



Sedgley's Diamond 60

*Sixty years, sixty people,
sixty stories about village
life*

1995

The Battle of the Dialects

By Revd Eric Petrie

Soon after Heather and I arrived in Sedgley in 1995 we led a group of Mothers' Union members in liturgical dance. I controlled the music and Heather, pregnant with Aidan, directed the dancers.

We are both Londoners and were new to the Black Country. Imagine our shock when one of the dancers asked **"What shall us do wi' ower donnies?"**

Later, my ear now attuned to the dialect of Sedgley and Lower Gornal, I had a phone call from a funeral director in Quarry 'Bonk': "Ay yo' go' a pen sillchick?" It took three goes before my brain managed to send the reply: "Ar." That lesson in Middle English still stands me in good stead. In among the Somerset accents here, the next most common you hear is Black Country!

But it's not just Black Country dialect that throws people. The Sedgley congregation used to complain that if I went home to East London they couldn't understand me for a few days.

And Bishop Rupert (**Rt Rev Rupert Hoare**, then Bishop of Dudley) came round to us in The Priory one day just before Christmas. The night before had been a parish supper of some kind and there were a lot of vegetables left over. I had taken them home and was busy making and filling the freezer with vegetable samosas.

I offered Bishop Rupert and Gazena his wife a samosa. "No thanks," he said. "I don't drink alcohol."



Aynuk and Ayli