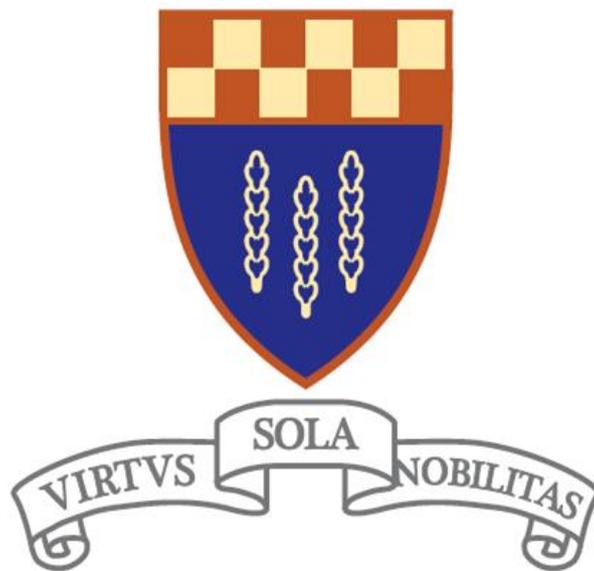


# The Pavior



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

August 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!

#### **President: Vacant**

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#### **Faces to Remember**

### **Samuel William Hill**

**Long serving Biology and Music Master at High Pavement**

**Latterly Second Master of the School**

**1931 to 1972**

## THE COMMITTEE-MEN'S COLUMN

### **An important Message from The Society's Chairman**

Enclosed with this copy of *The Pavior* (which I am sure is well up to the usual standard thanks to Colin Salsbury and all the other contributors) is the formal notice of the **2017 Annual General Meeting**. It contains information about special resolutions to make changes to the Constitution of the Society.

The current membership now totals 160 or so which is considerably fewer than was the case when the Society was first formed. Consequently, in order to ensure that business can be transacted, the committee feels that the *quorum* should be lowered to reflect the declining membership.

I do hope that you will make every effort to attend the meeting, as I am sure you will find it an enjoyable evening once the formal business is completed.

**Ken Kirk**

ooOoo

### EDITORIAL

May I offer my thanks to the Chairman for his kind remarks and draw your attention to a few items of this issue's contents.

The traditional 'end-piece' is this time in the form of a response by member Phil Ward to Tommy Gee's deep thoughts on the matter of 'class', grammar schools and particularly High Pavement Grammar School. Elsewhere Brian Ferrill has also adds his 'four penn'orth' on the same topic.

In addition, Phil Ward has sent us a piece on the subject of 'Memorable Members of Staff', as has Phil Evans. It is a recurring (and very interesting) theme. Most Old Paviors are wont to recall from time to time the mildly eccentric collection of geniuses who moulded our characters, while endeavouring to give us that good education we thought we so genuinely deserved (even though we might not put pen to paper on the subject). We are ever grateful for these contributions. Do keep sending them in.

Finally, I would like to mention an article about a former teacher at HP during the 1940s, **Ted Humphreys**. We had been put in touch with Mrs Patricia Stephens, sister of our late member Tony Humphreys whose death is reported on page 14. Ted was uncle to Tony and Patricia. The contact was provided by Tony's widow Christine.

Patricia has donated a copy of a book she and Tony have compiled about the life and times of Ted Humphreys, who is well remembered by some of us (including your editor), as a teacher of sixth form physics and always a very dapper figure on the school staff. Ted left HP in 1950 to continue his career in *Ethiopia* as a lecturer to trainees in their Imperial Air Force. The book is based on the diary compiled by Ted's wife, Madge, during their three years in east Africa. I have selected information from the long narrative which I think make interesting reading, especially for those who remember him.

**Colin**

ooOoo

**FROM OUR READERS**  
**FROM BRIAN FERRILL**

*[Following on from Tommy Gee's words on class distinction and High Pavement, Brian has been moved to pen a few thoughts on the same topic.]*

I am always happy to read the musings of Tommy Gee (May End-Piece) and I am sure that class distinction had no place within High Pavement School. However, I was only there for five years (1943-48) and received my education, and I mean total education, in the triangle of schools: Forest Fields Infants, Stanley Road Boys and High Pavement.

