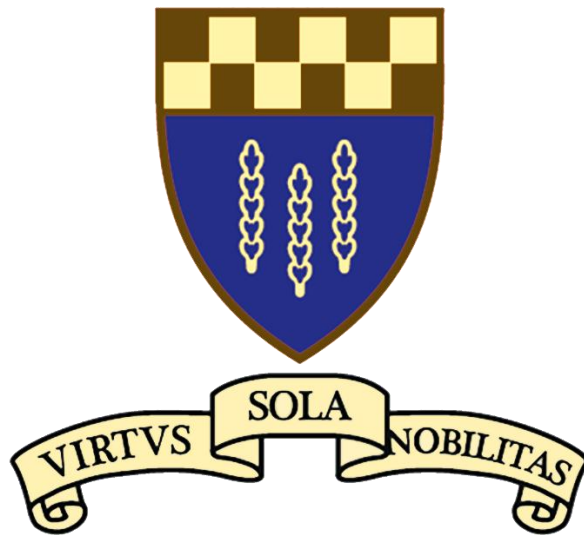


The Pavior

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



**Commemorating
High Pavement Schools
(founded 1788)**

February 2025

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 Presidents:	John J Elliott Colin Salsbury Noel Gubbins
Committee Chairman:	Vacant
Secretary:	Clive Bagshaw
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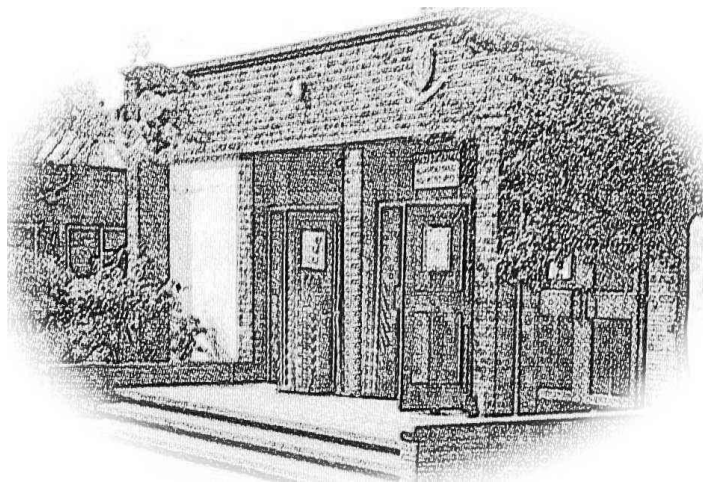
Copy for *The Pavior* newsletter may be sent to:

Colin Salsbury: colin.salsbury@outlook.com

116 Leicester Road, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 2AQ

The HP Society **Website** address is: www.highpavementsociety.org.uk

The HP Society **Facebook Page** is: www.facebook.com/groups/232442222741252/



HP Entrance Doors at Gainsford Crescent

(Picture supplied by Graham Wybrow)

Committee Notices

The Membership Subscription

The Membership Subscription is currently £20.00 per annum. This will be raised to **£25.00 per annum** from **July 1st, 2025**, as agreed at the last Society Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Flyer

A special single page Flyer is enclosed with this (February) newsletter containing special instructions. Please take care not to discard the sheet inadvertently.

Please read the Flyer carefully and separate the relative components as instructed. Fill in the information as accurately as possible and send each section to the appropriate destination

Contact Details

The Society is particularly keen to establish more accurate information about its members, especially their addresses, emails and similar data. The existing inaccurate information has often caused emails to be ‘bounced’ as undeliverable.

New Officers

Since the last newsletter the Society has made two significant new appointments. All have been appointed pending formal confirmation of their appointments at the next Society AGM.

- Clive BAGSHAW is appointed Society Secretary.
- Michael JOHNSON is appointed Society Treasurer. Michael was at High Pavement (Gainsford Crescent) from 1965-72 and was in School House.

ooOoo

HP Quick Questions.

1. What were Charlie Mardling’s full initials, as he signed his name?
2. Where was he from?
3. M. H. Brown became headmaster in 1963. Where was he from?
4. Frank Williams was music teacher for 17 years. Where did he go after leaving?

[Answers at the end of page 10]

Faces to Remember

Faces Not Quite Remembered (Photo Competition, Feb 2025)



7



8



9



10



11

Some more faces to identify. Many thanks to the readers who responded to the last competition. Results are given below.

Photos 7 & 8 above are from the 1955 Junior School Photo; Photos 9-11 are from the 1961 Junior School Photo. As before, if you think you can name any of these please contact me by email at:

gm.wybrow@btinternet.com

(or by phone on 0115-962-6249) with your suggestions.

