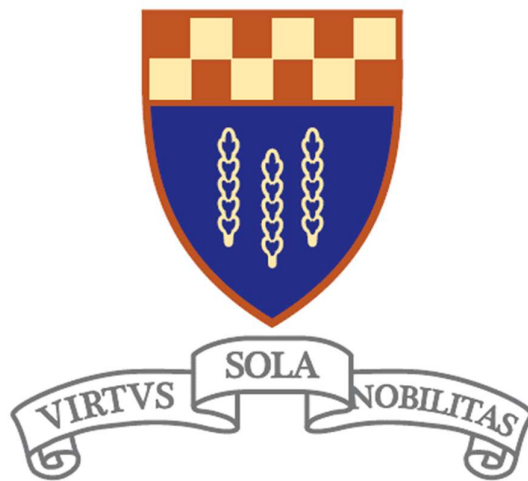


# **The Pavior**



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

**August 2023**

### 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!

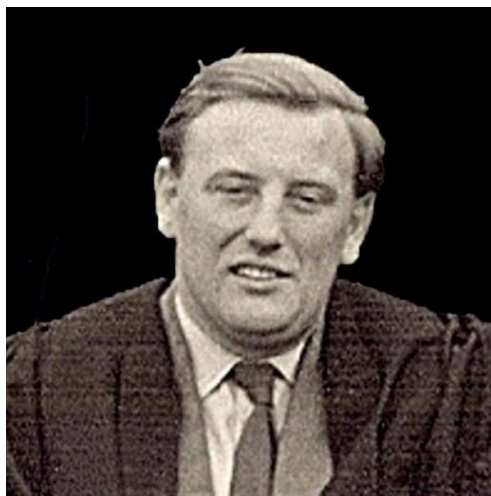
#### President: Ken Kirk

Honorary Vice President: John J Elliott  
Honorary Vice President: Colin Salsbury (01509 558764)  
Committee Chairman: Barry Johnson (07305 787517)  
Deputy Chairman: Vacant  
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The HP Society **Website** address is: [www.highpavementsociety.org.uk](http://www.highpavementsociety.org.uk)

The HP Society **Facebook Page** is: [www.facebook.com/groups/232442222741252/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/232442222741252/)



**Faces to Remember**  
**Jack Wilson Barrett**  
**Mathematics & Rugby**  
**1956 - 64**

## COMMITTEE NOTICES

Dear Member,

You are cordially invited to attend the 'High Pavement Society' 2023 Annual General Meeting to be held on **Monday 25th September 2023** at **The Paviers RFC Function Room, Burntstump Hill, Arnold, Nottingham. NG5 8PQ** commencing at **12 noon**. All members, wives, partners and guests are welcome.

The Society will be guests of the Paviers RFC, with whom we have fraternal relations, as part of that club's 100 Year Anniversary and which will also celebrate the opening of their new extension to the Clubhouse and its facilities.

The formal **AGM Notification** and a **Menu Order Form** may already have been sent to you by email but if not or if you have discarded them the Order Form is **on the Flyer enclosed with this newsletter**.

If you have not done so already will you please complete the form and return as soon as possible.

We look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

With Best Wishes,

Barry Johnson

Chairman

### Invitation to the Annual General Meeting

**Please be aware that any proposals or resolutions for inclusion on the AGM Agenda should be in writing to the Chairman or Secretary at least 21 days prior to the AGM.**

Wives, partners and guests are welcome but only paid-up members will be able to formally attend and vote at the AGM.

The Paviers RFC celebrated 100 years of its existence this year and to celebrate this achievement it has extended its clubhouse facilities to meet the growing needs of the club, its players and members. The Function Room and Bar have been refitted this summer and additional ground floor changing rooms added. The High Pavement Society is honoured to be invited to be the first to see these facilities at our AGM and we hope all members will make a special effort to attend.

After the AGM at approximately 12.45/1.00pm there will be a simple '*Paviers Match Day Fare*' meal served at a cost of £15.00 per person (payable in advance). This will consist of a Hot Pie, Chips and Peas followed by a selection of Delicatessen Meats, Cheeses, Biscuits, Tea or Coffee. The Club Bar will also be open and the new two-storey clubhouse and grounds will be open for members and visitors to look around, chat and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.. There is a 4 person lift installed to gain access to the 1st floor.

Good parking facilities are available for those coming by car. Special free transport arrangements will be organised by the High Pavement Society/Paviers RFC to allow anyone using public transport to be ferried the extra mile to the club grounds from the **Stagecoach Pronto bus stop** at the Seven Mile House, A60 Mansfield Road. These buses run every 15 minutes from and to Chesterfield Coach Station, Mansfield Bus Station and Nottingham Victoria Centre and Concessionary Fares apply after 9.30am. Also transport can be made available from Hucknall Station (Nottingham NET Tram and EMR Robin Hood Line) by prior notification.

