

# Moya's Memories of a Froxfield

## Part 1 The Great Road



“The Great Road to Bath” is the title of a very interesting book written by Daphne Phillips who tells the history of the A4. When I came across it recently I decided to jot down all the incidents I could remember during my childhood in Froxfield connected to this important road. Many famous people drove along it and if we could find out when they would be passing by we could wait to give them a wave!

I was born and grew up in the last of the 6 cottages at the western end of the village right by the road. In the war years American soldiers based in Manor Farm (now Manor Park) drove lorries in and out regularly; convoys of

lorries came through the village carrying ammunitions to the depot in Savernake Forest and more vehicles were parked on the village green. It must have been a very important road when it was constructed; it remained so during the two Wars and continues today despite the need for the M4 motorway.

My earliest recollection of it

was going for walks with my parents and seeing the beautiful line of elm trees from the village towards Harrow Farm. Sadly the trees became diseased and were felled some years later. Another memory was in the winter of 1940 which was very severe. Icicles formed on the branches and we heard them crack as they fell to the ground. That year



hardly any vehicles moved but those that did had chains on the wheels to enable them to grip.

Another snowy winter was 1947. Again the same conditions with very few vehicles on the move. As the school was shut the children made use of the free time and enjoyed tobogganing in Mr Savage's field next to our cottage. Pieces of galvanized tin or tea trays were used if you did not have a sledge. My father made me one and when my friend and I set forth from the top of the field we went hurtling down, through the open gate and landed on the A4! Fortunately there were no vehicles around and we suffered



no broken bones so we set off to have another go. Then slowly a car arrived stopped by the gate and two fellows got out. One of them asked me if they could have a go on the sledge, they took it and walked up to the top and came down at a

good speed! When they brought the sledge back to me they said it fulfilled a childhood dream and thanked me!! I wonder if later in life they remembered the A4 on that snowy day!

Moya Dixon



*It is still possible to receive a copy of the archive of Froxfield Exhibition historic photographs on either a CD or memory stick. There are many amazing early photos with views of the village, the A4 and the people of the community, all of which were collected together by Moya Dixon. Contact Lorraine Saville in Froxfield: [lorraine@paperworks-in-hungerford.co.uk](mailto:lorraine@paperworks-in-hungerford.co.uk) for details of how to obtain a copy of this wonderful archive, for a small donation to the Froxfield Historical Society.*