

The Dolphin pub a potted history (1850 – 1971)

The land around Trinity Square was, in 1831, just fields with a few streets and buildings filling the triangle of land formed by Parliament Street, Milton Street and North Street (later Forman Street). In 1838 approval was given by the Treasury for the sale of land in the Meadows and the Island. In a document dated 1st August:

"Mr Wakefield now states that the subscribers to the intended 'New Church' desire to take some of the land on Burton Leys for that purpose to the extent of some 3,600 to 3,800 Square yards, and he moves that a piece of the above land abutting to Mansfield Road and not exceeding 4000 square yards, be sold to the subscribers at 2/6d per square yard."

In 1841 The Holy Trinity church was completed and thus the beginning of continuous building works was commenced. By 1844 several buildings had been erected between the church and what would become North Sherwood Street. The Dolphin was built between 1848 and 1852.

White's Directory of Nottingham 1853 edition shows that William Webb Willerton was the victualler and maltster at Dolphin, North Church Street, and that he remained in that capacity until about 1858. Interestingly William Webb Willerton was also shown (in the 1848 edition of Lascelles & Hagar's Nottingham Directory) as the victualler of Dolphin Inn, Tollhouse Hill. Willerton was born in about 1810 in Scamblesby, Lincolnshire and died in 1881 in Nottingham. He appears to have owned or run several pubs the last one being the Red Lion at Matlock. Scamblesby is between Louth and Horncastle. Willerton was replaced by Andrew Lacey who remained in position until about 1867/68.

The 1869 Morris & Co. directory of Nottingham shows R. Oakden as victualler of Dolphin. The 1861 census return shows a Ralph Oakden 51 years, born in Leek and his wife Jane aged 38 plus their 4 children Mary A (24yrs), Ralph (10yrs), Edward (5yrs) and Arthur (2yrs). The 1861 census return also shows 'Dolphin Inn'.

The 1871 census return shows Jane Oakden (widow) 47yrs as victualler on Trinity Street. Trinity Street is the former name of North Church Street and various trade directories show the Dolphin under both addresses but with no real chronological pattern. Andrew Lacey is now shown as the Innkeeper at the Salutation, Nicholas Street. Jane Oakden appears to have remained in place until 1873/74.

The 1874 edition of Wrights Directory shows the Dolphin at 4 Trinity Street and the victualler as Samuel Pogson. Pogson is shown in the 1871 census return as victualler of The Sir John Borlace Warren on Derby Road and at that time being 39yrs old and born in Gedling.

Samuel Pogson remains in position until about 1888 but in the 1881 census return he is shown as a retired innkeeper and resident at 266 Mansfield Road. This cannot be explained except possibly the trade entry was completed and either he did not in fact retire at all or quickly came out of retirement to continue as victualler?

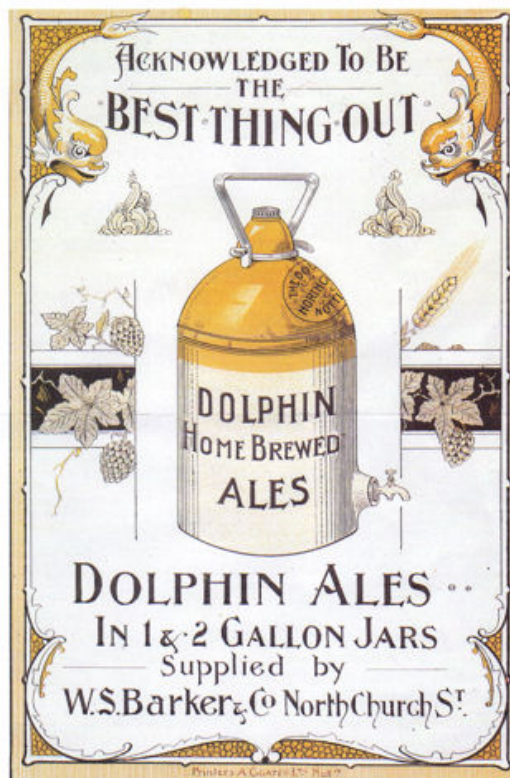
The 1889 edition of Wright's Directory of Nottingham shows Dolphin, 6-10 North Church Street and Edward Oakden as maltster and victualler. The 1889 plan prepared by

'Goads' of the City of Nottingham shows 6 to be the 'P.H.' (public house), 8 to be 'D' (dwelling) and 10 to be Edward Oakden Maltster. This appears to be the same Edward Oakden aged 5yrs in the 1861 census. The 1891 census return shows Edward Oakden aged 35yrs and born about 1856 as victualler at the Dolphin Inn, also resident was his mother, son and two servants.

