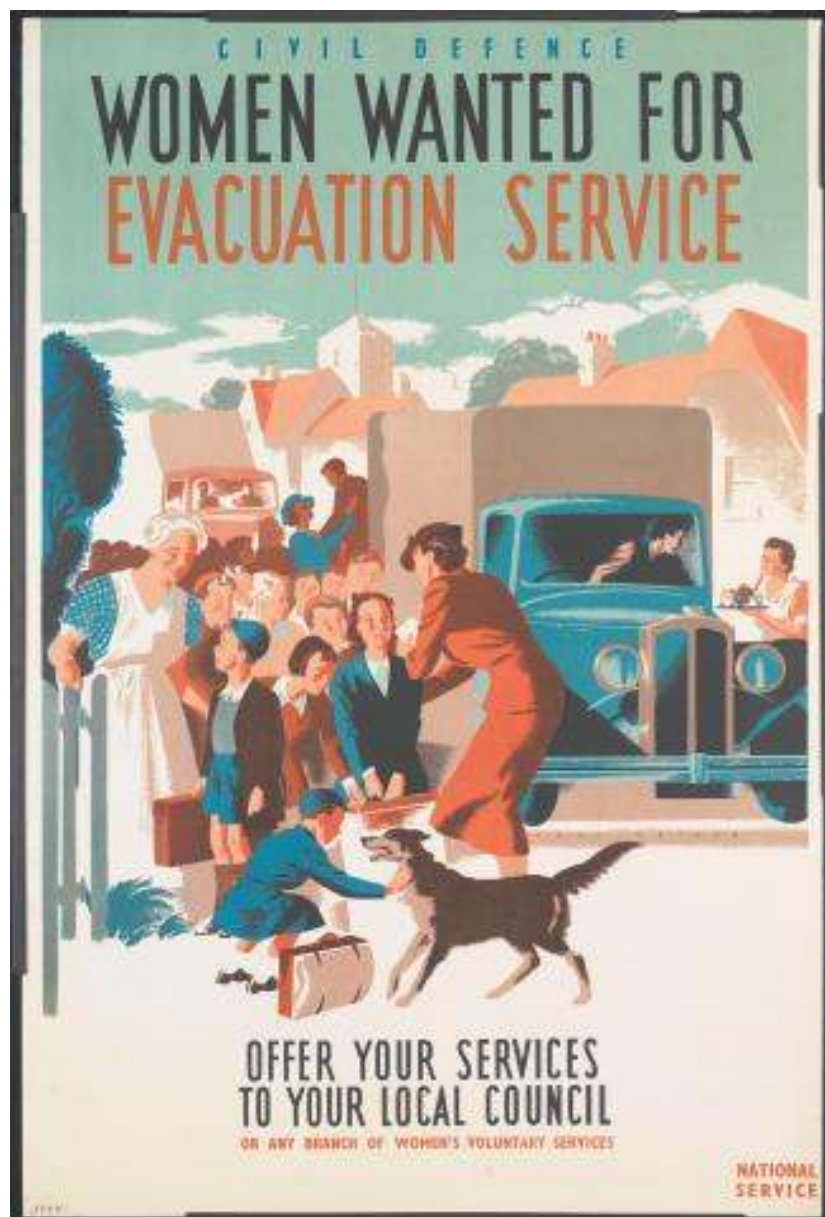
Evacuation was voluntary, but the fear of bombing, the closure of many urban schools and the organized transportation of school groups helped persuade families to send their children away to live with strangers. The schoolchildren in this photograph assembled at MYRDLE SCHOOL in Stepney at 5am on 1 September 1939. The adults accompanying them are wearing arm bands, which identify them as volunteer marshals.



Young evacuees boarding trains to take them to safety away from large Cities & Towns that would be targeted by German Luftwaffe bombers.

## **R**ECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

Evacuation was a huge logistical exercise which required thousands of volunteer helpers. The first stage of the process began on 1 September 1939 and involved teachers, local authority officials, railway staff, and 17,000 members of the **WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICE (WVS)**. The WVS provided practical assistance, looking after tired and apprehensive evacuees at railway stations and providing refreshments in reception areas and billeting halls. Volunteers were also needed to host evacuees.



## **L** EAVING THE CITIES

Children were evacuated from Cities across Britain. The children in this photograph are evacuees from BRISTOL, who have arrived at Brent railway station near Kingsbridge in Devon, 1940. Parents were issued with a list detailing what their children should take with them when evacuated. These items included a gas mask in case, a change of underclothes, night clothes, plimsolls (or slippers), spare stockings or socks, toothbrush, comb, towel, soap, face cloth, handkerchiefs and a warm coat. The children pictured here seem well-equipped for their journey, but many families struggled to provide their children with all of the items listed.



Evacuees from Bristol arrive at Brent railway station near Kingsbridge in Devon, 1940.

## LIFE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Evacuees and their hosts were often astonished to see how each other lived. Some evacuees flourished in their new surroundings. Others endured a miserable time away from home. Many evacuees from inner-city areas had never seen farm animals before or eaten vegetables. In many instances a child's upbringing in urban poverty was misinterpreted as parental neglect. Equally, some City dwellers were bored by the countryside, or were even used for tiring agricultural work. Some evacuees made their own arrangements outside the official scheme if they could afford lodgings in areas regarded as safe, or had friends or family to stay with.



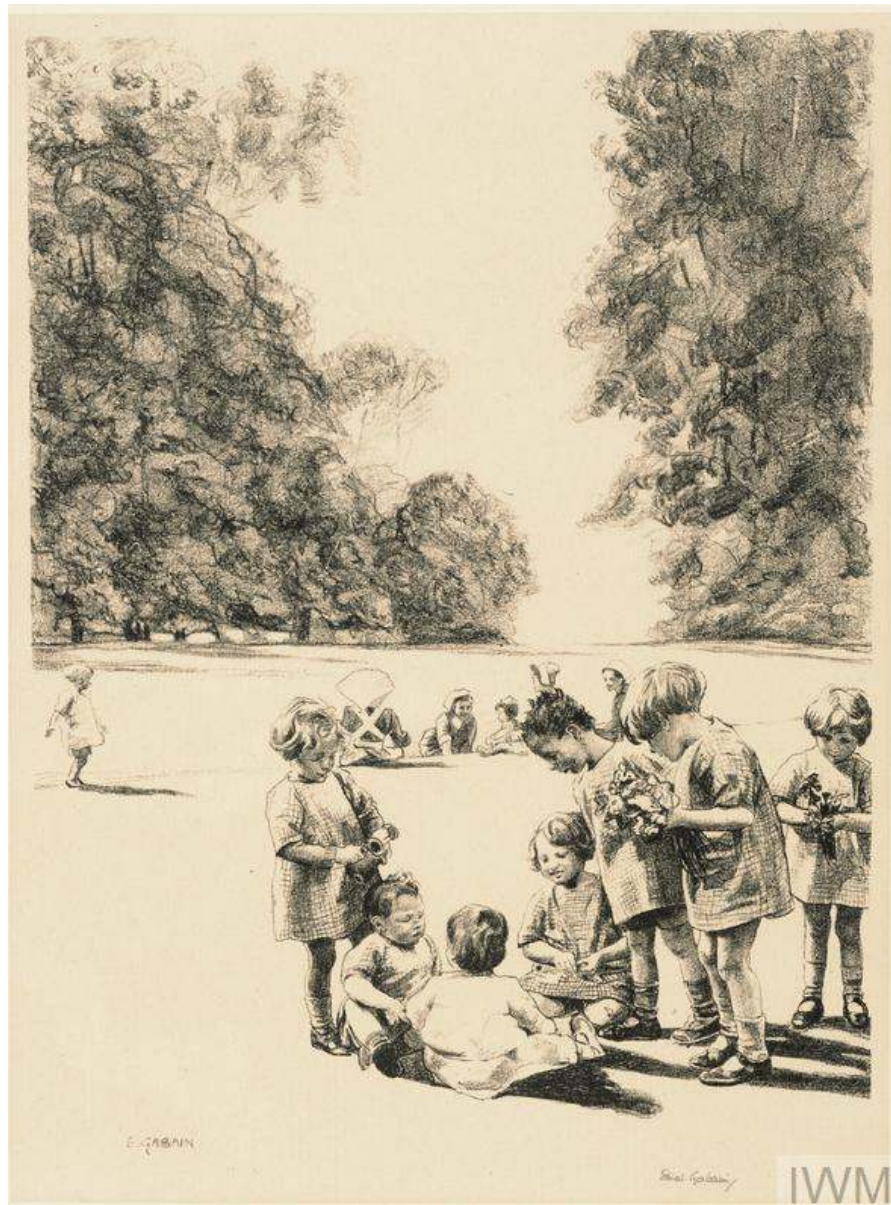
Evacuees on a nature walk through the countryside surrounding the Dartington estate in Devon.

Dartington is a small, beautiful village located just outside Totnes and is famous for being the home of the world renowned College. Dartington College is a leading centre of new ideas in arts and social sciences and is housed within a wonderful medieval building mentioned in Pevsner.

The village is home to the 1200 acre Dartington Estate.

# NURSERY SCHOOL

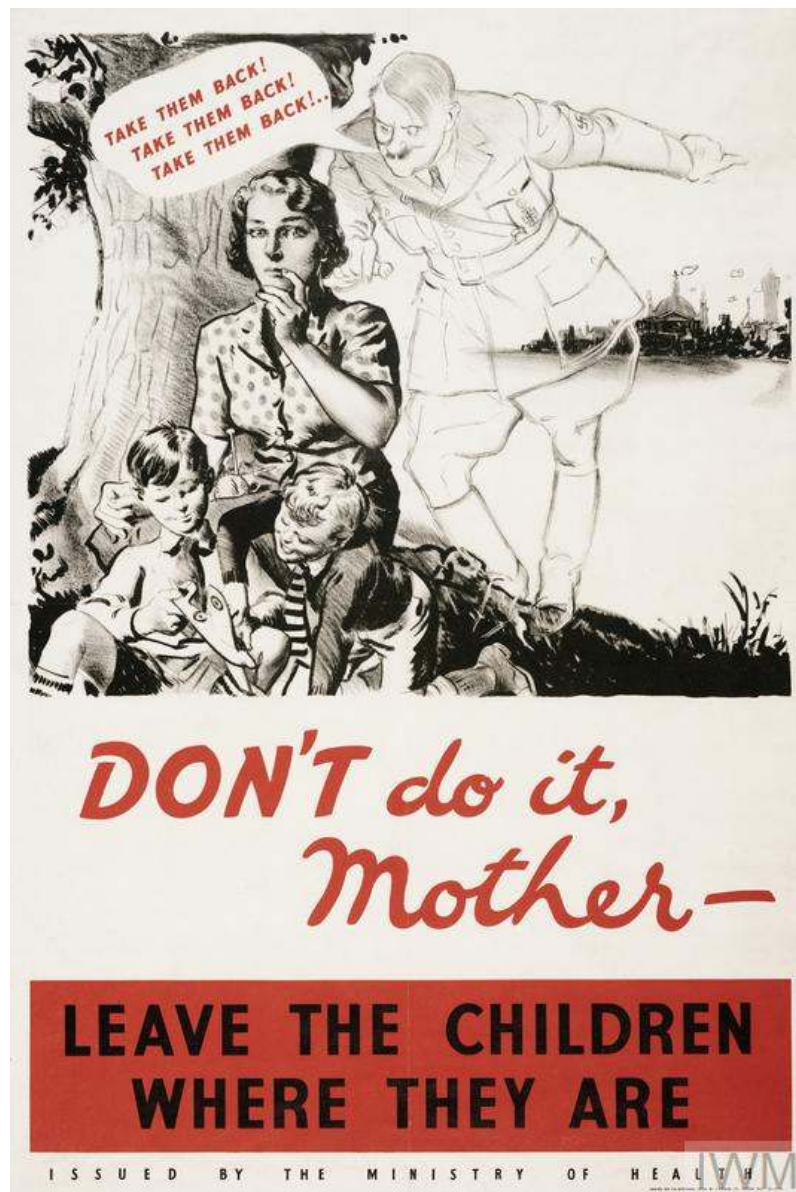
Many stately homes in the English countryside were given over for use as Nursery Schools or homes for young children evacuated from Cities across the country. This lithograph print is one of a series of five entitled 'Children in Wartime' by artist Ethel Gabain. This work was commissioned in 1940 by the War Artists Advisory Committee, who wanted a record of the civilian evacuation scheme.



A Nursery School: Watlington Park, by Ethel Gabain.

## R ETURNING HOME AGAINST ADVICE

By the end of 1939, when the widely expected bombing raids on cities had failed to materialize, many parents whose children had been evacuated in September decided to bring them home again. By January 1940 almost half of the evacuees returned home. The government produced posters like this one, urging parents to leave evacuees where they were while the threat of bombing remained likely.



Don't Do it, Mother - Leave the Children Where They Are, issued by The Ministry of Health

## **A**NOTHER WAVE OF EVACUATIONS

Additional rounds of Official Evacuation occurred nationwide in the Summer and Autumn of 1940, following the German invasion of FRANCE in May-June and the beginning of THE BLITZ in September. Evacuation was voluntary and many children remained in the cities. Some stayed to help, care for or support their families.



A Policeman helps young evacuees and the Nun escorting them at a London station on 18 May 1940.

## **V**-WEAPON ATTACKS

The GERMAN V1- & V2-WEAPON attacks on cities in the east and south-east of England, which began in June 1944, prompted another wave of evacuations from these areas.



**CIVIL DEFENCE** rescue workers search for survivors after a V1 attack in Norwood, London.

## **R**ETURNING HOME AT THE END OF THE WAR

For some children, the end of the war brought an end to a prolonged period of fear, confusion and separation. For others, it brought considerable upheaval as they returned to Cities and families they barely remembered. But the government's Voluntary Evacuation scheme was an enormous undertaking that saw millions of children sent to places of safety, away from the threat of German bombs.



Villagers saying goodbye to the children they adopted for the war.

This article was edited by Laura Clouting. Other IWM staff members contributed to writing an older version of this piece.

## **E**LEMENTARY, MY DEAR WARD

I attended the local PURBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL in Aldermore Road East (2 blocks away from my “evacuation” home) from 1941-1946.

My Dad came home on “embarkation leave” from the Army in 1942 before he was deployed overseas to the Desert Campaign in North Africa. Then he was gone for some 4 years.

My brother Roger was born on March 17, 1943 (St. Patrick’s Day) and my Aunt Edna gave birth to her firstborn a girl, Linda Celia Simmonds on March 9, 1941.

This period of my young life was dominated by a struggle with stammering and fear of being asked to read aloud in class. On many occasions I would not attend school to avoid such overwhelming embarrassment. I would sit in the grass on a piece of vacant land near the school for hours until it was time to go home.

My mother sought medical and psychological help from doctors, one of whom suggested I was “tongue tied” and recommended severing the web of skin (frenulum) under my tongue with surgical scissors. Our Family Doctor performed the operation “at home” during a house call. I passed out and fell to the floor, and the surgery did not work. (I can still taste the iodine used on the scissors as a disinfectant.) Knowledge of Speech Pathology has improved significantly since then!

Children tend to bully other children with disabilities, including stammering and this can end up in fighting or “pranks”. I did not suffer too much from bullying – I seem to have acquired a quick temper in self-defence. On one occasion, early in my time in Elementary School, I recall an older boy “peeing” on my shoe in the Boys’ urinal. He found this hilarious and roared in laughter as others joined in the hilarity. I was quick to respond and “peed” on his shoes in retaliation. **The ruckus attracted the attention of a male Teacher who dragged us both off to the Head Master’s study.**

Mr. Twigg was the kindly Head-Master, whom I have always respected. He heard, but ignored my lame excuse:

**“He did it first, Sir!”**

Mr. Twigg then explained the “error of our ways” and sentenced us both to **THREE LASHES of the bamboo cane on the left hand – which he administered forthwith in the privacy of his study.** (He was not very aggressive with his blows.) My left hand stung all afternoon, but I refused to cry.

I understood I was wrong, but I never told my Mother when I got home.

**PERHAPS THE PUNISHMENT FITTED THE CRIME...?**

**I CAN HONESTLY SAY, I HAVE NOT “PEED” ON ANY OTHER MAN’S SHOES SINCE...!**

# **C**ONSCRIPTION IN BRITAIN FOR THE SECOND WORLD WAR

## ■ LIMITED CONSCRIPTION OF MEN

During the spring of 1939 the deteriorating international situation forced the British government under Neville Chamberlain to consider preparations for a possible war against Nazi Germany. Plans for limited conscription applying to single men aged between 20 and 22 were given Parliamentary approval in the MILITARY TRAINING ACT in May 1939. This required men to undertake six months' military training, and some 240,000 registered for service.

## ■ FULL CONSCRIPTION OF MEN

On the day Britain declared war on Germany, 3 September 1939, Parliament immediately passed a more wide-reaching measure.

The NATIONAL SERVICE (ARMED FORCES) ACT imposed conscription on all males aged between 18 and 41 who had to register for service.

Those medically unfit were exempted, as were others in key industries and jobs such as baking, farming, medicine, and engineering.

Conscientious objectors had to appear before a tribunal to argue their reasons for refusing to join-up. If their cases were not dismissed, they were granted one of several categories of exemption, and were given non-combatant jobs.

Conscription helped greatly to increase the number of men in active service during the first year of the war.

## ■ CONSCRIPTION OF WOMEN

In December 1941 Parliament passed a second NATIONAL SERVICE ACT. It widened the scope of conscription still further by making all unmarried women and all childless widows between the ages of 20 and 30 liable to call-up.

Men were now required to do some form of National Service up to the age of 60, which included military service for those under 51. The main reason was that there were not enough men volunteering for Police and Civilian Defence work, or women for the Auxiliary Units of the Armed Forces.



## J OHN HENRY WARD -YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU!

Along with thousands of other able-bodied men, my Dad was conscripted into the Army in 1940 and trained as an ELECTRICAL MECHANICAL ARTIFICER with the **ROYAL ELECTRICAL & MECHANICAL ENGINEERS (REME)**. This provided my Dad with Secondary Education and Trade Training which he would not have received if he had not been conscripted into the Army.



REME Cap Badge  
1940 -1947

## **FORK IN THE ROAD**

Dad's coursework at the Army Technical School, Arborfield, Berkshire showed a latent talent for machines and engines and mechanical drawing; his future service and performance as an Electrical Mechanical Artificer was rewarded with promotion to the rank of WARRANT OFFICER (First Class) and prepared him for a successful return to the civilian workforce after the War.

## **THE BRITISH 8<sup>th</sup> ARMY IN THE DESERT**

In 1942, my Dad was posted to North Africa and then to Italy and had combat experience with the British 8<sup>th</sup> Army, commanded by FIELD MARSHALL BERNARD MONTGOMERY. The British, Australians, New Zealanders, Scottish and South Africans defeated the German Panzers (the Afrika Corps) commanded by the infamous General Erwin Rommel in 1942 at El Alamein and who later fought campaigns in Italy & Sicily.

## **THE ROYAL ELECTRICAL MECHANICAL ENGINEERS (REME) IN THE NORTH AFRICA CAMPAIGN**

The implementation of REME was very advanced in North Africa and the Canal Zone of EGYPT because new procedures and appointments had been made in advance of the formal date of formation. The RAOC base workshops in the Middle East, with one addition from the RASC, became REME to continue their repair and manufacturing role. Some workshops were equipped to the level of ordnance factories with capacity for manufacturing a wide range of equipment, material and spare parts.

Among the many items built were sledges for the Russian Army to operate in snow, iron lungs (respirators) for military hospitals and a wide range of dummy military equipment for the deception plans linked to forthcoming campaigns. Experimental work included the building of anti-mine flail tanks and mine detection equipment.

**Staff Sergeant JOHN HENRY WARD, REME  
(Photo in Egypt circa 1942)**



**With battlefield promotions, Dad rose to the rank of WARRANT OFFICER (FIRST CLASS).**

**He was following in the footsteps of his older brother, (my Uncle) EDWARD JOSEPH WARD who was a career soldier and attained the rank of REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR (RSM) in the ROYAL ARMY ORDNANCE CORPS (RAOC).**

Post-World War II, my Uncle Ted was stationed at the **HILSEA BARRACKS, Portsmouth, England** which was built in 1780 during the Napoleonic War.

**Just after formation of the REME, the British 8th Army in North Africa fought the famous tank battle of EL-ALAMEIN, which halted the German drive to the Suez Canal.**

In this crucial battle the ability of the **REME** to '**turn around**' equipment (**repair and recovery**) was adequately demonstrated. The pursuit of the Axis armies across North Africa considerably stretched the Allied lines of communication causing further wear and tear on supply vehicles. Additional semi-static workshops were provided to cope with vehicles recovered from the battlefields. The British 1st Army had been despatched with a very sparse **REME** component in anticipation of a brief operation, which proved to be a false hope.

By November 1942 another Allied Force had landed in **MOROCCO** and **ALGERIA**, which later linked up in **TUNISIA** with the victorious 8th Army shortly before the enemy surrendered in 1943. The first production armoured recovery vehicles were used in **TUNISIA**, these were turret-less tanks used to extricate bogged down tanks and then tow them away for repairs. Prior to this any recovery of vehicles under enemy fire was dangerous, as the recovery vehicles had no armour.

After surrender of the Axis in North Africa, the allied forces began to re-organize and prepare for new operations. The **REME** initiated major refurbishment of worn equipment and undertook a huge programme of vehicle waterproofing for the projected landings in **SICILY** and **ITALY**. Success in North Africa brought relief to **MALTA** where the **REME** had taken over the **RAOC** responsibility of maintaining anti-aircraft defences during the siege.

About this time the **REME** discovered that guns from **wrecked Sherman US tanks** could be re-fitted to the **British Churchill tanks**. As the Sherman tanks could use a much wider range of ammunition this substitution extended the capability of the Churchill tanks. The design was perfected, and two regiments of tanks were successfully converted for active service in **ITALY**.

#### **THE REME IN SICILY & ITALY CAMPAIGNS**

The landings in Sicily introduced the **REME** to a situation it would encounter throughout the campaign in **ITALY**. On the narrow mountain roads one broken-down vehicle could hold up an entire Army while the absence of large flat areas caused problems for deploying mobile workshops. As the Italian forces in **SICILY** negotiated surrender, the German Army fought a fierce rear-guard action and withdrew across the Straits of Messina to mainland **ITALY** to oppose the Allied landings there.

**Those Italians not in the German occupied areas joined the Allies.**

In this campaign the problems for **REME** included worn equipment, lack of strategic base repair units, heavy damage to equipment by enemy action and the harsh unsuitable terrain. The supply of new equipment was sparse as the UK based forces were preparing a stockpile for the invasion of **FRANCE**. Most of the new equipment was either American or Canadian. When Divisions were withdrawn from the front line the workshops ensured that the equipment would be in good condition by the time the Division went back into action.

