

VILLAGE LIFE 8

Wakes week.

Wakes Monday was the big day, after the 24th June. They'd parade at church on the Monday morning, and then they went to the Bowling Green. The Foresters went to the Bowling Green for dinner. After tea they had a parade round the village and there was the Morris Dancers out. The Foresters was a sort of friendly society. There weren't any help in them days, and if any of the men were off sick you used to go to the club and get a certificate and take it to the doctor. The doctor signed it, and they could take it back to the club and perhaps get ten shillings or a pound a week. Well, there wasn't anything else. Twice a year, they used to parade down the street**.** After the First World War they paraded on Armistice Day, then whatever day of the week 11th November was. [Dolly Brassington]

Wakes and Carnival.

They always called it 'Wakes', and it was ever such a big do. You used to have to save up from one Wakes to another to save any pennies. There used to be donkeys and that at the top of Winster Bank. Timmy Wray used to come every year, and they used to have these lamps that hung down and a flame used to shoot up. There wasn't a mantle over. They used to have these teeth, like, and you used to throw these wooden balls at them. And they always used to have donkeys at the top of Winster Bank. They'd only go so far, and you couldn't make them go any further, yet they'd only trained them for about half-an-hour. The fair people always came from Youlgreave to Winster. After they'd finished the Wakes at Youlgreave on the Sunday, they'd be packed up Saturday night. Sunday morning they'd travel from Youlgreave with the steam engine pulling all these big caravans, swings and dobby horses. It used to be on the triangle up by the Miners' Standard. They only used Oddo Field for the Carnival. Wakes was at the top, but they had Carnival in the daytime, as they do now. Carnival would perhaps start off at 1.30 p.m. and parade up the Street, and they finished off in Oddo Field. Wakes were there all week at the Bank Top. Every night you could hear Wakes going, all over Winster. This would have been anything after 1909. A lot of us lads used to go down towards Dudwood to meet the Wakes coming, and then we used to follow it up. It was something out of the ordinary in those days, because there weren't any televisions. You used to save all the pennies that you could from one Wakes to another. There were always coconuts at Wakes, and that was the only time of the year you could afford a coconut, if you knocked one off or if somebody knocked you one off. There was some who were very good at knocking them off, and they'd knock two or three off eventually, and perhaps they'd give you one. If you hadn't got the money to buy these balls to throw, they'd say, ''ere, teck one of these.' [Bert Boam]

A baby born at Wakes.

There was always a fair on the triangle at the top of the Bank. Tim Wray used to come and everybody assembled up there, and he was there all week. They had swing-boats, coconuts, big horses, slot machines, guns. Auntie Nancy [Mrs George Gregory] used to tell me that one of the children was born there, and she was involved in the birth of this baby, because they were like nomads these fair people, and one of them was born up there. [Roy Walters]

Carnivals and May Day.

We used to have this Mrs Fletcher who lived up here, Dr James' wife. She used to get up the maypole dancing and all that on May Day. There was a May Day Queen in the Main Street. They used to have a maypole and different things. I can't just remember exactly what there was. There used to be carnivals, but it dropped off. I think it would be the war when the carnival dropped off. Then, of course, they started to organise it again. And then there was a break for a year or two and, of course, they've started again with it. [Betty Dexter]

The Women's Institute and the Carnival.

The Women's Institute revived the Carnival and also ran the first barbecues that we had. They became very popular. We had the first barbecue at the Miners' Standard, and it poured with rain, but they opened the room at the back and everybody went in there. The first Market Fair at the top of the Bank was in 1968. I organised that, and we raised £500, and that was a lot of money in those days. We worked all the winter for it. We had whist drives, we dressed 144 dolls to be sold or won on the hoopla, we had a food stall, a craft stall, a roll-a-penny stall, we'd maypole dancing, we'd a marquee with minerals, we'd a marquee doing teas, we sold eggs, we made marmalade, we sold plants, we'd a second-hand clothes stall… I went to Hartington and got two cheeses, Hartington cheese, for the Market Fair, and the Burton girls cut it all up for us and weighed it out. And we had a wonderful day. [Margaret Tomlinson]

A pig in a sack.

The women were involved in the British Legion, W.I., and, of course, the choirs. They organised the Carnival when it was just one day's big event, not every day of the week. I remember my Dad used to give a pig as a prize, and they used to have to bowl the skittles for this pig. I remember Mrs Greatorex winning it, and my Dad putting it in a sack. And she carried it all the way up the Bank [to Bradley House]. It was a live pig. There was Timmy Wray's fairground, and that was lovely - dobby horses that went up and down, throwing for goldfish in the coconut shy, swing-boats, fancy dress and Carnival Queen. [Dot Fearn]

Ringing the fairground bell.

There were no telly. You'd got to make your own enjoyment all the time. There was a fair used to come to the top of the Bank - Tim Wray, with his two traction engines. He had galloping horses, swing-boats and stalls. And he'd got this –

have you ever seen them? – where you have a hammer and hit and try and ring the bell. I can remember when we were kids on a Saturday night they'd be coming out of the Miners' Standard, some of these men out of the village - they'd had a drop too much drink - trying to hit this thing with hammer. I don't know what year it would be Tim Wray stopped coming. Another gentleman took it on, a Mr Sykes, but he'd only got a little kiddies' roundabout and swing-boats. And after that, they never had any more fairs during Wakes Week. It's not the same. It's, like, all gone away, gradually. In them days there used to be seven or eight floats along Main Street. Well, you're lucky if you get one with a queen on now. [Les Bacon]

Piano playing at Wakes Dance.

