

Penny Philcox

Philcox and Son, of Catsfield working at Guinness Hop Farms

I have enjoyed looking at your site very much, thank you.

My interest is that my father Frank Philcox and brother Richard, as Philcox and Son, of Catsfield. They did a great deal of work at the Guinness Hop Farm, as I remember it, in the mid 1960's, to engineer the change from traditional hop-drying to the introduction of electric heating and drying systems.

We have no family photos of this time, sadly, but I remember going with them sometimes to see the works and the oasts etc. Their work, as I remember it, was putting in steelwork required to support the new mechanical drying equipment. I used to love visiting and also the smell of hops on there clothes when they got back from long, tiring days working at the site. When they finished they were given the thickest drink of Guinness, which they said was like drinking treacle. Of course, they drove back to Catsfield in truck and motorbike!

Working there also interested my father's mother, Nellie Roberts, also of Catsfield, as her family like so many local families boosted their income by hop-picking on the local hop-farms.

I don't know whether any accounts record the Philcox engineering involvement but thought I would just let you know what an important time of work it was for our family business being commissioned to work for Guinness, and the interest it brought us all.

[Note by Keith. I was not aware of the work Philcox and Sons did on the hop drying equipment in the oasts. Does anyone have any recollection of this?]