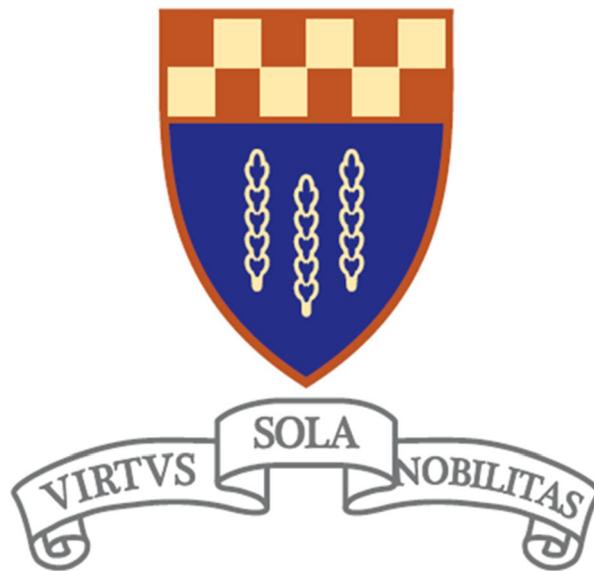


The Pavior



The Newsletter
of
The High Pavement Society
(Founded 1989)

August 2016

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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[0115 9278474]

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



Faces to Remember
Douglas Slater
Biology Master at High Pavement
1948-76

THE COMMITTEE-MEN'S COLUMN

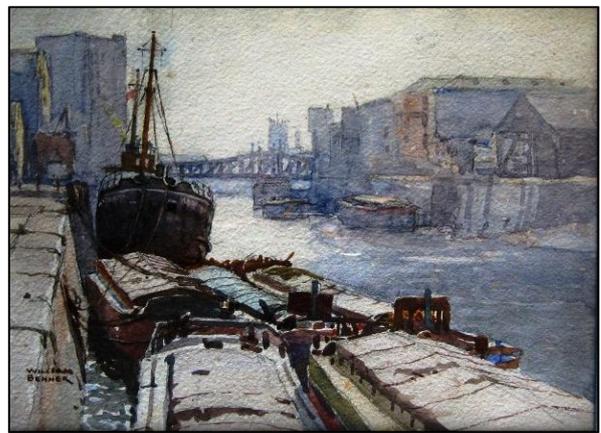
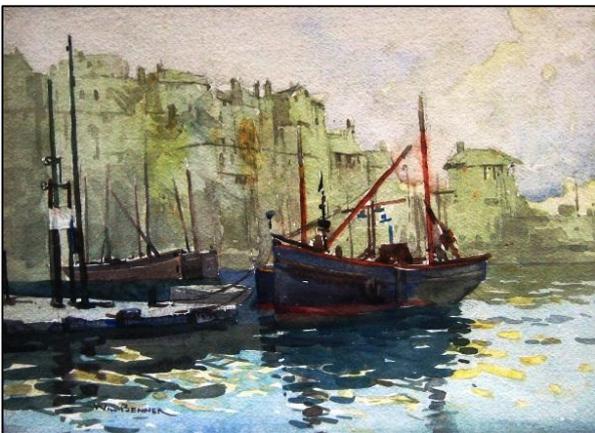
Bill Benner's Paintings

The committee Secretary has received a communication from the family of our late member Geoffrey Oldfield, who died recently:

Dear Noel, I am contacting you firstly to thank you very much, on behalf of my brother and myself, for the kind donation from High Pavement Society following my father's recent death. We were able to donate over £550 to the 101 RAF Squadron. It was nice to see so many members from the Society at his funeral and we hope we managed to speak to most of them. My father often spoke of his days at High Pavement School and thoroughly enjoyed being a member of your society, particularly the dinners he attended and the quiz nights.

Secondly, we are now in the process of selling his house and have in our possession two paintings by Bill Benner. I am not sure of the titles but am attaching photographs - they are both of Nottingham Canal. I believe my Dad bought them in 1980 as part of his retirement present from the Nottingham City Treasurer's department. We would like to find a good home for these pictures in memory of my father and wondered if High Pavement Society would be interested in either one or both of them. If not, maybe you could suggest somewhere or someone else who might be interested or maybe you could mention it at your next meeting. There is no particular rush as we are unlikely to be able to complete on the sale of his house before the end of the year.

**Kind regards
Val Lord**



The Society is honoured to be given the task of preserving what most would agree are two valuable mementos of both Geoff Oldfield and William Benner. Bill Benner was well known in Nottingham's artistic community and various suggestions have been made, including arranging to display the paintings in some suitable area. The membership of the Society are invited to send any ideas they may have on the subject to the Editor who will place them before the committee.

ooOoo

FROM OUR READERS

A Suffolk encounter -1

FROM RICHARD MASLEN, TOMMY GEE AND OTHERS

A strange coincidence occurred at a tiny Quaker Meeting today, held in Walpole Old Chapel, a building converted from two old farmhouses by the Puritans into a place of worship in the 17th century. Though not now a church it is used by the Quakers for their Meetings one a month.