When replying to this quiz, please feel free to include Nicknames and Subject taught, or any other interesting information. Please use the following notation (ie up to 3x “?”) to indicate uncertainty (ie No “?” = Sure; “?” = Fairly Confident; “??” = Not Sure; “???” = Wild Guess). For example:

1. Fred Smith; 2. -; 3. Tom (Fred) Brown?; 4. - Wilson ??? etc.

ooOoo







Results of FNQR Photo Competition of Nov 2024

Many thanks to the readers who responded to the Photo Competition in the Nov 2024 Edition of the Pavior. These readers were Alan Snape (AS), Anthony Wheadon (AW), John Wilford (JW), Barry Johnson (BJ), John Auty (JA), John Gurnhill (JG) and Tony Whelpton (TW), who replied variously by Email and Phone. Not only were they able to help identify the staff members but were often able to provide interesting recollections too.

The names suggested have been compared with additional information from:

- **School Staff Photo of July 1955:** This is the Photo that appeared, with a full set of names, in the book “High Pavement Remembered”, P100 (published in 1988 for the School Bicentenary) and
- **School Staff Database:** This gives full names for staff and their employment start / finish dates but, significantly, not the subjects taught.

Combining all this information, I have concluded the following. However, there still remains considerable uncertainty (indicated by the “?” symbols) and, if you know better, then please let us know. We do rely on our readers for help with this.

 <p>1. David McKinnon WOOD (1949-57) – History: Remembered by AW, JW & BJ. AW recalls he was from a ‘posh’ family & his grandfather was “a progressive liberal Minister” in Asquith’s government 1906-16. He is believed to have left HP to teach at a teacher training college. He is frequently well remembered by Society members.</p>	 <p>4. Peter (Pete) DALE (1951-57) – Chemistry: JA recalls him as very good at his job & always willing to linger after class for a chat with me & David Kerr Murray¹. Peter was an inspiration & a lovely bloke - a proper teacher. BJ recalls his nickname as ‘Doc’ as he had a PhD.</p>
 <p>2. Frederick Sydney READING (1954-57) – Maths ?: AS & JG remember the name as “Redding” which sounds the same. JG remembers his nickname as ‘Syd’. It is believed he lived in Salcombe Drive, Red Hill (AS) and later Woodthorpe (JG). JG recalls a long and interesting connection with him in later life which is described below.</p>	 <p>5. Donald James AGER (1946-56) – Geography: Remembered by AS, JW & BJ. Colin Salsbury remembers Don as a student teacher at High Pavement in 1943, before he returned as a full Master in 1946.</p>
 <p>3. William Sibbald KIRSHNER (1954-56) – German ???: No one remembers the name but JW thought he taught German & was nicknamed ‘Fink’ because he couldn’t pronounce ‘Think’. Possibly German exchange ? I have therefore taken the Name from a look-alike who appears in the 1955 Staff Photo.</p>	 <p>6. Edward WILLIAMSON (1954-57) – Maths ??: Two readers (JW & BJ) identified him as Mr Wilkinson teaching Maths. However, we have no record of a Mr Wilkinson but Williamson is the nearest match in name that I could find.</p>

JG also recalls the following: “Mr Syd Redding was my Maths teacher in the 3rd year, Sc3A. Top set, 1955-6. Having a very poor year I was demoted to Sc4B which resulted in me being put into the 2nd set for two years with Mr Symonds (*Ed: We have no record of a Mr Symonds and wonder if you were referring to the well remembered South African Master with the unusual spelling, Mr Saayman ?*). There I repeated most of the 3rd year work but luckily I got a grade 1 and went on to have a 33 year career teaching Maths. Syd was my team leader in examining for Cambridge Exam Board at O-Level, and with him living in Woodthorpe and me teaching at his local school, Arnold Hill, his two sons were in several of my classes for a few years before they went on to Imperial.”

ooOoo

¹ David Kerr Murray - the son of Mr. John Kerr (“Jake”) Murray, the very Scots History Teacher at HP 1941-62. I must say I like John’s expression “very Scots” to describe Jake Murray - a perfect description – GM. Wybrow.

Remembrance Service 2024

The annual Remembrance Service for 2024 was held, as usual, at the premises of the High Pavement Sixth Form at Chaucer Street on November 10th. This was the Friday preceding Remembrance Sunday. Members of the HP Society were represented as well as the College students.

Adam Beazeley, the College Principal, opened proceedings by introducing the group of girl students who had volunteered to read out the names (and ages) of the High Pavement Fallen of the two World Wars. The students then read the Names, some 184 in all, solemnly and with appropriate dignity.

At the end of the readings, as 11.00 am approached, our President, Ken Kirk recited the Act of Remembrance. At the conclusion of this, the British Legion bugler, Sarah Emblen, sounded the Last Post. The Two Minutes Silence then followed, which was honoured absolutely, and ended with Reveille also played by Sarah Emblen. Our President then recited the Kohima Epitaph:

