

Voices of Hickling

Interview Transcript: Pauline Brooks

*Interviewed by Ann Louise Kinmonth
on 14th December 2013*

ALK: So, Pauline, thank you very much for helping the Voices of Hickling with this.

PB: You're welcome

ALK: If we can just start off with any special memories of growing up in Hickling that you would like to tell us about.

PB: Er, should we do the Hickling school?

ALK: That sounds great.

PB: Yes, yes, um. Well Mr Drake was the headmaster and, Mrs Gold and Mrs Myhill were our teachers and then we would be there, they would be there to greet in the mornings after a very cold cycle ride and I used to have to go on the back of mum's carrier, especially as I lived down Heath Rd.

Our gloves would be warmed by the fire, ready for playtime and when the roads were ice I had to walk from Medina Cottage, Heath Rd.

At playtime we'd be playing balls on the school wall, top and whip and rounders, playing field, on the playing field.

Summer time would be dancing lessons in the playground, in winter we had to go across the road to the church hall, and there we would do all activities that they do now in the classrooms. But we used to have to go across the road with our hats and coats on, keep warm and, um, and of course the cloakrooms in the school, um, were one for boys and one for the girls.

The toilets were across the yard, as I call it, in a long row with wooden seats and a sink in the cloakroom to wash our hands before going in to class – and we would get very, very wrong if we hadn't washed them.

And Mrs Gold would teach us A, B and C and our tables, and our tables until we could remember them which now the young ones don't.

ALK: Ummm

PB: Our counting was done by shells. I still have some little shells that we used to count with. And if we done well we were allowed to play with plasticine [LAUGHS].

Mrs Myhill was in the middle class and our lessons were writing, reading, arithmetic and knitting, of course, which I quite enjoyed.

And afternoons we're practicing sports on the field which I thoroughly enjoyed. We did high jump and hurdles, long jump, relay and flat race. Never could quite beat Robin Myhill. [LAUGHS] I remember getting a place for the county sports with Robin and Anita Myhill.

And Mr Drake and the top class, a wooden screen divided the classrooms, which has now gone obviously, and a large glass bookcase would be on the back wall with the black iron stove in, in the centre – and this is the photograph of the thing at the back.

In my class was Pamela Mace, Doreen Newstead, and they both are still with us, Christine Allison, Joan Turner, who now lives in this village that I now live in, Bergh Apton, Harry Nudd, of course, John Goulby, Robin Myhill, Patrick Beales and Margaret Nobbs.

And my best lesson was country dancing when in the summer we went along to Mrs Hunter's lawn, Bright Mere Rd. It was a wonderful garden and we danced all the afternoon and we had a lovely time and once we were picked for county schools competitions.

My dancing partner was Patrick Beales, and course he was John Beales' son, and he no longer lives in the village now. And woe betide him if he stood on my toes [LAUGHS].

It was such a delight to dance against other schools.

Our milk was delivered by lorry in crates – very small bottles – in winter were warmed around the large fire burner. Imagine warm, thick cream, milk sucked through a straw, Horrible [LAUGHS]. I've never liked milk to this day.

Mr Drake taught the girls art and the boys football. Hobbies were gardening and cleaning the pond, which, we've got a photograph of the old pond here.

The dell was in the front of the playground with tall willow trees, bicycles propped up against them – no bike sheds. If it rained our seats were soaked. Sometimes we would find a flat tyre, wonder what boys could do that.

Mr Drake would get his cane out if the boys got into trouble. They would have to hold their hand out then got the cane across their hand. It wouldn't be long before the parents would be up the school after him.

The school house wasn't used by then for the headmaster. Mr Drake lived in The Hollies, Stubb Road

The school doctor would call every year for medical examination. From that some would be given malt. It was found, I was found with flat feet. (I) remember my shoes had to be made with arches inside and lace ups. Oh, and I didn't like them at all.

The dentist visited with a large van on the playground – we all dreaded that day. Sometimes we'd call in sick.

Dinners were delivered from Stalham School in large, stainless steel containers, then taken to the dinner hut to be served up by Mrs Mace, she would cycle from Whinmere Cottages, where we stood in an orderly line as they were served from large containers.

At the age of 11 we then left Hickling School and went on to cycle to Stalham Secondary. Those who passed the 11+ would go on to North Walsham High or Wymondham College.

There's a copy of Mr Drake's retirement here, that was my school.

ALK: *That's really interesting. How old were you when you were at school?*

PB: Er, from 5 to 11.

ALK: *And did you have, give me a feel of the family that you had in Hickling, your relatives and your own family, what was it like?*

PB: My family was, em, got to think now, obviously my parents, mum and dad.

