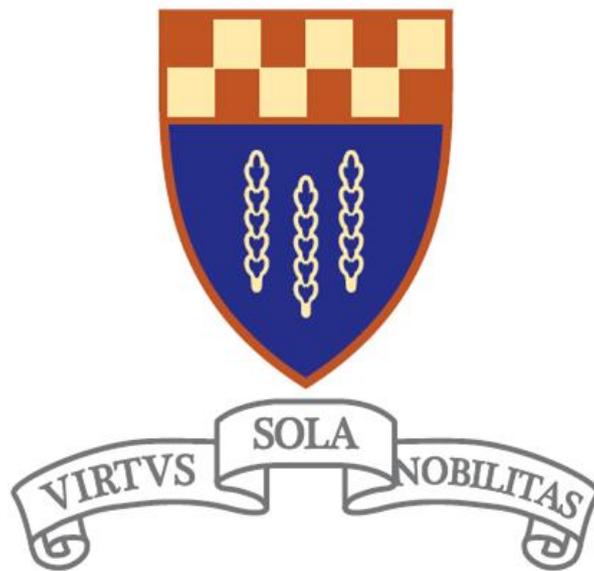


The Pavior



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

November 2017

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!

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Copy for *The Pavior* may be sent to
Colin Salsbury: colin.salsbury@outlook.com



**Faces to Remember
Raymond Caulton
Sometime Captain of Rugby at HPGS and Old Pavior
Physical Education and Sport Master at High Pavement
1950-73**

THE COMMITTEE-MEN'S COLUMN

A Timely Change

Although we have quite a large membership they are scattered far and wide (e.g. Alaska Canada, Australia, Belgium, France, Cyprus...) but a more modest number reside in or near Nottingham and are obviously the ones most able to attend meetings in person. Also, due to the 'ravages of time', we have lost about 10% of our membership in the last year, a process we regret but cannot alter. Over the past few meetings this has raised problems in achieving the necessary quorum of 25 members to execute the business of the Annual General Meeting.

For this reason a motion was passed at the recent 2017 AGM, (aided by a number of proxy votes) that **the quorum requirement be reduced to 15 members**. This should simplify our operations and allow business to be put in hand without the difficulties mentioned above

New Committee member

At the recent AGM we were pleased to welcome the offer from **Malcolm Pilkington** to join the Society's Committee. His assistance will be most useful in conducting the affairs of our organisation.

Our New President

As is reported on page 10 of this issue **Ken Kirk** has been elected to the office of President of the High Pavement Society, in succession to the late George Taylor.

Ken well deserves this honour, having served as Chairman of the Society's organising committee for many years. He will continue to officiate in this role, in addition to his Presidential duties.

New Title for High Pavement

Following the recent reorganisation in FE the institution will be known as

<p style="text-align: center;">Nottingham College High Pavement Sixth Form and International Centre</p>
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EDITORIAL

We have been pleased to welcome **Brian Ferrill** as a new contributor to our 'End Piece' columns. Readers will recall that for several years this space was graced with extracts from '*Army's Book*', the recollections of our founder member and President, Arnold Brown. We have been pleased to continue the column with contributions from other members, including the redoubtable Tommy Gee who is resting for a while. I have found Brian's style and subject matter able to generate echoes of *Army's Book*—I hope you will agree.

Our second innovation is seen on page 8 under the heading '**Pictures from the Past**' where we display old photos sent in by readers like Richard Beale (page 7).

Our former member Peter Bentley, who sadly died in 2014 had been in possession of a panoramic photo of the senior school taken in 1948. In 2006 he had carefully photographed it section by section so it could be displayed more effectively. Alas, for some time the prints had been lost in our filing system but now they have come to light and the results are now to be put on display over the next few issues of this newsletter.

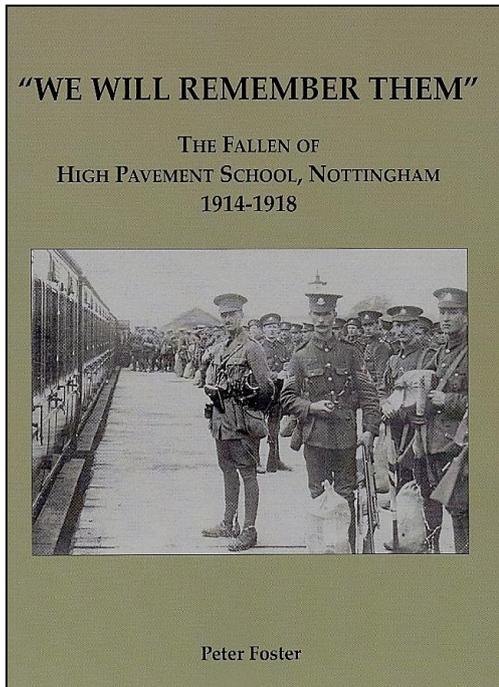
Colin Salsbury

THE HPS BOOK VENTURE – OLD PAVIORS IN THE GREAT WAR

Sponsored by the High Pavement Society

The names of the Somme and of Passchendaele are burned into the popular memory, and despite them having taken place a hundred years ago, they still resonate with the public. High Pavement, like most other secondary schools of the period, saw an enormous sacrifice during those years, losing ninety-three of its boys and masters. They took part in campaigns across the globe, from France and Flanders to Italy, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey and East Africa. They also fought in the air and at sea.