I remember it was Winster Wakes Dance, and the pianist had let them down, or fell ill, so they asked the MC, Stanley Boam, if he knew anybody who'd play. So he came and asked me and I said I'd try. I'd never done anything like that before, but it went very good, and they said I was better than the normal pianist. So they said would I play regular, and I did, all during the war years. It was good. My piano's at Gill's now - out of tune - and I've got arthritis. I used to play for functions at the Hall, such as if they were having a party. I played a lot of left hand, a good base hand. I wished I could have brought the piano with me, but there's no room. I used to tell people the words, then there'd be a gap for everybody to sing, and then I'd say the next line. [Dot Fearn]

Maypole.

They used to have a May Day with maypole dancing on the first of May. They used to go round the village with it. I used to dance round the maypole. My mother used to dance maypole when she was a child. Two or three sat on it at the bottom and held it, and everybody had May Day off. [Mildred Witham]

Winster Flower Show.

Winster Flower Show was held in Oddo for years and years and years. The Morris Dancers had a marquee always, there in Oddo, and a beer tent as well. And they all got so canned up they couldn't come out with their singing. [John Millward]

Morris dancing.

In the fifties I was teaching morris dancing. I was training the Winster team. I took over from Jos Noton, the headmaster of Winster School. I trained the morris team, and I had a junior team that I used to take to carnival functions and to the maternity hospital at Wirksworth - give them demonstrations there. Jos Noton said, 'We can't work these dances out. We just don't seem to understand from the book.' He said, 'You're a teacher of dancing. You'll probably understand it better.' So I volunteered to go down. I had them dancing and doing it all. They didn't know how to do the Winster Reel. I put it all right for them. I had them dancing, and I danced with them. They was leaning over the desk panting, and I was still dancing, and I said, 'What's up with you lot? I've just got over



Winster Morris, 1952. Back row: Vin Hodgkinson (left), Stan Marshall, Roy Witham, Ray Tuffin, Ray Marshall, Arnold Greatorex, Ernest Glover. Middle row: Walter Herrington, George Walker (Witch), John Wild (King), George Gregory (Queen), Eric Shimwell (Jester), Ron Haddon. Front row: Alan Greatorex, Alan Webster, Joe 'Pea' Rains (Musician), Michael Spencer, Tommy Gregory.

pneumonia and I've got more wind than you have!' Mind you, they were older than me. We were the first team. Roy Witham was a lad - he was 18 - and I taught him the Fool's Jig. We were the first visiting team to ever dance through the streets of Cambridge. Cambridge Morris used to come up here. In the fifties we also had a ladies' team country dancing and morris. I've got the photographs to prove it. I used to take my car with a loudspeaker on the top, and I used to have a record player inside playing the music. And I used to play all their morris dances, because they were all on records. But Joe Rains used to play the melodeon. We called him 'Joe Pea'. He was a greengrocer at one time. It's J.P. Rains, but we used to call him Joe Pea. I tell you, I used to provide them with my car and the music, and we used to go to Hartington, all over the place, and give bits of demonstrations, country dancing and morris dancing, go round with the collecting boxes. We used to give demonstrations at Darley Institute, Peacock at Rowsley. Then they did mixed country dancing, Morris Dancers in their dress and the girls in their dress. Kathleen used to run the ladies' dancers. I wouldn't interfere with their dancing. I used to more-or-less run the show. She used to fit in with us, but we wouldn't allow the ladies to dance the Winster Morris - and that's what they used to get narked about - because it's a man's dance. [Vin Hodgkinson]

'This is morris dancing.'

My husband was a Morris Dancer. We also did country dancing. Mrs Fletcher organised it all, but a Miss Bell - I don't know where she came from - she used to come and give us lessons. There must have been about sixteen girls in our group of country dancers, I think, and there were quite a lot of boys. They did the Winster Gallop, and it starts with this song:

This is it and that is it, and this is morris dancing.
A piper fell and broke his neck, and said it was a chancer.
You don't know, I don't know what fun we had at Brampton.
A roasted pig and a cuddled duck and a pudding in a lantern.
[Dolly Brassington]

Morris Dancers' pig's bladder.

I must tell you this. My dad was the Jester who had the pig's bladder. After he'd killed the pig, he'd bring the bladder and put it in a bowl of water and salt it and clean it. And then, when it was time for the morris dancing, he'd get this pig's bladder, and I can see him now with a pipe stem and stick it in the bladder and keep blowing. And, by Jove, he used to go red in the face. I thought his eyes would pop out. And he'd rub it on his knee and have another blow and another rub, until he got it blown up. And, of course, when you gave anyone a slap with it, it didn't hurt, because it was so thin. It never burst, and it was clean, because it had been salted. But they don't have bladders now. [Dot Fearn]

The Girls' Friendly Society.

