

## **Memories of Recycling**

We hear a lot about recycling nowadays, but I remember when virtually everything had more than one use, due to the ingenuity of village people.

Let's look at the places in Deddington where the small number of unrecyclable items would be deposited. These areas were where stone had been excavated and known locally as the tip, which were very small areas about two metres deep. The first tip was on the west side of the Banbury Road just before the highways yard. When this was full the next tip was in the small paddock opposite the Windmill Centre. The last one was also up the Hempton Road opposite Tombwell Lane. The trolley which had sides which were only fifteen inches high and pulled by a horse came weekly to pick up anything which could not be reused. This was known locally as the ash cart.

People who burnt wood and possessed a garden would spread the ash for fertiliser but if they burnt coal the ashes would be put through a sieve and the cinders put back on the fire the following day. The slack from the coal would choke the fire as it was too dusty to burn so it would be mixed with cement at a ratio of 16:1 just to hold it together to make a slab about two inches thick. When it had set it was cracked with a hammer then it would burn on the fire. All jars would be used time and time again for jams or chutneys. Tins with removable lids would be used for nails and screws and so on. A goose wing was used as a hand brush. Boots would be re-heeled with pieces of old car tyre. Used newspaper would be cut into squares and held by a nail fixed on the back of the toilet door ready for use. Newspaper was also used for wrapping up fish and chips. When a pig had been killed the bladder would be used as a football. Empty cotton reels were used for French knitting. Boys' fishing gear comprised a long can with string, a cork and a bent pin and for bait worms from the garden. When jackets were worn out, the cloth would be cut into pieces about two inches long and three-quarter inch wide to make a fireside rug by pegging them to hessian sacks with a special spring pegging needle.

After cornfields had been cut with a binder and the sheaves had been cleared from the field you would see women and children going up and down the field picking up ears of corn. This was known locally as leasing. The corn was used to feed their chickens. Happy memories!

**Don Walker**