I wasn't in the Army Cadets but in the other school activities, which included the 121st Nottm Scouts and 'extras' like rowing, sports (various), theatricals and trips abroad, we were all equals. There was a war on and, as Winston Churchill once said: *'We are all in it!'* Class barriers briefly tended to dissolve. Unfortunately class did rear its ugly head in the country between 1945 and 1950. The election of the Labour government in 1945 took the establishment by surprise but this nebulous body soon tried to return to its repugnant ways.

I suppose, using the words of C E M Joad, the popular broadcaster and philosopher, *'It all depends on what you mean by class distinction.'* A certain member of the royal family was once happily anticipating marriage to a Group Captain in the Royal Air Force. I can imagine the reaction of the nobility's older brigade at this potential crossing of class barriers. You know, *'back of hand to head put'* and a touch of the vapours (they learn that at finishing school). The outcome was tragic. The romance was thwarted and the gallant Group Captain was instantly posted abroad. Both later married other people but that's another story.

Today we know that 'money talks' and classes adjust accordingly. With billions in the bank you don't even need a title. Perhaps someone will draw up a new list of classes. How about these:

1. Royalty, Nobility and the aforementioned Rich List.
2. The Middle Class
3. The Poor
4. The Under-class.

My thoughts on the matter are that the middle class of today must include the working class, because anyone working and paying taxes is middle class.

The Poor? Well, I live among people, many of whom take holidays, drink moderately and gamble—but they do not work, so can't be working class. The government (i.e. the taxpayers) give them money to keep them quiet.

The Under-class also take the government's money, but drink heavily and waste money on drugs—and then complain that they are poor! Even so I cannot pass a homeless 'druggie' without putting a coin in the proffered box or cap. You see, I feel that if I had not passed the eleven-plus and after 5 years received that scroll of paper which I still treasure, that person sitting forlornly on the ground could have been me!

When, during my career in the RAF I applied for (and subsequently achieved) a commission I was asked by the Education Officer if I had 'Any GCEs' (as they were then called) I produced that scroll and his eyes widened. 'You passed nine subjects in one year?' 'Well,' I replied, 'it was a fortnight, actually, but I was well taught by experts over five years!' And there was no class distinction at all.

**Brian Ferrill**

## FROM PAUL EVANS

**Dear Colin,** The letters in the May issue from Alex Rae and Anthony Chapman (whose name is familiar and I'm sure our paths must have crossed at school) brought back many happy memories of inspiring teachers.

In the early 60's, when I was saving hard for extra spending money for our summer holiday in Blackpool, I would walk to school so that I could pocket the bus fare. As a result, I frequently met up with Stanley Middleton near Perry Road and walked with him. My warmest memory of him was when he took a group of us on a holiday to Northern Ireland, along with Graham Bacon (also English) and Roger Pratt (Maths). Graham's enthusiastic leadership as we squelched through the famous Irish bogs will long be remembered.

On that holiday also were Stan's wife and two small daughter's and, 15 years later, when my wife and I were selling our first flat, we arrived home after a weekend away to find a note from an interested potential buyer. She had left her name, phone number and an address in Caledon Road which I instantly recognised. Yes, we sold our flat to a young lady I had last seen when she was about five on that Northern Ireland holiday - Stanley Middleton's daughter.

Two other members of the English staff deserve mention, Dennis Moorhouse, who read "The Hobbit" to us in my first year and began my lifelong devotion to Tolkien, and Nigel Sandford. Most Old Paviers to whom I have spoken do not remember Nigel but his reading with us of "I Claudius" was great fun. I believe he may only have stayed for a short time, but I got to know him a bit out of school due to his involvement with the Co-op Arts Theatre on George Street, where my stage debut was alongside Nigel in a production of Sophocles' "Electra". My sister still has a photo showing him on stage in his Greek costume. I went on to perform in Bill Gray's production of "The Jew of Malta" for the school play.

I believe Eric Smith (EWNS) was head of English, but in my second year he took us for Religious Knowledge. In those days, RK was not taught as an examination subject, but every class had to have one period a week of RK to comply with the law. Those who taught it were not RK specialists, but were generally volunteers from the many Methodists and Quakers on the staff. 'Oscar'<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, head of chemistry and, I believe, a Quaker taught us RK in my first and fourth years. Was the Chemistry department staffed entirely by Quakers? My favourite chemistry teacher and fourth year form master, R B (Dinky) Dunn, certainly was.