Until now the lives of those who died have remained generally unknown and



unremarked. However, using the School's War Memorial plaque as a starting point and working through archives and libraries across the world, Peter Foster, himself an Old Pavior, has gathered biographical material on the dead, and for the first time it is published in book form, entitled 'We Will Remember Them', as a tribute to their sacrifice.

The book also looks at the background of pupils in 1914 and gives a brief explanation of the campaigns in which they were involved, together with a bibliography which enables the reader to pursue aspects of the war they may especially interest them.

Copies can be obtained through the High Pavement Society at a cost of £10.00 plus £3.00 p&p. The number of books is limited, and they are already selling well, so don't hesitate — send for your copy today!

Just send your **Name, Address, and Postcode** to **The Treasurer, The High Pavement Society, Robin**

Taylor c/o 190 Kenrick Road, Nottingham NG3 6EX enclosing a **cheque for £13.00**, made payable to 'The High Pavement Society'.

[The Society intends to make a supply of the volume available at most of its social events in the near future, when the book will be available at a cost of £10.00 only.]

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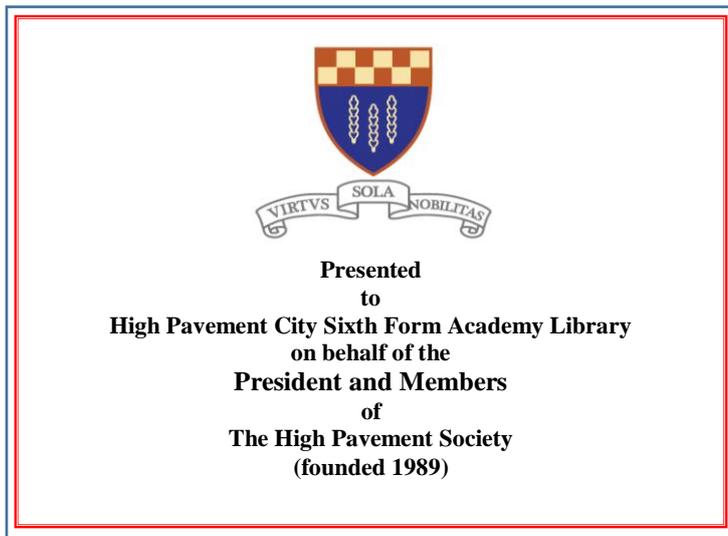
PROPOSED PRESENTATIONS TO THE HIGH PAVEMENT ACADEMY

A proposal has been made by some of the membership that they should present two books to the library of High Pavement Academy. These are:

1. The Recently published Historical volume 'We Will Remember Them'.
2. The biographical work by Ray Essen 'The Birth of Atomic Time' about the work undertaken by his father-in-law, the distinguished physicist and Old Pavior Dr Louis Essen F.R.S, in creating the atomic clock.

The cost of these books is being borne by the donors.

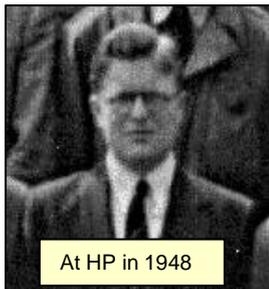
Bearing suitable bookplates as shown these volumes will be interesting and useful additions to the Academy's library and afford the opportunity for readers to learn more about their predecessors in the history of High Pavement. Further details will be available in our next issue.



◀ A facsimile, approximately half size, of the Book Plate to be inserted in the two volumes described above

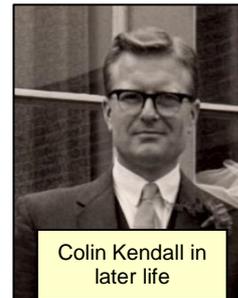
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APPEALS FOR HELP - 1. From Peter Kendall
Re Colin Kendall, Old Pavior



At HP in 1948

Peter Kendall is seeking to obtain information about the life and times of his father the late **Colin Kendall** who attended High Pavement in the 1940s. By profession a Nottingham teacher, he passed away in 1973, aged 42. Peter would like to hear from anyone who might have known him, especially in his later years. *[Peter can be contacted via the editor.]*



Colin Kendall in later life

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APPEALS FOR HELP - 2. From Hedley Versey

[Mr Versey is not a member but has made this appeal by contacting our website. We are pleased to display it on these pages. Please reply with any useful information, via the Editor]

Dear Friends My name is Hedley Varlow Versey; I am now almost ninety-nine, living alone and still computer-literate! I attended High Pavement between 1930 and 1935. High Pavement 'Secondary' school was then in Stanley Road under a brilliant head master we knew as 'Gilly' Potter. I've had a remarkable life, triggered by the foresight of Mr. Potter in providing me with a science education.