(for details see the 'Flyer' inserted with this issue.)

Barry Johnson Chairman

ooOoo

### The search goes on!

We still need more help to operate as a proper committee. Our detailed appeal in the May issue of *The Pavior* produced but a single response, from member Gerald Taylor. Welcome as it was, Gerald lives too far away to be able to attend our Committee meetings but we have offered him work as a Committee member which makes this possible.

However, we do need 'boots on the ground', so we can, among other tasks, appoint a new Secretary and a new Treasurer to replace the acting holders of these offices. As we explained in our first appeal the appointees will act as Assistants so they can 'learn the ropes' and are not being 'dropped in at the deep end' (mixing metaphors like mad).

If you live within say, a 20 mile radius of our meeting venue on Gregory Boulevard (where there is always free parking available) please think hard about joining us in running the show.

### OBITUARY

We have been informed by his wife Gina that our member **David Colin Craib** passed away on Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup> 2023. Colin was at High Pavement School from 1952 to 1958 and was in Wollaton House. The Society sends its sincere condolences to Gina and the family.

### The Society Tie



Our ties are (always) readily available for any member at a price of **£12.00** each including postage. Quality is excellent and enhances any Society occasion. **Please send your order with cheque to the Secretary (address on page 2). He will do the rest.**

ooOoo

### The Flyer

All readers should check that they have not inadvertently discarded the separate Flyer enclosed with this newsletter. It is an important document requiring your attention.

Thank you.

ooOoo

### Message from the editor

I am pleased to be able to report that, after an extended absence due to sickness, I have now been able to resume the role of editor of *The Pavior*.

During my absence the Society has been fortunate to utilising the skill and ingenuity of my Committee colleague Graham Wybrow, the Society's Archivist, as the substitute editor. He has thoughtfully extended his dedication to assist me in preparing the current issue and I wish to thank him for this favour.

**Colin Salsbury**

ooOoo

## **Bestwood Remembered - The Boys' Toilets**

The main Boys' Toilets were located on the Ground Floor of the Main Building at the foot of the West End Staircase (ie where the Admin Corridor met the Main Building). In the 1960s, there were also identical but 'mirror image' toilets at the foot of the East-End Staircase. However, in the 1970s, these were converted to girls' toilets when the boys' school became a "mixed" college (adding a whole new meaning to "mirror symmetry"). There were of course other boys' toilets around the site (eg in the Science Block, Gym Changing Rooms, etc) but these in the Main Building were by far the largest.

This photo (c.2000) shows the toilets looking almost the same as in the 1960's, with 5 Urinals, 2 Cubicles, 5 Wash-Basins and 1 Mirror. There was also 1 Drinking Fountain and 1 Cotton Roller Towel, usually wet and on a wooden rail,



roughly located where the electric Hand-Dryer and the large wooden box (no idea what that is) are in the photo.

Curiously, I personally believe that this Drinking Fountain may have had a significant impact on the academic performance of the school. Let me explain. Like many other pupils of the time, I could never somehow bring myself to use a Drinking Fountain located in the toilets, knowing only too well that teenage boys are not particularly hygienic and can also have a wicked sense of humour. Also, this particular fountain did not work well, with the "fountain" never reaching more than 1 inch above the jet nozzle – it was almost necessary to suck the water out of the nozzle. I presume that this was a consequence of the drinking water being piped directly from the mains (for purity) which would unfortunately have come with very low water pressure because of the schools location at the top of a big hill.

Back in the 60s, there were of course no drinks vending machines and no plastic water-bottles of the kind almost everyone carries today. Only the 1/3 pint of milk that every pupil was entitled to each day at mid-morning break<sup>1</sup>. There was therefore no practical way of rehydrating during school sessions and I can well remember the physical discomfort that I used to experience (particularly last periods morning and afternoon, especially in summer and after PE / games) and now recognise to have been the direct result of dehydration. Knowing what we know today about the importance of adequate hydration for concentration, I can only wonder what our fine school might have achieved academically, given just one decent drinking fountain properly located (ie anywhere but in the Boys' Toilets). **Graham Wybrow**

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<sup>1</sup> Until 1968 when Edward Short, the Labour Secretary of State for Education and Science, withdrew free milk from secondary schools for children over eleven. In 1971, his successor the Conservative Margaret Thatcher, withdrew free milk from children over 7 and in 1977, the Labour Minister Shirley Williams withdrew free milk for children between the ages of 5 and 7.

## Stanley Road Remembered

### Colin Salsbury recalls 'Fagging' and other follies

At the Stanley Road premises of High Pavement there was a swimming pool in the basement which in 1939, following the outbreak of WW2, was reinforced and converted into an air raid shelter. The access door to the shelter was on the south side of the building, down about three or four steps from the lower yard (playground to lesser mortals). It is still there as the entrance to the premises for visitors to the present establishment which is part of Forest Fields Primary School, although the concrete canopy and blast walls have been removed.