Turning to Anthony's letter, I cannot let mention of Alan Beck be made without referring to his work with the CWEC (Council of Education for World Citizenship). Sixth forms at Nottingham schools benefited from this organisation and I thoroughly enjoyed going to the meetings at various schools addressed by MPs or other political figures. Alan really encouraged us to become politically aware and involved.

However, it is Anthony's mention of Charlie Mardling that really inspired me to write. Charlie was my housemaster. The trouble was that his subject, French, was my worst. Being my housemaster, he could see that I wasn't too bad at other subjects, but I was always bottom of the class in his! However his efforts paid off. Much to my own amazement, I scraped a '6' (the lowest pass grade) at O level. When my mother went to a parent's evening shortly after, apparently he stood up and threw his arms round her shouting 'He did it!' A wonderful man.

**Regards, Paul (Bus) Evans. Newstead House 1959-1966.**

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<sup>1</sup> Keith, actually. I knew him and he was by then a member of the Methodist church in Loughborough, where he taught at Loughborough College School -Ed.

## FROM ALAN STEVENSON

**Leon ('Leo') Bryan**

**Born 13 August 1932, died 17th June 2017**



Leon, or Leo as his fellow pupils at High Pavement knew him, exerted an inspirational influence on many of his friends with his sporting and academic prowess, particularly in the later part of his school life. Somehow he seemed to excel in every facet of school activities.

Swimming was our shared enthusiasm and at the numerous swimming galas where we both competed, it was ever a joy to see Leo ploughing through the water, way ahead of the rest of us so laboriously chugging behind him. After one such gala the Evening Post commented that Leo might well be a candidate to represent England in future international contests.

In his quiet, gentle way Leo encourage many of us to join him in his other interests, which included hill-walking, camping, and for the more adventurous, rock-climbing. I was fortunate to be among those who joined him on excursions to Sark, Edale, the Lake District and similar places which, to me, were exotic venues and experiences.

Leo had eclectic tastes in music, often sharing enjoyable moments as a member of a group at the YMCA, listening to both classical works and New Orleans jazz with equal pleasure.

Among Leo's close friends were such well-known Old Paviers as Frank Hudson, Peter Hudson, Brian (Dick) Scorer, Barrie Cholerton, Adrian (Hades) Harrison, Mike (Hoppy) Hopewell, Terence (Tej) Marshall and George Haywood. Some are members of this Society, some have, sadly, now passed away.

Leo's enthusiasm and skill were expressed forcibly while playing rugby for the school. He was a speedy 'winger' (with Pete Knutton) and we all played in many games alongside him. The most gratifying of these was when several of us were selected to play for the 'Three Counties' Grammar team to play other county teams. About this time, although we had yet to leave school, we were honoured to be invited to play for the Old Paviers first team under the captaincy of the great Ray Caulton. Great Days! Leo kept his interest in 'The Game' throughout his life and his family affectionately recall both his frustration and delight whenever England performed.

Leo was a very 'hands on' family man and with his dear wife, Gladys, raised a very happy and close-knit family of children and grandchildren, whom Leo treated to an annual visit at their favourite venue of Thurleston Bay in the South Hams of Devon.

Leon's professional skills as a chemist took him to the top of corporate success, all achieved with his enduring ability and quiet leadership.

We will all miss him deeply.

**Alan Stevenson**

ooOoo

**FROM PHIL WARD**  
**Recalling memorable teaching superstars...**

Anthony Chapman has written an evocative and amusing article (in the May 2017 Pavior – best issue yet!) about HP teachers whom he regarded highly. I also have a few.

Starting with the ones he mentions, Alan Beck was my Latin teacher, and I agree with Anthony that Alan was a great teacher, and a lovely man. Through him I joined the Council for Education in World Citizenship, a UN offshoot, which led me, in later life, to a strong involvement with Oxfam.

Fred Millidge I only knew in the sixth form, when at my request I continued with French alongside my ‘A’ levels, just for fun. Fred always made the lessons enjoyable. – I particularly loved Maupassant’s ‘La Parure’.

I also remember Mr Mardling, though not directly. On the coach back from regattas we’d have ‘sing-songs’ including ‘We’ll make Charlie Mardling ...’ (unfortunately I cannot remember what we’d make him do) ‘...when the Red Revolution comes!’ Probably just as well. Other teachers also featured similarly in our anarchic singing.

