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Sweet memories of life at former Evesham jam factory

By Steve Mather

AN elderly Evesham woman has told of her happy' life at a town jam factory after reading an appeal for information in the Journal.

Gladys Geden of Charlton Close, Hampton, worked at the Beach's Jam Factory throughout the time of the Second World War and after seeing the article in her local paper, decided to tell the story of her time at the factory which once thrived in Evesham. Mrs Geden, now in her 80s, was conscripted to Beach's at the age of 14 on July 31, 1939 and began work in the despatch department packing jam and Christmas puddings for the forces.

She said: "My sister and I were both sent to work after the outbreak of war. We tied the packages down at the top with wet parchment and used to put our names and addresses in the top to get letters back and had quite a few.

"We worked from 8am to 8pm and we used to all ride home together in the blackout. My sister Edna worked on the labelling machine for the jars of jam and I remember there used to be a revolving table filled with boiling jam.

"Big pans were pushed up to the tables from the boiler house where the jam was made. It was all hard work but very happy times all the same. I still have two jars from the old factory and sent one to Evesham museum "

Beach's Jam Factory was moved to Evesham just over 100 years ago in 1907 by owner Thomas William Beach.

Mrs Geden added: "I stayed there seven years through the war. I still think of it and I see a lot of my old workmates."

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