

1942-1944

Joan Knights remembers her years at Norwich Training College

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I arrived in Norwich in 1944, having worked for one year as an Uncertificated Teacher in the village of Copdock, Suffolk. We students lodged in various houses in College Road and I was one of three Welsh girls staying in Hollies. In my first week there, my then boyfriend Ken from Suffolk, decided to visit me to take me out for the evening. I had been given strict instructions by my college 'mother' to be back by 10 o'clock, as the doors would then be locked. Unfortunately, we lost our way in this strange city and it was well past 10 pm when we returned. Luckily, Gill Caukwell was in a ground floor room; so I tapped on her window. Standing on her bed below the window, she lifted the sash for me to climb in and, as she did so, her pyjama trousers fell down, much to our amusement. Later I had a roasting from my 'mother', who told me that I was letting the college down for being late!

On many occasions we had to troop down to the air raids shelters, often with the accompaniment of visiting friends and Miss Duff, who would religiously patrol the bedrooms to ensure every girl had taken cover.

We all enjoyed the college dances, to which were invited members of the American Forces stationed at nearby bases. On one particular occasion, Lena Zamish went quite green when dancing an excellent jive with a large American known as Big Chief Catalina. Miss Duff looked very concerned and was quite undecided about rescuing her! Lena and I were in

the College Choir and I often wonder what became of her.

I have wonderful memories of the old college. I recall one vivid memory of Pam Harvey running along College Road on 8th May 1945, calling out, "The war is over!" All the windows in Hollies went up and everyone went mad. What a time it was!

My first post after leaving college in 1946 was in a junior school in Stowmarket and later at an infants school in Debenham. After getting married in 1950, we moved to Maldon, Essex and I was able to get a post at the local junior school. After three years, the bank transferred Frank to my home town of Bridgend, where we lived for 20 years. We had three children and when my youngest was five, I returned to teaching in the same school as my children for a few years. This was the very same junior school I had attended as a girl. After the children had moved on, I stayed on for 21 wonderful years.

For the last 30 odd years we have lived near Cardiff - looking forward to our diamond wedding anniversary in May 2010.

It's been wonderful meeting up with old friends - it was so good. Let's hope we can do it again soon.

Joan Knights (nee May) 1944-46



Above: 1942-44 wartime students outside the temporary dining hall