



# THE GIPSYVILLE VOICE

November 2023

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

In October we had the pleasure of welcoming Dr Grace Chapman, Heritage Advisor at Reckitt, to our Coffee and Chat morning for an insightful and interesting talk about the history of Reckitt and its wide-reaching impact in Gipsyville.

Grace brought along a collection of archival objects for us to handle and books to flick through, revealing an often-overlooked side of Gipsyville's social history. Amongst the archive were journals from the 1920s – the aptly named Gipsyville Journal – written and produced by Hargreaves Brothers and Co as part of their philanthropic activity in the area in the early 20th Century. Each journal is pocket sized and richly illustrated with hand-drawn advertisements for Glosso, Gipsy Black Lead and Aladdin Metal Polish, and were once handed out to the workers employed at Hargreaves Brothers and Co factories.

**“We’re holding a bit of history,”** said Jean, a long-time Coffee and Chat member.

**“Anything you can think of is in the archive,”** Grace told us, including pocket watches, chequebooks signed by Reckitt's past directors, and even gas masks from the Second World War!

Alongside the journals and bits of Brasso and Gipsy Black Lead, Grace showed us three old cans of Harpic. Harpic, one of the most recognisable products sold by Reckitt, was once used by over 50% of UK households. It's so famous in fact, that you've probably got a bottle of it hiding under your sink as you read this! We were lucky to get our hands on a rust-coloured Harpic bottle from the 1930s, almost unrecognisable compared to the plastic swan-neck bleach bottles we use now.





Reaching the end of Grace's visit, we spoke of Reckitt Radio, the lunchtime radio station that played to Reckitt workers during their shifts. "What's that song - 'Reckitt girls, Reckitt girls...'" Nora started singing, taking us all back in time to the busy and energetic floors of the Essex Street factory.

Did you once work at Reckitt? Do you remember Worker's Playtime and the songs you would sing along to? Let us know your stories by emailing us at [info@absolutelycultured.co.uk](mailto:info@absolutelycultured.co.uk), or write us at: Absolutely Cultured Ltd, 64 Humber Street, Hull, HU1 1TU.

## A NOTE FROM OUR EDITORS

Back in the early 90s, Gipsyville needed its voice to be heard. With a pen and notepad in hand and a keen nose for a good story, we walked the streets and spoke to the people of our area to write the stories that needed to be told.

It goes without saying that it was a pleasure to have been the editor and creator of the Gipsyville Neighbourhood News, which ran from the early part of 1995 to its premature ending in the back end of that same year.

One of the highlights of my time writing the newsletter was speaking to local war hero George Atkin, who I'd known for years but only discovered his story in the early part of the 90s.

Through protest and community action, we got things done. Uncovering important local stories and giving a voice to local people. Mick Foster, my partner in crime and sports-writer for the Gipsyville Neighbourhood News, played an important part in keeping alive the spirit of competition in Gipsyville through his work with our sports teams.

**Gipsyville is a vibrant area; it always has been. Now more than ever we need to shout about it!**

*Words by Barbara Foster and the Project Gipsyville team.*

## GIPSYVILLE THEN

Cawoods, Essex St, Gipsyville, 1981

Cawoods fish curing works are the most distinctive part of the Gipsyville estate, with their set of ceramic chimneys rising above the Shires. It was at this location that they produced dried salted fish in Hull for around a hundred years. Their Grimsby factory came later, and they moved all production there in 2002, a few years before the Hull Fish Market closed.

