

Partridge Green in 1947

In August 1947 I moved with the family from Northamptonshire to Sussex. Firstly to Ewhurst Farm, Shermanbury, and then on my marriage in 1951 to Geoff - the third generation of the Mitchell family to be the butcher to Partridge Green. There have been so many changes and the village has grown beyond recognition. When I first came there was only the High Street, part of South Street with an unmade road, Church Road, Bines Road and Littleworth Lane. Blanches Road was just being started

There were many more shops. There was the Ivy Stores, a small bungalow shop in front of Ivy Cottage near the Park. The Post Office incorporated the telephone exchange and grocery shop. There was a small grocer in South Street, The Forest stores - the largest grocers were on the Alldays site. There was a haberdasher where the vets are now and another one opposite what is now Mr Patel. Mr Patel's was the newsagents, sweet shop and tobacconists and also served meals, coffee and tea. The Butchers has remained but had its own slaughterhouse and animal pen behind. Tidey's Mill was a working mill with a beautiful old Mill house next door. Near the existing garage there was another grocers who also mended your shoes. The High Street had two market gardens and both sold vegetables and plants. Bines Road had the Blacksmith and forge and even today it has retained its name. Hunters Mead was just a track - no houses - and had the village Undertakers and 'Coffin Shop'.

The station, Horsham - Brighton line, had the lovely old puffer trains and took children to school, commuters to work and goods to their destination. Beyond the station where Star Road was, there was a large goods and coal yard. There were two coal merchants in the village. I can remember the trains so well; I used to push my eldest daughter in her pram into the guard's van at Partridge Green to go to Brighton and Horsham. The school was beyond 'The Green Man'.

West Grinstead had more shops also. There was a Post office and grocers in place of the 'Salmon Shop.' 'The Little Chef' stands on the 'Old Tabby Cat' site, a famous public house. The current junction of the B2135 and the A24 used to have another public house, 'The Burrell Arms' together with another Post Office and store. 'The Station Hotel' now the 'Partridge' used to be a garage which housed the fire station. Dial Post was also well served with shops most of whom delivered to your door.

The roads were so different too! In 1947 a farmer friend of mine moved from Wales to Dial Post and his entire farm and stock came by special train to West Grinstead Station and was walked along the road to Dial Post! There have been so many changes some good and some not so good. I'm sure I've forgotten many changes but I hope this gives some of you a flavour of the past.

Sue Mitchell