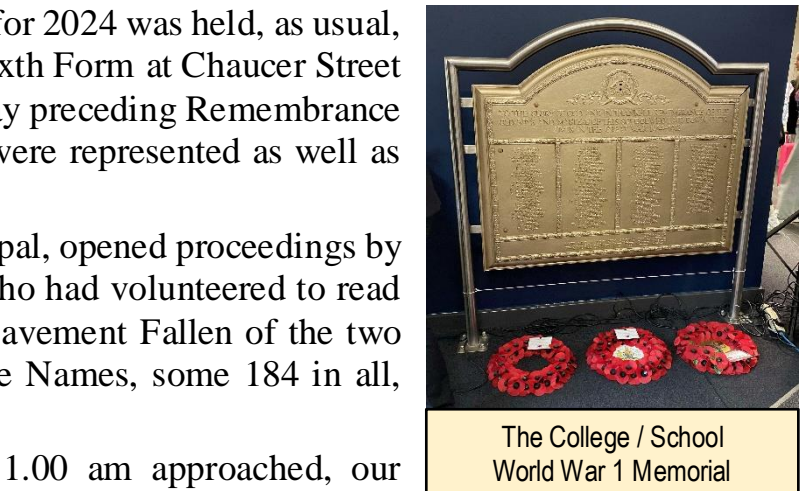
**'When You Go Home, Tell Them Of Us And Say,
For Your Tomorrow, We Gave Our Today.'**

The occasion was graced, for the first time, by the presence of the Deputy Lieutenant, Tracey Davenport, one of His Majesty's Deputy Lord Lieutenants for Nottinghamshire, representing The King. She gave a short address to the assembly during which it was revealed that she herself had attended the High Pavement Sixth Form College some years ago.

Sarah Emblen then accompanied the congregation in the singing of the National Anthem to recognise the attendance of His Majesty's representative.

This concluded the Service which was very well received by the Students and staff of the whole High Pavement Sixth Form, thanks to CCTV coverage throughout the building.

By Colin Salisbury



Deputy Lieutenant Tracey Davenport (3rd from right) and Bugler Sarah Emblen (4th from right) with members of the Society.

ooOoo

The Christmas Party

The HP Society's Christmas frolic took place on Tuesday December 10th 2024, at the premises of the Paviers Rugby Club in their well-appointed function room. This year, we were honoured to welcome 3 Guests from the current Sixth Form College, the Principal Adam Beazeley, and colleagues Dawn Ashley and Finley Castledine. These are the three staff members with whom the Society has worked closely to organise our collaborative events.

A gathering of some 32 members and friends settled into the comfortable seats and were

bidden welcome by Clive Bagshaw, who had organised the event most efficiently. John Chambers had been appointed Master of Ceremonies for the event and he soon began the proceedings by getting us all to sing together the popular rugby club song: *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* with all the actions. After a suitable interval we were served with our choices of a well-cooked Christmas meal (though turkey had been avoided due to its prohibitive price this year!). Among the group of Members and friends we were pleased to welcome our member John Elliott (complete with his splendid Christmas-themed pullover), Tony Wheadon from Stamford, and Harold Blythe from *Fleetwood*, no less!

With our food aboard we were further entertained by John Chambers, this time in his guise as the laconic comedian Tom Lehrer singing the song: *Poisoning the pigeons in the park!* John then swung into action, leading us into a round of carol singing, for what would a Christmas party be without them?

We launched ourselves into *Good King Wenceslas looked out*, using the song sheets thoughtfully provided by John. Alas, when the page had to respond to the good King with ‘Sire, he lives a good league hence... traditionally sung by the ladies, the efforts of the relatively few ladies present were rather overtaxed, but they rallied with fortitude. And so John led us on with *In the bleak midwinter* and finally, *We wish you a merry Christmas....*



The assembled multitude – feasting. Seated beneath the Rugby Club Centenary Wall.

Now that we were full of Christmas spirit, all the Paviers present were called to stand together as an impromptu Choir and sing our own anthem of *Carmen Paviorum*, our old school song. And we did! Squeakily, perhaps but most of us reached the end without collapsing!



The compulsory ceremonial singing of the School Song.

All agreed it had been a most enjoyable event and showered Clive and John with our thanks. We returned to our waiting carriages at about half past three and hopefully set off for our distant homes and beds.

By Colin Salisbury

ooOoo

Bestwood Remembered

Three pictures, taken around the year 2000, showing the Eastern End of the Main Building. The first picture shows the exterior of the building and many Old Paviers will remember, in times of bad weather, having to sprint from the prominent blue doors across the open ground to the Science Block (out of picture to the left) – or, of course, vice versa.

The 2nd picture shows the 2nd Floor Landing and the top of the East End Staircase. The photo is taken from immediately in front of, what in the 60s would have been Classroom 13 (with the door to Classroom 12 behind and just to the left of the photographer). To the left (barely visible in the picture) was the corridor leading to the Senior Library.

The 3rd picture shows the view from the 2nd Floor Landing looking East over the Science Block. Just visible on the roof of the Science Block (see enlargement below) are an array of 5 white rather sophisticated chimneys. These are immediately above the 2 Chemistry Labs and are, presumably, to process the output from the Laboratory Fume Cupboards. If I remember correctly, when the school was first built, the 5 fume cupboards vented directly to the outside air. I would be interested to know what improvements these more sophisticated devices offered.

Also visible in the 3rd picture (to the extreme left) is the high ground above the school where once stood the Padstow Secondary School. This had been demolished some years before this photo was taken in a fore taste of what was to befall the High Pavement site.