**At the Anzio beachhead behind the German lines, the initial outcome was disastrous. The German resistance intensified so that the beachhead could hardly expand, and the Allied casualties rose steeply. The REME troops were amongst many who were called upon to discard their specialist roles and fight as Infantry until the situation improved.**

Eventually based workshops were established in **ITALY**, largely manned by Italian civilians. After D-Day in June 1944, the Italian campaign became a secondary operation from where troops were being withdrawn to fight in **FRANCE** and **BELGIUM**. The scarce supplies of new equipment dwindled even further so that the **REME** had to maintain old vehicles and weapons in action until the final German surrender in May 1945.

The **REME** became involved in some mammoth rebuilding and modification work while copying the new specialist vehicles, which were designed locally in the Normandy campaign. This included the creation of 'ARK' bridging tanks and 'Kangaroo' armoured personnel carriers.

### **THE ITALIAN CONNECTION (1943)**

**While in the City of Perugia, Umbria (north of Rome) in 1943, my Dad recounts that he heard an ACCORDIONIST playing in the public square. He was so impressed that he resolved to buy a piano accordion for his son to play at home after the war was over.**



## **D**UNKIRK (D-DAY) JUNE 6, 1944

In the spring of 1944, only 5 miles from my house, GENERAL DWIGHT D EISENHOWER, made his historic decision committing 3,000,000 men and 2,727 ships to OPERATION OVERLORD which turned the tide of World War II. It was at Southwick House, that the progress of the Operation was plotted.

SOUTHWICK VILLAGE is a quintessential English village, full of timber-framed thatched cottages nestled together; a wonderful ancient church whose door is always open and welcoming; a great village shop and two lions, the Red Lion and the Golden Lion “public houses” or taverns.



The remains of SOUTHWICK PRIORY would seem ample to complete the picture but in recent historical times, the Village of Southwick was at the centre of one of the most important moments in British history.

The clues are found in the Village itself, with visitor boards relating the part Southwick played in the build up to D-Day in 1944.

**SOUTHWICK HOUSE, once a magnificent family home was to become the headquarters of the main Allied Commanders, ADMIRAL BERTRAM RAMSAY, GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER and GENERAL BERNARD MONTGOMERY.**



How the house came to be used as the headquarters goes back to 1940 when the THISTLETHWAYTE family, who owned the house, allowed the Royal Navy to use it to accommodate students from HMS DRYAD in Portsmouth Dockyard. By 1941, bombing in the Portsmouth Naval Dockyard had become so bad that the house was requisitioned and HMS Dryad was relocated to this new home.

#### **WORLD WAR 2 REQUISITION OF SOUTHWICK HOUSE**

Colonel Evelyn Thistlethwayte was the Squire of Southwick Estate and owner of Southwick House. Whilst he had loaned the house as a dormitory to the students of HMS Dryad, the Estate was still very much a family affair and Colonel Thistlethwayte enjoyed the company of the Admirals that he invited to share the **game shooting** his Estate could offer.

**(After the War the Admirals requisitioned the property!)**



The houses of Southwick, if they belong to Southwick Estate their doors are painted maroon.

## INSIDE SOUTHWICK HOUSE

The old drawing room became the famous map room from where D-Day was planned. The map was made by the **Chad Valley Toy Company**, war games for real. The house was at action stations. To see a replica of this map, visit the D-Day Museum in Southsea. Accommodation for those in command sprung up in the form of Nissan huts, where they could grab a few hours rest. The village was in "lock down", the Pub, the **GOLDEN LION** became the officer's mess and here sat the great commanders, **MONTY** and **EISENHOWER** enjoying a drink together.

It was from Southwick House that these commanders addressed their troops on the eve of battle, each writing heartfelt, stirring missives and it was in Southwick House that they remained to orchestrate the invasion on D-Day before leaving to join their troops.

Hampshire kept one of the biggest secrets in the run up to D-Day when tens of thousands of troops were billeted in Hampshire villages, hidden in their woods and sunken lanes and taken care of by the local people. At Droxford on the 2nd June 1944, **WINSTON CHURCHILL**, members of his war cabinet, **PRESIDENT EISENHOWER** and the French leader **CHARLES DE GAULLE**, the Canadian President **WILLIAM LYON MCKENZIE KING** and the South African leader **JAN SMUTS**, all met on the **ROYAL TRAIN**, in the siding at Droxford on the Meon Valley line.

## VICTORY IN EUROPE

In 1945 Dad was released from the Army and he returned to family life. This was a major **FORK IN THE ROAD** for everyone. Women had been “keeping the home fires burning” for 6 years in the absence of their husbands, fathers and brothers. Now the men were returned from the war and expecting to take up their position as head of the family. In those days nobody talked much about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), but the condition existed as much as in later years (and wars). There was a significant shift from the culture of the prior **PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY** towards our more **EGALITARIAN SOCIETY** today.

There was a great need for more jobs in industry and all trades and professions to employ all those who wanted to work. **The Government needed more revenue to repay the National Debts owed by Britain to the USA and Canada for the money borrowed to run the war and to repair the damage to infrastructure, housing and utilities.**

The resulting Economic Boom from 1950-1970 did not translate into financial growth for the average man and woman in Britain and there were decades of “**belt-tightening**” by the Government. **There was however an upsurge in housing, education and healthcare.**

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – EMIGRATE TO CANADA?

After the War, Dad decided NOT to sign up for a permanent Commission with British Army, and he considered emigrating to Canada (British Columbia). However, he felt the education system in Canada for his two sons was inferior to that in Britain, so he stayed in Purbrook. There was also some “anti-Trade Union” attitude in B.C. at that time, which meant British immigrants were not always welcome in B.C.

That decision was possibly not his best, but both his sons, and their children, emigrated some 20 years later anyway. Our branch of the Ward family would have been entirely different – not better, not worse, just different - if we had moved to Vancouver in 1946...

My brother, Roger and I would have married different wives and we would have different children, perhaps more or maybe less.

Such is the importance of a **FORK IN THE ROAD**.

## NEW POST-WAR HOUSE – #2, DAYSLONDON ROAD, PURBROOK

As a returning BRITISH ARMY VETERAN, my Dad had priority to get a COUNCIL HOUSE from Havant & Waterlooville Urban District immediately he was demobilized in 1946. We were fortunate to be given a new “show home” built by A.H Clear & Sons. Our new home was a 3-Bedroom, two-storey house with lounge, dining room & kitchen and 1½ baths. There was no garage.



#2, DAYSLONDON ROAD, PURBROOK, HAMPSHIRE, ENGLAND (blue car in front)

My Dad named our newly assigned Council house “PERUGIA” (named after the Capital of Umbria in Italy) with an impressive wooden plaque on the wall beside the front door.

PERUGIA is an Italian City, the capital of the UMBRIA region. It's known for its defensive walls around the historic centre. The medieval Priori Palace exhibits regional art from the 13th century onward. It was here that my Dad heard an accordion being played in the Town Square... so Dad bought me an accordion after the War, and I became an “accordionist”.

We later were reminded of the “Italian connection” when the VERRECCHIA Ice Cream truck came calling in our village of Purbrook. I recall that ice cream was our first such treat for many years, and it was EXQUISITE...



**"Tuppence Each" to you, my Lad!**

Dad spent the next many years constantly developing our new lawns and trees and growing vegetables for our kitchen table. He splintered his elbow digging the hard clay and had surgery later. We had a pedigree Golden Cocker Spaniel called BEAUTY, and a white Cat called SNOWY as well as a large aviary of Green and Lutino Budgerigars make our new house truly a HOME.



August 1948, John, Roger & Beauty (Golden Cocker Spaniel)



Verrecchia Ice Cream Shop, Guild Hall Square, Portsmouth (Circa 1960)



## **“BACK ON CIVVY STREET”**

In 1946, soon after leaving the Army, Dad was hired as Manager of a Gas Station & Auto Repair Shop owned by A & E Hayter in Portchester, Hants. Several years later he took a position as Quality Control Inspector at the FORD Southampton Plant (previously Briggs Motor Bodies). The Ford Southampton Plant was a motor vehicle assembly plant, located in Swaythling on the north-eastern outskirts of Southampton, England. It was the western European centre for production of the very successful FORD TRANSIT VAN.

Dad had acquired 6 years of experience and training with REME that qualified him for these responsible positions - otherwise he might still have been delivering milk!

Now he had a brand-new FORD car, bought at Company Employee discounted price and he could drive to work every day in his “Company Car”.

## **THE ELEVEN-PLUS EXAM**

In the 1940's it was traditional for parents to reward their sons and daughters with a significant prize in recognition of their passing the “ELEVEN PLUS” exam in order to be accepted into the GRAMMAR SCHOOL - an important “Right of Passage” if one wanted to obtain a Professional career and / or attend a UNIVERSITY in England. Most boys in my era wanted a BICYCLE to allow them to get to the Grammar School – a sort of Passport to the world and beyond!

## **FORK IN THE ROAD – NO BIKE! AN ACCORDION!**

I passed the ELEVEN-PLUS exam in 1947. Dad asked me, would I like an ACCORDION?

I said I would prefer a BIKE... so he bought me an ACCORDION!

I must confess that my initial reaction was to ignore the gleaming full size 120-Bass SETTIMIO SOPRANI Accordion (with Instruction Manual) displayed on the table in the “FRONT ROOM” – the place for formal occasions and tea parties with family or friends. The accordion remained there for several days as my disconsolate feelings grew with my realization that I was probably not getting a bike. I was steadfast in my resistance to picking up the accordion and try it on for size.

When I finally did sneak into the room a try to lift it by the straps and put it on, I realized it was much heavier than I expected. So, I left it on display on the table – with the Instruction Manual unopened.

After a few more days, my parents brought in their “backup” – my Uncle Richard Beck who was a very proficient musician on several instruments and, indeed, he had a small band that he led providing dance music to weddings and parties.

Uncle Richard picked up the gleaming instrument, swung it on his shoulders and unclipped the bellows, looked down at the shiny keyboard and began to play glorious Italian and French-style music like I had never heard before. His fingers flew effortlessly over the keys – and I was hooked! The sound was very evocative of Italian cafés and spaghetti... none of which I had ever tasted!

A week or so later I was enrolled in the MADAM COURTNEY ACCORDION SCHOOL in Portsmouth and my next few years were spent learning some rudimentary music theory, taking a few proficiency exams and playing an instrument that I really enjoyed for decades to come.



Madam Courtney's Accordion Orchestra (circa 1952).



**Having to carry this heavy instrument a mile from home to the bus stop, two or more times per week for several years turned me from a 90lb. Asthmatic weakling into a useful member of the Purbrook Park Grammar School soccer and cricket teams!**

**In a few years I became sufficiently proficient at playing the accordion that I earned a little “pocket money” playing evening “gigs” at the FORT CUMBERLAND TAVERN in Eastney Road, Southsea and once at the KINGSTON PRISON in Portsmouth (an uncomfortable evening!) My fellow music students also joined me to play for revellers at the 1953 QUEEN ELIZABETH CORONATION STREET PARTY in Landport, Portsmouth.**

**Our small Accordion School from Elm Grove, Portsmouth also participated in the Annual ACCORDION DAY at Westminster Central Hall in London, where world-famous accordionist and bandleader GERALD CROSSMAN conducted us in an orchestra of several hundred young players from towns all over Britain.**

**We filled the auditorium and Gerald Crossman conducted from the podium. The music was a set piece we had all practiced back home, throughout England, for weeks – and had never played together as one “orchestra” before.**

**Quite a stirring and emotional event for us amateur musicians!**



Gerald Crossman



CENTRAL HALL WESTMINSTER, LONDON, UK

I also had the honour in 1949 of playing at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary MEMORIAL FUNDRAISER in the DEVERELL HALL, Purbrook to help the families of the Royal Navy submariners lost in the sinking of the submarine HMS THETIS in June 1939. This was a tragedy that shocked the local Royal Navy community and the British public.

On June 1, 1939, the submarine HMS Thetis was lost in Liverpool Bay during an accident while on diving trials. Ninety-nine men died in the incident. There were just four survivors. Among the dead were several civilian builders and Admiralty officials. Some months later the boat was salvaged, repairs carried out and Thetis was re-commissioned as HMS Thunderbolt. But she was obviously jinxed. On March 14, 1943, the submarine was lost for a second time when Thunderbolt was sunk off Sicily. The boat was not given up as lost until March 28, 1943.

MUSIC has always been an important part of my life and has given me much enjoyment and pleasure over the years. The cost of buying an accordion for me in 1948 was a big expense for my Dad, and I am eternally grateful to him and my Mother for introducing me to the joy of music and the thrill of playing an instrument that other people also enjoyed listening to.

My Dad never played a musical instrument, but he had a good singing voice and he would often serenade us from the bathroom with his tenor rendition of MARTA...

“Marta, Rambling rose of the wildwood  
Marta, with your fragrance divine  
Rosebud, of the days of my childhood  
Watched you bloom in the wild wood  
And I hoped you'd be mine.”

Oh, by the way, I eventually got my bicycle in September 1947, in time to ride to my first day at PURBROOK PARK COUNTY GRAMMAR SCHOOL – and beyond! I often went to Portsmouth by bike (10 miles return) just for fun. (Years later I would regularly ride my bike the 12 miles return trip to EMSWORTH to visit a certain young lady who had caught my eye! Portsdown Hill provided a good workout for a young recovering asthmatic!



I still have a sleek, black **PAOLO SOPRANI** accordion that I bought in Edmonton, Alberta in 1980 - my third. It has not been played for many years.



In 2010 I graduated to a professional grade **YAMAHA MOTIF ES6** Electronic Keyboard Synthesizer.

(Now what do I do with my **LEFT HAND** when there are no **BUTTONS** to push?

## PLAY UP POMPEY...!

In the years after Dad returned from the War, we were living in Purbrook and he enjoyed taking us on Saturday each week to Portsmouth to visit his family at the “ancestral home” in Jersey Road, Buckland. He and I would often leave Mum and Roger with the family and we would take the bus to Fratton Bridge and then walk the mile or so to FRATTON PARK Football to watch **PORTSMOUTH Football Club** play in the English Division 1.

There would always be a “full house” of some 17,000 fans all sporting the Pompey colours of blue & white. Soccer or FOOTBALL, as “we British” call the sport, was the major entertainment in Portsmouth in the 1930’s and after the War.



ENTRANCE TO FRATTON PARK FOOTBALL GROUND



**Portsmouth Football Club was founded in 1898 and the club has always played at Fratton Park.**

**The oldest stand still in use is the South Stand, built in the 1920s and designed by Archibald Leitch. It houses the dressing rooms, boardroom and offices and is the heartbeat of the stadium.**

**Pompey were promoted to the top-flight for the first time in 1927 and reached two FA Cup finals before winning the trophy with a 4-1 victory over Wolves (Wolverhampton Wanderers) in 1939.**

**In the 1930s the stadium was further developed with the building of the north stand, which is still in use. Pompey enjoyed a golden post-war era, winning division one (now the Premier League) in 1949 and 1950, one of only five clubs to win the trophy in back-to-back seasons since the war.**

**As a 10-year old fan, I can recall being “passed” hand-over-hand above the crowd to be stood at the front (by the 3 feet-high crush barrier) to watch the action on the pitch! That was fine until the massed crowd strained forward to see the play at the far end of the pitch. Then I learned why it is called a CRUSH BARRIER...!**



**FRATTON PARK Football Ground, Portsmouth, Hampshire, England**

**After the match we would go back to the “FAMILY HOME” in Jersey Road, Buckland for a simple AFTERNOON TEA with the family and listen to Aunt Emma and Uncle Tom, still dressed in their black & red uniforms, tell us of the latest events at the local SALVATION ARMY branch.**

**My Mum was not at all enthralled with these visits and, in due course, the visits were less frequent, and Dad took us to “Afternoon Tea” at the CO-OP Store in North End (corner of Stubbington Avenue and London Road) with the Policeman in a white coat directing traffic. This was before the use of Traffic Lights able to control a 5-road intersection!**

**After the refreshment we would take in a movie at one of the three Cinemas in North End – the Odeon, the Gaumont and the Essoldo. Ice creams & cigarettes were served in the interval between the cartoon, news and 2 movies. Nobody knew then about the hazards of SECOND-HAND SMOKE. (On reflection, none of the Ward family smoked in the house.)**

# **P**URBROOK PARK COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

In September 1947, I attended the local “grammar school” known then as PURBROOK PARK COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL, for the first time.

The impressive main building had been built by John Deverell in 1839 and remained in the Deverell family until 1919. John Deverell was the Magistrate for Hampshire and had purchased the land and the title of Lord of the Manor of Purbrook.

In 1924, the Hampshire County authorities bought the house and estate for £11,000 and the school opened as ‘Purbrook Park County High School’. The school quickly became very popular and well respected, and an extensive building programme began. The original school hall was built in 1928, and the first school gymnasium in 1935.

Further building work took place into the 1950s and 1960s as the school continued to flourish and grow in popularity. In 1989, the main building was 150 years old, and further extensions and renovations took place.

I was excited by the wonderful sports facilities available for soccer, cricket, tennis and gymnastics, all of which I had never seen before! This eventually introduced me to the world of TEAM SPORTS and decades of healthy “outdoor exercise”.

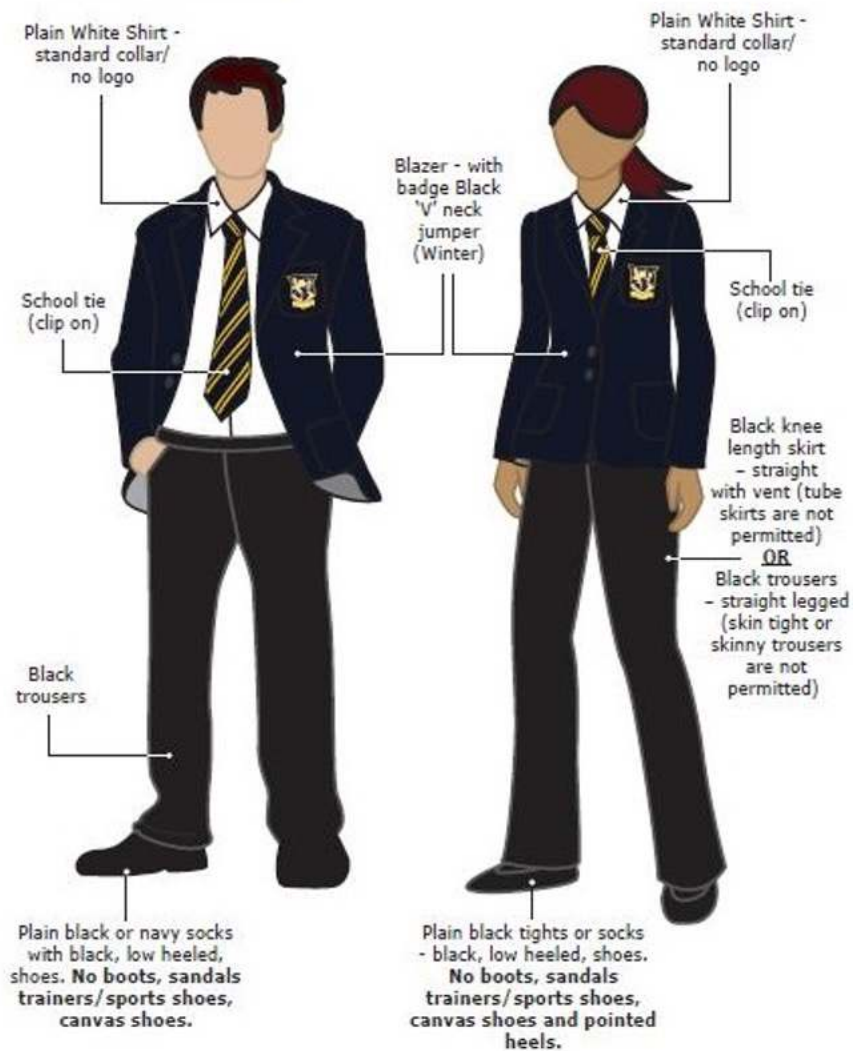
## **PURBROOK PARK COUNTY GRAMMAR SCHOOL – MAIN BUILDING**





**WE WERE ALL VERY  
PROUD OF OUR  
SCHOOL MOTTO  
"TRUTH CONQUERS"**

## School Uniform



**ALL UNIFORM, PE KIT AND PERSONAL EQUIPMENT MUST BE NAMED**  
*(When lost property is found it enables the school to return it to the owners)*

# **G**RAMMAR SCHOOL LIFE

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

My early years at Purbrook Park County High School were not my most productive times. I had yet to learn the benefit of hard work, and it took me a couple of years to reduce an embarrassing stammer whenever I was required to read or speak to a large group.

This has been a lifelong task, which has been part curse and part blessing. It has taught me that some problems cannot be ignored, and that DETERMINATION and PERSISTENCE are essential to SUCCESS. However, compassionate understanding of my speech problem from some of the teachers, and especially the Head-Master (Mr. C. E Lemin) made a great difference to me in my 7-years at the school.

## **SCHOOL DINNERS**

Every day started with ASSEMBLY in the Assembly Hall with Anglican prayers or hymns and a reading by a senior student from the Bible. At noon the kitchen staff served HOT LUNCH in the Hall with individual bottled MILK to drink (no tea or coffee!) A simple dessert was also served. Students could bring their own brown-bagged lunch if they preferred. The cost of such “school lunches” was very economical and students paid for this subsidized service each month. NO MONEY, NO LUNCH!

## **SPORTS, SPORTS & MORE SPORTS**

Physical exercise (PE) was obligatory and took place in the gymnasium or outside on the Sports Field as the weather dictated. Boys played soccer, cricket and track & field. Girls played field hockey, netball, rounders (a British version of “baseball) and tennis. In addition, there were inter-House and Inter-School sports matches held in the evening or on the weekend. There were also segregated HOT & COLD SHOWERS available next to the gymnasium after each session (bring your own towel).

With all this EXERCISE every day, there were very few students with OBESITY...! I have often reflected, in the years since, that my Mother and Father never had the opportunity to participate in sports of any kind. There was no money for such leisure activity and therefore they never experienced the benefits – except through the professional spectator sports like football at nearby FRATTON PARK with Portsmouth Football Club. Even though I played for 20 years in local amateur soccer, rugby, cricket and table tennis my parents never came to watch as parents do today in Canada.



## SCHOOL BUSES

Local Students either walked or cycled to school; Students from afar were transported by “School Bus” – a green Southdown Motor Services “double-decker”. At that time (1950’s) no senior student had a car and few teachers used a car to come to school. This was to change by the 1960’s.

