

Paul Saville

Memories of Bodiam as a Student

During the early sixties I was a student and worked every summer for Guinness living at the Terrace Wood Hostel that was run by a man called Fred - who I recall had a dog nearly as big as himself! Simon Vimiviston lived there as did another foreign worker called Peter and other single Guinness workers. One year I was there, Guinness hired a crop spraying aircraft and the pilot stayed at the hostel

I was attached to New House Farm (run by a man called Bill something) and would work though the early part of the summer on irrigating the hop gardens as well as other jobs. I remember that Percy Webb was the foreman and I worked alongside Bill Russell and David Lawrence (David spent much of the summer months hop washing)

When the hop picking season arrived I worked in the oast at New House and I can remember clearly pressing hop pockets with Bill Goodsell. Fred Carey also worked in the oast. Fred was also a keen fisherman. Later I drove a tractor taking bines from the gardens to the New House picking machine.

I also knew Frank Jarvis as I went to Rye Grammar School with his sons Mark and Alan.

Later on after I heard that Guinness were pulling out of Bodiam I went down to visit and was shocked by what I saw - great piles of twisted wire from the grubbed out gardens! I was lucky, however, as I managed to rescue three New House hop garden signs from the rubble which I have on my wall at my house in France. They are: Neblongs, Middle Brook and Big Field.

During that visit I met with Bill Russell who was in charge of parking at the castle car park.

Is there anybody left alive from that era? If so I would love to be in touch.