The East End of the Main Building. In the year 2000, sporting 2 Satellite Dishes.



The 2nd Floor Landing & East End Staircase of the Main Building. Photo taken outside Classrooms 12 & 13.



The view from the 2nd Floor Landing. Science Block and, in the foreground to right, the exterior of Classroom 13.



Enlargement

Graham Wybrow

Sir John Charles ROBINSON (1824-1913)

The First High Pavement Knight.

[We look here at the productive career of the first of the six Old Paviers known to have been knighted, a man with influence, even on royalty, in the worlds of Art and Architecture.]



Strangely enough, though he was famous later in life, we do not know the name our subject bore when he entered the world in December 1824 at what is now the site of James' Store, but was then Harley Place, Carrington Street; but he eventually took the name of his grandfather E. B. Robinson, by whom he was brought up after being orphaned at age two years. Mr. Robinson was a printer, bookseller and auctioneer with premises in Long Row.

His first experience of school was at an establishment near the Castle Rock, after which he enrolled at High Pavement. Whilst at High Pavement, he was classed as a "Pay Boy" as his fees were paid by his grandfather. A consequence of this is that his name does not appear in the School Records, as these did not record paying pupils. He was later apprenticed to G. J. and S. J. Walker, architects, builders and marble masons, whose premises were in Derby Road, at what is now Mitchell's Motor Garage. While he was there he made a close study of ancient architecture, and his interest in this field may have led him to develop, or perhaps discover another interest: namely Art.

In 1843, while he was working on St. Mary's Church, the remains of an older Norman church were discovered within it. Nowadays I suppose the obvious thing to do would be to photograph the discovery; but at the time the science of photography was only a few years old, and not at all advanced. At any rate he made sketches of what he had found (despite having been forbidden to do so).

In the next year, still only 20 years old, he designed the facade and stamp of the Nottingham Mechanics' Institution. It is still in use.

With a growing interest in decorative art rather than making drawings of buildings he began to work for William Taylor, box maker and wholesale stationer on Mount Street and Chapel Bar, who sent him to travel through France for the purpose of buying drawings that should be suitable for box labels. He used his time there to develop his skills in painting and sketching, and subsequently opened a painter's studio on his return to England.

Robinson's endeavours in Art were evidently very successful: he became Second Master of the School of Design in Beck Lane, which is now known as Heathcoat Street, and was admitted to the Royal Academy. From here he progressed to headmastership of the Government School of Design at Hanley, a Staffordshire town that has now become part of Stoke on Trent.

During his time at Hanley, Robinson became an authority on Art as applied to ceramics, and it was this expertise that enabled further advancement; for in 1852 he was invited by the Duchess of Sutherland to appraise her China Collection at Trentham Hall, and this led to even greater things.

He was invited by Prince Albert to appraise *his* China Collection at Windsor Castle, and Queen Victoria retained his services for classifying and arranging art treasures. His work

earned him further promotions. Among them, he was made Curator of the Museum of Ornamental Art at Marlborough House, whose collection was moved in 1857 to what is now the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Yet another way in which he made his mark was through his collectors' club, which became a Fine Arts Club. This was an unofficial body, but in 1866 it merged with the Burlington Fine Arts Club, and he became its first president. Besides this, with Sir Francis Seymour Haden he helped to create the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers, which is now known as the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers. He was also the first Superintendent of Collections at the Foundation of Science and Art and became Inspector of Elementary Schools of Art.

John Robinson continued to be Curator at the Museum of Ornamental Art till 1863, when his title was changed to Art Referee, but in 1869 he resigned from the post to become an advisor to private collectors.

In his advancing years John Robinson continued to be active. From 1880-1901 he was Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, and in 1882 he became Inspector of Pictures to Queen Victoria. For his many endeavours he was knighted at the Queen's Jubilee in 1887 and made C.B. (Companion of the Order of the Bath) in 1901.

In the early 1850s John Robinson had married Elizabeth Newton, who was a daughter of Edmond Newton, Alderman of Norwich. When she died, in 1908, he moved from Harley Street in London to Newton Manor in Swanage, Dorset. And there he died in 1913, at the extraordinary age for the time of 89 years.

For more about this very distinguished Old Pavior, including portraits of Sir John Charles Robinson himself and examples of his art:

- Wikipedia: [John Charles Robinson - Wikipedia](#)
- National Portrait Gallery: <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp03826/sir-john-charles-robinson>
- National Gallery of Art: [Sir John Charles Robinson](#)
- Art UK: [Robinson, John Charles, 1824–1913 | Art UK](#)
- Tate: [Sir John Charles Robinson 1824–1913 | Tate](#)

Some of his most admired works, which consist of etchings and drypoints, can be seen in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

By Gerald Taylor

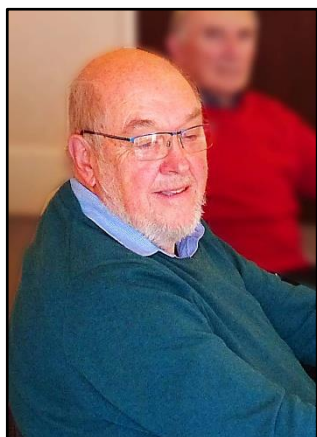
ooOoo

Answers to HP Quick Questions (page 3).