*Words by Peter Marshall.*

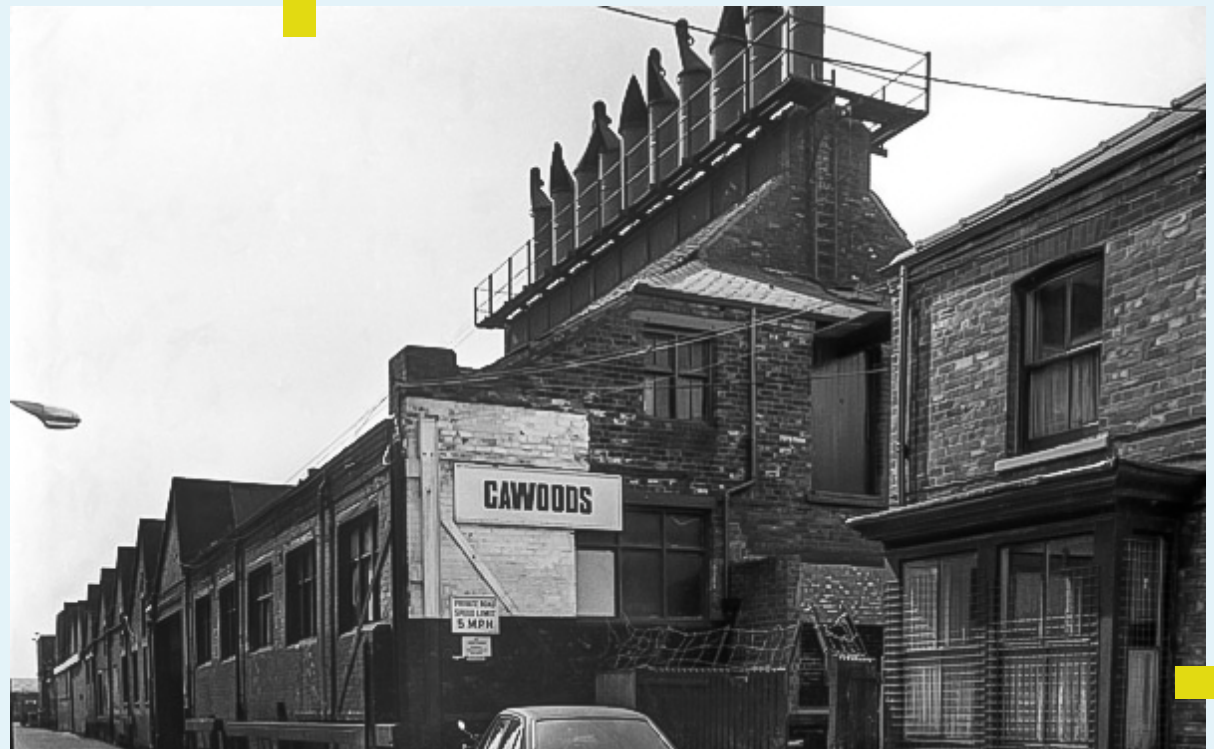


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## WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR GIPSYVILLE?

Gipsyville is an area with a rich history (as we all know!) but often it goes unnoticed. We want to help change that and put Gipsyville on the map. So, we want to hear from YOU; what is it about Gipsyville that you love?

If there is an interesting, funny, or downright weird story you have about Gipsyville and its history that you're eager for everyone else to hear, we want to know!

We know that not every area is perfect, either; so how can we make Gipsyville even better? What would you want to see improve about your area?

There's a few ways you can share your stories with us.

You can: Email us at [info@absolutelycultured.co.uk](mailto:info@absolutelycultured.co.uk); Write us at Absolutely Cultured Ltd, 64 Humber Street, Hull, HU1 1TU; Contact us on Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter at Absolutely Cultured.

Or pop by to our Coffee and Chat sessions at Gipsyville Library on Wednesdays between 10am and 12pm.



## OPEN DOOR

Through the creation of the 'Open Door' column, it is hoped that within future issues of The Gipsyville Voice that I will be given an opportunity to express my feelings on a number of different subject matters, as well as prompting readers to respond to much of what I intend to write about.

### Being Happy

For a lot of people, personal happiness may just mean having good friends and family that you can rely on. For me, however, it is also about keeping both the mind and body active enough in order to maintain a certain degree of well-being.

In terms of the overall happiness of the Gipsyville Community, one obvious question which immediately comes to mind is whether or not they feel they are being suitably catered for in the area in which they live.

When it comes to trying to rectify any outstanding deficiency, it can be all too tempting to state the lack of a reassuring police presence on the streets of Gipsyville – especially when looking back at some of its past problems. However, my angle of approach on this particular occasion has more to do with what I'd like to see happen and in terms of the local community benefiting in a different way.

For example, I have personal hobbies and interests in life which may differ from those of other people – but does that mean I should not attempt to share them with others in the event they could be of benefit to someone else in the local community?

