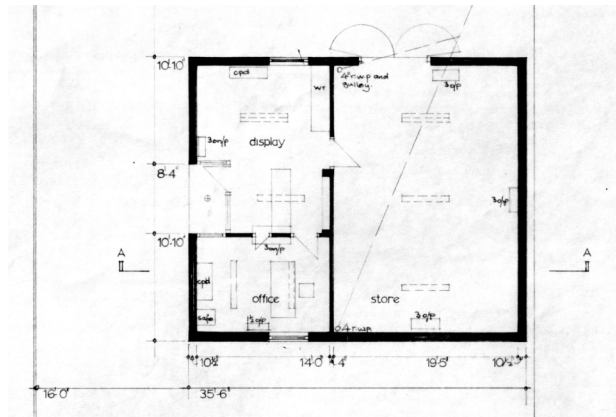


The 1970s: The Good Life

1970 Plans for the New Headquarters were described as “a fine building and great asset”.



End of line for allotment society HQ

Members of the Rock Allotment Society demolishing the old railway carriage that was the society's headquarters from 1926 until 1971.

The carriage, built in 1890, was bought by the society in 1926 for £15, and was only replaced when Cambridge City Council built brick headquarters for the society three years ago.

The society had hoped to sell the carriage whole; with the help of the Royal Engineers, Waterbeach, but their heavy-duty crane in Belfast. The Cambridge Model Engineering Society were invited to take anything they wanted before the demolition.

Much of the remains has been given as firewood to neighbouring old people. "There is still some left, and anyone is welcome to take it from our site between Holbrook Road and Glebe Road," said the secretary, Mr. K. W. Paige.



Cambridge Evening News photograph

RAS members lived The Good Life in the seventies and **1974** was described by the Chairman as “a wonderful year with all plots let and a waiting list”.

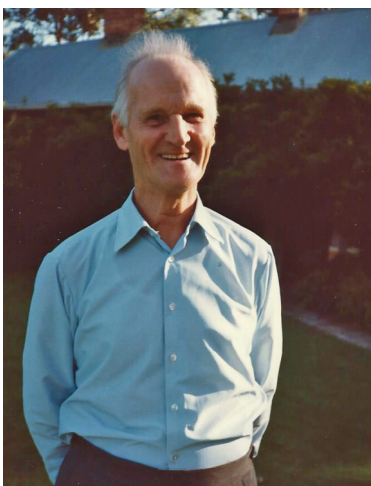
In the *Cambridge Evening News* Mr Harold Robinson, Secretary of the Cambridge Central Council for Allotments spoke of the increasing popularity of allotments, with many people anxious to join the self-sufficiency trend.

He admits that up to a few years ago nobody could foresee the big increase of interest in allotments. There had been a steady decline of allotment activity since the Second World War when the Dig for Victory campaign demonstrated just how much food could be grown at home when gardeners put their minds to it.

Mr. Robinson reckons that with a family of four a gardeners can save at least £100 a year by growing his own vegetables.

So allotments, which were once the sanctuary from washing up and the children, are now even being sought by housewives taking up the rake and watering can to keep down the household budget.

1976 The Society celebrated its 60th anniversary with a Prize Draw and gave a rent-free year to all OAPs. The draw was made by Professor Fergus Wilson: Mr Peters won 2 stone of fertiliser, Mrs Wilkinson a garden net, Dr Strangeways two pairs of garden gloves, Mr Amey a Stanley spade and Mr Bird a £2 voucher.



Geoff Meaby (left) was Trading Officer from 1970-94. At the AGM on 8 March 1976 he was presented with Life Membership of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. In 1977 the Secretary spoke of “the good work put in by Geoff Meaby...a tremendous increase in orders”. Three years before, the gross turnover had been £500, but it had now topped £5,000.

Mr Percy Brignall died in **1976**. He had been Chairman since 1955 – only the third in the long history of the Society. Mr C Butler took over as Acting Chairman.

In **1970** work began to clear the Baldock Way ditch in the hopes of alleviating the longstanding flooding problem.

In **1971**, with the introduction of decimal coinage, rent was set at £1.25 for a 10-pole plot.

At the **1972** AGM it was noted that “there were a few ladies present”.

In **1976** “a slackness in paying rents was reported at the AGM.

At the **1979** AGM Professor Fergus Wilson gave a talk on compost.