

The Pavior



The Newsletter
of
The High Pavement Society
(Founded 1989)

May 2015

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: George Taylor Esq

[0115 9278474]

Committee Chair: Ken Kirk 0115 9568650

Deputy Chairman: John Elliott 0115 9266475

Secretary: Noel Gubbins 0115 9756998

Treasurer: Robin Taylor 0115 9609483

(robinatnottm@aol.com)

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

John E Mason 01509 768578

Copy for *The Pavior* may be sent to

Colin Salsbury Colin.Salsbury@outlook.com

(Please note new email address)

116 Leicester Road, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 2AQ

The HP Society website address is: www.highpavementsociety.org.uk



Faces to Remember
John Geoffrey Graham
History Master at High Pavement
1930-67

COMMITTEE-MEN'S COLUMN

[The Comment Column, originally written by our founder and former President, the late Arnold Brown, has a new title. More recently it has been penned by members of the Society's committee who have provided contributions of a more general nature, hence the change. Your Editor is once more your scribe though the other colleagues will contribute from time to time.]

You don't deserve good school buildings

The renovation at great expense of the old Stanley Road building has been necessary to accommodate the ever expanding community of our friends at Forest Fields Primary School and has been extensively reported in these pages. Those of us who used the buildings in the 1930s and 1940s well remember just how inadequate they had become for the burgeoning grammar school of those days. The buildings were bursting at the seams, with every square foot put to use for a population of 850 boys and their mentors in structures originally built for half that number. Wooden huts had been erected in the crowded site to extend classroom accommodation and eventually a pre-fabricated laboratory was added.

The whole premises were careworn (remember those steps and the hall floor?) and much of the furniture needed replacement although the school workshops performed sterling work repairing the ravages of time and vigorous usage. Toilet accommodation was abysmal.

GJR Potter, the Head, had been campaigning for improvement almost since he came to the school and had received encouragement when the Board of Education's inspectors had passed adverse comment on the state of the school buildings. Alas his pleas were falling upon deaf ears and Henry Whipple the Director of Education (no less) speaking in jest at the prize giving in 1936 said the school '*had not received its new buildings because it hadn't asked for them*'.

The editor of The Pavior (who he?) responded thus: *Now, really, Mr Whipple, this will not do. If the school has remained silent, it is because walls have mouths and stones speak with tongues. What need should there be of speech when that monument of brick with its satellite huts in Stanley Road bears such eloquent witness?* Strong stuff indeed! However, the head always had to take note of his employers' position and so he said the delay was possibly 'nobody's fault'. Maybe the new buildings were 'just around the corner'.

Alas, in the Pavior for March 1937 Mr Potter ventured to remark in his column, almost in despair: *For at least sixteen years the question of a new building for this school has been under discussion, yet nothing has been done, in spite of pressure from the Board of Education (now the Department of Education). Why? For one reason, because in this City there is very little enthusiasm for Secondary (i.e. grammar school level) education. Among the parents, old boys and a few others who know what a difference it makes to a boy's equipment for life and his material prospects, yes; beyond that, nothing at all.*

Then came the war years when development stopped but afterwards not much had changed. Finally Mr Potter, at the last Speech Day before his departure in 1947 to pastures new, let rip at the local council's neglect of our school and publicly voiced the bitter frustrations he had experience over the years.

'*Headmaster lashes council!*' was the headline next day in the *Nottingham Journal*. But it was water off a duck's back to the Chairman of the Education Committee, Walter Halls. Although he was present he pretended that he hadn't heard the criticisms.

It took another eight years before the new school at Bestwood was ready for occupation by the 'Cinderella of Education in Nottingham'. A sorry tale, indeed. **CS**

PETER WARD

We regret to announce the death of our member Peter Ward (1942-47) who died on February 14th 2015. We send our sincere condolences to his family in their loss.

ooOoo

A LOOK BACK TO THE 1950s

(Two excerpts from the pages of the Pavior Magazine –May 1959)

The Old Pavors - Old Manning (London) Society

This august body was apparently in tenuous existence in the 1950s and struggled to bring together the various old pupils of HP and the Manning School who had proceeded to careers or other activities which took them to the London area. There had always been a fatal attraction displayed between the two school communities in Nottingham and when Harry Davies became head at HP he sought to regularise and encourage suitable liaison between them. His Joint Sixth Form Society thrived from the word ‘go’. It seems that the above society sought to continue this tradition among former pupils living and working in the London area, although the catchment was much wider.

Unfortunately the article carries no mention of the names and fortunes of any Manning Old Girls but a list *was* given of former High Pavement pupils ‘in and about London’. The list also included two former members of staff of High Pavement during the 1940s who had moved to posts as headmasters of their own schools in or near London.