1. C. M. E. Mardling.
2. Rugby, Warwickshire.
3. St. Ives, Cornwall.
4. Australia.

From Laurence MILBOURN [HP Staff: 1975-2007, Trent Head of House]

[Editor's note: Readers may recall that Laurence plays a distinctive role as a member of the Society since he was a member of the teaching staff rather than a former student. His reminiscences are none the less welcome to readers of The Pavior]



Laurence Milbourn

I have previously recorded in this newsletter some of my memories of teaching at High Pavement. I was surprised when I discovered that it was long ago in 2009 when I put pen to paper. I will attempt to remedy the intermission.

First, though, I will remind readers that I joined the staff of High Pavement in January 1975, having taught at Fairham Comprehensive School and Bramcote Hills Grammar School. I joined as 2nd Physicist and Assistant House Tutor for Trent House. My Head of Department was Tommy Thompson (TLT) and my Head of House was Doug Slater (DS). Doug retired with ill health later that year and died soon after. I was asked to take over the House and so, unexpectedly, acquired pastoral responsibilities on top of my O and A level academic work.

For the first 18 months, the House job was not really arduous. With a couple of exceptions, most of the boys in the House were trouble free and all I had to do was collate and summarise their reports. It was later when the truly comprehensive intake arrived that the work really started. Many of this intake were not used to doing homework and could not work independently and so fell behind and struggled. There was also the problem of hormones. The new intake included girls and relationships between 17- and 18-year olds was not something I had ever been trained to deal with. Enough said.

The third Physicist was Jerry West (AJW) and we decided to try a bit of team teaching. One of us would conduct and lead the lesson and the other would move around the class, checking on work, answering questions and generally keeping the students focussed. It worked really well and the students seemed to appreciate the effort we put in. Changes to the structure of the timetable stopped our little experiment but we both found the experience very rewarding. (Jerry decided to emigrate to Australia and was christened by our then principal, our “Antipodean Adventurer”). One of the techniques we employed was the weekly test. Every Friday afternoon there was a quick test on what had been covered since the last test. Many students have since admitted that without that incentive, they might not have been so successful.

At this time, we had quite long lunch breaks so Dave Mouncer (chemist and Scout Leader) and I got into the habit of going down to the Art Department to use the pottery facilities under the watchful gaze of John Smith (Splodge), the Art Master. There we became quite proficient at throwing on the wheel though I must admit that we never really mastered glazes. I still have a couple of my pots; they make excellent doorstops.

In the 70s and 80s, the number of female members of staff increased steadily and it is not surprising that a few romances blossomed leading to marriages. Dave Sibley (Music) married Gill (Maths, Phil Bailey (IT) brought in his wife Gill (nee Bullock), who also taught Maths and Dave Berry (Maths) married Di Evans (German). Gill Bullock was the daughter of Mr Bullock, a former Head of Maths and she too became Head of Maths in the 90s.

ooOoo

From John CHAMBERS [HP: 1954-61, Basford House]

Recollections of Gainsford Crescent



Assistant Secretary
John Chambers

I spent one year only at Stanley Road, followed by 6 years at Gainsford Crescent. The connection with Stanley Road was to be continued as my good lady, Jenny, spent 7 years there as a student at the Forest Fields Grammar School.

At Gainsford Crescent I had to cycle from my home on the Broxtowe Estate to save time and money. This even involved going home for lunch for a couple of years, often being caught out at Basford Crossing and having to carry my bike on my shoulder over the footbridge to save time!

Fellow pupils will remember the cycle track at Gainsford Crescent, down which we could cycle to the site exit after retrieving one's bike from the cycle shed (which also served its purpose as the smokers' hideaway - for those miscreants of the time!).

For safety we had to dismount at the bottom of the track and cross Arnold Road before remounting for the journey home. On one occasion, because my cycle was damaged, I borrowed my elder brother Ernie's newly acquired racing cycle with fixed rear wheel drive and just the one front wheel cable brake. As I reached the end of the track and braked hard the cable snapped! I had no capability of using the fixed wheel back-pedal braking that was available, so I sped unstopped across Arnold Road. Thankfully there was no traffic, and I survived. What chance of that survival today?

On another occasion I was in conversation with a classmate, Tony Brailsford, who was heading for home by bus. I encouraged him to walk down the cycle track with me, which was against school rules. Cyclists only were permitted. Part way down the track we were accosted by a *temporary* prefect, acting as such during the A-Level exams. He told Tony to turn back, and I said, 'Take no notice; he's just a temporary prefect'. Tony's name was duly recorded. At assembly next morning Tony was told to report to the headmaster 'Taff' Davies's study for appropriate admonition and received the normal slipping of the backside, followed by the customary handshake and 'No hard feelings' conclusion. I felt totally to blame and followed Tony in the queue. 'Why are you here?' asked Taff, so I explained my culpability. 'Temporary prefects *are* prefects' Taff affirmed, and I received my own due punishment.

