

BRANSTON MERE WIRELESS STATION

3 Direction Finding Station (Y Station)

Information from Cliff Oldfield - Posted to Branston in 1946 until 1954.

Cliff Oldfield and wife Molly, also Bill Hobkirk, lodged with a Miss West in Sleaford Road. Cliff and Molly later moved to Silver Street into a cottage owned by Jack and Nancy Westwood.

Jack Tones lodged with Rose Green. Played the piano at The Waggon & Horses Pub.

Doug Taylor went to the new estate and later married Rene Reeson

Gordon Kennedy and wife Joyce.

Cyril Humberstone and family, all made welcome in the village.

Flt. Lt.. Jock Murray and Sergeant Jack Scobell were in charge at this time.

Wartime Servers Remembered by Cliff

Maurice Norman, whose wife Phyllis was a WAAF at Branston Mere W/T

Hugh Burkhill, who also married a WAAF.

Ted Liddell. He organised post war re-unions at Moor Lodge Hotel

The Watch Supervisors in 1946.

These were all staff who had served in the R.A.F. during pre-war Persian Gulf Days.

Charlie Deaker

Frank Hardy

Chas Steer – Had served on the Royal Yacht as a ‘Sparker’

Jock Thomson

Bill Parsons

Bill Swan

The Watchkeepers – Were all ex-Servicemen.

Johnny Dale, Graham Howlett, Fred Burgess, John Skelton, Jack Cubitt, Jack Keal, Charles Scase, Harold Tacey, Vic Kershaw, Frank Gascoyne, Geoff Barrand, Roland Chevins, Frank Law, Gordon Kennedy, Jim Barney, Cliff Oldfield.

Locally Employed Staff

Billy Reynolds – was also a gents' hairdresser. (Could be brother to Charlie Reynolds?)

Charlie Barnes - was the wizard with the bucket and brush (Cleaner?)

George Creasey – Transport man ferrying families and carrying packages. Also repaired cycles.

Further Information

Cliff Oldfield died in 2004, his wife Molly died 30.11.09. They had a son named Timothy who works for the Bank of England and who now lives in Kent. There is an old photograph of Cliff & Molly, together with others, standing in Silver Street, Branston.

Jean Grantham, a W.A.A.F. Sergeant from Hartlepool who worked at The Mere is now deceased. (Portrait photograph in existence) Her daughter Kathleen lives at Doncaster and is due to visit Nancy Westwood some time early this year.

Ted Liddell is now deceased. His widow Nora Liddell lives in Sunderland.

Joyce Northey who lives in Silver Street, Branston, remembers that her father, the late Tom Vaisey, was a Special Police officer at the wireless station and the only thing he ever told Joyce about his work was the fact that he was on duty on one occasion when an aircraft crashed in the field near the wireless station. It did not catch fire but all the crew were killed by the impact of the crash. When he got to the plane he found they were all Australians and there was not a mark on them.

Information From Jack Scobell – Son of Warrant Officer Scobell Who Served at The Mere.

He states his father's correct name was Willy John Scobell and he came from Northumberland where the name Willy was used as a Christian name in place of William. He served in the Royal Air Force until the late 1920s and a short time later he obtained employment as a civilian at Branston Mere Wireless Station, being employed by the Air Ministry. At the outbreak of the 2nd World War all staff were enlisted into the R.A.F. and he subsequently attained the rank of Flight Sergeant. Sometime around 1943 he was posted to Cheadle where he remained almost until the end of the war and by this time he had attained the rank of Warrant Officer. He was then posted back to Branston Mere and was then in charge of the unit together with Flt. Lt. Jock Murray. He remained there for a further period of time before being posted to R.A.F. Digby. At some stage after his return to Branston Mere the staff was returned to civilian status.

He further informs me that from time to time his father had the task of visiting some of the residents in Bracebridge Heath, and possibly other villages, in order to find a billet for some of the Wireless Station staff. Some villagers were reluctant to take such people into their homes but refusal was not an option, and like it or not they were forced to comply.

Peter Scarcliffe
30.3.10