My personal list of memorable teachers would start with Alec Gardner, our history teacher. He inspired me enormously, not just for the subject, but also because he taught me to believe in myself, as Anthony wisely suggests, a mark of a good teacher. He was also very human. Alec and I shared the same sense of humour, Tom Lehrer, Bob Newhart etc. When I covered my exercise book with brown paper and labelled it ‘HISTORY; 1066 and all that!’ (cribbed from Sellar and Yeatman), apparently both Alec, and Mrs Gardner too, thought this hilarious. I met her, with half a dozen other lads, at the Gardners’ house on Middleton Boulevard when rehearsing for ‘Everyman’. I played ‘Fellowship’, a noisy, larger than life, extrovert character, so nil points for casting. Mrs G was lovely - we all enjoyed having our faces made up by her for the live production, c. 1959.

Alec was an inspiration too for the small number of ethnic minority pupils at HP and I vividly recall him encouraging Chad, a lad from Ceylon, cheering him on to victory in the 440 yards. (Doesn’t that sound so old-fashioned?).

Stanley Middleton was also a great hero of mine, and fellow resident in Sherwood. I was staggered when I realised that he actually rated me. He presented me with a Progress Prize in 1959, and the English essay prize, particularly cherished, in 1963. To some degree we all basked in Stanley’s fame as a successful novelist.

I feel that I should particularly mention Harry Davies. I think (now) that as Head he set the values, the tone of the school, and ensured that the tone subtly percolated down to all of us. Though at times he could appear threatening, he was actually wise, caring and sensitive: I recall one occasion when he had to announce the death of a close colleague at an assembly. Having delivered his brief eulogy he burst into tears and rushed off the stage; a dramatic and moving moment, still remembered.

On a very different occasion, in a General Studies lesson (it was very general) Harry took us through a series of questions about teenage life. His surprise last question would hardly cause a ripple nowadays but in 1962 it floored us all. (Don’t forget, as Philip Larkin has it, ‘sexual intercourse began in 1963’). His question: ‘*Have you done it?*’ After the initial shock, then a degree of nervous tittering, we all recorded our answers faithfully. Maybe. There were

wags, afterwards, who claimed they'd written witty answers, for example, 'No, but I practice a lot by myself so that I'm ready when the time comes!'

'Crock' Crossland I remember fondly. He had tremendous tales about Persia, and brought in fabulous magazines for us to read. He warned us about the dangers of public loos. 'When sitting on the toilet, always put a piece of loo paper on the edge of the bowl, to stop your penis touching it.' He didn't explain why, except to hint darkly at what we might catch.

Fred Wells, more prosaically, told us to push back the cuticles on our finger nails, to reduce nail biting. That's all I recall learning from him, I was hopeless at maths, and got no help from him, so he does not figure in my personal pantheon.

Mr Dobson, 'Dobbo' an English teacher, warned us of the dangers of planned obsolescence, for example car manufacturers designing cars with doors that one had to slam to close, hence reducing their lifespan. He had a favourite word to illustrate how, in German, adjectives and noun were all consolidated together in a single word, thus: 'hard-to-get-into-by-the-average-burglar-type-of-safe'. So he reckoned.

The last teacher I'll mention was one we called Isiah; I don't know his real name<sup>2</sup>. He wore glasses, which only slightly disguised the fact that one of his eyes was higher than the other – hence "Isiah". Think about it.

**Phil Ward 1956-63**

[P.S. The classicist in me (all classicists are pedants) cannot allow what I think is a minor error in Anthony's article to go unremarked. *εχιδνα* is actually Greek for 'viper' or 'adder'. *εχινος* is the word I believe Anthony is thinking of. It means hedgehog or ballot box; the shell of the *εχινος*, a sea urchin, was used as a jar, or, hence, as a ballot box. I'm so glad we've got that sorted. See why I'm quite good for crosswords and pub quizzes. But little else... **Phil**]

**ooOoo**

### **FROM TREVOR RUTLAND**

#### **An appeal for contacts**

Trevor Rutland has contacted the Society for contacts who might remember him at High Pavement from the years 1961- 66. His email address is [rutland9@gmail.com](mailto:rutland9@gmail.com). He will be pleased to hear from anyone who remembers him from those years.

We are always glad to put old friends in touch even, as with Trevor, they are not members of the Society. Please respond via email.