There were only six people present, two women and four men. Two were Old Paviers and HP society members, Richard Maslen and Tommy Gee. One of the women present had brought her brother with her who revealed in conversation that he was a teacher at Marlborough College but in the past had worked at High Pavement Grammar School in Nottingham, leaving in 1967. His name was Christopher Joseph and he had worked there as a geography teacher with Eric Shepherd. Our friends disclosed their membership of the Society which he said he would like to join.

In the words of Richard Maslen, ‘How strange! A tiny Meeting in the oldest Dissenting Chapel in England, out in the wilds of Suffolk and there we were!’ Tommy reported his version of the meeting in a phone call to the editor the following day.

A Suffolk Encounter – 2

FROM CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH

Dear Colin So, firstly how did I come to be at the Quaker Meeting at Walpole Old Chapel? My sister lives in nearby Wangford and attends Meeting irregularly. I only visit her once a year, and that normally during the week, so I have never coincided with her visits to Chapel before. After Meeting was over I was talking with a lady and just happened to say that the first school where I taught had grown out of an old Free Church or Dissenting Foundation. She asked where it was and, when I said “In Nottingham” she immediately introduced me to Richard Maslen and Tommy Gee.

We had quite a long talk, although our memories of High Pavement are from quite different eras. I don’t think that I have ever met ex pupils from the Forest Fields site before. My time, and friends, all relate to the Bestwood Estate site.

I was doing my Education Diploma in 1961-1962 and had looked at numerous schools, mostly minor Public Schools. My subject is Geography and the situation in those schools was poor. Geography was usually not regarded as a main stream subject and the curriculum was stuck somewhere in the 1930s. When a job was advertised at High Pavement my Tutor said ‘If you can get a job there you will be very fortunate. It is an excellent school with a wonderful Headmaster’. So I went for interview and secured a job, starting in September 1962, under Eric Shepherd.

I well remember him speaking to me on day one, ‘Your first term; my 90th; good luck!’ Also in the department was Roger Dalton, who later left and went first to join the staff of the teacher training college in Lincoln and then to Derby, which became a University. He and I have remained very good friends ever since. I don’t recall the name of his replacement.

I was very fortunate to be appointed Head of Geography at Marlborough College in 1967 and so left before HPGS was abolished and turned into a 6th form college. I gather that the buildings have since been demolished. Well they were not a great architectural wonder and probably unsuited to the 21st century.

Over the years I have gradually lost touch with all but three of my former colleagues. Roger Dalton I have mentioned above. Graham Bacon (English) stuck loyally with the State system and worked near Chesterfield before becoming Head of the Comprehensive in Bude and then Stokesley, North Yorks. I shall be staying with both in August, but will forward your email and attachments anyway. Peter George (Economics) lives near Oxford, but I met his wife recently, who told me that he is now in a care home and not really recognising people, which is very sad.

Many other teachers from my time are now dead: the wonderful Harry Davies who did so much for the school as Head; Eric Shepherd, who had only a short retirement; Alan Millidge (Languages); Nigel Sandford (English) and many others.

With very best wishes, Christopher Joseph

[Good to see a reference to Eric Shepherd. He was fond of making digressions in his lessons and once entertained Sc 2A by reading the whole chapter describing the rural cricket match from 'England their England' by A G McDonnell, making us fall about when we should have been studying the agriculture of Australia. I'm glad he did this, I have kept that volume on my bookshelf ever since.-Ed]

ooOoo

FROM ROY TAYLOR

Dear Colin

Well that clinches it. It must be the same one. The line: *That meeting persuaded me to abandon mathematics*" (Our End Piece – May 2016) convinced me. Not that I knew Tommy Gee at school, but it is a name seared into my memory.

During my last years at HP (1943 and 44) we were being prepared for the Oxbridge Scholarship examinations. Mathematics was the main problem: *Answer 5 questions from the 8 provided.* Formidable in itself, but the teacher (I can visualise him but cannot recall the name) considered we should adopt the 'Tommy Gee System' for ensuring success, i.e. complete all eight questions but then cross out the three least impressive.

However, it was not a system I stood any hope of adopting, and I always wondered whether it was really true.