When I started my career at HP in 1942 there was a practice among the older boys of seizing any hapless newcomer and frog-marching him to this entrance. He was then hurled down the steps to crash against the locked door (not a very hostile act as it was only a few feet) but intimidating enough when you were only eleven years old and everyone seemed so huge. Gradually the small pit filled up with victims to the great discomfort of the first arrivals.

The practice was known as 'fagging' and the victims (in fact all the first years) were referred to by their persecutors as 'Fags' after the practice in some Public Schools, described so graphically in the entertaining books of Frank Richards (Billy Bunter and all that).

That was all that happened but somebody seemed to have come off rather painfully and in school assembly Mr Crossland, the Deputy Head (Crock to you and me) and responsible for all disciplinary matters, mounted the rostrum and announced that the practice had got to stop. He said that the school had its own genteel initiation ceremonies on the sports fields if we felt one was necessary.

Thus the fagging died. I and all the other first formers were therefore thwarted from wreaking our vengeance on the following year's intake. We never witnessed its revival although bullying no doubt still existed in a clandestine form. Boys will be boys, after all.

Another practice which was condemned was to climb on to the school roof! This was strictly forbidden for safety reasons. The school was (and is) a lofty building but there always seemed to be someone among the sixth formers who was able to use his privileged rank to scramble from the central roof area to the turret and attach some article like a flag (or in one case an effigy of Hitler) to be removed by someone else (usually one of the caretakers) at some risk to life and limb. The turret, now fully rebuilt, was then reputed to be in a decayed state and likely to give way or even collapse.

(The present occupants in the building are many years younger than in our time and unlikely to emulate the practice. Maybe the thought has never even crossed their minds.)

**Colin**

ooOoo



The entrance as it is today, now devoid of the pit into which the 'fags' were once thrown – but arrow marks the spot (from memory).

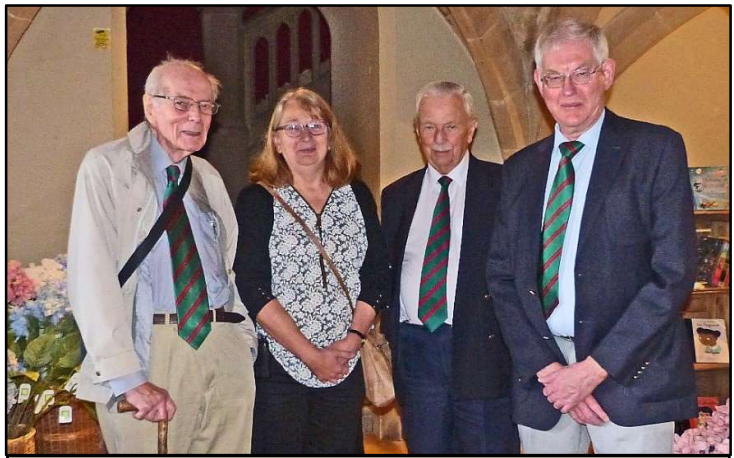


## A Visit to Newstead Abbey

It all started back in the autumn of 2019 when I wrote to the Nottingham Museums Service to enquire if they had any items relating to High Pavement School. They replied with a list of just six items. We paid the nominal Administration Fee and Colin Salsbury and I arranged to visit the Museum's offices near the Castle to view and photograph these items.

However, one item, a Girl's Hatband, was not available there as it was stored with the Costumes Collection at Newstead Abbey. Therefore, in the late autumn of 2019, I contacted the Curator of Costumes at

Newstead Abbey to discuss a viewing. However, circumstances intervened and there then followed 3 years of general Covid disruption and periods of significant ill health for both Colin and myself. However, finally, on Tue 25 Jul 2023, we made it to Newstead Abbey where we got to see the Hatband at last. I also got to meet the Curator with whom I had been communicating for some 3½ years.

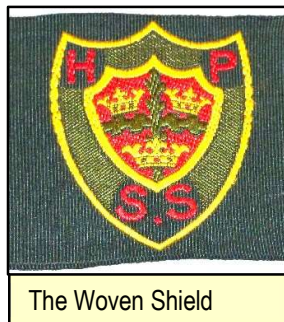


The Meeting at Newstead Abbey, Tue 25 Jul 2023. From L to R: Colin Salsbury (Society Acting Secretary & Pavior Editor), Judith Edgar (Curator of Lace, Costumes & Textiles), Ken Kirk (Society President) & Graham Wybrow (Society Archivist).



**HPSS Girl's Hatband:** Museum Item NCM 1978-620 Hatband / Girl's School: Green Petersham ribbon (High Pavement Secondary School, Nottingham) length of ribbon, one end with bow of 1 loop and 2 fringed tails, woven with yellow outline shield with the Arms of the City of Nottingham and H.P.S.S. in red. Band is 2" wide and 20" long (i.e. 5 x 51.5 cms)

The Hatband in question is Dark Green in colour, 2" wide and approx. 20" long. It carries the (then) school badge in a shield shape and a bow. It would presumably have been worn with the badge centre front and the bow on the left-hand side. I hope to describe this in more detail in a later article.