Mrs Fletcher, the doctor's wife, did a lot for the village. She was always working for the village. She lived in the Manse, organising different things. When the war was on - it must have been the 1914-18 war - we were in the Girls' Friendly Society, and we used to go up into her kitchen and she would have all kinds of things on the table, like apples, plums and different things. And we had to bottle it and do, and she sent it down to Darley Hospital. That was called The Willing Helpers' League. We used to go two evenings a week, and that was when the 1914-18 war was on. One night when we went we were all crying, because we were cutting onions up. We couldn't see, because there were so many onions. And I remember these plums ever so well. Gooseberries - I don't know if she'd have somebody collecting them in the village. A lot of the village people had gardens, and they grew a lot of fruit, so she'd probably beg some, if anybody had too much. I do remember that they went to the Whitworth Hospital at Darley Dale. She also helped to organise concerts and things like that - different plays, Sleeping Beauty. She used to help us to get dressed up. [Dolly Brassington]

Silver Jubilee.

I remember the Silver Jubilee [of Queen Elizabeth, 1977]. All the children were given mugs. Silver Jubilee night there was a big bonfire up near Lunter Rocks. I suppose there were others in view from higher points. I remember going up and coming down, because my auntie slipped and did something to her ankle. Mr



Tug-of-War. The Crown Team in action on Main Street on Wakes Saturday 1965.

Boam's taxi took us to Bakewell the next day to the Bakewell Hospital to have it seen to. [Eileen Crowder]

A den of iniquity.

W.I. and the British Legion. That's about it. Whist drives in the Market Hall. There was a tennis court behind the Manor and Mr Fengel used to charge 2d an hour. I used to hear about the Rendezvous - all these doctors and lawyers from Sheffield bringing other people's wives. It was raided quite a few times. They gambled there. It was called the den of iniquity. It was only outsiders doing it on the quiet. [Dot Fearn]

The Manor.

The Manor before Thorntons came was funny, a bit queer - naughty goings on. It was a peculiar place. It ran as a club, men mainly. I never really knew much about it. I think it was a club, and I think it was men. [Marjorie Stoker]

Skating on Mosey Mere.

Another thing I'd like to remind people about, in my days. Everything's altered, both the seasons and everything, because we used to get that keen a frost. I've seen as many as thirty people playing hockey on Mosey Mere at top of Winster Bank – and I've been one of 'em, an' all! And there's been thirty people playing

hockey and that on there. It's been frozen that hard and it's lasted such a long while. And now that's never happened for years. The seasons were different then in wintertime to what they are now, ever such a lot different. My father, when he'd finished at the mine, he went to Birchover quarries, and he was out of work for a length of time - as much as nine weeks - with frost. Couldn't work at the quarry for nine weeks, and you didn't get paid. You had to manage the best way you could, like, because most people in the village kept either a pig or two and fowls, and that's how you lived, through your own produce. [Bert Boam]

Bear baiting.

Mrs Staton told me - that's Lizzie Staton, whose grandma lived at Jasmine Cottage on East Bank - that there used to be bear baiting in Winster. The bear used to be baited at the Shoulder of Mutton on West Bank, but it used to stay in the ale house where her grandma lived. I asked her where they used to keep it and she said it just slept in the back kitchen in front of the fire. It would be really weird having a bear lying in front of your fire. But that's all she told me. She didn't remember anything else about it. [Dot Fearn]

The Pigeon Club.

The Pigeon Club used to meet every Friday and bring their clocks. George Wood was secretary, and used to do all the writing down and putting the little band on the pigeons' legs. And then they used to send them away. I was never in the club, so I can't tell you the details. Lots of people had pigeons in the village. There were pigeon lofts everywhere. It was a big sport. They used to have a pie supper every year. I used to cater for them at the Bowling Green. You can imagine making meat and potato pie for about sixty or seventy. I used to bake them in my dad's big tins and take them to the local bakehouse to bake, and then they'd carry them across the road up the steps to the clubroom. They'd all be seated, and there'd be about four of us serving pie and peas. They always had pea and pie suppers, and the weddings and funerals were always the same - ham and tongue salad. I used to bake everything, though, all the cakes. [Dot Fearn]

The Poor House.

In my day it was called Bank Top Farm, but once it was the Poor House, because I've heard my grandma and grandad talk about it. It were very convenient for what it was used for, because there weren't quite as many people on Poor Laws as what there is today. I've been in Burton's shop when people have come in and they've handed over this piece of paper, and I've seen Mr Burton say to the girls, 'Now go and get this.' And it's been a pass for so much bread and cheese, and they had to make that last till they got to Bakewell to the Poor House or to Ashbourne Poor House. [Gladys Hardy]

A poor woman moves on.

I remember seeing people walking from Ashbourne to Bakewell. I lived on the

Via Gellia, in a pub called the Lilies Inn, with my Mum and Dad at one time, and I used to have to bike to school. I saw this old lady going up Shothouse Hill. She was walking. Her shoes were worn out and her feet were bleeding. She said she'd got to walk to Bakewell. So I said, 'Stand on my bike pedal and I'll push you as far as I can, and you'd better go to my Dad's shop to get some money to get to Bakewell.' And my Dad gave her the money for the bus fare. They'd changed the laws so that you could only stop at the Poor House for one night, and then you had to move on to another one, so people had to travel from Bakewell to Ashbourne. They call the Poor House at Bakewell 'Newholme'. It's the hospital now. [Dot Fearn]

The first buses.

