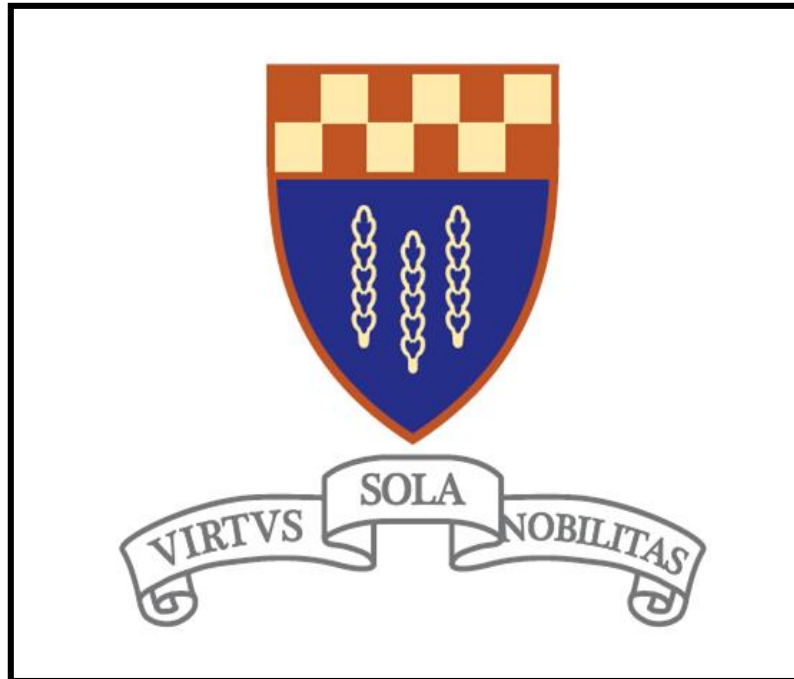


The Pavior



**The Newsletter
of
The High Pavement Society
(Founded 1989)**

February 2014

Your Committee

The Committee Members listed below are always delighted to talk to you on any matter – particularly if you have a contribution to make to this publication!

President: Vacant

Committee Chair: Ken Kirk 0115 9568650

Deputy Chairman: John Elliott 0115 9266475

Secretary: Noel Gubbins 0115 9756998

Treasurer: Robin Taylor 0115 9609483

Registrar/editor: Colin Salsbury 01509 558764

Archivist: Lance Wright 01636 815675

Committee Members:

Barry Davys 0115 9260092

Tony Humphreys 0115 9284577

Marcus Pegg 0115 9216548

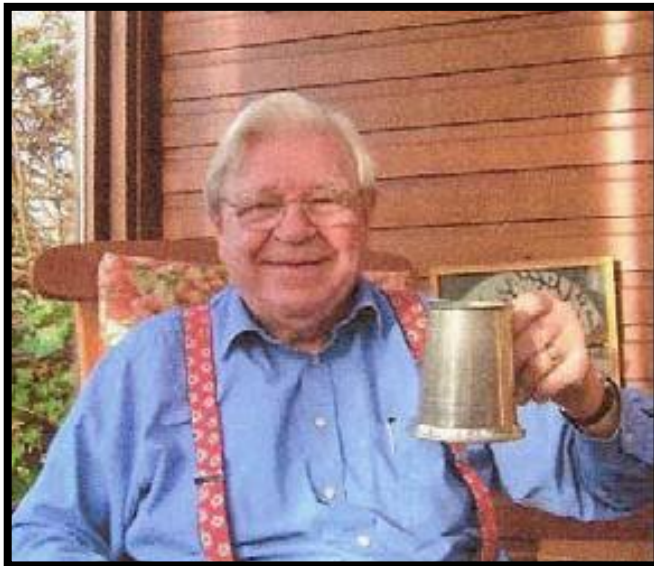
George Taylor 0115 9278474

Copy for *The Pavior* may be sent to

Colin Salsbury colin.salsbury@ntlworld.com

116 Leicester Road, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 2AQ

Our website address: www.highpavementsociety.org.uk



Faces to Remember

Arnold Brown

Founder Member and President of the High Pavement Society

1923-2014

ARNOLD BROWN
1923-2014
BARBARA BROWN
1922-2014

It is with great sadness that we report the death of our distinguished President and Founder Member, Arnold Brown. It is also our sad duty to report the death only a week earlier of Barbara Brown, Arnold's beloved wife. They were quite devoted.

Arnold Brown was an Old Pavior to his fingertips. He had been instrumental in founding our Society and believed passionately in its aims often stating them quite forcefully. They were: to commemorate the former Grammar School after its sad demise, to provide fellowship for its past pupils, to uphold its fine ideals and traditions and to offer help and encouragement to the young people who now pursue their education via the successor institution, The High Pavement Sixth Form Academy.

