

OUR HISTORY Winter 2006

Shopping in Partridge Green 1974-2006

We have lived in the village for over 30 years and can still remember the variety of shops we had then.

The large house on the corner of South Street (now the chiropractors surgery) was the general Store and Post Office. The mail was sorted on the premises and Mrs. Jessie delivered it twice a day. The Post Office, run by Mr. Madgwick, was the meeting point of the Village with chairs provided for the elderly to sit and hold council. You could buy anything from insecticide, compost, kitchen pots and pans and cutlery. Even watering cans hung from the ceiling, you could hardly get into the shop for stock! Latterly it became a card and sweet shop.

The Police House was on the same side of the road where P.c. Powell lived. This was those halcyon days when the village bobby walked regularly through the village and knew everybody. You could knock on his door anytime for assistance and he would always help. Vandalism was very rare and everybody felt safe. You could even leave your door unlocked - and they call this progress.

Up the road towards the Fire Station, now where the Veterinary Surgery is, was the haberdashers where you could buy wool, buttons, thread, shoes and toys.

Next to the haberdasher was the butcher's shop, where, as now, you could always purchase quality meat. You could always get the local gossip from the lady who sat in the alcove by the door taking your money. Geoff was separating meat from money transactions long before the government thought it up.

Next door was the doctor's surgery where everybody heard about your ailments through the thin walls!

Opposite the fire station, where the two detached houses now stand, was Popes newsagents. Howard, in a wooden hut, sold newspapers, cigarettes, tobacco and alcohol. Being a wooden hut it was easy to break in and cigarettes and drink were often stolen. When it was very hot the chocolate melted and had to be moved to the stockroom at the back.

Round the corner next to Pretty's garage, was Mr. Gills grocery shop. Everything was stacked in cardboard boxes and stacked floor to ceiling. He delivered groceries to any address in the village.

Up market ladies clothes were stocked by Delia Kelmanson in her 'Little Hatchshop' tucked round behind the Partridge Pub. She made sure that the ladies in the village were well dressed.

Where the mortgage shop is now, used to be a hairdressers where Barry would give you a good haircut. It was later taken by Woodward that sold wood burners stoves.

The Co-op was then Wavy line shop. At one time there was a mouth watering delicatessen selling an extensive range of cold meats, cheeses etc.

Then, one by one, the shops closed. Someone thought we ought to have some new ones so a lovely detached house, Wilton Villa, standing in beautiful gardens full of fruit trees, was pulled down and four new shops built, but that's another story.

David Webb