

Down Memory Lane – Michael Jones (as told by Mary Gurteen)

Part 3

History Of Church Farm Units, Attlebridge

While recounting his memories Michael Jones mentioned the conversion of his farm buildings at Church Farm for alternative use.



The Cartshed: before

Michael had finished with barley beef in 1976, leaving his farm yards empty. He was approached by Joe Larter, who had been made redundant from Eastern Tractors and asked if he could set up business at Church Farm. He chose the old blacksmith's shop. Thus a trend began. Keith Lee, who worked for Michael as tractor driver and handy man for 35 years, excelled at the work of building conversion, carpentry and bricklaying. Under Michael's supervision Keith carried out all the succeeding conversions of the buildings to industrial units. The pictures show Keith and some of his work.

As more businesses came along the cartshed was converted, along with the old barn and yard. No longer needed for Michael's daughters' ponies, the hay barn was adapted and the stables made into a parish meeting room. The grain store and silage barn were also converted. Several of the unit holders had started up businesses following redundancy. As many as 35 people have been working on the site at one time.



The Cartshed: after



Keith Lee, man of many parts

In the 20 years up to 1996 the units included John Fiddy Printing, Attlebridge Concrete, the Mid-Norfolk Conservative office, and Jeremy Riley with J Riley Harvesters, who eventually bought the farmhouse and buildings. By then Michael, having retired, moved on to another chapter in life. Although it was the end of an era for him, Michael is pleased that the set-up has continued to thrive under Jeremy's ownership.