There was no transport, so we used to have to leave for school at half-past-seven and ride down with Mr Thomas Heathcote and his milk cart to Darley Dale Station, get the train and then go to Matlock and walk up. And we'd have to walk home at night. My father was quite concerned about this, so he made his way down to Matlock, to a gentleman there, and he got them to send up a taxi for us for half-past-eight each school day. But other people, who wanted to go down to catch the train and that at Darley Dale or Matlock, kept coming and wanting, could they have a ride? It got so overcrowded my father thought he'd better do something else about this. He came down to see if they could set up a twelve-seater little bus first, and then he arranged for it to fetch us back at quarter-past-four in the afternoon. In between that he arranged for them to come up to Winster and leave Winster at one o'clock to come down Wensley and round Oker for the older people to go shopping to Matlock. The fare to Matlock was 6d. And that's how the bus started running in Winster. [Bessie Thorpe]

The doctor and his wife arrive by car.

When we first came to Winster I don't think people went anywhere by transport. They walked. The bank came to Winster once a week, the doctor was in the village, the shops were in the village. Beyond going for clothes, their hairdressing they could get done in the village. So I suppose about once a year they'd go on a shopping expedition - to Bakewell, mainly, more than Matlock. When we first arrived in the village in 1934 we came by car, which shook everybody rigid, and I think I made the fifth or sixth vehicle in the village. The fish man had one, the Dower House had a car, Mr Greatorex had a car, Desmond had a car, and I had a car. Everybody thought I was a scarlet woman - a car and my nails painted red! [Marjorie Stoker]

Village doctor.

An interesting thing, which you couldn't do today, was with the medicines. My husband looked after Stanton-in-the Peak, Birchover, all those villages that side - not Matlock so much, because there were doctors there. Via Gellia he looked after, and the Hollybush down there, the farm, that way. He visited Stanton-in-the-Peak Mondays and Thursdays - I think something like that - and the

patients up there would give him their bottles which were empty of medicine, ointment or whatever. He brought them back here where Eileen [Crowder] was working for us, as far back as that. She would fill the bottles and put them in a little box on the wall outside. And you went and collected it yourself. Now, I ask you, today, leaving medicines lying about! An old man, whose name I can't recall, took them down to the bus, put them on the bus, paid the money, and the conductress or conductor took them off at Stanton-in-the-Peak, where there was somebody waiting. Medicine was delivered to the villages on Mondays and Thursdays. It couldn't happen today. Fancy leaving it sitting in a box on the wall outside! It wasn't locked. You just opened it like a cabinet. It would be unthinkable today. You wouldn't dare to, never mind being allowed to. No, everybody just trusted everybody else. It's like not locking your door. [Marjorie Stoker]

A Firework Night accident.

On bonfire night, 5th November, there were a lad about twelve or thirteen year old - somewhere round about that. And in them days, when it were Firework Night a lot of them kind of lads about that age, they used to get a bit of copper piping and they'd drill a hole in this copper piping and they'd knock one end up, and then drum this little hole in. And they used to make their own powder, and they used to get charcoal, saltpetre and sulphur. Them three makes your powder. So they used to make this powder and put it in, and then get some newspaper and get a stick, so it would just fit nicely in your pipe. And they used to ram it in tight, like, after they'd put the powder in. Then they used to light this little bit of fuse. Oh, and bang! It were colossal. Harry Fengel, he was at the bottom of Woolley's Yard - that house at the bottom of Woolley's Yard used to be a bank, William Deacons Bank, once upon a time. And there were a lot of us lads there at the time. And he lit this what'sit, and it didn't go off. And he got it again to light it and it blew him, I don't know if it were two or three fingers off. Harry Fengel was his name, and he lived down the School Lane at that time of the day, across from Redthorne. It was Woolley's Yard that the accident occurred, where the railings were against the Post Office. [Bert Boam]

Hallowe'en.

We'd go and get a turnip, because most of the farmers had heaps of turnips in them days, different to what it is now. They used to pulp the turnips to feed the cows with. They'd always have big heaps, so you could go to one of them turnip heaps, get a turnip and hollow it out and cut little eye things out of the turnip and stick a candle in and then put it on a stick. Today there's no turnips for anybody to hollow out. [Bert Boam]

Cattle fairs.

They used to have two fairs, one in May and another would be August or September. They used to have these wooden pens, and they had some down Pump Lane and they had sheep in them, and they had some up East Bank and they

had pigs in them, and so on. For the cattle, they always used to be in the Main Street. My granny, well, she had, one fair day, a great big dish with fried fish in. And then one of the cows went with horns and caught it somewhere, because they knock about so, and knocked pane right through onto fried fish, right against John Rowland's boot shop. To this day there's still a ring in the wall where they used to tie horses up. [Bert Boam]

Earthquake of 1952.

