



Fairlop PlainTimes for Schools



Fairlop's Manmade Landscape

Kath's day out

Kathleen Arkinstall from Seven Kings, remembers the steam trains which ran along the western perimeter of Fairlop Plain before electrification in the 1950's.

The Fairlop Loop railway line: a pre-WW11 reminiscence

"We often went out on a Saturday afternoon. We'd catch the 149 bus to Newbury Park station which was very modern.

I'd wear a cardigan over a cotton frock and my school panama hat made of straw. Mum always wore a hat. She and Dad carried our heavy, gabardine raincoats over one arm, in case it rained. It wasn't a "posh" outing; just an outing in the country.

The train had shiny, polished, wooden seats with a mesh luggage rack above. Each carriage had 4 or 5 compartments, each with a door on either side. If you knelt up on the seat you could look down the carriage through a gap below the luggage rack. If you were feeling clever enough you could climb through the gaps from one compartment to another!

The train went so slowly you could almost get out as it went along and pick flowers from the wayside.

We'd get out at Grange Hill and walk up the long hill to Hainault Forest. When we passed the sweetshop at Lambourne End I always went in on my own with a penny and bought an apple. Behind the gate of the nearby farm (opposite the Two Brewers) were some huge pigs.

We'd go into the Beehive pub for Afternoon Tea. We had paste sandwiches, cress and lettuce, brown bread and butter and jam. "Outside" bread always tasted better than your own at home! There were iced fancies and pieces of "slab" (fruitcake). We drank tea from nice, china cups.



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We'd sometimes take a ball and I'd play "catchers" with my Dad. I wouldn't come home without a bunch of sticky buds or wild flowers like buttercups, clover and Queen Anne's Lace which I picked from the side of the road. When I got home, I had them in a glass jam-jar on the window ledge".