## NO COMPUTERS

Until the 1970’s there were no **COMPUTERS, CALCULATORS, CELLPHONES** or music players. Students were required to commit information to **MEMORY** and to calculate figures mentally or on paper. **Google** was not even a word at that time! Later in my engineering career in Alberta, Canada I made full use of **mainframe** and **desktop computers** in my work for the City of Edmonton. I made it a priority to equip my staff with **desk-top PC’s** and **printers** to speed up our work in typing, calculating, data collection and dissemination.

By the year 2000 one skilled person with computer network support could carry out what previously took a team of secretaries, draftsmen, engineering technicians and accountants to complete.

## SCHOOLING FOR LIFE...

Students in Britain were required by law to attend school up to the age of 16. Primary School was for 5 to 10-year-olds. Secondary Education was provided by Grammar School or Comprehensive School for 11 to 18-year-olds. Grammar School students started at 1<sup>st</sup> Form, progressing to 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Form.

At the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> Form year, the 16 years old students sat exams for the GENERAL CERTIFICATE of SECONDARY EDUCATION (GCSE) at the Ordinary Level (or O-Levels). Those who chose an “academic” career (as opposed to a “vocational” career) would continue into the SIXTH FORM (Lower 6<sup>th</sup> then Upper 6<sup>th</sup>) for 2 more years and then sit exams for other subjects at Advance Level (or A-Levels).

All the students were assigned to a “HOUSE” (or Team) for the duration of their high school career to sharpen their tribal instincts – ROMANS (colour Blue); SPARTANS (colour Green) and TROJANS (colour Red). In our school the Romans, as a group, seemed to excel at academic achievement; Spartans took most of the athletic glory and Trojans had to work very hard to compete with both of them.

I was assigned to the TROJAN HOUSE. I was an “average” student in most subjects, but I was particularly uninspired by “Latin”. My Term Reports from MRS. GRIMES for Latin were unflattering and unforgiving. Generally, she repeated her opinion that I was “thoroughly lazy and idle and a nuisance in class”. Luckily, I had some redeeming factors in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology – and my “majors” (to use an American term) were English Language, English Literature, French and Geography.

In 1952, at age 16 in the 5<sup>th</sup> Form, I sat the GCSE (ORDINARY-Level) and received a pass in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and English Language.

Two years later (1954), in the Upper Sixth, I sat the GSCE (ADVANCED-Level) and received a pass in French, English Literature and Geography.

My major interest while I was at Purbrook Park was sport. I had become a useful “fast bowler” in cricket and a persistent goal scorer in soccer. In 1953 I was appointed CAPTAIN of the Trojan House Soccer team and the Cricket team. I even showed promise in TRACK & FIELD SPORTS in the 100 yards & 220 yards sprints and the JAVELIN throw.

The following year I was selected as CAPTAIN of the SCHOOL CRICKET TEAM – a fact that would have a big impact on my future **FORK IN THE ROAD** experience.

In 1953 I also met the most important person in my future life – my future wife, PHYLLIS JEAN MONK, an attractive, vivacious 15-year-old student in the 4<sup>th</sup> Form who has shared my life now for 67 years – and counting! She was also a loyal member of TROJAN HOUSE – and she has been in “my house” ever since!



In those years, the Head Master and the teachers at Purbrook Park were not enthusiastic at the prospect of teenage students having personal relationships with “the other sex” and the faculty were very concerned when local residents complained that student couples were “walking down the road holding hands”.

On one occasion I was called to the Headmaster's Office and was told discreetly to NOT hold hands while walking with Phyllis Monk in public! (I told Phyllis to stop, but she refused...!)

When I reached the Lower Sixth Form (at age 17) I had refurbished my reputation (except for incompetence in LATIN), and I was appointed as a PREFECT.

The role of a Prefect at Purbrook Park was to:

- Observe the school rules at all times.
- Be dressed appropriately at all times.
- Maintain an excellent attendance record.
- Be punctual for your duties.
- Maintain a perfect behavioural record.
- Be positive and enthusiastic.
- Be able to encourage and motivate fellow students.
- Be cooperative, helpful, well mannered, trustworthy, and responsible.
- Be respectful toward teachers, your peers, and the school environment.
- Display leadership qualities: confidence, initiative, problem solving skills.
- Be willing to take on extra responsibility.
- Be able to work independently and complete tasks without supervision.
- Maintain a good academic record (B average minimum).
- Be a good Ambassador for the School.

I realized later, that these are the very same qualities needed for success in ANY career.

The more you do well, the more you will be selected to do.

In plain English that is called PROMOTION and earns you more MONEY!

## **A**IR TRAINING CORPS (AIR CADETS)

While in the LOWER SIXTH FORM at Purbrook Park County Grammar School I was approached, along with a few other Prefects, by the Mathematics Teacher, who also doubled as the LIEUTENANT in charge of the AIR CADETS at the School. He told us that recruitment from the younger students at the school was significantly short of the number needed to sustain the group, and he offered to recommend early promotion to SERGEANT if we would sign up, take a few "easy" exams and assist him to get the group involved in rifle shooting and glider training. We all thought that would be a great deal!

So, we signed up, collected our uniforms, polished our new black boots, shone our brass cap badges and belt buckles and followed to the “drill square” – actually the Girls’ Netball Court! A few weeks later we were “drilling” the new recruits (Heft Rite! Heft Rite! HALT!!). We also learned to assemble, clean, aim and fire a .303 Lee- Enfield rifle – with the accompanying SORE SHOULDER that goes with such exploits.

We also learned the THEORY OF FLIGHT and took off (pardon the pun!) in a few months to the RAF 622 GLIDING SCHOOL at Somerford, Christchurch, Dorset where we spent a few weekends learning to fly SLINGSBY T31 winch-launch gliders from the Christchurch Airfield – right alongside the English Channel.

Initially we flew tandem with an Instructor - and learned there is NO ENGINE on the thing! You are parked at the “downwind” end of the runway (so that you take off “into the wind”). Then a large HOOK is attached to the nose of the glider, which connects a very long wire cable to a power winch some 500 yards away. The winch is then kicked into high gear and you are propelled down the runway at high speed, climbing to higher altitude all the way. When you find yourself over the winch (hopefully at 1,000 feet above the ground) you pull the RELEASE handle, and the tow cable breaks away and falls to the ground. At that point you are violently catapulted VERTICALLY UPWARDS by the centrifugal force.

You are strongly recommended to watch your ALTIMETER to check you have enough height to get back to the airfield. Your mission is to fly in a large RECTANGLE to take you back to the landing point on the runway. One minor issue is the large GRAVEL PIT at the end of the runway that you need to fly over before landing at Christchurch Airfield. The problem is that the gravel pit attracts colder air – which creates LOW PRESSURE, causing your glider to lose altitude. If you are too low on approach you will “sink” into the gravel pit!

Your instructor takes you on several TEST RUNS to learn the required techniques. You learn to judge your height required at each turn in the “rectangle”; you learn to check and adjust your speed; you learn that to CLIMB you must first DIVE to gain SPEED to increase LIFT and thus to climb. (Unless you can find a THERMAL!) Pushing the nose of the glider DOWN when you want to go UP takes a lot of “intestinal fortitude”!



**John Graham Ward**

Then the big day comes when you are “invited” to fly solo. They prefer you bring the glider back undamaged... and they REALLY prefer that you land back at the Christchurch Airfield! (I believe a tow-truck and low loader is expensive.) One of my schoolmates did disappear into the GRAVEL PIT but emerged with a SWOOSH out of the pit to land just in bounds. His touchdown had a slight YAW (rotation from left to right about the vertical axis of the airplane) on contact with the ground, but the skid was not too badly damaged... the glider has no landing wheels or undercarriage.

**THEY SAY: “ANY LANDING YOU WALK AWAY FROM, IS A GOOD LANDING!”**

Thankfully, I had no excitement on my solo flight and I got my GLIDER PILOT CERTIFICATE to take home...

In 1954 I was advised that my academic qualifications might suit me for a career in the BRITISH CIVIL SERVICE. Several mentors had suggested I apply for a position in the CUSTOMS & EXCISE. So, I stayed on at Purbrook Park for a few months into the Fall of 1954 and took the CIVIL SERVICE 'OPEN' ENTRANCE EXAM in Portsmouth, England.

In spite of weeks of special preparation for this exam, I found I was in fact totally unprepared to answer many of the questions on such obscure topics (to me at that time) as World Current Affairs or "any book written in English". In those days we had no television, no cable news and there was no discussion in my family of POLITICS or ECONOMICS or GLOBAL EVENTS. Also, we did not buy the expensive newspapers or magazines that did promulgate those issues. Today those topics are debated in "real time" on 24-hour, unending CABLE NEWS TV and on our smart phones and hand-held tablets, with HIGH DEFINITION pictures and HIGH-FIDELITY sound into our headphones.

Consequently, I was woefully ignorant of such information; I did very poorly in the exam and was graded at the lower end of a very long list of candidates from all over the British Empire.

No prospect here of a position for me in the 'elite' CUSTOMS & EXCISE or the FOREIGN OFFICE!

I had a lot of "growing up" to do.

It is rather like the jump from High School to University;

- then from University to a job in "YOUR FIELD",
- then the move to "SUPERVISOR",
- then the move to "MANAGER",
- then the move to "DIRECTOR",
- then the move to the "BOARDROOM" - full of other smart people, just like YOU.

You need to elevate your game...each time... or you go home!

## **ANOTHER FORK IN THE ROAD – A TAXING TIME!**

**Weeks later I was offered a lowly position of TAX OFFICER in the INLAND REVENUE OFFICE in Portsmouth on a salary of £360 per year. (Perhaps equal to \$20,000 CAD today, allowing for inflation.) Since no other employers were beating a path to my door, I accepted the offer and proceeded to take my place in the offices on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Floor of PRINCES HOUSE (# 32, KINGS TERRACE, SOUTHSEA, PORTSMOUTH, UK).**



**However, the transition time in December 1954 from Senior Student at Grammar School to rookie TAX OFFICER walking up the imposing steps of PRINCES HOUSE in the elegant business district of Southsea was very short. I was introduced to some very serious looking Civil Servants with impressive titles, heavy horn-rimmed spectacles and smoking large pipes.**



**I was given a desk in the corner of a large office with a telephone. My job was to calculate the income tax owed by individual taxpayers based on the data supplied by their Employer in the PAY AS YOU EARN (P.A.Y.E.) Income Tax scheme and to instruct the Employer how much income tax to deduct from the weekly pay cheque or monthly salary. There were a lot of Income Tax Act Regulations and procedures to learn and I spent many working hours reading this material. Then I was let loose (under close supervision) to make Income Tax Assessments on many unsuspecting taxpayers.**

**In Canada the roles are reversed; here you calculate your own TAX ASSESSMENT and Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) tells you if your calculations are right – or wrong!**

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – FIRST-HAND SMOKE!

### **THE LITTLE “PUFFER” THAT COULDN’T:**

Several weeks passed as I learned my new occupation. Life in the Tax Office was very boring, so I needed a distraction... I decided to join the “smokers” and buy a PIPE. I had noticed a tobacconist shop in the nearby Guildhall Square where I often took my lunch break. It was only a 15-minute walk, so I visited the shop and selected an impressive Shamrock Style Gentleman’s Wooden Smoke Pipe.



The young lady Shop Assistant asked me what tobacco I would like, so I explained I was a “rookie” smoker and asked her to pick a popular brand for me. She reached quickly onto the shelf above her and presented a small sample pack for me to try. (It turned out she was also a “rookie” tobacconist).

Outside the shop I paused to fill my new pipe with my new tobacco and lit up with my new lighter. There was an impressive cloud of smoke produced and I coughed a bit but set off back to the office.

My new pipe turned a few heads on my way to the office and I must have looked like a battleship under full steam... By the time I was almost back to the office, my pipe was spent – so I refilled the bowl and lit up again. As I returned to my desk my colleagues nodded approvingly at the smoke screen I created.



However, I soon felt very queasy and rushed to the Men's Toilet... and threw up both my lunch and my breakfast. When I returned to my desk a colleague commiserated with my "green colour" condition and asked what I had been smoking. I showed him the half-empty packet of tobacco and he laughed heartily... I had been smoking popular CIGARETTE tobacco and had smoked the equivalent of 10 cigarettes in an hour!

In a few days I plucked up courage to resume smoking the new pipe and I purchased a tin of the more appropriate THREE NUNS pipe tobacco. This coarser cut of tobacco did not create incendiary effects as in my previous attempt. Nonetheless, I gave up the PIPE after a few months and smoked OLD PORT cigarillos on occasion. In a few years I gave up smoking entirely, having seen on TV a section of a dead smoker's LUNG... I nearly threw up again! I haven't smoked at all now for over 40 years.

### **NATIONAL SERVICE (August 1955 – August 1957)**

My career at the INLAND REVENUE proved to be only 9 months long. In July 1955 I received my **NOTICE OF CONSCRIPTION** to serve my NATIONAL SERVICE in the Royal Air Force for 2 years. This obligation would have been deferred if I were participating in a UNIVERSITY PROGRAM or Vocational Training at a College or an Apprenticeship. Since I was pursuing none of those career paths, I was instructed to present myself at the **#2 RECEPTION UNIT** at **RAF CARDINGTON in Bedfordshire, UK** on August 3, 1955.

### **HISTORY OF RAF CARDINGTON**

The site was nationalized in April 1919, becoming known as the ROYAL AIRSHIP WORKS.

In preparation for the R-101 AIRSHIP PROJECT, the No 1 shed was extended between October 1924 and March 1926; its roof was raised by 35 feet and its length increased to 812 feet. The No. 2 shed (Southern shed), which had originally been located at Royal Naval Air Station Pulham in Norfolk, was dismantled and re-erected in 1928 at Cardington.

RAF CARDINGTON opened in 1936 and was a specialist training base for balloon operators, the first batch of recruits undergoing basic training on entry into the RAF arriving in 1937. Basic training of new recruits continued until 1953. Training of Balloon Operators was stepped up in 1938 to ensure the full manning of barrage balloon units around the coasts **in the event of war**. Following the conquest of their homelands many **Polish** and **Dutch** personnel were trained in balloon handling.



**On October 5, 1930, the British airship R-101 crashed on a hill in Beauvais, France.** The impact was gentle and survivable, but the ship was inflated with **HYDROGEN** and the resulting fire incinerated 46 of the passengers and crew. Two additional crew members died of their injuries soon after.

**After the crash of the R-101, in October 1930, all work stopped in Britain on airships. Cardington then became a storage station.**

**RAF CARDINGTON** opened in 1936 and was a specialist training base for balloon operators, the first batch of recruits undergoing basic training on entry into the RAF arriving in 1937. Basic training of new recruits continued until 1953. Training of balloon operators was stepped up in 1938 to ensure the full manning of barrage balloon units around the coasts in the event of war.



**Airship Hangers  
circa 1941**

**The balloon training unit closed in November 1943, by which time it had trained over 5,000 RAF balloon operators and nearly the same number of operators from the Women's Royal Air Force as well as twelve thousand other balloon personnel and drivers of both sexes.**



**In 1943 until 1967 it was home to the RAF Meteorological Research Balloons-Training Unit, undertaking development and storage (after 1967 this was undertaken by the Royal Aircraft Establishment).**

**RAF CARDINGTON** continued to be associated with balloons, No. 1 Balloon Training Unit becoming the Balloon Development Unit in August 1945 and the Balloon Manufacturing Unit in April 1948. In November 1945 the Balloon Development Establishment became the Research and Development Establishment.

At the end of May 1945, a Personnel Dispatch Centre was set up to process personnel being demobilized.

**In October 1946 No. 2 RECEPTION UNIT was established at Cardington to process all airmen recruited through National Service, voluntary enlistment and re-enlistment.**

NATIONAL SERVICE was a standardized form of Peacetime Conscription that was in force from 1949 -1963. All able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 30 were called up. They initially served for 18 months. In 1950, during the KOREAN WAR (1950-53), this was increased to two years. Between 1949 and 1963 more than 2-Million men were conscripted into the British Army, Royal Navy or Royal Air Force.

In 1955, an average of 3,500 recruits were arriving at Cardington every month.

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – TO FLY OR NOT TO FLY?

During my short stay at Cardington I was interviewed and tested for my “aptitude” and “preference” for a ground crew or air crew selection for my 2-year service ahead. Three years earlier, the Teacher in charge of the Purbrook Park AIR TRAINING CADETS told us that a successful career with the ATC would afford us a huge advantage when we were finally “CALLED UP” for National Service.

When I finally took my Selection Tests at RAF CARDINGTON and confidently asked for a SHORT-TERM COMMISSION of 3-years as a Pilot, on the strength of my Air Cadet Service, they laughed! They said, if I was really serious to sign up right now, they might consider me for a SEVEN-YEAR COMMISSION as a WIRELESS OPERATOR!

Instead, I opted for TWO-YEARS ONLY as a RADAR MECHANIC working in BOMBER COMMAND on the ENGLISH ELECTRIC B-1 (CANBERRA) BOMBER.

Thus, I began my ROYAL AIR FORCE career, which proved much later to be one of my most important career moves. I learned a set of TECHNICAL TRADE skills; and I subsequently learned that a COMMERCIAL SALESMAN earns more than a TAX OFFICER – and gets a Company Car into the bargain. So, I began considering other future career options to that of a CIVIL SERVANT, but no other opportunity seemed available at that time.

However, a series of options or “**FORKS IN THE ROAD**” were to come my way in the near future.



## ENGLISH ELECTRIC B-1 BOMBER (CANBERRA)

After completing a brief BASIC TRAINING COURSE (aka "Square Bashing") at RAF HEDNESFORD in Staffordshire, I was assigned to take a 12-week TRADE TRAINING SCHOOL course in Radar Systems and Electronics at RAF YATESBURY in Wiltshire. This was a more technical subject than I had ever encountered before so I teamed up with GEOFFREY BURTON, another "new recruit" who came from an accounting background. He and I worked very hard together to ensure we passed this course so that we would not run the risk of being "demoted" to another category such as AIRFRAME MECHANIC with a consequential drop in pay!

In the Final Exam at the end of the Course in December 1955, Geoffrey came in 1st. and I came 2nd. In a class of 20. In becoming fully-fledged RADAR TECHNICIANS, we were awarded new shoulder patches.



**We had achieved our objective - to earn more wages. To celebrate, I invited Geoffrey to spend Christmas (1955) with my two families in Purbrook and Emsworth, Hampshire.**



**In January 1956 I was posted to BOMBER COMMAND HEADQUARTERS at RAF UPWOOD in Cambridgeshire. There I learned to maintain & repair the navigation & bomb aiming system on the 72-aging but beautiful ENGLISH ELECTRIC B1 Bombers (aka the "CANBERRA") at the base, which later in 1956 were kept busy making bombing runs via Cyprus to the Canal Zone in Egypt when COLONEL NASSER, President of Egypt decided to blockade the SUEZ CANAL.**

**This threatened to cut off oil supply to Britain and other Western Allied countries.**

## **THE SUEZ CRISIS – 1956**

The Suez Canal directly links the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea. It was built by Egyptian workers under the French and British-owned SUEZ CANAL COMPANY and opened in 1869. The Company was seized and Nationalized by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser on 26 July 1956. The move worried Western governments, as the Canal was a vital route for oil travelling to Britain. If Egypt blocked the flow of oil, Nasser could badly damage the British economy.



**Loading 1,000 Lb HE bombs onto English Electric B-1 Canberra Bomber.**  
(This was usually done in Cyprus, before the bombers refuelled and flew on to bomb the Canal Zone).

The Egyptian seizure came during the Cold War, further heightening the tensions with Britain and France. Egypt's stated reason for the nationalization of the canal was to use the shipping tolls to finance construction of the Aswan Dam — which was proposed to control flooding on the Nile and provide hydroelectricity as well as other means of industrializing the country. Nasser continued to operate the canal as usual, but Britain, France and their regional ally Israel began plotting a military response. Meanwhile Nasser obtained military armaments from the Soviet Union.

### **BOMBING THE SUEZ CANAL**

When diplomacy failed to produce a solution, France, Britain and Israel secretly plotted to attack, without informing the US, Canada and other NATO allies. Israeli forces advanced on 29 October to within 42 kilometres of the canal. Britain and France ordered both Israel and Egypt to withdraw from the Canal Zone (a move pre-planned with Israel). Nasser did not retreat.

**On October 31, 1956 Britain and France began bombing the Canal Zone.**

Whereas the move by Britain and its Allies to stop the Egyptian blockade of the Suez Canal involved ground troops and tanks from the three armies, a major factor was the aerial delivery of high explosive bombs by the RAF Canberra bombers of #35 Squadron based at RAF UPWOOD.

Their mission was to fly to the Canal Zone via Cyprus for re-fuelling and drop 1,000 lb. bombs with precision onto the targets identified by the ground troops. This was achieved using the onboard RADAR systems for navigation and bomb aiming that I and my fellow NATIONAL SERVICE airmen had helped to service prior to take-off.

## T RANSPORTATION - WITH RATIONING OF GASOLINE

During my 2-years in the RAF (1955-1957) I needed to have transportation to travel home to Purbrook and Emsworth on most weekends. Initially I had a 150 cc BSA BANTAM motor bike, but it was proven inadequate to carry Phyllis and I at the same time on a long journey. One weekend on an exploratory trip to YATESBURY, WILTSHIRE with Phyllis as a passenger, the engine seriously over-heated and we had to sit by the roadside until it cooled down. Then we "limped" home to reconsider our options. Obviously, I needed a car, but we were still single, and had no spare money. My wage in the RAF as an A/C 2 (AIRCRAFTSMAN SECOND CLASS) was £1.25 per week – about \$7.00 CAD today!

My Dad came to the rescue and loaned me the extra funds I needed on top of the proceeds of selling the BSA Bantam. He steered me towards a very economical 1938 FORD 8 HORSE POWER SALOON, which would get me to and from Yatesbury with no problem. (This was true for the Yatesbury - Portsmouth run, but later proved untrue, in wintry conditions, for the



longer Yatesbury-Peterborough **"IDITAROD"** in January 1956.)

The IDITAROD TRAIL SLED DOG RACE is an annual long-distance sled dog race run in early March from Anchorage to Nome, entirely within the US state of Alaska. Musher and a team of 16 dogs, of which at least 5 must be on the towline at the finish line, cover the distance in 8–15 days or more.

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – AUTO EXPIRATION

In early January 1956, having successfully completed my initial training as a RADAR MECHANIC, I was posted to BOMBER COMMAND HEADQUARTERS based at RAF UPWOOD near Peterborough, Cambridgeshire and about 130 miles by road from RAF Yatesbury. I had received permission to use my own vehicle to transport me, and 3 other A/C 2's, all going to Upwood. The weather for several days had been near freezing temperatures and my car had been parked in a large unheated hangar all night.

