



Doreen & Bill Brown.

Doreen is the daughter of Billie Wilkinson, Alderman and much admired and respected Mayor of Scarborough about 1963. Doreen's grandfather was William Wilkinson, Mayor in the 1930's. The photographs Doreen has supplied belonged to him.

Doreen lived at number 5 Princess Terrace, off Princess St until her father bought a shop on the corner of Springfield and St Sepulchre St. There was no gas or electricity, no bathroom, they had to use a tin bath but they did have an indoor toilet. The shop closed in the 1970's because there was no longer a demand for that type of shop and probably reflects the general trend away from small local, specialist shops. Doreen's parents bought a house in Castle Gardens in the early 1940s. The house was built by Charles Day. These new houses were built to replace those which had been bombed during the Second World War.

Doreen went to Friarage School, left at 16 and went to work at Boucher Brown Printers in North St and there she met Bill Brown. They have been married for 55 years and their first home was in Clifton Street. Doreen missed the 'bottom end' and felt out of place being away from the community she had been brought up in, she did not settle and they made plans to move to the bottom end as soon as they could. Doreen says the 'bottom end' is special and she would not want to live anywhere else. Even though, anything beyond the 'bottom end', towards the South Cliff area and beyond, was considered 'posh'.

The 'bottom end' has seen many changes. It has always been a fishing community, anybody who moved in from outside, the community either took to you or they didn't, and if they didn't take to you, you certainly felt out of place. A lot of Doreen and Bill's neighbours were fishermen but sadly a lot of them have died, many of the houses have been sold and the fishing connection has disappeared. Bill Colling who lived opposite Doreen and Bill at number 7 Castle Gardens died in 2006 and his house is now for sale.

Doreen and Bill thought one of the big changes was the disappearance of small local shops and this was one of the things that they missed the most. There had been a shop on Castlegate, more or less opposite their house, called "Evans", known locally as "Pennies from eaven" very much like the programme on television called 'Open all hours'. There had also been a fruit shop in Princess St, just as you turned round the corner from Castlegate about two doors along on the right. There was a chemist in Princess St at the square end called 'Gallantries' (?). There was practically a shop on every street corner and you could find everything you needed, right on your doorstep. There wasn't really much need to go outside the 'bottom end'. These shops were like 'community centres' you were bound to bump into someone you knew and find out everything that was going on. Everybody knew each other.

There were lots of fish shops (fish and chips). If you knew the owner, you could take your fish to them and they would fry it for you for a penny (1d) - but this was a favour to spare you the bother of doing it at home - frying fish at home can be a bit smelly! People didn't lock their doors, in any case, they didn't have anything to steal. The local policeman knew everybody and if anything 'went missing' - they knew the likely suspects. Another big change is that you don't see as many children in the bottom end, they don't play out like they used to do.

The photographs show Cross St and Duple St (Friargate) before the slum clearance of the 1930's - Doreen was about 7 or 8 years old at the time. A lot of the people moved out of the bottom end. The new housing which replaced the old cottages in Duple St and Cross St were luxury by comparison - indoor bathrooms and toilets. The new homes "were well kept and maintained when they were first built - some nice families lived there." These photographs show children in the street, small corner shops and in general reflect the ordinary everyday life at that time and which Doreen and Bill recollect with much affection.