

Ramsey Mortuary Chapels

Heritage and Archive Centre

By Jane Yardley – Chair, Friends of Ramsey Mortuary Chapels

Good news at last! Restoration work has now restarted on the Anglican Chapel thanks to the sterling efforts of Kevin Colam, who did such a wonderful job for us on the restoration of the archway that unites the 2 chapels.

Hopefully by the time that we open next year the Anglican Chapel will be fully restored, apart from the contagion window, but more about that at a later date. Then we can start on the Non-conformist Chapel which is, unfortunately, in a far worse state of disrepair due to severe neglect over the years. But we are a determined group and know that with your continued help and support we will get it done.

On Remembrance Sunday, we laid a wreath on behalf of the "Friends" at the service on the green outside St. Thomas a Becket Church, which was very well attended and it was so nice to see so many old friends and acquaintances after such a long time.

Some of you may remember that in last November's edition of the Ramsey and Warboys Informer, just before lockdown, I included a piece that my dear friend Beryl Perrin, who is sadly no longer with us, wrote for our archives, about her memories of Ramsey when she was a child and I would like to continue it here.

We left Beryl walking along the High Street just approaching the Methodist Chapel, the next shop being Tansers and now she continues...

"This shop was what I thought of as a posh shoe shop, the smell of leather was glorious. I went there for sandals for school and church. Red "Clarks" sandals for school and white ones for church and pots of polish were used to keep them looking smart. I remember that the red polish used to come of onto my white cotton socks, it didn't matter how often you rubbed the shoes it always happened. We children were served downstairs, the adults went upstairs and

I think that Mr and Mrs Tanser lived at the back of the shop, which eventually became a takeaway.

We didn't get our winter shoes there but I don't know why.

Tansers had a house attached and then the next shop was Mr Proud's cycle shop and again this shop had a smell all of its own. You stepped down into the shop which wasn't very big. There were cycles everywhere, tyres of all sorts, puncture repair kits, cycle lights, batteries, bells, chains and cans of oil. Mr Proud also repaired cycles and he was married to one of the teachers at the Infant school.

The outside of the shop was painted blue and I remember walking past one evening with my friends from the Youth Club, all of us singing the clapping song. It's funny what stays in your mind.

When Mr Proud retired the shop became a barbers and hairdressers called Montys. It's now flats.

Next to Mr Proud's was GB Hyde and Son. When I was small it was run by Mr George Hyde and then his son Richard. The shop was in two parts, the first was a haberdashers and school outfitters, plus china and glassware and other sundries. Across to the right of the main shop there was another building which housed furniture, carpets and also sold larger items such as prams.

I bought my children's pram from there. It was a beautiful navy blue Silver Cross one. It had a tray between the wheels to hold your shopping and a white embroidery anglaise sun canopy. I loved that pram. Hyde's also had a house removal service and also laid flooring.

Miss Clarke worked there for years and I remember a Mr Bull, but not the names of the others.

It was a wonderful shop and I really miss it, as I'm sure a lot of people do.

Next to this was a piece of ground which was Hydes car park, which is now flats and houses. How times change!"

More of Beryl's walk next time. Meanwhile I hope that you all have a very good Christmas and let's hope that next year is a better one for everyone. Thank you, on behalf of us all for your continued support for our project.