ALK: *What were they doing?*

PB: Dad was. Before the war, he was a lorry driver for Mr Rivett and then he went away to the war, joined the Royal Navy and, by that time, I was born, 1941. While he was in the war and I was 5 when he came back. Apart from, um, er when they had

ALK: *What was it like for you when he came back?*

PB: I can't really remember him much to tell you the truth, not at that age, but I had a very, I had a lovely great uncle who lived with us in Medina Cottage and he was, he was wonderful because he was more like my dad you see.

ALK: *So, there was your mother.....?*

PB: Yes.

ALK: *Your dad was away*

PB: Yes.

ALK: *Great uncle, who else was there?*

PB: Um, no, nobody, auntie, she came, um, she used to work in Ludham Post Office during the war and she, granny and grandma they had to be moved from Ludham because that was a smallholding on the airfield, they wanted it for. And so she stayed on with my mum and so when I was even a baby she was still there.

ALK: *Were you an only child?*

PB: **Yes, yes, I am an only child and I've got a photograph of myself with auntie somewhere here..... um.**

ALK: *We can look at that later on actually*

PB: **Alright.**

ALK: *That'll be fine*

PB: **Yeah.**

ALK: *What you have got there which will be lovely to hear about is some of your holiday memories. Outings and things, you know. You've got the one about going to the Dipping Place in the summer.*

PB: **Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.**

ALK: *That's very nice and I don't know if you could....?*

PB: **Yes I can tell you some of that. Would you like me to go through right from the time I was in Medina House?**

ALK: *Would that suit you or would you like to pick a bit out? I don't want to tire you out.*

PB: **No, can you cut things out that you don't want?**

ALK: *Yes, yes. You do what works for you.*

PB: **Oh right. Well, I was born there in, in Medina, 1941. We went back to the war and, em, my dad was called Teddy, my mum was Dorothy, she was an Adams from Ludham.**

Dad's parents and grandparents before were all born in Hickling.

ALK: *Mmmmm*

PB: **And Medina was their first married home, from 1938 to nineteen forty 1949.**

When the war broke out, 1939 to 1940 dad joined the Royal Navy.

Our home at Medina was a kitchen, diner, a walk in pantry, black lead stove mum would clean once a week with Zebra. Bath night would be once a week in a large tin bath in front of the stove, a piece mat laid on the floor, in front. Mum would make with scraps of old material and a sack backing. I can see her doing that now, with a hook. [LAUGHS]

Upstairs were two large bedrooms, one was a bedsit. In those days there was no flush toilets, it had to be a jerry pot under the bed.

Mum would have a paraffin night light or a candle to go up to bed which I had to share the same room. The blackout blinds were pulled

down, which I can remember making everywhere very dark, to stop the light shining for the enemy planes.

Across the yard we had a brick shed with a large enamel cooking stove. We had 4 paraffin bottles hanging along the back, three for the cooking rings and one for the oven. The paraffin was delivered to the house once a week.

The copper fire had to be lit to heat the water ready for washday and a large copper stick – luckily I didn't ever get that. Washing had to be mangled before hanging on the line and the bath had to be emptied from underneath.

The toilet was down the garden, no fancy toilet rolls. I remember mum cutting out squares of newspaper which were kept together with a meat skewer. I can remember doing that.

A photo of me in the pram with auntie as a baby, along the lake and down the side of our house. And that was auntie I was telling you, who lived with me right from tiny you see. And, so I was brought up with all them, all my mum's family and used to go and visit, and at Christmas time we'd have Christmases with them but that's further along.

And at Christmas time mum would go next door to help Jenny Brown, that was our neighbour, and, er, pluck the chickens, ducks and geese – we'd be knee-deep in feathers.

Also a pig would be killed. The mincer was screwed to the kitchen table for the pork sausages to be made. Not forgetting the pork cheese cooking on top of the stove, my favourite to this day.

We would go across the marshes opposite Guttermere (?) Bridge, you know where that is? Picking blackberries, remember crossing , planks over the dykes to Martin Brown's eel hut at Heigham Sound where they'd be brought home and skinned for supper.

ALK: *That's lovely that. I saw that.*

PB: Yeah, blackcurrant pickings, raspberries, gooseberries, and apple pickings were done those days. All the fruit had to be bottled in Kilner jars, boiled on the top of the stove for hours, then the jars would seal.

Also home made jam. I remember being in the picking field with mum, having to duck under the currant bushes as a German bomber came, came over very low. I'm still here to tell the tale.

