

Social Life

In 1891 Harman set up the Britannia Works Institute for the benefit of his workers. There were kitchen facilities, refreshments, a stage and a billiard table.

Iford Limited continued to provide a social club and social activities for staff and their families well into the twentieth century.

"[The Social Club] was right adjacent to the Pioneer Market which is no longer there, and it wasn't massively big, but they used to have loads and loads of functions. We played darts for the ladies team and they used to have dances, Christmas dances, Valentines dances and all that sort of thing..." Bonny Cannon



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"... They used to have the Saturday nights, they had like a little three piece band [laughs] do the quick step and the waltz and foxtrot and it used to be good fun. No drink like there is now, oh goodness me no!" Joyce Smith

"... I had a lot of fun in the amateur dramatics group, we used to put on quite serious plays and we met every... I think it was Thursday night again, certainly once a week we met, and put on plays. I acted in them, I even directed one once with my big honcho boss in it Dr Ganguin, and it was very hard to direct a boss. I was only 17, maybe nearly 18 at the time and it seemed very strange to be telling your boss what to do..." Jennifer Pardue

"... We used to have a Christmas show for children of workers so I'd been to that before because my father worked [at Iford Limited]..." Jennifer Pardue



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There was also a music society which organised coach trips to classical music concerts in London.

"... The coaches were organised by the London Philharmonic Society and firms all over the South East presumably arranged the number of tickets they wanted [...] then they would take us to the Albert Hall..." Mary Davis

Many people working at Iford Limited were keen photographers and the company encouraged this hobby by offering staff discounts on film.

"... I had a little box camera, it was a Kodak, a brownie box camera, we all had one of these and in our lunch break, we'd be out [...] we'd go over to Valentines Park in Iford in our lunch break and out would come the cameras [laughs]." Joyce Smith



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The Faces & Places

Pictures (top to bottom):

1. The Britannia Works Club with pool table, pre 1914. Copyright Redbridge Museum and Heritage.
2. Bonny Cannon and a man dancing at an Iford Limited social, c.1960.
3. Britannia Works Institute Cricket Club in South Park, 1924. As well as a team that represented the whole company there were also inter-departmental teams and matches. Copyright Redbridge Museum and Heritage.
4. A photo from the launch of HP5 at Photokina, 1976. Some employees got to take new Ilford products home before they were launched for the public as part of the testing process. Copyright Keith Davidson.
5. Inside a social centre on one of Iford Limited's sites, 1975. Copyright Redbridge Museum and Heritage.

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