

## ROUNDAABOUT VERWOOD

# PAST and PRESENT

### Punch & Judy Café, Manor Road



Originally a large store or emporium owned by Mr W.H. Rose, a Methodist local preacher and located just south of the chapels in Manor Road. Mr Rose stocked groceries, drapery, hardware, boots and shoes and was an agency for Jones sewing machines. As you entered, the grocery was on the left and the drapers on the right. Mrs Rose had charge of the clothes' department. Christine Stratton, née Henning, recalls the tins of biscuits and the drawers behind the counter containing spices. Sugar was weighed and put in a blue bag. Brushes and mops hung from the ceiling. The place smelled of polish. Olive Roberts, née Whitmore, remembers lovely ice-cream cakes and mock cream which you collected in a jam jar.

Eventually the shop was taken over by Miss Bell and Mrs. Coles

and it became the Punch & Judy Café, a very popular venue as a meeting place, for day to day meals and celebratory occasions. Hilary Joy, who was a waitress there, remembers the choice of cooked meals at mid-day. Soldiers from Blandford Camp who were learning to drive called in for meals, one group in the morning and another in the afternoon. Gerald and Ethel Froud were amongst those who had their wedding breakfast there. Congregational Chapel parties were held with Vera Reeks reciting monologues amongst other home grown entertainment.

A great loss to the village occurred when fire destroyed the café in August

January 2014



1968. It was never rebuilt for its former purpose but Brian Hall, a Verwood businessman, opened an estate agency on the site which is now the present Post Office and a Chinese takeaway.