We set off immediately after breakfast in my 1938 FORD 8 SALOON and were scheduled to arrive at RAF Upwood by early afternoon that same day. The car was fully loaded with 4 large adults and 4 large kitbags on the luggage rack at the rear. We made good speed – around 40 mph – and the car soon warmed up. Some 50 miles into the journey we were approaching the City of OXFORD and there was a smell of something burning... I stopped the car, shut down the engine, lifted the hood and saw immediately we were in trouble. The engine was almost glowing and would not turn over on the starter.

So, we got to a telephone, called a tow truck and hitched a ride to the nearest Auto Repair Shop. They confirmed the car was “dead”. As instructed for such emergencies when travelling on military business, I called the ROUTE TRANSIT OFFICER (RTO), explained our problem; he arranged rail tickets for us to pick up at Oxford Railway Station and sent us to RAF CARDINGTON in Bedfordshire for the night.

We arrived at our new home, RAF UPWOOD next day, some 24 hours overdue and were immediately put on “charges” by the RAF Police. Not a good start!

After receiving a “dressing down” by the Duty Officer next day for being late on arrival (**no excuses were accepted**), we were assigned to our Barrack Block and things began to look much better. The accommodation, though “Spartan”, was better than we had been accustomed to at RAF HEDNESFORD for several months; the food was MUCH better than we had previously received. It became apparent that this was a more “mission oriented” establishment. As the Headquarters of BOMBER COMMAND, this base had the highest of standards. Our job was to fly dozens of bomber aircraft every day and, as other military entities (such as NASA) claimed later, **FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION**.

We were quickly subjected to a familiarization with the AIRCRAFT, the MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES, the RADAR EQUIPMENT and the WORKSHOPS & HANGERS.

As the days and weeks passed, we became more comfortable with the demanding technical side of our job and we were able to relax in the relative privilege of the domestic side of our job. However, back in the Barrack Block we were still responsible to be our own JANITOR, LAUNDRY MAID and BOOT SHINE BOY. These skills we had learned well in our previous BASIC TRAINING at "Boot Camp".

A ritual on all RAF Stations was the BARRACK ROOM INSPECTION on a Friday morning before permission to leave the base on a WEEKEND PASS is granted.



**BARRACK ROOM AT RAF UPWOOD – READY FOR INSPECTION.**

Any serious non-compliance with the regulations would result in your WEEKEND PASS being revoked and alternate "cleaning duties" assigned to keep you busy over the weekend...

The DUTY OFFICER would visit each Barrack Block at the set time to check that beds are made, cupboards are tidy, toilets are cleaned, floors are waxed and shined, uniforms are clean and pressed, boots are polished, belts are "BLANCOED" and brass badges are polished and gleaming.

A NOTICE was posted on every Barrack Room wall:

**BLANKETS SHALL BE SHAKEN OUTSIDE ON THURSDAY.  
IF THE WEATHER IS INCLEMENT - DO IT ON WEDNESDAY!**

This principle has been most useful to me in all of my subsequent endeavours. Excuses are no substitute for ineffective planning and poor execution in whatever you do. Thinking ahead and looking for possible problems and preparing solutions to fix those problems, if they occur, is the stuff of GOOD MANAGEMENT in all things.

We would take our turn at cleaning the toilets and the washroom area, as well as the area around the exterior of the building. The flooring inside the barracks was normally linoleum or plywood stained in a shade of dark brown. This had to be waxed and buffed (by hand) to a high shine. To preserve the shine, we would slide around the floor on thick felt pads while moving to and from our personal "bed-space" where the sheets and blankets were stretched tightly over the mattress, the pillow was stored in the bedside cupboard, containing your working or "dress" uniform.

Your kit-bag stood on display for close inspection if demanded. Uniforms hanging in the cupboard were to be clean and pressed, with cap badges, brass buttons and belt buckles brightly shining. Boots and shoes were stored on the floor at foot of the bed.

# R ADAR MECHANIC DUTIES

In July 1956, while at RAF UPWOOD I was assigned to No. 35 Squadron and had the privilege of working on the "GEE" System of navigation and bomb aiming on the English Electric B1 Bomber (aka Canberra). This radar system was "state of the art" at the time and "top secret". Today we have a similar feature on our Motor Vehicles and Cell Phones called Global Positioning Satellite - GPS - (don't leave home without it!).

GEE was a radio navigation system used by the Royal Air Force during World War II. It measured the time delay between two radio signals to produce a fix, with accuracy on the order of a few hundred metres at ranges up to about 350 miles (560 km). It was the first hyperbolic navigation system to be used operationally, entering service with RAF Bomber Command in 1942.

Gee was devised as a short-range blind landing system to improve safety during night operations. It then developed into a long-range, general navigation system. For large, fixed targets, such as the cities that were attacked at night, Gee offered enough accuracy to be used as an aiming reference without the need to use a bombsight or other external references. Jamming reduced its usefulness as a bombing aid, but it remained in use as a navigational aid in the UK area throughout and after the war.

Gee remained an important part of the RAF's suite of navigation systems in the postwar era, and was featured on aircraft such as the English Electric Canberra and the V-bomber fleet.

## NAVIGATOR'S SEAT on a CANBERRA Bomber



We worked on maintaining & repairing this equipment, both inside the aircraft parked on the Perimeter Track and back in the Workshop. Various type of Staff Cars & Trucks were assigned to the RADAR MECHANIC to drive around the base property at RAF UPWOOD.



HILLMAN MINX  
Staff Car

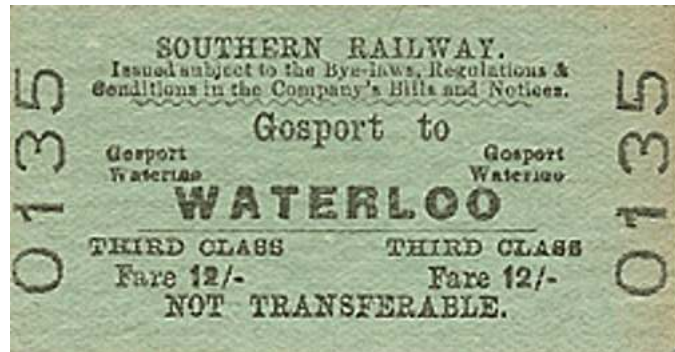


1-Ton Staff Truck

# TRAVELLING HOME ON A "NATIONAL SERVICE BUDGET"

After working hard all hard all week, our highlight was to be permitted to take a WEEKEND PASS to go home to the family, girl-friend and "mates" in your hometown.

On a wage of £3.0.0 per week for a LEADING AIRCRAFTSMAN it was not possible to travel on "British Rail", even in "Third Class". So, some adventurous guys would hitch a ride on a truck on the highway while others would travel by train using the "platform ticket" scam.



We would buy 2 platform tickets for 1 PENNY each to get into the train at PORTSMOUTH TOWN STATION and then "palm them off" to the Ticket Collector in KINGS CROSS, LONDON. Then repeat the trick on the remaining journey from Kings Cross to Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. This was a risky solution but saved about £2.7s.8d (or my whole Weekly Wage!) per return trip to Portsmouth. (240 Pence = 1 Pound)

## **N**ATIONAL SERVICE – MY FINAL YEAR (1957)

My final year at RAF UPWOOD was spent carrying out my regular RADAR MECHANIC duties during the week and scurrying to get gas for my car to get home at the weekend. The aftermath of the SUEZ CRISIS was a lack of gasoline throughout Britain and everyone was issued COUPONS limiting how much they could buy based upon their occupation and domestic status. My allocation was insufficient to get me home to Purbrook and then back to Upwood. So, I had to rely on help from my Dad, who just happened to be Manager of a Gas Station and could obtain extra coupons for me.

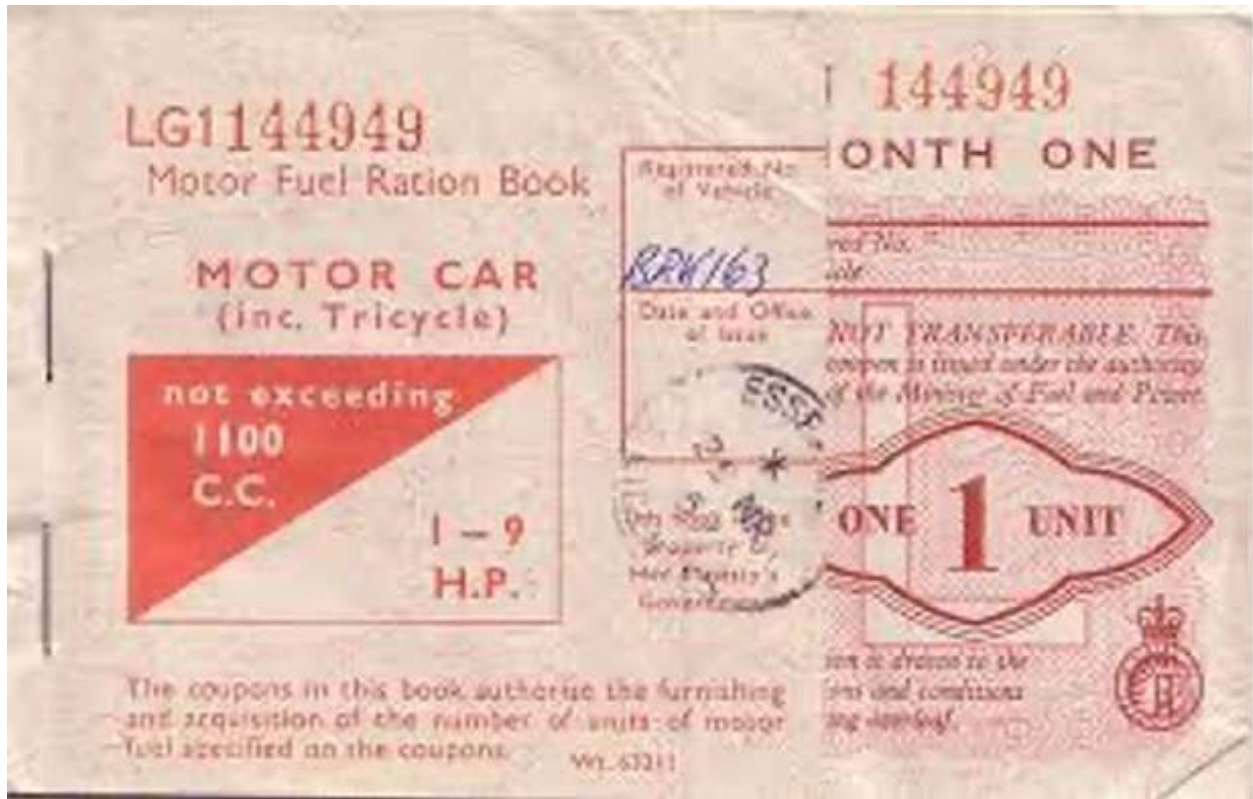
The 1936 HUMBER 12HP car I was driving on the 150-mile trip each weekend to get home was not the most reliable machine on the road, and the gamble on whether there would be enough gas available to buy just added more excitement to the journey. If you ever had to stop for gas on the way, you had the problem of lineups of cars competing for the rapidly dwindling gas at the Gas Station. Following a minor collision later in 1957 (where my large headlights fell off) I sold the Humber, as it was now a financial burden!



As my final year of National Service unfolded, I began to consider the long-awaited return to regular life back home. My expectation was to return to my previous job with the INLAND REVENUE OFFICE in Portsmouth and to plan for the future state of matrimony with my fiancée. Marriage seemed a long way away since we had no money saved, and insufficient income to consider renting an apartment or a house.



Will that be CASH, Sir or CASH...? (What is a "CREDIT CARD", Sir?)



## **D**EMOBILIZATION DAY AUGUST 3, 1957

My two years NATIONAL SERVICE finished on AUGUST 3, 1957 and I had arranged with a fellow Leading Aircraftsman (LAC) in my Squadron to give me a lift from RAF UPWOOD to PORTSMOUTH, where I could take a SOUTHDOWN BUS to Purbrook. I had previously sold my ancient Humber Saloon and was glad to hitch a ride on that last journey home. I did not know this fellow well, but he had told me he was a "Commercial Salesman" who, like me had his fledgling career in "SALES" rudely interrupted by National Service.

I was in shock and awe when he picked me up at the MAIN GATE at camp with his car.



This was his new COMPANY CAR, which he had been given by his Employer to continue his lucrative Salesman duties in the "big city". It was a brand-new luxury 1957 FORD Zephyr Zodiac, with a 2.26 Litre straight-6 Engine (68 HP), fully loaded, the like of which I had never even travelled in.

I suddenly realized I had a lot of "catching up" to do.

We drove back to Portsmouth in far less time than I had been accustomed in my 1934 12-HP Humber. There was some friendly conversation on the journey, but we both relaxed in the luxury of this limousine and pondered the future ahead for both of us. He seemed to know exactly what his future would be.

I returned to "civvy" street with a growing comprehension that my job as a TAX OFFICER in the Inland Revenue was not going to match the expectations of my friend in his role as a Commercial Salesman.

I could not, at that time, foresee a BRIGHT FUTURE.



## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD - YOU HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED

When I returned home to Purbrook, I took the short vacation that I was due before returning to work. I soon received a letter in the mail from the INLAND REVENUE welcoming me back into the Department and advising me that, due to some personnel reorganization, I had been re-assigned to the office in GUILDFORD, Surrey effective immediately. My salary at £360 per year would be unchanged (worth about \$10,000 CAD equivalent today) and I should report for work in a week.

There was no way I could afford to live in Guildford at that time or to commute the 45 miles to get there on a salary of £360 per year. So, I responded that I insisted to be assigned back to Portsmouth as the Department promised, when I left for National Service, that I would “keep my present job”. The official reply was that I was being offered my present job, but no guarantee had been given that it would be in the same location.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT LESSON – READ THE FINE PRINT.

So, I submitted my RESIGNATION to the INSPECTOR OF TAXES at Princes House and went on my way to find another job. Employment was not easy to find, but my Dad contacted my Uncle MONTY (Montague Richard Mortimer), who was the Manager of the large Co-op Bakery in Portsmouth and he was able to offer me a temporary job as a BREAD HANDLER at minimum wage, starting at 4:00AM each day. The job had a benefit – all the newly baked bread you can eat for lunch – bring your own sandwich filling!

The job was not strenuous but handling hot bread straight out of the oven on a conveyor belt played havoc with young soft hands! I was required to grab 4-loaves in a row and “lob” the group into stacked racks up to 5-feet high!

(What could go wrong...?)

Initially, a few loaves missed the mark and ended up on the floor of the bakery. With advice from the “Old Hands” I got the hang of it...

So, the older workers advised – wear cotton gardening gloves, which I did next day. Each pair lasted a few days, before they disintegrated in shreds. I carried on for a few weeks, looking all the while for another, better employment option.



**A Similar Arrangement...**

**Mission Accomplished!**



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# **H**AVANT NALGO CRICKET CLUB

Since leaving Grammar School in 1954 I had continued to play CRICKET for the local HAVANT NALGO Cricket Team, when I was available. NALGO was the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS, the local bureaucrats from the Town Hall in Havant – in whose Havant & Waterlooville Municipal District I lived.



**Havant NALGO Cricket Team - September 1958 (John & Phyllis - top right)**

These gentlemen of Havant NALGO were all keen amateur cricketers, but they also included several influential DEPARTMENT HEADS from the HAVANT TOWN HALL such as ACCOUNTING, LAW, PLANNING and ENGINEERING.

# H AVANT & WATERLOOVILLE URBAN DISTRICT

## - JOB OPPORTUNITY

In early September 1957, when I was changing in the Clubhouse at HAVANT PARK prior to playing cricket for NALGO, the team's Wicket Keeper, Jack Stubbs asked how I was enjoying being back in "civvy street". I told him I had just recently resigned from the Inland Revenue and explained why. He asked if I had ever considered working at the Town Hall. I said I might be interested, and asked what jobs were available in say, "accounting"? He advised that, unfortunately, a position for a trainee ACCOUNTANT had just been filled in his Department.

I was unaware that my friend JACK STUBBS was in fact the CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER at Havant Town Hall. (Jack Stubbs is centre front row above)

However, the CAPTAIN of the team, JACK SHELBOURNE was the CHIEF ASSISTANT ENGINEER at the Town Hall and he said he had a vacancy for a TRAINEE CIVIL ENGINEER, if I was interested. I asked, "What does an Engineer do?". He advised that Trainee Municipal Engineers work on municipal infrastructure engineering projects during the day and attend the PORTSMOUTH COLLEGE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY on several evenings and one afternoon per week.

He asked what my educational qualifications were, and I told him – General Certificate of Secondary Education (ADVANCED Level) in English Literature, French and Geography and GSCE ORDINARY Levels in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and English Language. He noted, wryly, that I did not have a strong scientific portfolio but he invited me to come for interview on Monday anyway.

In spite of my obvious ARTS leaning scholastically and in spite of my asking the dumb question, (What does an Engineer do?) I must have impressed Jack Shelbourne in some way. He said he had been in touch with the Registrar at Portsmouth College of Advanced Technology and they would accept my academic qualifications to enrol as a student in the TESTAMUR IN MUNICIPAL ENGINEERING Program.

After World War II, the British Government needed Engineers to design & rebuild whole communities and the infrastructure to serve the population. Military veterans returning from the War and young men graduating from High School were provided with FREE technical education and PAID work experience for 5 years to become MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS under a program called the TESTAMUR in MUNICIPAL ENGINEERING (TME), which was provided by in Hampshire by PORTSMOUTH COLLEGE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY (now PORTSMOUTH UNIVERSITY).

I was told to report to the PORTSMOUTH COLLEGE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY later that week, and to start my induction into the HAVANT URBAN DISTRICT Engineers Department next morning. I was advised that the TESTAMUR PROGRAM would start with a 3-Year course to obtain a HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN CIVIL ENGINEERING.

After a further 2-years of study, the FINAL EXAMINATIONS would be held at the INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS in London. The 5-Year TESTAMUR PROGRAM would lead to the professional qualification of CHARTERED ENGINEER (C.Eng.).

The position initially carried the title of JUNIOR ASSISTANT ENGINEER and an annual salary that was equally frugal at £400 per year as my previous TAX OFFICER position, but the free College education and the future prospects were far superior.

(I had not been told at that stage that the “future prospects” would include an offer of HOUSING ACCOMMODATION with the job!)

I was offered the position of JUNIOR ASSISTANT ENGINEER, starting immediately, and I was very pleased to accept – THIS WAS A CHANCE OF A LIFETIME!



PORTSMOUTH COLLEGE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY – ANGLESEA BUILDING

## WEDDING BELLS

When we realized that we would be assigned a COUNCIL HOUSE as a condition of my taking the job at HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE URBAN DISTRICT, Phyllis and I decided to get married as soon as possible. It took a few months to receive our allocated APARTMENT in Waterloooville, and we picked our wedding date to be October 25, 1958 at St. James Church in Emsworth. The Reverend Gwynne, who baptized Phyllis Monk in 1938, graciously agreed to come out of retirement to perform the Wedding Ceremony for us some 20 years later.



Reverend Gwynne, John Graham Ward, Phyllis Jean Monk and the Rector.



**St. James Church, Emsworth, Hampshire, England**



# **M**Y APPRENTICESHIP at the BOROUGH of HAVANT

I spent the next 5 years learning how to plan, design, survey, draw, calculate, estimate, specify, schedule, tender, contract, supervise, direct and control small engineering projects from sidewalks to roads in Havant – including some work on sea defences on Hayling Island. In future years these skills would become a SPECIALISM known in the industry as PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

Not until many years later, in Canada, did I receive formal training in “Project Management” (at the University of Alberta). By this time, I knew the process and procedure, which I had learned “hands on” from the experts.

My colleagues at HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL were a collection of veterans mostly from the RAF (with experience of WWII) who had taken University Degree Courses in Civil & Municipal Engineering and were the leaders in our Engineering Department, together with several experienced Technicians (Surveyors, Draftsmen, Clerks of the Works and Site Engineers) who all guided me during my 5-year apprenticeship.

They were all serious, talented professionals who also loved a bit of fun and jokes. They often met at the local pub to join in an irreverent “sing song” at the piano (reading from a “hymn book” that was NOT “church approved”). They also enjoyed high-speed TREASURE HUNTS through the country lanes of Hampshire and Dorset and Sussex – always culminating at a rowdy hostelry with a good supply of “Watneys Red Barrel” for the men and “Babycham” for the ladies.

Some of the young 20-somethings (and even 30-somethings) in our Engineers Office were also taking their TESTAMUR courses at Portsmouth College. We all studied hard – because we needed the potential extra money – and we would often meet for supper at someone’s house, followed by an intensive, competitive Q&A on the syllabus on which we were to be tested next. Anybody who “didn’t know” or couldn’t quote the answer to any question was roundly jeered! We, therefore, “ate, drank and slept” this stuff for 5 years until we came to EXAM TIME...

The last 2 years (i.e. after successfully passing the 3-Year HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN CIVIL ENGINEERING) were the final phase of subjects including THEORY OF STRUCTURES; HIGHWAY DESIGN; TRAFFIC ENGINEERING & MUNICIPAL LAW. Some of these subjects were 7-hour exam sessions, which took place in the hallowed halls of the INSTITUTE OF CIVIL ENGINEERS at One Great George Street in London.



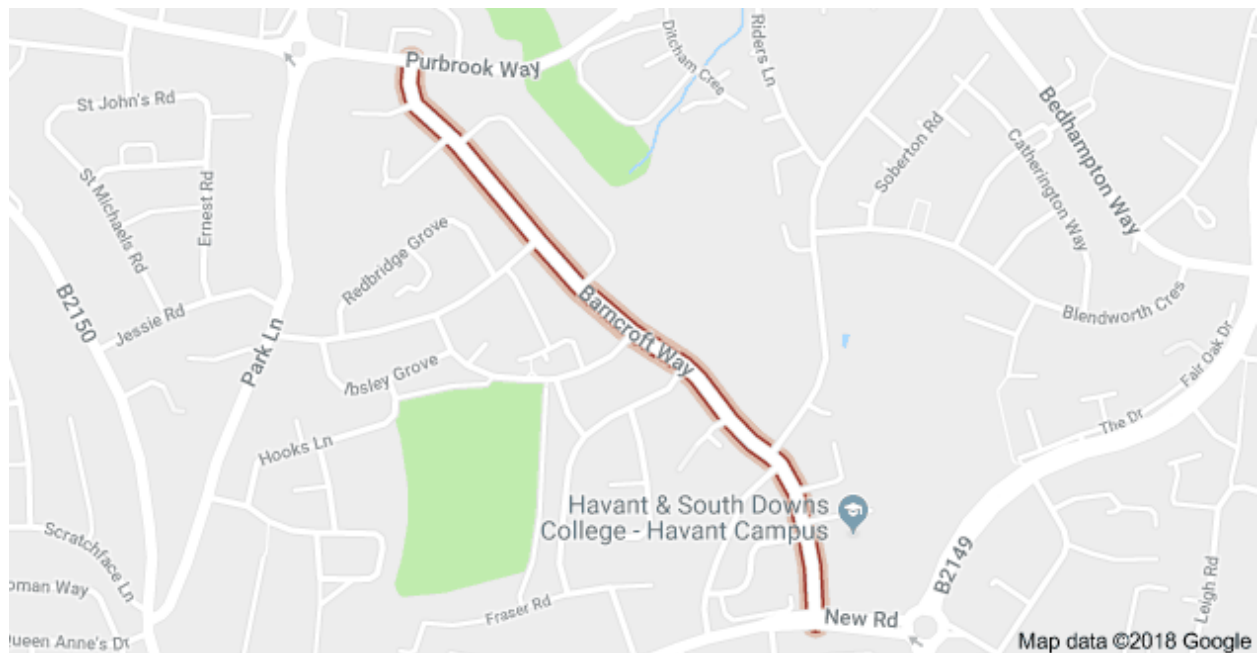
The INSTITUTION of CIVIL ENGINEERS, One Great George Street, London.