Edward Oakden remained in position until at least 1895. The 1895 edition of Kelley's Directory shows under North Church Street; 6, Dolphin P.H. Edward Oakden victualler and brewer, 8 Mrs Oakden, 10 Edward Oakden, maltster.

1896 and 1897 remain a mystery but in the 1898/99 edition of Wright's Nottingham Directory the entry under North Church Street states; 6-10 Wm S Barker & Co, Maltster and victualler, Dolphin. In May 1898 W S Barker & Co put forward plans for alterations and additions to the building.

The 1900 edition of Kelley's Directory of Nottingham shows under North Church Street; 6, 8 and 10 Dolphin P.H William Sissons Barker. At this time a Charles Henry Stafford is shown as a corn merchant at 3 Hollow Stone, Nottingham.



On 27th June 1900 Alfred Goater Ltd. Nottingham registered a design for a poster advertising Dolphin Home Brewed Ales. The poster measured 125mm by 195mm and being about A5 size may have been used as a flyer as it advertises Dolphin Ales available in 1 & 2 Gallon Jars. The suppliers are W. S. Barker & Co North Church St. An image of the flagon appears in the centre of the design


At about the same time a double sided order form was produced. One side showed the image of the jar along with purchasers requirements, date and place for name and address, and 'To the Dolphin Brewery' at the top. The other side gave details of available beers with prices per gallon, a stylised fish which looked nothing like a Dolphin and a poem extolling the virtues of the beer:

Come ye who are weak
 And be of good cheer,
 To strengthen your bodies
 Drink the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER;
 There's no ale or porter
 So strong fine or clear,
 To nourish your bodies
 As the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER.
 So you that are weak,
 And you that are strong,
 Drink the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER
 If you wish to live long.

Price List...

STRONG & MILD ALES		BITTER BEER.	
Per Gal.		Per Gal.	
XXX	2/-	BBB	1/6
XXXX	1/4	P.A.	1/4
XXX	1/2	STOUT.	
		INVALID STOUT	1/6
		D.S.	1/4

Terms:—Cash on Delivery.
 IN 1, 2, and 4 GALLON JARS.



Come ye who are weak,
 And be of good cheer,
 To strengthen your bodies
 Drink the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER;
 There's no Ale or Porter,
 So strong, fine, or clear,
 To nourish your bodies
 As the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER.
 So you that are weak,
 And you that are strong,
 Drink the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER
 If you wish to live long.

ORDER FORM.

To THE DOLPHIN BREWERY.

Please supply me with—

.....Gallon Jar.....at.....Per Gallon


.....Gallon Jar.....at.....Per Gallon

I intend to the appropriation by you to this Order
 at The Dolphin Brewery, North Church St., Nottingham,
 of goods of the above description and in a deliverable
 condition.

Dated this day of 190

Name _____

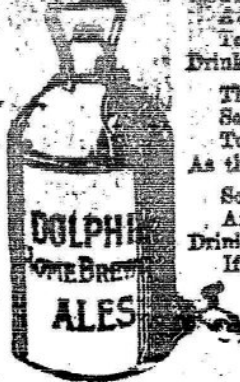
Address _____



Also at about the same time an advert appeared which again showed the stone jar exactly as the previous two. The actual origin of this advert is as yet unknown but is believed to have been in a newspaper of the time. It shows 'Dolphin Brewery' along with the address and the price of 1/4d per gallon (no waste). It gives the National Telephone Number as 01838. (See below)

DOLPHIN BREWERY
 OFFICES: 8, NORTH CHURCH STREET,
 NOTTINGHAM.

HOME BREWED ALES
 BEST BITTER BEERS,
 IN JARS—1, 2, & 4 GAL **1/4** PER GALLON
 (NO WASTE)
 CASKS ANY SIZE. QUICK DELIVERY.