After 'A' levels I went to Kesteven Training College, Stoke Rochford to take a 3-year Teacher Training Certificate. During my second year Taff Davies left High Pavement School following his appointment as Director of Education at Nottingham University. Our college came under that University and as such his signature is on my Graduation Certificate. Taff also knew and admired our college Principal, W. Warmington, who died during my time at college and Taff gave the inaugural lecture in his memory.

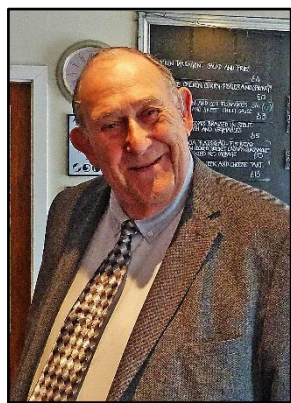
Happy days and memories of a fine headmaster.

John Chambers

ooOoo

From Clive BAGSHAW [HP 1956-61, Sherwood House]

Childhood Memories



Society Secretary
Clive Bagshaw

I grew up during the austere days of post war rationing, which continued until 1953, when rationing mostly ended. Meat was the last item to be de-rationed and food rationing ended completely in 1954. I clearly remember going to the shops with ration books when running errands for mum. My education was a very good one. I lived on Andover Road, Bestwood Estate and was indeed extremely fortunate to go to new and superbly designed schools and to have been taught by excellent teachers.

As a younger child I attended Sunday School at the Arnold Road Baptist Church on the Bestwood Estate, where a beautiful young nun, Sister Grace, who had such a lovely soft voice with an Irish lilt to it, had a massive impact on me (I think I had a crush on her and even at that young age I knew that under that habit, she was a very beautiful young lady). She led me further along the Christian path on my journey of faith. All these things formed the beginning of my Christian life that reinforced my parents' teachings, along with life skills and all were carried out with care, discipline, lots of encouragement and love in abundance. Many life skills were learned in the Scouts, and the military discipline, shooting skills and flying skills I learned from the Air Training Corps. This was the 138 Squadron (Trent Lane Nottm) ATC, as the High Pavement did not have its own ATC.

I attended a very good school at the top of the estate built to a modern design laid down by Henry Whipple. It had the school laid out around a grassed courtyard with lots of glass opening out onto open spaces with ample light. Many schools of the time were built in this way to Henry Whipple's vision of what would be conducive to a good learning environment. It worked well and I am grateful for Mr Whipple's talents. *[Editor's note: Clive has provided much information about this notable man, and it will be presented in a future issue of the Pavior.]*

I did learn and was well taught in this agreeable environment. My school career started at Henry Whipple Infant and then Henry Whipple Junior schools, before I passed the 11+ and became eligible for the Nottingham Boys High School. Unfortunately, my parents could not afford the fees to send me to that institution, so at age eleven I went to High Pavement Grammar School instead of the Boys High School. High Pavement was housed in a brand new building on Gainsford Crescent on the Bestwood Estate, and had transferred the year before from its old premises in Stanley Road, Forest Fields. My sister experienced a similar transition, as she passed for the Nottingham Girls High School but ended up at the Manning Grammar School for girls.

I was immediately impressed with facilities at High Pavement. It had a separate science block with lecture rooms, chemistry labs, physics labs and biology lab plus classrooms for the students in the sciences stream. The main block housed most of the classrooms and adjoined the admin block, the teachers' common room and the headmaster's study. Adjoining that area was the great hall and stage and the separate gymnasium behind with its changing rooms and showers. There were also splendid craft workshops for woodwork and metalwork. The School also boasted fabulous sports fields in three tiered levels with rugby pitches, cricket pitches, and athletics tracks and other athletics facilities.

I joined both the School Orchestra (in which I learned to play the cello) and the Music Society. My music teacher, Mr Frank Williams, was instrumental in this development. I clearly recall, on my first music lesson with him, he got to me and gave me a violin. I put it under my chin but he took it off me again saying, “that’s far too small for a big lad like you”. He came back with a viola but with the same result. He then approached the stage in the big hall, got on all fours, pulled away the curtain around the bottom of the stage and crawled under the stage. After some muffled muttering and a few bumps and bangs, he reappeared crawling backwards, still on all fours, dragging a battered old cello. It was missing one string adjuster peg, the bridge and the bow, three strings were broken, and it exhibited a number of chips and scratches that did it no justice. “This is more your size,” he said, beaming. He sent it away to be refurbished and when it came back I didn’t recognise it as the same instrument. So, I became a cellist, of sorts.