# LEIGH PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The aftermath of World War II changed the Havant area forever. Following the bombing of Portsmouth, the City needed to house the displaced population. Portsmouth City Council purchased land to the north and west of the Town of Havant and extensive development of farms and woodland to housing began in 1947. The new urban areas of Leigh Park and Waterlooville were built on part of the Forest of Bere. The Saxon Kings used these forests for hunting long before the Normans officially declared the area a Royal Forest in 1086, putting it under forest laws and staking it outside common law.

Local populations have been harvesting lumber, especially oak, from the forest for centuries. Since the 1950's the quiet little market town of Havant has developed into a larger, suburban conurbation incorporating the established villages of Langstone, Warblington, Bedhampton and Denvilles. By 1961 the population of Leigh Park was over 40,000.







## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD - MY FIRST HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

During my Apprenticeship at Havant I had the opportunity to complete some minor highway construction in the LEIGH PARK area of Havant where the City of Portsmouth was constructing new overspill "council houses" under Agreement with the Havant Borough. This included the engineering & supervision of BARNCROFT WAY and the nearby BEDHAMPTON WAY in 1960. New housing construction followed this road construction in a few months.

Most areas in Leigh Park were allocated PARKING for 1.5 vehicles per house. Within 5 years there were cars parked straddling the curbs on most streets as car ownership increased to over 2 vehicles per house.

**LESSON LEARNED - Plan ahead for FUTURE GROWTH; then allow a SAFETY FACTOR; then DOUBLE IT...!**



Every project I worked on in those days was interesting because it was a “steep learning curve” – from parking lots and residential road construction in the Town to wooden “SEA DEFENCES” on the foreshore at Hayling Island. You get very WET in rough seas. Measuring the groynes with tape & theodolite while waves are breaking over you is dangerous to your health!



A GROYNE is a rigid wooden or concrete structure built from an ocean shore that interrupts tidal flow and limits the movement of sediment.

In the ocean, groynes create beaches or prevent them from being washed away by the longshore drift.

# MOONLIGHTING

In my later years at Havant I applied my newly acquired building construction knowledge from Portsmouth College and my design/drawing skills to good purpose by designing conversion projects and new houses for private clients wishing to take advantage of the “building boom”. I would prepare drawings to meet the client’s vision and then steer the planning & bylaw approval application through the Engineers Department for a small fee. The money was very useful, but the experience was invaluable!



TYPICAL VICTORIAN TOWNHOUSES for which I designed conversions into apartments in the 1960's to augment the housing stock in EMSWORTH (near where Phyllis was born and lived until 1958).

I used the knowledge in Building Construction I acquired from lectures at PORTSMOUTH COLLEGE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY (now [Portsmouth University](#)) and the experience I gained from this residential building renovation to design and build several of my own subsequent homes in FAREHAM, ST. ALBERT and QUALICUM BEACH. This participation in the “housing market” has not only increased our PERSONAL NET WORTH but has allowed us, in cooperation with skilled BUILDING CONTRACTORS, to create homes that always meet our specific needs and requirements.

## **MOVING ON TO BIGGER THINGS**

Three years into my Apprenticeship, one of my older colleagues at Havant Engineers Department suggested that it would be a “good career move” to take an appointment in another City where I would not be seen as the “rookie” or Junior Engineer. (I could always finish my 5-year Program with another Municipality.)

One such trusted adviser was ROBIN FOX, my CLERK OF THE WORKS. Rob was a big man with a large “Flying Officer” moustache and a booming voice – an ex-Army Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM). He had worked for many years in KENYA and was an impressive “NO NONSENSE” figure on any Construction Site he supervised. He was a “larger than life” mentor and drove a “late model” JAGUAR Mark 7 Saloon.



His wife, called “PIP”, worked at the CLASSIC CAR DEALERSHIP in Portsmouth. She said she had the “perfect car” for me. So, I went to see this vehicle and picked out our “new car.”

The new car was a 1946 ROVER 75 P4 Saloon in "British Racing Green", known as CYCLOPS for its distinctive extra front headlight. This limousine had real leather seats, a Straight-6 Cylinder Engine with 2,103 cc and 75 bhp, capable of 82 MPH in perfect silence! It had cut-glass ashtrays and a hand brake like a bone-handled walking stick.

Phyllis and I "fell in love" with this car immediately and borrowed some money from my Dad and bought it for £300. That was equivalent to ONE YEAR'S SALARY for me at that time!



It created quite a stir from appreciative colleagues when it appeared in the Staff Parking Lot at Havant Borough Engineers Department.

Phyllis' Mum and Dad said they "felt like the King & Queen" when they took a Sunday drive with us in the country. My parents thought it was a little bit "over the top".

# **F**INISHING SCHOOL at FAREHAM BOROUGH, Hampshire

In 1961, I applied to FAREHAM BOROUGH ENGINEERS DEPARTMENT who were advertising a position of ASSISTANT ENGINEER in the Drainage Section. Having recently obtained my HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATE in CIVIL ENGINEERING from Portsmouth Polytechnic I was ready for “bigger things”. The position on offer was on a higher Pay Scale and included accommodation in a COUNCIL HOUSE close to the office in Fareham and a CAR ALLOWANCE with a CAR LOAN available.

I was invited to attend an INTERVIEW with the Keith Trask, BOROUGH ENGINEER in his office in WESTBURY MANOR on West Street, Fareham. I parked my “Rover 75” in front of the Building where a couple of cars were already parked. The car next to mine was a shiny new VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE – must be another candidate for the job, I thought.



**WESTBURY MANOR, West Street, Fareham**

My interview with the Borough Engineer KEITH TRASK went well. I explained the HIGHWAY design and construction work I had done at Havant, and that I was finishing off my TESTAMUR studies at Portsmouth Polytechnic. He said that was fine, but the work they had planned for this position was to assist the Section Leader in the DRAINAGE SECTION to deal with an upgrading & expansion program for the STORM DRAINAGE and the SANITARY SEWER Systems in the surrounding areas of TITCHFIELD, WARSASH and SARISBURY. I confirmed I would be eager to take on this new challenge.

I have recently researched my WARD FAMILY TREE back to 1015 AD and it shows a strong connection with the LITTLEFIELD FAMILY of TITCHFIELD from the 1500s.

I did not know at that time that the Town of Titchfield had such connections with my "direct" family Ancestors - the LITTLEFIELD FAMILY - 600 years before I came along in 1970 and ripped up the streets to construct new storm sewers draining into the Meon River. One might also construe a connection with the name "Titch Field" and Little Field; however, the name of Titchfield comes from the Old English "ticken" meaning kid or young goat, and "feld", meaning field. Thus, the meaning of TITCHFIELD is 'a field where young goats are kept'.

KEITH TRASK had been standing looking out of his second-floor office window (over the EXECUTIVE PARKING LOT) as we spoke, and he asked what SALARY would I accept in the Pay Range that was offered? I quoted a number that was in the middle of the range. He smiled, and said "O.K, I suppose you need it for that rather large motor car parked next to mine out there!" How soon could you start? I said I could start the next month.

He said that would be fine - then added "By the way, the STAFF PARKING is at the rear of the Building!" I got his message...! The ALDERMEN and the BOROUGH ENGINEER park in the Executive Parking Stalls... the "rank and file" Staff park at the rear - big car or NOT!

I had a very civil and friendly working relationship with Keith Trask while I was a member of his Engineering Team at Fareham Borough. We had the tragic experience of the GREAT FIRE at Westbury Manor (caused by an electrical fire in the staircase) when we were all removed to the EMBASSY CINEMA for several months while new Civic Offices were built in Fareham Town Centre.

Keith Trask also readily approved my proposal to extend Highlands Road to join the A27 at the top of Catisfield Hill and reduce traffic through the Village. My plan to upgrade the Stormwater Drainage System by installing large diameter concrete pipes down streets in Titchfield with houses that were centuries old was also accepted and completed.

It was very encouraging to be able to get things done to solve the problems of the Borough.

## **E**RUPTION AT PEEL COMMON WWTP

One of my first interesting assignments at Fareham was to replace a large steel roof to a DIGESTER TANK at the PEEL COMMON WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT. When a circulating pump broke down, the contents of this large sludge Digester had expanded and blown the roof off the tank leaving a difficult “clean-up” job and a badly twisted circular steel roof. As the tank was over 30 years old, it was decided to replace the roof structure completely.

The original Consulting Engineers in Yorkshire were contacted for the design drawings. Copies were sent to HARLAND & WOLFF Ship Repairing & Engineering Works in Southampton. They fabricated the new roof in one piece ready for transporting by road to Fareham. Since it was too wide for normal trucking, we cut the roof in half, stood it vertically on end on the low-loader trailer, anchored it securely for transporting and delivered it to Peel Common at night.

Next day it was unloaded, put in place by crane, welded back in one piece and repainted with bright blue METALIFE corrosion resistant paint. You could see it for miles! (The photo below is a recent view of the PEEL COMMON WWTP.



(Note the large array of SOLAR PANELS now installed adjacent to the Plant. A sign of the 21st. Century!)

## **A** LFRED DRYLAND PRIZE

In 1962, on completion of my FINAL EXAMINATION at the Institution of Civil Engineers in London, England for the TESTAMUR IN MUNICIPAL ENGINEERING, I was informed by letter that I had obtained the highest marks in the HIGHWAYS DIVISION of all candidates from Britain and the Commonwealth.

I was awarded the ALFRED DRYLAND PRIZE by the County Surveyors Society (established 1885) and Phyllis and I drove up to Scarborough in Yorkshire to attend the ANNUAL CONVENTION to receive the prize.

I was summoned soon after to the FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL CHAMBERS to receive the congratulations of the Mayor and the Aldermen.

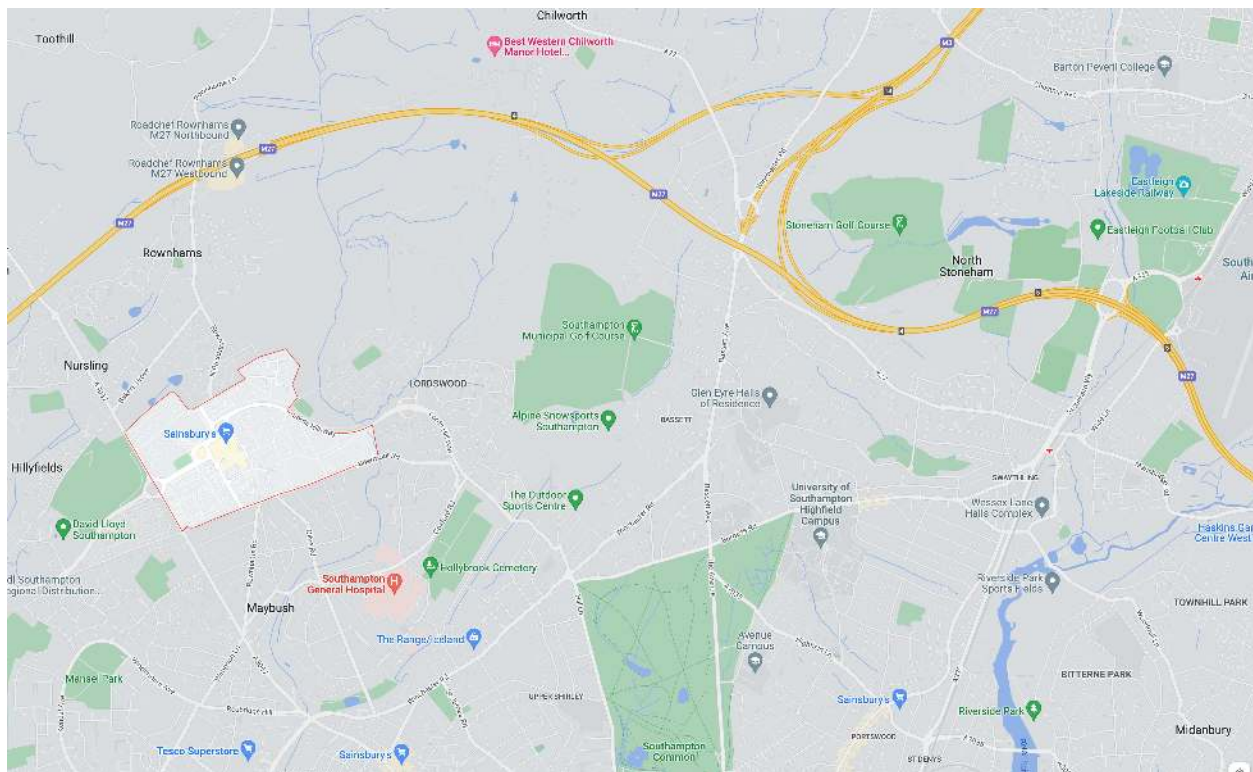
**I had finally learned what an Engineer does...**

# SOUTHAMPTON CITY ENGINEERS DEPT - THE LORDSHILL PROJECT

Some 20 miles to the east, SOUTHAMPTON CITY, continued to expand rapidly, but there was insufficient land available for more housing to satisfy its needs. So, the City bought LORDSHILL with its 563 acres in 1964 to cater for the growing demand. Hampshire planners gave approval for new homes to cater for the 2,000 people at that point in time.

In 1963 I was hired by Southampton City Engineers Department as a SENIOR ASSISTANT ENGINEER to work with my former colleague, REG STONE from Fareham on the preliminary designs for LORDSHILL highways and drainage systems. The City was able to build over 4,000 mixed Council and Private dwellings and accommodate a population of 12,500 people.

LORDS HILL and LORDSWOOD projects were adjacent to the SOUTHAMPTON CITY GOLF COURSE.



Little did I realize then in 1965 that I would be back three years later, at the invitation of my brother, Roger to try out a different sport called GOLF. Roger has always been an avid golfer, and although it took a few years, I acquired a love for the game and have played for the last 50 years – all over the world.

It all began at LORDSHILL and SOUTHAMPTON CITY GOLF COURSE.





Southampton Golf Course – 10th. Hole

## **L**IFE IS GOOD – BIRTH OF STEPHEN JOHN WARD

On May 21, 1965 Phyllis and I had our greatest day ever when our son, STEPHEN JOHN was born in St. Mary's Hospital in Portsmouth. He has been a constant delight to us all and has grown up to be a caring, talented and successful Husband to Irina and Father to his children, Robert, James and Anita.





**"Steve, this is an ASTON MARTIN Db2 - James Bonds' special car!"**

## **R**ETURN TO FAREHAM BOROUGH

In 1965, after two years in Southampton working on the Lordshill Project, I had the opportunity to “move up the ladder” by taking a position of PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT ENGINEER back at Fareham Borough.

The assignment was to work on the redesign and upgrading of the storm sewer system for the central area of the BOROUGH including Fareham, Titchfield, Warsash, Hill Head, Locks Heath and Sarisbury.

The project was named the FAREHAM TOWN STORM DRAINAGE UPGRADE PROGRAM.

Based on research by the Ministry of Transport’s ROAD RESEARCH LABORATORY (RRL) in Crowthorne, Berkshire the recommended design of large pipe systems now treated the pipe and its bedding & surround as a structural entity. Also, the maximum hydraulic capacity of the sewer system assumed that the pipe was surcharged to the elevation of the manhole covers in the road or right-of-way. These complex calculations needed the application of a MAINFRAME COMPUTER.

As was typical of the time in Municipal Authorities, only the ACCOUNTING Department had ready access to “the Computer”. It was in a specially vented room to which only the DIRECTOR OF FINANCE had the key. The Engineering Department had to “reserve” a time to run their calculations on the machine – after PROPERTY TAXES and PAYROLL monies were computed. I spent the next 20 years, in England and later in Canada, promoting the cost/benefit of equipping Engineers with computers to speed up and to improve the accuracy of major projects in MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

The FAREHAM TOWN STORM DRAINAGE UPGRADE PROGRAM was large enough to benefit from the use of a computerized program to calculate optimum pipe diameters and slopes to maximize the capacity of the new sewer system. With the limited manpower at our disposal it took several years to complete the surveying, mapping, drawing, structural design, pipe selection & sizing, quantity takeoff, cost estimates, Right-of-Way acquisition and FUNDING APPLICATION to the Hampshire County and the Ministry of Transport. It was normal in those years to have funding rejected year after year, followed by revision of the Project and re-application.

Since we were unable to get satisfactory access to the Mainframe Computer in our own Accounting Department, we decided to enlist the help of the ROAD RESEARCH LABORATORY. For safekeeping, I took the "punched cards" to the RRL in Crowthorne, Berkshire myself. When I later received the "printout" of the results of these computations by RRL we were able to prepare our preliminary REPORT on the proposed radical Upgrade of the Fareham Borough Storm Drainage System and present it to the Borough Council.

The construction was proposed to take place over a 10-year period, and I prepared a large spreadsheet of the proposed Program Summary with cost estimates attached. This was hung "on the wall" in the office...

Many years later, when I returned from Canada to visit my old colleagues at Fareham Borough Engineering Department, the Program Summary was still hanging "on the wall" and the project was still unfinished!

This was much different to the situation I was then working with in Alberta.

# C HERRYGARTH DREAM

In 1967 Phyllis and I were able to design and build our “dream house” in Catisfield. We contracted with a builder who had some choice lots in a prime location to build our own design 4-bedroom house. I did the drawings and obtained planning & bylaw approvals for my house and the adjacent house. The builder paid me for the design/drawing and proceeded to build both houses. He named the road CHERRY GARTH after an Old English Yorkshire word “garth” for “orchard” and then planted Flowering Cherry trees in each front yard.



15, CHERRYGARTH ROAD, CATISFIELD, FAREHAM, HANTS

## FORK IN THE ROAD?

The above photo was taken in 2012; the Cherry Trees grew rather large in 45 years and have been removed. (It looked more attractive when the trees were there.) In 1967 we paid £7,000 for the newly built house. We sold for £20,000 in 1974 and today (2022) it would fetch £500,000. Whereas we needed the money in 1974 to buy a house in Edmonton, Alberta, perhaps we should have rented the property and sold when we retired? That would probably have been “a bridging loan too far” in our financial adjustment to a new currency and new markets. We remember vividly the frequent downturns in the Alberta economy and the sharp rise in interest rates in the 1980’s that caught many by surprise.

As with most of our homes during our married life, we lived happily at CHERRY GARTH for 7 years. Our son, Steve, was growing up and attending the nearby "private" MEONCROSS SCHOOL in Catisfield. This was a "for-profit" all-boys school and offered the advantage of small classes and more individual tuition than the larger public Comprehensive Schools. He had started attending Meoncross in 1969 at age 4 years and 4 months and really enjoyed the friendly atmosphere. He was doing very well academically, although the opportunity for organized team sport was not a high priority. At age 9 we moved him temporarily to the local "public school" at RANVILLES JUNIOR SCHOOL in Fareham, but he was so far ahead of their curriculum that he got bored and was not happy. However, as it turned out, we left for Canada soon after anyway.

### **PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION**

In 1971, having fulfilled the requirement for post-graduation professional experience with a Consultant or a Municipality, I was awarded the designation of CHARTERED CIVIL ENGINEER (C.Eng.) by Council of Engineering Institutions. The designation "C.Eng." in England is of similar professional standing to "P.Eng." given to Professional Engineers in Canada.

One example of the special opportunity I was given in Fareham is my unsolicited Proposal to the Borough Engineer that an EXTENSION OF HIGHLANDS ROAD through Catisfield would provide a more efficient connection with the A27 Trunk Road to Southampton. After considering the idea for a few weeks, the Borough Engineer called me in and said to go ahead with Grant Application to Hampshire County Council, then later to design and contract out the project.

The route for this new stretch of road passed within 100 yards of my new house at Catisfield, so I would later travel this road to work daily.

### **WARD BOUNDARY MAP**

Another interesting yet unusual assignment was to revise the ELECTORAL BOUNDARY MAP of Fareham Borough to reflect more equal population distribution for Federal Elections. The electoral constituencies in England are called "wards". The demarcation between each Constituency is called the Ward Boundary. Therefore, the MAP I completed was humorously called THE WARD BOUNDARY MAP. I received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Mayor and Borough Council for my work.