I wonder whether an old class-mate named SWIFT who was in my class in the science stream between 1930 and 1935 is still alive? I should love to contact SWIFT, to whom I owed an apology, before we die. Can anyone help? Sadly, it may now be too late. **Hedley Versey**

FROM OUR READERS
FROM BOB STUDHOLME

I am writing with reference the photograph in the August issue of *The Pavior* of the 1963-64 cross-country team sent in by Mike Scholey but it is with considerable sadness that I do so. However, I am pleased to be able to put names to some of the lads in the picture.

Back row, 4th from the left was Bob Hudson. Bob was quite a good all-round sportsman and in the classroom showed a great propensity for modern foreign languages. Taught by Alan (Fred) Millidge and mentored by him Bob went off to one of the more highly thought of universities to read Modern Languages.

The lad seated on the right is Clive Rowe. He lived on Bagnall Lane at Basford and had a strong interest in all sports. He was a regular 1st. XI cricketer without being a strong batsman or bowler. Lots of other lads would query his inclusion in the 1st team but John Dodd was absolutely clear as to why he was included. John Dodd said he was worth his place because he was a very sound fielder and could be guaranteed to prevent the opposition from scoring runs in any game. He was described as an intuitive fielder and could stop more runs than he would get himself. A good team man. Also clearly good enough to do his bit in the cross-country team.

The saddest aspect of the photograph is seeing the face of Derek Perry. I would walk to school from Highbury Vale, Bulwell with Ian Duncanson and Eric Dobb, up to Bestwood Estate and we would collect Derek Perry on the way. We sometimes encountered Stan Middleton when he lived on Broomhill Road.

Derek and I were good pals with a strong interest in athletics though I was a thrower/sprinter and Derek was an 880 yards competitor. We both attended the English schools championships each year from our fourth year upwards. Derek came sixth in 1964 in the 880 yards. He then left school to go up to Oxford to read classics. To this day I haven't seen any of the lads in the photo—except for Derek Perry.

I was at Loughborough Colleges and played rugby for them and was in the athletics team. In the summer of 1967 we had an athletics match versus Oxford University (and, I believe, Birmingham University). I looked for Derek Perry but he was not on the competitor's list. However, as secretary of the Achilles Club¹, he was present and we had the opportunity to do some serious 'catching up'. After swapping athletics stats and future sporting hopes he told me that he was getting married in the coming August. His future wife was also up at Oxford and I was delighted for him as he so happy about his forthcoming marriage. I wrote a short note home to my parents (we had no telephone) that evening to give them the news. They too expressed their delight with a return letter.

Finals finished, I got a job laying railway lines to earn some money before I started teaching in the September. One evening I arrived home to find my parents looking very fraught. My Dad stood holding a copy of the Nottingham Evening Post. He simply said, 'Bad news' and passed me the newspaper where the main story on the front page told the story of Derek's unfortunate death². I was stunned.

Looking at the cross-country photograph, even now, I feel sadness over Derek's passing in those circumstances—but I am also filled with regret that all the cross-country runners from the HPGS photograph have never crossed my path since I left school. **Bob Studholme (1956-64)**

