

In memoriam -George Forsdike (11.05.1929 - 22.09.2018)

George passed away suddenly in his home in Gosbeck where he had lived since 1980, previously having lived in Church Cottage, Pettaugh where he was born. George was one of five children born to Charles and Elsie Forsdike and was the second son after Ernest, the eldest child. George was the very first person to be interviewed for our Pettaugh History Project and had a keen recollection of the village and its people. George was introduced by his nephew, Jim Davey, as a source of information about the Mission Hall as Jim had become aware that a controversy has arisen in the village as to the ownership of the Mission Hall and the property on which it was situated, some in the village asserting that it was part of The Green and public property. When he was asked about his memory of the Mission Hall, George was quite explicit saying that it was owned by the Cutting family and that children were not allowed to play in the grassy area where the wheelwright's workshop, sawing pit and shed had formerly stood. He remembered that he and his pals would sometimes venture through the gate and look through the shed windows to see coffins which the wheelwright had made. The front of the shed had a large AA motoring sign attached giving the distance to London.

All of those who we subsequently interviewed recalled George as being a very good-natured and mischievous boy and his antics were a great source of amusement. He was famous for his exploits on his bicycle, a machine provided by the local East Suffolk Education Authority to enable Pettaugh children to cycle to the nearby Stonham Aspal Secondary School. He was reminded of the occasion when he was demonstrating his ability to ride his bicycle sitting on the handlebar and facing backwards. He caused great amusement to the audience when he lost his bearings and rode his bicycle backwards into the pond of water next to the windmill. When he was due to return the used bicycle to the Authority when he left school it was in such a well-worn state that most of it was in bits and pieces. George will be sorely missed and our thoughts are with his family. He continued riding his bicycle well into his eighties.