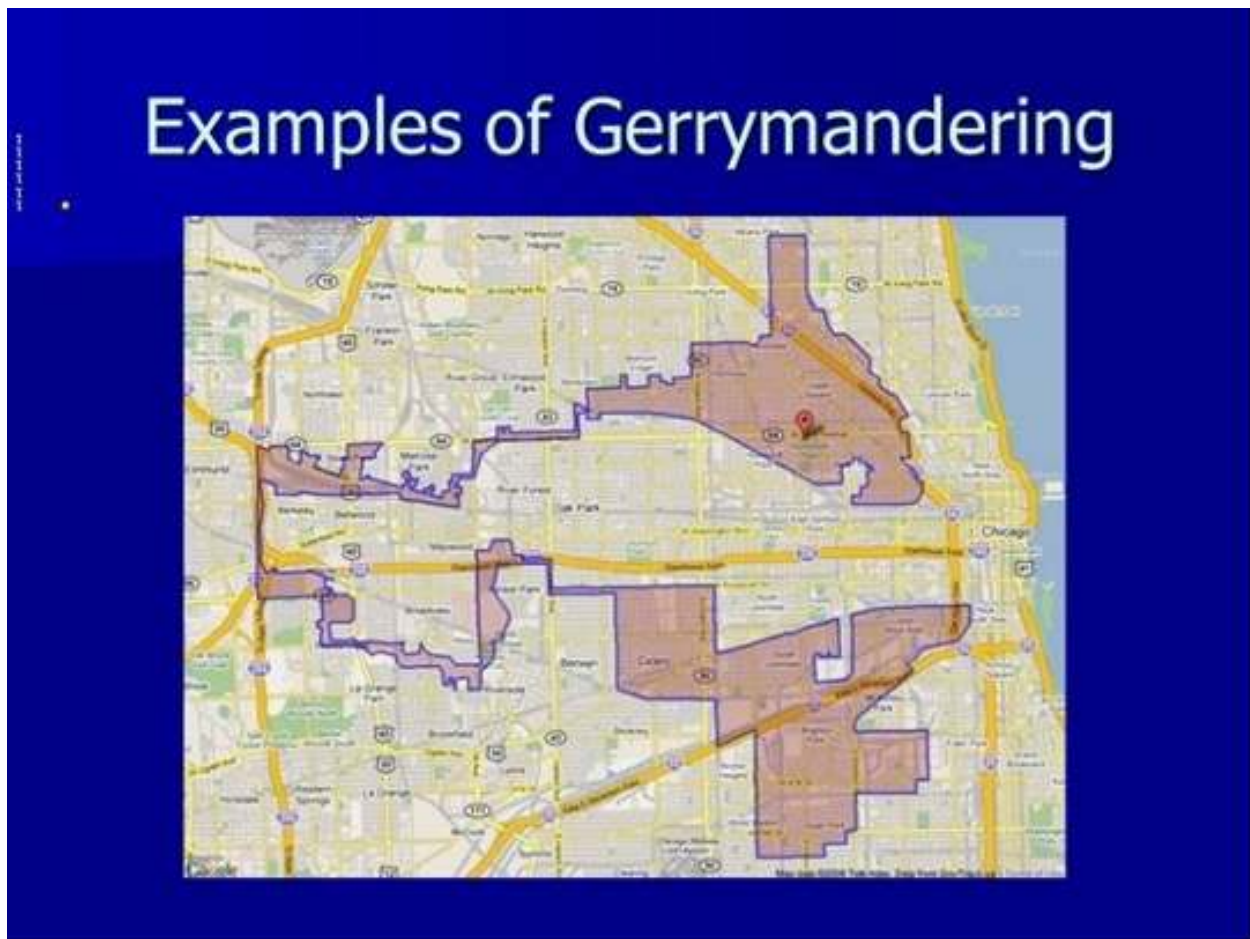
**NO GERRYMANDERING HERE!**

Editor's Note:

## GERRYMANDERING

In 1812, in the USA, Governor ELBRIDGE GERRY signed a bill that redistricted Massachusetts to benefit his Democratic-Republican Party. When mapped, one of the contorted districts in the Boston area was said to resemble the shape of a mythological Salamander. So was coined the new "word" GERRY-MANDER-ING.

This has become a burning issue in the USA where voter suppression is a standard "dirty trick" by the Republican Administrations, both State & Federal, of recent years. Democracy suffers a body blow when one group or other is disenfranchised by any such fraud.



## **F**IRE AT WESTBURY MANOR (1973)

The staff at Fareham Borough used a small wooden hut at the rear of Westbury Manor for a LUNCH ROOM. This also housed the TABLE TENNIS equipment for inter-Club matches against Havant UDC and Gosport Borough. One evening we were deeply into a hard fought table tennis match versus Gosport, when the door burst open and Keith Trask, Borough Engineer rushed in resplendent in a trilby hat, pinstripe suit with sleeves rolled up and carrying a huge rolled WALL MAP on his shoulder. "Give me a hand, chaps! The Office is on Fire...!"

We had not heard the FIRE ALARM – because it did not RING! There had been an electrical fault in the wiring within the CIRCULAR STAIRCASE and in those few minutes the core of the building was fully engulfed. As we rushed to the office a few yards away to help, the FIRE DEPARTMENT arrived and told us to "Get Out Fast – and leave it to them!" Which we gladly did!

Next day, on returning to work we found the ENGINEERS DEPARTMENT was largely destroyed. Many valuable and historic items were lost as well as all our office equipment and furniture. We were told we were to move into the empty EMBASSY CINEMA across the street – and the Engineers Department never worked again in Westbury Manor.

I was assigned to assist with the task of designing and procuring a new office building – which turned out to be a large multi-storey building of modern design. We adopted the new German concept of "Bürolandschaft" – open plan office landscape. This involved partitions and indoor silk plants...

The future of Westbury Manor was uncertain as the building became derelict after the Fire. Intensive lobbying by many groups such as the Fareham Society, Fareham Local History Group, Friends of Fareham Museum and individuals has helped to save it.

FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL is now based in the new CIVIC OFFICES in Fareham Town Centre. The building's construction began in 1974 and was completed in late 1975. Before then, our departments were located in different buildings around the town: Westbury Manor housed the Council Chamber and meeting rooms while departments were in West Street, Osborn Road, Trinity Street and Wickham Road, above shops, banks and in port-a-cabins.



When all the Departments moved into the new Civic Offices, residents could do their business with the Borough in one place. Since then, parts of the building have been updated but it still has some of its original features, such as exposed brick walls in the lift lobby, and the 'open plan' office environment has mostly been kept throughout.



## **R**EOORGANIZATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND (1972)

In 1972 it was apparent that the ECONOMY in Britain was deteriorating and there was very little grant money available to small municipal authorities such as Fareham to move ahead with any major infrastructure projects. In combination with the Local Government Act of 1972, the HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL had announced a major REORGANIZATION that would reduce the authority of local Municipalities. Fareham Borough had already ceded its Public Works Section to join HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT.

At this time, I was a Member of the JOINT TASK FORCE of Aldermen and Staff who were dealing with the effects of this reorganization. Serious issues were occurring, such as LAYOFFS, DOWNSIZING, EARLY RETIREMENT and BUDGET CUTS. The security of employment for Local Government workers was now in serious jeopardy. Whereas, I had a certain "seniority" that would protect my position in the short-term, it was obvious that the long-term future in Local Government was not attractive.

### **FORK IN THE ROAD - EMIGRATION PLAN**

I began to seek alternatives abroad in countries like Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada. My younger brother, Roger Ward, had already immigrated to New Zealand with his wife and 5 children in 1970. Over the years I had heard from colleagues who had spent time overseas working in Commonwealth countries that the opportunities were very attractive. I never really thought that I would take such a challenge.

However, I contacted several foreign Immigration Departments and Embassies and finally secured an interview in London at the Canadian Embassy where a large CONSULTING ENGINEERING COMPANY based in Toronto, Ontario was seeking several experienced MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS to come to Canada and join the firm. The Company was called De Leuw Cather Canada Ltd and was one of the largest Transportation Engineering & Construction Consultants in North America.

I met with the President, John Main who was conducting the interviews in London himself and he said he would contact me later concerning the appointment. He called me a few days later and offered me the job of SENIOR MUNICIPAL ENGINEER in their EDMONTON ALBERTA office. The salary was very attractive, and the Company offered free temporary

accommodation for a month and agreed to put a generous SALARY ADVANCE in my Canadian Bank Chequing Account. I was happy to accept.

After much (lengthy) organization to obtain CANADIAN IMMIGRATION PAPERS, BRITISH PASSPORT, RBC EDMONTON BANK ACCOUNT, British Airways AIRLINE TICKETS and to do research into the culture and climate we would be moving to, I was ready to fly to Edmonton on July 1, 1974.

My wife and son would remain in Fareham until Christmas, when I would have settled into my new job, bought a house and a car and returned to the UK to bring the Family over to Edmonton. In the meantime, Phyllis would sell the Catisfield HOUSE and my new CAR, and ship our FURNITURE and belongings, by SEA & RAIL from Southampton to Edmonton.

WHAT COULD GO WRONG? We REALLY didn't know what to expect... We had heard it was COLD in January in Edmonton. Nobody told us our FREEZER was WARMER than Edmonton in January!

[\(What does that MINUS sign before the temperature mean, anyway?\)](#)

A few days before my "departure" we held a FAREWELL PARTY at our Catisfield home for dozens of our friends. There was a CANADIAN theme to the festivities with lots of beer and burgers and hot dogs. We had two local bands playing Country Music in the back yard and GEORGE HAMILTON IV singing "ALBERTA BOUND" on the record player. The garden was surrounded in candlelights and the evening air was filled with laughter and music.

Then the RCMP came at 10:00PM to ask us to "turn it down a bit..." - there had been a complaint! So, the party was formally concluded. The cleanup lasted well into the next day!

FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELTS...

I arrived in EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT on a sunny July evening and cleared IMMIGRATION and CUSTOMS. The shuttle bus took me out to HIGHWAY 2 NORTH and I could see Downtown on the skyline 17 miles away. (The prairie sure is FLAT...!) The Quebecer sitting next to me was very friendly and I tried to respond in French to his simple questions, but quickly realized he spoke a form of French with which I was NOT familiar. The rest of the journey was conducted in smiling silence...

I had never before seen so much of the HORIZON; in England you don't find as much space between things and people! The sky was light blue and endless and soon we were in the STRATHCONA neighbourhood and parked at my hotel (reserved by my new Employer) – the INN ON WHYTE. It was getting late, I was very tired after almost 16 hours travelling, so I checked in and went to bed.

Next morning at 5:00AM I awoke, dressed and went down eagerly to see my new City – EDMONTON. The Chinese Desk Clerk smiled and wished me "Good Morning!". (He was the first Chinese I had ever met...) I stepped onto the sidewalk and there was the largest CAR DEALERSHIP I had ever seen. Don Wheaton Chevrolet had more cars on hand for instant purchase than any Dealers in Britain at that time. New cars in the UK took 3-6 months to pre-order from the factory.



Whyte Avenue 1974

You could have "fired a gun" down Whyte Avenue and not hit anyone at that time of the morning. It was SATURDAY and it was a LONG HOLIDAY WEEKEND... I did not know that! I decided to take a walk before breakfast, so I grabbed a Street Map from the Hotel and took off towards the MACDONALD HOTEL (over the North Saskatchewan River).

It was only 5 kilometres!



Jasper Avenue, Edmonton 1974

After I had crossed the Connors Road Bridge and climbed several hundred wooden staircase steps up McDougal Hill to 100 Street, I finally emerged on JASPER AVENUE, the “heart” of Downtown Edmonton. It was nothing like I had imagined and, in 1974, I thought I was looking at an old-time movie set! I was beginning to think I had made a BIG MISTAKE!

### **FORK IN THE ROAD?**

I returned on foot to the Hotel, by which time it was late morning and I was really hungry. As I was in Alberta, famous for its BEEF, I ordered a Beef Sandwich and a Pot of Tea. Would you like “fries” with that, Sir? Sure, why not!

When the order arrived, in quick time, I was amazed at the quantity of shaved beef in the multigrain sandwich and the generous portion of fries (enough for two) and the added Coleslaw salad. The tea was very good (although the water was “hot” not “boiled”). All in all, things were looking up. I was also amazed at the cost of this substantial meal – no more expensive than a British “cuppa” and a slice of “shaved” beef between two thin slices of bread. No fries or coleslaw!



Jasper Avenue & 101A Avenue in 1974

That afternoon I did some more walking around the area of the hotel, checked out the cars at Don Wheaton (they all seemed HUGE compared to UK models). I asked the eager Salesman for details on price etc. I gulped at the price but recognized that I was now earning a salary much higher than before.

I also, checked out my new office at De Leuw Cather (Canada) Ltd. It was closed but seemed from the outside to be a small but newish building, and only a block from the Hotel (where I was staying for a month at Company expense). I thought I might visit my new boss, Roman Wozniak, General Manager of the Edmonton Office, at his home the next day and introduce myself in preparation for starting work on Monday. (But it was a Holiday Long Weekend...)

The next day, Sunday, I called a Yellow Cab at 9:00 AM and took off to the address I had received to meet my new boss. The cab left, and I rang the doorbell of this impressive house in this "up-market" neighbourhood and soon the door opened, and a rather disheveled, sleepy eyed 40-something guy appeared in his bathrobe... this was Roman Wozniak. Obviously, this was a BAD time!

I apologized for the intrusion and introduced myself, "John Ward, from England." He seemed confused, "John who?" I reiterated the information, and he suddenly understood. He smiled and, somewhat embarrassed, invited me to come in. "Can I get you a coffee?" he asked, motioning that he was going to get dressed. "Have a seat, I'll only be a minute. I have a golf game later this morning!" As I had brought my golf clubs from England solely for the purpose of playing golf, I was eager to see if he would invite me to "make a foursome". But he did not...

We had a pleasant chat. He suggested I take "a few days to look around Edmonton before coming to work." I got the impression he was not expecting me to arrive, just yet. I was introduced to his young son, about 5 years old, and Roman said he would be pleased to run me back to the hotel, before he had to make his tee time at the DERRICK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB nearby.

So, I followed him into the garage and sat in the front passenger seat of his new CHEVROLET IMPALA STATION WAGON... the largest passenger vehicle I had ever seen. Of course, we had no SUV's and personal "trucks" in Britain, so this was the new reality for me! I was dropped off at the Inn on Whyte some 20 minutes later and left to my thoughts and impressions of Edmonton.

I was very concerned that Edmonton may not be the place we imagined. My Parents had decided they would like to come to Edmonton in a few months to retire in Alberta. My plan had been to buy a house large enough to accommodate all 5 people and our son, Steve, would have grandparents at home when he came from school each day. My Parents would have Phyllis and I to help them when "old age" caught up with them in future years.

In light of what I was seeing, I had great misgivings that my wife and family would not be happy in this different environment. Perhaps I should put our plans on "hold"...?

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – REVIEW EMIGRATION PLAN!

My immediate impression from the first few days in Edmonton was a large dose of “culture shock”. I could not foresee how I would be able to stay and work there for 6 months and then go back to Fareham and bring my wife, son and parents to Edmonton if there was a potential that they would not ultimately settle there. I had “burned a few bridges” already in Fareham by resigning my job. It seemed best that I should return quickly and bring Phyllis and Steve back for a few months to contribute their opinion into this family decision.

Later that day (Sunday) I called Phyllis at home and shared my concerns. She did not fully understand my reasons – she had not seen Edmonton for herself! So, we agreed I would return immediately and discuss the situation in more detail. I said I would use the SALARY ADVANCE from De Leuw Cather to pay for the airline ticket to London.

Remembering this was a SUNDAY and a LONG WEEKEND in Edmonton, I immediately called the AIR CANADA RESERVATIONS to purchase a ONE-WAY TICKET to London Gatwick. Since I was a British Citizen and could offer no Credit Card, Home Address or Home Telephone number, the Clerk suggested I should purchase my ticket IN PERSON at the Airport. So, I called Roman Wozniak and advised I had an EMERGENCY at home, but I would be back in TWO WEEKS. I then checked out of the Hotel (paid by De Leuw Cather) and took a cab to the Airport to catch the first Air Canada flight to London.

There was another problem with the RESERVATIONS CLERK at the Air Canada Office in the Airport – they do not accept PERSONAL CHEQUES. After much discussion he agreed to “trust me” and accepted my cheque, which I assured him was backed by “several thousand dollars” in the RBC account... Subsequently I boarded a plane bound for London Heathrow and, after a 9-hour flight, I arrive to be greeted by Phyllis in our (almost new) VAUXHALL VICTOR 2300 SL.



## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – SELLING AT THE CAR AUCTION!

In a few days I was destined to sell this 9-month old car at AUCTION for £750 – I had paid £1,000 new!

Phyllis and I went back to Catisfield and reviewed our future plans and decided to advance our move to Edmonton. We made arrangements to sell our HOUSE and CAR; arranged for our FURNITURE AND PERSONAL EFFECTS to be shipped by sea and train to Edmonton. Having previously arranged for new BRITISH PASSPORTS for Phyllis and Steve, we bought airline tickets for us all and were set to arrive back in Edmonton within the two weeks that I had stated.

Previously, within a few days of arriving home from Edmonton, I had a phone call from AIR CANADA to say that the Royal Bank of Canada had returned my personal cheque for the AIR LINE TICKETS as NSF (not sufficient funds). It appears that there was NO MONEY in the Account as De Leuw Cather had agreed in my hiring Agreement. I was furious, and also embarrassed, as I had never had a cheque “bounce” before (or since!).

I immediately called JOHN MAIN, PRESIDENT OF DE LEUW CATHER at their Head Office in Toronto and demanded to know “what the hell” was going on. Also, I complained there had been nobody available to meet me at the Airport or at the Hotel, which I felt was common courtesy. John Main apologized and said he would contact the Edmonton Office and get back to me. He returned my call in a few hours and explained that the news of my scheduled arrival had only just got through to the Edmonton Office and Roman had not deposited the agreed salary advance into my RBC account. So, I accepted the apology and advised I would be back in Edmonton in a week.

He wished me a good trip and said that a Staff Member from the Edmonton Office would meet us at the Edmonton International Airport to escort us to the Edmonton House Suites Hotel. This was a marked improvement to my first arrival 3 weeks earlier. It was apparent that the Company wanted to correct the earlier mistakes.

When Phyllis, Steve and I finally boarded our AIR CANADA flight to Edmonton we were all excited at the prospect of the “new world” ahead of us. On the plane we met a very friendly teenager returning from a year SABBATICAL in England who lived in Edmonton. After a lengthy chat about his family in Alberta and our exploration to a new country, he invited us to visit his home... and took the details of our hotel.



Edmonton House is located in the heart of DOWNTOWN and overlooking the North Saskatchewan River and within walking distance of Jasper Avenue.

When we finally landed at EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL (YEG) and cleared Immigration & Customs a young De Leuw Cather Engineer called TODD TURKALO met us with his car and drove us to the Edmonton House hotel, which was to be our home for the next few days. (The Company later arranged more permanent accommodation for us in the adjacent Greenbrier Hotel while we were searching for a house to buy.) Todd helped us check in and ride the elevator to the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Floor where our suite was located. This was presenting a different viewpoint of the City and I was very relieved that Phyllis and Steve seemed very happy with their new surroundings. The view from the balcony on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Floor was really impressive.



**View of Edmonton from Strathcona...**

**It was also much better for me to have them there with me to share the experience of being a LANDED IMMIGRANT.**

**The young man who had befriended us on the plane was also true to his word. In a couple of days, he called us and took us to his home and hosted us for a couple of hours. This was an encounter that was to occur many times during our early Canadian experience.**

**THE NATIVES WERE VERY FRIENDLY!**

## **W**HAT DO YOU MEAN - "KLONDYKE DAYS" ...?

Next morning, we had a momentary set back to our acclimatization when we went for a short walking tour of the Downtown area after breakfast. The sun was shining brightly, and the sky was blue, we were told it was a typical Summer day in July. As we reached JASPER AVENUE near the famous Macdonald Hotel, we suddenly came across a large group of Edmontonians dressed in weird old-fashioned clothing – it looked just like the Victorian era of the GAY NINETIES.

Everyone seemed to be having a good time, but we felt somewhat out of place since we were dressed in modern English garb! When I got back to the Hotel later that morning, I asked the Concierge what was going on in Edmonton? He smiled and said, "This is Klondike Days! It's an annual 10-day event held in Edmonton to remember the Gold Rush. This year's event takes place on July 20<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>. We get over 750,000 visitors every year."

So, we learned that Edmontonians enjoy a good Party!



Don't tell me they dress like this EVERY DAY?

Oh, it's just a FANCY DRESS PARADE – and it lasts for TEN DAYS? Don't they have JOBS to go to? Oh, they do this to entertain the TOURISTS... Go figure!



**Phyllis & Sharon in Klondyke Costume (When in Rome...?)**

## **B**ACK TO SCHOOL

We had arrived in the height of the SUMMER VACATION. The schools were all closed and everyone who could take time off from work was enjoying the sunshine. It was AUGUST and Phyllis began thinking about getting our 9-year old son, Steven set up in a school near the Downtown location of our new home in the EDMONTON HOUSE. We were lucky to get him into the nearby OLIVER SCHOOL, which was one of the Public Schools in that neighbourhood of Edmonton.

Phyllis and I were unfamiliar with the Public versus Catholic School Systems; neither were we familiar with the Grade system of Kindergarten to Grade 6 ,then Junior High (Grade 7 to 9) then Senior High (Grade 10 to 12). Still we caught on very quickly and Steve was excited to start his new education experience. He had spent a few years in an "English" Private School and had a very polished "English" accent.

Steven learned quickly that the "polished" accent was going to need a bit of "roughing up" if he was going to fit in with the local lads – who, like us, were all IMMIGRANTS - and we all had the paperwork to provide it! So, in a few weeks we noticed a distinctly "Canadian" accent from our son as he fitted into his new culture of hockey, barbecues and wide-open spaces.

We were able to get Stephen enrolled in the nearby OLIVER SCHOOL and he would be starting the 1974-1975 Year in September 1975. This is one of Edmonton's oldest school buildings, located just off JASPER AVENUE and 118th. STREET, only a short distance from the River Valley and Downtown.

The stately, three storey, red brick OLIVER SCHOOL was built in 1910 and officially opened in March of 1911. The solid brick school was viewed as very modern in those early days with classrooms that could accommodate fifty students. It had electric lights, indoor toilets, a miniature rifle range and a heating/ventilation system that was truly unique for its time.

The West Annex was built in 1928 to accommodate the growing population, and the gymnasium was added in 1958. Oliver School has been the centre of the Oliver Community for more than 110 years. The history of the school is rich and diverse and the building has seen many changes over the Century, the most significant being a \$3,500,000 upgrade in 1999-2000. As well as providing Education Programming, the

building has served the Community over the years for Political functions, Church meetings, air raid preparations, Community gatherings and even as a Hospital during the 1918 flu epidemic. The school gymnasium is still available through a Joint Use Agreement with the City of Edmonton for groups to use for sports activities and meetings.

Oliver School serves students from Kindergarten through Grade 6 in the OLIVER REGULAR ELEMENTARY PROGRAM.



**OLIVER SCHOOL, Edmonton, Alberta**

# M OBILITY RESTORED



A top priority for us was to buy a car to transport us around Edmonton and become familiar with the City and to get to work, school and shops. We had no idea what car would be best, so we went to EDMONTON MOTORS (Chevrolet Cadillac Oldsmobile) on Jasper Avenue and spoke to the salesman there and finally decided we should buy a new CHEVROLET IMPALA 4-door hardtop.

I thought, if the Chevrolet Wagon is good enough for my boss with his kids and a dog, the Chevy Sedan will probably be good enough for Phyllis, Steve, me and my parents (who were due to join us in a few months) after I had bought a large house with a large garage!

While we waited for our new car to be shipped in by train from Ontario and prepared for us to take possession, we decided to rent a smaller CHEVROLET MALIBU for a few days to get used to the road system around Edmonton, driving on the "wrong" side of the road and sitting on the "wrong" side of the car. Oh, and realizing that traffic lights in Edmonton are on the FAR SIDE of the intersection, whereas in Britain they are on the NEAR SIDE... so you DO NOT drive across the intersection on a RED LIGHT to huddle next to the aforesaid RED LIGHT.

