

Below is an email exchange between two current Ilkley Angling Association members. It contains interesting historical information regarding their grandfathers who were both keen Ilkley AA members in the distant past:

On December 9, 2016, Stephen Cheetham <[stephen.fws@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.fws@gmail.com)> wrote:

**John Goodall (1876-1964)**

My grandfather John Goodall was an avid fisherman and ran Goodalls Saddlers and Fishing Tackle shop in Shipley.

As he suffered badly from asthma he did not serve in the First World War but instead supplied the horse harness to the cavalry which became a special service and an exempt service.

He was a member at Ilkley Angling Club before the war and during the war he noticed the terrible loss which the club was suffering from. Members were away, some killed, some missing and some badly injured subsequently this effected the clubs finances.

My grandfather initially financed the clubs rents until he managed to get his old friends including Harry Ramsden and some of the other tackle shops to help support the club and keep it running.

After the war the remaining members returned and instead of thanking my grandfather the committee tried to make the club membership from only Ilkley residents. As my grandfather lived in Baildon this excluded him. But he never held a resentment and spoke little of it.

We are unsure of what happened after this decision but I do know that he fished the Ilkley stretch on a regular basis, in fact every Wednesday afternoon which was half days closing in Shipley.

Back in the 1950's I remember his last few fishing trips when my mother and I dropped him off by the footbridge and he would wander downstream to his favourite spot by the sewerage outflow. On his return home he would put his catch in the kitchen sink so I could admire them.

He did stipulate in his will that his ashes should be scattered at his favourite spot below the sewerage works outflow to which we firmly complied.

Kind regards            Steve Cheetham

On December 10, 2016, David Martin <[davidmartin@ilkleyanglingassociation.co.uk](mailto:davidmartin@ilkleyanglingassociation.co.uk)> wrote:

Stephen,

Thank you for that. Very interesting.

### **Owen Bowen (1901-1995)**

I'm not sure when my grandfather was fishing our stretch but he was already a life member of Ilkley Angling Association by the time he first took me to the river in 1972 so he must have been a member for a long time before that. He gave me all his guest tickets from then onwards until I became a junior member. That trip in November 1972 was my first ever fishing session trying to catch Grayling. Owen told me to trot gilt tail worms down the Bath Street run so that is what I did and it worked well. I think I caught five decent sized Grayling. Within a couple of years of that day I had caught my very first ever Trout and Grayling on the fly - both from the Ilkley AA stretch from the main road bridge downstream to Bath Street.

I never knew my grandfather to fish. For at least the last 40 years of his life he lived on St Nicholas Road in Middleton and was a very keen gardener (with a very good worm compost heap!). He died at 94 and is buried with my grandmother in the cemetery just downstream of Bath Street. I now have all my grandfather's fishing tackle and fishing books.

Back in the 1970's there were large numbers of Grayling (and Trout) in our stretch and I used to carefully weigh the biggest. The largest Grayling I caught back then on our stretch was only 1lb 1oz. Now we still catch lots of Grayling but a goodly number are much bigger than that. Back in the 1970's our stretch held large numbers of Dace and I think these probably competed with the Grayling for food and so it inhibited the size that the Grayling grew to. Once the Dace disappeared (about 20 years ago) the Grayling started to regularly be caught at 1lb 8oz and above.

Regards     Dave

PS – my great grandfather, also called Owen Bowen (1873–1967), (who did not fish) was a famous Yorkshire painter/artist and lived in East Keswick near Collingham. My uncle Edward Bowen did fish and he was also a member of Ilkley Angling Association.

David Martin, Secretary - Ilkley Angling Association