

brothers would make fish cakes out of the unsold fish and chips from the previous day. They were delicious, especially in the evening washed down with lashings of Tizer.

Near the end of the road is the junction with Upper Paddock Road. This was an important meeting place for all the local kids and others from nearby streets. *The Villiers Arms* was here and the old perfume factory - that later became Crawleys hardware shop. Eastmans, or Eastons, was a butcher's shop and some nasty things went on in the yard adjacent to it. Over the road was S. J. Hocker, another, provision shop. We never bought anything here as he was a competitor to Stan Palmer. Mr. Weller had his shoe shop next door. Mum was always in there convincing him that my shoes were not beyond redemption. Just past the Attwood's house was a confectioner's, run by a little man called Smith. He had a shiny high forehead and small round spectacles. This shop was well placed to stock up with supplies for a long day in Penrose woods.

Generally we spent our free time playing in the street, making a noisy nuisance of ourselves, but if more time was available we would take ourselves up to the dump, which led to Attenboroughs' fields or go to Watford Heath and/or the Grange and Penrose wood by the railway. The dump was a wonderful place. Old bike wheels, rusty stoves and general junk was tipped here. It was in two parts: The high ground and the forbidden lower yard that I think belonged to Mr. Narraway, the local rag and bone man. Beyond was Scarroft Bros. Builders' yard. Between Mr. Narraway's and the high land was a short hill that we could roll lorry tyres down and slide down on those curved sheets of old Anderson shelter. Sometimes we could tear down in an old pram. Stones would be thrown at Narraway's horse and he would shout and chase us away. I found some old aircraft bits and several empty bomb cases. These were dragged into Attenboroughs fields then jammed into the ground nose-first in the middle of the footpath to scare the Sunday walkers on their way to Merryhill Lane. One of the bomb cases was eventually thrown into the Big Pond. This was the larger of two ponds in the fields and part of the drainage from a large house in Bushey owned by Lord Bethel. At some time a gang of us had set out to find the source of the stream, this had led us to the Third Spinney between Haydon Road and the churchyard of St. James and then into the forbidding Fourth Spinney. We eventually found an ornamental lake in the grounds of a large mansion with a rowing boat moored at a jetty. Every film that we had seen that involved boats and included shelling, bombing, piracy, mutiny, torpedoes and submarines was re-run. The day was rounded off by pushing the boat out into the middle to look like the *Marie Celeste*. Downstream the water eventually flowed into a pipe under the field because the water sometimes vanished through the ground near the Small Pond. It finally flowed into a culvert in Haydon Road and disappeared. Pete and I tried to find out where it led to but it was too small to crawl through.

From No.57 there were a number of routes to Attenboroughs'. The quickest was by cutting through Avenue Terrace. This was a long dark alley up the side of the haunted house. Halfway up was a row of cottages and a large scruffy house. We always got shouted at if caught cuffling through, it was private or something. Nothing was private in our world. If it could be explored or played in then it was. It led to Lower Paddock Road, which was not really our patch even though the dump was at it's end. A lad called Pete Flanagan lived in the road, and also Johnny Dodd(s), John Scarrott, the Corries and dear old Dolly Wolf (Woolf). She hated children and we gave her every reason to because she blamed us for anything broken. We were accused of everything. She had a horrid yappy dog which Pete ran over whilst hiding his bike recklessly in the fields. He left an impressive green tyre mark over it's white fur.

An alternative route Was to walk the length of Upper Paddock Road. At No.1 lived John Alexander, who was a few years older than me, and his elder brother Derek. These were more Brian's friends. Their father worked on the railways and could ride a bike slower than anyone I knew without falling off. Jill Karlstedt lived next door, she was always asked to be the *duty nurse* at our bike races through Penrose Wood. Further up was Anne Young and her sister Carol. These two were good reliable street kids and mucked in with all the rough and tumble. Next to them lived the Munday's, the two daughters were Carol and Suzanne. These two were a bit distant from us. Their dad had a Jowett car CUP 3