

I've spoken before about the absurdities of the God's County branch of my family. Some ate their Yorkshire puds served as a starter, some with the main course, doused with gravy and some with sugar or honey as a dessert. There are one or two other idiosyncrasies I remember from my childhood and my grandad's idioms. He was a taciturn white rose - who liked a rum and pep. When asked where are we going? It was there and back to see how far it is! Any trip to Ivinghoe Beacon to fly our kites meant we had to drive through Hemel and Berko. Never sure if it was one, the other, or both but the old A41 always drove us past Treacle-bumstead.

The most infuriating though was my grandad always using the expression – a wim wam for ducks to peak on. I considered that to be gobbledegook and I wasn't far wrong. Its meaning – lost in the depths of the Yorkshire vernacular does mean, it is all nonsense, stop talking nonsense or mind your own beeswax – take your pick. I never understood.

Other family expressions include, going up the smoke, down the bottom, top of town (toprankin obviously), to hell and back and to the Toon to see a man about a dog. There were also several family ditties that my dad used to teach us. All now unrepeatable as they were politically incorrect even in the seventies and certainly wouldn't pass muster these days.

I recently read an online news article that said that there were so many forgotten expressions that needed to be bought back into circulation. I might be showing my age here but I'd used three of them in my writers' block entry and six of the others are certainly well embedded in my lexicon. There was only one I can't remember ever hearing before and that was so inspiring that I've already forgotten it. Living in the past or it aint broke, don't fix it.

In our house, if there was enough blue sky to make a sailor's suit then we'd begin our adventures, charge over the rec or head further afield to the tennis rec. Mind you don't get your flares caught in the seesaw, don't throw stones at the squirrels (which were red in those days) and no run-unders on the swing. Certainly, mum, there will be no foul-language in public and the biggest promise of all – yes mum, I will behave myself. I do know who is looking on – even if you say I don't.

At the rec, is it anyone for cricket? One handed catches off the wall, six and out for losing the ball or perhaps a shuttlecock into the next-door neighbours garden. You then had to pluck up the courage to climb the fence dive across the lawn and rescue the ball if it hadn't been punctured in the rose-beds. Why not scrump a few opportune apples before climbing back over – how much is that doggie in the window? Quick, scarper, its not in the window anymore.

Captains to choose teams, goalie when needed, rush goalie and jumpers for goalposts are more ironic reminiscences than an actual rite of pacing out the pitch for the beautiful game, that is now played vicariously and virtually. How many times was your

opponents' goal smaller than yours? Especially when they were the last one picked. First firsts, second seconds for wallball, Wembley or headers and volleys... anyone?

Square peg, hompom, hopscotch and British bulldog are games that have slipped from my children's memory if not my own. Though I guess murder ball is the same at any age.

So its time to gan yem, return to sender, run for home. Time to take five, pull up a pew, put up your feet and bury your nose in a good book.