Arnold's jovial presence was a source of delight at all our gatherings and he also delivered much good humoured comment via his writings in this journal, which initially he composed himself until he asked me to take the reins as he 'was never quite sure which buttons to press...' Arnold was immensely gratified to know that the old buildings, in which he and so many of us prepared for our life ahead, were now fully restored to their former glory and being used for the younger age group of his former primary school. We send our condolences to his family in the sad loss we share so deeply.

Arnold will be sorely missed—by each and every one of us.

Colin Salsbury

CHRIS HUNTER

We have been informed by his family that our loyal member Chris Hunter, a former School Captain and latterly a forensic psychiatrist, died aged 63 on December 18th 2013 after a long illness.

GEORGE STOKES

We have also been informed by the family of our loyal member George Stokes that he died aged 82 in September 2013 after a several months of illness.

DOROTHY BALDWIN

Dorothy Baldwin our celebrated honorary member has died at the great age of 111 on January 1st this year. The Society was represented at the funeral on January 15th by Derek Robinson.

The High Pavement Society sends its sincere condolences to the families of these members in their times of sad loss.

FAREWELL ARNOLD!

On Monday 27th January a group of Old Paviers, together with a large congregation of family and friends, attended the Thanksgiving Service for Arnold and Barbara Brown in St Leonard's Church Wollaton, which followed the family's cremation service. It was the same church in which Arnold and Barbara were married so many years ago.

It was our privilege to sing *Carmen Paviorum* as our contribution to the occasion.

Typically there was an invitation to us all to join the others for Arnold and Barbara's 'Last Pub Lunch' in the adjacent 'Admiral Rodney' where we raised a glass in a toast to their memory.

ooOoo

FROM OUR READERS **FROM PETER DAWSON**

I can't express adequately my feelings of sadness at the sad death of our two friends who for so long have been at the centre of all that is good about our society.

I have read with great pleasure all that Arnold has written about his life when growing up, and many other good times we have been able to share. His gentle sense of humour and great kindness are things which will stay with us. In Barbara he found an ideal partner who supported him in all he did and was always a gracious companion to us all.

They will certainly be remembered, always.

Pauline and Peter Dawson

FROM DEREK ROBINSON

Dear Colin, It was a pleasure to meet you and the other members of the High Pavement Luncheon Club at the Nag's Head in Woodborough once again. Since speaking to you I have managed to find time to read the November edition of *The Pavior*.

I was very interested in the article concerning Fred Freund and his description of Mr Lamont's methods of 'instilling French by dint of fear and a heavy hand'. I too was taught French by Mr Lamont and his methods brought terror into the classroom. I personally witnessed members of my own class brought to the verge of tears by the sheer savagery of his 'clout round the ears' that was neither expected nor deserved. The slightest thing was punished physically and although I had always managed to avoid his disgraceful behaviour before, twice I was exposed to his desire to punish me during my very last French lesson with him.

One day he was very late coming to the classroom and seconds before he entered, a friend passed me a comic. Mr Lamont snatched it from my hands before I could hide it but I escaped the expected clout because he was clutching books under his other arm. 'Escaped' is possibly the wrong word as I knew he would 'get me' before the class ended.

As he sat down at his desk he summoned me but instead of receiving the anticipated clout I was told to distribute some test papers which contained English sayings which we had to convert to the French equivalent. At the end of the class I was again summoned to collect the papers for him. Before he let me return to my desk he demanded to know what the French equivalent was for the English expression 'I wonder why'. French was always my worst subject and we both knew that if I got it wrong I would be punished.

By God's grace I was word perfect and I never met him again for it was the end of term.

Sincerely, Derek Robinson

FROM RICHARD WAPLINGTON

(Woppy's Waffle)



Dear Colin With your permission I would like to start a fairly regular piece in the Pavior and I'd like to call it 'Woppy's Waffle'. Perhaps the main content of this bit of waffle must be to express my joy over the progress made in the resurrection of the old school, though I thought it was rather a pity about the demise of the old science labs. My chief memory of this concerns 'Crock' Crossland who, when recalling his time in the trenches of World War 1, produced an almighty bang by igniting the products of the electrolysis of water. No Health and Safety then! I am moved to ask if there was a Roll of Honour¹ of those killed in that war?

I found the article by Geoff Oldfield on the lace and hosiery industry quite intriguing. I am sure that hand lace-making was a 'cottage industry'. My mum, whenever she was very busy ('thronged') would say 'I haven't time for (even) a bit of lacework'. I think women were paid for their labours on a piece-work basis but this was of course in the days when women were not deemed to have any career aspirations after marriage.

Referring to the mention of fees in one of Arnold's contributions, I think these were always necessary unless you passed the 'Scholarship' (11+). I didn't take it due to ill health and my mother had to pay fees which were subsequently repaid because she was not very rich.

One last thought: Has the Prefects' Room survived?² This was at the north end of the building near the (then) Art Room. I came to HP the year after the girls departed to their own school down the hill and there was a ditty still being sung:

'I want to find the House Captain.
I know where he is, I know where he is!
Making love up in the Prefects' Room!'