While driving that weekend through SHERWOOD PARK we had our first conversation with a polite young RCMP Officer who stopped us to enquire why we were driving at 90 km/hr in a 50 km/hr limit area? My explanation of having just arrived from the U.K. and being unfamiliar...and apologetic... really did not impress him. He let us off that time with a caution, but I am sure I heard him mutter as he walked away, "Bloody IMMIGRANTS"!

#### TRIP TO ELK ISLAND PARK

That day we motored on eastwards to ELK ISLAND PARK (to see the BISON) and were incredulous how far it seemed we had gone following our ROAD MAP spread out over our immense bench seat in the rental car. We were convinced we must have passed the turnoff to the Park already; so, we turned around and drove miles back to ask a Gas Station attendant where is Elk Island Park? He smiled and said, "You were only a few miles away. You should have kept going... this is a big country you know!"



## **1974 CHEVROLET IMPALA**

Our new car was delivered a week later. It was the biggest thing I had ever seen on 4-wheels and was powered by a 7-Litre V-8 engine with 4-barrel carburetor and automatic gearbox. With gas costing only 39 cents per gallon at that time, we were not concerned then with fuel consumption of 10 mpg in the City and 16 mpg on the highway.



## **SERENDIPITOUS MEETINGS**

On the next week-end I suggested I take my son, Steve and my wife, Phyllis down to the nearby VICTORIA GOLF CLUB to walk with me while I played 9-holes of golf. They both agreed, so I packed my clubs in the rental car and we drove the few blocks “down the hill” to the course.

VICTORIA GOLF COURSE is the oldest municipal course in Canada. It was first developed in 1896, before the City of Edmonton was founded. Victoria's fairways and greens are somewhat forgiving – ideal for beginners or mid-handicap players. Victoria's prime river valley location offers an excellent backdrop of the Alberta Legislature and University of Alberta buildings.



VICTORIA GOLF CLUB, Edmonton in 1974

I went to the STARTER'S BOX and asked if he could fit us in for a quick Nine Holes... He asked if I had a tee time reserved; I told him no, I was new in town. "You must have a reservation here to play on weekends", he advised. After quickly studying his booking sheet, he said," If you follow that guy with the red cap, you can probably join him on the back nine!" Those were the most impactful words in our entry to Canada. We joined this couple and their son, who were playing as a two-some as their earlier two-some on the front nine had opted to not play the back nine...



## **A FORK IN THE ROAD...**

Our golfing companions were English and they were delighted to hear our similar accent. They had been in Alberta for a few years. He worked for Alberta Government Telephones. As brief introductions on both sides followed between the ladies, the husband, DENNIS and his son MARTIN continued playing golf with Steven and me. The lady, JOY, was busily engaged by Phyllis in answering a myriad of questions about life in Edmonton.

When we reached the 18<sup>th</sup> Hole, Joy invited us to come to supper at their house. Phyllis would normally have politely refused, but she was so eager for some social company, she was delighted to accept. So, we went back to their home a few miles away in the West End of Edmonton and Dennis fired up the barbecue and popped on some very large T-bone steaks and hustled up some excellent baked potatoes, while Joy laid the table and we sat down for one of the nicest and LONGEST suppers ever!

Joy finally asked me WHERE I came from in England (HAMPSHIRE) and where in Hampshire (PORTSMOUTH) and where in Portsmouth (PURBROOK) and where in Purbrook (DAYSLONDON ROAD). Then she announced that she, as a young woman, had lived only ONE BLOCK AWAY from me. She also had worked in the same INLAND REVENUE OFFICE (Princes House) as me. Dennis and I had played FOOTBALL as teenagers at the same PUBLIC PARK. It seemed incredible that we had lived so close in England and yet had to travel 4,232 miles to meet in Alberta!

Phyllis phoned her Mother in England that night and I called my Parents with the news. Joy called her Dad in England. Our Parents each called the other and suddenly we were "connected" with an extended family that would last for more than 40-years. We have been "family" with the DENNIS and JOY GOBLE and their daughter ANNELI and son MARTIN ever since (with vacations, Christmas, Birthdays, Golf trips, etc. together) and have kept close contact right up to this day.

Dennis & Joy are now back in Edmonton after many years in British Columbia and Arizona. They are living in a very comfortable residential Retirement Home in upscale Falconer Heights, River Bend. We keep in touch frequently with each other by phone and e-mail.

Unfortunately, we no longer play Golf due to our "advancing years" ...!



**GOLFING IN MAUI, HAWAII (Dennis, Joy, Phyllis, John)**

**BUT WAIT – THERE’S MORE! VICTORIA GOLF COURSE was the “gift that keeps on giving...”**

**We met RICHARD D’SILVA, another “British ex-pat”, at Victoria Golf Course 6-years later, in 1980. Phyllis and I were fitting in a quick 9-holes of golf after work. (She had taken up the game by then and become very enthusiastic to join in the lifelong struggle to play “up to PAR”.)**

**RICHARD D’SILVA was paired with us that evening and we quickly became friends with the “human dynamo”. Richard did everything at top speed, always cheerful and telling jokes and a powerhouse of information on many subjects. He, like us, loved his golf and he said that evening “You must meet my wife, Sheila. You would like her!”**

So, we arranged to meet that weekend at WESTRIDGE PARK LODGE in Devon, Alberta and played our inaugural game of golf with the D'Silva's – there were to be many more over the next 20-years.



#### **WESTRIDGE PARK LODGE GOLF COURSE & RESORT**

After the game we had coffee in the Restaurant and shared stories of our individual English and Canadian experiences. Richard had studied Mechanical Engineering in England and then enlisted in the British Army. His father was a Medical Doctor in the Foreign Service and the family had spent many years in India. Richard had a varied career in manufacturing & selling products and ultimately settled in Alberta to work in the oil industry with SYNCRUDE.

Shelia was a product of Catholic Convent schooling and a very calming influence on Richard's dynamism. She had mothered four fine sons through some tumultuous times and the whole family was a joy to be with. Both Richard and Sheila enjoyed dancing and we had great fun together for some 26 years.

Richard died in 2006 and Sheila had some unhappy times, yet bolstered by her four boys and their wives and many grandchildren. After several years of adjustment, Sheila married their longtime friend, DAVID ELSON (who had also lost his spouse of many years) and he and Sheila are our special friends to this day. They live now in a Strata Complex in OAK BAY, Victoria, BC with an ocean view and we meet frequently in Oak Bay or Qualicum Beach.

**BUT I DIGRESS - BACK TO WORK!**

After the weekend touring escapade, I reported for work at the Edmonton Office of DE LEUW CATHER ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS LTD. My new colleagues made me feel very welcome. After a few days of "orientation", ROMAN WOZNIAK, my new boss took me on a weeklong promotional tour to meet a number of Government officials and City Engineers of small Municipalities around Edmonton and up to Grand Prairie and Fort MacMurray.

It was obvious there would be a large amount of travelling involved in this job. My first assignment following a successful promotional presentation by my boss to the Ministry of Transport in Edmonton was to prepare plans & estimates for an increase in the PARKING CAPACITY at the Edmonton International Airport (YEG) that I had landed at only some 3 weeks before.

It seems air traffic passengers were increasing and needed more parking spaces for their cars at the airport. One answer would be to REDUCE the width of all existing Parking Spaces at YEG from 12 feet down to 10 feet. (How times have changed!). Another option we explored was to build a large PARKING STRUCTURE to augment the ever-increasing surface parking resulting in longer walks by passengers to get to the Terminal in frigid winter temperatures. In the end M.O.T chose both options – as you can see today at YEG.

I learned quickly in working with large (big City) Municipal authorities in Alberta that the pace of life was different here compared to Britain. No more "mothballing" projects to reapply later for PERMISSION to proceed to design & construct projects! In Alberta everything was geared to rapid response and moving ahead to beat the onset of WINTER or to be ready for the arrival of warmer temperatures in the Spring. Projects were usually large scale and the emphasis was on "FAST TRACKING" wherever possible. This induced a background of excitement, which was refreshing.

However, that "pace of life" was much slower in some smaller communities around Edmonton. I was invited by the City of Camrose to meet with their City Engineer, JOHN KIMINSKY, in January 1975 to discuss some storm drainage works they needed following a damaging SPRING FLOOD they had suffered the previous May. So, I arranged to meet him at 10:00 AM in his office at City Hall in Camrose.

That morning was a typical Winter day – clear blue sky, bright sunshine and a brisk temperature of “minus 20” following a flurry of snow earlier. I left Edmonton on time to make my appointment, allowing for a 1-hour drive to Camrose.

On the way I encountered my first experience of BLACK ICE and had several scary moments in controlling the skidding on highway curves at even moderate speed.

When I eventually arrived in Camrose City Hall a few minutes early for my meeting, the Secretary advised me that her boss had “gone for coffee” and would be back shortly. An hour later when he finally returned, I asked him if he knew we had a 10:00AM appointment? He seemed surprised at my question and said, “We don’t keep clock-time around here!”. Luckily, not everyone in rural Alberta was of that opinion. It was certainly NOT the attitude in Edmonton.

We then got down to business and he advised that they needed to rebuild a small wooden DAM & SPILLWAY in MIRROR LAKE in the centre of Town and also wanted me to prepare a Proposal to upgrade the storm water system for the whole Municipality. So, I got back to Edmonton and proceeded quickly with the new engineering work, which was very welcome to my Company at that time.

## **BOOM & BUST**

The economy in Alberta in 1974 was going through a minor upturn and De Leuw Cather had a backlog of small municipal projects to clean up. I was kept very busy dealing with that interesting work. The Company was also hiring more new Engineers from South Africa, which proved to be a good fit in our business with highly qualified and motivated young Engineers seeking a career away from the expected “bloodbath” when the Apartheid system in South Africa would be overthrown.

We made several long-term friendships with these new colleagues and their families. I made every effort to ensure that the new recruits from overseas were properly welcomed “off the plane” and escorted to their temporary accommodation and mentored in their transition to the New World of Alberta. They all made successful careers in Canada and none have returned to South Africa. Canada is privileged to have the large number of South African Engineers and Doctors who have immigrated here to meet the ever-increasing demand for such professional services as the Canadian population expands and matures.

## **P**HYLLIS' NEW CAREER IN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Shortly after Steven enrolled at the Oliver School, Phyllis applied for a TEMPORARY SECRETARIAL position in the Alberta Government DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY & COMMERCE located in downtown Edmonton. She remained in this job as she learned about the methods and procedures in the Department until December 1974 when we made a brief 2-week trip to England to see our family.

### **U.K. HOLIDAY - FOREIGN EXCHANGE**

While we were in England we made a significant withdrawal of money from our British savings, which in accordance with current British legislation, had been frozen in LLOYDS BANK before we immigrated to Canada.

This money was needed urgently to fund the purchase of our new house in Edmonton, which would be completed in a few months. So we had to "export" our frozen assets from the U.K. in order to put a roof over our heads. It was rather like the LEND-LEASE ACT of 1941 in reverse...!

Since we could take only £5,000 per day from the "locked" account, we visited the Bank over many days to withdraw enough money (in large denominations) to "gird our loins" on the return journey. The CANADIAN CUSTOMS & REVENUE Officer in Edmonton was not very diligent at that time in checking us for hidden money.

It was rather uncomfortable travelling for 9 hours on an AIR CANADA Boeing 727 wrapped in £10 Notes...!

Back in Edmonton, our ROYAL BANK OF CANADA Manager advised that we could NOT deposit the British Sterling bank notes at one time because it would exceed his daily limit! So, we had to visit him on several days in order to complete the TRANSFER of our funds from £ Sterling to \$ Canadian.

So much for money laundering... We discovered later that the penalty for transferring money out of the UK without approval was 40% Tax Deduction plus FINES.

(Whoops! Is anybody looking?)

## **FORK IN THE ROAD - PROMOTION FOR PHYLLIS**

### **ALBERTA DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY & COMMERCE**

In January 1975, on returning to work at the Department of Industry & Commerce Phyllis had the opportunity to apply for a PERMANENT POSITION of Executive Secretary to the Director for Industry in the Department of Industry & Commerce. She got the job over strong competition, and her English training and credentials were a proven asset.

This was position was a new challenge and she was excited to work in the political atmosphere of the Alberta Government when Peter Lougheed and later Don Getty was the Premier. She was subsequently promoted to EXECUTIVE SECRETARY to the Assistant Deputy Minister in the Department of Economic Development & International Trade.



In a career spanning 18-years Phyllis was closely involved with successive Ministers of the Department organizing events and itineraries for International Trade Delegations. Her work included arranging Receptions and formal Dinners and assisting in the travel and security arrangements for both incoming and outgoing trade missions.

She had the opportunity to accompany Canadian delegations travelling overseas to Britain and Europe and also to work with incoming foreign delegations seeking business in Alberta.

One of the more high-profile events she assisted on was organizing a State Visit by **QUEEN ELIZABETH II** to Edmonton and Red Deer, Alberta in June 1990. Her Majesty the Queen arrived at the Red Deer Industrial Airport and was chauffeured to the Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre where she opened the new state-of-the-art Pediatrics Ward.

A reception luncheon, co-sponsored by **PREMIER DON GETTY** and **MAYOR MCGHEE**, was held for **HER MAJESTY** at the Capri Centre in Red Deer.



## OUR NEW ALBERTAN HOMESTEAD

In January 1975 the TRANSFER OF FUNDS into our Canadian Bank assisted us in buying our new house in the PRIMROSE NEIGHBOURHOOD at 8419-181A Street NW – close to the “coming attraction” of WEST EDMONTON MALL.



(Note: This Photo was taken over 45 years later...!)

The new FAMILY HOME was a 2,000 sq. ft, TWO-STOREY DETACHED HOUSE with 4-Bedrooms, 2 and-a-half Bathrooms, Lounge, Dining, Family Room and Kitchen with a large, double-garage. This would be adequate for 4 adults and 1 Teenager. It also had a large “pie-shaped” lot, which would keep my Father happy building fences and doing some light gardening in the warm weather. In the Winter we planned to teach Grandpa and Grandma to CROSS COUNTRY SKI at the local golf courses! Maybe SNOWSHOEING across the frozen North Saskatchewan River would be an option? (That never happened...!)

Our Builder had been working diligently on the construction of our new house since February 1975 and advised us that the COMPLETION DATE would be in May 1975. We visited the site frequently and one day in April I had taken Phyllis after work to inspect the almost finished building. The SPRING THAW was making the sticky grey clay soil (called “Alberta Gumbo”) almost impassable.

The Contractors had put down some “duckboards” but Phyllis, in her business suit, was not dressed for the occasion. So, I grabbed my rubber boots from the trunk of the Chevrolet Impala and carried her across the mud. Halfway across the morass my boots were stuck in the Gumbo and I completed the trip on one boot! It was clear we needed some topsoil imported for the landscaped gardens to come!

Since arriving in Canada some 12 months before, we had been living in the “transient” style of EDMONTON HOUSE, downtown in the “big City”. Our neighbours in the Hotel had been huge, black Footballers with the Edmonton Eskimos and huge, white Hockey players with the Edmonton Oilers. Steve and I had spent many hours playing TABLE TENNIS and SNOOKER in the Games Room at the hotel and he and Phyllis enjoying the swimming pool. However, we were very much looking forward to moving into permanent accommodation and getting to know our new neighbours in the Primrose Neighbourhood.

### CHAIN MIGRATION...?

Before I realized it, we were in SUMMER 1975 and my Parents in England were making preparations to dispose of their furniture and unwanted personal effects in order to immigrate to CANADA and start their retirement in the NEW WORLD. They had obtained their IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS & APPROVAL and purchased Air Line tickets on BRITISH AIRWAYS scheduled to arrive in June 1975.

We made the necessary arrangements for their ALBERTA HEALTHCARE insurance and I signed the forms guaranteeing to be responsible to “sponsor and support” my Parents while they were in Canada so that they did not end up on WELFARE or in SOCIAL HOUSING. I was happy to return the support they had afforded me in my younger years.

In recent years some Governments, particularly the USA, have criticized the validity of CHAIN MIGRATION - permitting new immigrants to ultimately bring to the host Country those members of the immigrant family who wish to follow their siblings or children into the “New World”.

In my experience it was much more difficult for my parents, than us, to give up their “roots” and come to Canada to retire. Not only did they lose the comfort of the familiarity of their Motherland, but they did not have the enthusiasm or energy in their elder years to learn and adjust to new ways, environments and cultures. Ultimately, they missed seeing their children, but they were more comfortable in a British beach chair than a foreign hammock.

## **MOVING DAY**

**Our new house was finished on schedule and my Mum and Dad arrived on time in June 1975 to move into a much more spacious house than they had lived in for 28 years in Purbrook while raising my brother and me. Those memories were about to be replaced by the different reality of LIFE in CANADA.**

**Mum and Dad brought their personal valuables and daily needs & clothing in their hand luggage but also had sent a few selected items of furniture from England to Edmonton by boat and train. (Mum had also brought me a major supply of GALAXY MILK CHOCOLATE for my personal emergency use. You can't buy this stuff in Canada and now my previous Supply Agent had moved in with me! I would now have to rely on my Wife's Cousin, David Lillywhite to keep me supplied from England.)**

**Months before, our furniture and household effects had been shipped over from England by boat and train and kept in storage in Edmonton. I recall it was a complicated process to clear CANADA CUSTOMS at the "port of entry" before the journey by train could be completed. Then there was the transfer from train to road transport to deal with. The insurance claims for damage to some items took months to sort out!**

**Now we were all unpacking and re-uniting ourselves with our "stuff..." It was a hectic yet exciting time.**

## **W**ELCOME TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

A few days after we began moving into our new home in PRIMROSE, the doorbell rang and Phyllis opened the door to find a young boy (about Steve's age) standing there smiling.

"My mum asked me to tell you she's coming over for coffee!"

He turned and marched off back to his home 50 yards away down the lane beside our unfenced garden. We were not accustomed to such proactive approach from neighbours in England. However, it was nice to see they were friendly.

As promised, his Mum arrived 10 minutes later at the front door with home-made cookies and a beaming smile. With an unmistakable Ukrainian accent, she welcomed us all to the neighbourhood and Phyllis invited her into the lounge, where my Mother was helping to unpack chinaware and kitchen utensils. Phyllis apologized that she had not yet located the boxes containing our coffee pot and cups.

"No problem", said our new neighbour. She stayed for 15 minutes and chatted about her background and immigration to Canada. Phyllis reciprocated about our British origins and said we were looking forward to settling in to the area. The Ukrainian lady said to call if we need anything and then said goodbye and left.

Several months later, on JANUARY 6, 1976, we were invited to our friend's house for UKRAINIAN CHRISTMAS DINNER of Kutia (sweet grain pudding), Borscht (beet soup), Vushka (small dumplings with mushroom) and Varenyky (dumplings with cabbage and potatoes). The Ukrainian Diaspora in Edmonton is very visible, and especially in VEGREVILLE and their cuisine and music has strongly influenced Albertan life.

**A diaspora is a large group of people with a similar heritage or homeland who have since moved out to places all over the world. The term diaspora comes from an ancient Greek word meaning "to scatter about."**

## MENDING FENCES

One early morning in Summer 1976, I was looking out on my backyard and saw a group of school kids marching slowly across the yard towards the school. I went out back and shouted to them to use the Public Walkway, not my backyard. They looked at me as if I was crazy... but moved on towards the school.

When I mentioned this to one of my neighbours he said, "In Alberta, if your yard is not fenced, or a NOTICE is not posted, the public has the right to cross your property."

So my Dad and I erected a fence as soon as we could. The kids then started a routine response of kicking in a fence board or two each month... I complained in person to the School Principal but he was unable to stop the vandalism completely. This nuisance went on for 2-3 years with irregular recurrences of the "fence bashing."

My son, Steve (by now a tall 13 year-old) kept an eye on the situation and eventually saw one boy kicking in the fence. So, he followed the culprit to his home, knocked on the door and told the parents what their son had done. That seemed to end the vandalism.

## NEW ZEALAND EXCURSION

In December 1975 my Parents took a 6-week trip to visit my Brother, Roger and his wife Anna and their 5 children in New Zealand. Mum & Dad had not seen them for 4 years. They flew via Hawaii to Auckland New Zealand and then were escorted to Roger's new property in the Waitakere Ranges. The 11-acre parcel was being developed with one large wooden "bungalow" house on stilts. (Two smaller homes were added later when Anna's Mother, Peggy Redmore, immigrated to New Zealand from England in the 1980's and Roger's daughter, Margot married and decided to live on the property.)

When Mum & Dad arrived the wooden bungalow was still under construction. Roger and family were sleeping in a small CARAVAN on site. Mum & Dad were invited to stay nearby in a house with the Mother (Rusty) of Roger's friend, John Rust, a New Zealand Engineer in Calgary. They did not get to see all of the development that Roger and his Family achieved over the next 30 years or more, but they were able to experience the raw beauty of the North Island where Roger and Anna and their growing Family have settled.

In 2011 I hired some local Vancouver Island house remodelling Contractors to upgrade our KITCHEN in our home at 640 Morningstar Drive, Parksville, British Columbia. The Electrician was a 40-something NEW ZEALANDER from Waitakere... he said he knew the WARD FAMILY very well and he gone to school with some of them!

My Brother, Roger sent these photos to me some 40 years after our Parents visited him in 1975. House #1 was being finished in 1975 and the natural vegetation was still mostly "in charge". In the following years there were more buildings, more animals and more Family to "settle in" and make their footprint.



Roger's House #1 and the "Granny Suite" for Mrs. Redmore



**And we will MOW, MOW, MOW...?**



Roger, Anna & Paul in their local COFFEE SHOP - BLOSSOMS Cafe





**Roger's House #3 - Rental Unit**



**My Brother, ROGER,  
Gardener Extraordinaire!**



**Water Supply Reservoir (from Roof Runoff)**

# CONSULTING ENGINEERING DOWNTURN

Since June of 1974, I had been working away clearing the backlog of Municipal Projects which De Leuw Cather (Canada) Ltd. had accumulated during the previous year or two of economic upturn and by early-1976 we were seeing a disquieting reduction in our normal buffer of 3-months to 6-months' "work in hand". So, I was asked to go out on a promotional tour in Central Alberta and Northern Alberta to rustle up some work to keep the team at De Leuw Cather gainfully employed.

I had heard previously in my short career with the Company that this type of "rhythm" occurs in Municipal Engineering & Construction work. The periodicity of HIGH to LOW is often 2 years and not more than 5 years. Thus, this downturn was predictable, and it was going to be difficult for my small Municipal Engineering team to react as the Company's main thrust was in TRANSPORTATION work in Calgary & Edmonton, such as FREEWAY expansion, LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT construction and NOISE BARRIERS.

