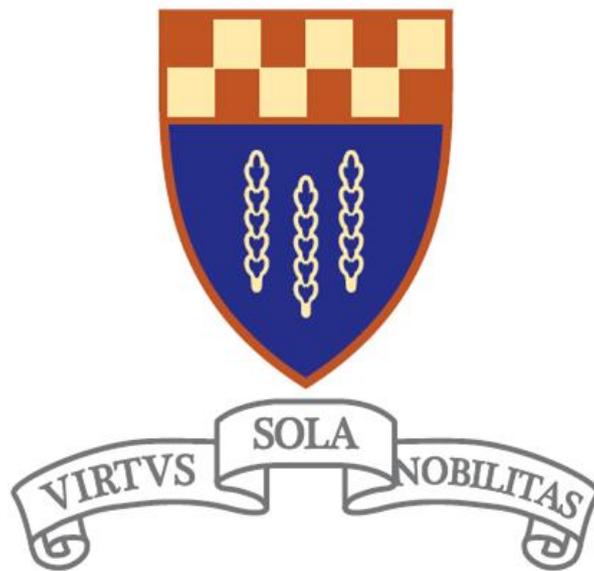


# The Pavior



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

**February 2015**

### **Your Committee**

The Committee Members listed below are always delighted to talk to you on any matter – particularly if you have a contribution to make to this publication!

#### **President: George Taylor Esq**

[0115 9278474]

Committee Chair: Ken Kirk 0115 9568650

Deputy Chairman: John Elliott 0115 9266475

Secretary: Noel Gubbins 0115 9756998

Treasurer: Robin Taylor 0115 9609483

Registrar/editor: Colin Salsbury 01509 558764

Archivist: Lance Wright 01636 815675

Committee Members:

Barry Davys 0115 9260092

Tony Humphreys 0115 9284577

Marcus Pegg 0115 9216548

John E Mason 01509 768578

Copy for *The Pavior* may be sent to

Colin Salsbury [Colin.Salsbury@outlook.com](mailto:Colin.Salsbury@outlook.com)

**Please note new email address**

116 Leicester Road, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 2AQ

The HP Society website address is: [www.highpavementsociety.org.uk](http://www.highpavementsociety.org.uk)



Faces to remember  
**Edgar Ivan Gilman**  
History Master at HP 1948-49

## OBITUARY

### Edgar Jackson (HP 1935-40)

Harold E (Edgar) Jackson died on the 28<sup>th</sup> December 2014, aged 91 and at his funeral in Lowdham Church on January 12<sup>th</sup> the Society was represented by our chairman Ken Kirk, Robin Taylor and Dave Collins.

The church was filled with many of his friends and former colleagues from the world of education. This had been his life's work, spent teaching in junior schools in the county and ending with his appointment as a headmaster. The funeral service was conducted by the vicar, the Rev Carol Tainton, who as a young girl at the Welbeck Junior School in the Meadows district, was a star pupil in country dance classes conducted by Edgar at that time.

Edgar was one of the most loyal members of the High Pavement Society, attending as many of our functions as possible, in spite of his deteriorating health. We used to look for the familiar Old Paviers' scarf in green and red (of which he was one of the few possessors). We shared his waggish sense of humour. (Who else but Edgar would have named his house *Millstone*?)

Among other things, Edgar was pleased to be known as a 'remnant', the sporting fate of so many of the less dashing Paviers. He once wrote: *'As a remnant it has always been a comfort to know that we don't need to be an extrovert, because our stronger brethren will always obviate the necessity. They will crunch in the scrum, strain at the oars, chase the leather and generally bust a gut in the pursuance of some sporting goal; and when the chips are down they will be there again, leading the charge, manning the ramparts and being in full control of all desperate situations.'* A sentiment which all other remnants would share.

High Pavement School meant so much to Edgar: many of us applauded his laudatory letter about the school to the *Nottingham Post* after they had reported a local councillor as using the word 'unloved' to describe the building.

This picture of Edgar was taken during the visit to the old school in Stanley Road during its refurbishment, when he gamely tackled its demanding staircases—right to the top—with much puffing and stopping to recover his wind. Only afterwards did it seem that this was the endeavour of a man who needed one last look at the scenes of his youth...before time ran out.

We shall all miss him.



## COMMENT



*[This column was regularly written with wit and wisdom by our late President, Arnold Brown but now he is no longer with us and the committee have decided to take it in turns to address the membership on various topics. This month the task has reverted (in the absence of any other volunteers) to your editor (left)].*

### SCHOOL SINGING – AN EARLY TASTE OF ‘SERIOUS’ MUSIC

School singing at High Pavement (in my day) took place for all the junior forms. They assembled for the purpose in the Hall from 12 noon until 12.45 pm, every Friday, no doubt freeing many of the staff to update their admin/markings; or alternatively to make a quick exit to the pub for a pre-prandial swill.