I joined the school’s 121st scout troop under Scout Leaders Jack Allen² and Chick Farr, initially as the patrol second and then leader of Kingfisher Patrol. I really enjoyed my scouting, which taught me so much that has been of great use to me throughout my life. The Scouts were most enjoyable. I especially enjoyed outdoor activities like bush-craft, tracking animal spoor, use of ropes and knots, first aid and the games we played. When I made Patrol leader my parents bought me a superb sheath knife to go on my belt and taught me how to use it and how NOT to use it, and how to sharpen it and keep its edge. A blunt knife is dangerous because you need to exert greater pressure to force it to cut. A sharp knife is a safe knife because it cuts easily without excessive force. You know it is sharp so you treat it with respect. Even a blunt knife will stab, cut and gash when it slips due to the use of excessive force. All my life I have sharpened and honed all my knives, and never had an accident with them. My friends tell me my knives are lethally sharp and dangerous. I reply, “only in the hands of an idiot”.

As I became a teenager I encountered people who were of other faiths and came to realise there were many other religions as well as various branches of the Christian faith. I didn’t know anything about these other religions and in fact didn’t really know much about my own religion. Bibles in those days were typically The King James version in old fashioned English and extremely difficult to understand. With all its “Oh yea’s”, “Oh Verily I say unto thee” and “He begot” it was like a different language. Before I left school new versions of the Bible became available that were modern translations and much easier to read and understand and nowadays we have a whole plethora of different types of Bible, including the study Bibles with masses of study notes that provide explanations in depth, and explain so much of what might otherwise be considered gobbledegook.

By my teens I was busy with more exciting discoveries. First scouting, then at fourteen I joined The Air Training Corps as an air cadet and learned to shoot and to fly aeroplanes. I also discovered girls were quite exciting too.

These first 16 years were the rock-solid foundations on which my life was built. They were the preparation, the groundwork for my life’s journey.

Clive Bagshaw

² Jack Allen lived in my road (Orville Road). He was a mechanical engineer working at Rolls-Royce Aerodrome, Hucknall and was the father of Brian “Nipper” Allen who was also an HP Pupil and Scout.

– GM Wybrow

OUR END PIECE
Alan A SMITH [HP:1943-48, Basford House]
Just An Ordinary Bloke – 8.

[Ed: 94-year-old Alan, now living in Australia, brings us up to date and so concludes our account of an “ordinary bloke” whose life story is not at all ordinary. Alan has now been retired for 36 years, and he agrees with his mother's favourite saying: “time flies.” However, he himself has not by any means stood still, having visited many parts not only of Australia but of the wider world too, including, as he says “just about every European country”, but “I think we missed out on Andorra.”]

Travel within Australia, not so much a country as a vast island continent, itself entails covering of huge distances. Here is Alan's description of one of his journeys:

Flew Melbourne to Sydney where we boarded the ‘Indian-Pacific’ transcontinental train, Sydney to Perth (4350km, 2720 miles). Flew from Perth to Darwin, where we boarded “The Ghan”, Darwin to Adelaide train (2980km, 1862miles). Flew Adelaide to Melbourne. It took 12 days.



Alan and ‘The Ghan’ in Alice Springs.



The Crocodile Hotel



Alan in the Hotel's Pool

tend to think of Australia as having delightful climates;

but warmer weather has its drawbacks, among them its tendency to nurture wildlife that is not so delightful. Alan's picture shows an establishment that commemorates one such specimen, the sort of thing you do not want to find in your garden. As you see, the Crocodile Hotel was constructed to resemble from the air the unlovely creature after which it is named. Alan's next picture shows him in the hotel's pool. Happily, it turned out to contain none of the brutes that inspired the hotel's name. Otherwise, instead of Alan in the pool and no crocodiles there might have been crocodiles and no Alan.

He also has something to say about his other travels:

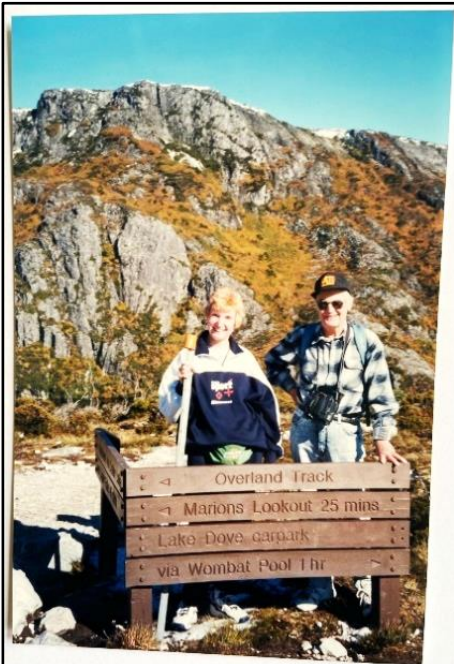
In more recent times we have visited Japan and the more Eastern parts of Russia. And there was a cruise that took in the Pacific war sites. However, we were not allowed off the

ship at Iwo Jima. It seems it is now essentially only used by the Japanese military!