They were Mr WE Morris and Mr L Dawson, both chemistry teachers as it happens. Mr Dawson (‘L’ stood for Les[lie] Dawson – really!) became head of Hawes Down School in West Wickham, Kent and Bill Morris was head of the John Cornwell¹ School in Manor Park, East London.

Many names on the long list were studying at institutions of London University or at London teaching hospitals. One person however, Robin Barber—on leave from Sandhurst, is reported to be seen ‘*propped up by various parts of London after recovering from a spot of bother with a parachute jump!*’

The Dog and Bear Boat Club

On the same page as the report from the HP-Manning group, mentioned above, is a further report, also bearing the same contact address in London, concerned with the sport of rowing. (*The club title was obliquely described as relating to the Nottingham pub of that name, now Whittards coffee emporium. The connection is not explained except to recognise its popularity with the Old Pavors Rugby Club.*) A list follows of some thirteen rowers, together with their rowing clubs and events, who had followed the sport with enthusiasm.

The declared aim of the Club was to ‘co-ordinate future activities of Old Pavors crews *throughout the country*’ (my italics –Ed.). The idea was apparently to form an Old Pavors Rowing Club which could offer facilities for crews to row under the O.P. colours.

Is anyone among our readership able to recall either of these bodies and tell us what happened to them?

¹ ‘Jack’ Cornwell was a naval hero who died from wounds sustained in the Battle of Jutland when only 16. He was awarded a posthumous VC. He came from East London where his memory is much celebrated and the school (which he attended) was later named after him. They obviously knew how to pick a good headmaster.

FROM OUR READERS
FROM TONY HUSBANDS
Paviors Get Everywhere

I have been tempted to write this short account of meeting a fellow Old Pavior under somewhat unusual circumstances. At the time I was working for a scientific instrument company in Cambridge which had a thriving export business. I was employed as an applications chemist which involved me with all aspects of working with modern analytical instruments. The position also included some overseas travel in support of the export department. I should perhaps add that the meeting happened many years ago at the height of the Cold War.

We used to organize 'whistle stop' sales tours throughout eastern and central Europe. These trips typically started in late August and carried on until December and covered most of the nearest Iron Curtain countries including Poland. Unfortunately on this occasion I had drawn the short straw and as a result I had to carry out the final leg of the journey which included travelling to Warsaw, Gdansk and Szczecin. I said that I had drawn the short straw because by now the date was late November, possibly early December, and in the middle of a

Polish winter. The temperature was down to minus 10°C with a strong wind as well as considerable amounts of snow. In summary therefore this took place at a time of year and in an era where tourism was virtually unknown. It is certainly true to say you didn't travel to the Baltic Sea in winter unless you had to.

We were eating our dinner in a restaurant in (if my fading memory serves me correctly) Gdansk, but it could have been in Gdynia. The weather outside was very cold and snowy and we thought that



we were probably the only English people for many miles. Imagine our surprise when the head waiter approached us and said that there were a number of English people wishing to eat in the restaurant and would we mind if they joined us. We were of course delighted to welcome them.

I started talking to the person opposite only to find out he came from Nottingham. It transpired that he lived in an area of Nottingham that was not far from High Pavement. Further conversation revealed that we had been at High Pavement at the same time. He apparently worked for a company that was involved in hosiery machinery. They were obviously another organisation that also sold goods behind the Iron Curtain.

Unfortunately I cannot remember the name of this man but if perchance he reads this article all I can say that it was great to meet a fellow Pavior in such unusual circumstances.

My interest in analytical chemistry could probably be traced back to chemistry lessons from Mr Crossland (i.e. 'Croc') leading indirectly to my travelling extensively behind both the Iron and Bamboo Curtains during this period of my life.

(My son became convinced that I was a spy in disguise!)

Tony Husbands

FROM BARRIE STARBUCK

As a relatively new member I have spent some time trying to measure the wavelength of The Pavior in order to offer a contribution. Names and nostalgia are clearly central and I realised that for a rather unusual reason, I may have retained an above-average number of names of contemporaries, which I should perhaps feed into the system.

I left Stanley Road in 1950, a comparative unknown, and so I remained throughout a far from illustrious industrial career. My greatest educational achievement was as a long-term Register Monitor - much less messy than milk and blackboard - of the General stream during 1945-50, and I was still able to recite the entire class register well into my sixties.

I will now reattempt this party-piece as an octogenarian, and perhaps elicit a few questions and responses from fellow readers. I fear that the list is no longer complete, and might even have become interbred with the guard detail of a certain unit outside Ismailia in 1955!

Benson, Boot, Botham, Brearley, Brown, Byrne, Culley, Davies, Deacon, Disney, Dobson, Farrell, Fletcher, Freeman, Gooch, Grace, Mclean, Parr, Roweth, Spencer, Starbuck, Temple, Wagg, Waplington.