At 12 noon, for about 5 minutes, pandemonium reigned among the 500+ boys in the hall until, without apparent warning, the place became uneasily silent. This was because our music master, Stanley Nolan, so sadly bereft of his hair at an early age, had stepped through one of the doors unannounced and slowly walked through the melée creating a pathway of terrified silence by means of his brooding stare. He rarely spoke but we all knew when to keep quiet.

Stanley (alliteratively carrying the nickname ‘Nobby’) then stepped on to the rostrum and conducted a musical session of demanding quality, usually a rehearsal of some particular choral work selected for delivery during morning assembly or, more likely for the Speech Day concert that arrived remorselessly every year. Occasionally we had a talk about a musical topic and were able to sit down and enjoy it, although this meant sitting on the liberally oiled (for dust suppression) wood block floor which transferred a sticky deposit to the seat of one’s trousers, especially if you fidgeted. Once we were treated to a series of lectures, lasting for three sessions, about the mechanism of the ear (I suppose it had remote musical connotations) given by the rather stern Mr A Marrow. Mr M (Alfie) was not strictly a member of the academic staff, being the senior member of the team of laboratory support staff, but he liked to feel he could teach in the right circumstances. He gave lessons in Nature Science to first formers and lent a hand with music sessions when he was allowed.

When we were practising a choral work we often had the accompaniment played by a talented third former called Roy Meads, who went on to become both a musician and a brilliant researcher in advanced physics. He retired finally as a professor at Exeter University. The work of Roy and others freed Stanley Nolan to conduct from the rostrum. ‘All eyes on the stick!’ (meaning his conductor’s baton). We *all* complied!

As Speech Day drew near Nobby was able to commandeer more and more lesson periods and even bring in the senior scholars (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> formers) for their party pieces as tenors and even *basses!* The climax of this was the rehearsal which took place during the morning of the Speech Day itself. The ambitious programme would be run through stage by stage until Nobby felt it was as good as it was going to get. He was a human dynamo, that man!

The performance in the evening, following the delivery of various speeches by the Head and visiting dignitaries, was for we performers something of an anti-climax. We were note perfect. We dare not be otherwise. The finale was, of course, *Carmen Paviorum*, the school song (music by S. Nolan).

I think this explains a lot about our efforts which follow the social evenings of our Society!

**Colin Salsbury**

## FROM OUR READERS

### FROM KEN MACKENZIE GRAHAM



*[Ken Graham first contacted us to enquire if the school honours boards (on which entrances to senior universities were recorded) were still in existence. He had achieved the distinction of a place at Cambridge and had never seen the entry with his own eyes. He was not the first to make such an enquiry. Rumours had it that the boards were scrapped after the (sinful) demolition of the Gainsford crescent site. We were able to reassure him that the honours boards are still kept on display in the High Pavement Sixth Form Academy and are still in use, being updated from time to time. We were able to send some photos (Ken lives in Australia) and in his reply he sent the Pavior this interesting description of his varied career.]*

**Dear Colin,** I started at High Pavement Sixth Form College in September 1987, following the completion of my O-levels at Arnold Hill Comprehensive School. I had applied to study three A-levels in Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. I quickly discovered the step from O- to A-level was a difficult one and found the majority of my first year quite challenging academically. Indeed, at the end of my first year the results of my testimonial exams were not very high, however I knew that with continued hard work and application, I would be able to do much better.

In the years since leaving High Pavement, I have often reflected on the excellent preparation my teachers afforded me, not only for the A-level exams themselves but also for the subsequent academic study I have undertaken. My mathematics teacher, Mr Steven Morely deserves particular mention; he was a humble man who had an excellent grasp, not only of the subject but also in his ability to highlight common misconceptions encountered when learning the subject. This strengthened my appreciation and enjoyment of mathematics. In addition, my chemistry teacher was Mrs Sweet who likewise provided excellent coverage and notes which have proved enormously useful in the years since, particularly during my study of chemical engineering.

Following my A-level exams in 1989 I decided to take a year off (gap year) before attending university. I felt I had become academically quite specialized, having studied the sciences and mathematics for the previous 2 years and so on a seemingly wild impulse I decided to study the Arts in my year before university. I attended Bilborough Sixth Form College and took A-levels in Theatre Studies, English Literature, Communication Studies and GSCE French. It was a fantastic year which certainly broadened my horizons both academically and personally, allowing me to meet friends who have had an enormous bearing on my life since. It was during this time I started to attend St Martha's Anglican Church in Broxtowe, with friends from Bilborough Sixth Form College. It was here I met the Rev. John Harding who made an enormous impact on my life and who introduced me to the Christian faith.

