

Leadgate Stories

Bill Laidlaw

Although I was born in Medomsley in 1949, we moved to Villa real in the early 50's. My earliest memories are going to Leadgate Primary School when I was 5 (no parents, just my older brother).

My dad was down the pit at Medomsley.

I remember seeing the Northern Lights from Villa Real on my birthday. We used to have it on Guy Fawkes night as mine was the 6th Nov.

I took over a paper round at Matthews in Leadgate when my older brother joined the RAF in the early 60's. We had to do St Ives road, the Dene, Plantation St. and they around past the CO-op. My sister took over from me when I joined the RAF in 1967.

All 3 of us were the first from Villa Real to all pass our 11+ and go to the Grammar school. I left early and worked in Doggart's for 2 years before joining the RAF.

I remember sneaking into the Wheatsheaf pub in my ATC uniform and conning Sadie and Alan to let me have a pint. (Alan was a RAF mechanic in the Battle of Britain)

I then married Glynis Herdman from Delves Lane and began my RAF adventure. We travelled the world, had 3 kids and finally settled in Norfolk after being with the RAF for 49 years.

Sadly, Glynis died in a car crash 10 years ago, but me and the family are settled down here.

My sister stills live in Consett and we try to get up there when we can. My older brother lives in Spain.

Picture is of me on Swings at Villa Real