Our radio was run with large batteries, when dried out we had to cycle down to the village, to Mr Pratt's garage in the village, for a top up of, and I can't remember what you called the stuff you had in the batteries.

ALK: *Yes, yes. Was that now Andrews or was that Beales?*

PB: Yes, that's right.

ALK: *That was Andrews yeah.*

PB: Yeah, yeah.

ALK: *Distilled water*

PB: That's right, I think it was something like that. Big black batteries they were. With the tops, more like a car battery actually.

ALK: *Exactly. They were.*

PB: Yes, I can remember cycling down with mum to get these all topped up.

A Mr. Ernest Turner had the grocery shop. He would call and buy the candles, we would call and buy the candles, sugar weighed in blue bags with ration books – we were allowed some sweets etc. and, of course, you've seen the ration books – I got one of those anyway, I got my husband's – and there's a photograph of the shop.

Over the other side of the road, Mr Oliver Turner was running the Post Office, and they were brothers. Post Office and drapery. Not much in fashion.

Mr Kirkland from Martham called at the house selling clothes. Also Mrs Miller would cycle from Catfield with the club book which we would try and buy clothes from.

Those days also there was a black man with his case trying to sell clothes at the door.

Mr Harry Markham, the butcher, supplied the meat, sharpening his blades as he went along cutting joints. He used to frighten me but he was quite harmless. And these are the pictures of him.

ALK: *Was that the first black man you'd ever seen. The man who came to the door with the ...?*

PB: Yes, it was frightening.

ALK: *Quite strange*

PB: Yes, but they were very good. They didn't say anything nasty or anything.

ALK: *No it was just, you know, you weren't used to it*

PB: Yes, I can say black man can't I, 'cos I never know these days?

ALK: *I think so, I think I'm a white woman*

PB: Well they cut everything out don't they. What you should say and what you shouldn't now

ALK: *Yes well you shouldn't say anything that would upset anybody*

PB: **No. I don't want to do that.**

ALK: *I don't think that anyone would be upset*

PB: **Sometimes mother would buy things from him.**

ALK: *Yeh. They got on all right?*

PB: **Yeh. And they needed to earn some money too didn't they. That was war time.**

ALK: *You don't know where he was from?*

PB: **No. I haven't no idea. No**

Standards of Stalham supplied the bread, and Sid, the roundsman, used to bring in his basket lovely fresh loaves of all bread. A cup of tea waiting by the fire, which was steaming on the kettle was steaming on the black stove.

Mr Feathers from Sea Palling, ringing his bell, would call out "fresh herrings, fresh herrings". They would be a treat for supper after a long day in the fruit picking field.

It was a great luxury when the Coot Shoot took place on Hickling Broad. Uncle George Bishop, warden of the National Trust, would bring us a brace of coots.

ALK: *I'm very interested in that. Did you ever go on that? The Coot Shoot?*

PB: **No, no, no.**

ALK: *It was happening in the winter.*

PB: **Yes, it would be. Yes.**

ALK: *And did you know when royalty were coming down to do it and that?*

PB: **No.**

ALK: *You didn't. They were all quiet about it.*

PB: **I was a bit young really when that was taking place, and, um, of course, the King came, didn't he and Prince Charles came and, um, the Duke, but the King was the one in that time.**

ALK: *He really liked it, didn't he?*

PB: **Yes.**

ALK: *And Gwen Amis was in the*

PB: **Pleasure Boat.**

ALK: *The Pleasure Boat, yes. Charles stayed there one time I think.*

PB: Yes, that was later on. Much later on.

ALK: Do you remember that?

PB: Yes, yes, yes, yes. But I can remember uncle bringing us the coots.

ALK: Is this the same uncle who lived with you or is that a different uncle?

PB: No, no. This is George Bishop the warden on the National Trust.

ALK: What do you remember about him?

PB: He was my dad's brother. And he married Nurse Bishop, who was a nurse in the village and she came to me with my first baby.

ALK: Oh really

PB: Yes, yes, yes. I'm very young.

ALK: How old were you?

PB: Not quite 18. [LAUGHS]

ALK: We'll get back to that. We're jumping ahead.

PB: That's further on that is.

ALK: Yes, let's have the holidays first.

PB: Er, well the holidays was, really didn't do a lot of holidays when I was young. Couldn't afford it in them days. Not really.

ALK: So, what were you doing when you weren't in school? That's what I mean by the holidays.

PB: Well, we would play, let me see, what would we be doing?

