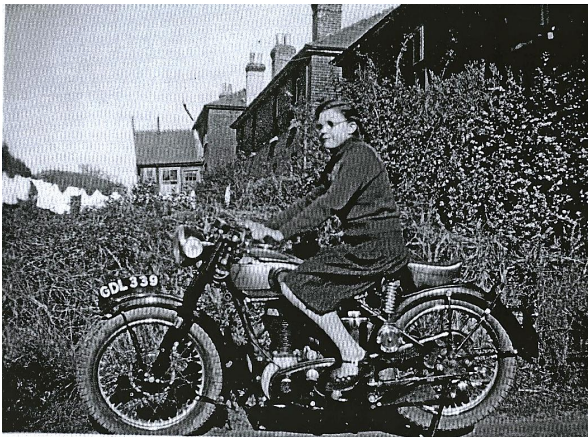




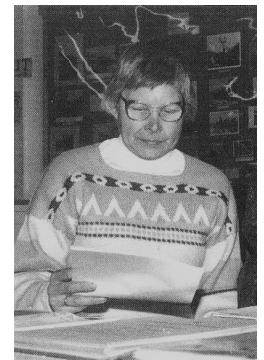
Brenda Creese



The picture shows Brenda Creese outside her home at Sydney Terrace, Upper Ventnor, around 1950. One assumes that the motor-bike was her means of transport, unless she was striking a pose for the photographer. Brenda will be well-known to older residents as someone who gave extraordinarily wide vocational service to her community, a contribution that was honoured in 1993 when Ventnor Rotary Club presented her with a citation certificate and cheque. Over the years, she helped countless local causes, including St. Alban's Church, the Mission for Deep Sea Fishermen, the RNLI, the NSPCC, the Ventnor & District Local History Society, and the Isle of Wight Steam Railway. When Fay Brown published her booklet called 'Up Shute 3' in the autumn of 1993, Brenda sold 125 copies in the first few days. The photo below on the right shows Brenda at

the desk of Ventnor Heritage Museum in the late 1980s where she became a regular steward, serving right up until around 2010, by which time bouts of ill-health were starting to limit what she could do. She died in 2014, the same year as Fay Brown, the pair close friends for much of their lives.

Sydney Terrace, where several of Brenda's family lived, no longer exists. But the site, adjacent to Old Shute, can still be identified, for it forms an area of very uneven and unstable grassland where building is by and large prohibitive. The terrace gained its name from Robert Beavis who had emigrated to Australia in 1853, but returned in 1876 and sometime in the early 1880s erected the sixteen cottages that came to form the terrace. Some locals referred to them as Beavis Cottages, but, in due course, Sydney Terrace was the name that stuck. In the 1901 Census, the list of household heads, in order of 1 to 16 Sydney terrace, comprised: Eugene Beavis, Isaac Beavis, Charles MacGonnell, Richard Worth, Charles Lovegood, Henry Bannister, Ann Drudge, Daniel Creese, John Munns, William Gosling, unoccupied (11), unoccupied (12), Jessie Colenutt, Emily Bagwell, Jane Blake, Mary Drudge. There are bound to be a few Ventnor residents today who will recognise some of these names and their association with the Sydney Terrace. In 1899, in an auction advertisement from Francis Pittis & Son, the tenants, collectively, paid a little over £189 in rent annually, or some £12 apiece.



There was evidence of ground movement at Sydney Terrace as early as the 1920s. In 1927, for instance, No. 14 was deemed unfit for habitation. By 1950, closing orders had been made on several more cottages such that Kelly's Directory of 1951 recorded only 9 of the original 16 cottages as inhabited. By the end of that decade, the entire terrace had had to be demolished, the picture illustrating the scale of subsidence. Huge vertical cracks had opened up in the walls of some of the cottages, while others had walls that were bowing. The two people in the picture are Mr and Mrs Harry Grant who, one assumes, had been re-housed by this time.

Ventnor & District Local History Society: Michael Freeman, from files in Ventnor Heritage Centre, especially those of the late Fay Brown.



Ventnor & District Local History Society is a registered charity, working to preserve and record the history of our area and make it available to the public in the Ventnor Heritage Centre.

The Society and Heritage Centre are run and managed by volunteers.

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