



Park Bottom

The current occupants of Park Bottom are Bryan and Lyn Morgan. Bryan was born in 1947 in Minehead, Somerset and I, Lyn, was born also in 1947, at Hebden in Wharfedale and was brought up in Grassington where my family still live. We met at university in Birmingham and made our home in the Midlands after we married in 1973. However, after many years of working in industry we both wanted to escape from the 'rat race', I wanted to return to Yorkshire to be near my family and our dream was to run a B & B and so here we are in Litton, Iwney and working at Park Bottom.

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A reference to the name "Park Bottom" can be found on maps drawn up for the Enclosures Act by Oxford University and on Tythe maps. It is also mentioned in "Valuation and Measurements of the Townships of Litton and Halton Gill" which is thought to have been compiled in 1845. The landowner was John Preston who also owned Sawyers Garth.

We have been told that there were seven miners' cottages on the site now occupied by the present building but only three dwellings - Park Bottom West, East and South are mentioned in the 1840's. Thomas Metcalf, a farmer, his wife, three children, a servant, a lodger and a visitor occupied Park Bottom West. Park Bottom East - William Forster, an agricultural labourer, his wife and one child. Park Bottom South - Margaret Garnett, a char woman, one child and a lodger. It is not known when the cottages ceased to be occupied.

Harry Battersby's notes refer to his grandfather, Henry who died in 1923, keeping hens at Park Bottom, which he rented from Jimmy Greenwood:

"in his last years he would go to Park Bottom in the afternoon. Father dropped in quite a bit of hen food on his way to work. I was also commissioned to help on the odd occasion. He had an oyster crushing machine in the building at Park Bottom in which the shells were put in a kind of basin on top, a clamp screwed on then I had the big handle to turn. The crushed shells came out into a box underneath".

We have been told that Harry Battersby used the site to make pre cast concrete boskins to replace the traditional timber cattle stalls.

An aerial photograph taken c1962 shows very little of the buildings still standing and what is now the garden was covered on rubble.

In 1977 Park Bottom was owned by a London Development company which went into liquidation. Dacre Son & Hartley were instructed to sell the site and it was bought by Paul and Jean Dolan. The following year, with the help of their sons Philip

and Alistair, they cleared the site by hand and separated the original building stone from the rubble. Architects Russell and Merryweather designed the house and in November 1979 Geoff Metcalf, a local builder who was born in the village at Sawyers Garth, started construction with the help of his son and uncle. Paul and Jean started a bed and breakfast business in 1980 and they also did teas.

It was thought that there was a well on the site and in 1980 it was located using water divining and was excavated to a depth of 30 feet by a group of potholers. Various artefacts were found in the well including a pig whistle and George II coins.

In 1983 the annex was built on the east side of the house to increase the number of letting bedrooms.

In 1987 the Dolans decided to move on and Park Bottom was sold to Peter and Jan Singer who carried out some alterations, reduced the number of bedrooms and opened up the dining room to non-residents. In 1989 they returned to their profession as University lecturers and sold Park Bottom to Bill and Lee Bradshaw, who were regular visitors to the dale. They further reduced the number of letting bedrooms and after about one year decided to stop taking guests and make the most of their retirement. In May 1996 Bill and Lee moved to Grassington and we moved into Park Bottom.

We first saw the house on a grey wet day in February 1995 and we knew it was the place for us - the perfect place to realise our dream - we could quickly get the bed and breakfast business restarted without having to carry out any major alterations to the building. In the year it took to sell our house in Snitterfield near Stratford upon Avon we visited Litton several times, each time it was raining!. We were concerned that Bill and Lee would sell the house to someone else but they were sure we really wanted to move here - we must do if we could love the place in spite of the rain.