Richard Waplington (1932-39) Forest House (aged 93)

FROM MIKE SIMPSON

It was interesting to read the extract from Charlotte Erikson's book in the article by Geoff Oldfield. I knew Charlotte. She was American and Professor of Economic History at LSE. Later, she became the first holder of the Mellon chair in American History at Cambridge and a Fellow of Corpus Christi. I am also an Americanist and when I joined the British Association for American Studies in 1963, Charlotte was the secretary. I used to see her regularly at our annual conferences. The last time I saw her was in the 1990s, living in retirement in a small cottage at Chesterton in Cambridge. I believe she was also a church organist.

Michael Simpson (Trent, 1950-58)

Reader (ret.) in American History, Swansea University.

¹ Yes indeed. The Roll of Honour for both World Wars is displayed on our website. www.highpavementsociety.org.uk. There is of course the memorial plaque to those who died in the First War which is now on display in the foyer of High Pavement Sixth Form Academy in Chaucer Street. Lance Wright, our Archivist, has full details of these and other serving men.

² The space occupied by the Prefects' Room is still there in the newly refurbished building but I think it is now a set of unisex toilets!—Ed.

FROM DEREK TONKIN

Dear Colin, I was saddened to read in the November 2013 issue of “The Pavior” that my old school friend Fred Freund had passed away. Somehow I always remembered Fred as “Freddie”, but whether we called him that with his consent, I cannot recall. But then I used to be “Tonk” and I never heard that again after I left High Pavement. Nor do I ever recall meeting Fred again after I left Nottingham in 1948, though I came back to the city from time to time until my mother retired to South Wales in 1962.

I had not known until I read the article that Fred had been one of the ‘Kindertransport’. I was not sure at the time whether he was of German or Czechoslovak origin, though I seem to recall that he did tell us that he came from Czechoslovakia. I knew that his surname was German because I was learning the language, but it would be intriguing to know whether he was from the German minority in the Sudetenland or, as I would now suspect, from the German-Czechoslovak community in Prague. He was always a very cheerful fellow, bright and breezy whenever he was around, and without the trace of a foreign accent so far as I can recall. But then there were one or two other Jewish refugees from the Continent at school, one of whom was an entertaining scholar called Bandler, but he would not have been part of the ‘Kindertransport’ as his father and mother had also made it to Britain and the family lived in a delightful house in Mapperley Park.

But here is something which I now find strange: I do not ever recall that I knew Fred as being Jewish. I have no doubt that he was, but such was the integration of religious communities in Britain at the time that being Jewish was to me as a young lad no more different than being Catholic, or Baptist, or Church of England. If I might digress: this reminds me of the time I took a party of Cambodian MPs to Northern Ireland in 1962, when I acted as French-English interpreter. ‘We understand’ said one pompous local official ‘that you are all Buddhist. What we would like to know is: are you Catholic Buddhist or Protestant Buddhist?’



This is a photograph of the Arts 6th Form at High Pavement, probably taken in the spring of 1948. It is a scan of an overexposed black and white photograph which I have touched up as best I can. Fred is the second from the right in the front row. The names of the rest are on the tip of my tongue, but I can't remember them all these days.

From top left: Charnley; his friend whose name I don't recall; next a chap called 'Purtle'³ who was great fun; Buxton⁴ who married young and then another unknown; Bottom left are two great guys, the second very arty; then Ken Jones who became a teacher (with whom I am still in touch); then myself; then, if I recall correctly, Frank Hudson who was a great rugby player; Fred Freund; and finally a chap whom I seem to recall as Smithies.

There is an interesting Czechoslovak sequel. In 1954 the Foreign Office had sent me to learn Polish at the School of Slavonic Studies at the University of London. This led to two postings to the British Embassy in Warsaw, 1955-57 and 1966-68 (of undoubted interest to the Stasi—I have their report!). In the spring 1968 my wife and I drove by road from Warsaw through Czechoslovakia to Vienna. This was the time of the Prague Spring when Alexander Dubček had brought in a reformist government, but it was squashed by Soviet tanks which invaded Czechoslovakia on the night of 21 August 1968. Subsequently I returned to London and found myself looking after the affairs of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other East European Soviet 'Satellites'. In 1971 Britain had expelled 105 Soviet diplomats - mostly from their Trade Office – for activities “incompatible with their diplomatic status”. But then we found that the Czechoslovak Embassy had simply taken on Soviet tasking, so I recommended that 7 Czechoslovak diplomats out of 22 in the Embassy should also be declared *personae non gratae*. But we didn't say which the 7 were, and the Embassy decided to remove the wrong 7. So we told them that for that reason we would declare p.n.g. another 7. This time they removed the right ones. I would like to feel that we had done Fred proudly by striking a blow at those who had effectively prevented him from returning to his country after the Second World War.