Studying at Cambridge was a fascinating experience and the beauty of the university with all of its ancient courtyards only served to enhance the experience. Following Cambridge, I worked briefly in Journalism before studying to be a teacher at Manchester Metropolitan University. My first long-term teaching post was at Bolton School Girls' Division – an

excellent school in the North of England which saw me teach GSCE and A-level mathematics from 1998 to 2001. I remember that for some of my lessons, I would use the notes provided by Steven Morely during my own study of A-level at High Pavement, to enhance my teaching – such was the quality of Mr Morely’s coverage of the subject!

In 2001 I migrated to Australia; a fulfilment of a lifetime dream to live in that beautiful country. After spending my first year living and working around Australia, I decided the most delightful part of the country was the south west of Western Australia. I eventually settled in a small coastal fishing town, approximately 300km south of Perth, where I currently live today. Since migrating in 2001 I have owned a wheat and sheep farm elsewhere in Western Australia as well as studying to be a chemical engineer at the University of Sydney. I graduated with First Class honours from Sydney and have since worked for a renewable energy company building utility-scale solar power stations in Australia.

I am an amateur astronomer and own two large computerized telescopes. I regularly run astronomy evenings with members of the public, showcasing the magnificent appearance of the night sky from the dark Australian skies.

Although at the time I found my A-level studies at High Pavement College challenging, I have always looked back on the excellent preparation it afforded me, both in preparation for the A-level exams and in the subsequent study I have undertaken at tertiary level.

I would be very happy to hear from any friends or teachers from the college who may remember me, or indeed from any former High Pavement students now living in Australia.

**Ken Graham**

**ooOoo**

### **FROM JOHN MASON**

**Gentlemen,** Are you a ‘Forest Fielder’ or a ‘Bestwoodite’ or, like our vice chairman and our archivist, do you have feet in both camps?

Whatever your situation I am sure you can all recall times and events that would enhance your claim as to which version of High Pavement was the superior. Well perhaps we can put it to the test. Not in a rugby or cricket situation as I think we are all too old for such exertions, but I *am* hopeful that there will be enough amongst us who sometimes chase a small dimpled ball down a fairway, and claim to be *golfers*.

If there are enough of you interested I would be quite happy to arrange a friendly get together at a course close enough to Nottingham (so as not to make travel too arduous) where maybe we can have a small challenge match between members from each era. If you have attended both premises we can perhaps say you would represent the one where you spent most time. Maybe we could have a meal and a drink afterwards, but first I need to know if there are sufficient numbers interested. Ideally we need about eight or more from each site. The early months of the summer seem ideal to me but perhaps you would let me know your thoughts, and if interested the time(s) you are available. I can be contacted on [j.mason.144@uwclub.net](mailto:j.mason.144@uwclub.net) and if I hear from enough Old Paviers I will go ahead and make some arrangements.

If it ‘takes off’ we may then make a challenge to our old rivals at Nottingham High School, as I am sure they will also have an old school society and would perhaps relish the chance to renew old, and by now, more friendly rivalries.

**John Mason. Gainsford Crescent 1955-60 Trent House**

## FROM ERIC TOWLE

**Dear Colin**

It was good to meet you at the HPS Christmas meal, and I'm sorry that it has taken so long to forward the attached photo and details. Sadly, not having the gift of memory possessed by my brother-in-law Barry (Davys), I'm 'guesstimating' the date and quite a number of the names as you will see, so it will be fascinating to discover whether any clearer identities will surface if you publish it sometime in the future.

The class is **General V**, the year possibly 1954, the final school year for most of us. Our Form teacher was Mr Brailsford.

Names are given from left to right.

