

Michael Daniels Remembers.....

Heroes And Villains



The results of a fire at the Batteries

Image: RLHS-DAR-095-004.jpg from the RLHS archives.

I have lived my whole life in Redditch (almost 72 years) and, between the ages of 5 and 24 lived in Lodge Road. We lived halfway up the road but at the very bottom of Lodge Road, and running along Union Street to Marsden Road, was the battery factory – Alkaline Batteries. My memory involves a huge fire at that factory.

At the time – very early 1960's – I was a schoolboy and just venturing out into Lodge Road when I realised, even at the distance from number 58 to the Alkaline works, that there were flames in the air, just inside the gates of the works. Obviously, as an early teens schoolboy, I began to run down the hill toward the factory. Before long the fire had become huge and the sound of fire engine sirens filled the air. As I got close to the bottom of the hill, three or four lads, who I knew as locals and fellow school boys, ran out of the gates of Alkaline Batteries, shouting loudly. Soon, this group of lads were being hailed as local hero's for sounding the alarm and preventing the fire doing more damage than it had, which was extensive nonetheless. The fire had started in a large wood shed that the factory used on its premises. It took a number of fire engines to eventually bring the fire under control.

However, within 24 hours and 'police inquiries', the hero's became villains as it transpired that they had caused the fire as they sat smoking on the top of the wood pile.

Michael Daniels