## **FORK IN THE ROAD - LAYOFFS**

By June 1976, it was obvious that there would be layoffs in the Company, so I decided to explore career options back in Municipal Government where I had spent 18 years of my Engineering career in England. So, I enquired at the EDMONTON CITY HALL to see if they had any vacancies for Municipal Engineers with experience in highways and drainage design & construction.

They said I would first be required to take an INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY TEST that would take 2-days to complete. All new employees were required to be tested. I asked what the tests would examine, and the Human Resources Supervisor said the following aspects would be covered:

- o Job knowledge tests to measure a candidate's technical or theoretical expertise in a particular field.
- o Integrity tests. ...
- o Cognitive ability tests. ...
- o Personality tests. ...
- o Emotional Intelligence tests. ...
- o Skills assessment tests. ...
- o Physical ability tests.

She explained that I could take some of the written test papers home to complete in the evening if I chose. So, I did that and submitted the written answers on the following day. There was also a day-long written exam and one-on-one interviews.

After a couple of days, the Human Resources Supervisor called to advise me there was a job vacancy for the **CHIEF of WASTEWATER TREATMENT** in the Water & Sanitation Department, if I was interested. I said I was interested, so I had an interview the next day with RUPERT LITTKE, Manager of the Water & Wastewater Treatment Division (who had recently held the position of CHIEF of WWT himself).

We had very cordial meeting. He asked for a summary of my career. I explained my work over the last 20 years in highways and drainage, but I noted I had no direct experience in wastewater treatment. That was not critical to the job, he said, we have many experts on the process, the main emphasis of your job will be to provide effective leadership to get improved results.

He said he had done this job himself for 4 years – and he was a CHEMICAL ENGINEER who previously worked at the nearby CELANESE PetroChemical Plant. He noted I was a Registered Professional Engineer in Alberta and a Chartered Civil Engineer in the U.K. We discussed Salary and a few other “personnel” issues like Pensions and Dental Care. Then he offered me the job starting on JULY 1, 1976.

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD - CHIEF OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT

I was pleased to accept the offer, the salary was a significant increase on my remuneration with De Leuw Cather Canada Ltd. and in future I would get to hire consultants and Contractors to do work for the City, rather than having to compete for consulting assignments in a shrinking market!

The City of Edmonton's GOLD BAR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT is located along the south shore of the North Saskatchewan River, bound by two scenic City Parks, nature trails and the expansive River Valley. The plant is a tertiary treatment facility that treats domestic and industrial wastewater from across Edmonton and the surrounding area.

(Tertiary treatment is a biological process that reduces or eliminates ammonia-nitrogen and phosphorous.) Serving over 700,000 in the Edmonton area, the plant is among the top five facilities of its kind in Canada.





**GOLD BAR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT – ENHANCED PRIMARY TREATMENT TANKS**



**GOLD BAR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT – CLARIFIER TROUGHS**



#### **CLOVER BAR BIOSOLIDS LAGOONS & COMPOST CURING SITE**

**The natural treatment facility currently handles approximately 100 BILLION litres annually, which includes wastewater from both the sanitary and combined sewer (sanitary and storm) systems. With the recent plant addition, the plant's primary treatment capacity had increased from its peak capacity of 910 million litres/day to 1,250 million litres/day. With that added capacity, a much larger volume of wet weather flows from the City's older combined sewer system will undergo treatment.**

**All municipalities that provide sanitary drainage services treat wastewater in order to return water to its source and manage the biosolids that remain. Biosolids are the nutrient-rich organic by-product of domestic wastewater treatment that contains essential plant nutrients and organic matter. When properly treated and managed as a beneficial resource they can be recycled and applied as a fertilizer and soil amendment.**

**Composting is a process of mixing biosolids with a carbonaceous bulking agent such as sawdust, wood chips, ground woody yard debris and residential solid waste. Finished compost products are refined and sold for various uses. It is one of the recommended options for the beneficial reuse of biosolids.**

### **Agricultural Land Application (Nutri Gold Program)**

**Nutri Gold is the program for using liquid biosolids from the City's Clover Bar Lagoons on agricultural lands. Biosolids provide macronutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) and micronutrients (calcium and magnesium) to the agricultural farmlands, which reduce the requirements for chemical fertilizers.**

**Biosolids to Farmland: Since the program's inception in 1978, close to 550,000 dry tonnes of biosolids have been distributed over 16,000 hectares of farmland.**

**Biosolids to Compost: Since the composter's start-up in Year 2000, more than 180,000 dry tonnes of biosolids have been used to make compost products for sale.**

### **INAUGURATION & TRANSITION**

**When I took up my duties in JULY 1976 at the GOLD BAR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT, on 50<sup>th</sup>. Street, Edmonton, adjacent to the NORTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER, I was very impressed at the cleanliness of the whole Plant, much of which was underground and, apart from a slightly "earthy" aroma, it did not offend one's sensibilities.**



The GOLD BAR PLANT operates 24 hours per day with 2 shifts of 12.25 hours (to allow an overlap for continuity purposes). All the staff members were very motivated to do a great job, from the Operations Crews, the Maintenance Team and the Laboratory Staff down to the Janitorial Staff (who cleaned the floors, corridors and equipment constantly as if it was a Cruise Liner).

I spent the next few weeks inspecting each phase of the operation and learning how the process worked. It was here my BIOLOGY and CHEMISTRY from High School came in handy as I learned more about MICROBIOLOGY and MICROSCOPES.

The first year of my tenure was a steep learning curve including consideration of many important cost-effective changes that could be made to improve the performance of the purification process. All the staff members were challenged to propose changes in their area to meet higher goals.

The first phase of treatment was the PRIMARY SETTLING TANKS where 150 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY were screened and relieved of sediment. All the sediment (SLUDGE) is piped to large above-ground DIGESTOR TANKS, which allow anaerobic bacteria to break down the sludge and produce METHANE for re-use in heating the buildings.

Next are the SECONDARY SETTLING TANKS where aeration bubblers encourage aerobic bacteria to break down the pollutant even further before passing the effluent to the TERTIARY BIOLOGICAL FILTERS. Finally, the treated effluent is piped to the OUTFALL structure where it flows into the North Saskatchewan River.

The FINAL EFFLUENT STANDARD in 1976 was the Alberta Provincial standard of 50 ppm of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and 50 ppm of Suspended Solids (SS) (known as the 50/50 Standard). We set ourselves a TARGET of 10/10, as this was the Royal Commission Standard in Britain at that time.

Our Plan of Action to achieve this target was quite simple:

1. Review & Refine all Processes to increase Removal of Pollutant;
2. Introduce Computers to improve accuracy of Data Gathering & Delivery;
3. Reduce time taken to Review & Respond to Process Condition changes;
4. Improve Maintenance of All Equipment to reduce Downtime;
5. Re-activate any Equipment lying idle due to Maintenance or Operating Problems;
6. Improve Training of Operators to Ensure Compliance with Standard Operating Procedures.

The staff all worked hard on this Program and over a period of 2 years we achieved an EFFLUENT STANDARD of 17/17 and the Provincial Government lowered the Provincial Standard to 20/20 (from 50/50) – an improvement of 60% in removal of pollutant in the treated effluent being discharged to the North Saskatchewan River.

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – CHIEF WATER ENGINEER

It was normal procedure for Senior Management staff to move around every 4 years or so to broaden their experience and knowledge in the workings of our overall Department. This provided stimulus and challenge so that you didn't get "stale" (or too comfortable) in your job.

After serving for 4 years in the WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT I was invited in September 1980 to move up to the HEAD OFFICE of Edmonton Water & Sanitation into the position of CHIEF WATER ENGINEER.

I had the privilege to direct a multi-discipline team of 60 engineers, technicians and support staff in the planning, design, construction supervision, contract administration and commissioning of all water treatment, storage, transmission and distribution systems for the City. The Annual Budget for "minor" Capital Projects was \$35 million and the Annual Office Budget was \$4 million.

Unlike typical Government Offices we were required to pay for all our Office expenses including payroll, office rent, utilities, furniture, office supplies, travel costs. In addition, we were assessed 9% Overhead in lieu of "Business Tax". We were required to be competitive with local Consultants providing similar Engineering & construction supervision services. If we were not more economical than the Private Sector we would be "downsized..."

One major issue we were tasked with resolving was the Springtime "taste & odour" experienced by all customers using potable water in the City. Edmonton Water Department also supplies all the surrounding Municipal Authorities such as St. Albert, Leduc, Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, Sherwood Park and even out to Vegreville. This water quality issue was a big concern for all. The main cause was the upstream pollution from cattle feedlots and inefficient sewage treatment plants, as well as the Spring melting of our own huge SNOW DUMPS which drained to the River.

We hired several Water Engineering Consultants from Alberta and Ontario to advise on the solution and I also went overseas to England to hire 4 Senior Engineers for our in-house work on this project.

The solution to the taste & odour problem was to increase the capacity and upgrade our two large Water Treatment Plants and to locate our snow dumps in winter where the polluted melt water did not enter the North Saskatchewan River. The estimated cost of this work was \$750 Million and proved to be successful within a period of 3 years.



**E.L. SMITH Potable Water Treatment Plant  
CLARIFIER TANKS**

**E. L. Smith Water Treatment Plant - Chemical De-Chlorination of Residual Water  
using Sodium Bisulphate**

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – CHIEF DRAINAGE ENGINEER

In 1985 I was transferred to the DRAINAGE SERVICES section of the Department as part of the continuing Management Orientation for senior staff. This was a move that needed less adjustment on my part as I had worked on similar projects in England for many years. I knew from my previous experience at Edmonton Water & Sanitation that there was a major problem with the City sewer system that caused some 250 houses every year to suffer flooded basements due to sanitary sewer backup resulting from storm sewage infiltration.

In addition, several low-lying areas of the City were prone to severe flooding in times of prolonged heavy rainfall. Such storms would flood the underpasses on the City's ring road system and other tunnels under the CN Railway in the downtown area. This could create a serious interruption of the EMERGENCY or DISASTER RESPONSE teams in the City. A solution to these problems was a high priority for City Council.

The City sewer system was originally designed in the early 1900's without the benefit of COMPUTERS or the knowledge of METEOROLOGICAL WEATHER DATA we now possess. Also, the inefficient control by City Hall in earlier years, of sewer & drain installation resulted in many "cross connections" of storm water into sanitary sewers and surface flooding during heavy storms infiltrates into sanitary sewer manholes through vents in the manhole covers.

Studies of the weather patterns and the rainfall intensity in different areas of the City showed the effect of "weather" coming from different directions. Calculation of the existing capacity of each leg in the sewer system showed where flooding would occur. Computer systems allowed us to design existing sewer flows to rise to a level just below the manhole cover to take advantage of the higher flow velocity due to the increased hydraulic head. Investigations of many individual house connections to the storm & sanitary sewers indicated a need for installation of "backflow protection" valves and sump pumps in the basement to deal with potential sewer backup.

With the knowledge of these deficiencies in the City sewer system, we set about a complete REDESIGN of the network within the City. Since the City covers some 250 square miles, that was quite a challenge! With the help of Consultants, our own in-house 75 engineers, technicians and support staff conducted a thorough investigation of the sanitary sewers and

the storm sewers and prepared a comprehensive RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT to modernize the City's drainage infrastructure at a cost of \$1.3 BILLION.

In 1986, Alberta received another economic blow when world oil price declined steeply. Alberta's economic woes began to turn around in the late 1980s. The provincial government used enormous royalty revenues generated from oil and gas sales to diversify into the forestry sector. By the mid-1990s, Alberta's fortunes were on the rise again, thanks to the fiscally responsible Ralph Klein government and higher world prices for oil and natural gas.

In 1987 this PROPOSAL was submitted to Edmonton City Council but received lukewarm response from the Aldermen due to the obvious economic and political impact such a massive reconstruction would cause. So, the usual decision in such situations was to carry out these changes over the next 30 years. This would also need a boost in revenue from the Provincial and Federal Government – which has not yet occurred.

However, as we all now know, the economy in Alberta and Canada was headed for the major ECONOMIC RECESSION of 2008 to be followed by a slow and painful return to stability led by the USA.

#### PHASED OUT

Since I left the City of Edmonton ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT in 1996, the City Council has transferred the operation & management of the WATER UTILITY, WASTEWATER UTILITY and DRAINAGE SERVICES UTILITY to Edmonton Power Corporation (EPCOR).



Snow Dumps in  
Edmonton



**E. L. Smith Water Treatment Plant**



- In 2008 the 3-year upgrade to the E. L. Smith Water Treatment Plant was completed. This helps to secure the long-term supply of drinking water for the Edmonton region.
- In 2009 the City of Edmonton transferred ownership of the Gold Bar Wastewater Treatment Plant to EPCOR Water Services. The Company has made many upgrades increasing the capacity and the efficiency of the Plant to meet higher loads and higher standard requirements.
- In 2017 the City of Edmonton approved the transfer of its Drainage Services department to EPCOR, giving them responsibility for managing Edmonton's complete Water Utility cycle. About 700 skilled and experienced Drainage employees joined EPCOR.

This very extensive reorganization of the previous WATER & SANITATION DEPARTMENT included ALL of the areas I had worked in for 11 years and were now in the capable hands of many of my former colleagues but under the “semi-private” Corporation of Edmonton Power (EPCOR).

## **F**ORK IN THE ROAD – DIRECTOR, ENGINEERING SERVICES

In 1988, I was transferred to the reorganized EDMONTON PUBLIC WORKS department in the position of DIRECTOR, ENGINEERING SERVICES.

Our team of 53 engineers, technicians and support staff was responsible to deliver contract management services to City departments in the construction of water, sewer and telephone underground utility systems. In addition, we provided engineering, drafting, surveying, cost estimating and project management services to the PUBLIC WORKS CONSTRUCTION BRANCH who were engaged in building TUNNELS for the extension of the City Light Rail Transit system (LRT).

- I remained in that position until my retirement in March 1996.

## **P**REPARING FOR RETIREMENT - 12, KINGSVIEW POINT, ST. ALBERT

In 1990 we had moved into a newly designed & custom built “house on the hill” at #12 Kingsview Point, St. Albert with only 2-minutes’ drive to the golf course. We had joined the STURGEON VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB, several years before and had made lots of friends there. Golfing was our “exercise routine” and the Golf Club was our local “social club” and Restaurant.



When the snow & ice came in Winter, Phyllis was not too happy about the “house on the hill” location, as she slid her rather large 1985 OLDSMOBILE REGENCY down the hill to stop (sometimes) at the intersection at the bottom. My new BUICK PARK AVENUE was fine with its “traction control” feature!

After 38 years in Municipal Engineering, including 20 years working for the CITY OF EDMONTON, I decided to take conventional RETIREMENT at 60 years of age. Phyllis had retired from her 20-year career with the ALBERTA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT three years earlier.

We had planned to stay in St. Albert as our permanent home in the Summer and to follow the SNOWBIRDS to the sunny State of ARIZONA, USA each Winter for up to 5 months.

However, when some colleagues in my Edmonton, Alberta office in 1993 said we should take a look at VANCOUVER ISLAND and the Comox Valley as an alternative, we took their advice and drove over and checked out the area around QUALICUM BEACH.

We liked it so much that we immediately bought a Townhouse condominium under construction in a complex with "ocean view" called PEBBLE BEACH in the French Creek area between Parksville and Qualicum Beach.

The Townhouse was ready in Spring 1994, so we took possession, rented it to an elderly couple for 2 years and returned to St. Albert to wait expectantly for my actual retirement scheduled for MARCH 1996.

#### 1996 RETIREMENT

Following all the usual FAREWELL LUNCHEES and presentations of various mementos to carry into the "afterlife" such as a gold-plated Alarm clock and boxes of golf balls and speeches to long serving friends and colleagues whom I have REALLY missed – I took my leave of the City of Edmonton in March 1996.

I had served the cause of WATER PURE & SIMPLE for some 20 years and never taken a day of sick leave – for which I received several symbolic wristwatches over the years from the Department. I had run the course and lived to tell the tale!



## **S**urgeon Valley Golf & Country Club

Now Phyllis and I began our long-awaited RETIREMENT with the customary frequent attendance at the STURGEON GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB as we prepared to sell our St. Albert home and move to Vancouver Island in the Fall of 1996.

I played golf with the SENIOR MEN'S Club and we gathered at 8:00 AM at the Clubhouse most days of the week for our 4-hour game of golf prior to lunch at the Golf Course or some other Local restaurant. Phyllis and I played regular "Couples" Golf Tournaments and lived the special life of the Golf Professional, but with smaller prize money.



## **M**OVE TO VANCOUVER ISLAND

August 1996 came around very quickly and we arranged several more Farewell Functions and headed for the Sunshine Coast and the BC Ferry sailing to Nanaimo, British Columbia.

Our elderly renters had vacated our Town House at the PEBBLE BEACH Condominium Complex in FRENCH CREEK and we quickly slipped into the VERY relaxed lifestyle of Vancouver Island, where we had been assured there was NEVER more than an inch or two of snow – and that reputedly melted in a day or so. We had accordingly divested ourselves of all gardening and snow clearing tools and equipment. The hired LANDSCAPE GARDENERS will do all the work that is necessary, so we began to explore and familiarize ourselves with our new culture.

As advertised, the FALL was a splash of colour throughout the Island as the leaves turned and we tried out the local golf courses and restaurants. Everyone at Pebble Beach was super-friendly and we spent many hours playing BRIDGE in the Clubhouse and joining in with POT LUCK SUPPERS and getting acquainted with everyone.

Soon after moving in we had a visit from our STRATA COUNCIL CHAIRMAN who handed us some pamphlets and brochures on the local area and he asked if we would be interested in serving on the Strata Council as the “Annual General Meeting” was due in April 1997.

We declined the offer but said we would consider “helping in some way” in the New Year. Life carried on with its usual relaxed rhythm, but we began to hear from some Owners that there were a few “issues” that needed to be resolved – the landscape maintenance was not being done satisfactorily, some small trees had died, etc.

At the Annual General Meeting in 1997, several Owners raised the issue of the unsatisfactory Property Management services being offered by the current Management Company. After a discussion of options open to the Strata Corporation, it was decided to invite PROPOSALS from several local Property Managers to replace the current Company.

## **FORK IN THE ROAD - EAGLE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT STARTUP**

Phyllis and I decided we could do the Strata Management job better than some of the local firms. So, we immediately formed and registered **EAGLE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT** as a “sole proprietorship” Company to provide a full range of property management services and hired two talented and experienced Assistants to join us.

We mounted a brief promotional campaign informing the Owners at Pebble Beach of the advantages of hiring John and Phyllis Ward as dedicated Owners and experienced in all the aspects of infrastructure management and governance by the Strata Corporation.

Then John Ward was invited to attend a competitive “ALL CANDIDATES” interview at a Town Hall Meeting of the 54 other Owners Pebble Beach. As a result, John Ward was selected and appointed to be Property Manager in February 1998.

We have had many successes and are proud of the fact that we were able to not only manage a total of 30 different Strata Corporations over those years, but were able to assist several Strata Corporations with problems not only of building repairs & remediation (frequently related to “dry rot” from water penetration) but also water supply deficiencies, sewage disposal problems and roadway repair & maintenance. One large building remediation project cost \$3,000,000, and another cost \$645,000 – both in “sleepy” Qualicum Beach.

# **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE CONDO**

**We have had many amusing incidents in our 20 years as Strata Managers.**

- An Elderly man once locked himself out of his Townhouse. He then broke in through the kitchen window. Next day he reported to the Manager that a burglar had broken his window and stolen his keys. Strata had to repair the window at Corporation cost. We later discovered he had early dementia and had forgotten where he put his keys. He did this several times over many months. The Strata had to replace his keys several times. The keys were found later in his “sock drawer...”
- There was the old man with ALZHEIMER’S SYNDROME who wandered off out of the gated community and was found hours later in the local town... walking down the road in a daze. He had no family locally, so the Police were empowered to refer his case to the Provincial Social Services Department.
- There was the old lady who repeatedly put her hot iron on the kitchen countertop and claimed under Strata insurance to replace the countertop with a black “brand” shaped like an iron.
- There was the deceitful man who intentionally toppled a potted plant (which he had just watered) onto his carpet, leaving a permanent stain. Then he claimed under Strata Insurance to replace ALL the matching carpet in his ground floor. The Insurance Adjuster approved the \$5,000 claim. There was no evidence that it was not accidental.
- There was the old lady who put her watering can into the kitchen sink and turned the tap on to fill the can. She left the spout of the can aimed over the edge of the sink and went to her computer to “quickly” do some surfing. She returned 30 minutes later to find the whole ground floor flooded. Strata Corporation had to replace ALL her matching hardwood flooring under Insurance coverage at a cost of \$10,000.
- There was the elderly couple, who went away on a 4-week holiday. Their washing machine rubber hose developed a drip inside the wall. When they returned, the wall insulation was saturated, the wall was about to “burst” and the carpet in the adjoining dining room was wet over a large area. Multicoloured fungi were growing out of the carpet... The carpet was replaced along with the wall construction - again under Strata Corporation Insurance.
- There was the elderly lady of Central European descent who got angry with her dishwasher that would not work properly. In a rage she jumped into her car in the garage and reversed fast out onto her driveway... but forgot to open the Up & Over Door first! The door was repaired under her Condo Insurance. Now you know why Condominium Insurance is so expensive.

## **FORK IN THE ROAD - BACK TO A "SINGLE FAMILY HOME"**

**640, MORNINGSTAR DRIVE, FRENCH CREEK**

In 2004 Phyllis and I decided we wanted to leave the Townhouse in PEBBLE BEACH and build another "single family home". Whereas we had enjoyed the communal atmosphere in a Strata Complex for 8 years, being the Strata Managers as well was too much of a burden. We also wanted to "upsized" our home from the 2-Bed, 2-Bath concept to a 3-Bed, 2-Bath with a Home Office. There is no way the Strata Concept will allow you to do this without obtaining a 75% Approval from the other Owners – and then they have to approve your detailed design. Then there is the argument "If you build one, everyone will want one..."

So, we searched for a suitable lot in the Qualicum Beach area and quickly found a site in the St. ANDREWS ESTATES backing on to the 18<sup>th</sup> Fairway at MORNINGSTAR GOLF COURSE. This location was perfect, and it has a great "golf course view" with a 400-yard long backyard...and a flag at the end!

We purchased the bare lot from the Builder (ARBUTUS HOMES) and immediately began to work on the "custom design" for the 2,200 sq.ft. bungalow. In October 2004 we moved in and, over the last 18 years, we have enjoyed making upgrades to the home to create our own "little haven" on MORNINGSTAR DRIVE. This is the longest time we have ever lived in any home, anywhere... 18 years, and counting!