Yours sincerely, Roy (Flash) Taylor

*[Asked to comment TG says he was sure the master concerned was Mr F W Hastie. He goes on to recall that for the examination at Wadham College, Oxford in December, 1942, it was not so much the ambience that was intimidating, but the eccentric competitor sitting next to him who scratched his papers out **with a quill pen!** TG apparently does not recall the 'Tommy Gee System' -Ed.]*

FROM MIKE GLADWELL

School Days (1946 - 52)

On my first day we were seated on the floor of the Assembly Room (the hall?) to be told what House we would be in and asked if we wanted to be in the same House as a relative (usually a brother). I signalled that I would like Wollaton as my *mother* had been in that House—this got me off to a bad start as few realised HP had once been a co-ed establishment. The (then) Old Boys' red and green colours were in my schooldays the colours of this former co-ed school¹. Is the inscription **Girls** still on the North entrance²?

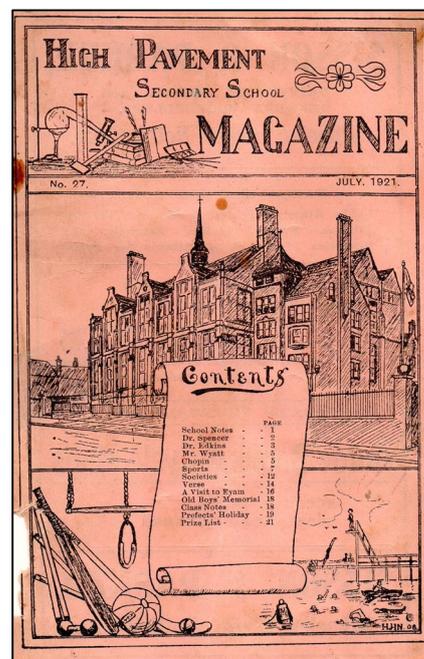
Mr Crossland was our chemistry master always known as 'Croc' but 'Sir' to his face (not to be confused with those hideous shoes which weren't invented then). My personal recollection of Croc, who had taught my mother, was his remark that '*you will be never as good as your mother!*' (true in fact but what would our present day child psychologists make of this, I wonder?) It was particularly true when it came to music because I was unable to sing in tune and had to be a **remnant**. Speech day was a trial but the Soldiers Chorus from Aida was a favourite. In dramatics, however, I enjoyed being a stage hand when we had such acting talent.

Organised school holidays were spent at Newlands (the Lakes), Isle of Arran and Longshaw (Derbys). Mr Shepherd, I remember, informed us of his weak heart then took us on what seemed like a 20 mile hike. Great Gable was climbed in the rain, of course, giving me a life time fear of height exposure.

Another cross I had to bear was the nickname of 'Jenny' which came from my second-hand satchel. This had been autographed by the previous owner, Jenny Ritchie, whose name had been engraved with what looked like a red-hot poker—magic markers had not been invented. This nickname, widely used, must have been disconcerting to the opposition on the Rugby field (Strelley of course, with its rusty tin baths). None of these factors seemed to bother me at the time. I became the Second XV Captain and really thought I had arrived. Nevertheless, I came down to earth [sic] while attempting the practice pole vault which had been rigged up in the hall. Also erected in the hall when required was a boxing ring, climbing ropes and horizontal bars, even a vaulting horse I recall. Mr Page, the Gym master, told to us how, when cycling to HP he would hang on to the tail gate of a passing lorry and get a lift. Imagine that today!

A temporary stage was erected for the School Play and on one occasion a recording took place of "Top of the Form" for the BBC Light Programme; which was broadcast.

Woodwork and metalwork classes were held on the opposite side of Stanley Road and were much enjoyed even though my first dovetails resembled a stair way rather than a box. The pot of glue was permanently on the boil - goodness knows what the whiff did to us. The Music Room was also across the road, where the singing of a solo was much dreaded. Mr



Mike has sent us this cover of our fore-runner, The HP School Magazine, for July 1921 which was passed down to him by his Old Pavior mother.

¹ Now, of course, the colours of the HPS tie!

² Yes!

Williams once asked the class if music told a story. Trying to be a creep I said it did, only to be corrected. Music and me have never mixed well and still don't, but I *was* there when Bill Haley and his Comets came to the Odeon.

Last memory of all: School dinners were at Palm Street, where a near riot occurred when pineapple was on the pudding menu; we war time children had never tasted such delights.

Looking back, a lesson period ($\frac{3}{4}$ hour?) seem such a long time but is now gone in a flash. I was lucky to have a good education - not realised at the time of course - and glad to have this opportunity of reliving those times on paper. **Mick 'Jenny' Gladwell.**

[We look forward to receiving some fascinating material from that 1921 school magazine. Not many of us were born then!]

ooOoo

FROM ALEX RAE

Dear Colin,

I recently came across an article written in 1937 by Henry Whipple, the then Director of Education at Nottingham City Council. The Henry Whipple Primary School in Bestwood bears his name. The article is entitled 'Education in the City of Nottingham' and in it he describes the provision of secondary education in the City. In 1937, 'High Pavement Boys' School' had 720 pupils (which is roughly the number on the rolls in my day, between 1966 and 1973)³. Whipple goes on to say: 'The High Pavement School, founded in 1788, was transferred to its present site in 1895. It was the first unsectarian school in England and also the first Organised Science School in the country. When the Manning School was built in 1931, the High Pavement Secondary School, formerly a mixed school, became a Boys' school and its facilities for practical instruction were greatly increased.'

