

Life stories of



bygone days

by Loddiswell History Group
from recorded tapes by Reg Sampson

Life Stories of Bygone Days

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Loddiswell History Group*

*Based on a collection of
interviews from recorded tapes
by Reg Sampson*

Front cover photo:
Walter Kernick,
Dennis Sharland and Ned Lethbridge

Back cover photo:
Threshing at Lordswood, Churchstow, 1928

Acknowledgments

The stories in the book are tributes to those who have participated in recording their life histories. Without their co-operation and enthusiasm I would have been unable to get a glimpse of so many lifestyles within a small rural village. Some had second thoughts and on more than one occasion I was greeted with " I bain't gwain to do it " but with some gentle persuasion I have been able to record many different life styles for posterity.

My thanks to the families who have turned out their personal photo albums and I would also like to express my thanks to the following people and organisations for permission to reproduce photographs and illustrations; The Cookworthy Museum, Kingsbridge, The Kingsbridge Gazette, The Western Morning News, J.C.Lawrence of Gosport for photograph of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in Blandford 1956, Andrew Lownie Literary Agent for a photograph from the book 'Submariner' by John Coote, and Copyright from J.Salmon Ltd., Sevenoaks, England for use of watercolour painting of Douglas Dakota Aircraft.

We have made every reasonable effort to track down the owners of every one of the photographs we have used in this book to ask permission for their use, but there are a few we have not been able to find.

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Local Heritage *initiative*



Preface

Nearly every aspect of our lives in the second half of the twentieth century has been recorded by newspaper coverage, television, films, photos and video but records of life experiences in the first half of the century are limited. Many of the stories that I have recorded relate to an era before electricity and mains water were installed in the home. Housework took up a considerable amount of the day and men worked six, and sometimes seven days a week doing hard manual work without any holidays. The old saying, "What you've never had, you never miss", certainly rings true.

Stories were passed down by word of mouth. Grandad reminiscing about the past was tolerated, but if only we had listened and remembered, our lives may have become richer and we would have benefited from their philosophy of life. In our present time the life experiences of our Grandparents will also be lost if they are not recorded before it is too late.

During, and for a while after, the two World Wars there was a void of news coverage and film was almost unobtainable by the ordinary citizen. I have been privileged in being able to record the personal experiences of several members of our parish who have contributed to the life of our village community. The wartime experiences of service men and women gives an insight into their traumatic wartime years, and were recounted as if they were only yesterday, and not sixty years ago.

People at home through that time endured bombing, hardships and sacrifices, but their indomitable spirits and determination helped to create the quality of life today. Some of the young men and women who were stationed here during and after the war married locally, and have made their homes here enriching our village community.

Life Stories in Bygone Days captures the unique life stories of 32 Loddiswellians on 160 pages with 165 photographs recalling the changing pattern of village life in the early 20th century. These were originally recorded on tape by Reg Sampson and bring each character vividly to life to create a wonderfully warm, easy to read book.



Jack Hine

Except for the war years Jack Hine grew up and spent his whole life in the village. His skills in the bake house produced a range of delicacies as well as lovely homemade bread. His contribution to village life made him a well-loved character.

Cyril Brooking

Seen left of the photograph here is loading ammunition on the submarine, Untiring in Holy Loch, in 1942.

When he volunteered for the Navy his

friend said he wanted to go into the Submarine Service. Cyril said, "I always said I'd shoot myself if they put me in one of them things" but that's where Cyril spent the next four years, experiencing many nerve-racking assignments.