Well dad he came away from, when he came out of the war he had an allotment and I would go down with mum and dad, and he would have the calves and we'd feed the calves with the bottle, and he'd grow the fruit and the vegetables, and we'd have to feed the rabbits and I'd be the one having to pick the cow weed, and also the chickens.

The chicken food was delivered from Harry Burton's at Stalham. And every week on Tuesdays Stalham sale took place and the vegetables would be cut, potatoes dug, eggs washed and prepared early morning, ready for selling at the market.

Our treat after collecting our money would be a cup of tea and a roll served in wooden hut, served in a wooden hut.

Sadly Stalham sale closed – 1991 as far as I know. And so really, we did those sort of things really, more country things and ,er.....

ALK: Lovely, yes. You got the little description of going to the Dipping Place near the Tallowins. I don't know where that is....

PB: Oh, yes.

ALK: but that makes a very nice.

PB: Um, we played hopscotch on the roadside, top and whips, skipping ropes, roller skating, and running in the harvest fields, chasing rabbits.

Cold tea taken in Corona bottles for the farm workers.

As acorns came on oak trees boys, boys made pop guns to shoot out, out the acorns. If you got hit it was quite painful. Also conkers were threaded on string.

Those were the sort of things we would do to show who could hit the hardest.

ALK: I'm sure the children would love all this bit. What was that like?

PB: Oh, it was lovely. You would thread all the conkers through a piece of string, make a hole right through, mind your fingers with a skewer as you done it. And then each of you who had the conkers would bash them together you see and who would, who could break the most. That's the sort of thing, games we used to play.

ALK: We're you good at that?

PB: Not very. [LAUGHS] I think I got more bruises on my hand than I did broken conkers. [LAUGHS]

ALK: Thank you.

PB: Oh dear! And then, um, er, where we got to? Oh! And Christmas was at grandmothers' – that was lovely and all the family would meet at granny's.

ALK: And who was grandmother?

PB: Grandmother Adams.

ALK: Right

PB: Not the Bishop side. My mother's side.

ALK: Yes, and where did she live?

PB: Well, she originally was in Ludham, on the airfield, till the war and then they had to be moved here to North Burlingham, in a council farm here. And, er, so, therefore, mum would travel to granny's and cycle 'cos they didn't have cars, couldn't afford cars in them days.

So I would be in the basket chair, I can remember that too, quite plain. And away we'd go, cycling all the way to North Burlingham, up here where you now drove past.

ALK: From Medina Cottage?

PB: Yes, yes, yes.

ALK: *Wow.*

PB: Yes, and she had walked it with me in the pram.

ALK: *That would have taken a couple of hours.*

PB: **Coo, I should think so. More than that.**

ALK: *Yeah, I would say so. Four.*

PB: Yeah, yeah and, er.

ALK: *Half a day.*

PB: **Must have done.**

ALK: *Must have done. Did you stay over then? When you got there.*

PB: **Yes, yes, yes. And dad being away most of the time anyway, um, she'd always want to go home to mother, you see, for the weekends and things like that.**

And Christmas time was lovely, 'cos we'd go over to granny's and all the family would be there and that's such a lovely big farmhouse and there would be a large holly tree in the dining room, from floor to ceiling, having been cut and brought in from the farm.

On the way to bed going down the long, dark hall, up the wooden staircase, sometimes we'd slide down the bannister rail. I can remember doing that.

Always called in to say goodnight to great granny, and great granny would live in the little bedroom upstairs. She'd never come down, only at Christmas.

ALK: *How old do you think she was?*

PB: **Well, she, she was in her 80s at that time I would have thought. But she lived on, no late 70s. She lived on until she was 99.**

ALK: *So, she was about the age that you're coming to when you would go for Christmas*

PB: **Yes, yes. When I was a child. Yes, yes, and, er, and there'd always be a little prayer from her bible, then a tin of ginger biscuits brought out from under her bed. She would give us one each before getting in our beds.**

My uncle, which is my mum's brother, would always put me on his shoulders and take me in to see great granny, and she was a dear little lady with long, straight, grey hair. And very kind and pleasant, just

sweet really. She didn't want to worry anybody, she was, um, wouldn't be any trouble to anybody either.

And, and, actually my, um, my grandson said to me a few months back "Grandma, I'll take your photograph" on his mobile phone you see, and what you'll look like in a hundred years' time. Pardon? So, anyway he took this photograph and me with my grey hair, you'd have thought that was my great grandmother. I had, I really did. I had a fit. "Oh wipe it off" I said, "Please" [LAUGHS].