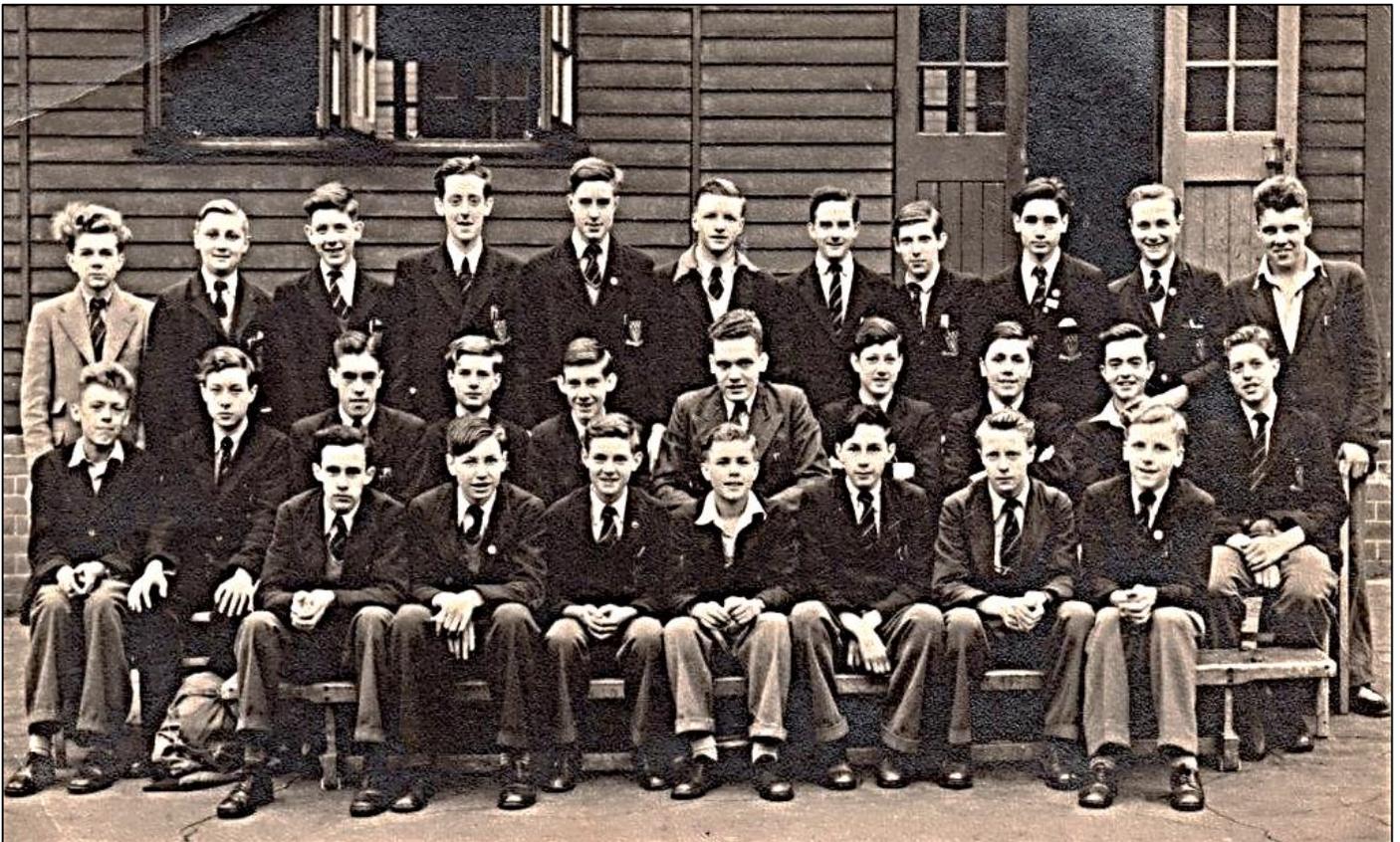
**Back row:** 1. ? ; 2. E Towle; 3. ? ; 4. – Bowley; 5. David Kemp; 6. – Coulton;  
7. David Hadrill; 8. – Shelton; 9. Peter Wood; 10. – Warrington; 11. Lawrence Burton

**Middle row:** 1. - Minton; 2. – Brady; 3. Greg Brown; 4. John Beale (twin); 5. Neville Myatt; 6. Mr B. ; 7. ? ; 8. Keith Talbot; 9. ? ; 10. Roy Pollicot.

**Front row:** 1. - Webster; 2. ? ; 3. - Beale (other twin); 4. - Webster (no relation to No.1);  
5. ? ; 6. ? ; 7. ? ; 8. John Trout.

There are very likely to be a few inaccuracies in some of the names stated.

Best wishes **Eric Towle**



**General V – 'Ready to take on the World'**

## FROM TOMMY GEE

*[Tommy recently wrote to us about his life in the colonial service in Africa and elsewhere and this often brought him into close contact with water. He sends these reminiscences describing how he came to terms with that element.]*

My autumn piece was about the air, so this is about water, another key to life, being the major constituent of the fluids of living things. Before the Big Bang of creation all was hydrogen and God but those hydrogen atoms fused to make oxygen and other elements (and still do in the sun) combining together to give us water. And here we are today, our lives utterly dependent on it. It *can* be a source of pleasure, as we relax and holiday by the sea or inland waters. Maybe we sometimes take it for granted – until its supply is withdrawn or interrupted. Then it is often fought over.