The Woven Shield

We had a very interesting and enjoyable meeting with the Curator of Lace, Costumes & Textiles, Judith Edgar, who kindly agreed to join us for lunch afterwards in the Abbey Café. We learned that Judith also attended High Pavement, in her case during the Sixth-Form College Transition Years in the mid-1970s.

Curiously, our President, Ken Kirk had an additional reason for being interested in Newstead Abbey. Back in the 1930s, his mother had worked at Newstead Abbey as a live-in housemaid to the then resident McCraith family, who were prominent Nottingham solicitors.

**Graham Wybrow**

ooOoo

## Sixth-Form College Awards Evening 2023

The High Pavement Sixth-Form College held its Awards Presentation Event at 6pm on the evening of Tue 13 June. The event was held at Chaucer Street in the Cafeteria which was specially rearranged for the event. It was a fine hot summers evening and the additional air-conditioning was much appreciated.

As usual, the High Pavement Society was invited to send representatives and this is always a great pleasure for us. We are always warmly welcomed by the College staff. On this occasion, the Society was represented by our President Ken Kirk, Graham Wybrow and John Chambers.

The Head of Centre, Adam Beazley greeted the students and families and started the proceedings. Our President Ken Kirk was invited to say a few words about the Society and its relationship to the College. I have personally attended a number of these events now and find the experience very rewarding. Inevitably, I find my thoughts turning to the similar events that were held when I was at school and try to see the evening through the eyes of the young students.

Certainly much has changed since my schooldays. Now there is much less formality and very much more diversity. However, I feel that this is the School/College doing what it has always done and changing with the times. As circumstances change, so the School/College adapts to accommodate.

What is unchanging is the ever present energy and enthusiasm of the young students – and this is always so inspiring. I always leave the event with clear memories of happy young students (often with their parents) proudly clutching their well-earned certificates. and I have increased optimism for the future.



L to R: Ken Kirk, Adam Beazley (Head of Centre) and Dawn Ashley (Sixth Form Operations Co-ordinator). Society President Ken Kirk addressing the audience.



The Prize-Winners, Students and Guests are seated in the body of the hall in the centre distance and the staff are seated separately in the foreground. The presentations took place just off the picture to the right.

**Graham Wybrow**

ooOoo



**FROM OUR READERS**  
**FROM TOMMY GEE**

*[Another note from our oldest contributor (started at HP in 1936!) without which no issue of this journal would be complete. (NB the first part of his item was submitted using a lightly held pencil on the back of an old invoice, which caused your editor not a little eyestrain in its interpretation! Further additions have arrived by more orthodox channels. A delivery from Tommy is always interesting!]*

**My dear [sic] Colin,**

I am now back home after a week in Cornwall during which a visit to Truro Cathedral was the Easter high spot. It is very special, being built only a hundred years ago, long after our mediaeval ones. However, it is built in the same style and shows just what the locals of their day could accomplish.

They found a suitable site in the middle of Truro with a church already standing there but they cleverly incorporated this in the new building. How the enormous blocks of granite were hoisted up into position I can't imagine. But then, the Egyptians built those pyramids and, come to think of it, we *did* help the Romans to build all those roads like the present day A1.

Now, referring to my last contribution in the May Pavior in



which I described my recent Brazil visit, I mentioned my trip by **funicular** up the Sugar Loaf Mountain (with its statue of Christ the Redeemer) for the view from the summit. I have now obtained a photo showing its operation. The funicular cables are marked with an arrow for clarity.

I also have found a photo of the travel on the rivers by small punt-like boats to which I alluded last time. These were quaintly called *piki-piki* and saved a lot of walking.



**Regards, Tommy (HP 1936-43)**

*[Thanks Tommy! Wherever will you go next, I wonder. I'm sure you will find somewhere interesting to explore. Just make sure you get back safely. Colin]*

**ooOoo**



Truro Cathedral

### **FROM Gerald TAYLOR [HP: 1964-71, Newstead House]**



*[Gerald has recently volunteered to join the HPS Committee to assist with the production of the Pavior Magazine and we welcome him to the Committee. In this article, he presents some of his memories of his days at High Pavement School]*

The May issue of The Pavior contained Bruce Phillips's recollections of his High Pavement days, which overlapped with mine, so I should like to add a few more memories of that time, although the names of some of the teachers may be unfamiliar to older Paviors.