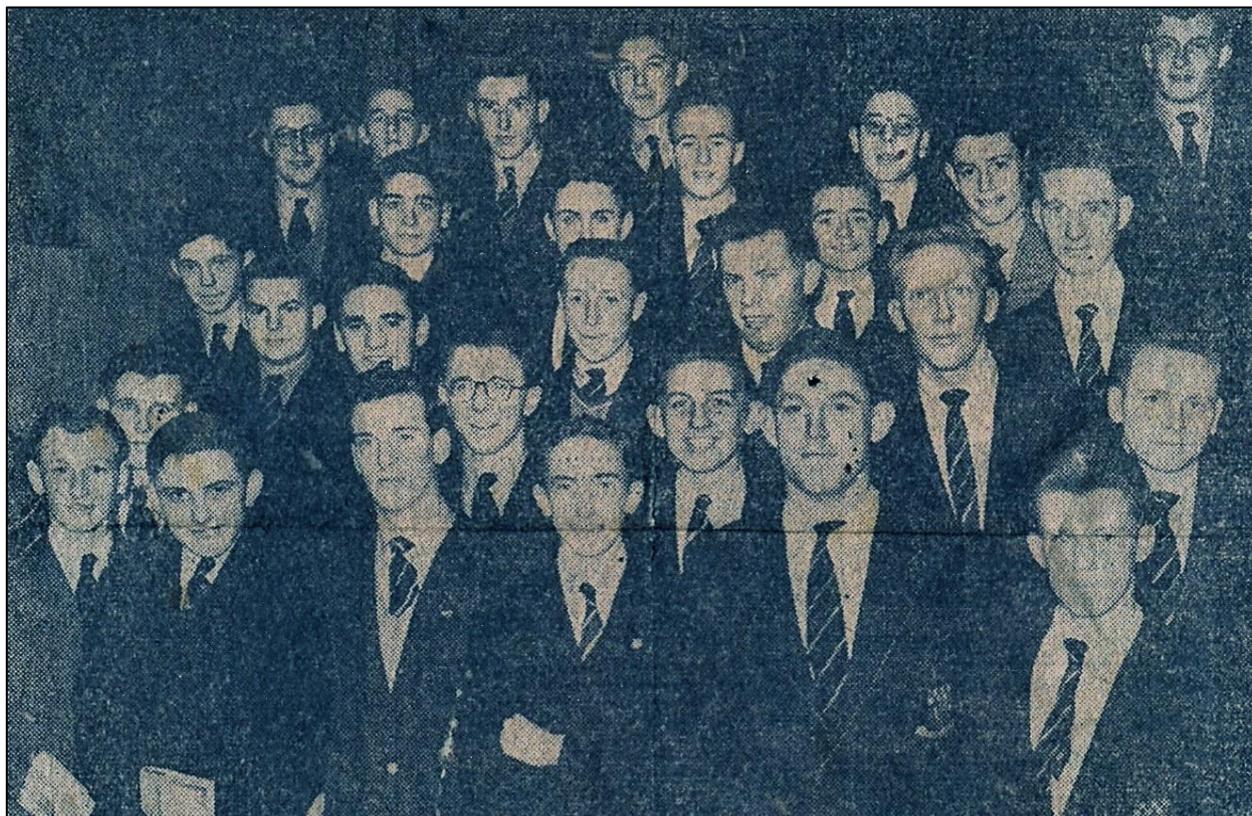
¹ Oxford University's Sports and Athletics Club

² Readers of the August issue will recall that he was accidentally electrocuted on his honeymoon.

PICTURES FROM THE PAST
1 - FROM RICHARD BEALE

[The photo below was sent by Richard Beale and is reproduced from a cutting in the Nottingham Evening Post. It was headed 'High Pavement School Prizewinners' and is dated 1953. The presentations were made by Mrs W C Cooper, wife of Air Commodore W C Cooper, (a prominent local industrialist). Interestingly the article below was headed 'High Pavement May Move Next Year', saying that the new playing fields would be in use in September 'Next Year' with the school moving a year later in 1955. -Ed.]

Dear Colin, Herewith the photo I promised you. Here are a few details:



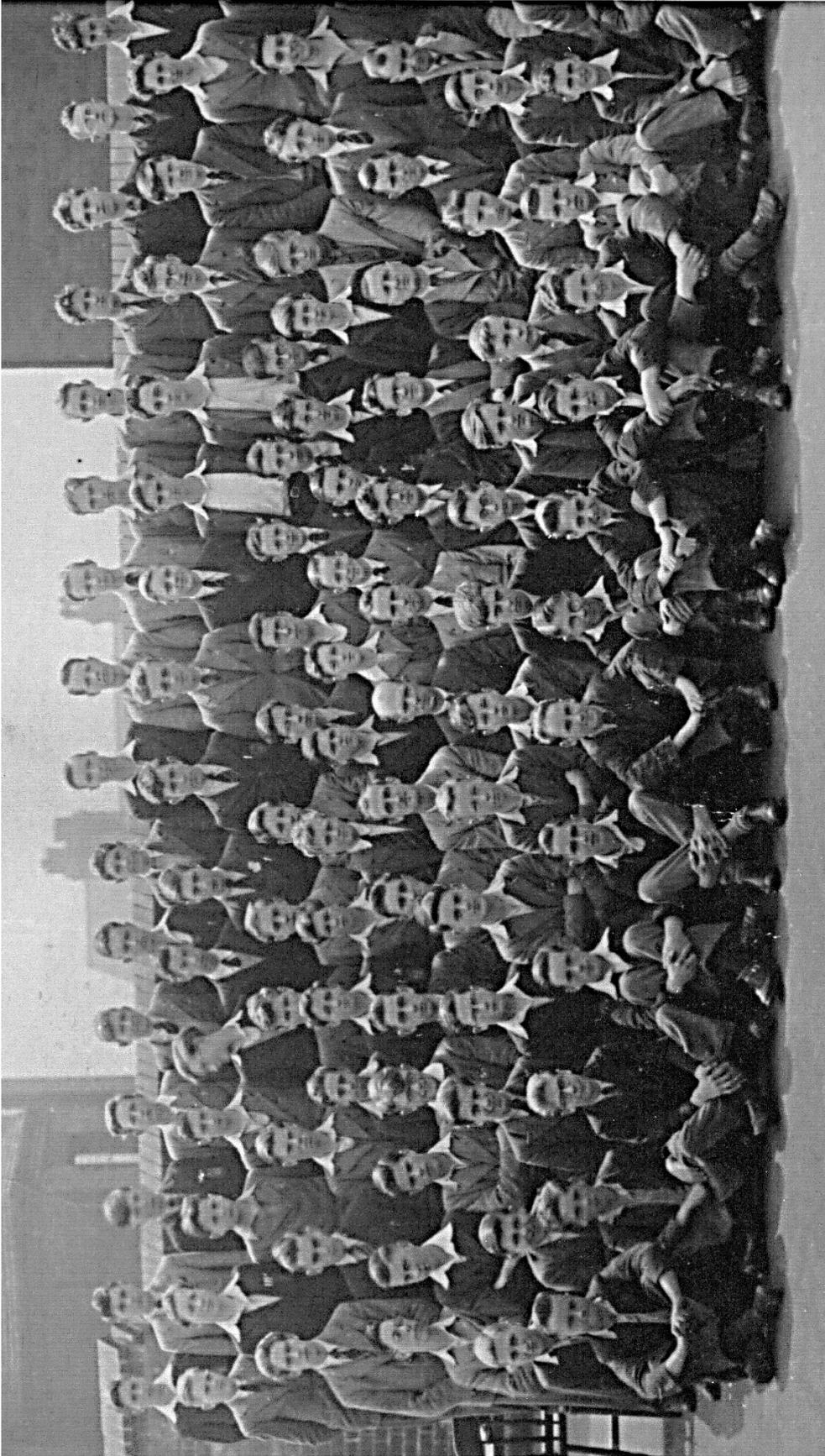
On the front row are Scott; Butler; (name unknown); myself. (I am the one with the dot on my forehead - courtesy of my grandson!). By my right shoulder is Brian Knight and John Bird is at the right edge of the photo. Peter Bowles was present but was talking to someone and therefore not in the photo but he received the 5th Form prize for Drama!!

I received the German prize (two books entitled *Heute Abend* with the school badge stamped on their covers) – I still have them. I was a cadet in the Sherwood Foresters Army Cadet Force and won the Sword of Honour as a corporal. It was presented by the oldest living Sherwood Forester, aged 93, wearing his dark green ceremonial uniform. I served for 37 years in The Gunners³, including 20 years as an army commando based in the Royal Citadel in Plymouth and Malaya.

My best wishes to all in the High Pavement Society. **Warmest regards, Richard**
[Richard has kindly sent two copies of the cutting which are available for Old Paviers who may be interested. Contact the editor for details.]

³ The Royal Artillery for those who aren't familiar with this title -Ed

PICTURES FROM THE PAST
2 - FROM THE LATE PETER BENTLEY



This group photograph shows part 1 (of 5) carefully copied by the late **Peter Bentley** who died in March 2014. As members may recall these group photos were panoramic and the print was about 3 feet long! For this reason it would be pointless to display the whole print filled with Lilliputian scholars, so we are showing it section by section, from left to right, over the next few issues. We hope memories will be kindled among our older members of their friends from that era.
(NB your editor is 9th from the left on the back row!)

THE HIGH PAVEMENT SOCIETY PRIZE AWARDS 2017

Each year the Society presents substantial cash prizes to four outstanding students of High Pavement Sixth Form Academy. This year the event took place on Tuesday 12th September at 12 noon at the Academy in the presence of the Faculty Director, Denise Jelly and members of staff. The Society was represented by Chairman Ken Kirk and committee members Robin Taylor and Colin Salsbury, who were warmly welcomed by Denise Jelly.

Each of the four students received a cheque for £150, a sum intended to assist them with the next stage of their education.

The award recipients were as follows:

The High Pavement Society Award for Excellence was won by **Abigail Filer** as the highest achieving female student, with grade A* passes in Biology, Psychology and Sociology at 'A' Level. She is to study Genetics at the University of Leeds.

The High Pavement Society Award for Excellence was won by **Hosan Williams** as the highest achieving male student, with grade A* passes in Biology and Chemistry, a grade A pass in Mathematics, all at 'A' Level and a grade A pass in Further Mathematics at 'AS' Level. He is to study Chemical Engineering at the University of Leeds.