Incidentally, Henry Whipple's wife, Dorothy, was a popular novelist in the 1930s and 40s. Over the last few years, a London publisher, Persephone Books, has reprinted many of her novels and she is among their most popular authors. The Whipples lived on Ebers Road in Mapperley Park and there are moves to erect a commemorative plaque there.

In a quite different vein, I would like to say I very much enjoyed seeing the photograph of Basil John Dodd in the May edition of *The Pavior*. That his first given name was Basil came as a surprise. He was universally known as "Bert" Dodd. He taught me French in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th forms (1967-1970). He encouraged us to read books in French and operated an informal lending library of Maigret crime novels. Largely as a result of Bert's excellent teaching, my French set was able to sit our French "O" level in October 1970 rather than June 1971.

I think it was Bert and Bill Gray (English) who came up with the nickname 'Albert' for the then headmaster M H Brown⁴.

Bert was a fine batsman who like other staff members played cricket for Woodthorpe Cricket Club. I have extremely fond memories of Bert Dodd. **Kind regards, Alex**

³ In the 1940s this reached 840

⁴ A soubriquet much disliked on his part, understandably so!

FROM MIKE HOPEWELL

[Mike has become a regular contributor and relates yet another of his flying experiences.]

Jambo

The year is 1972, and after leaving the RAF Central Flying School in 1958 I was now a Captain with BEA⁵. My roster for the 27th of April was to fly a four-engine turbo-prop *Merchantman* (a freighter, gross wt. 64,000 kg, payload 18,000 kg) to Zurich to collect the Basel Zoo director with a large animal for Gerald Durrell's Zoo in Jersey. Because of its quiet engines the *Merchantman* was allowed to fly at night, and our schedule was take off at 2.00 am to Zurich, which was normal.

However, only at Zurich were we informed that our cargo was a 352lb (25 stone!) western lowland silver-backed gorilla, named Jambo who was born in Basel Zoo and Prof. Lang was to accompany him on the flight. The gorilla was gently sedated and loaded on board in his prepared steel cage. Professor Lang had a normal aircraft seat fitted nearby, together with a large supply of mixed fruits and veg. We took off and climbed to the normal cruising height and after a short time were in daylight and passing Paris. The Director was supplied with plenty of coffee and biscuits, while Jambo was asleep in what appeared to be a rather large, alarmingly thinly barred cage.



Prof Lang

It was only after we began a gentle descent over southern England, ready for our landing in Jersey, that our human ears began to pop and clear that the three pilots in the cockpit could hear a very loud rattle and clanking of metal bars. P3, the monitoring pilot, was sent back immediately to check that all was well with our dainty passenger, (chest 54 in, waist 48 in, wrist 14 in). Dr Lang assured P3 that Jambo had just turned over on his straw bed.

The approach and landing at Jersey was normal and we taxied into the dispersal where the ground staff and Durrell Zoo staff were waiting to gently offload our very important new resident for the new gorilla house at the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust Zoo.

The new gorilla house had been designed for Jambo and his two wives, Nandi and N'pongo. It was to be opened by Mr. David Niven, film actor, who armed with an attractive bouquet of celery, leeks, cabbage, cauliflower and curly kale, was acting as best man, but only on condition that he was, at no time, to be left alone with the happy couple !

Jambo is best remembered for the act which helped to dispel the myth of the aggressive gorilla when in August 1986, a little boy fell into the enclosure and lay unconscious. Jambo who showed gentleness and protection, tenderly stroking with his huge hands and then towering protectively over the tiny figure, keeping his family of inquisitive gorillas well away (the child was eventually rescued). His life-size bronze statue (right) looks down on the large gorilla enclosure at the Jersey Conservation Trust.



Cheers, Mike.

⁵ British European Airways, now part of British Airways.

THE HIGH PAVEMENT SOCIETY AGM AND QUIZ NIGHT



This popular social and administrative function of the Society will take place in the autumn on **Monday September 26th** at **6.00 for 6.30 pm**. Following the business of the AGM there will be a buffet supper followed by an enjoyable evening's activity, featuring the annual quiz which is *guaranteed* to take place!