Other names I recall from the same 1945 intake, who may also be part of this register, were Geoffrey Wood, Phillip Claxton, Raymond Nutt, the Rattenbury twins, and Mick Husbands, but they could well have been science or classics wallahs, to whom we occasionally spoke.

Barrie Starbuck

ooOoo

ANOTHER SPECIALITY FROM TOMMY GEE

Our good friend and fellow member Tommy Gee has sent us this picture composed by his great niece in about 1995 as a present for Tommy's Birthday. The artist is Fleur Holden (née Hunter) who has HP links, being the grand-daughter of Ray Caulton, well known to generations of Pavors of both sites.

The drawing celebrates the successful Gee pork butchers business run by Tommy's father (also Thomas Gee) for which the main shop was located on Radford Road in the Hyson Green district of Nottingham. Most Old Pavors will know that this was next to the Forest Fields district in which our old school so proudly stood. Consequently it would be an area with which many of our older members were extremely familiar. We have seen fit to reproduce the drawing in these pages because the various lists of names around the different parts can evoke so many pleasant memories of the district that once existed in the old Hyson Green.

It may be necessary to dig out your magnifying glasses to read some of the stuff (the original is produced on a sheet of approximately A3 size) but some of us have found it both an amusing and rewarding experience. We are very grateful to Tommy for his unusual contribution.

[Interestingly, we needed to reduce the A3 drawing to this size and sought the help of a professional plan copying service but they asked £12 plus VAT! Our member Alan Bullimore was on hand and did it for nothing with a Canon Powershot, held in his rock-steady hands. Thanks AB!-Ed]

