

The Early Days of Lyminge Dramatic Society

Interview with Gordon Keutenius, conducted by Ingrid Goodchild

I spoke to Gordon Keutenius - one of the first members of the society and was, indeed in the first production *The Ghost Train*.

Joyce Stanley (Catherine's grandmother) was also in this. Gordon was also in the second play they did, *Black Chiffon* as Doreen Gough's fiancé. Doreen and John her husband were stalwarts of the society. John design and built the sets with Paul Rand, who still lives in Lyminge.

In those days they invited an adjudicator out from Canterbury and at the end of the play (then performed in The Methodist Hall) they were called onto the stage for criticism or praise! The then Methodist Church and Hall were built by J J Clayson Lyminge Builders. Sadly, the Church took a direct hit in World War II (doodlebug) and was rebuilt after the war by his son Frank Clayson, who was the founder member of the Lyminge Amateur Dramatic Society. His father J J Clayson built and lived in Woodbury in Church Road.

Other early members were Tom and Eileen Wood and Bobbie Stacey and her daughter Pat.

I joined the society in Autumn 1966, aged 24, after just moving to Lyminge.

Richard Clayson and Andrew Garrett were down from Oxford University and were superb actors (they made harpsichords in North Lyminge).

We were fortunately enough to have Vincent and Doreen Ball (Australian actors). He used to be in *Emergency Ward 10* on TV and went on to act in "Bodyline" about cricket, as the Australian Prime Minister and he was also in *Muriel's Wedding* as the vicar taking the wedding ceremony. Jim and Pat Henry, who farmed at Longage Farm in Lyminge were also members, Pat being a fine director. Vincent, Doreen and Pat had all been to RADA.