Can you swim? The old grammar school had a swimming bath in the basement where most of we boys learned to swim and later I swam during WW2 in a river race ending at Trent Bridge. That began a long love affair with water: rowing in eights; dinghy sailing (and overturning) in foreign waters; ocean travel on the high seas... and boat building. For the last 50 years we have managed to have a swimming pool next to our house, believing that swimming prolongs active life.

In 1936 my father took me to see the review of the fleet at Spithead when most of our ships were on display alongside ships sent by the other maritime nations. Hitler sent his ‘pocket battleship’ the *Graf Spee* which a few years later the navy pursued until it was scuttled near Montevideo in the Battle of the River Plate. After this I had my first sea trip to Sark in the Channel Islands with a few lucky boys from our school scout troop.

Two years national service with the Royal Navy was, in retrospect, the equivalent of an expensive extended cruise where one saw the world and expanded one’s horizons, leading to a life where most of it was spent working abroad.

At the end of the war, my wife Anne and I sailed one foggy December night from London’s King George V dock (now Canary Wharf) on the Union Castle Line’s ‘round Africa’ liner, the *Dunnottar Castle*. This reinforced our love of the sea in preference to hectic air travel. However, as liner travel slowly disappeared and planes took the place of ships, we resorted to such cargo ships as were still ‘tramping’ but this too is now a thing of the past.

I built several boats, starting in Africa with two boats to sail on Lake Victoria. The first was an 8 foot ‘Gremlin’ (to enhance the skills learned from Messrs Blackburn and Howe in the HP woodworking shops) after which I built a GP14 dinghy using local materials. My next boat followed a New Zealand design – an 18 foot boat driven by an outboard motor for easier travel inside the reef. Back home in Sussex I continued by building a sea-going dinghy.

Further memories now flood in: the colonial administration owned a small boat on Lake Albert from which we caught the gigantic Nile perch, one being sufficient to feed the entire station. The boat itself achieved world fame as the *African Queen* featuring Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn.

One last memory is of a family holiday on the coast of East Africa at Malindi. I tried, with our two young sons, to swim and tow our hired dinghy from its off-shore anchorage to land. A strong current was running and we almost drowned. It is so easily done...

Water is kind to us but when rough can kill.

**Tommy Gee**

## VISIT TO THE STANLEY ROAD PREMISES OF THE FOREST FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL 2015



Following a suggestion made by Sue Hoyland, Head Teacher of the Forest Fields Primary School, We placed a notice in the November 2014 *Pavior* asking if anyone would like to take part in a visit to the old school in Stanley Road. The premises are now a fully functioning accommodation block of the Forest Fields school and this visit would necessarily be different from our first such visit about a year ago (reported in the February 2014 issue of *the Pavior*). Then the builders responsible for the major refurbishment were still in occupation and the school had only just begun to make use of their new home. Now we were to find a fully operational part of the Primary School in the building which had once housed our venerable grammar school.

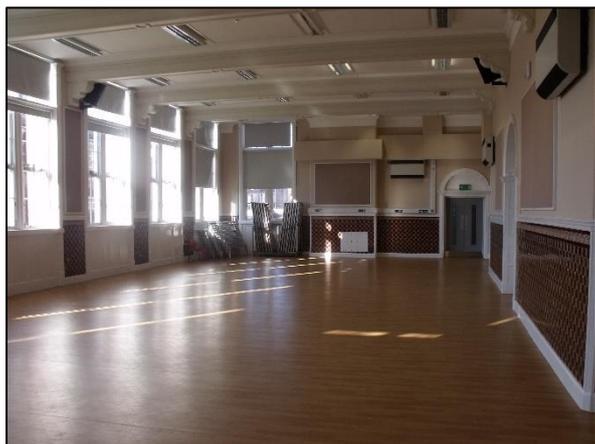


Our party was of a somewhat mixed character. There were one or two people who were repeating the experience after attending the visit referred to above, several others were members of the Society whom we don't often see at regular events but were none the less welcome at this rather special gathering. Unusually, two of the visitors (one of them a lady) were non-members but had attended the school in its follow-on identity, after HP had departed for the wilds of Bestwood, i.e. the Forest Fields Grammar School, initially under the Headship of Oliver (Oscar) Barnett, formerly on the staff at HP in the 1940s. We welcomed their presence among us, as we did two other old *Paviors* who were non-members but had heard about the visit and asked to be included in the group. Sixteen of us, all veterans, gathered at the reception office located in the space formerly occupied by the old swimming pool-cum-war-time air raid shelter.