PIG TAILS

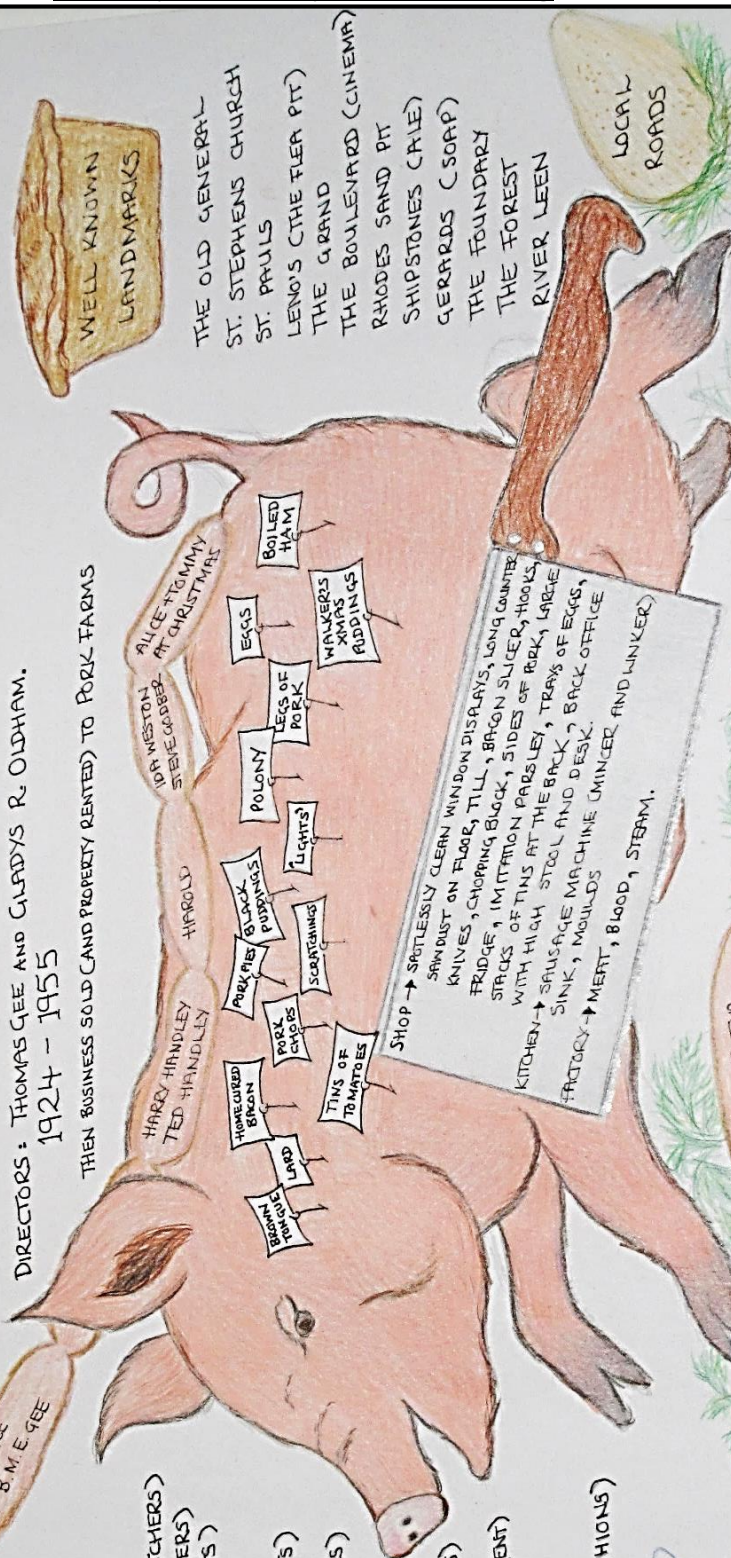
THOMAS GEE ~ PORK BUTCHER

199 RADFORD ROAD, 174 BROXTOWE LANE, NOTTINGHAM.

DIRECTORS: THOMAS GEE AND GUDYS R. OLDHAM.

1924 - 1955

THEN BUSINESS SOLD AND PROPERTY RENTED TO PORK FARMS



THOMAS GEE
B.M.E. GEE

OTHER
LOCAL
SHOPS
1924-1955

POLKEY'S CORPOSITE PORK BUTCHERS)
BLAYS (FRUIT AND FLOWERS)
MAYPOLE (DAIRY PRODUCTS)
GILLS (CHEMIST)
THE TOFFEE SHOP
WIDDOWSON (NEWSAGENTS)
CHANDLERS (DIY)
HIPPEYS (BREAD AND CAKES)
DENMAN (FRUITERS)
IFEY'S (HABERDASHERS)
STADONS (DEPARTMENT STORE)
LOVEJOYS (SEEDS, PET FOODS)
HEATHCOTES (PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT)
NIX (NEWSAGENTS)
SCRAMSHAW'S (BUTCHERS)
MERKINS (FISH)
WOODRUFFES (LADIES FASHIONS)

PROFESSIONALS

DR. BAKER (LOCAL GP)
MR. GARTHWAITE (DENTIST)
MR. SWANDER (DENTIST)
LLOYDS BANK (SUB-BRANCH ON RADFORD RD, MAIN - ALFRETON RD)
SAVINGS BANK (CORPOSITE SHOP)
LEAH MARSHALL (CLEANER AND LAYER OUT)
ERNEST TOYNTON (MUSIC TEACHER)

A REAL WINNER!

[We were very interested in this press cutting which is reproduced by courtesy of the Nottingham Evening Post for April 20th 2015, sent in by our member Graham Wybrow]

19th-century school wins award after revamp

A RESTORATION project on a 19th-century city school has received a prestigious award for its sensitive design and renovation.

The revamp of Forest Fields Primary School and the grade two-listed Berridge Centre has been completed and a commemorative plaque installed.

The project, led by Nottingham City Council, Wates Con-

struction and architects CP-MG, has now received the Valerie Gillespie award from the Campaign to Protect Rural England, which recognises the best community initiative that enhances the environment.

Sue Hoyland, head teacher of the Bradgate Road school, said: "The restoration has provided us with a building which both celebrates its past

and fulfils its purpose as a school of the 21st century."

The refurbishment included restoring the roof, creating 12 classrooms, computer room, hall and ancillary spaces.

Many of the original features were retained including wooden panels complete with graffiti from the 1940s. The Victorian wall tiles in the hall were stripped of many layers of

paint and restored to their former glory.

Fred Cook, chairman of the Campaign to Protect Rural England Nottinghamshire, said this piece of work was "extremely commendable".

He said: "We are delighted to see restoration that benefits the people who live in the area and also prevents unnecessary building on alternative sites."



This commemorative brass plaque is mounted on the wall in the Forest Fields Primary School's Reception Office. The office is located in the old school building and is well remembered as the former Swimming Bath of High Pavement School in the 1930s. *Berridge Centre* is the latterday name for the old school building.

THE CLOCK

Forest Fields School wants to know

During the recent visit to Forest Fields School by Society members and their friends we were shown an old pendulum wall clock which had been discovered during the refurbishment works in the former HP building. The school's head, Sue Hoyland, said that it was almost as old as the building itself and would be restored and renovated. It would then be put on display in a prominent position in what they now call their Berridge building, as a link between the

first occupants of the school and those of the present day.

This work has now been completed and the clock proudly displayed in the school reception office (see the previous article). The maker's name is Arth. E. Marks of Nottingham.

The school is anxious to learn more about their old clock and have asked if the Society members would be kind enough to look through their collections of memorabilia to see if any photographs might show the old clock in the background. It's a tall order but we know that Old Pavors always rise to a challenge.

At least one such photo has been known to exist, of a sports team with the clock visible behind it. Unfortunately this has since been lost. Anyone with useful information

about the clock should contact the editor who will pass it on to the Forest Fields School.