Part of the Society's purpose is to enable members to meet each other and we urge as many people as possible to reserve this evening in their diaries and support the Society

in one of its principal activities. Personal invitations will be sent out in the usual way nearer to the date, enclosing full details.

The Committee

ooOoo

PUB LUNCH NEWS

A Message of hope!

The High Pavement Country Luncheon Club (a.k.a. the Pub Lunch Crowd) have, sadly, not been active since the last issue of this newsletter was published. We regret that this has happened but our miniscule committee has been beset by many problems such as illness, absence of the wealthier members on continental holidays, pre-occupation with other duties and family matters.

Enough of the excuses! We *are* going to meet again and fairly soon at that. The organisers are planning a lunch at **The Mapperley Golf Club** on **Thursday September 8th** at 12.00 noon for 12.30. The usual people on the mailing list will receive invitations through the post as usual. However, it is possible that there may be some members who have not previously taken part. **Anyone else interested should contact the editor of *The Pavior* as soon as possible** and arrangements will be made to add their names to the invitation mailing list. Their invitations will then be sent promptly.



We have enjoyed the fare at this venue in the past and we anticipate a similar welcome this time. Don't miss it!

ooOoo

FOREST FIELDS VISIT 2016

Following the announcement in the *May Pavior* that we would try to arrange another visit to the Stanley Road buildings and arrangements were made with Head Teacher, Sue Hoyland, for five of our members to make a visit on June 29th.

So it was that the five of us arrived at the main entrance, which many will now know is located in the old swimming pool/air raid shelter in the basement. Here in the well-appointed office (shades of Kathleen Chawner's cubby hole!) we signed in and received our visitors identification lanyards, as is the modern custom. (Those of us who were not quite computer-competent—it's an 'age thing'—were helped by one of the office staff.)

Sue Hoyland herself bid us welcome and introduced her deputy, Paul Charley, who would also accompany us. We visited the Main Hall which is a veritable showpiece of modern restoration but still recognisable with its original decorative glazed wall tiles. After a look round we ascended the north staircase (whose steps were almost unrecognisably un-worn) to the Head Teacher's office (known during the war years as the Mistresses Common Room) for a brief chat with Sue about the school and her work in it. Then we climbed further to the first floor.

Here we were taken into one of the classrooms (where Room 8 used to be in our day) to see a class of the present Primary (i.e. Junior) school in session. Sue introduced we ancient creatures, saying to the shy, well-mannered youngsters, '*These gentlemen once attended this school, many years ago.*' A few questions were now invited and suitable answers given, sometimes requiring a little interpretation from Sue. We moved on and entered another class session where we had a similar experience. 'What colour were the walls when you were here?' We daren't tell them just how begrimed the school was in those times and how we adorned desks and other woodwork with our carved initials! Here it was so resplendently modern that we felt such treatment never happened nowadays

All the time we were avidly recognising scenes of our past, though it sometimes required a little thought to make the necessary re-orientation. We arrived at the south staircase and ascended again to arrive at what we knew once as *The Art Room*. We gazed out of the smallest

window towards the Forest, seeing the attractive view with more appreciative eyes. Then it was across the roof and into the north wing again to inspect the enduring (and illicit) carvings on some of the wainscoting—an inspired piece of preservation.



Left: We take tea with our gracious hosts, Sue Hoyland and Paul Charley.
L to R: Bob Wadsworth, Alan Ripley, Mike Gladwell, Geoff Thomas.

We crossed over to the old 'Workshop Block' for another nostalgic inspection, rounding off the visit with tea and cakes in the old Room T1, now a staff room, served by our hosts. All agreed, it had been a most enjoyable visit. We thanked our hosts for their great kindness and wished them and the new school well in what had once been our *alma mater*.

CS

HIGH PAVEMENT CITY SIXTH FORM ACADEMY

2016 Awards Evening

The Awards Evening took place on 28 June when certificates were presented to many students for *endeavour* during the past academic year. In addition to these tokens of recognition three additional awards were made which incorporated actual prizes of £25 Book Tokens, provided by the High Pavement Society. The Society was represented at the occasion by our Chairman, Ken Kirk, plus committee members John Mason and Colin Salsbury. We were made very welcome and treated as distinguished guests.



The Principal, Denise Jelly, spoke to the assembled students, some accompanied by proud parents, explaining the purpose of our Society and saying how welcome our support was to the Academy.

The award ceremony lasted for some time and was applauded at



Left: John Mason presents **Mayam Pourmotamed** with her HPS award.

Right: Colin Salsbury presents **Conor Williamson** with his HPS award.



every stage. There was the usual flash of humour when it was announced that the recipient of an award for making 100% attendance was unable to be present. The Society's representatives shared refreshments afterwards with the assembled staff, students and parents.

ooOoo

STAN SMITH'S COFFIN WALK

[This report was compiled from an article that first appeared in the Nottingham Evening Post on Friday, 29th July, to which journal we are pleased to give due acknowledgement.]