Fred recalls the snootiness of the Nottingham High School, who at the time absolutely refused to be contaminated with the proletariat of High Pavement. Their weightier pocket money also gave them (they thought) the pick of the girls at Manning. But somehow, around 1947, Manning agreed to social contacts with High Pavement, and I learnt my first steps in ballroom dancing with a delightful girl at Manning, by name Betty, who was also studying modern languages. My first love. Whatever become of Betty, I wonder? Her father ran a store on the corner of Hucknall Road and Perry Road. Callous me, for after National Service I found myself at Oxford where there was no shortage of wondrous women. Did I forget my Betty? Dare I seek her out on “Friends Reunited”?

The English teacher Ida Maxwell was not a born teacher. She once demanded that “all those boys who are not sitting down should please stand up” which reduced us all to paroxysms of laughter. Lamont, the French master, was indeed a real terror and could swipe you in a way which would land him in jail these days. But he once told us that he had been shell-shocked during the First World War, and that was why he went 'loco'. We felt just a little sorry for him. My guess is that he might have been told later that teaching was not for him.

I hope all goes well with you, Derek.

³ Rex Davies. He was quite a character (weren't we all?). We knew him as 'Pyrtle' as displayed on the appliqué jumper he wore.—Ed.

⁴ Known by the nickname of 'Bacca' Buxton. I wonder why?—Ed

Poetry Please!

Ron Martin, Old Pavior and Colliery Manager in his earlier life, became Deputy Chairman of the High Pavement Governing Body. In his retirement he has become a successful poet with several volumes of verse to his credit, both in this country and America. He originally composed a poem called High Pavement which appeared in the Nottingham Evening Post and later in the August 2011 edition of The Pavior. He has again reviewed the fortunes of the old school and reached some unhappy conclusions. His esoteric style sacrifices metre but maintains rhyme.

High Pavement

The school was built in the nineteenth century
It was one of the finest schools in the land
The teachers had none of the modern teaching aids
Only a blackboard and a piece of chalk in their hand

In spite of this all the pupils excelled
Being influenced by the teachers' dedication
The pupils of the school were very fortunate
They enjoyed the benefits of a good education

Alas, a decision was made that the building was unsuitable
That its facilities were not up to the standard required
But the examination results could not be equalled
Most of the pupils got the grades they desired

Many of the sixth formers went on to university
Others went into the commerce industry
The fact that they had been to High Pavement
Was in fact their passport to security

The school eventually moved to a new site in Bestwood
But something appeared to be lost in the transition
The staff and pupils appeared to be the same
But somehow it lost its pride in its traditions

The grammar school eventually disappeared
As a result of the city council's reorganization of education
A sixth form college was established but has now disappeared
And is now part of the New College amalgamation

It is regrettable that the grammar school disappeared
Because its pupils played a vital part in the economy of the city
Many bright boys were denied a good education
And like many I think that is a pity

Ron Martin

STANLEY ROAD - THE FINAL ACT

We visit the old school as it emerges reborn [Pictures by Graham Wybrow]

The redevelopment of our old school building is now complete and two special visits were arranged for the Society. The first of these was on December 6th at the invitation of the site construction manager, Matt Cooper. A conducted tour was arranged for any Old Pavors who could attend and nine (fairly) stalwart members of the Society gathered at the entrance on Stanley Road. Most of them were wallowing in nostalgia and marvelling at the smart appearance of the edifice before them.

We were welcomed into the manager's office located in the former caretaker's house at



the top of Sturton Street. After the issue of safety helmets and hi-vis jackets we were taken around the various sections of the main building's new interior which to most of us looked very similar to the old building we remembered but somehow cleaner and free of the very

◀ The slightly sinister-looking members of the HP Society about to enter the bright new building by the south entrance.

L to R: Edgar Jackson; Robin Taylor; Ken Kirk (who arrived a little late and had to start without a hard hat); John Elliott (behind Ken); Noel Gubbins; Colin Salsbury; Don Woodward; Derek Robinson.

worn appearance we remembered on flooring and steps. The Hall was a splendid sight and we dallied for reminiscence before progressing up the well-known stairs to the first floor, passing the Mistresses Common Room (now the Head Teacher's office suite) on the way. Some of the Forest Fields Primary School classes were now in possession and making good use of their new premises. We would hardly recognise these, now more user-friendly with carpets(!) and lowered ceilings. We spent a few minutes weighing up the new layout of the west side of the



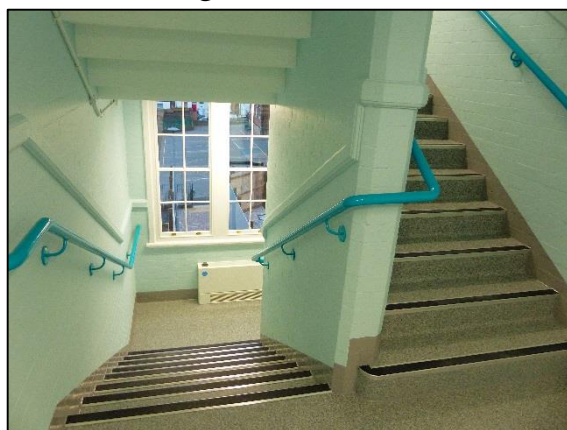
▲ One of Graham Wybrow's tricky shots with *three* exposures forming a panoramic view. This is actually the south end of the Hall and the end wall appears to bulge towards you although we all know it's really quite flat. However, the view shows off the beautiful decorative finish now approaching completion.



top corridor and discussing with our guide the splendid views over the Leen Valley towards Wollaton Hall, now clearly visible in the afternoon sun.