SPECIAL NOTICE

To all Pavors of the Gainsford Crescent era

High Pavement Grammar School

Gainsford Crescent

60th anniversary Reunion Dinner

is being organised for former members of the Gainsford Crescent establishment on

Tuesday August 18th 2015

At The Belgrave Rooms, Goldsmith Street, Nottingham NG1 5LB

For further details contact the organiser immediately please:

John Mason, 51A, Cumbrian Way, Shepshed, Loughborough, Leics. LE1

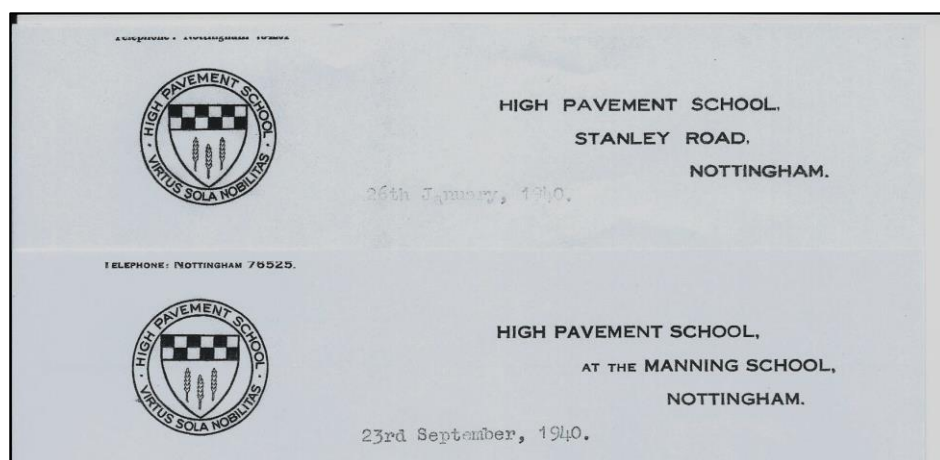
Email: j.mason.144@uwclub.net

DID YOU KNOW MY FATHER ? LEON VICTOR CLARKE

We have been in correspondence with Mr **Bob Clarke** of Endon, Staffs who is anxious to learn more about his late father who was an Old Pavior. Bob has sent us some documents which he has discovered among the possessions of Mr Clarke senior (of 62 Bernard Street, Carrington, Nottingham, HP 1935-39) which evoke considerable interest.

1) A General Testimonial, dated 26th January 1940, from the school (address Stanley Road) given to all school-leavers and signed by the Housemaster (AP Millidge) and Headmaster (GJR Potter). (NB This document is not the same as a confidential reference sent directly to a university or potential employer which of course is not shown to the subject.)

2) A Letter of Reference, dated 23rd September 1940 which concerns LV Clarke's competence in Technical Drawing, stating that he showed 'more than average competence' and signed by Harold Howe, Crafts Master.



(Unusually the letter carries the address: 'At the Manning School'. It is dated September 1940, in the period following the outbreak of war when part of the school population was housed at the Manning girls' school while their own was being equipped with air raid shelters.)

3) A circular letter relating to our forerunner *The High Pavement School Old Boys' Club*. It is a letter from KF POOL and FJ TIPPET², joint Hon Secretaries of the club and is dated 25 Oct 1946 and explains the proposals for the first Post-War Reunion Dinner of the club at the Welbeck Hotel in Milton Street (Tickets price 6/-). It also gives a long list of interests and sporting activities which they hope will be developed by the Club, including Cricket, Table tennis with/without Badminton, Music, Photography and 'Private Club Dances'. Remarkably, it does not include Rugby which was the longest surviving Old Paviors sport and still continues in the vigorous 'Paviors Rugby Club' (no connection with this Society) at Arnold, Nottingham.

Our Archivist has traced an entry in the Register of former pupils serving in HM Forces during WW2 showing that a few years after leaving school in 1939 LV Clarke of Sherwood House became a Flight Sergeant in the RAF.

If you knew (or knew of) L V Clarke at any time please contact the editor who will pass on the information to his son Bob Clarke.

² Many of us remember Fred Tippet as a gallant Captain of the school and later a teacher of Physics and Mathematics at HP from 1946 to 1950. During this time he was an inspiring leader of the school's Scout Troops. *The Old Boys' Club* later disbanded-Ed.

THE HIGH PAVEMENT SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION DINNER 2015

The 26th Annual Reunion Dinner of the Society took place on Monday April 20th 2015 at the Welbeck Banqueting Hall, West Bridgford Nottingham. Fifty four members and their guests attended. The Chairman Ken Kirk presided and the Master of Ceremonies was Robin Taylor. Also present was the Society President, Mr George Taylor. A distinguished guest was Denise Jelly, principal of High Pavement Sixth Form Academy.