Oh! On the bedpost, this was coming up to Christmas, on the bedpost my stocking would hang waiting for Father Christmas. In the morning I would find it full of sweets, orange, nuts and, if you were lucky, a few presents. One year I had a big doll, dressed by mum, not forgetting the sugar mouse.

There's the sugar mouse. We didn't have very much did we? In those days. So really apart from skating when the ice was on the Broad and things like that. I think we might now be coming up to that.

Oh! And we had Jack Valentine's night too – that was exciting. Jack Valentine – in fact I think we liked that as much as Christmas because there'd be parcels on the door and then there'd be a knock and the parcel would disappear.

And of course you'd cry because you thought you had lost your present. [LAUGHS] And the door would open, you'd open the door and a broomstick would drop through, you see, that would.

ALK: What was it? What time of year?

PB: It was in February time when this happened.

ALK: What, February the 14th?

PB: Yes, yes, yes.

ALK: Valentines. But you called it Jack

PB: Jack Valentines. Yes, Jack Valentines.

ALK: And what happened? What did you all do?

PB: Well we'd have parcels. Your parents would wrap the parcels up all in newspaper, and inside would be maybe nothing when you got it. And another one would be snatch parcel and that would be all with string round it. There'd be this long length of string going from round the door, so obviously someone was hiding round the wall and as soon as you opened the door to get it that would go, you see, snatched away. And then you'd be upset because you thought you'd lost it, lost a present.

ALK: *Why did you like it so much? It sounds horrible*

PB: Oh no, it was lovely. Well, I liked it, and we only done that in Norfolk you see.

ALK: *I'd never heard of it before.*

PB: Hadn't you. Oh right and all you had was an orange or a few sweets or something like that, but that was just the, I suppose the, I enjoyed it. 'Cos Norwich never done it because when my grandchildren grew up I tried it with them, you see. And, of course, they didn't know what I was doing and they were frightened.

ALK: *Exactly*

PB: They really were frightened, yeah. You see we grew up with it so I think David Platten did do a little bit of notice of Jack Valentine's night too. Have you met David? Yes. But he, he would know all about Jack Valentine.

ALK: *I'll ask him.*

PB: Oh then 1946 was the bad winter and we had all the snowdrifts and, 7 foot high, and I can remember mum was helping us and the friends who lived around.

We cut a big igloo out so we could sit under it. That was so high, that was lovely, to get under this igloo. We thought we were the, er, what do you call them?

ALK: *Eskimos*

PB: Eskimos. Yes, yes, yeah.

ALK: *Lots of people have mentioned that winter*

PB: Yes

ALK: *Do you remember anything else about it?*

PB: Well, I can remember the Broad was frozen over, obviously, and then everyone was skating, which I was too young to, to do and, em, I can remember walking over the frozen dykes from Catfield Staithe, since we lived down that end of the road, you see, to Hickling Broad, and that's a bit terrifying, especially if the ice started to crack when you walked too close to the edge or something.

And, um, the sledges would be out and snowballs would be played and that was quite an exciting time really.

But my mum would always be worried and frighten me in a way because "Mind you don't fall through the ice."

ALK: *Well you were only 5 or 6*

PB: I know, I know. Yes. But we did all go in a group and adults with us as well, so.... Yeah, but that did, she weren't very good at, um, anything with water, she put me off really [LAUGHS].

Especially if you went down the Broad and you come to the.... When I reached the age of 8 we moved from... When did I come in with this, um, er, Dipping Place?

ALK: *The next page, yeah, you're coming there, 'cos there's the picture.*

PB: Ah! Yes, yes, but then. Ah yes. I'm getting older now. [BOTH LAUGH]

ALK: *Well done. Effortless.*

PB: When I reached the age of 8 years old, we moved from Medina Cottage in 1949 to the village green. Er, there were built the new council houses on the track, as we called it then. You know where they are do you?

ALK: *I think so*

PB: On the green.

ALK: Yes

PB: And so, of course, mum was pleased to have a new, modern house after having Medina Cottage with no facilities, you see.

So obviously then that's why we moved. That was the best, the loveliest time really.

And then, of course, we had the village policeman, Mr Dellow, who'd watch at night if you had no lights on your bike, em, which we don't have now, do we?

A good youth club in the Wesleyan chapel, I think it was called the Wesleyan chapel. There's a picture, I did have it somewhere. You've probably seen that, the Wesleyan chapel, I think it was Mr Dick Tillett used to run that, and John Beales.

ALK: *Mmm*

PB: I never did join that because I was still only 8 so I really weren't.

You know they were all older children there really. And the Methodist Chapel held Sunday School services, and every year we had Sunday School anniversary.