**ooOoo**

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

<b>2017 AGM Supper and Quiz Night</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>September 25<sup>th</sup></b>
(please see also the separate notice enclosed with <i>The Pavior</i> )		
<b>Pub Lunch at Lowdham (World's End)</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>November 7<sup>th</sup> (TBC)</b>
<b>Christmas Pub Lunch (Mapperley GC)</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>December 11<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>2018 Annual Reunion Dinner</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>April 23<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>2018 AGM</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>September 24<sup>th</sup> (2018)</b>

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

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<sup>2</sup> Mr Clark -Ed.

## PICTURES FROM THE PAST

### FROM MIKE SCHOLEY

Dear Editor, I enclose a photograph of the **HPGS 1963-64 Cross-Country** team, taken in the main hall at Gainsford Crescent.



From left to right they are:

**Back, standing:** Fred Millidge (teacher); Mike Hancock; Alex Scott; Murray Johns; ? ; ?.

**Front:** Mike Scholey; Martin Lawson; Derek Perry; ? .

Sadly, Derek Perry suffered a fatal accident on his honeymoon in Tunisia, I think, during the early 1970s. He was electrocuted by a faulty pump in the hotel swimming pool where he was staying (according to my memory

of a conversation I had with Mike Hancock in 1973).

**Kind regards, Mike Scholey (HPGS 1958-1965) Dordogne, France.**

### FROM PETER CHARNLEY

Peter Charnley, though not a Society member, has tracked us down via the internet and has



kindly sent a few old photos of a VI form group in 1946. We have shown some of these faces in an earlier issue, when we were contacted by Derek Tonkin but this picture (taken on the school roof – forbidden access to all except the VI forms) is a better one with some otherwise missing members. Peter identifies the following:

**Back row:** Tarbox; Unknown (possibly Geoff Robinson ? –Ed); Smither; Davies; Wheatcroft; Charnley.

**Centre:** Gallichan

**Front row:** Harmston; Maclean; Lowe; another unknown.

We hope this will kindle a few memories of those days and maybe produce a response from someone for the next *Pavior*. Our thanks to Peter Charnley to whom the editor will pass any messages, if required.

ooOoo

## THE ETHIOPIAN ADVENTURE OF TED HUMPHREYS



Many Old Paviers will remember Ted Humphreys who began his life at HP in the 1920s as a pupil at Stanley Road and went on to University College Nottingham, obtaining an honours degree in physics. In 1938 he became a physics and maths master at HP, the year he married Madge Pearson, also a teacher. During the war years Ted was recruited as a ‘boffin’, working on radar development, before returning to HP in 1946 as a physics master, teaching, among others, the writer of this article.

Possibly the war years had made him restless with his work in England because in 1950 he applied for the post of lecturer in physics, mathematics and mechanics at the training school of the Imperial Ethiopian Air Force, initially for a 3-year contract.

The country was not a world power in any respect, being the virtual fiefdom of its Emperor, Haile Selassie, who had seen fit to set up an air force with a training centre and flying school at Bishoftu near the capital, Addis Ababa. Prior to WW2 the country had been occupied by Italian military forces in Mussolini’s grandiose plan to set up an African empire. However, during the war British forces defeated the Italian military and set up a quasi-colonial government until the exiled Emperor could return. This led Ted and Madge, and others too, to expect that there would be a significant RAF presence in the country but on arrival they discovered that the Flying School was mainly run by a detachment of the *Swedish* Air Force under their titled commanding officer, Count Rosen.

To fit in with this Ted was appointed as an officer in the Swedish Airforce and had the task of setting up and operating the training courses in the areas of physics and mathematics appropriate to the school’s training courses.

Life for the two of them was a mixture of social activities with the few Britons and more numerous Swedish couples (among whom they made many friends) and contact with the daily life of a somewhat undeveloped east African country with a rather hostile climate. The small house which was their living quarters had a power supply that was intermittent on a daily basis, as was the piped water supply, but they made the best of it and Madge showed great fortitude and resourcefulness in tolerating its shortcomings.

In due course the couple managed to acquire a second hand car (cars were not numerous in England in those days, never mind Ethiopia – where there were far fewer). It was a Fiat ‘Topolino’, probably imported during the Italian era and its reliability depended on a great deal of ‘hands on’ maintenance by Ted and his colleagues.

Ted had naturally set the highest standards in the flying school schemes under his control and produced a well-trained output, although there were some candidates who were rather disappointed at the rigor of his examinations.