Our late member Stan Smith who died in April this year, aged 78, was a distinguished local historian in his village of Brinsley, Notts. He had explored the routes of the old 'coffin walks' which were used in days long ago to carry the coffins of the deceased over footpaths and roads from the chapel in Brinsley to the place of interment in Greasley, some two miles away. Stan was instrumental in reintroducing the tradition of coffin-walking in 2004 and in his honour a walk was conducted by local parishioners, complete with a specially made traditional coffin borne by bearers. His widow, Christine, and the organiser, Mr Peter Fletcher, headed the procession carrying a miniature coffin between them.

A commemorative service was then held at St Mary's Church, Greasley

DOCUMENTS FROM THE PAST

1. Report of a Genius in the Making

During correspondence with the great man's biographer, Ray Essen, our archivist, Lance Wright, has received this yellowing copy of the fifth form report received by the distinguished physicist, **Dr Louis Essen** when he was a pupil at High Pavement.

Dr Essen earned renown in the world of physics, and particularly in the art of precision timekeeping with his invention of the atomic clock. This was the first reliable instrument to measure time with the degree of accuracy necessary for the study of advanced physics and astronomy and for the determination of the speed of light with better accuracy than any method hitherto in use. Dr Essen's talent obviously began to appear while at school.

Report for the Summer Term of Session 1923-4

Name Essen, L.

House Wollaton

Form VA

Average age of pupils in Form
at beginning of Term 16.5

Attendance:—Number of Times absent from 1/3/24 up to,
and including, 11/7/24

0

E. G. Jordan
R. Crossland } House-Masters.

SUBJECT	FORM OR SET	PLACE	NO. OF PUPILS PLACED	REMARKS
ENGLISH	<u>VA</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>24</u>	
HISTORY	<u>do.</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>21</u>	
GEOGRAPHY				
MATHEMATICS (including Arithmetic)	<u>L₁</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>25</u>	
SCIENCE	PHYSICS	<u>VA</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>24</u>
	CHEMISTRY	<u>do.</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>25</u>
FRENCH	<u>do.</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>25</u>	
GERMAN OR LATIN OR SPANISH	<u>do.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>21</u>	
MANUAL WORK OR SEWING				
DRAWING				

Number of Pupils in Form 25 (21 placed)

Position in Form, determined by the aggregate number of marks in all subjects: 1st. (1st.)

* = 'Below Form Standard in this subject.' well done!

H. J. Spenser Head-master.

Next Term begins:—J. Sept. 9th

We can note his position as 'top of the form (Va)' and his premier position in many subjects including physics and mathematics. One supposes that the class had other prodigies in the field of Chemistry and French and that history was a subject rather unworthy of his precious study time. We can only agree with the head, Dr H J Spenser, in saying 'well done!'

Another recognisable name is, of course, that of his housemaster 'R Crossland' who must then have been in the early years of his teaching career. (Essen paid great tribute to Mr Crossland for the encouragement he received to follow a career in the sciences.)

2. School Prizegiving 1924-25

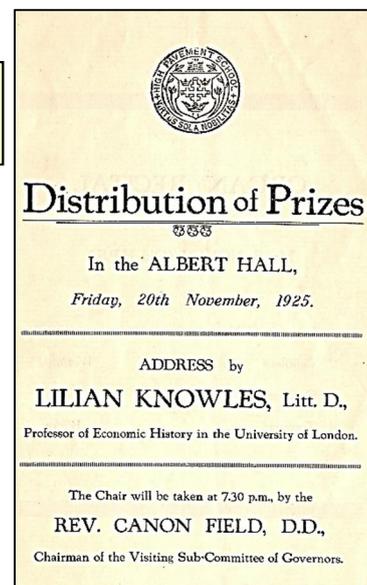
Another document sent to Lance Wright from Ray Essen is a copy of the programme for the High Pavement School Annual Prize-giving⁶ for the year 1924-25. This contains Louis Essen's school successes. It is too large to be reproduced in its entirety but it yielded several items of interest:

Page 2 featured the items for the organ recital by Mr *S. Nolan* (Old H.P.S.) [sic]

The front page. ►
Note the old school
badge/ coat of arms

Page 3 included the success of *Essen, L.* (W) in winning the Education Committee's Bursary of £25 a year [£1375 today] and fees, the Derby Road Senior Exhibition of £10 [£550] per year, tenable at University College Nottingham. Also on this page the success of *Essen, L.* in the Intermediate Science Examination.

Page 4 contained the General School Examination results (with Matriculation exemption) including those of our former member, the late Dr *N.M.Potter* (Pass) and also the *Daily Telegraph* journalist, the late *A H (Harold) Atkins* (Honours).