The stage would be built up and decorated with lily-of-the-valley. I can remember we used to go and pick people's lily-of-the-valley from the garden and decorate the stage all in the front so they'd have a barrier up the front.

I was quite excited about that and Mr Ralph (?) and Frank Osborne would take the service, and Mrs Doris Osborne would take us girls in

her home for practicing singing and reciting. That was the Sunday. We would have a new dress.

The service was morning, afternoon and evening.

The chapel would be full and chairs out in the small school room, and the screen opened. There's a screen in the middle isn't there? And that would be opened.

And every Tuesday evening, that was quite a treat this was. Every Tuesday evening in the village hall the pictures were held. We had to pay, I think I've got this right, a shilling, not quite sure.

ALK: *Is this when you're 9 or 10, that kind of age, or later?*

PB: Yes. I was then coming, yes, it would be. Yes, to get in we had to pay a shilling to get in. They were shown from a large reel onto the screen, whirr, whirr, whirr, make an awful noise all night.

It was a village meeting place for all the youths, um, and this is where we are, in the village hall, and the W.I. would be held there, wedding receptions, the baby clinic once a month, run by Nurse Bishop.

After the war parties were held there for service families by the Royal British Legion.

Dr Walsh would travel from Stalham, running a weekly surgery from the kitchen. He would call out "Next one please".

ALK: *I'm particularly interested in Nurse Bishop and Dr Whatsisname.*

PB: Dr Walsh.

ALK: *Dr Walsh. So can you, what do you....., I know you are going to tell me about having your first baby and Nurse Bishop. But did you know Nurse Bishop?*

PB: Oh yes. 'Cos she's my aunt.

ALK: *But I mean professionally. Did you see her for anything? Until you had your baby?*

PB: No.

ALK: *No, we'll come to it. What about the doctor? Were you ever ill? Did you have to go to the doctor?*

PB: Oh yes. When I was, when we lived down Medina.

When I was school age, um, at school, um, I had measles very bad.

ALK: *Did you?*

PB: Mmm, yes.

ALK: *Was there a lot of it in the village at that time? No, you don't remember probably. No, you were too young. So, what was that like?*

PB: **Nasty. I was really ill, I had....**

ALK: *What do you remember?*

PB: **Very bad nosebleeds. That was quite frightening. Haemorrhaged really, um, so mum had to send for Dr Wilson and he would come from Ludham and visit the house and treat me, and then I, I was quite ill and uncle who I had, great uncle, who I had spoke to you previously about, um, went out and bought me a bottle of, what was it, um, this white stuff, was something like cod liver oil. It was in a white bottle, can't remember the name. Emulsion.**

ALK: *Some kind of emulsion.*

PB: **Yes, yes.**

ALK: *Did, did you have any antibiotics or anything like that?*

PB: **No, no.**

ALK: *Did your parents have to pay for the health....?*

PB: **Yes, yes.**

ALK: *It was just before the NHS came in, was it?*

PB: **Yes, yes, yes.**

ALK: *1949 sort of time*

PB: **Yes, yeah, yeah. I don't think we had any help. I'm sure we didn't.**

ALK: *Yes*

PB: **And so, this bottle of emulsion, whatever you call it.**

ALK: *Was meant to do you good.*

PB: **Awful.**

ALK: *Was it disgusting?*

PB: **Yes, dreadful, but that did, did help a lot.**

ALK: *Did it? What was it meant to help? Do you know?*

PB: **Yes.**

ALK: *Do you know what it was meant to do?*

PB: **Build you up, I think, after being low.**

ALK: *You lose a lot of weight with measles.*

PB: **Yes, yes. Yes, yes. And then cod liver oil I had.**

ALK: *I had that*

PB: **All sorts of things.**

ALK: *So you had measles. Did you have any other illnesses or accidents?*

PB: **Um, no, I didn't really.**

ALK: *You were well off then. You didn't have whooping cough or...?*

PB: **No, no.**

ALK: *.... chicken pox*

PB: **No, I didn't have chicken pox until I was, oh, married and had my children.**

ALK: *So you were a healthy family?*

PB: **Yes, yes.**

ALK: *There wasn't a fear about not being able to get healthcare, or that kind of thing?*

PB: **I hadn't noticed it. Not in the family at all. No, no, we had a very happy family really.**

ALK: *It sounds it*

PB: **Yes, yes. All a loving family and a loving grandmother, and, er, made a lump come to my throat now. Um, and all my, I didn't have any brothers and sisters, so my mum's sisters were like sisters to me.**