Going out of the kitchen door there was a yard, a toilet, and then there was this big old wall. My mum was in the kitchen and I was somewhere about here, and there was this terrific crash. I went in the kitchen and I said, 'Oh mum, that wall's come down, I'm sure.' I opened the door very gingerly and had a look, and it was still standing. It turned out it was the earthquake. There was this terrible noise, and I thought it was this wall that had crashed into the yard. You wonder is everything coming down on you. [Betty Dexter]

Marshall's Dance Band.

Winster used to be quite an active village, always something going on, very lively, and my father belonged to the Morris Dancers. He had the Marshall's Dance Band, which went quite a few miles in Derbyshire. When the winter weather was bad they used to take a spade in case they got stuck in the snow. The village hall in Winster was called the Burton Institute, same as it is now, and we used to hold dances and concerts - quite a busy place. Also in the dance band was my brother-in-law's brother, Norman, who used to play the piano for quite a while. And my mother played the violin. She was a very good violinist. Learned from the age of five and used to teach. [Phyllis Taylor]

Pancake races.

Mr Johnson organised pancake races, Amy's dad. He were the instigator of them alright, but he always run in races. And they were very good people for giving things away, like. They made cups of tea and gave to folks, 'cause they'd got a big backyard, you see, where all the farm used to be, and they could accommodate up in their front room. [Gladys Hardy]

A Pancake Day accident.

We used to run from the top of the street in those days, down to the Market House. I remember quite a while back when we were all at the top of the street ready to run and Dr Stoker comes down on his bicycle, waving pancake in one hand and riding bike with the other. And he'd arranged with the landlord at the Crown, which was Bert Hawley, to have about eight half pints of beer waiting for us. We set off running down there, straight into the Crown, drunk these half pints of beer and then went down to the Market House where the winning tape was. I got down there first, because I'm a pretty good runner. They carried on with these races for quite a while, but the old organisers were dying off and the new lot taking over, and they only run half the length of the street. I got on

to them many a time and told them, I said, 'It's no race, no race at all, running from Woolley's Yard down there, because if you drop your pancake on a short run you could pick it up and catch up with the winners. I've been on to them many a time. Every year I keep telling them, 'Go farther back', but they won't.



Picking up pancakes. The Shrove Tuesday races outside the Crown on Main Street, c. 1960, with Carolyn Boam and David Bacon still running.

About three years ago I decided to run on my own, at 82 years of age, and I went from the bottom of Woolley's Yard just to show them and prove that you can run if you want. I ran as good as I could do, like, and, of course, everybody cheered and clapped me. Then I used to have Eric Shimwell, who's dead and gone now, he used to egg me on to run. He kept saying, 'Go on, you can beat them.' He used to come and give me a rub down - pretend like - just before the race, and I set off, and I could usually beat them all at my own age, no trouble.

Three years ago there was me and Alun Thomas, because I'd been asking for runners - anybody over 70. But nobody would take me on. Alun Thomas was about 70 at the time, and he said he would do. We set off from Woolley's Yard. I'm keeping up with him and I'm just about to overtake him, and I don't know whether I caught my foot in a hole or whether it was a cat's-eye, but I went a right purler. I didn't fall, I slid - hands first. Pan went flying, took middle out of my left hand, knocked my knuckle on my right hand…. It was bleeding and they brought me in the house to clean me up. And I kept feeling a bit dizzy. I kept putting my head between my knees. Eric Shimwell was with me. He went straight into Burton's. 'Come quick, Bill's collapsed!' When I came round all I could see was a pair of knees, and it was Dawn Woolley. She'd been in the Police Force and she knew a bit about First Aid. I went to Calow Hospital, and they cleaned me up, stitched my hand up, and I was alright. I've run once since, and I was on my own that time. I said, 'Now then,' to the starter who was the schoolmaster - his name was Edwards, I think. I said to him 'If Eric Shimwell's up there, this is for him,

because he's always been on to me.' I just run down for Eric, and that's the last time I've run in Pancake Races. [Bill Slaney]

Youth entertainment.

The Burton Institute was in use most nights when I was a girl. Every week there was something going off. There was always a dance on Saturday night - ballroom dancing and old-time. Vinny Hodgkinson used to run the dancing. It was quite a little hot-spot in those days. We also had the youth club, which was very useful because it had us in contact with all sorts of other villages - Birchover, Youlgreave, Elton, Bakewell, and some of them over Hartington way. We would go and integrate with them. We had sports matches and all sorts of things like that, so we got to know people in the other villages as well as in our own. There was Mrs Fletcher, who used to do the country dancing classes, with Mrs Potter playing the piano. Then there was the Women's Institute, of course. That was very strong. And each church used to have its own concert, perhaps twice a year. The church always put one on on New Year's Eve - that was a good one. [Eileen Crowder]

The Women's Institute.