Page 5 contained the SUCSESSES OF OLD PUPILS, 1924-25.

Included were two names in particular: One was *Jessie Westmoreland* who won BA 1st Class Honours in Mathematics. [Could this be the Miss Westmoreland who tackled that subject on the staff of HP during the war years?] The other was *Chesters, J.* (Captain of HP 1923-24 and intermediate BSc in 1924. [Later to become *Dr Jack Chesters OBE, FRS* who won distinction in the steel industry and became a government adviser on the use of energy.]

Page 6 again included *Essen, L.* who was awarded the Midsummer Form Prize for VI Sc.

Page 7 gave the list of House Cups for such titles as Girls' Work; Girls' Games; Boys' Work; Boys' Games; Boxing; Boating [sic]; House Singing; Best House All-round-Work and Games. Wollaton won four out of the eight cups although, for reasons not given, the **House Singing Cup** was not awarded this year [one wonders why?].

Page 8 accommodated the Programme for the evening with the formal proceedings like the Headmaster's Report; the Address by Prof. Dr Knowles; the Prize distribution and the Votes of Thanks interspersed with musical items [there was no *Carmen Paviorem* in those days]. Two songs were performed by *Freda Jackson*. [Surely the girl who went on to become a leading stage and screen actress, particularly famed for her portrayal of the dreadful, Mrs Aggie Voray, in the West End success (and later film) *No Room at the Inn* during the late 1940s.]

⁶ Later to be known as 'Speech Day'

3. The Pavior for 1935

Dr Essen, when aged about 28, contributed a learned yet lucid essay to the school magazine (our forerunner also called *The Pavior*) on the subject of 'Quartz'. In particular he discussed its ability to resonate in an electrical circuit and thereby produce an accurate method of standardising time and electrical oscillations (he was himself later able to improve even on this degree of accuracy. Quartz crystals are of course still widely used in conventional timepieces, including the one donated by the Society to High Pavement Academy in Dr Essen's Memory).

[The essay sat rather oddly among the less mature contributions from school pupils. on such subjects as 'Camping', 'Country Life', 'Mock Elections' and 'Believe it or Not'.]

ooOoo

DECEASED FORMER MEMBERS

Martin Cohen

We have since been informed by his family that our loyal member Martin Cohen died on May 3rd 2016.

Francis Duncan Underwood

We have been informed by his wife Betty that our loyal member Duncan Underwood died on June 1st 2016. His funeral was held at Bramcote Crematorium on June 13th when the Society was represented by Ken Kirk and Robin Taylor.

John William Westwood

We have been informed by his wife Joan that our loyal member John Westwood died on May 28th 2016 after a long illness. His funeral was held on June 14th at Attenborough Church, when the Society was represented by John and Carol Adkin, Trevor and Alison Fisher and Jesse Woodhouse.

The Society sends its sincere condolences to the families of these three members.

NEW MEMBERS

Although we have lost several old friends over the past year we have also been recruiting new members, which keeps our numbers reasonably steady. Since July 2015 we have been pleased to welcome the following new members(dates at HP in brackets):

Roy Taylor (37-44); Ken Jones (40-48); John Barsby (49-56); Chris Mansfield (50-55);

Tony Wheadon (53-58); Howard Green (53-60); Chris Beaumont (60-65);

Martin Mellor (?-?); Christopher Joseph (*staff*) (62-66); Stephen Godward (66-73);

Edward Vick (71-76); Rebecca Godwin (94-96).

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OUR END PIECE



*[We are pleased to hear once more from our member **Tommy Gee** with a thoughtful article about prison-visiting. Tommy, a practising Quaker, was a volunteer worker for a charity called 'Inside Out Trust' which provided work projects for young offenders. Tommy employed the mother of a young offender as a home help and she also acted as his driver to get him to appointments. He took an interest in her son's welfare after the young man received a prison sentence. Tommy saw fit to compile this report after a visit to Highpoint Prison in Suffolk, with the intention of sending it to the appropriate authorities (his group had once met with MP for Norwich, Charles Clarke. when he was Home Secretary). The report makes interesting reading.]*

A visit to see James Farmer⁷, aged 21, recently transferred to Highpoint Prison, Suffolk from HMP Norwich

This report is intended among other things, to draw attention to the contrasts between Highpoint and HMP Norwich, where James was originally imprisoned.

