



## **VILLAGE HALL REMINISCENCES**

**Extracts from 'Village Voices' by Jenny Peet**

***'Soft Fruit, Bellows and Ferrets' - Memories of the 1930's and 1940's of Grace Cornelius,  
born 1928 and lived at Milden Cottage, behind the Hall***

"....There was no water in the village hall and so anyone using it had to come to our house with buckets to collect some, so we were paying the water rates for the village hall!"

"....The village hall was used by the Army during the war. Huts, to house showers, were built in the paddock. Under our garden wall was the cook house and grandfather collected the old bread and scraps to feed the chickens.

When I was a little girl, when there was a dance at the village hall, I would go up on the landing to look through the window to watch the dancing – all the ladies in their posh frocks. If you were on the landing you could hear the music but if you were down in the kitchen all you could hear was the beat of the drums. If it was a wet night our house was a very popular place because the women would arrive with wet frocks around their ankles. My grandmother used to switch on the electric iron to iron their dresses until they were dry.

There were no toilets in the village hall. The ladies had a bucket lavatory in their cloakroom. Outside, round the back of the hall, down the paddock, was a place for the men. It was just a square building with a drain for them to wee in and then through a door there was a separate bit with a bucket with a wooden seat if they needed to do anything else. If it was bad weather the men wouldn't bother going all the way down the paddock – we could see them from our landing window all lined up. The poor caretaker had to empty all these buckets. The contents were just dumped behind the hedge into the brook in the old orchard next to the village hall. On wash days this brook would run with soapy water as the women of the village emptied their wash tubs."