We signed in via the school's electronic security system and were issued with our name

badges. (These were handed in at the end of the visit as a useful check that none of us had expired during our stay.) We were warmly welcomed by the Head Teacher, Sue Hoyland, in person, assisted by her deputy Gareth Denman. Sue gave a short introduction about the school as it now exists and produced an interesting exhibit in the form of an old pendulum wall-clock which had been discovered in the basement during the refurbishment. It bore the date 1898 and was thus nearly as old as the building itself (1895). She announced that the clock was to be installed at the main entrance to the school as a reminder of its relatively long and honourable history (and in passing Sue revealed that the clock's estimated value today would be about £600!)

We began our tour of the huge building towering above us. Steps! A lasting impression from our youth was of the flights of steps at both ends of the building giving access to all



levels. Fortunately a small lift has now been installed connecting the basement, ground and first floors and one of our number was pleased to make use of its convenience to make the climb more bearable. We first climbed to the ground floor (i.e. the level of the main Hall) and entered the now princely enclosure so sensitively restored, with its gleaming (original) tiled dado and huge windows through which the afternoon sun was streaming. Gone was the treacherous crumbling wood-block floor of our schooldays, to be replaced by a modern hardwood strip flooring. Lighting units were modern but discreet. Such

elegance! The visiting group soaked up the ambience and did a little reminiscing.

The group then made a brief tour of the ground floor teaching rooms which were in use by small classes who were beautifully unconcerned as these old people invaded their day. It's worth noting that the access to these rooms was via the doorway at the north end of the Hall, the other



◀ 'These handles were here when I was at school!'  
One of the ground floor classrooms ▶

doors being kept only for show and permanently secured.

We now ascended to first floor level via the south staircase, passing the entrance to what was one the study of the headmaster (and now is rather incongruously a toilet). Onward and upward, we arrived at the first floor to be met by our colleague who had used the lift. Here and there we came upon notices announcing that the price of school dinners (lunches?) was £1.75 per day and we wrestled with a little mental arithmetic trying to relate this to the 9d we had paid in the 1940s (surprisingly, the two values were of a similar order of magnitude!).

The 'top corridor' of our day had given way to a passage which opened out into a study area equipped with what seemed like dozens of computer terminals at which we could only



gaze open-mouthed. This school was well-equipped to turn out the most competent young workers ever. Exiting at the north stairs we again climbed and did a little gazing at the view across the Leen Valley to Wollaton Hall. The building's outlook is nothing short of superb and on this brilliant February day we could enjoy it to the full.

At the very top of the building we stopped (for breath?) and to look in the classroom we used to know as Room 12 (though others disputed this and said it was Bill Benner's Art Room. Memories have a habit of fading...) The room is distinguished by possessing carved inscriptions from the old days, executed with penknives and similar tools to leave a mark for posterity. The names 'W A Gilbert', 'J Dolman' and H A Rossin (see 'Sporting Prints') were clearly legible.

We then crossed the roof via the new walkway to reach the south summit with the Art



Room's successor (depending on your memory...) giving us a chance to see the view to the hills of Mapperly to the east. We retraced our steps across the roof and descended all those beautiful green clad stairs to the ground floor and walked out into the yard, now devoid of its old Lab Block and forming the main play area for the school.

We turned our steps to the west and crossed the recreational area that was once Stanley Road and entered the newly designated 'Bradgate Building' which once

housed the HP Music Room and Workshops. (The original Forest Fields School is now their 'Stanley Building' and the HP block their 'Berridge Building'.)

A discussion then took place with Sue Hoyland regarding the polyglot intake of immigrant children and the need to be able to communicate in other languages. She revealed (to sharp intakes of breath on our parts) that the total number of languages could be as many as 51! However, she pointed out that in some cases there might be only one or two children involved. The scale and complexity of directing such an establishment dawned on some of us for the first time and several among the group pursued the matter with further questions. We then viewed the dining hall and heard about the Breakfast Club before school and the Dining Club... the life of the school seems to have no boundaries.

At last we repaired to the School Hall (Berridge Building) where we were hospitably entertained with refreshing fruit juices and biscuits, most welcome after our trek around the School. We chatted a little more with our hosts and as our departure drew near John Chambers, on behalf of the visitors, gave a short speech of thanks to Sue Hoyland and her colleagues.

We departed full of memories of old times and admiration for the achievements of our successor institution. May it long continue to flourish!

