

# A stroll down Memory Lane

DO you remember Slough High Street's own town clock, garage or nursery?

Take a trip back in time along the old High Street, courtesy of Slough Museum. From now until Monday, May 2, the museum is staging an exhibition tracing 200 years of the town's historic areas.

Starting with a colour reproduction of the earliest known picture of the High Street, painted in 1802, the exhibition chronicles its changing face up until the 1970s.

The exhibition, which places pictures of the modern-day town centre next to those of yesteryear, has running street maps alongside the exhibits to pinpoint exactly where in the area the pictures are set.

A number of the photographs were taken by the well-known professional Slough photographer Cecil Greville, who had his own studio in the town.

Others have been submitted by individuals who have loaned them to the museum.

The pictures showing the town centre of the 19th century and even those of the town after the Second World War, give a view far removed from today's pot pourri of shops, banks and fast-food restaurants.

Instead, there was an eclectic collection of buildings including Lovegrove's Chair

## Report by PAUL MORRIS

Manufactory, the South Bucks Garage, the Charles Turner nursery shop, John Harding's butchers and private dwellings.

Proudly displayed outside John Harding's shop, circa pre 1914, is a substantial collection of precisely hung rabbits.

"We've just had someone in the other day who said they actually remember little buckets being fastened to the rabbits' heads to catch the blood from falling onto the pavement," said Slough Museum curator Lesley Hackett.

"They certainly must have been fresh!"

Other landmarks captured on film include the Methodist Central Hall on the corner of The Grove, the Old Crown Hotel, which used to be where the Argos shop is now and the Slough town clock.

Located at the entrance to where Littlewoods is now, the clock was demolished in 1972.

Most of the photographs are conspicuous by their staged atmosphere and lack of people and traffic in what was a very busy

thoroughfare.

However, in among these pictures are glimpses of the people of the time, such as the Co-op carnival in the 1930s and celebrations to mark War Weapons Week in May 1941, complete with a model of a destroyer outside Suter's department store.

As with much of Slough, at firsthand there appears to be little evidence of the High Street's history.

However, although the scenes from then and now are sometimes totally unrecognisable, there are some telltale signs of Slough's past, if you know where to look.

For example, the High Street's unlikely two oldest buildings are the Rose and Crown pub and Tony's Grill cafe, both of which date from the 1700s and are listed buildings.

The trick is, says Lesley, to let your eye roam over the modern shop fronts to see what is above them.

So next time you walk down the High Street, let your eyes rise above the shop facades to catch a glimpse of an almost forgotten part of Slough.

● Slough Museum is open Wednesday to Friday, 12 noon to 4 pm, and Saturday, Sunday and bank holiday Mondays from 2 pm to 5 pm.