



Russell Children

stove. I built myself a boathouse with timber from the old colliery building, the joy of my life, installing bunk beds and a kitchen range. Sometimes I slept there with the sound of the surf on the shingle a wonderful opiate. I bought a trammel net and the first time I used it there were 72 Huss and goodness knows what else in it. We had no fridge or freezer so selling was the only option. The going price was 10 shillings (50 pence) a score.

The sea was not always friendly. The night of the great storm and floods of 1953 was horrendous and frightening when we lost the sea wall with huge plumes of white water soaring into the air. The spray was

hitting our roof and the wind took one of our windows off its hinges. We took the mattress off the bed, dragged it downstairs and slept in the kitchen. We were glad to see the back of that night.

The nearest residence to the railway cottages was the bungalow where the Gatehouse family lived. One night we were woken by Charlie saying his pregnant wife was not well. Hazel saw that the baby was coming and help was needed. I went up to the signal box and asked for a doctor to come. Dr. Tolland arrived by special engine. She insisted that I stay with her to help deliver the baby - not my scene at all! After three hours a boy was born and I could go home. 'No, you can't' said the doctor, 'there's more to come!' Twenty minutes later a baby girl arrived. Being premature the babies had to go to hospital, so I arranged for a train to stop and an ambulance to meet it at Dover.

Would anybody consider living somewhere similar? I hated the thought at first, but when it was time to leave, because it was lonely for our children, it was with a heavy heart. It taught us that life could be good, ignoring the 'must have' and 'throw away' society. We had no possessions to go wrong. There was a wireless, but it ran on batteries. Every Thursday I picked up my wages with nothing to knock a big hole in them.

New "Crypt" Group an Update

Cllr. Graham Wanstall - Chairman "The Crypt" Group

Many people were concerned that the tragic 1977 fire at the "Crypt" has never been permanently commemorated!

A group has been established with a dedicated committee to install and maintain a commemorative plaque and also to be interested and associated with the neglected site's future.

As the groups' chairman I thank Derek Leach, Terry Sutton, Cllr. Ann Burke, Charlie Elphicke M.P. and the many now retired firemen who fought the fire in 1977 for their help and assistance. We will remember the fireman, the three children and three adults who lost their lives in the fire and the four fireman awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal.