

## SUNNYSIDE CAFE, CHADDESSEN COMMON

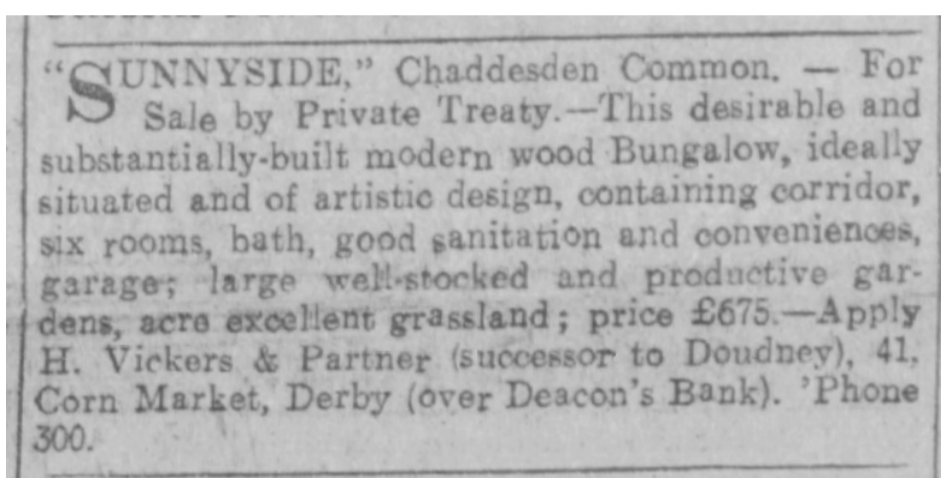
The break-up of the Wilmot family's huge Chaddesden estate during the First World War saw most of the land in Chaddesden sold to new owners within the space of a few years. Local authorities and land speculators quickly acquired hundreds of acres of agricultural land and built houses wherever they could; other individuals were content to buy an acre or two and set themselves up as smallholders ready to enjoy the good life.

One of these smallholdings was built at Chaddesden Common, on an acre or so of land to the west of Morley Road, a couple of hundred yards to the south of the turning down to Locko and Spondon, and apparently began its life as Sunnyside Poultry Farm run by Mr. John Caulfield. Its name was particularly well-chosen, for it faced due south and looked straight down Morley Road towards the village. Like a few other new houses built in Chaddesden around this time, Mr. Caulfield's property was a wooden bungalow. From time to time, Mr. Caulfield rented bed-sitting rooms in his house and in June 1922 he used the *Derby Daily Telegraph* to advertise just such a room to let "with use of bathroom, piano, etc., with or without board." I wonder if the piano made all the difference in acquiring a new lodger?



Sunnyside Cafe on Chaddesden Common

By the summer of 1926, however, Mr. Caulfield had decided to sell Sunnyside and move abroad, and so placed the property in the hands of Derby estate agents Messrs. H. Vickers & Partner, who put the bungalow and its acre of land on the market. Their advertisement (shown below) described Sunnyside as an ideally situated modern wood bungalow "of artistic design, containing corridor, six rooms, bath, good sanitation and conveniences".



Advertisement – *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 7 August 1926

The asking price was £675, a sum which someone clearly thought represented good value for money, for only a few weeks later the agents were advertising that the property was now sold and that the household furniture together with the poultry houses and fowls, etc., would be auctioned on the premises on 9 September. Those members of the public who wished to attend the sale but lived some distance away were reminded that the "Ilkeston bus passes the gate", and this raises the interesting prospect that maybe some of those who bought a few fowls then had to utilise this method of transport to take their purchases home!

The rapid growth of Chaddesden in the 1930s and 1940s makes it rather difficult to trace later owners, for other properties in the village were also confusingly called Sunnyside or Sunny Side (as, for example, in Meadow Lane). However, a later enterprising owner of the place had the idea of running it as a combined cafe and store as well as providing pitches for up to four residential caravans at the rear of the property. By the late 1950s (possibly earlier) the premises were operated under the name of J. & K. Quail, who advertised regularly in *St. Mary's Church Parish Magazine*. Their business was evidently acquired by the Duro family sometime between April and June 1958 for the parish magazine adverts were subtly altered to reflect a change in ownership.