Mr W J Gray was something of a character in the English department. He had a predilection for the word 'grotty', which he deployed at every opportunity, and its derivative, the verb 'to grot': what grammarians call a back formation, I believe. His language in general was expressively flamboyant. I recall that when we encountered a piece of text that could not be properly understood without knowledge of an episode in the Old Testament, he was disappointed to find that none of us were familiar with it. 'You lot,' he began in a denunciatory voice, as we all sat back in our seats in joyful anticipation of a Bill Gray tirade, 'are the most irreligious, sacrilegious shower of good-for-nothing atheistic layabouts I have ever, in all my life, had the misfortune to teach.'

In one year the school magazine contained a contribution entitled *Petite Teste Populaire*, which I think was due to Mr. R J 'Bert' Dodd. One question challenged the reader to say with whom you associated the following: *I'll have your guts for garters!* It was, of course, Mr Gray with whom we associated it.

Mr S W Hill (known not surprisingly, as 'Swill'), I remember as a sedate man of middle age. A pupil commented that he seemed a very contented character, but there were signs that the embers of an earlier more fiery nature had not altogether died out. Older Paviors may be able to enlighten me about that. Every so often he would raise his voice, no doubt in exasperation at the shortcomings of some wrongdoer, and the sounds of his discontent would permeate the walls and corridors of the building, even if they did not quite make it shake, and caused those in other classes to know that discord was afoot.

I also recall, though imperfectly, this anecdote told by a Pavior of an earlier era than mine. There had been a biology field trip and a pupil already at the destination and awaiting the rest of the party whiled away the time in some thoughtless activity that caused a hazard to cyclists on the footpath. The others following, all on bikes, came sweeping along the path, with Mr. Hill in the lead. Consequently it was he that first encountered the hazard and signalled his discovery of it by cartwheeling through the air. Having gone ballistic in the literal sense he then did so metaphorically, reprimanding the errant wretch at some length, and with many decibels.

Mr. Hill was also a member of the choir, his voice always coming through very clearly, so that a comment was once made about 'the Male Voice Choir, Mr. Hill.'

Mr John Preston, who taught chemistry, was a somewhat slightly built man, aged perhaps thirty. A more senior pupil than I remarked that you had to be abnormal to fail chemistry under his tutelage, and his revision homework assignments, though arduous, kept us up to the mark in the subject. His customary injunction to sinners, the negligent, the inadequate, and the generally depraved was 'Report to Mr. Rayner (the senior technician) at 4

o'clock.' Those thus condemned had to serve their term of imprisonment by making paper boats. I do not remember what these were for, but wonder whether High Pavement could have mustered the finest paper flotilla in the land.

Bruce mentioned Mr Thompson. There were three teachers of that name. The first, if I have it right, was Mr W S Thompson, who was known as 'Bommo'. In the late sixties Mr T L (Squadron Leader) Thompson arrived to teach physics and, it was announced eventually, mathematics. Not surprisingly he became known as 'Bomber'. There was also Mr P A Thompson, who taught chemistry. He left a year or two before Squadron Leader Thompson's arrival.

There were other names, many of them no doubt familiar to earlier generations of Paviers. They include Charlie Mardling, 'Jack' Train, Doug Slater, 'Sam' Thrasher, 'Puff' Graham, 'Compass' Smith, Christopher Joseph, Stan Middleton, 'Chick' Farr, Ray Caulton, 'Rip' Graves, Christopher Smith, Mr M A R Tuck, Mr. Beck, 'Dinky' Dunn(e), Victor Hartree, Alfred Wilson, James Bullock, Mr Harthill, Mr E Harris, Mr E P Brown, Mr Hollyworth, Eric Shepherd, Mr A P Millidge, Arthur Blackburn, Frank Williams, Mr J D Morris. But I will let the reader off with those already mentioned.

**Gerald Taylor**

ooOoo

### FROM Bruce PHILLIPS [HP: 1961-68, Wollaton House]

#### Science at High Pavement (2)

*[Bruce PHILLIPS is not a member of the Society but recently sent us some interesting recollections of his days at High Pavement. The first half of his recollections were published in the May 2023 Pavior and we now publish the remaining half, which covers his 6<sup>th</sup>-Form years and later career]*

In the sixth form, we were taught maths by Mr. Bullock. He was dreadfully ill at the time, but we didn't realise how ill. He would pause quite a lot, looking out of the window, and say, 'Bear with me, lads. Sadly, he died after the first term of the year in the Lower Sixth. Unfortunately, he wasn't replaced until the following year, so we had no Maths Teacher for months. Another teacher would come in and set us some work and go back to his own class. This left us with little understanding of the subject. Consequently, I and most of the group, struggled with calculus at the time but I'm happy to say that I caught up to some degree at later when at the Polytechnic and much later, when preparing for university in my forties, I taught myself from a book. The replacement for Mr. Bullock was an ex-RAF pilot, who, it seems, had retrained when he left the air force. His teaching of Mechanics always seemed to involve drawings of aircraft turning in the air! When



Bruce in 1972, 4 years after leaving HP - showing rebellious streak.



Close-up of that hair !!



it came to calculus, he would usually start with ‘Now you probably know more about this than I do.’ We all sat there, sadly shaking our heads.