## SPORTING PRINTS FROM RAY BRYSON

*[This print, probably from the Nottingham Evening Post, shows the (then thriving) Old Paviers Rugby XV during the 1949/50 season. Members of this Society in the photo include Ray Bryson and Alan Stevenson. Also worth mentioning is H. Rossin whose name we discovered carved into the woodwork during the recent visit made to the old school.]*



*[An excellent print of the Trent House first year (1937-8) Cricket XI taken at the school in front of the former Physics Lab. **Back row L to R:** Morrow; Davies; ? ; Lee; ? ; Houldsworth. **Front row:** England; Bland; R. Bryson (capt); Shaw; Draycott.]*

## **KENDRICK PARTINGTON TO BE COMMEMORATED**

*[This message was forwarded to us by Dr Nigel Day with whom we had originally corresponded regarding our late member Kendrick Partington]*

**Dear friends,** I have received the following email from **Nigel Partington**:

‘Just to let you know that KJP’s name will be inscribed in the Friends’ Book of Remembrance at the Friends of the Musicians’ chapel in St Sepulchre’s, Holborn at their annual Service of Remembrance on 28<sup>th</sup> April. I think that the service is at 6pm, so rather a late start but I thought that I would mention it to you, and indeed to anyone else who might be interested, if you happened to be free or were in London on that day.’

It is good to see Kendrick will be remembered in this way.

Best wishes **Nigel Day**

**ooOoo**

**St Mary’s Church, High Pavement, Lace Market, Nottingham**

**Saturday March 14th 7.30 p.m.**

**In memory of Kendrick Partington**

The Choirs of Nottingham High School, Nottingham Girls’ High School and St Mary’s join forces with the Orchestra of the Restoration to perform John Rutter’s vibrant and entertaining *Feel the Spirit*.

*I was Glad* **Parry**

*Double Trumpet Concerto, 1st mvt* **Manfredini**

*Pavane* **Faure**

*Symphony 104* **Haydn**

*Tuba Concerto, 1st mvt* **Vaughan Williams**

*Feel the Spirit* **John Rutter**

Tickets £7.50 (£5) and £3 students For Tickets and further information contact:

T: 0115 845 2274 Email: [music@nottinghamhigh.co.uk](mailto:music@nottinghamhigh.co.uk)

**PUB LUNCH NEWS**  
**HPS Christmas Luncheon 2014**

This year, as an experiment, the committee of the Society decided to forsake their usual venue (because it had become a little too expensive) and opted instead to use the training restaurant of New College Nottingham, better known to our readers as **ncn**, which is affiliated to our friendly High Pavement Sixth Form Academy. The restaurant is housed in the Adams building on Stoney Street in the city's Lace Market which is a listed building, formerly the Thomas Adams lace factory offices.

To the gratification of the organisers there were fifty two acceptances and a jolly crowd gathered in the dining room (following various adventures in finding the place) with nearly everyone managing to buy a drink at the bar and to take in the splendidly festive appearance of the surroundings.



We had all given our menu selections long in advance and we sat and chattered in happy anticipation of their arrival on the table. Unfortunately the restaurant staff was very short-handed, with as many as five of the students failing to turn up for duty, so the table service was on the tardy side. This meant that some items were allowed to get cold while the remainder were still awaited for some minutes. There were consequently several voices raised in complaint and disappointment.



Not everyone was so upset and many enjoyed their meal and of course we all enjoyed being there together, though we regretted that there were some absences due to illness.

Crackers were pulled and corny jokes read out to the usual groans. Silly hats were donned (mostly red for some reason) - with one noble exception: **Keith Readyhoof** produced his old High Pavement cap and wore it with great dignity throughout the meal.

It could have been an occasion to remember but we had to rely on our comradeship for the success of the event rather than the meal itself. Maybe we'll cast the net a little wider when choosing our venue for next Christmas.

**ooOoo**

**ANNUAL REUNION DINNER 2015**

The Annual Reunion Dinner for 2015 will take place on  
**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April at The Welbeck Rooms, West Bridgford**

**6.30 pm for 7.00** (Ample secure car parking)

**The price per head will be £23.00**

Individual invitations with a choice of menus will be sent by post nearer the date.

## ARNY'S BOOK



*[Arnold's family agreed that we should continue to select suitable pieces from Arny's Book to remind us of our old friend and how much we appreciated his company when he was with us. This extract, in his inimitable style, describes some of the more horrific experiences of his childhood.]*

### THE OPERATIONS

Visits to doctors and hospitals have a special flavour all of their own for each one of us. But at the tender age of seven years to be whisked off to some strange room, told to undress, be examined, and ordered to walk across the room in order to demonstrate my supposed fault was quite incomprehensible. I had a rupture, or hernia, as it was variously described. Mum later confided that I would have to go to hospital 'hospickle' and undergo an operation 'operAshun'. Fortunately I was too young to understand the full import of this and accepted my situation with calm fortitude. One fine day was appointed for the journey to the Children's Hospital and I truly forget the method of transport. We certainly had no car, taxis were not used by the likes of us, and I can think of no tram or bus routed in the right direction. It would seem astonishing if we walked, but this may well have been the case. I have little recollection of my reception on arrival at the hospital, but clearly remember my bed in a ward containing possibly two dozen children all in various stages of recovery.