Above and right and below: Some of the members and guests present. As usual there were too many to show everyone!

Below right: Dave Collins delivers a soulful melody.

After the excellent dinner the Loyal Toast was proposed by John Elliot who also read out the Society's Message of Loyal Greetings sent to Her Majesty the Queen and the reply from Her Majesty's representative. Toasts were then proposed to High Pavement to which the response was made by Denise Jelly who again expressed her appreciation for the support given by the Society to the Academy.



Ken Kirk rose to propose a vote of thanks to the staff of the Welbeck Rooms for their excellent service after which, following the usual break for general relief, Robin Taylor

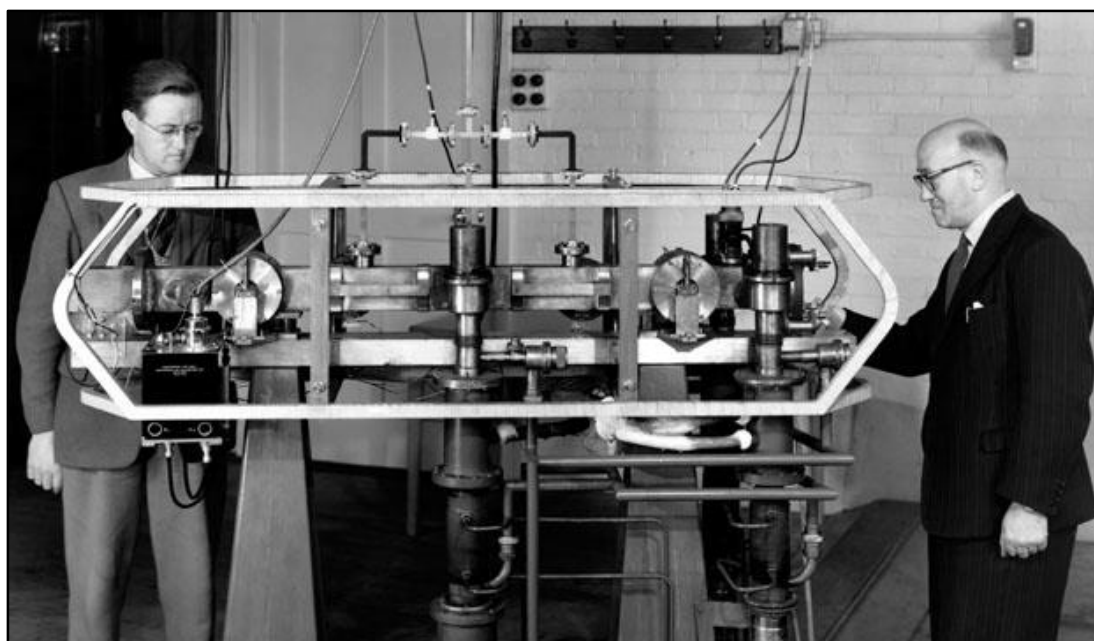
introduced our fellow member and talented musician Dave Collins who accompanied himself in delivering a splendid entertainment. Among his selection of folk songs and ditties were many that he had composed himself.

The evening closed with yet more music. as the members present formed their impromptu choir to give a fine rendition of the School Song, *Carmen Paviorum*. The rooms were still echoing to this rousing anthem as the Guests dispersed, with another collection of treasured memories.



LOUIS ESSEN—INVENTOR OF ATOMIC TIMEKEEPING

Louis Essen DSc FRS was one of our most distinguished Old Paviers and earned world-wide recognition as the developer of the 'atomic clock' which utilised the properties of atomic oscillations to provide a reliable and reproducible standard of time measurement. He utilised devices which commenced with the quartz oscillator and later the caesium beam to produce accuracy of time measurement far in excess of any previous devices. To commemorate his work this Society donated a digital quartz clock to the High Pavement Sixth Form Academy and it is on display in the academy's foyer. It was unveiled there by Dr Essen's widow in 2005. In 1935 Dr Essen wrote a most interesting and lucid article for The Pavior, the HP school magazine, on the use of quartz crystals in various technological applications, which must have been an inspiration to the school's physics students of that era. (We have a copy in our collection. -Ed.).



Dr Louis Essen (right) with his colleague JVL Parry, posing with the renowned caesium beam atomic clock. This proved superior to any other time-keeping device and became a world standard for defining the value of the second.

Ray Essen, who changed his own name to that of his father-in-law, is Louis Essen's biographer and a historian of his work. He recently contacted our secretary with this news:

Dear Noel, It has been a little while since we last communicated so I thought I'd let you know that I have published a book about my father-in-law to coincide with the 60th Anniversary of the invention of the atomic clock. The book is called 'The Birth of Atomic Time' and includes the memoirs of Louis Essen. It is available on Amazon. One of the chapters from the memoirs includes Louis' recollections of his time at High Pavement, and particularly his gratitude for the help given to him by one of the schoolmasters, Mr Crossland. Despite its title, it is quite a readable book.