When I started in the sixth form, I realized that if I took Chemistry, I would be taught by my arch-enemy, Johnny Preston. I knew that I couldn’t get on with him as I was becoming more of a rebel. However, there was a maths teacher by the name of Brown<sup>2</sup> (who resembled the broadcaster, Bamber Gascoigne, which earned him the nickname ‘Bamber’). He was a customer at my family’s shop and was instrumental in getting me transferred to the Lower Sixth Engineers. This set me on the engineering route and ultimately to Physics, so I have a lot to thank him for.



Bruce (1966) - but not in school uniform.

Most of the Engineering group had never taken Technical Drawing before and we only had two years to qualify. We had to cram in some extra lessons on Wednesday afternoons with Arthur Blackburn when we learned the skills and techniques involved. He would teach for one lesson and then set us a task to complete for the second as he had a different class to teach. I’m sure he must have given up a free period to accommodate us. In the first year we took our O-levels and in the second, our A-levels. This stood me in good stead when, later, I became an engineering draughtsman.

**Bruce Philips (1S, 2S, 3P, 4S2, 5S2, 6th-Form Engineering.)**

**[Comments by Graham Wybrow:**

- 1. I studied maths at HP under Jim Bullock and EP (Ted) Brown and went on to spend most of my working life as an engineer in the Aerospace industry. I was in the last 6<sup>th</sup>-form year to complete 2 full years with Jim Bullock before his premature death in the autumn of 1966 and have always considered myself fortunate to have completed those 2 years. Had he not been taken ill, your experience of the Calculus would have been quite different.*
- 2. I have a paper by Harry Davies written in 1959 entitled ‘An Experimental Engineering Course in a Grammar School’ detailing his attempts to found an Engineering Course at HP Stanley Road in 1954. Your article is, I think, the first reference I have seen to an actual Engineering Course at HP since then and I thank you for that important input.*
- 3. Noting Bruce’s pride in his distinctive long red hair, I wondered if he was one of the 2 boys with such features in the Super-8 Cine Film on YouTube, entitled ‘The 1960s. Scenes from High Pavement Grammar School, Nottingham’ (1966-69). However, Bruce confirmed that he was not one of those in the film. ]*
- 4. Correction: In Bruce’s article in the May Pavior, he named his Physics teacher as Mr Thompson. He subsequently realised that the name should have been Mr Steel – Mr GG Steel (Sep 63- Jul 71).*

**Graham Wybrow]**

**ooOoo**

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<sup>2</sup> This would have been Edwin Philip Brown (known as Mr EP (Ted) Brown), who taught Maths from Sep 64 - Dec 67.



## FROM DEREK TONKIN

Dear Colin,

The record of Sir (Frank) Stanley Tomlinson KCMG in the May 2023 issue of 'The Pavior' reminds me that from 1952-1971 we were both serving Foreign Office and (after 1966) Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials. Our paths never crossed, and he retired in 1972 aged 60, which was then the compulsory retirement age, and for me as well in 1989.

That he was knighted and I wasn't was all the fault of Margaret Thatcher, who didn't like the Diplomatic Service all that much and decided when she became Prime Minister in 1979 that only Grade 1 and 2 Ambassadors – the senior posts like Paris, Washington, Bonn, and Tokyo – should be knighted while those of us appointed, as I was, to Grade 3 and 4 posts like Vietnam and Thailand would lose the privilege. So it was that Tommy Tomlinson was knighted when in 1966 he became High Commissioner to Ceylon (Sri Lanka since 1972), but not his successors after 1979. The situation today is even tighter than before and only Ambassadors at Grade 1 posts are likely to be knighted.

Needless to say, all this caused umbrage not only among those of us who missed out, but also in countries affected. It was made clear to me by Prince Tongnoi Tongyai, the Private Secretary to His Majesty The King of Thailand, Bhumipol Aduljadej, that His Majesty was not at all pleased that I was the third British Ambassador in succession appointed by the Court of St James's of the House of Windsor to the Court of the Ninth Monarch of the House of Chakri who was not suitably honoured, so what was the British Government doing sending third-rate Ambassadors in whom they clearly had no confidence? It might be that I could be asked to return to London until the British Government appointed an Ambassador in whom they had confidence.

This I reported to the Foreign Office, who it seemed had already had representations from the Thai Ambassador in London, but who were also totally unmoved, fearing the wrath of Number 10. I argued unsuccessfully that we needed the tools to do the job. At least the matter was never raised with me again. It was especially galling that a very good friend of mine in Thailand, Jim Holt, had been knighted before I arrived in Bangkok in 1986 for his commercial prowess in selling British Saracen armoured vehicles to the Thai Army.