The Stanley Middleton Memorial Award for Literary Achievement was won by **Emily Ekins**, with a grade B pass in Creative Writing, grade C pass in both English Literature and English Language, all at 'A' Level. She is to study English Literature at the University of Reading.

The Ken Bateman Award for Engineering was won by **James Shelton** with a grade C pass in Chemistry, an A* pass in Mathematics, a grade A pass in Physics, all at 'A' Level, and a grade A pass in Further Mathematics at 'AS' Level. He is to study Engineering at the University of Nottingham.



The Winners and their Award presenters

1. **James Shelton** with **Colin Salsbury**.
2. **Hosan Williams** with **Robin Taylor**.
3. **Abigail Filer** with **Ken Kirk**.
4. **Rachel Sowter** with **Ken Kirk**.
(Unfortunately **Emily Akins** could not be present but arranged for her friend, Rachel Sowter, to receive the award on her behalf.)



Ken Kirk offered his sincere congratulations to all the award recipients and wished them well in their future careers, pointing out that they were now members of the High Pavement Society, and he hoped they would continue to remain in contact during the next few years.

These awards are possible thanks to the **High Pavement Society's Education Fund**. Originally established with an initial contribution from the Society's General funds the Education Fund has, for several years, been supported by the generosity of individual members of the Society, often anonymously. The Committee are looking to continue support in this way to the students in the coming year and we would welcome further donations from any member of the Society. Contributions can be sent to the Hon.Treasurer whose details are at the front of this issue.

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TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS

The Society has many among its ranks who are, or were, holders of professional appointments and were in receipt of regular issues of technical and professional journals. If any of these are still in your possession and are not out of date they will be gratefully received by the Library of High Pavement Sixth Form Centre. Some have already been donated in this way and have been avidly read by students working on Projects. If you have anything to spare please contact the Editor, or approach the library in Chaucer Street direct. Your help will be appreciated.

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THE 2017 AGM AND QUIZ NIGHT

This popular event in the Society's calendar took place on Monday September 25th in our usual venue, the Welbeck Rooms, West Bridgford, organised by John Mason for the committee. The Society was pleased to welcome some 42 guests, including 24 Society members. We had expected to see among us the usual delegation from the staff of the High Pavement Sixth Form Academy but they were unable to attend. We were however pleased to welcome our member **Phil Ward** and his lady who live in faraway Devon but who were visiting the Midlands on family business.



◀ Our visiting member Phil Ward and his wife, enjoying the event.

Following the usual muster in the bar the members were marshalled into the adjoining assembly room leaving our guests to enjoy a further chat. Our Chairman, Ken Kirk, who so deftly conducted past meetings (which lasted a mere 20 minutes if we were lucky) was unable to attend until later. Instead the chair was taken by Colin Salsbury, a member of the committee.

As described on page 3, tonight was especially important because the Society needed to amend its constitution to lower the number required for a quorum. Although we numbered a slightly unsatisfactory 24 members present, we had received several proxy votes from members unable to attend and the quorum requirement was satisfied.

The main resolution, that we reduce the required number for a quorum to 15 members, was passed unanimously. Future meetings will thus be able to operate without difficulty. Other business was quickly completed, including a proposal from the floor that the Society should

invite Ken Kirk to accept the vacant office of President of the Society. This was passed with acclamation. The meeting also considered the matter of the Society's *book venture* which is described on page 4.

The AGM then closed and we rejoined our guests in the dining room.

We all now enjoyed one of the Welbeck's splendid cold buffets, followed by the draw for our usual **raffle** conducted by the charming and energetic **Margaret McClean**. A sum of £90 was raised for our funds.



◀ A view of our gathering when the buffet was about to close. The teams prepare for the quiz.

We then formed our teams for the penetrating, sometimes baffling, **quiz** directed by Noel Gubbins, in which the team led by Dave Marriott was triumphant.

Much hilarity accompanied the inevitable debates about the correct answers and suitable prizes were distributed to the winners.

Following the quiz, Ken Kirk spoke briefly to express his pleasure at accepting his appointment as the new President of The

Right: A happy reunion occurred when Pat and Mike Watkinson met Geoff Thomas, an acquaintance whom Pat had not seen since her school days.
Below left: The singing of *Carmen Paviorum* accompanied by John Jalland on the piano.



High Pavement Society to which the assembled company delivered prolonged applause.

The evening ended in the usual style with a rendition of *Carmen Paviorum* by the assembled Old Paviors, accompanied by our member



John Jalland on the piano. It made a big difference to the singing!

It had been a very effective AGM followed by a most enjoyable social evening, as all present would agree.