The Ethiopian administration had its inadequacies which often resulted in the late payment of salaries which all the staff regarded as an unacceptable state of affairs. Ted also ran into difficulties when trying to recruit other staff from the UK, resulting in the appointments being cancelled after the recruits had handed in

their notice to their employers. The senior Ethiopian officer in the Department was extremely intransigent about this and other matters, leading to much frustration for the school staff and eventually Ted made a decision not to extend his contract and returned to England in 1953 with the rank of Major. Madge too had had enough of the strange life they had led, even though much of the country was very beautiful and they had made several explorations of great interest (some of it in the unpredictable Topolino).

They returned to the UK by ship via South Africa and the Atlantic coast (there were no really reliable air lines in those days).

Ted later took up an appointment as senior physics master at East Barnet Grammar School and after retiring settled first in Bottesford and finally Nottingham.

Madge Humphreys died, aged 85, in 1999 and Ted died, aged 87, a year later.

**Compiled by Colin Salsbury from *An Ethiopian Diary* by Patricia Stephens and Tony Humphreys, based on the diary of Madge Humphreys.**

ooOoo

### **TONY HUMPHREYS**

We have been informed by Christine Humphreys, that our member, Tony Humphreys, died on June 13<sup>th</sup> 2016.

Tony was for some time an active member of the Society's committee until ill health prevented further involvement. (Unfortunately news of his passing did not reach the Society until a later date).

### **LEON BRYAN**

Our member, Leon (Leo) Bryan passed away on June 17<sup>th</sup> 2017 after a short illness. His funeral was held on July 3<sup>rd</sup> in Tunbridge Wells. (*His friend, Alan Stevenson, has contributed a brief memoir on page 6*)

### **GEOFF GOOCH**

A long-time member and supporter of this Society, Geoff Gooch sadly passed away on 13<sup>th</sup> July. His funeral service was held at Bramcote Crematorium on 31<sup>st</sup> July, in the presence of representatives from all levels of Nottinghamshire amateur and professional cricket, a game in which he had been involved all his adult life.

Ken Kirk and Robin Taylor represented the High Pavement Society together with his close friends, Roy and Margaret McClean, Mike and Elizabeth Tomlinson and Dave Marriott.

**The High Pavement Society sends its sincere condolences to the families of these former members**

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ROBERT THOMPSON

In the May issue of The Pavior, in the announcement about Robert Thompson the name of Alan Matthias was inadvertently substituted. We would like to apologise to the families of both these former Old Pavors for this unfortunate error.

## HIGH PAVEMENT SIXTH FORM CENTRE ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

The 2017 Awards Evening of the High Pavement City Sixth Form Academy took place on Tuesday June 20<sup>th</sup> in the Learning Centre of the Academy on Chaucer Street, Nottingham.



Denise Jelly, the Head of Faculty, presided and welcomed High Pavement Society representatives, Robin Taylor and John Elliott. The occasion was one in which students receive their certificates of commendation for their work during the past year. Three out of the 70 recipients were selected by the Academy to receive the additional award of a £25 Book Token donated by our Society.



**Top left:** Imogen Dakin with Robin Taylor

**Below left:** Alexandro Justin with John Elliott

**Right:** Denise Jelly proudly shows our representatives the extensive range of A Level courses on offer by the Academy.

Their citations were as follows:

### **Imogen Dakin:**

*'High Academic Calibre, Intellectual Versatility, Contagious enthusiasm, Talented and Ambitious.'* (Award presented by Robin Taylor)

### **Hosan Williams:**

*'Model Student, Exemplary Dedication and Motivation, Great Team Player.'* (The recipient was unfortunately not able to be present)

### **Alexandro Justin:**

*'Exceptional Dedication and Commitment, Excellent Role Model and Devotion to Peer Support.'* (Award presented by John Elliott)

Denise Jelly in her address congratulated all the award winners and commended the association between the Society and the Academy, expressing the hope that it would long continue.

The evening concluded with informal meetings between staff, students, parents and friends as they enjoyed the refreshments p

## PUB LUNCH NEWS

### Mapperley Golf Club

The HPS Country Lunch Club gathered once more at a favourite venue on June 7<sup>th</sup>, a bright and sunny day. The numbers (21) were a little down but Chairman Ken Kirk remarked in his speech of welcome that the group was ‘*small but perfectly formed*’<sup>3</sup>, implying that the quality was there if not the quantity.



