The Woodford Valley Churches

This parish is the Parish of Durnford and the Parish of Woodford, was Woodford and never the twain would meet, until 1973 - when the church decided to join it as a united parish. Durnford lost their vicarage and their vicar and became a united parish with the Woodfords, and that's when we began to see more of each other. Other than that, we'd lived separate lives more or less. Until about five years ago some people would not go to church at Woodford, and some people in Woodford would never come over here. But that's died out now - more or less because people have come in and never knew how it was. They accept the fact that it's a united parish and act accordingly. The joke was that either Woodford or Durnford didn't tell the other that the Vikings were coming and they've never got on since!
Pat Powell

I did church flowers for twenty-one years, which was lovely. The vicar we had at the time didn't like us buying flowers, he liked us to use the ones you could pick in the garden really. One particular wedding, they wanted wild flowers which was very, very difficult indeed. And I just came home and picked all the flowers I could find in the garden because the ones that they picked at the river side, they just wouldn't last for a wedding. So when we'd finished I said, would they please come and have a look at the flowers in the church and see if they approved of them. And the father said. "Oh well, no one will bother, they'd have all have been to the pub!" So I thought that was lovely.
Janet Moore

My young sister and me and one of two young girls, we sang in the church choir until I left school. We used to walk down from the farm to the church Sunday morning, and then after we'd had our dinner in the afternoon, we had to come back for Sunday School. We had a choir master and he used to suck little tiny black sweets - they were ever so small - not much bigger than a knob pin. They were Mellolds and if we got fidgety during the sermon he used to give us one. Oh, they were horrible.
Margery Truckle (nee Grinter)



Marg and Maude Grinter and Nap

I used to go to church three times on Sunday. I would go to morning service, afternoon Sunday School and then go to Evensong. I used to sing in the choir. I enjoyed that tremendously. As we got older we used to pump the organ, so the oldest boy was always the organ pumper. We used to annoy Mrs Pile, she used to play the organ. We used to watch the weight, if the weight went down you were OK but if the weight got near the top she would run out of air. Then she'd rat, tap, tap on the organ but we'd do it on purpose. We was devils really.
Monty Hazzard

We always had to say our grace. We never left the table, we always had to say. "Pray God for my good dinner. Please can I get down?" And we always used to say our prayers at night. We used to get down on our knees on the side of the bed and say. "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon a little child. Suffer my simplicity, suffer me to come to thee. God bless, Mummy, Daddy, sisters, brothers, aunties, uncles, all cousins, kind friends. Make me a good girl through Jesus Christ. Amen." Then you would have a prayer book or a bible for a present and my mother wrote a prayer in there, one for you to say when you go into church and kneel down before the service. And she wrote this prayer in front of the prayer book so that we'd remember it.
Betty Evans (nee Riggs)



Betty and Vera Riggs at Wilsford Manor, 1936



St Andrew's Great Durnford. 1890



All Saints' Woodford with Mike Penny. 1951



29th May 1938. Wilsford Church. Dedication of new graveyard