The Women's Institute was formed in 1918. I wasn't around then, but I know Winster had a lovely ladies choir, which was quite successful. I wouldn't join it when I first came to Winster. I said, 'No, that's for old ladies'. But I did eventually join. They had a Miss Beresford, I think it was, that used to come round from head office in Derby teaching us how to sing, and we won cups and went singing at various events. The first Winster Drama Group was formed in 1949 by the Women's Institute. There were all sorts of productions, and one of them was 'Fall for the Shore'. We were the first amateur dramatic group to do that. We did about six plays in the Burton Institute, and then we stopped and didn't do any more. We had loads of fun. One time we'd about fourteen children, the women, between us, so we got the children who were off school and they helped us fix up the stage. We had to paper it and make all the scenery. And we got Hedley to cook chips for us at dinnertime, specially for us all. We had great fun. It was a big let-down when it was all over, because we so much enjoyed it. [Margaret Tomlinson]

Divorce.

In the 1930s divorce was hardly heard of, and, if it was, it was very hushed up. I know my mother telling me with bated breath once somebody had got divorced and I mustn't say anything about it. It was quite a thing. [Marjorie Stoker]

Council houses.

It was brought to the attention of the Parish Council that we needed houses in the village. There was no intention of building them originally on the playing fields. There was plenty of ground otherwise to build houses on. At the top of the Bank, which later they had swings up there, they were going to make that

into a little estate up there and then build further out and extend the village that way. But there was one gentleman, whose name was Bill Slack, and for some reason - I don't know why, except that he had no children at all – he wanted houses where the recreation ground was. He thought that would be the best place. He belonged to the Parish Council, I believe, and he got a petition up and took it round to the people who were definitely desperate for houses, because after the war a lot of the young people got married. They came from the war and got married, so we were very short of houses. And he took a paper round to say which do you want, houses or a playing field? And, really, that wasn't the option at all. It should have been the playing field where it was and the houses somewhere else. But, of course, they had this petition and they all signed it, a lot of people, to say they wanted houses. And he worded it so it looked as though they wanted houses on the playing field. So the Parish Council said they couldn't do anything about it. [Amy Slater]

A night out in Matlock.

We use go out every Sat'day naight, go t'dances. Went dairn Matlock Bath one naight, an ah dunno what, ah think i'must've... I fell dairn on flooer. Two girls wer picking maa up when ah cum roun'. Tayen me inter tea room an gi'me a cup o' coffee. I felt not very well all naight after that. Ah went work next day'n dairn farming an doin', an ah wer alraight. Not always bin quiet in mey younger days. Ah've cum in an' stepped out in me best clothes and gon straight back work, never had no bed at all, like, on Sat'day naights. [Stan Heathcote]

The Bull's Head.

Grandmother was owner of the Bull's Head [now Peace Haven, East Bank]. They used to come on their horses, go under the arch, tie them up and go in the pub for half a pint of beer and a packet of Woodbines for tuppence ha'penny. I heard my grandma saying about that. We were always told, when we kept the Bowling Green, that you could never refuse anybody bread and cheese. I don't know whether it was a law. There was a clubroom for functions upstairs, like the one we had. The club was the Buffaloes. It was very private, like the Masons. They didn't divulge, but I know my husband was in it, and they were very good when anybody needed help. [Dot Fearn]

Pubs in 1961.

When I came in 1961 there were just two pubs down in the village, The Crown and The Bowling Green, plus the Miners' Standard up the top of the Bank. Then they made the Hall into a pub, after the factory. It was a factory during the War. It was the Ukrainians. Then it was companion sets, the factory where they assembled companion sets. Then Derek and Pauline Wood did bed and breakfast and obtained a licence to turn it into a pub. [Roy Walters]

The Crown [now The Lodge, Main Street].

The old Crown was going then, across the road, when Will Stone and them were

there, but it's been shut about this last thirty years. We used to all go and have a pint. I were only a young lad, you know. I'm sure we weren't old enough. We were only about thirteen or fourteen, drinking beer like a man, and all these old men they didna bother about you. You could sup all night, drink there all night, and at turning-out time they come out and they never wobbled or nothing. They walked straight home, then come next night and have a fill up. They'd tell you some old-fashioned tales, them old men. They shut. It wasn't because it didn't pay - you couldn't get in. It were that full, because old Will was such a comic, and Tommy Todd was usher. He lived at the back, sort of a little flat at the back. He was a sergeant major in the army, and he could throw men out like flies, he could. I've seen many a fight in there. Tommy Todd, he's dead now and gone, he's in churchyard now. I mowed his grave other day. It used to be a real good, old village, an active village. [John Millward]

Minding horses outside the Crown.

Yes, such a lot worked down the mine at that time, but there were so many different trades, same as in a lot of villages. It didn't matter what village it were, there were always someone either to do with pushbikes or some kind of a trade. In Winster there was every trade that you could mention. There weren't any trade missing. There was even a tailor at Winster. People used to come into the village from round about, into same as Winster. I can remember when I were young, some of the farmers that lived away, same as at Pikehall, or someone maybe from Gratton, they would come into Winster for their groceries, saddlers, or something like that. And they would call at Crown for a drink, and they would give you a ha'penny to look after the horse for them. And you thought you were well away then. Sometimes they'd say, 'I'll only be half an hour,' and sometimes they'd be two hours. And you'd be stood there with the horse for two hours for a ha'penny! That happened such a lot of times. I can remember ever such a lot of times that I stood with horse against Crown in the Main Street at Winster, and yet today they're all cars. When I'm talking about there weren't one stood in the street. There was only four in the village. Walter Thorpe, he were first one to ever have a car in Winster, brother to the Thorpe that kept the shop as Yates. [Bert Boam]

Billiards at the Crown.