The next stage was to mount the last flights of the stairs leading to the place we always knew as Room 12 at the very top of the north wing. Sadly, some of us had to puff and pant a little on this stage but no doubt the vigorous youngsters we saw from time to time would conquer these heights with ease. A

traverse of that taboo territory, the roof platform enable us to take note of the beautiful new cupola (or spire) on the ridge. Then we continued to the southern wing's summit that was once Bill Benner's Art Room. Everywhere gleamed with new paint and redecorated surfaces. All corridor floors and stairs were totally concealed with a hard-wearing light green covering and non-slip safety treads were fitted to all stair edges. We gazed in awe at this palatial splendour, thinking of its rather dowdy condition in our times. There was lots to see and we envied the new occupants as we avidly examined every room. We departed filled with joy that our old building was raised to a better level than it had ever possessed before.



‘Good luck to all who sail in her!’ was the general consensus.

‘What was it like in those days?’

The second visit took place on January 20th when Noel Gubbins and Colin Salsbury were invited by Sue Hoyland, head teacher of the Forest Fields Primary School, to join a history group of nine and ten-year-olds to talk about the days when *we* were pupils at the school. We had been provided with a formidable page of questions which the youngsters were going to ask and we prepared ourselves accordingly. We were welcomed by Jo Keely, the deputy head, who was leading this history project and introduced to a circle of about nine or ten young enquirers who introduced themselves, one by one. We responded and told them who we were and how old we were, to the dropping of several jaws and sharp intakes of breath. You could see in their eyes the thought; ‘As old as *that!*’

Then the grilling began. We fielded the pre-notified questions without much trouble and pencils were busily deployed to record everything (?) we said. Then hands were waved as supplementary questions were asked. These were endless and we had to be a little selective lest we would be there until midnight. Here are some of the questions and the answers we gave (reduced to their bare essentials):

What is it like to be back in your old school? Good. Much nostalgia after 65 years.

Was the structure of the school the same now as it was then? Yes, basically, but then there was no lift(!) and the toilets were outside the building.

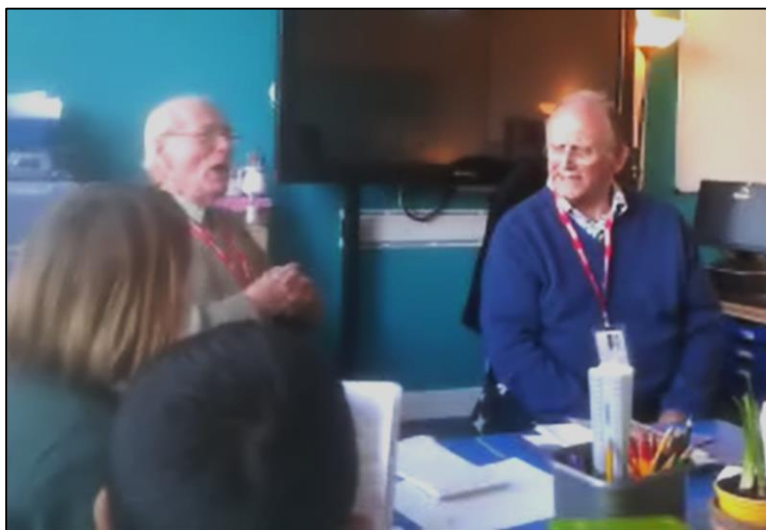
What has changed about the architecture? Not much externally because it is a ‘listed building’ (we explained). Inside we had noticed there are now false doorways in the main hall.

Did you have girls at the school and where did they enter? Sadly, not in our time. We explained the migration to the Manning School in 1931. (We mentioned the 'Girls' entrance).

Did you have school meals here? Well, not in the school. WNG explained about the 'Palm Court' centre in Palm Street. He didn't like the meals so went (a long way) home for lunch. CHS recalled the former meals centre at St Simon's Hall in Russell Road (still there in a new role).

Did you have fun? Oh yes! Lots of fun. Pranks on other boys, sometimes on the teachers.

What was your timetable like? Start 9.00 am, assembly till 9.30(ish). Lessons lasted $\frac{3}{4}$ hour, sometimes double $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Lots of moving about between different rooms. Games; with rugby, cross country running (Strelley), athletics, cricket etc for a whole afternoon.