The fare was of the usual substantial and appetising quality we have come to expect and our pictures show it being



consumed with our usual gusto. We were very pleased to welcome Bob Studland and Tony Wheadon who had made special efforts to attend and among the regulars was Ray Bryson, who was also a Golf Club member.



Ray drew our attention to a wall plaque of Honorary Life Members of the club with several names which included ‘G J R Potter’, no less. Yes, it was the renowned Head of High Pavement School, who did so much for us in his time (1929-47) before moving on to pastures new. We felt honoured indeed to encounter that famous name.

The event was organised on behalf of the committee by John Mason.

### The Nags Head, Mickelover, Derby.

Also organised by John Mason, the Society mustered some 20 members for this pub lunch (there would have been more guests had it not been for the road blocks caused by a serious accident *en route*). This hostelry was located in remote Mickelover, and promoted itself rather alarmingly as ‘*The Flaming Grill*’! We had not sampled its fare before but it produced suitable dishes, if a little slowly (and the milk ran out when coffees were ordered)—but then again, nobody’s perfect. Never mind, the hearts were warm in spite of it and all enjoyed the sociability of the occasion.



*[It’s worth mentioning here that the editor of the Pavior and his wife arrived a day early for this event due to a communication error. They enjoyed a lunch but without the company. Nobody’s perfect!]*

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[<sup>3</sup> An expression now in common use but which dates back as far as 1914, according to a source via Google. I just thought you’d all like to know that-Ed.]

## OUR END PIECE

Phil Ward

*[In our May issue our regular contributor, Tommy Gee, uttered some challenging ideas about Grammar Schools and Class, particularly those arising from his own experience. In this article we can read the response of our member, Phil Ward. Interestingly, at the present time (written at the end of June) the Governments proposed initiatives on grammar schools seem to have been put on ice.-Ed.]*

First, the general background. I don't agree with Tommy Gee that *The Guardian* has been equivocal about whether grammar schools are or were a good thing. *The Guardian* definitely opposes grammar schools, and the proposed extension of them.

It reports:

*'..... that grammar schools thrived in a period of social change (1940's to 1960's) does not prove that they were the cause (of that change).'*

*And later, 'Even if grammar schools boosted social mobility for the lucky few they left many more behind. The 11+ measures parents' ability to pay for coaching, not children's natural abilities.'*

Secondly, the more personal stuff. The problem that we all have, gentlemen, is that we are a self-selected band of ageing grammar school males with opinions on said grammar schools (one specifically) that could never be regarded as objective; and those views were formed decades ago when everything was very different.

I lived on Haydn Road, Sherwood and attended Haydn Road Junior School. Ours was a small terraced house, with an outside toilet, no bathroom, and few luxuries. I don't want to come over all 'Monty Python' on you, but yes we did struggle. Virtually all my ancestors on my Dad's side (traced in part through the generous help of Pavior Archivist Lance Wright), were miners. Dad couldn't be a miner, his health wasn't good. He actually worked at Players and my Mum at Stumps (a textile firm on Haydn Road in the old Kinema building). Both were in low level jobs so we never had enough money. Tommy Gee says he knew and played with kids much poorer than himself as he grew up. Well, I didn't. The Ward family: parents, an older sister, a younger brother and me, were amongst the poorest in our neighbourhood. Receipt of free school meals is, Tommy suggests, the usual test of poverty. I went home for dinner (sorry, lunch - see how posh I am now?) when we mostly had bread and dripping, sometimes bread and jam; and that was about it. We never 'licked the road with us tongues' though.

Tommy reckons that 'HP boys looked up to those at the High School, and the High School kids looked down on us'. I didn't look up to the HS boys. I passed the 11+ and then the High School exams, so, at the age of ten, accompanied by my mother, I went along to be interviewed there. I didn't even know what the word 'interview' meant; no-one told me, and I didn't ask. There were four interviewers, tall, male, imposing, with strange black robes over their shoulders.

'Why, Ward,' the lead inquisitor boomed, after a few pleasantries, 'do you want to come to the Nottingham High School?' the last three words enunciated slowly and carefully, as befitted an institution of such fame and grandeur. 'I don't', says I. 'Me Mam wants me to.' The interview did not last too much longer after that. I was not accepted.

My time at HP was, I suspect, like most others; we just got on with it. It wasn't the best time of my life, though I had a number of good mates. Despite the House system, and the variety of games on offer, the amount of mixing between academic groups and ages was, I found, somewhat limited. Most of my friends were lower middle class, (i.e higher than me, but I didn't mind, being quite broad minded). One or two were *pukka* middle class.