Carol and John Adkin with John Mason, organiser of the feast.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2017 Christmas Pub Lunch (Mapperley GC) Monday December 11th
12 noon for 12.30 pm Music by John Jalland

2018 Annual Reunion Dinner Monday April 23rd

2018 AGM and Quiz Night Monday September 24th

Please consult your diaries to make sure these dates are entered as priorities

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PUB LUNCH NEWS

Since our August newsletter we have not arranged any of the usual pub lunches but concentrated on the AGM and Quiz night. However, on November 2nd, just before we were preparing this issue for publication, the Society made a visit to Ye Old Bridge Inn at Oxton, a venue we had not used before.

Ye Olde Bridge Inn, Oxton.

A party of 32 members and their guests arrived at this hostelry for a lunch, organised by John Mason.

At 12 noon prompt we were cosily accommodated in a snug annex of the pub's dining room and soon settled to chat over our pre-prandial drinks.

We were pleased to welcome some new faces to the pub lunch scheme in the shape of Peter Preston, Howard Green and John Astill (pictured below, L to R). They immediately began to reminisce, which is what these events are for (among other things like eating and drinking).



The waitress arrived and knelt at the feet of John Mason (yes, she really did—but only so she could speak to him more easily). She then agreed to



take a few photos of the gathering, some of which are shown.

The orders were taken for our starters and the young lady then disappeared from view. Unfortunately these comestibles did not arrive for a long time and JM had to go and chivvy them a bit. However, the food, when it arrived was very good and the chips were cut on a scale that would have pleased Desperate Dan!

Ken Kirk made a short speech with a verbal notice about the Christmas Lunch next month and also drew our attention to the Society's book commemorating Old Pavors lost in the Great War. Ken also thanked John Mason for organising this event. Unfortunately John has suffered a serious decline in his health and after a successful season will have to relinquish his role as



pub lunch organiser. We were glad to see Noel Gubbins, our Secretary, who has also had health problems recently. Both gentlemen have made a big contribution to our affairs and we wish them an early improvement in their well-being.

The weather was bright as was the occasion. May we enjoy many more such events in the future.



Views of the assembled company (taken by the ever-helpful waitress).



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OBITUARY NOTICES

IVAN KING

We have been informed by Mrs Rita King that her husband, Ivan, a member of this Society for many years, died on July 5th 2017. His funeral, attended by a packed congregation, was held in Peterborough Crematorium on July 17th.

Ivan's golfing friends provided a guard of honour, with raised golf clubs, as the coffin arrived. 'Swing low sweet chariot' was sung after the committal, with 'Test Match Special' as recessional music. It was a true celebration of his life.

TONY WILLS

We understand that Tony Wills, a contemporary and friend of Ivan King, has also passed away this year. Tony was an Old Pavior although not a member of the Society. He will perhaps be remembered by those of our members who were at HP in the early 1940s.

MICK HUSBANDS

Dear Colin, Just a brief note concerning my late brother Mick. He was not a member of the High Pavement Society but may well be remembered by other members particularly if they had connections with the Old Paviers Rugby club.

Michael James Husbands (known to all as Mick) was born on July 3rd 1934. He lived in Mapperley and started at HP in 1945. His talents were very much in the arts studying French, History and English at 'A' Level. He also gained his school colours by playing for the 1st XV. From HP he subsequently gained a place at Nottingham University to read economic history.

His chosen career was in teaching and following university he taught at a number of primary schools in Nottingham, marrying a fellow teacher, Corinne, during this period. While he remained in Nottingham he played rugby for the Old Paviers for a number of years.

The family regularly holidayed on Guernsey and Mick decided that island life suited both his wife and himself and when a position came up for a headship of a new school in Jersey he successfully applied for the position. Latterly, he taught for a number of years at Victoria College Preparatory School, Jersey.

Mick pursued a number of hobbies including bowls, tennis and (in his retirement) bridge and often enjoyed the company of his son, Niall, daughter in law, Rachel, and their three grandchildren.

Mick died peacefully in his sleep on September 15th this year, following a lengthy illness.

Tony Husbands

ROGER SELBY

We learn from his wife, Linda, that Roger Selby died on November 14th. He had suffered from motor neurone disease for some time but had borne it bravely. He was well known for his passion for jigsaw puzzles which he found particularly diverting. He was regarded as a gentle, humble but generous soul.

Our sincere condolences are sent to the families of all these Old Paviers

OUR END PIECE Brian Ferrill Looks Back

[Brian is a regular correspondent and sends us this interesting account of his early life in the Hyson Green area during the 1930s. Much has changed around there since then but many locations still exist. Some readers might need a map to help with the local geography!]



I opened my eyes for the first time in Collins Nursing Home, Sherwood at 6.00am on the 13th March 1932, or at least that was what my mother told me. I have a strong feeling that my mother had perhaps suffered a miscarriage before my time. I say this because, later in life, she was talking to a friend and remarked “Oh, Dr Cochrane says ‘All girls should have a miscarriage, it clears the tubes and makes our work easier for us.’” (Dr Cochrane was for many years the senior gynaecologist at Nottingham General Hospital.) I know that in my childhood children were meant to be ‘seen and not heard’ but they had big ears!

