



(Photos courtesy of Bob and Olive Knight)

“Lovely little places!”

The Prefabs at Stewards Green, Epping.

After the Second World War, Britain was struggling to re-house those who had been bombed out, plus the returning Service-men-and-women, and also those young people who had grown up at home and married, but had no place of their own.

Epping had lost housing due to enemy action at Bridge Hill, Fairfield Road, Fiddler’s Hamlet, etc. But the main problem seemed to be young couples having to start their married lives with their parents or in-laws, or in very cramped conditions. One expectant mother pointed out to the mid-wife that there was no space for a cot in their only room. The nurse’s advice? *“Oh, empty one of the drawers and put it [the baby!] in the drawer!”*

One solution proposed was the provision of “temporary bungalows.” The Epping Urban District Surveyor, Mr H J Mead, was underwhelmed by the prototypes, describing them as *“not exactly things of beauty, nor are they likely to remain a joy forever.”* It was suggested that 40 such temporary bungalows should be applied for, and that the site should be a field at the bottom of Bower Hill, towards Stewards Green, because *“its acquisition and use would not be likely to raise protest.”*

Despite Mr Mead’s opinions, the majority of the people who moved there were thrilled. They had their own well-designed bungalow with a garden all round it. They had “mod cons” in the kitchen such as a gas fridge and fitted cupboards. And the prefabs were built round an extensive green which gave their children a safe place to play.

Can you help?

Local resident Jenny Coumbe has started to write a booklet about the Stewards Green prefabs. She would love to have more input from **people who lived there**, or **relatives who visited**. Also, if anyone has **photos** showing the prefabs’ exterior or interior, she would be very grateful if she could borrow them to scan, and then return. Please initially contact Epping Forest District Museum on 01992 716 882.