



# *Parish News*

## *Minety*

Village on Right Track



Minety station circa 1845

Wiltshire was once at the heart of the railway industry in Britain and Swindon was world famous for the manufacturing works that produced trains and employed thousands.

But there is an untold story of a village that grew around the expansion of the railway into Gloucestershire.

It is told in the book “A History of Minety” created from research by James Lee from the University of the West of England.

Minety, which until the 1840s had been a small farming village, exploded into life when a station was built on the outer edge of the village in 1841.

For nearly 100 years the station served the community and aided Minety's growth, but the station shut 45 years ago this year, in 1964, a victim of the notorious Beeching cuts.

The full title of the station was Minety and Ashton Keynes and it served the local area as well as providing passenger links to other places in the country.

The influence of the railway turned Minety from a farming community to a bustling village.

Village stalwart Gordon Miles has lived all 83 years of his life in Minety. He has seen the ebb and flow of village life change around the existence of the station.

Mr Miles said, "Minety was made up of milk farms and the milk used to go away on the train. There was also a cattle pen at the station."

The selling and moving of milk became more profitable for local people than using the milk themselves.

Lower Minety grew around the extension of the station and soon the school moved from Upper to Lower Minety. New homes emerged in the new part of the village to accommodate the growing population and the growing importance of the line and the station has seen its use as a passenger line.

In National Trust property Clevedon Court in Somerset the walls are adorned not just with old paintings but with framed railway timetables with Minety as a main station on the line from London Paddington.

Mr Miles said, "It was a very active station mainly because of the farms in the area but there was also a passenger service to Swindon. I think one closed before the other, I think the passenger service closed first.

They put it to a single track although I hear they are now thinking of making it double again."

Since the closure of the station, although the village has grown, Mr Miles said, "There isn't the same centre of activity."

Nicola Curtis, Wiltshire Gazette and Herald 3 December 2009