My Uncle Bill Stone used to keep the Crown. He married my dad's sister. That was when I was going to school. That was his living there, that and pig killing. He didn't do anything else only them two things - look after pub and pig killing. In Crown Yard it were rather funny. You could go up the side and then there were stables there for the horses, because in them days there used to be a lot of horses. Sometimes people would go to the Crown and leave a horse for some reason in stables there. Just beyond the stables was another house. Dennis Wild, they used to live there. It was a nice pub. They had a billiard table and there were a clock, and they used to charge you so much for a half hour, and you had to wait your turn or book. Some days they'd happen be booked up, so they'd

put your name down for the next day. So you'd go and have half an hour, because there were no other means of playing billiards. There were no snooker then - it was all billiards. On the footpath today - it must still be there - is two big iron doors, and they opened like a trap door. Horse and dray used to bring these 'ere barrels of beer, and they got 'em on to floor and they used to slide them down there into the cellar on two long pieces of wood. [Bert Boam]

Sing-songs and cyclists.

It was a lively spot in Winster at the time - sing-song every Saturday and Sunday night. At Carnival time you couldn't move in there. Mr Stone used to walk round, 'Mind yer backs, please'. Tray would be over his head, because he couldn't get through that crowd, and they'd be sat outside on the forms drinking. That was on Carnival Day. Christmas time in the Crown you used to have mulled ale - he'd give it away at Christmas - and mince pies. All those have gone now, and we miss all that lot. At weekends they had a lot of cyclists, and there were cycles all up our yard and in the entry up the yard. There were a lot of pots to be washed, and that was my courting, having to wash and dry these pots while the wife was playing the piano! I think that's where they made a little bit of money, because they couldn't make much out of beer in them days. It were only a penny a pint. They used to do a lot of catering. Some came from Sheffield and stopped over the weekend. We'd bed them down up in the attic somewhere. They used to get a lot of beer before they went back. [Bill Slaney]

Piano sessions at the Bowling Green.

I used to play in the pub when they had sing-songs every Saturday night at the Bowling Green, and everybody had their party piece, their favourite song. At Christmas time there was the carols. [Dot Fearn]

Catering at the Bowling Green.

I catered for every wedding round about, because there was nobody else in them days. When they were hatched, matched and dispatched they came to me. The funerals were brisket beef, pickles and that sort of stuff. As for the Friendly Societies, the Buffaloes didn't have many functions. They met in secret, something like the Masons. We kept the Buffaloes' insignias up in the clubroom. They had mayoral collars. They must have had lots of money, because they were very heavy, beautifully crafted things. The Foresters were more like a Sick Club that you paid into. You paid 1d or 2d, and if you were ill you got a little bit, not much. [Dot Fearn]

A ghost at the Bowling Green.

We'd been there quite a while, in the Bowling Green, and Mr Nutt lived next door. He came in one night and we said, 'Tom, have you ever heard about the ghost being here, because I saw this figure of a man going towards Gill's cot.' And he says, 'I'll tell you what he looked like before you tell me!' But I told him it was an old man with one of these Burberry macs, and it was pinned up and

he'd got a cap on. And, of course, I said, 'Clear off'. And Tom said, 'That's exactly what I saw.' I had some men lodging with me and one was called Tommy Smythe. He was a Londoner, and he said, 'There's something funny up your stairs. I've seen this old man. He came in the bedroom. I shouted and he went out. I put this chair under the door handle, but it didn't stop him. He came straight through the door.' Then there was Roy Nutt, and he saw him outside in the urinal. I had a gentleman lodge with me who used to come to Enthoven's three or four times a year, and he said, 'There's something happened. My door was going to and fro, and then, just as if somebody sat on my bed, it went down.' But he didn't see anything. But there's no end of people seen it, and I saw it twice. Now, Mrs Britland, who went there after us, she had things go missing and moving about, and she said sometimes the dog's hair would stand up and it would be tense. And David Bentley, who's there now, his wife saw it, and they had things move. He was doing some writing one day in the lounge, and he went up to finish it off, and it was in the next room under something. I asked my Auntie Sarah - she's sort of a spiritualist woman - and I said, 'Who do you think it'll be?' She said, 'I think it will be somebody who never did anybody any harm.' Well, David Bentley's wife, she was in bed, and they'd just got in and she said she saw it, as I did, as plain as plain, going towards Gill's bed. And then, another time, I was going up for some matches and it was on the landing. I just said 'Clear off!'

There's another ghost in Winster Hall. A man jumped off the top. They call it 'Lovers' Leap'. They say he haunts the Hall. [Dot Fearn]

A good head at the Miners' Standard.

Major Evans was landlord in the 1960s and it was sometimes claimed that he gave short measure. Roland Marshall was in there one day and he ordered a pint of beer. When it came there was a good two inches of froth at the top. Roland said, 'Do you think this would stand a whisky, Major?' (meaning would there be enough room for a whisky chaser). The Major said, 'I'm sure it would.' To which Roland replied, 'Then fill the bugger with beer!' [Dot Fearn]

A dispute over football.