### Looking for Links

Within the next issue of The Gipsyville Voice, I'll show you how it is possible to start off with a single word, then create from it other words in order to reveal a crossword of my things.

*Words by Ken Owst.*



## PART OF THE STORY

Until I was married I had lived my whole life in East Hull and I can honestly say I had never heard of the area of Gipsyville. Even when I moved to the Anlaby Common area over fifty years ago, I still didn't know anything about this estate other than cycling or driving down Askew Avenue to work at Smith & Nephew, or to shop on Hessle Road.

Being an Absolutely Cultured volunteer, I decided over two years ago to take the opportunity to help at the Coffee & Chat sessions held at Gipsyville Library every Wednesday morning. At these sessions I have met a lovely group of residents who talk and laugh all the time and who have taught me a lot about the history and culture of this friendly area and its people.

At these Coffee & Chat sessions, I have enjoyed joining in with various workshops such as art, crafts, drama, circus skills and outings but most of all I have especially appreciated the heritage meetings where I learned for whom, why and when the estate of Gipsyville was built.

*Words by Christine Train.*

## WHAT'S ON & LOCAL SERVICES

- West Hull Community Sports Club. North Road, HU4 6LQ. Every Thursday, 11am–2pm. A drop-in support group, free for all to join.
- Gipsyville Multi-Purpose Centre. 730 Hessle Road, HU4 6JA. Open Mon: 9am–5pm. Wed: 10am–6pm. Fri: 9am–5pm. Sat: 10am–1pm.
- Knit & Knatter with Loretta. For knitters of any level, learn new styles, and have a chat. Gipsyville Library, 730 Hessle Road, HU4 6JA. Every other Monday 10–11am, excluding Christmas and Bank Holidays.
- Early Help Services for families. Offering training courses, parenting courses, and housing support. The Rainbow Centre, Wheeler Street, HU3 5QE. Open: Mon–Fri 8:30am–5pm.
- Explorers in Libraries with Artlink. Free art clubs to develop skills, make friends, and create cool new work! Gipsyville Library, 730 Hessle Road, HU4 6JA. Every Wednesday, 4–5:30pm (term-time only).
- Kiddie Kastle Day Nursery. 1099 Hessle Road, HU4 6SB.
- Christmas Craft Fayre at Gipsyville Library. Saturday 2 December. 10am–12:30pm.
- Children Christmas Party at Gipsyville Library. Children of all ages welcome. Friday 22 December. 1–3pm.

# Gipsyville Christmas Celebration



## Friday 24 November

For our third annual Christmas Event in Gipsyville, we'll be gathering around this year's Christmas Tree at Gipsyville Library before heading on a festive lantern parade.

The event will finish with a communal sing-song at the tree led by a choir and hot chocolates all-round!

Lanterns have been made by residents in workshops led by Rosie Ireson.

## Schedule

- 6pm - Festive lanterns distributed
- 6:20pm - Choirs sing in front of tree
- 6:30pm - Lantern parade sets off to Shires and North Road
- 7:30pm - Choir, songs and refreshments
- 8pm - Choir ends
- 8:30pm - Event ends





# Ready for a coffee, chat & some culture?



10am-12pm every Wednesday  
at Gipsyville Library

Join us on Wednesdays as we gather for a good old natter over a cuppa and biscuits.

In these sessions, we've also taken trips to the theatre, museums, galleries and even took part in 'This One's For Us', a performance down Essex Street.

Gipsyville locals are invited to shape and deliver a variety of exciting activities, giving everyone the opportunity to get creative.



# Ready to explore your creativity?

10am-12pm every Saturday  
at Gipsyville Library

Pop down to one of our free creative sessions for all ages, and take part in the project '*Do You Know Who I Am?*'

Since July, Alison Ollerhead and a team of Art Avengers from Arting have invited Gipsyville locals to examine their identity and what makes them who they are, through a series of fun workshops.

We'll be hosting an exhibition of the work from 25 November to 9 December at the library during opening hours, after which the workshops will continue into 2024.

To stay up to date, join our Facebook group. Just search 'Gipsyville Friends'. You can also email us at [info@absolutelycultured.co.uk](mailto:info@absolutelycultured.co.uk)

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