..... Come ye who are weak,
 And be of good cheer,
 To strengthen your bodies
 Drink the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER;
 There's no Ale or Porter,
 So strong, fine, or clear,
 To nourish your bodies
 As the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER.
 So you that are weak,
 And you that are strong,
 Drink the DOLPHIN BREWED BEER
 If you wish to live long.

NAT. TELEPHONE NO. 01838.

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The 1901 edition of Wright's Directory of Nottingham shows; North Church street, 6-10 Barker Wm S & Co maltster & victualler, Dolphin. In the alphabetical index of the same directory is recorded as Barker W S & Co (C Mauby & Co. Stafford).

The 1902 edition of Wright's Directory of Nottingham shows: North Church Street; 6, Claude Septimus Mawby, victualler, Dolphin. [Equity £40 Loan Club Ltd (J. Crofts Sec)] *no other information known about the Loans club.* 8-10, Barker & Co Brewers and Maltsters.

This remained the same until about 1904/05. By 29th September 1905 proposed alterations were put forward by The Dolphin Brewery Company, Brewers, Wine & Spirit Merchants.



At sometime between 1902 and 1907 Charles Henry Stafford came into ownership of the Pub, brewery and associated premises but nothing is yet known about this sale or purchase. What is known is that Charles Henry Stafford died on 11th February 1907. The following appeared in the Evening Post on Saturday April 6th 1907 under recent wills:

"Mr C. H. Stafford, Scarrington

Mr Charles Henry Stafford of Scarrington Notts, Brewer, maltster and wine and spirit merchant, a member of the Retford Board of guardians, and District Council, a prominent sportsman well known with Viscount Galway's Hounds, who died on the 11th February last, aged 58 years left estate of the gross value of £26,724 4s 1d. Probate of his will, dated 18th January 1906, has been granted to Mr Joseph Walter Johnson, Corn Merchant of Hollow Stone, Nottingham, Mr Bernard Swanwick Wright, Solicitor, of 3 King Street, Nottingham and Mr Chas Howard Tripp, brewer of Derby, to each of whom the testator left £25. To his son, Percy Beaumont Stafford, he left £1000, certain family portraits and Chippendale chairs, and property at Long Bennington, to his son Henry Norman Stafford he left his Fledborough furniture, to his son David New Stafford £1000, a diamond pin and silver tankard, and to his son, Thomas Edward £500, a silver cigar case, and his watch and chain. The residue of his property he left to his children in equal shares, and he gave his trustees full power to deal with his business interests, as they may think fit".

Further information from the same source as shows that:

...Charles Henry Stafford died 11 Feb 1907, trustees submitted to auction the Dolphin Brewery, North Church Street with 8-qtr plant, 35-qtr maltings & offices and the:

Dolphin Inn, adjoining the brewery;

Barley Mow, High Street, Old Basford;

Anchor Inn, Beerhouse, Langley Mill, Eastwood;

Old Robin Hood, Coalpit Lane;

Beer off-licence, 39 Denmark St & Highurst St;

Leasehold Beer off-licence, 177 Arkwright St;

Leasehold Beer off-licence, 243 St Ann's Well Rd.

Apparently without success as they later reported to the creditors that Stafford had died with the estate heavily mortgaged & the licenced properties had been bought at a time of high prices & were now unsaleable, but they could find tenants for the brewery & the Dolphin & suggested that a deed of assignment be arranged.

The auction date was apparently 15th May 1907.

The 1908 edition of Wrights Nottingham Directory shows, Church Street - North;

6, Page, Robert Alex, victualler, Dolphin

6, Equity £40 Loan Co. Limited (J Crofts Sec)

8-10, Dolphin Brewery C. Brewers

177 Arkwright Street, George Stone, Grocer and Beer-off

243 St Anns Well Road, Henry White, Beer retailer and shopkeeper

Old Robin Hood, Coalpit Lane, Alexander Onion victualler (junction of Hockley and Goose Gate)

By 17th September 1909 James Shipstone and Sons Ltd were submitting plans for additions to the Dolphin Inn and had purchased the public house sometime since 15th May 1907.

The 1910-11 edition of Wright's Nottingham Directory shows;

6, North Church Street, Dolphin, Henry Green

8, North Church Street is now shown as Higson D & Son, Medical Botanists.