Which was your favourite lesson? WNG chose 'History' CHS chose 'Chemistry'
Who was your favourite teacher? WNG chose 'Stanley Middleton' CHS chose 'W E Morris'. We both gave our reasons.

In passing we mentioned the School Song, *in Latin, you know* (heads nodded wisely). So we flung back our heads and *sang* it to them! Slight alarm turned to amusement and wonder.

◀ The bemused pupils of Forest Fields School listen amazed to the unusual sounds of *Carmen Paviorum* sung by a couple of most unusual singers.

'Best history lesson we've ever had!' was the unanimous verdict.

Noel Gubbins and Colin Salsbury

*Finally, this letter in the **Evening Post** deserves to be read by Old Paviors everywhere.*

FEELING THE LOVE FOR HISTORIC SCHOOL BUILDING

Regarding the £6.4m revamp of the former High Pavement Grammar School building (Post February 1) Councillor David Mellen is wrong when he refers to these premises as an 'old, unloved building'. Old, decrepit and neglected maybe, but unloved? Never.

Myriads of Nottingham's finest passed through her hallowed portals and over 1,500 feet daily plodded the well-worn (now restored) stairways of their alma mater.

Together with a small group of alumni, I was privileged to enjoy a guided tour of the revamped building in early December. My years there ended in 1940, the others' a decade later but we all could feel the memories flooding back, as though it were yesterday.

Comparable school buildings – Mundella, Henry Mellish and Our Sister Manning – have disappeared without trace.

Stand anywhere in the Forest area and look to the skyline and there she stands foursquare, sturdy dependable and most certainly not unloved. Many thanks to the City Council for resuscitating her.

Edgar Jackson Main Street, Gunthorpe

Reproduced here by courtesy of the Evening Post

PUB LUNCH NEWS

The Nag's Head Woodborough

A revival of our Pub Lunches after a slack period in the early autumn took us to the Nag's Head, Woodborough on November 20th. We have previously enjoyed similar events in this pleasant hostelry and some 30 guests assembled for a convivial drink and to sample the tasty fare, while enjoying an opportunity to chat about old times. The lunch was organised

by Noel Gubbins.

Pub lunch regulars Don Woodward and Stan Rhodes with their ladies at the Nag's Head ►



The Christmas Pub Lunch 2013



▲ Arnold chats to Alison Fisher

▼ The Grand Paviers Choir!



The Pub Lunchers gathered at the Welbeck Rooms, (where we hold our Annual Dinners) for a Christmas Lunch on December 16th, also organised by Noel Gubbins. The manager had put one of the smaller and cosier carpeted rooms at our disposal and 39 guests sat down to a well prepared traditional menu. Fewer perhaps than we had hoped but there were many unable to attend due to prior commitments.

We were particularly pleased that on this festive occasion our President, Arnold Brown, was present, accompanied by his son as guide and helper. Now confined to his wheelchair, Arnold was made most welcome and at the Chairman's invitation made a short speech. Arnold pointed out that this time he was the guest of the organisers whereas in the past it was often the other way round. He wished us well for Christmas and the New Year.

All present returned his greetings, glad to see him amongst us after an absence of some months. At the Chairman's suggestion the Paviers present all sang *Carmen Paviorum* in his honour, with great vigour and feeling.

It had been a truly memorable Christmas Lunch.

The Packe Arms, Hoton near Loughborough

A gathering of 26 members and guests took place at the **Packe Arms, Hoton**, on February 12th 2014, organised by Colin and Marjorie Salisbury.

We sat in the cosy rooms of this pub, complete with log fire, and enjoyed the warmth on a cold winter's day.

Before our meal Ken Kirk invited us to stand silently in memory of Arnold Brown who introduced the pub lunch as a feature of the Society's activities. We thought of Arnold as we enjoyed the tradition he had founded. Long may it continue.



ooOoo

HARRY J PEAKE

A few months ago The Society was approached by Dr J.V Field for details of the late Harry J Peake's school career. It appeared that during World War 2 a person of that name had been part of the now well-known, but then highly secret, code-breaking establishment at Bletchley Park. Dr Field, who is a historian, thought this might be the HJP whose name appeared in an article in the Pavior and was anxious to learn more about *our* Harry Peake. From the Honours Boards, now at Chaucer Street, we obtained details of HJP's Oxford college for Dr Field who was then able to contact the college's administration for further details. We also supplied information, as far as we were able, about HJP's subsequent career. Since then Dr Field has continued with enquiries and sent us this short but interesting article about our former School Captain and member of staff at HP.

What Harry Peake did in WW2

Henry John (Harry) Peake (1923-1998) was educated at High Pavement Grammar School (Nottingham) and The Queen's College, Oxford (Open Scholarship 1942), where he read first Mathematics (Mods 1943) and then Physics (Hons 1944, BA awarded 1946). Peake was at the Government Code and Cypher School (GCCS), Bletchley Park from 1944 until November 1945, in the group working on non-morse messages (teleprinter traffic) and in the Japanese section. On leaving, he returned to teach at his old school.

