

Credits:

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And a very special thank you to all the interviewees taking part in this project:

Gladys Sangster (b. 1917), Cyril Aston (b. 1920), Rhoda Woodward (b. 1925), George Mason (b. 1925), Mike Wood (b. 1926), Archie Buzzard (b. 1934), Alan Sargeant (b. 1934), Sheila Evans (b. 1934), Adrian Hearne (b. 1936), Janet Parry (b. 1936), Trevor Parry (b. 1937), James Williams (b. 1939), Michael Snelling (b. 1942), David Golby (b. 1943), Bob Herbert (b. 1944), Rosemary Herbert (b. 1947) All members of the Banbury Museum 'Times Gone By' group.

Interviewer: Karey Morley

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Permission to use personal photographs: David Golby, Karey Morley

This photo: The old Temperance Hotel (also known as the Bluebird) & Cadbury Hall building in Bridge Street.

Credit: Karey Morley

Front photo: Market day Market Place c. 1950s © Oxfordshire County Council

Banbury Museum's Reminiscence Group 'Times Gone By' presents

Exploring Banbury Town Bridge Street & Market Place Sound Trail

The Banbury Museum reminiscence group decided to embark on this project in the autumn of 2012. As far as we are aware this is the first oral history sound trail dedicated to capturing authentic voices of senior residents of the town. We are delighted that it is being made accessible to the general public, and hope it will be the first of many. It is important to remember that this sound trail is a collection of personal memories and experiences, giving a flavour of what life was like over five decades from the late 1920s to the late 1960s. We have endeavoured to record some of the social history of this market town.

Bridge Street became an important approach into the heart of the town. In the 1850s it was chosen as the most suitable site to build the new Town Hall, in front of which was the Cow Fair where the cattle market took place until the 1930s. It was the link from the railway station, and housed the bus terminus for many years. One of the most important community serving buildings in Bridge Street started life as the Temperance Hotel, but was known locally as the Bluebird Hotel. Cadbury Hall was attached to the Bluebird and together they served as an unemployment station in the 30s depression, a holding centre for evacuee children during the Second World War, and a place where school children could get a hot meal and the public could get a bath.

Market Place was the heart of the town on Thursdays and Saturdays when the market came. Before the war the market stayed open until at least 7-o'clock in the evening, lit by large naphtha flares which created a beautiful atmosphere as they glowed with a white light. There are memories of the smells that were elicited from the market stalls, particularly of fish from Trusses the fishmonger and Butler's coffee. Before refrigeration the meat stalls would have to sell all their stock, and an enormous amount could be bought for a shilling if you waited until the end of the day. Thoughts about the various different food stalls brought back one particular recollection that: 'flies were flies in those days'.



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