The next morning I was fed and washed by a formidable woman who, to my horror - because it was no joke to me - threatened to cut off my big toe with a carving knife if I was not a good boy. Did I then try to be good! - *and* terrified to boot. There is a clear memory of the boy in the next bed, who was little more than a baby, being wheeled in very clearly in deep sleep. For what seemed like several hours he displayed little sign of life. The nurses finally took notice, muttering to each other 'Do you think he's all right?'. I had no real understanding of this situation except a feeling that once you were wheeled out, there was a chance of no recovery on your return.

Memory of the 'operAshun' day is vivid in respect of the journey to, and arrival at, the operating theatre. After being dressed in the usual, but not usual to me, outfit, I was wheeled through what appeared to be endless corridors to this strange and alarming room full of weird equipment and begowned men, presumably doctors. 'Climb on to here' said one of them, indicating what I now know to be the operating table. I dutifully made the move and lay on my back on the hard and unfamiliar bed. I lay, staring at the ceiling or lighting arrangement, for what seemed to be an interminable time while the men talked. Their conversation was incomprehensible to me, but it seemed concerned with what they intended to do to the patient ready on the table. Eventually I could bear this no longer, sat up and demanded 'What do you want me to do?' They appeared to react with no delay to this saying 'Just lie still and breath into this', clamping a mask over my mouth and nose. This was really a relief from the anxiety of the wait. Very soon a blackness began to envelope me, accompanied by a distinctly uncomfortable sensation of sinking into a void, and eventual complete loss of consciousness.

Waking much later, a bandage round my middle, and a slight soreness, is about the limit of my further recollection of the Children's Hospital visit. However, another hospital visit, a year or two later, paints a much more vivid picture of the way in which the health of children was cared for in those days.

It concerns the tonsils. During the 1930s the idea was in vogue that childhood illnesses were all due to the tonsils and adenoids. Colds and sore throats, especially if persistent, were

due to defective tonsils. ‘Whip ‘em out’ was the cry, and all will be cured! Arny was diagnosed thus and referred by the school doctor to the Chaucer Street Clinic<sup>1</sup>, the establishment belonging to the Education Department and whose main job was to execute the whipping out of tonsils - and adenoids.

This time I distinctly remember the tram ride to Derby Road from where the clinic was easily accessible. The school clinic tonsil procedure was strictly on a production line basis. Up to, I recall, a dozen children arrived around lunch time and, after taking leave of their parents, usually their mother, were undressed or asked to undress, and clothed in a long plain gown surmounted by a red rubber apron - to catch the blood! The wait then began. All were in one room before being called one by one to the operating theatre. The only comparison I can think of is, later in life, queuing for Electric Shock Treatment or Electro Convulsive Therapy, to give it its proper name, in the waiting room with several other people in a psychiatric hospital; or perhaps in more general terms, the dentist’s waiting room. But as I had not so long ago experienced the routine of the operating table, I wonder, did this make the present situation easier or harder?

‘Arnold!’ came the summons, and I faced the prospect as one experienced in battle. But not prepared for the waking in the middle of the night on a rubber sheeted bed, a violently sore throat, and a bowl of blood by my pillow, ready for any addition I may feel the necessity to add. Morning came, we were allowed to dress and soon mother arrived to collect me for the journey home. Again on the tram, this time muffled by an ample scarf to protect my delicate condition. The recovery or convalescent period was relatively short and the ordeal soon forgotten. But hopefully modern medicine has profited by the experience of all the children of my generation who had to undergo this ordeal.

Before finally putting my childhood medical history to bed perhaps it would be a good thing to say a word about dentistry. There were two principal practitioners local to us. One worked in a surgery next door to Burke’s tobacco and confectionery shop on Radford Road and was named Mrs. Baker. The other, also a woman, lived further down the road on the opposite side and gloried in the name of Nell Gwynne. I am unsure if that was precisely her name, but that is how I understood it. Both inflicted similar attacks on one of my teeth. Carefully squirting in the anaesthetic, as they thought, it squirted out again to the opposite side of my mouth, effectively numbing the wrong area. Both these so-called dentists then acted in the same way. Being beefy ladies they effectively held me down and by sheer force extracted the appropriate tooth, at the same time inflicting on me the most excruciating pain it has ever been my experience to endure. So much for dentists!

**ooOoo**

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<sup>1</sup> This building still exists and is almost opposite High Pavement Sixth Form Academy. It is now part of the Nottingham Trent University’s premises.