

To the best of my knowledge I started at Chenies School in September 1939 or was it 1940? We used to catch the No. 335 or 336 Bus from Little Chalfont to Chenies as the Rover Bus was already full. *My brother John followed about a year later.*

Mrs. A. E. Life was the headmistress who lived in the school house attached to the school. I remember on my first day being taken into her kitchen for stewed plums. Mrs. Life was a wonderful mixture of caring person and stern disciplinarian. She played the piano at assembly and music lessons. If anyone was naughty she would roll up their sleeve and explain how her hand would reach from wrist to elbow when she smacked the tender inner arm. This had a great deterrent effect on the whole class. She was an excellent cook and I remember staying with her once when she cooked an omelette which was the best I've ever tasted.

Our school games consisted of "He" "Chain He" and "Up and Over" when a tennis ball was thrown over the outside toilet block. The girls played "hop scotch" and "he" etc. *We had lessons in the orchard during warm weather, and I remember an apple falling on a boy's head & he was allowed to eat it. That put a stop to our laughter.* The school and local families played host to the evacuees from London. We regarded them as interlopers and were rather un-sympathetic to the trauma they must have endured.

On fine days in the Summer we used to walk to and from school with our friends the Honours, Pete, Ken and Billy all went to Chenies and we all ended up playing for the Youth Club Football team which played on the Platt.

School dinners were started in the Long Room of Chenies Manor and Mrs. Pearce was the head cook.

Some people have unhappy memories of their school dinners but ours were excellent. Some of the Mums came to help as servers etc. and the tapioca, rice puddings and semolina were wonderful and if lucky there was second helpings and an occasional scraping out of the dishes used to cook these puddings. *I recall some of the older girls helped with the drying up of the cutlery.* Our teachers sat at a table on a raised platform overlooking the main room so as to keep an eye on us.

The Youth Club use to meet in the room above the canteen and there was a full size billiard table available on which we used to play.

Anyone with a reasonable voice was pushed/selected for the church choir and we attended practices and services on Sundays. I recall at one time the organist was called Whittaker Wilson who ended up marrying one of the choir ladies called "Judith??" He played the usual "Here comes the bride" with such passion the organ nearly burst. Mr. Smith was the rector with five daughters and he had a wonderful collection of sea shells and birds eggs.

Sports Days were held on the Chenies Cricket Ground opposite the Red Lion and were great occasions with a half day off lessons and much excitement. We had all sorts of running races and sack, three legged and egg and spoon.

Miss Howe is the only other teacher I can remember and she cycled to school from Chesham each day. She was a happy person and a good teacher.

We were fortunate to be so well taught and cared for by Mrs. Life and her colleagues, and a good proportion of the school went on to Germaines Street and Whitehill in Chesham or Dr. Challenor's in Amersham.

Children there in my time were Ken and Brenda Goss, John Cox, Ken and Margaret ^{Maling} ~~Maling~~, Roger and Hilary Simmonds, Anne Ryder and her cousin Joyce, the Stevens, Donovans and Warners from Lodge Lane, Michael Mallett? George Hooke, Margaret and Michael Setterfield, the Munns (John, Michael and Geoffrey), Bernard Mead, Peter, Ken and Billy Honour etc.

During the war we had to practice going under the desks if the siren sounded, when in the playground we would hide in the hedges until the "All clear" sounded. ^

Bovingdon was the home of the "Flying Fortresses" and we saw them limping home at the start of the disastrous daylight bombing campaign. On one of our walks to school we saw a Lancaster bomber which had crash landed in the 100 Acre field beside the main road to Chenies and was wedged between the trees on Stony Lane. In

the later part of the war we saw a "Flying bomb" when my Dad was cycling back from church with me on the cross bar.

One of the joys of life are the way the strands intermingle. Mum helped out with school dinners and became friendly with Mrs. Life. Dad decorated her kitchen when she had been in her new house for some time and been widowed. We and the Gosses meet and met through Mum and Dad retiring to Burton Bradstock in Dorset. Ken Goss and I met in the Canal Zone whilst doing National Service in 1954. They were happy days in spite of the war as we had none of the responsibilities or worries of our parents.

Joe Harrison