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Transcript of Interview with Brian Moore

Dated: 29th January 2024

Transcriber: Roger King

Introduction

This interview was conducted as part of project on the history of Newbold Heath community. Brian was interviewed because he had worked at the Heath Garage for ten years. He also lived in Newbold Verdon, and so, at times, the conversation widens to record Brian's recollections of village and parish life.

Could you tell me a little about your past.

I started working at the garage in December 1955. I was 15 years old and had just left Ibstock High School. I was not born in Newbold but Whitwick. I lost my dad when I was three-and-a-half years old. He got killed in the war. He was a commando.

My mum married a Newbold chappie, and we came here when I was about 12 or 13. I left Broom Leys school when I was 12. We lived at 40 Mill Lane. It was a bit of a wrench, leaving Whitwick but eventually I got used to it. I got into everything in the village. I was in the church choir, an alter boy. Then when Arthur Hurst started the scouts I joined, I was a senior troupe leader. And the first year I cam they started the St George's Day parade. It must have been about 1957. We had all the scouts from Coalville and District coming to join in the parade.

Everyone knew everyone in the village. You could talk to everybody.

The Garage and the Heath

I was always interested in mechanics and the garage was one where I could get an apprenticeship. I got a five year apprenticeship and a one day college release.

The garage was very busy and got busier when the Bonsal estate got built. We even serviced Peter Bonsall's car.

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There were two houses next to the garage and a row as you went up toward the Heath and two rows of houses as you went up toward Merrylees.

There was subsidence in the garage. Down one side there was a small piece of garage and then the main room with a wall in between. The subsidence cracked this wall so much we could walk straight through it. It took a while to get bigger, but no one seemed to mind! The next thing we knew was that they took the wall out altogether and they made it into one big room.

A typical day was servicing cars, doing tyres and serving petrol, but the first few years of apprenticeship I was the general dog's body. I enjoyed working there. We used to get on ever so well. One of my big mates was Jim Garnham from Barlestone. There was Len, Derek and Rex Wilkinson, they all worked there. And their dad had a haulage company up there on the Bagworth Road; this is how they started.

They were good employers. Len and Michael, his son, always had a season ticket at Leicester City and the three of us went together. It didn't feel like a boss/worker relationship.

The garage got the Renault franchise, and they built a big showroom on the opposite side of the road. I remember my very first Renault job. A chapie had bought one brand new and on the road just passed Stapleton this lorry in front was indicating right. The chappie thought he must be wrong because there was no road, so he decided to overtake. But the lorry was turning into a farm drive and the car went straight under it. They didn't write it off but sent a new shell out and I had to rebuild it. Mr Wilknson's 3 milk lorries worked seven days a week so the only time to service and repair them was in the evening. We often had to work overnight on them. It was a very busy place. I was surprised how it all ended up.

They also had three coal wagons.

The Heath Cricket Ground and football

The Working Men's Club Cricket team played on a field at the Heath, and I played for them. One year we played at Newton Burgoland, and we were all bowled out for two leg byes! The pitches were not good. Often the cattle or sheep

would have to be cleared off before we could start and their mess. All we had at the Heath was a shed. We used to have a good time. One Sunday every year we used to play the brewery, and they would bring a barrel of beer.

We had two football teams in the village: Newbold first and seconds. We played on the Reccie (Dragon Lane) and got changed at the Institute (Miners Welfare on Dragon Lane). No washing or anything, just got changed and went home mudded up.

I broke my leg on the Reccie and was off work for 12 weeks and had a plaster up to my hip for the whole of that time and was told I couldn't play football again. The surgeon thought I had been in a motorbike accident it was that bad that bad. When they finally took the plaster off I couldn't walk but they expected me to catch the bus home!

Coach Driving

After ten years at the garage, I fancied a change, and I thought I would get more money driving because you could get more hours. I worked there for ten years before I went off working on the coaches, first with Deacon and Hardy's at Barlestone and then I went back up to Wilkinsons before I started at Reliant Coaches in 1970 and worked there until 2004, thirty-four years. I was made redundant.

I did school runs and touring. I spent most weekends touring on the continent. I went to Roberts Coaches the next day; there was plenty of work around.

Once I got my HGV license, I started driving for them. They had lorries that went round picking the milk churns up from the farms and taking them into Leicester. I used to be a relief driver on as Sunday. I loved that: my brother used to come with me. I used to get milk, eggs and potatoes from the farmers.

We used to run a service for the miners. We started at Gibsons Garage, Barlestone, just passed the school on the right-hand side. That was the first stop at 6a.m. in the morning, through Newbold to Desford then left down Lindridge Lane; first to Merrylees pit, then Desford Colliery, then up to Bagworth Colliery, into Ellistown and down to Nailstone and that's where we stopped. We would then reverse the journey, taking the night shift miner's home. After that we would do the school runs. At 1p.m. e would take the afternoon shift out and bring the morning shift back, before going off on the school runs.

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I loved to get out on the road and be my own boss. I went all over the continent, as far as Vienna. That was a long way. We couldn't sleep, we would drive through the night – no tacker graphs. You had to watch it through France, they were aways after the British drivers for speeding and parking. I did know a French family out there. When the ar had finished they used to look after my father's grave. I went over when I was 7, meeting this family. In 1993/4 I got smashed up in France by an Englishman. It took all my brakes and everything. I managed to get the passengers back to the hotel on another coach and I wrang he young girl up from the that family and they took me back to the family house overnight. We kept in touch, but I haven't heard anything for a while now.

The travelling took me away from the family, but it was earning me money. I never fancied a job at Tubes (Desford) or at the Pit. My friend took me down the Desford pit on a Sunday and I didn't like it. I would never have worked down there.

PAST TEAMS **Dubious record for Newbold Verdon**



Newbold CC bowled over

RECORD breakers they may be but few teams would want the dubious honour achieved by Newbold Verdon CC in the mid 50s.

For playing against Newton Burgoland around 1956 or 1957 the village side was all out for just two runs and one of the players Colin Goacher who has loaned us this picture wonders whether this is still a record low score for the South Leicestershire or any other league.

The line-up is (from left) (back) Brian Shearsby, Desmond Hill, Ian Poole, Ron Adams, Albert Squires and Frank Tansley (front) Jeff Langton, Peter Gilliver, Brian Moore, Colin Goacher and Jeff Statham.