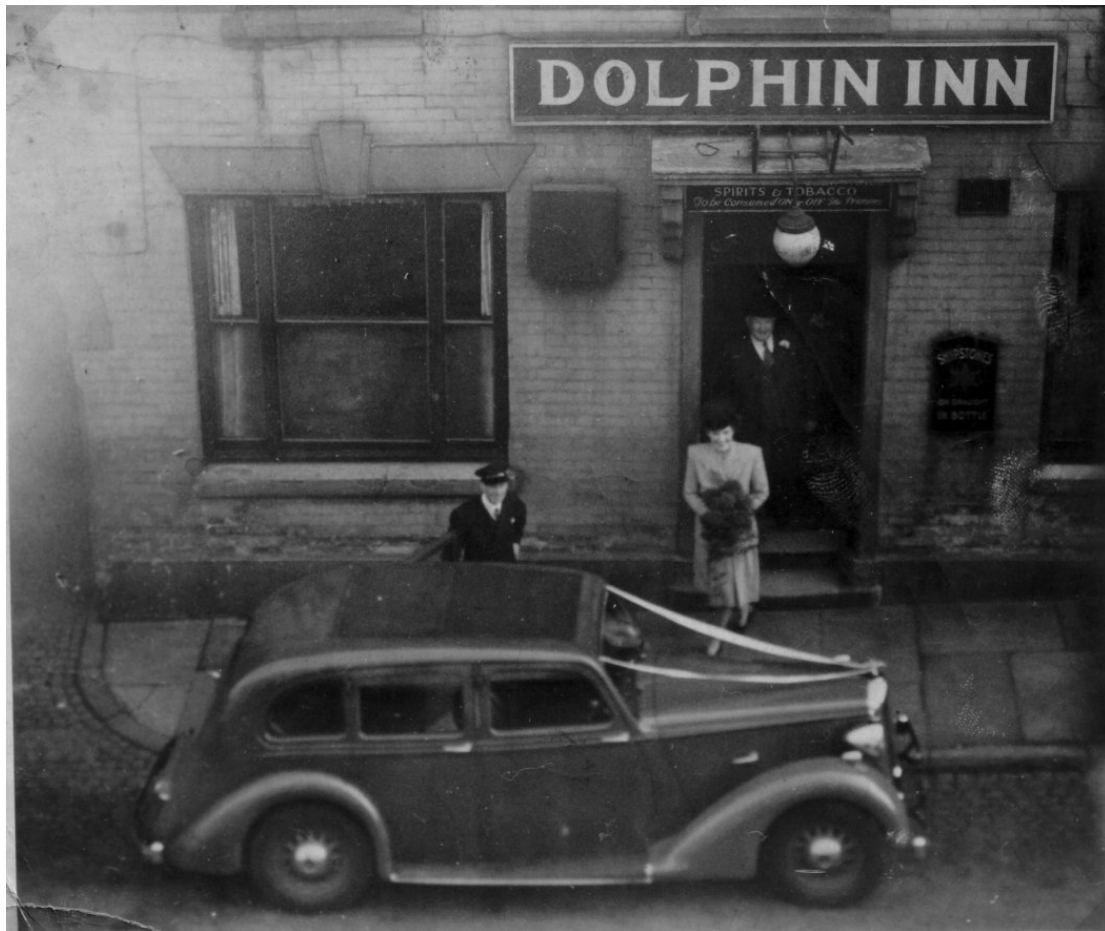
10 is not recorded and may still have been for sale at that time?

The 1912 edition of Kelley's Directory of Nottinghamshire is as per 1910 but shows 10a as John Boot Junior, Brass Founder.

Henry Gibson remains as the victualler of the Dolphin until 12th March 1923 when the licence was transferred to Fred Bloor.