My home was then at 180 Noel Street and my grandparents were nearby at 192. My other grandparents were not far away at 5 Belton Street, about 300 yards only. We were a compact family. However, when we left the hospital we went to Harwill Crescent, Aspley (!) but I have no recollection of this or how long I was at Aspley.

My first memories were of a very strict mother and two very loving grandmothers. I eventually had a 3 wheeler bicycle and spent more time at 192 than 180! Grandma Harriett (Ferrill) at 192 had a kitchen table with drawers in it, some with kitchen tools or cloths, but one of them held home-made cakes and lovely bread pudding – making me react with ‘Yum Yum!’ even now.

Grandma Harriet had two sons, one of whom was my father, Arthur. She also had a daughter, Irene, her youngest child. The other son was George who lived in Skegness. Skegness indeed!

It came about because in 1929 there came the crash to end all economic crashes and from then on work was difficult to find. In 1929 George was working at the Co-op on the corner of Beaconsfield Street and Noel Street but on reporting for work one morning, he found his job no longer existed. Fortunately for him the manager said ‘You are a good lad George and I have rung the branch in Skegness who have one vacancy but you must be there tomorrow at 8.00 am!’ Skegness was 80 miles away but his mother said she would pay his fare and he made it in time. In due course he met a ‘nippy’ in Lyons’ Tea Rooms who later became my Aunt Florrie.

Back in Hyson Green the three houses at 180 and 192 Noel Street and 5 Belton Street all possessed what was called ‘the range’. Some of the houses around there had two such, one in the kitchen and one in the ‘scullery’. The kitchen was in those days what we would now call a ‘living room’. Elsewhere on the ground floor were two more rooms. One, the ‘front room’ (only used on special occasions, such as parties and perhaps by courting couples on Sunday afternoons!). The other was outside and its title was variously ‘the lavatory’ ‘the bog’, ‘the privy’ and I am sure there are other names, However, when I hear Americans (and my daughter-in-law is one) referring to ‘the bathroom’ I want to say ‘No!’ The bath room appeared

when a long tin bath, which lived on the wall in the lavatory, came into the scullery every Friday night!

Back to the ranges, in all their black-leaded cast-iron glory. Properly used they were fantastic. In the middle of the range you kept a coal fire burning. On the left was an oven, taking its heat from the fire and on the right was a tank full of water, also taking its heat from the fire. On the top of these two were circular cast iron lids. These were lifted (they would be very hot!) using a special handle or 'key' which was stored, when not in use, together with a small shovel, hearth brush and of course a poker on a 'fireside companion'. The handle also opened and closed the draught flaps which controlled the heat delivered from the fire. (If you were very poor you mixed gasworks 'coke' with the coal, as it was then much cheaper than coal.) Above the live coals of the fire itself you could rest a saucepan or frying pan for really quick cooking and some ranges even had a demountable 'spit roller' above the fire. So much for our 'life support equipment' as it then was.

Not many people spoke to me when very young but my Grandma Ferrill not only spoke to me, she taught me to tell the time using her chiming clock. We then went through the alphabet together and, suddenly it seemed, I could read! I soon learned to write my name and 'cat sat on the mat'. I was now four, it was 1936, and I had no idea that my world was about to change.

One morning mother dressed me in my best clothes and dragged me up to Forest Fields Infants School. She had an appointment with the headmistress and when we came out of her office I was booked to start at the school from September 1936.

I did not know then that my mother was pregnant, the 'facts of life' were never explained to me but Grandma Ferrill did teach me about Jesus, although she was a Spiritualist (and I learned she was also a gipsy). I learned the traditional little prayer before bed:

Gentle Jesus meek and mild
Look upon this little child
Pity my simplicity
And bring me safely home to thee
God bless mummy, daddy etc

Soon after this I pedalled down our 'entry' a bit too fast, lost it and went under a coal merchant's dray. I was all right but my 3-wheeler was crushed. I was not meant to take that bike to school so I started running and am still running at the age of 85!

One night my father came up to see me in the night and carried me downstairs. Grandma Mariah (Hall), my other grandma, was there. She hushed me and covered me up in her armchair. Then, as now, I never had any trouble getting off to sleep. Head on pillow – gone! Father was asleep in my bed.

Something woke me up – it was a baby crying. I shook my Grandma, asleep in the armchair, saying 'There is a baby crying upstairs!' She replied, with a smile, 'I bet that baby would like a cup of tea' and put the kettle on forthwith. And so it was my first sister arrived in this world. The date was October 12th 1936.

Brian

[Further chapters are in preparation.]

ooOoo