



## Lowtherville Shops in the 1940s and 1950s - part 2

Moving down to, and along, Newport Road, at its junction with Lowtherville Road, there were four shops., one of which is still in existence as the **Central** convenience store. This property was originally No.1 Lowther Road, with No.2 being about 120 yards further up! When Lowtherville Road was renumbered this shop became part of Newport Road (quite rightly so).The shop was first opened in the mid-1890s as **Wyatt's General Stores**. In the 1940s & 1950s, Hilda Wyatt ran the business for many years and we always knew the shop as 'Hilda Wyatt's'. It later became Clarkson's, run by Les and Betty Clarkson.

Opposite were two other shops numbered 27 & 29 Newport Road - both now closed. No. 27 was originally a baker's shop run by a Mr. Booth. When Mr. Booth moved on it became part of **March's Bakery** and then Mills Stores and then, finally Morrison's, under the ownership of Mr. & Mrs. J. R. B. Morrison.

Next door, No. 29, was **L.A. Wood Grocer** - originally Jessop's Drapers - a general store and dairy run by Les & Olive Wood seen, right, standing in their shop doorway.

Around the side of the property, fronting Cornwall Road, was a processing plant where the fresh milk was prepared and bottled using wide-necked pint bottles and cardboard tops (remember them?).

Milk supplies for the dairy came from two sources – Brooklands Farm at the top of Lowtherville Road run by Les's brother, Aubrey, and Gordon Gattrell's Down Lane Farm, opposite Sprack's garage. When demand was high, in summer for instance, an additional source of milk was obtained from Unigate. Les Wood had two blue Bedford vans and delivered to all areas of Ventnor and district (including the RAF camps) every day of the year. A double delivery was made on Christmas Eve so that everyone could have Christmas day off!



Olive ran the shop with assistance from Janet Price, Pauline Westmore and Philda Sansom, while Les ran the dairy. Although this shop, which ended its days as Lowther Post Office, has now been closed for many years, the dairy building at the side in Cornwall Road is still standing.

At the other side of Cornwall Road next to the Wesley Court, which was then the Methodist Chapel, was yet another general store, **Liningtons** originally owned by Mr C. Coleman, who lived in Lowtherville Road. When he retired due to ill health in 1958, his daughter, Marion, and son-in-law Eric Linington, who was blind, took on the business. Although Mrs. Linington was there some of the time, for long periods each day, Eric ran the shop on his own – quite an achievement!

Further down, at the junction with York Road, were a pair of semi-detached shops - **The Wool Shop** – a haberdashery business owned by Mr. George H. Scapens who had another shop in Ventnor High Street (also called the Wool Shop) and **Clarkson's** Shop and Bakery which was opened in 1929, with all the produce being made in the bakery at the bottom of the garden behind the shop. The Clarkson family ran the business throughout WW2 and finally closed it as a bakery in the 1960s. Although Clarkson's has been closed for many years and is now a private residence, the adjacent business still survives as a retail unit having been a ladies' hairdressers for over forty years.

Next to Clarkson's was 'The Queen' (owned by W.B.Mew Langton), Lowtherville's first dedicated public house which was opened in 1953 upon the transfer of the license from the old Globe Hotel in Ventnor High Street. (the Globe Hotel was where the car park now is, opposite Market Street). The 'Queen' closed in the late 1970s and is now a residential block.

**So, the only establishments and premises that remain today are The Fish & Chip Shop, The Social Club, The Convenience Store and the Ladies Hairdressers, all the others have either closed or disappeared.**

*Ventnor & District Local History Society: Colin Beavis (Acknowledgement: Between 1992 & 2002 the late Fay Hewitt Brown published five booklets for the Society, entitled 'Lowtherville Life' & 'Up Shute'. These have enabled me, along with my own memories, to compile this article for the South Wight Chronicle).*