Fred Bloor remained as the victualler until 29th April 1938 when the licence transferred to Freda E. L. Bloor (presumed to be Fred's wife and presumed upon Fred's death)

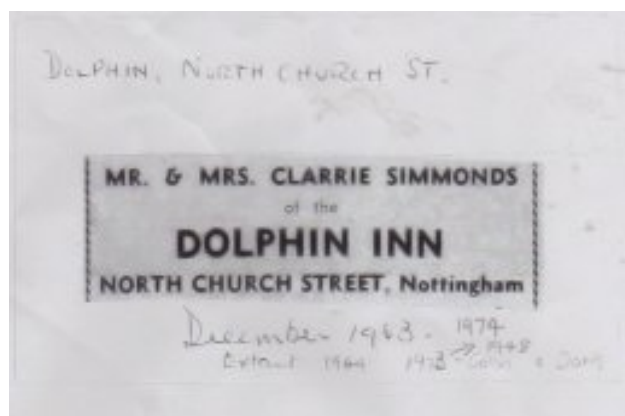
On 21st August 1939 the licence was transferred to Freda Ethel Liley Braund on the date of her marriage. The book of repairs kept by Shipstone's Brewery shows Freda Braund as the licensee for repairs to the Dolphin carried out between 1940 and 1946.



By 9th October 1947 the licensee is John Charles Blacknell .

The photograph shows Joan Blacknell walking to her wedding car with her father 'Charlie' Blacknell in the doorway and the pub sign clearly visible. On October 9th 1947 Joan married Harry Maxfield Skermer at the Holy Trinity Church and the photograph was taken from the Police Station opposite the pub. Charlie Blacknell is shown as the licensee in the 1953 edition of Kelly's Directory of Nottingham and West Bridgford. At about this time Charlie Blacknell became ill and his daughter and son in law Harry Skermer started to run the pub. Harry Skermer eventually took over the licence and by the 1956 Kelly's Directory of Nottingham and West Bridgford Harry is shown as the licensee. Harry Skermer remained in place until about 1961 and from about that year the licence went over to Clarrie Simmonds and his wife. An advert appeared in (it is believed) the Evening Post in 1963:

It is believed that Clarrie Simmonds remained in place until the old Dolphin was pulled down in 1971.

