

Bill Walker - sports day at Bawdsey 1943

The mention of Bawdsey brings to mind the time, 27th April to 2nd June 1943, when we encamped alongside the radar block at R.A.F. Bawdsey in Suffolk. – Bill Walker, camped at Bawdsey during the war.

In particular I recall the day when we joined the personnel of the permanent Bawdsey radar station in a sports day event. There was plenty of friendly competition in the various races and contests but the most memorable happening was the 'marathon' of umpteen circuits of the field in front of the great impressive residence. I cannot remember if this had been requisitioned by the R.A.F. or if the owners were still in residence. Anyway, to get back to the 'marathon', one or two of our 'wannabee' athletes entered the race and were given vociferous support from our mob from the sidelines. The greatest cheer of the day did not go to the winner or even runner ups...it was given to the last man in....our Corporal Jack Pike. He gave the crowd the best example of sheer determination and pluck ever seen. Many many laps behind, long after the other runners had passed the winning post or given up, Jack, red faced, absolutely knackered, kept struggling on, refusing to give in until to thunderous cheers he staggered past the post. An excellent example of perseverance and grit from a man who would not class himself as an athlete. I will always remember Jack and that event at Bawdsey.

If you spent time at Bawdsey Radar Station or have stories to tell about events in and around the station please do get in touch with us!