

Keith Lloyd – Biographical Note

My mother Ivy Lloyd was anaemic and was therefore susceptible to all sorts of illnesses. So it was considered that I should be born in a special maternity hospital in Commercial Road, Stepney.

Two weeks after my birth in 1932 we returned to 22, Cranbrook Road, West Silvertown, where my parents and my mother's parents Bob and Agnes Orley (my grandparent) were living at the time.

My brother John was born three years later, also at the same hospital in Stepney.

We lived at 22 Cranbrook Road for eight years and then in 1941 we moved to 7 Barnwood Road for a period of about six months and then back to Cranbrook Road, this time to No. 35. My brother Malcolm was born there in 1946 and I was married from there in 1955 and moved to Stratford in 1956.

In all I lived in West Silvertown 24 years apart from periods of evacuation and National Service.

I attended West Silvertown School in Westwood Road for 13 years. During the last year of my schooling I attended Pretoria Road School in Canning Town. After that I went to night school for 10 years at Poplar Engineering and Navigation College and West Ham Technical College where I passed examinations in the Royal Society of Arts, the Ordinary and Higher National Certificates in Mechanical Engineering. I am a Fellow of the Institution of Engineering and Technology.

After a few months working on building sites I gained a production engineering apprenticeship with Venesta Ltd. After completing my National Service I joined a building services engineering company as a draughtsman and worked my way up to be a Company Director. I retired after having completed 40 years with the same company

My brother John attended West Silvertown School up to the age of 11 and then went on to Pretoria Road School. His first job was in Venesta Ltd in the Tin Foil Packing Department for 3 years. He then he did his National Service with the London Rifle Brigade and after that he worked for 3 years with our father, painting and decorating for the then owners of West Ham United FC, W. J. Kearns. Subsequently he worked for 3 years in the warehouse of the Co-op and then 14 years with Tate & Lyle delivering sugar. Finally he spent 17 years with Guardian Royal Exchange.

My brother Malcolm also attended West Silvertown School. He passed the 11-plus exam and then attended Stratford Grammar School. He worked first for Oakley and Watkins for 3 years - they were shipping suppliers, based at Canning Town. He then had several temporary jobs before he moved on to be a Kiosks Stock Controller for Trust House Forte for 5 years. In 1971 he joined the Prudential for 21 years. After that he was employed by the MOD as a security guard for 4 years before working as a London cabbie.

My mother was born at 14 Cranbrook Road in 1912. She had three brothers and one sister all born at 22 Cranbrook Road, West Silvertown. They all attended West Silvertown School. Her first job was at Clarnico's Sweet factory at Stratford, but the journey was too much for her and she moved to the Co-op flour mill. Sadly, the flour dust made her ill and she moved to Venesta Plywood factory lining tea chests. Here she cut her finger so she couldn't handle the lead sheeting and was sacked. At the

age of 18 she was employed at Tate & Lyle sugar factory at Plaistow Wharf but a year later she married my father and in those days they didn't employ married women and she was sacked. Then followed a cleaning job and finally she worked in the kitchen of a café in the North Woolwich Road.

My father Ernest Lloyd was born in 1911. He had five brothers and four sisters of whom eight survived. All were born at 1 Barnwood Road and attended West Silvertown School. His first job was in the boiler room at Venesta Ltd. Here he had an accident which damaged his ear drums and he was sacked. His next job was at the Tate & Lyle sugar factory at Plaistow Warf but was sacked at 21 because T&L would have had to pay him a man's wage. For the next nine years he was in and out of work as most factories in Silvertown found it was cheaper to employ 'casual labour.'

During the war years there was plenty of work for all and he was employed on essential works in the Dock Area Flour Mills.

After the war he was employed as a painter and decorator with Bowden & Willis and then finally with W.J.Kearns, owners of West Ham United FC. He carried out all the 'sign writing' at the Upton Park ground and a number of shop fronts. He was a prolific artist and painted in oils after the style of the 'Masters' Rembrandt, John Constable, Thomas Gainsbough and many others. His work was exceptional and many of his paintings are still with the family and will remain so.

The West Silvertown School and streets as we knew them, were demolished in 1960 ending a period of community closeness that would be difficult to emulate in today's world.