In 1947 he went back to Queen's, completing an Honours course in Mathematics in 1949. He then became a mathematics lecturer at Marlborough College. In 1962 he was Headmaster of the new Bilborough Grammar School (Nottingham). He later became Principal of Sheffield College of Education.

My reason for writing about Peake is that, together with two American colleagues, Whitfield Diffie and James A. Reeds, both experts on cryptography, I am working on an edition of a document written at Bletchley Park in 1945 and declassified in 2000: the Report written by the 'Newmanry', the group to which Harry Peake belonged, which was led by the eminent mathematician Max Newman (1897-1984). Other people involved included Alan Turing (1912-1954), I. J. (Jack) Good (1916-2009), later a well-known statistician, and

Donald Michie (1923-2007), who became a pioneer in the field of machine intelligence (he never liked calling it 'artificial intelligence'). They worked on teleprinter ciphers and designed and used the Colossus machines.

By the time Peake joined, Newman had largely succeeded in his 1942 remit of mechanising the breaking of teleprinter messages, and by the end of April 1945 the group had 22 cryptographers, 2 administrators, 28 engineers (15 for maintenance, 13 for construction) and 273 Wrens, making a total of 325. Wrens carried out routine tasks such as typing and checking of tapes (teleprinters used 5-hole punched tape). All work required fanatical attention to detail and all staff worked eight-hour shifts round the clock. At the junior level, where the bigger picture cannot have been visible, it must have been a rather hard life, but there was no shortage of intelligent company.

Dr J V Field, b. 1943, Honorary Visiting Research Fellow, Dept of History of Art and Screen Media, Birkbeck, University of London, is a historian of science, but in the 1960s was a computer programmer, using the Cambridge University Titan (Atlas II) machine to help in designing the Anglo-Australian telescope (now operational at Siding Spring Observatory, Coonabarabran, New South Wales).

ooOoo

NAT'S NATTER

[Our Secretary takes yet another trip down Memory Lane]

Crime & Punishment.

During my time at High Pavement Grammar School, discipline was maintained by a system of 'lines' and 'detention' with no corporal punishment, but the masters had their own individual methods for supplementing the approved system.

Does anyone remember 'enjoying' Mr Bullock's 'Bike Ride'? This involved him pinching a small amount of hair/skin at the miscreant's 'sideburn' area and then rotating it round and round, causing a considerable amount of pain. If you were unfortunate to suffer this treatment you would never forget it and would think twice before incurring Mr Bullock's wrath again. Another treatment was the throwing of the blackboard duster at misbehaving pupils, which was employed by several masters, but particularly by our French master Mr Thompson who had a very accurate aim and who threw it when you were least expecting it.

Mr Dunn our science master had a very sadistic trick which was not necessarily a punishment but I remember his eyes twinkling as he suffered us all to engage in his electric shock treatment. This involved the use of an induction coil with two flying leads on the secondary coil. The whole class would be told to hold hands and the circuit would be completed by the two pupils grasping the electrodes on the flying leads. Mr Dunn would then proceed to wind up the volts until one of the class could no longer bear it and would break the circuit. The whole process would then start from scratch again until another pupil dropped out. This would continue until the last man standing would be declared the winner.

A variation would involve Mr Dunn dropping a two shilling piece and one of the electrodes in a bucket of water. He would then invite one of us to hold the other electrode and try to retrieve the coin from the bottom of the bucket, the two shilling piece being the prize if successful. I never saw anyone retrieve the coin as Mr Dunn would quickly increase the voltage if anyone looked like picking out the coin. Imagine that with today's 'Elf and Safety' obsession.

Of course most of the masters were able to maintain discipline by the respect afforded to them by their pupils but this was not so in the case of our fifth form Maths master Mr ‘Charcoal’ Black. He was very mild mannered man and would allow the less disciplined pupils to take advantage of this. His lessons would follow the accepted method of explaining a particular mathematical procedure, working through an example on the blackboard and then setting problems for us to solve from the examples in our text books. He would then invite pupils who required more help to come to the front of class where he would explain further. This would be the signal for nearly every member of the class to swarm round Mr Black at the blackboard causing mayhem, to which he was completely oblivious. One of the more mischievous class members would then remove the detention record book from Mr Black’s brief case and proceed to ‘sign off’ the counterfoils. This worked for a while until Mr Black fathomed what was happening and reported the whole class to the Headmaster, who subsequently came to class to give us a severe rollicking and we were obliged to apologise to Mr Black.

Having written this article, it would perhaps appear to readers that we were an undisciplined lot, but that was not the case. We were, generally, very conscientious, hardworking pupils and these incidents are my memories of isolated cases, spread over five very enjoyable years spent in the classical stream

Nat Gubbins.