Our small group (mother, brother and T Gee) visited James on Saturday 21 May. The visit was pre-arranged with the prison to be for 2 hours beginning at 2.00 pm. We were familiar with conditions at Norwich Prison, where Ormiston⁸ staff welcome visitors and issue tickets on arrival so there is no queuing, and the single helpful prison officer in charge deals with visitors, who are called by him, in turn, into the visiting area. Although advertised on their web site, no Ormiston representatives were present to welcome visitors here at Highpoint, so two women prison officers dealt with the two long queues, which created a very different atmosphere right from the start. Unlike Norwich, the setting at this centre is not welcoming. It is scruffy. The toilets are not up to today's standard. There are no refreshments on sale and there is no important and helpful literature on display or available.

I found standing in the pressing and anxious queues quite tiring. I chatted to two well-built middle aged women adjacent to me who had travelled from Croydon by train, followed by a bus journey from Newmarket, then having to walk some distance to the prison. They were a wife and sister who had been making visits over some months, starting off very early from Croydon and getting back home late. Their prisoner was serving a 7 year sentence and was suffering from lung cancer and they told me they wanted him to obtain compassionate release on a monitoring tag. However, they did not know how to set about it so I asked whether he had approached IMB⁹ for help but they had not heard of the IMB. A disproportionate number of visitors were black, so particular care was needed to make all welcome. I sensed no racism.

We were sent to the gate in several large groups and waited there. Visitors were called into the gate in groups, by individual visitor number. It was hot and sunny, and I was told hats had to be left behind in the lockers as they were not allowed inside. (I normally wear one for solar caritosis, the result of many years Government service in the tropics.) There was no seating, except on the ground so I stood up, supported by my stick. Spotting my situation, a youngish visitor went up to the prison officer on the gate and said, 'You should let that old man [*Tommy is 90*] with the stick in next'. I told her that she might prejudice her visit if she

⁷ Not his actual name

⁸ Ormiston Trust [a voluntary group assisting with prison visiting in Eastern England].

⁹ Independent Monitoring Board for prisons, staffed by volunteers. TG had once served on the IMB for Norwich Prison.

made a fuss, and thanked her for her compassion. I eventually did sit on the ground to await our turn after someone else did likewise.

By the time we were called in, it was 2.30 pm, so the 2 hour visit had eroded to 1½ hours. Also we then learned that James had been punished for fighting with a prison officer and his visit had been reduced to just one hour.

He had just become a Muslim, possibly because in despair some prisoners turn to God for help, or perhaps because the Muslims in the prison community stick together for mutual support, or because, as is often said, the halal food is better. I don't know. He sounded lonely and depressed and his spirits were low. It seems that during last week he had been given a rucksack to wear by a prison officer, who had said to him 'Go and make a bomb!' The provocative rucksack incident led to a fight, and the prison officer concerned was sacked for racism. Unfortunately and I guess understandably, James had suffered penalties too¹⁰.

Sadly, James is not able to accept the prison system, which seemed very tense, as appears to be the case in all prisons at present. It was certainly the case in Highpoint. There were notices everywhere about the drastic penalties for bringing in 'spice' and other drugs. The alarm went off at least twice whilst we were in the visitors centre and three officers on duty there rushed out at high speed in response. A BBC report, repeated in the Guardian, tells of a prisoner wielding a twin bladed weapon who had taken five officers hostage at Highpoint on 12 May when Gold Command (a high level command system for dealing with emergencies by the security services) was deployed. Chatting to staff I sensed that they were having a difficult time, so I am concerned about the consequences for those who are incarcerated there, as all must be affected by the current troubles.

A serious problem was the acoustics of the visitors' hall. I could not have a proper conversation with James, and his mother too found it very difficult to hear his responses. Since visiting is crucial in the reduction of recidivism something should be done about this, possibly through the Ormiston Trust. The room is long and narrow and with about twice as many visitors as HMP Norwich. Perhaps an acoustics expert should pay a call during visits to see what can be done to improve matters. Highpoint was a self-build project on an old RAF base, with work done by the prisoners themselves as a money saver. Did they use an architect?

There was no literature readily available or on display to inform visitors about visiting arrangements, and my experience of trying to get through to the Prison about it failed after many attempts. I do not know whether they have introduced prisoner email there. I asked for literature, and a copy was supplied from the prison office. It contains no mention of Ormiston, and is written by a civil servant.

On a scale from 1 to 10 HMP Norwich scores 8 or 9 whereas Highpoint scores 4 or 5. Staff shortages are not the answer, as there many more on duty at Highpoint than at HMP Norwich. But that may have been a management decision because of the security standard. When I left early I was still wearing my visitor's tag, which caused me to speculate just how and whether their system works, and wondered if someone could explain the tag's purpose. Rumour has it that it is to prevent the visitor switching with the prisoner, who can then escape.

I have asked if I can communicate this report to the Chair of Highpoint IMB and to the Ormiston Trust, in case improvements can be made.

Tommy Gee

¹⁰ James has since revoked his conversion to Islam