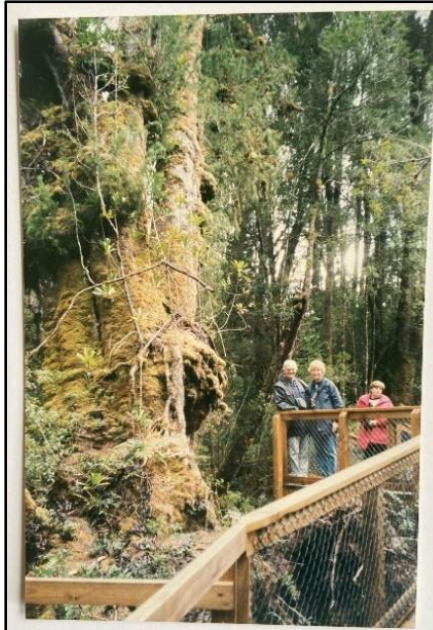
On a less cheerful note we are told that with the advancing years he has had to cut back on his wanderings: “Walking in our National Parks is a thing of the past. Used to drive the car but the offspring assert old people lose their concentration abilities so the car has been sold. You realise that I am 94 going on 95, don’t you?”

But the passing years bring their compensations: “These days I get satisfaction in knowing that our offspring and their offspring are leading interesting lives and learning whilst travelling.”

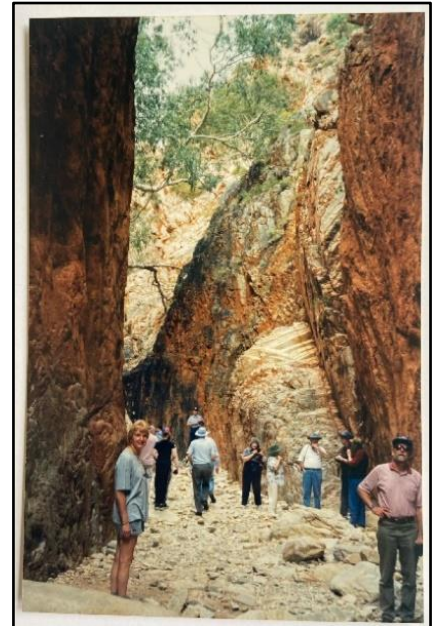
And now for a gallery of some of the pictures showing Alan’s wanderings in retirement.



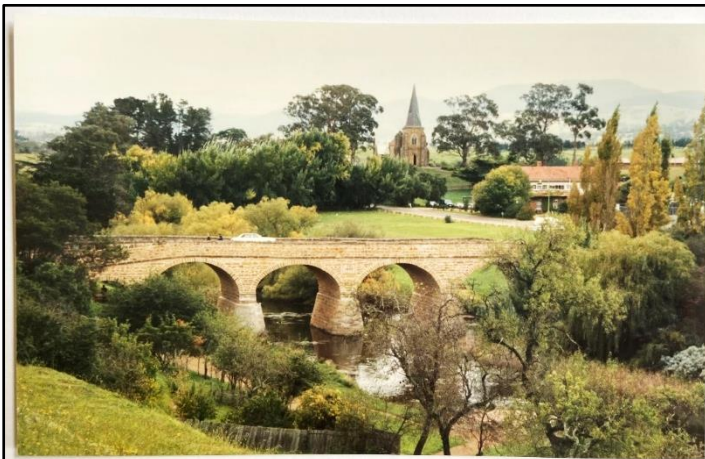
Alan and Joy at the Beginning of the Overland Track, Tasmania



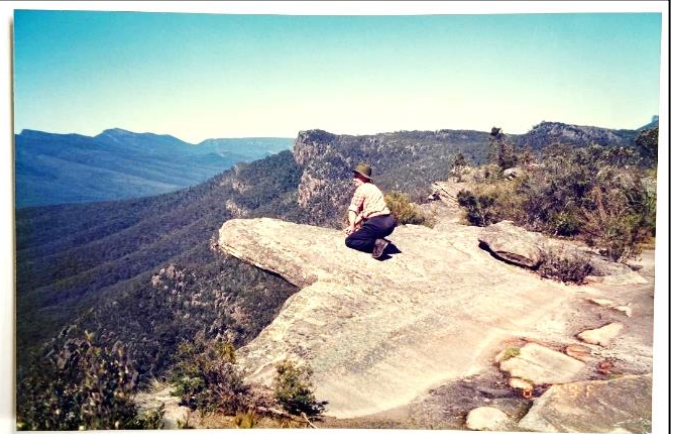
Alan and Joy beside a Huon Pine near Gordon River, Tasmania.



Joy and Others in Stanley Chasm, Northern Territory.



Richmond Bridge, Tasmania, the Oldest in Australia. Built by Convict Labour 1824-5.



Alan Crouched in the Grampians National Park, Victoria.

Alan concludes with a sombre intimation: *“Do not sympathise but I have skin cancer mainly on the scalp and fore-head. They say there are 3 types of that ailment and mine is the middle one!! But of course they would not say it is the worst!”*

Let us wish Alan well in his treatment and thank him for his contributions to our magazine. How many ordinary blokes have worked in Antarctica? After all, he could have opted to spend a quiet life in Aspley!

[Edited by Gerald Taylor]

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