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ARNY’S BOOK

[Arnold’s family agreed that we should continue to select suitable pieces from Arny’s Book to remind us of our old friend and how much we appreciated his company when he was with us.]

The Wedding

Came the morning of 1st April 1944, the day my life would be changed for ever, and the last day Mother would have the opportunity of shouting upstairs ‘Arnold, Arnold, (I’m unsure if she ever called me ‘Arny’) it’s half past’. In the old days of school and Hudson Veritys ‘half past’ meant ‘half past eight’, but on this morning it was ‘half past every hour up to at least ‘half past twelve’ - because, to make the time pass quicker until the magic hour of two in the afternoon - Arny had decided to stay in bed!

The anxiety caused by this, perhaps, rather eccentric behaviour, to Mother and Win, was eased upon my appearance, dressed in my RAF best blue - customary for weddings and other state occasions - and in ample time for transport to the church. The car was the taxi, used by us on special occasions, owned and driven by Mr Woodhouse, father of an old school friend and so well known to us. I really can’t imagine how the guests managed the trip to Wollaton in the absence of cars. The journey from home to Wollaton Church, and back to Bobber’s Mill for the reception was surely a problem on public buses, but in some way it was achieved. Photographs taken in the garden of Mother’s house on that day still survive, and were clearly taken by a professional photographer. The cake stood in its splendour on the coffee table, the profundity, complex and intricate nature of its scrolls a monument to the art of cake decoration which ruled before the stark, clear lines produced by today’s ‘sugarcraft’ artists. The food was less memorable, but the best obtainable in one of the darkest years of the war.

Of all the means of transport to one’s honeymoon destination I suppose the local bus must be the least exciting. We had booked a holiday of indeterminate length in the village of Barkstone, presumably on the recommendation of sister Win’s lifelong friend Ida, who lived

in the village of Plungar nearby. These two villages, little more than hamlets, were situated in the Vale of Belvoir, about ten or twelve miles from Nottingham.

Our bag (or was its bags?) packed, we made our way to the bus station, presumably by trolley bus - I am pretty sure there was no taxi involved at this stage. The Central Bus Station was situated adjacent to what was then called the New Market, and was alive with buses bound for many destinations, and mainly patronised by service personnel returning after weekend leave. The amount of alcoholic liquor consumed at the reception could scarcely account for my inclination to sleep during the journey, but surely my bride of six hours was not pleased.

Finding our honeymoon cottage was not difficult in the blackout, and the door of what proved to be that of the village wheelwright's was promptly opened, and a warm welcome extended to us into their home. They had clearly not entertained newlyweds before, but had the presence of mind to serve us a late breakfast the following morning.

This unremarkable village did not prove the most exciting venue, and after a demonstration of the process involved in constructing wheels by our host, we explored the surrounding straight, flat, rather uninteresting lanes, before returning to face the equally humdrum wartime meals. This was not conducive to an idyllic post nuptial holiday, and after two or three days we decided to return to Nottingham, and prepare for the move into our new two room home at Wollaton. I always like to tell the story that our furniture and household goods were transported by horse and cart to our new home, but the authorities will not accept this version, pointing out my tendency to elaborate and exaggerate, and gently remind me that the vehicle used was, in fact, a coal lorry - motorized! So be it - it was exciting, novel, and we were proud as we chugged our way towards our first home - albeit a share in a house belonging to comparative strangers.

We were able to complete the living room, except for some essential furniture and sundry bits and pieces, to give some semblance of home comfort. Heating was by coal fire, but the fire grate was small and somewhat inadequate for the size of room, unless supplemented by the addition of a small electric heater which we occasionally used. The living room provided a fair degree of comfort on that first evening. But not so the bedroom, which was without a bed, due to be delivered, but not yet arrived. In 1944 heating in bedrooms was almost unknown, and so, coupled with the lack of a bed, the first night in our new home did not quite come up to standard as the happiest one of our lives. An early knock on the door the following morning was that of the driver of Barker's furniture van, delivering the remaining items - bed, wardrobe - and the missing bits of the dining room.

Scarcely had we time to receive these when in hot pursuit came the dreaded telegraph boy on his red painted bike. Telegrams in wartime could only be bad news, and have one of two meanings the loss of a loved one - or a demand to return immediately from leave. The very sight of the red bike said it all. After a short five days of marriage and less than twenty four hours in our two little rooms the call had come to return to the tender care of the RAF.

What was the reason for this early recall? Where were my friends and I to be posted? Long forgotten was the old enthusiasm for flying; any posting will bring nearer the day when we must face the prospect flying in anger against our enemies, the Germans, or worse still, the Japanese. These thoughts flooded into my mind as Barbara and I prepared to say our goodbyes, in the certain knowledge that I would be leaving my comfortable billet at Hednesford, and our next meeting would be at some uncertain time in the future. Nevertheless our spirits were not low as I finally boarded the train for the now familiar journey - armed with a large piece of Herbert Taylor's masterpiece cake for my pals to sample.