

..... Local Girls' War Effort

Since I attended Pam Fogarty's funeral recently she has been in and out of my thoughts and I have recalled the time during the war when she and four other girls raised money by holding a Fete and Show in the Burdfields' garden in South Street (the best place to live with fields nearby). The four other girls were Rita Carter (nee Barnett), Heather Pullen (an evacuee living with the Burfields), Olive Harrison (nee Saunders) and Hilda Burdfield (the late Hilda Goldsmith); they were 12/13 years old.

I assume the money raised was for the war effort and it seemed to me that the whole village supported these events. I remember there were games and stalls at the Fete and I bought three woollen balls to hang on the hood of my dolls pram, they were really made for babies' prams. I also won a golliwog in the raffle - that would not be permitted nowadays. I think music was played for the dancing in the show, a piano I think and I remember fairies in fairylike costume and Pam being a witch (good grounding for her future drama career) and amazing acrobatics being executed. I thought it was wonderful and so Sheila Pullen and I decided to get up a show.

We rehearsed in my garden in South View Cottages with Betty and Hilda Saunders but made the mistake of asking a few boys to take part - Clarence Woolven, Ron Childs, Ben Sayers and my brother Keith. Sheila, a romantic, choreographed a dance but the boys objected to putting their arms around the girls' waists and when it came to acrobatics they just messed about and so this venture had to end on the second rehearsal!

To get back to the older girls' successful Fete and foray into the entertaining world - they must have spent many hours rehearsing and I suppose they had some adult help, especially with costumes. I wonder how much money they raised and if anybody can remember these events? If they had taken place at the present time the girls would most likely receive an award of sorts but during the war there would not have been such things.

It seems strange to me now but I was in awe of these 'big girls' and couldn't wait to be a Girl Guide like they were. I believe Pam was Patrol Leader of the Robins, Rita of the Red Rose and Heather and Olive were in the White Heather patrol into which I was enrolled.

Wendy Pennifold (nee Tidey, born at Fernlea)

Do you recall these events? Have you got your own story? Please let the Editorial team know and we will print yours next time! Thank you Wendy.