I still have a number of school reports (but alas no photographs) from 1921-25. Louis was in Wollaton House and I think he may have attended High Pavement from 1920 onwards but no family record has survived from 1920. Louis certainly talked about skipping 2 years of study as his parents could not afford the school fees so he crammed his studies and started at University College, Nottingham, in 1925. I thought you would like to hear about this modest amount of publicity that the book gives to High Pavement and I'd be happy if you want to insert a line or two about Louis in The Pavior.

Best wishes, Ray Essen

**HPS MEMBER KEN OLISA TO BE THE NEXT LORD-LIEUTENANT OF
GREATER LONDON**
(PRESS RELEASE)



From:
Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street

First published: 23 March 2015

Part of:
Community and society

Mr Kenneth Olisa is appointed as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Greater London

The Queen has been pleased to appoint Mr Kenneth Olisa OBE FBCS FRSA as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London to succeed Sir David Brewer CVO CMG when he retires on 28 May 2015.

Ken Olisa is a businessman and philanthropist, the founder of 2 technology merchant banks and the first British-born black man to serve as a Director of a FTSE-100 company (Reuters). An advocate of social inclusion, he is Chair of Thames Reach, a charity working to shelter and resettle the homeless; Chair of the Shaw Trust, supporting the disabled and chronically unemployed to find work; founding Chair of the Powerlist Foundation, supporting future leaders from BME and disadvantaged backgrounds; a former Governor of the Peabody Trust; and a former Non-Executive Director of the West Lambeth NHS Trust.

Mr Olisa lives in Hampton Wick with his wife, Julia. They have 2 grown-up daughters and 5 grandchildren.

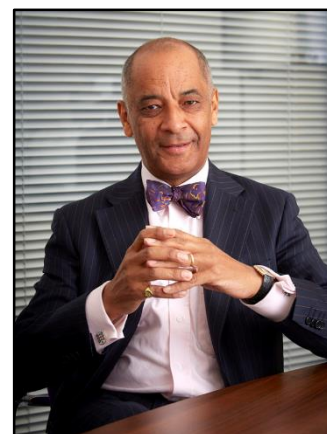
We were very pleased to receive the above Press Release announcing the appointment of our member Ken Olisa to the office of Lord Lieutenant of Greater London.

As many will know, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenants are the representatives of the Crown for each county in the United Kingdom. Men or women of all backgrounds, they are appointed by The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister.

The Lord Lieutenant of Greater London is Her Majesty's representative in Greater London, including the 32 London boroughs. It is necessarily the largest county in terms of population. (The ceremonial county of Greater London does not include the City of London, which has its own Commission of Lieutenancy.)

In an email to *The Pavior* Ken was typically modest, saying:

"Actually, the word to describe my feeling is 'humbled'. Importantly though, I am the first Old Pavior to hold this post – hence the reason for this email!" **Best wishes, Ken**



The High Pavement Society is proud of its illustrious member and Old Pavior (1963-70, an alumnus of the Gainsford Crescent Era) and we offer Ken Olisa our heartiest congratulations.

PUB LUNCH NEWS

Mapperley Golf Club



Ken Kirk gave a short vote of thanks for their splendid efforts. (Both David and Carol have now moved on from their appointment at the club).

The numbers present were somewhat larger than we usually attract for our lunches, possibly drawn by the prospect of dining in such exclusive surroundings. The friendly gathering was much enjoyed by all those present.

The next pub lunch is being organised by John Elliott and will take place on June 3rd at the Nag's Head, Woodborough, Notts where we have enjoyed several lunches in the past. Make a note in your diary now. The usual notices will be sent to regular pub-lunchers prior to this. (See below).

A successful pub lunch was organised for us at the Mapperley Golf Club by our Chairman Ken Kirk, a former member of this distinguished institution, on Thursday March 19th.

Some 40 members and their guests enjoyed the first class meal prepared under the watchful eyes of the stewards David and Carol.



Notice to all members of the society

Our pub lunches are some of the most enjoyable activities operated by the Society and the Committee would like to widen the participation to include many of those members who have not previously taken part. Each lunch is organised by one or more committee members and the secretary notifies all those on his mailing list with the details of venue, menus and cost. Usually menu choices are notified in advance. **We therefore urge anyone interested to contact the Secretary, Noel Gubbins, so they can be added to his mailing list.** We cannot send invitations to the whole membership as many of them live too far away, so it is incumbent on those who would like to share in these social events to take action—now! The number is 0115 9756998, or email williamgubbins@btinternet.com He'll do the rest.

ooOoo

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Following yet another increase in postal charges the committee of the Society have discussed the subject of the collection of membership fees without the need to involve ourselves in unnecessary costs. I am therefore asking all members who have previously paid by cheque, to make a decision to set up a standing-order thus ensuring that there is no requirement to send out payment reminders - sometimes more than once.