Tommy Tomlinson's career was not dissimilar to my own. As the son of a Police Sergeant, he was not deemed to be of sufficiently high social standing to seek to enter 'The Diplomatic', but having a degree from University College, Nottingham, which had in 1884 aligned itself with the University of London which offered external degree courses, he was allowed to sit for entry to the Consular Service and in 1935 was appointed Probationary Vice-Consul in Tokyo. As the attached extract from 'The Foreign Office List and the Diplomatic and Consular Year Book 1965' records, in 1937 he was appointed one of His Majesty's Vice-Consuls in Japan, which would mean that he was granted a consular *exequatur* by His Majesty King George VI guaranteeing his rights and privileges of office and ensuring recognition in Japan.

He might have expected to spend twenty years or more in Japan, rising to Consul and then Consul-General. He himself served in Tokyo, Kobe and Yokohama. But with the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939, he found himself transferred in April 1941 to Saigon, then the capital of the French colony of Cochinchina, with representation in the French National Assembly.

In 1940 French Indo-China fell under the influence of the Vichy regime which coexisted for some time with the Japanese authorities, so Tommy found himself under house arrest for

months until he was allowed to leave. In 1947 he was posted to the Foreign Office as a First Secretary, and this marked his entry into 'The Diplomatic' or Branch A of the Foreign Service as it became known under post-war reorganisation.

In my own case, at age 18, I passed the entrance examination to the Civil Service Executive Grade because my father had died the previous year and I did not expect to go to university. But I found myself in 1952 with no job, but an Oxford degree, so I took up a Branch B appointment in the Foreign Service which they had kindly kept waiting for me. In 1964 I too found myself unexpectedly transferred to Branch A as First Secretary, in the South East Asia Department of the Foreign Office, of which Tommy Tomlinson himself had been made Head in 1954.

It was purely coincidental that for years both our names were on the same page of annual Foreign Office lists, though for some reason the editors did not include the fact that I too was educated at High Pavement. I think we were the only ones. As it was, up to the turn of the century, it was rare for grammar school boys to reach Ambassador or High Commissioner rank. Those times have now gone.

Tommy was knighted as Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George, or KCMG (Kindly call me God). Higher still is Knight Grand Cross of the Order, or GCMG (God calls me God). I am a mere Companion of the Order, or CMG, and nobody calls me anything. Today, I wouldn't even get that. **Derek**

*[Thank you Derek, good to hear from another nonagenarian and former friend and fellow member of the School Scout Group. Those who came after our time would perhaps not realise that you were a man of many talents, especially in the school Dramatic Society with prominent roles in 'The Late Christopher Bean' and 'The Amazing Doctor Clitterhouse'. -Ed]*

**ooOoo**

### **FROM ROY JOHNSON**

**Hello to all concerned,**

I just want to say 'Well done!' to all who have been involved in revamping the HPS Website. It looks fantastic and is now so much more interesting to the reader. Obviously a lot of hard work and research has gone into its creation. **Best wishes, Roy Johnson**

*[The development of the Web-Site is very much a 'work-in-progress'. We have been planning to upgrade the Web-Site for 3-4 years now but because of workload we have been unable to get the new pages to the level of maturity/polish required for publication. Eventually, in frustration, we decided to go ahead and publish what we had, albeit incomplete in places - otherwise it was very likely that it would never see the light of day.*

*We are particularly keen now to complete the list of Distinguished Alumni. The list that we have published so far includes barely 40% of the names that we have identified, and we are finding new names to add to the list every week. Also this page is proving to be of particular interest to visitors to our Web-Site, a figure which we monitor. We feel that this page does much to demonstrate and celebrate the achievements of the School.'*

*The website is supervised by the Website Administrator, Lawrence Milbourn, a former member of staff of the Sixth Form College and now a member of our committee and the recent development owes much to the hard work that he has put in. **Graham Wybrow]***

## OUR END PIECE

ALAN A SMITH

### **Just An Ordinary Bloke – 3. Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS)**

*[In this article, 93 year old Alan (now living in Australia) provides more detail of his early career after leaving High Pavement in 1948 and completing 2 years National Service. He describes how he got into meteorology and came to join the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS) and his arrival, in 1952, at the UK Government Research Station at King Edward Point (KEP) on South Georgia. ]*

I trained as a Scientific Assistant (Meteorology) in London in 1950. Briefly, a Meteorologist would have a degree in either Maths or Physics after which they would have completed a 12 months course in Meteorology. A Scientific Assistant essentially provided all the material necessary for the meteorologists to devise their forecasts. The material comprised a wide range of observations such as temperatures, air pressure, amount and types of cloud and the height of their base, visibility, present and past weather, wind speed and direction from the surface to the upper atmosphere. The equipment used included thermometers, barometers and barograph, thermograph, hygograph, theodolite, radar and radio sondes.

At the end of training I was posted to Wick in Caithness. Many pleasant memories remain: The pipe band playing in the town square at the weekend; When on the night shift listening to a tinker on the far side of the airport, playing his pipes; Seeing excellent displays of the aurora borealis; My landlady playing cards six days a week (but never on Sundays!); A day visit to Orkney with two sisters; Walks along the cliffs to visit a Sinclair ruin.

