

MEMORIES OF ASHBURY

BY ALAN DAY (Recorded 2015)

I was born at Alyn House in November 1929, the youngest of nine, six brothers and two sisters and myself. I attended Ashbury School. The headmaster was, I think, a Mr Cully who was also the church organist, and I had the job of pumping the organ (at times not very well), as I would be singing the hymns with the choir and forgot to pump, thus making the tune waver. Mr Cully would then kick the side of the organ to attract my attention.

At the latter part of my schooling, which was during the War, most boys would work on Mr Spence's or Mr Reade's farm during the summer, harvesting and haymaking.

I played football for Ashbury in the North Berks League.

Leaving school at fourteen I went to work at RAF Watchfield, as apprentice motor mechanic, stayed for three and a half years, then joined the Royal Marines serving twenty-seven years.

Myself and David Bunce were quite pally, rode our cycles and built dens all over the place.

My six brothers:

Two were in the Royal Marines and were on board HMS Exeter at the Battle with the German battleship Graf Spee.

Two were in the Army, one of which was captured in North Africa, was prisoner in Italy, escaped and worked with the Partisans for two years.

Two brothers were in reserved occupation. I also had two brother in laws in the RAF.