Advertisements from *St. Mary's Parish Magazine* – April and June 1958

My own memories of Sunnyside Cafe date back to around this time. When I was just a toddler, my Mum walked with me (in a pushchair) up to the cafe perhaps once a fortnight or so as a special treat. More often than not, Mum's friend and neighbour, Margaret Tuffrey, and her little daughter Joanna came with us. Since we lived on Moncrieff Crescent at the time, these afternoon walks must have been something of a marathon for both mothers because they had to push the children's pushchairs all the way down Wood Road, through the gitty onto Morley Road and then head right up into the countryside of Chaddesden Common passing several working farms en route – a round trip of nearly three and a half miles!

As we toiled our way up to the top of Morley Road the Felix bus sometimes overtook us and halted briefly at Sunnyside while the conductor offloaded a small supply of the latest edition of the day's papers. Whenever we two children saw this happening we would race to see who could get to the bundle first to take it into the cafe. Once we had taken our seats at a table, Joanna and I were given fizzy drinks while our mothers enjoyed a well-deserved cup of tea before contemplating the return journey. If there weren't too many other customers, the juke-box in the corner of the room might be silent, and before long either I or Joanna would be requesting a coin (6d, I think it was) to feed the machine and listen to one of the very latest hits – I seem to recall that Bobby Darin singing "Mack the Knife" was extremely popular at the time. As the two infants got older we were able to accompany our mothers on our tricycles and on one memorable occasion we left the cafe to find the afternoon had suddenly turned very foggy and, before my Mum could stop me, I had pedalled off as fast as I could down Morley Road in the direction of home. Within a few seconds I was swallowed up by a bank of fog, while my mother frantically ran to catch up with me before I collided with a car, for in those days there was no pavement, just a faint white line painted on the road surface to separate pedestrians from vehicles. Fortunately I came to no harm, but my tricycling activities were closely monitored for some time!

Just how busy the cafe was remains a debatable point since over half a century ago there could not have been all that much in the way of passing trade, and the sprawling Oakwood development was not yet even a doodle on a planner's map. Possibly in an effort to attract more business it was eventually re-styled as "Sunnyside Transport Cafe" and continued to be advertised in the parish magazine for some years. Linda White (née Clarke), whose parents ran Valley Farm on Morley Road half a mile south of the cafe, remembers going up to Sunnyside to collect their daily paper. She recalls that the cafe sold sweets, tea, coffee, as well as providing breakfasts, etc., and was patronised by the car transporters going backwards and forwards to the storage depot at West Hallam. She also recollects that the Duro family sometimes kept a few pigs at the back of their property.

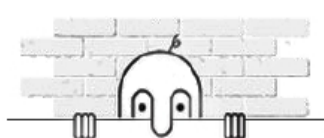
Eventually the cafe ceased its commercial activities and reverted to a private residence, and in the 1980s I remember it gradually becoming surrounded by the encroaching houses of Oakwood. Finally, I walked down Morley Road one day and Sunnyside was no more and the developers were laying the site out for yet more houses. Fortunately, someone remembered the old wooden bungalow and a drive leading down to the new properties was named "Sunnyside" in its honour.

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### POSTSCRIPT

A few years after I wrote the original article, I came upon an intriguing reference on the website of MACE – The Media Archive for Central England. It seems that on 20 September 1972 there was a TV feature lasting just over five minutes broadcast by *ATV Today* on the subject of lorry drivers' eating habits, and one of the places visited by reporter Chris Tarrant was Sunnyside Transport Cafe. I enquired about the possibility of getting a digital copy of the film, but unfortunately the price quoted was just too high.

Peter Cholerton, 2021



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