One Sunday lunchtime at the Miners' Standard a carload of ex-miners – getting on a bit – came in. And there was an old fellow in - one of locals - called Frank Brothwell. He were in his seventies. And they got talking about old times at Shirland. Now, Frank played football a lot – in fact, he once played for Shirland. And at finish it got into a little bit of an argument, because they said that nobody in Winster could play football, and Frank got a bit angry about it. So he said, 'Well, there's five of us 'ere.' That were four old chaps and Mary Greatorex. And they said, 'We've got a ball int' car.' So they went on back out there, and they played five-a-side. I tell you, there were no Stanley Matthews there, but there were some clog! And Winster won. And they all shook hands, all covered in mud. [Jack Walker]

A tea party.

When I were courtin' missus - name of Bessie Greatorex - one Christmas time I'd come up to see her, and she said, 'Donald – that was her old man – he hasn't come home yet.' It were 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Well, they never served after time in them days. So I went to the Crown to see if they were there, and somebody said, 'They're up at the Miners' Standard.' So I came up here and they were all sat down, and Donald said to me, 'Hey, Jack, come in. Have a drink!' And they had a teapot and cups all round. I said, 'I've not come up here to drink bloody tea!' But it turned out the teapot were full of spirits! I came up to take Donald home, and he finished up taking me home! [Jack Walker]

Winster Hall becomes a pub.

The house we were living in, someone wanted to buy off us at the time, and we had to look for somewhere. We were wanting to live in Winster, so we went down on Carnival day, and all hell was let loose there. There was a fairground on the car park. We looked through the windows and said, 'This is for us, if the rest of the place is alright.' So we ended up buying it. We bought it for £9,750, just before inflation hit. Within three years they told us it was worth £50,000. We sold the Paddock for £10,000. I started to do afternoon teas first, and then bed and breakfast for about three years. I started doing evening meals, and the customers provided their own wine. So I decided that we'd apply for a diners' licence, and then went to my solicitor and said, 'How much would it cost to apply?' He said, 'Not a lot.' So I said, 'Well, while we're doing, how much will it cost to apply for a full-on licence?' He said, 'You can apply. It won't cost you any more, but you'll never get one.' We got the first one in twenty-five years to be granted to private premises! They granted it us at Ashbourne in about 1984, I think. I can tell you a funny little story about that. The solicitor was taking me to Ashbourne. He'd lost his driving licence, and he said, 'I'm afraid you'll have to drive me there.' He'd lost his licence through drinking, and he was applying for a licence for me! So I had to take the solicitor to court to get the licence! I came home all elated. That's how it came about. It went in the paper to say we'd been granted the first licence, and then I got a phone call to say, 'Excuse me, but you haven't got permission for 'change of use' for a pub yet.' It took me two years to get them to agree to what we wanted. They would only allow us one drinking area at first. We'd got parking for twenty-one cars, and so our drinking area was limited at first, and we had to play softly, softly for a couple of years. Then we got it extended and went on from there.

The Hall was a bit like a large family, and there were some real characters among the customers. Some of the older characters of the village became part of the furniture - they were there when you opened and they were there when you closed. They were their own community. We used to have a lady called Dot Fearn. She used to come and play the piano for us. Dot was a good pianist, all played by ear, no music involved. We used to have regular sing-songs, and Boxing Day was a thing to look forward to. Eve Nutt was another customer. Lunch time on Boxing Day was purely musical. People used to sit there and drink and

sing, well inebriated, like, till two o'clock in the afternoon. Ladies featured quite well. They had their own community, if you care to call it that. [Pauline Wood]

Winster Hall changes hands as a pub.

It was illness, really, that made us move on. I just became, as I thought, intolerable with my customers, and it's not a very good relationship when you're running a public house. We still get appreciation from our customers. Even now, every time you meet them, they say, 'Why the hell did you sell Winster Hall?' But it's part and parcel of Winster's history, we think. We sold it on as an ongoing business to a gentleman named Mr Warboys. He came from Codnor, and I think he was in Winster round about twelve months. He was an entertainer, which went down very well in the short-term. He used to sing. After a while when he picked the microphone up we used to say, 'Oh, God, it's him again!' He had his old favourite songs. They sounded alright the first time, but when you've heard them fifty times... After him it went to a gentleman, he was an ex-naval man, merchant navy. He must have been there for about two years. I believe he was called Burrows**.** He tried to run the business like he ran the ship, and, unfortunately, he didn't go too well. He took the bed and breakfast away and turned it into a restaurant, for which there was no real call. Once he'd lost his bedrooms, he'd lost the continuity of strangers coming in. He solely relied on the pub and the restaurant, and there was a lot of competition in the area, so that was the death of Winster Hall. He over-stretched himself. [Derek Wood] [Winster Hall is now a private house.]



Former Winster Hall pub sign, now on display in the Bowling Green.

Winster Hall pub sign.

The sign depicted the Morris Dancers. It was taken from a Morris Dancers' photograph, so the people are real people. The only one I can remember is young Richard Corfield as a young boy. I think he's a grown man now in his forties. [Pauline Wood]