ALK: *Yes*

PB: **As well as aunts.**

ALK: *As well as aunts. Yes. From what you say it sounds as though all the different generations loved each other, you know"*

PB: **They did.**

ALK: *That's what sounds so very attractive about your family, if I may say so.*

PB: **Yes, yes, yes. And I brought my children up the same you see.**

ALK: *So let's get on to that a little bit. So, after you'd left school – We'll come back to this, don't worry - but whilst we're on the subject, after you'd left school did you move away or did you stay in the home with your aunt and your mum?*

PB: **No aunt, aunt left after the war was over. They closed the Post Office in Ludham so she went then back home to Burlingham, North Burlingham.**

ALK: *Yes*

PB: So, she left the house and when we moved down into the green....., on to the council houses, um, great uncle came too. But then he left.

ALK: *So it was you and your mum*

PB: Yes, and dad.

ALK: *Your dad had come back?*

PB: Oh, yes, yes, by then.

ALK: *When did you, did you just leave when you got married then?*

PB: Yes, I was at home all the time.

ALK: *So, what about the courting time? Who was this man?*

PB: Terry Brooks

ALK: *Turned up. How did you meet Terry?*

PB: He lived on the same estate as I did.

ALK: *The new build*

PB: Yes, yes.

ALK: *Tell me. Do you remember meeting him?*

PB: Yes.

ALK: *What happened?*

PB: Lovely. Well I think we were out, well we all used to be in the village together.

ALK: Yes

PB: Down the Broad.

ALK: Yes

PB: And, and the boys would all be on the Greyhound corner when we girls would all walk past.

ALK: Yes

PB: There'd be all these boys, we daren't hardly go past sometimes, and, er, gotta think now, when I first met him.

Um, he had a new racer bike and I think we were all girls then going out to the pictures somewhere, perhaps to Stalham pictures or something, because they had pictures there and, of course, I had a ride on his crossbar.

And um, I was a bit, a bit later home than I should have been, so I got a smack. [LAUGHS]

ALK: *How old were you?*

PB: **Where have you been? Well, I was getting on for a teenager then.**

ALK: *I hope so.*

PB: **Yes I was. I'd left school. Course I had, I was hairdressing in Stalham.**

ALK: *So, you left school at 14, or...*

PB: **No, 15.**

ALK: *And so you were hairdressing in Stalham by then?*

PB: **Yes**

ALK: *By 15, 16*

PB: **Yes, yes.**

ALK: *Is that what you went to do?*

PB: **Yes. 15 years old, as soon as I left school.**

ALK: *That's a lot to ask isn't it? So, you went straight into that?*

PB: **Yes, straight away, yes. I didn't even have a holiday.**

ALK: *Yes. So you got a smack even though you were 16?*

PB: **Um, yes, yes...**

ALK: *That was alright. [LAUGHS]*

PB: **And then, of course, being in the village we'd all see each other occasionally and then we'd meet.**

Well, sometimes he wouldn't want to see me. He, he would say "I don't think I'll see you tonight, I'll go out with the boys" [LAUGHS]

So, I'd have a few tears wouldn't I, and mum would say "What's the matter?" "Oh! He don't want to see me tonight", "Well I wouldn't bother with him" she'd go. But, of course, I did, didn't I?

And that went on from there really. And then we used to go to Yarmouth on the train and go to the pictures together and I loved him dearly.

ALK: *I can see you did. It shines, it shines out.*

PB: **Yes, yes it was lovely actually**

ALK: *I'm being sympathetic with you. I can feel it too.*

PB: **Can you? I didn't realise it was as bad as that.**

ALK: *No, it's lovely. It's a privilege. Thank you.*

PB: **Yes, yes. And, er, really, we only had a bicycle. And walked.**

ALK: *It was you needed wasn't...*

PB: **And by then we'd moved from the council houses and dad had bought the little thatched cottage by Jack Martin's shop. It used to be that little cottage there, if you know where I mean. And that was lovely, we lived in there and, of course, I was courting Terry.**

He'd come round and we'd have the evening together and we'd go out and, well, as I say, we'd walk the village really. Arms round each other, it was lovely. Oh! This was all before we were married.

Terry used to come and meet me in his bicycle, and wait for me, and cycle home with me. And we fell out sometimes and my friend who worked in the shop with me, and I'd cry because we fell out and she'd say "oh! Look who's out there". He was outside. "Ooh!" I said "He's come". "I wouldn't go with him if I were you" she said to me.

Of course, off I'd go, I was that excited because we fell in together and, obviously, when it come to get married. So, um, but that was really lovely.