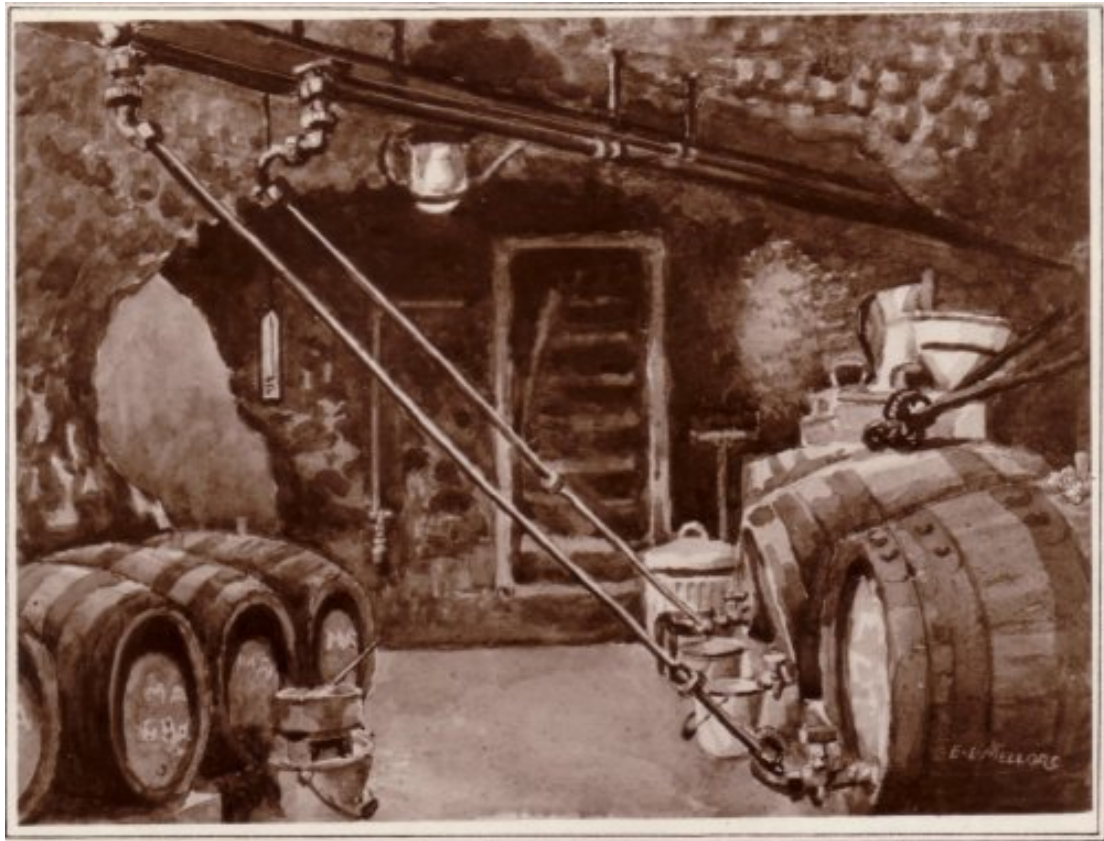


The Dolphin Morris Men first practiced at the YMCA Nottingham in January 1968 and for a few weeks (maybe only 3 or 4) went to the Dolphin for an after practice pint. It was while at the Dolphin that the idea for a team badge was decided upon, and taken from a picture that was on the wall of the club room.



The picture showed a stylised fish with 'The Dolphin' printed above it. The fish looked nothing at all like a Dolphin but the members wanted the badge to be based upon the pub name and that image. Colin Shaw simplified the image, and using the basic shape of the 'fish', came up with the first team emblem that he produced from felt shapes

In the 1950's E. L Mellors painted a picture showing the lower ale cellar at the Dolphin. The curve of the roof can just be seen (above the barrels on the left) and the uneven nature of the edge of the curve. The 'cuts' were caused by the ropes used to lower barrels from above. As the barrels were lowered the men below held onto the ropes and by holding them against the roof used the friction to slow the progress which in turn caused the sandstone to wear away.



The original Dolphin Morris Men were all members of the NTMC (Nottingham Traditional Music club). Dave Hughes was 'on the door' of the club, taking entrance money and doing a lot of organising of trips and club business in the background he was also later a member of the Owd Oss Mummers.

Dave worked for the Social Security in premises that were close to the Dolphin pub. Dolphin practiced at the YMCA which was a Tee-total establishment and the Dolphin was the nearest pub to get a drink at.

Dave had been to the first NTMC trip to Padstow for the May Day celebrations in 1968 when Wib (John Whitelaw) had obtained the old pub sign from the Golden Lion in Padstow after it has been replaced by a new one. When Dave saw that the old Dolphin was being demolished he decided that the 'Dolphin' sign would be a nice souvenir for the team to have. He asked the workmen if he could have the sign and they let him have it. Dave put the sign in his van and took it round to the Old Schoolhouse in Kingston-on-Soar and handed it into the care of Ian Stewart one of the founder members of the side. Ian has kept the sign since that time and it remains in excellent condition.

It measures 11 feet 2 inches long, 1 foot 9 inches deep and 3½ inches thick. It is solid wood and very heavy. It was painted in October 1965 by Woodward Leylac who kindly painted their name and date on the finished sign. It is not known if it is a newly made sign or the old one refurbished but it is in good condition.



Further artefacts have come along in the process of researching the Dolphin and they include:



Two gallon stone flagon made by the Fulham Pottery and complete with carrying handle and original tap. This was purchased through Ebay from a Lincolnshire dealer who purchased it from a man who lived at Louth.

Victorian Half pint copper tankard bearing the impressed name 'Dolphin Inn' and made by 'Oldham Maker Nottingham' sometime in the second half of the 19th century.



Photograph of the only known pub token to have been found from the Dolphin. Note how it is called 'Hotel'. The maker, Lewis Rose was from Birmingham and made a great many of the tokens used by public houses throughout the country. These tokens were used as credit or prizes or encouragement to use the named premises and this one would have been made sometime between 1889 and 1910. The original is owned by a Nottingham pub token collector who has about 240 of the 280 known examples. It is a very rare example.



Dolphin Hotel, North Church Street, Nottingham Brass 1½d check made by Lewis Rose.

Information for this article was obtained from:

Nottingham Archives, Nottingham library, Nottingham Evening Post
Records of the Borough of Nottingham book IX 1836-1900, Nottingham Trade
Directories, Andrew Cunningham (Local Brewery History enthusiast), Chris Steer (Local
Brewery History enthusiast), Brian Howes (Local collector and enthusiast)
Alan Lewis (Shipstones lorry driver and delivery-man from 1959 - 1967)
Dave Hughes (NTMC committee and close associate of Dolphin Morris)
Rob Skermer (Son of Harry Skermer, Grandson of 'Charlie' Blacknell)