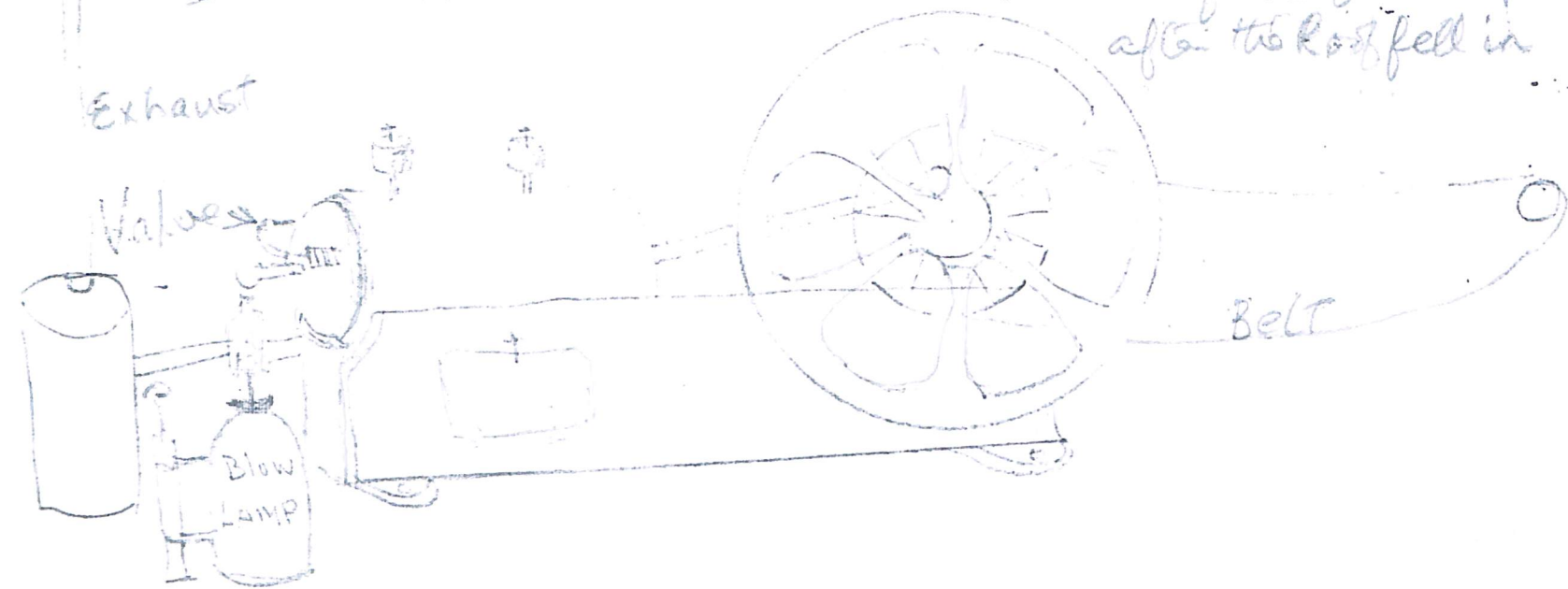
The first summer we moved here was idyllic, the sun shone and it seemed as though we were having a long holiday, we had to rebuild the client base of the business so we had time on our hands - but no money!. We realised how lucky we were to live in such beautiful surroundings and our two Burmese cats, Branigan and Flurry, thought it was heaven - stonewalls to walk on and fields to hunt in, but we needed to have other work until the business was sufficient to pay the bills and so Bryan began working behind the bar at the Queen's Arms and I started to work at Amerdale House Hotel in Arncliffe. Then, after we had been in the village about six months, Janet Taylor approached us as she wanted to retire from running the Post Office but did not want the village to lose this facility and so in April 1997 the Post Office moved to Park Bottom, opening three mornings each week.

Since then the B & B is much busier with many guests returning on a regular basis, and so life can be hectic but we have no regrets about moving to Litton, we just look out of the window and realise how lucky we are to live in such a beautiful and unspoilt village. We enjoy all our work, and we find that everyone is very friendly, both villagers and visitors.

This Engine was in Park Bottom 1st House
It was intended to run a Circular Saw
It had no Plug. The big blow lamp heated an
Electrode red hot to start.
I never saw it Run

I sold it for £5 for Scrap
after the roof fell in

Talken Paraffin Engine



Battersby