ALK: *Lovely.*

PB: **Yes. I know I was young but I wouldn't. If I had my time again I wouldn't, I would still want the same person.**

ALK: *I can see that. Yes.*

PB: **Can you?**

ALK: *Yes, yes, I can. Now, my dear, it's getting a bit dark and you might be getting a bit cold.*

PB: **I'm alright. I'm fine.**

ALK: *Then we'll keep going.*

PB: **Do you want the heating on?**

ALK: *No*

PB: **'Cos I haven't got any on.**

ALK: *No, I'm alright. I'm just checking on you.*

PB: **I'll put the lights on.**

ALK: *Let's do that Dipping bit. Can I find it for you?*

PB: **Yes.**

ALK: *Because I like that bit.*

PB: **I'll put my tree lights on for you.**

ALK: *Oh. That'll be nice too. Thank you.*

PB: I've got rather warm now. Going through all this, I think I've got excited. [LAUGHS]

ALK: *So it's just this, this piece. There's a gap there, then it starts there with all those boys. Just that bit and then it will go with the photograph very nicely. In the summer, it says.*

PB: In the summer, in the summer holidays.

ALK: *That bit, but don't do it too fast.*

PB: Alright.

ALK: *Take your time dear.*

PB: If I do this tomorrow it won't be any good will it? In my prayers.

ALK: *Well I'm sure it will be fine but I want it to sound as though you are talking to me.*

PB: But in the summer holidays.

ALK: Yes

PB: We would go swimming in the Broad – up to Mr Tallowin's mill, called the dipping place, and there we would..., oh, there would be all the village boys and girls, and, there again my mum would say "oh do be careful, don't go and drowned see".

That would frighten me to start off and the boys would all be swimming all round you and would frighten me to death, and we went into the little dipping mill, dipping house mill, to change. It was the only place we had to change and, of course, the boys would be running round to peep (LAUGHS), but I was getting older then but that was nice.

But there'd be a dyke as well where we could practice to swim, and Janet Beales, was at the time, she'd be there as well, she was another local girl and there'd be lots of villagers all come down. Because, unfortunately, that all got closed up you see – so after a time you couldn't use it any more but, em, that's lovely. You could go halfway out to the Broad.

ALK: *Was the water clear?*

PB: Yes, it was clear.

ALK: *Did it have a gravel bottom, or all mud?*

PB: It was a bit sort of silty, yeah, yeah, yeah – what I can remember and, em, but you could walk right out waist high. Yes, that was quite nice.

There'd be, Susan's got a lovely picture of the boat, an old rowing boat coming down to the mill – and really that's about all I can remember about what I used to do down there.

Of course we used to have to walk down, down the lane from the village.

ALK: Yes

PB: And walk down the lane. We did a lot of walking and cycling.

ALK: *Walk right down to Tallowin's farm and then turn down...*

PB: Yes.

ALK: *Was there a Tallowin in the farm then or was that someone else?*

PB: Yes, that was Mr & Mrs.

ALK: *That was*

PB: Mr.

ALK: *Must be the father or something.*

PB: Oh! What was his name. Um, can't remember now. Joyce Tallowin was the mother and then there was the father there. Their boys were young too, you see, John and er.

ALK: Yes

PB: Can't remember the other two boys' names.

ALK: *John is my generation.*

PB: Is he? Oh, yes, yes.

ALK: *More or less. He's there now. We're good friends. Yes, with Vi.*

PB: That was John who gave me this.

ALK: *Aah, that's where I've seen it.*

PB: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

ALK: *Well very good. I've, I've asked you to talk a lot and you've given me lots of stories. I just, just think we should probably wrap up because that's long enough really. Is there anything else that*

PB: This is the photograph of that old chapel that had, that had the youth club.

ALK: *Yeah. I remember it well.*

PB: You can remember that can't you?

ALK: *I can actually. I think I can.*

PB: I think that tell you the dates there, when that was

ALK: *Is there anything else that, um, that you think you'd like to tell me about, which is sort of amusing stories of your life in Hickling or stories that you*

heard tell or anything like this. No particular reason why you should, I, I just don't If you've got something else you want to say I don't want to not let you say it. But you have been through a lot and, er.

PB: **No.**

ALK: *I think we've done rather well, haven't we?*

PB: **Yes, I think so. Yes, yes.**

ALK: *Ok so we'll stop the tape and then you'll tell me all the stories. [LAUGHS]*

*This transcription has been made to back up, not replace,
the audio tapes that form the main record output of the VOH Changing Village project 2015 to 2020.
The transcribers used their best efforts and checked back for proper names and places.
We ask for forgiveness for any errors...*