



The **Temperance Hall**, now the dentist, was where the Infant Welfare Centre was based. This was where you went to have your baby weighed and where new mothers collected the necessary vitamin supplements, milk and fruit juice to maintain health and wellbeing despite the restrictions of war rationing. It had close links with the Nursing Association and the Red Cross for whom they fund raised.

It was also used in the early part of the war by children evacuated from Ealing Modern School until facilities were made available to them at Wooburn School. It was always a useful venue for meetings and talks, such as those run by the

Women's Institute who gave guidance to their members on how to cope with rationing and how to 'make do and mend' or recycle. Children's events were also held here, but it was not popular for adult band music and dances due to the restriction on alcohol. The Temperance movement was strictly teetotal.



Magpie Cottage, at the top of Sheepridge Lane, was once the home of Reginald James Baker (known as James) and his wife and son. Mr Baker spoke fluent Spanish and was a Latin American correspondent with the BBC shortly before the outbreak of the war. They had moved to the village by 1939 and James became involved in the Home Guard but his work was not all it might seem.

He was actually part of a wartime emergency service and was responsible for setting up an operational base, or listening station, at the cottage. His responsibility also included the wellbeing of a group of nine to thirteen people

who arrived in the village to act as listeners, tuning into German, American and the 'rest of the world' radio transmissions.

Rooms were found in the village for most of the listeners but the two German-speakers and a secretary were billeted at the cottage, and all the group had their meals there. The local telephone exchange received instructions that they were always to make a line available. So it was, that on a night in early September 1939, he was able to alert the War Office, the Admiralty, the Air Ministry and the BBC that Germany had invaded Poland and that 20 years of peace was now at an end.

Because of the secret nature of his work there are few publications mentioning his name but it was recorded that in the latter stages of the war he was given dispensation to leave the Home Guard for special wartime duties elsewhere. This included trips to Argentina (under the guise of a BBC official) where it is believed he was involved in tracking down Nazi officers who had sought South America as a safe refuge from the recriminations of war.

NOTE: There are no records of what **The Cherry Tree**, or **The Stag** did during WW2 and perhaps their facilities were too small to provide anything more than a normal bar service but they may have provided rooms for evacuees. We believe that **The Magpie** pub, which stood opposite Magpie Cottage, provided accommodation for some of the listeners, and many of the evacuated Lloyds Insurance workers were billeted in houses along Chapman Lane so that they could walk to Strathcona every day.