

Brian Carr remembers.....

Growing Up In Redditch



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Oakly Road

Image: GHC-0351.jpg - RLHS Archives

in their place.

From my bedroom window I had a decent view of the developments being made and took a few photos of the changes which I still have, quality is not so good though.

I attended the County High school so walked through town everyday from Oakly Road. to Grove Street though the back streets of the old town.

As I got older I could start to work a little and had plenty of paper rounds. At various times I worked from Dillons on the corner of Evesham Road, also from a small newsagents that I recall was opposite the Hungry Man, near the Electricity show room and Wrights the electrical store where I bought my first records.

I later I worked for Dick Biddle who had a shop at the bottom of Oakly Road next to the old station. When the bus station was proposed he moved across the road onto bottom of Unicorn Hill, in between a butchers and green grocers which was run by his sister.

Dad was still in the police force up until 75 and had been the 'local bobby' for most of his time. The old Police station in Church Street had a Police only club upstairs I frequented from time to time, next door to the Station were the Court rooms which each year hosted the Police children Christmas party.

I was born in Stourbridge in 56 Dad was a policeman and was transferred to Redditch in 58 so all my memories are of Redditch. We lived in the police houses in Lilac close, Mayfield's (the white ones first on left) semi detached with a shared office centrally which explains the blocked up entrance in the middle and the Police crest that is still present. Mom was teacher at Lodge Farm then St Luke's, and St Stephen's. She taught at St Luke's whilst I was there. My brother Andy came along in 59.

We moved to Elm Road police accommodation in around 63/64. Having the run of the nearby factories, rail lines opposite and all territory to the baths was great fun. I n 68 we moved to our own home in 76 Oakly Road just as the development was beginning to take off. We were at no 76 is on the level piece half way up, glorious Victorian house that has another house built in our garden since we left. When we moved in, there were properties on both sides of the road but I presume a compulsory purchase order must have been made on those opposite so they were emptied and they became a wonderful playground for the youth of the area before being demolished and the bus route built



Magistrates Court & Police Station in Church Road

Image: PICT0334.jpg - RLHS Archives

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Congregational Church, Evesham Street

Image: 1500C.jpg - RLHS Archives

He was also at the forefront of the Friends of Auxerre after being asked in 67 (?) if we could house an exchange Gendarme, it sparked a passion that stayed with him for the rest of his days staying heavily involved with F&A . I used the Evesham Street Congregational Hall as a youth club until I was kicked out for smoking, I recall attending functions at the Kingfisher Hall but have no idea why.

Mom was also a Guide captain of Headless Cross guides. They used to use the Memorial Hall opposite St Lukes school which was also the site of some single storey classrooms.

One aspect of 76 Oakly Road house which was probably unique was the strip of land at the bottom of the garden that was rented off British Rail for a peppercorn rent that we used as vegetable garden and orchard. It also gave adventurous lads a free access to the railway track and Mount Pleasant tunnel. We spent many a happy hour exploring its embankments, etc. and of course the tunnel itself, the braver ones would walk the length of it to the Mayfield's without torches!

I have still have some pictures of the tunnel itself and then the progressive filling in of the whole channel, possibly the only ones. I left to go to College in 75 and never lived in Redditch again.

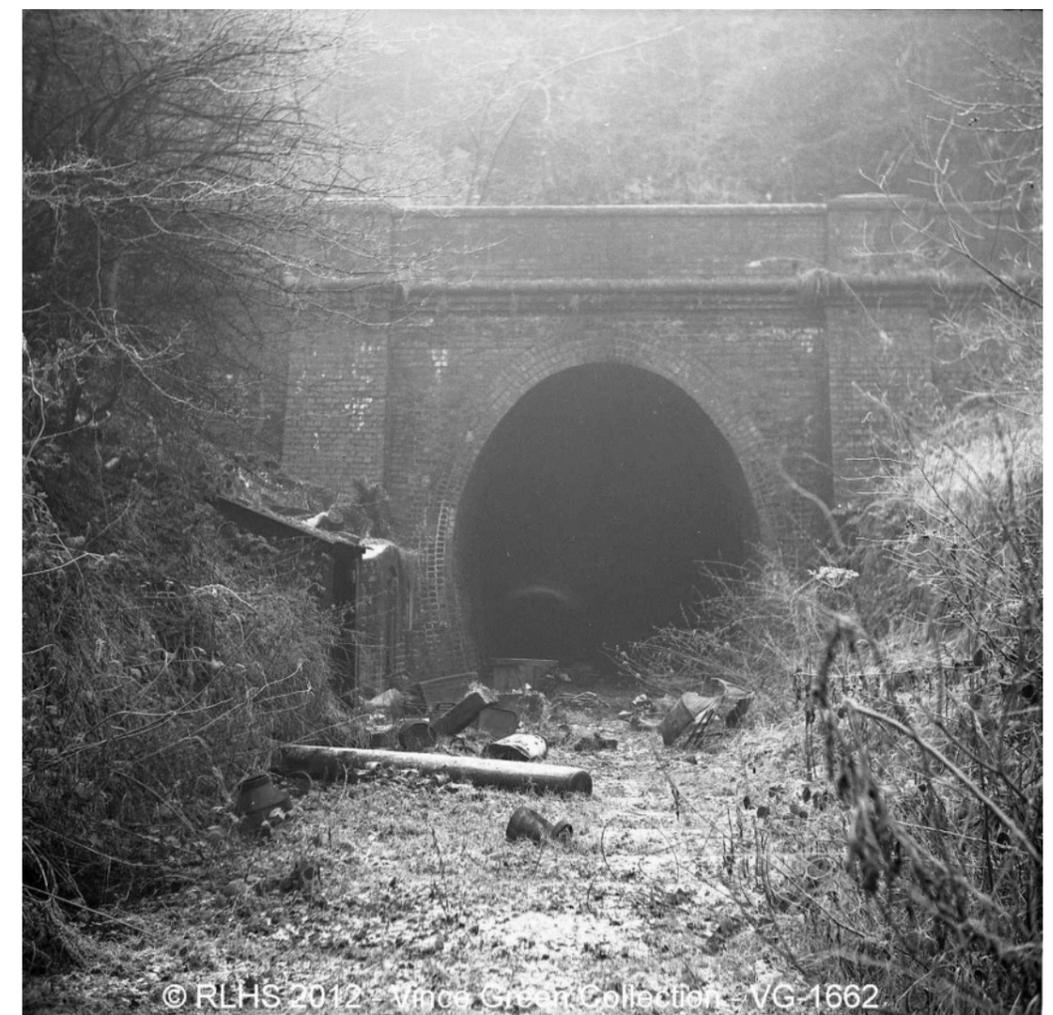
I have however never really left the town, the rugby club is in my blood. Dad, Tony Carr, was one of the re founding fathers of the Rugby club in 66, I played for them as soon as I could in 72 and, apart from the college years,

I continued to play for the club until 2008 when I had to retire racking up over 700 games for them. Andy, who was the better player was skipper in the 80's and probably played as many as me but was not sad enough to record them.

I did a stint as Club Hon. Sec. for 12 yrs before taking up a position with the County RFU. I am honoured to be currently Chairman of the club and having recently retired I seem to be spending more time at the club than ever before.

So, although I have not lived there for 44 yrs I still regard Redditch as being my home town,

Brian Carr



Redditch Railway Tunnel

Image: 1622.jpg Courtesy Vince Green