If you are one of the minority of members who do not have a Standing Order arrangement please help us by acting now to set up your account in order that your subs are paid when they become **due on July 1st**. Just phone or email me for a form and, once it is returned, you won't need to be bothered again. My details are at the front of this issue.

Robin Taylor (Hon. Treasurer)

ooOoo

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. Unlike the piece we selected for our last issue (again in his inimitable style) describes his experiences on the dance floor and views about modern dancing.]

The Light Fantastic

At the beginning of the war activity by bombing and threat of bombing interfered very little with the entertainment industry - hardly called an industry, but rather a series of what would now be termed 'private enterprises'. One of the most flourishing of these was the Dancing School universally known as Hanford and Richards. All 'respectable' young men - not to mention girls - of my generation were encouraged to learn to dance. Activities in a dance hall were very different from the displays provided by the interpretations of today's ubiquitous 'Pop' music.

Every caper was performed to a formal pattern and in unison with one's partner. The foxtrot, quickstep, waltz, tango and possibly rumba were the order of the day, and these must be taught, preferably by a professional instructor, and practised until sufficient skill was acquired to execute them in public. And so it was to Hanford and Richards that all good young boys and girls were consigned by their parents soon after entering their teenage years.

Of course, the object of the exercise in the eyes of all of us was to meet a desirable young person of the opposite sex, but this aspect was only discreetly discussed. The premises of the Dance School were divided into two rooms. The main, and larger one, was designated for beginners; the second, smaller, area was for more advanced exponents. There was no membership or registration - the class on each evening took all comers. Boys and girls gathered, sitting around the perimeter of the dance floor and quietly eyeing up the possible partners for the evening, for, once having made an initial choice couples were saddled with the same person for the whole session. Inevitably the most attractive and presentable boys got the pick of the bunch among the girls, and bashful, retiring Arny made do with the leftovers.

Once the couples were arranged, the business of serious instruction began. Music was always provided on a gramophone by courtesy of Victor Sylvester and his Orchestra, the universally accepted leader in Ballroom Dance Music, but we were all arranged in suitable positions and the precise movements of the feet demonstrated and copied by all before this pre-eminent 'Strict Tempo' music began. First a few halting steps, then followed by a longer dance perhaps the whole record would be played - not a long play, but a short 78 rpm disc of the old scratchy type.

The Dancing School taught us not only the art of ballroom dancing, but also some degree of social skill, and even the possibility of 'dating' a nice girl for future adventures. The real stars of the evening were Miss Hanford and Mr Richards who bestowed their charm and skills on each of us as the evening progressed by personally demonstrating the intricacies of each dance.

Whatever goes on in 'Dance Halls' in the 1990s (when this was written) remains a mystery to me. I appreciate these places are no longer so termed, but the general term 'Night Club' is used to cover all similar establishments, and they are hardly run in the manner remembered from the 1940s, rather involving extremely loud and tuneless music, most probably drugs of one sort or another, mindless jogging up and down, and, who knows, all sorts of nameless depravity performed in the name of free expression.

But in 1940 a slightly more advanced activity was that provided by the more commercial and larger Dance Halls of which there were three in Nottingham the Victoria, The Greyfriars Hall and, the principal and more highly respected Palais de Danse. About this time I frequented, usually on Saturday nights, one or other of these, some of the time alone, but very often with a partner.

Smith's Cleaners was the shop next door to Hudson Verity (where I worked) and shared the rear of the premises with us. For this reason I was thrown into contact with two of their female employees. Their names are now forgotten, but on occasion I escorted both to the Palais and other venues, and escorted them home after the dance. The younger one to catch her bus which departed for West Bridgford, and the other, who was an older and much more mature person and always pointedly reminded me that her boyfriend was in the forces, to her home over a shop on St. Anne's Well Road. Both trips involved a long walk home to Bobbers Mill Road in the blackout, a long one, but not involving any concerns about mugging or other terrors of the night.

In the dance hall the procedure was very similar to that at Hanford's but, of course, there was no instruction and the music was provided by a live orchestra who maintained a much more vigorous presentation than Victor Sylvester's accompaniment. Many of the girls danced with each other, but the opportunity for boys to dance with the girl of their choice was always present after the initial accepted approach of 'May I have this dance' - which deteriorated over the years to a brief 'Will yer?' Now, I guess, this has been completely dropped because formal dancing partnership has given way to a virtually solo performance with only the most tenuous connection between boys and girls who had previously been the closest of partners.

ooOoo