In 1952 a newspaper advert was seeking volunteers to join the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey. I am qualified and invited to attend an interview in London. It was very brief. Had I a girlfriend? Could I cook? What outdoor activities was I involved in? Would I go across the road to have a brief medical check-up? A short time later a letter arrived telling me to go to Newcastle, get on a ship to Norway and that I was to go to the Antarctic on a whaling ship. Then a telegram arrived. *‘Do not go to Norway, report to London airport where you will be met. You are to fly to Montevideo where you will be met.’*

The BOAC DC6B left London on 7th September with stops at Lisbon, Dakar, Recife, Rio and Montevideo where we arrived on the evening of the 8th. I was met on arrival and 2 or 3 days later the lady of the house took me down to the docks, showed me where the Admiral Graf Spee was scuttled during WW2 and saw me aboard an Argentinian whaling supply vessel that was bound for Grytviken in South Georgia.

The ship was the rather ancient *Harpon* having been built in Hamburg in the 1890’s. Its 4th mate was Hermann Ritter, a German. In 1942 Hermann had led a meteorological expedition to northeast Greenland. He was captured by the Danes and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner in the USA. He had previously spent several years in Spitsbergen and his wife had accompanied him for one year. She wrote the book *‘A Woman in the Polar Night.’*

During WW2 a Royal Navy cruiser patrolling the area discovered that the Argentinians had set up a station on territory claimed by the UK. In 1943 it was decided in London that work in the Dependencies should be resumed. Bases at Deception Island and Port Lockroy were set up in 1944, Hope Bay in 1945, the South Orkneys and Marguerite Bay in 1946. Argentina and Chile set up bases in competition. Argentine bases were staffed by military personnel and very occasionally shots were fired over the heads of FIDS staff.

At Grytviken was a whaling station owned by PESCA, an Argentinian company, however it was largely staffed by Norwegians. About 1km away is King Edward Point on which the UK government's station is situated. Its staff, at the time of my arrival, comprised, a magistrate, a customs officer, a radio operator, a diesel mechanic, a weather forecaster with 2 Scientific Assistants (Meteorology) and lastly the policeman/odd job man, his wife and 5 year old son. There were two other whaling stations on the island, Husvik was the smaller and wholly Norwegian establishment and the other was at Stromness/Leith Harbour owned by Salvasons of Edinburgh.



The Grytviken flensing plant (whale processing station) South Georgia, 1953.

South Georgia is about 100 miles long and 55° South, impressively mountainous with Mt Paget just short of 10,000 feet being its highest point. Its daily average temperature is 1.6 degrees Celsius, and its extreme minimum is minus 19.2 degrees Celsius. There are numerous glaciers sweeping down to the sea and an abundance of wildlife with both king penguins and fur seals towards the northern part of the island. Fur seals had been nearly exterminated in the 1800's but were then multiplying steadily. Reindeer were introduced in 1911 and were limited to 3 areas. There were many elephant seals and these were 'farmed.'

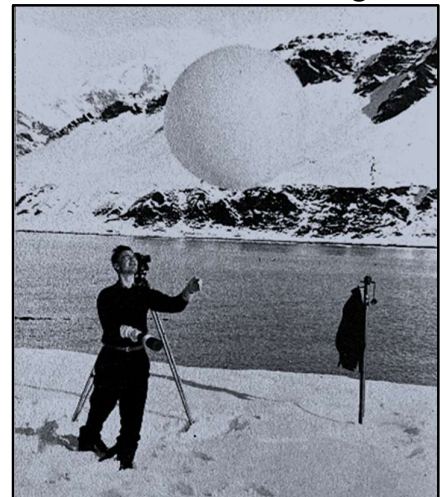


Les the Cook (L) and Clive a Radio Op (R) with King Edward Point (KEP) in the distance.

The island's coastline was divided into 4 segments. Each year one segment, in turn, was considered to be inviolate. The remaining three were

visited by the sealers. They could kill 90% of the male elephant seals only. The PESCA Company had the only sealing licence and apparently the system worked well but of course the whaling was the most important activity. Whaling commenced in South Georgia in 1904 and ceased in 1965 and in that time a total of 175,250 were killed or about 3,000 per season (1st October to 31st March).

The Harpon dropped anchor, soon after breakfast, in Cumberland Bay between Grytviken and King Edward Point. The magistrate and customs officer came aboard to complete the necessary documentation. Having completed it they went ashore taking me and the mail with them. The mail was the first delivery in 6 months and consequently received priority attention from the people on The Point. I was left kicking my heels for a couple of hours. The snow cover was over a metre thick.



Releasing a weather balloon at King Edward Point (KEP), South Georgia. I took the photo of the Met bod.

**Alan A SMITH (HP 1943-48).**