Probably my closest friend was David Orton, son of a company owner/director and younger brother of another Pavior, Peter Orton, who had gone on to Oxford. David rebelled somewhat against all that and became, like me, a strong Labour supporter. Other friends were fellow rowers in the Second Crew, and they were also pretty middle class. At home in Haydn Road my friends of old went off to Secondary Modern at eleven – part of 'the left behind' - and gradually fell away. I suffered some low level harassment when I first started at HP, mainly because I was the only one in our gang to go there. Regularly, my HP school cap was forcibly removed, (until I stopped wearing it). My tie was used as a throttle round my neck. Eventually they tired of it.

At fourteen I was summoned to see Taffy Davies who explained that I was judged to have done very well in French and Latin, so I now needed to choose between Russian or Ancient Greek for a third language. I chose Russian. 'Yes', he responded, 'we thought you'd say that. You're doing Greek'. I went on to do Greek, Latin and Ancient History at 'A' level.

I left HP in 1963, without a backward glance. What I now see, much more clearly than I did then, is the *values* we were taught (or perhaps were gradually, subtly, instilled into us) that counted, rather than the subjects we studied. These values counted for a lot.

I carried on to study Classics at University College London. This experience was certainly an eye-opener (rather as Tommy states about his time at Oxford) but with me it wasn't because of the sudden awareness of 'Class' that he reports. I'd learned early on that nearly everyone was better off than us. With me, rather, it was the realisation that there was so much to see and do in the world, '*Oh brave new world. That has such people in't*'.

After UCL I did a Post Graduate Certificate in Education at Nottingham University, with a vague view of teaching Classics. I was sent to a private school for my teaching term, a school full of confident young men from very wealthy backgrounds, so patently unlike me. I was neither confident nor wealthy. I chose not to go into teaching.

Instead I applied for a job in industry, and joined Rolls-Royce (Aero Engines) in Derby. After an initial graduate training scheme, I became Personal Assistant to the Managing Director. This was my transformation moment – introduced to the world of big business, to international travel, to important people who had their every need catered for, to secretaries and chauffeurs (Rolls-Royce cars, obviously), to politicians, to the media, to Knights of the Realm (Sir David Huddie, the MD, had been knighted a few months before I began working for him). I had to learn very quickly.

I won't go through the rest of my CV – I'm not applying for a job. [See my UCL alumnus write-up <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/classics/alumni/alumni-of-month>- if you really want to learn more.] I reckon I did OK, career-wise, probably better than many, and living now in a converted barn my wife and I both love, a mile from a delightful beach in South Devon, I am pretty contented. It's a far cry from Haydn Road. Unlike Tommy I cannot claim to have joined

‘the ranks of those who governed; the meritocracy, the intellectuals, those who ran the country’.

I have, though, made a number of visits to Number Ten, meeting several prime ministers (see photo of me with J. Major, below), I have served as a trustee of a number of national



charities, including Oxfam, I have worked on various committees, including Blair’s Social Exclusion Unit, working out of the Cabinet Office in Whitehall (another eye opener). I could not have achieved whatever I have in life without the things I learned at HP, and then at UCL. I am eternally grateful.

So, I can either suggest that grammar schools worked for me, so why not extend the system, a little? *Or* I can heed my Guardian/socialist beliefs, and conclude that

there must be a better way of ensuring that **everyone** is allowed to make the most of their potential. That way is probably the comprehensive route. For the many not the few, dare I say. The hard evidence, as opposed to biased or dated opinion, supports that view. My two daughters both attended comprehensives; totally biased as I am, I believe they have both done very well, with good degrees from good universities and now good careers (fitted around my five grandsons!).

One final point. I recall Harry Davies, during his sabbatical year at Cambridge in the 60’s, working on a thesis around the subject of the poor accessing grammar schools (*plus ça change....*). One aspect of his theme focused on what the barriers might be. He suggested that perhaps the curriculum itself was one barrier, one potential source of alienation. Certainly as I progressed with languages, and tried but failed to progress with algebra or trigonometry, my parents were of less and less help to me. And the loss of parental credibility that this entailed meant an increasing rift between me and them. Ancient Greek? - ‘*eeh our Philip, even the letters are different!*’ This, from my Mum, was the final straw.

**Phil Ward**