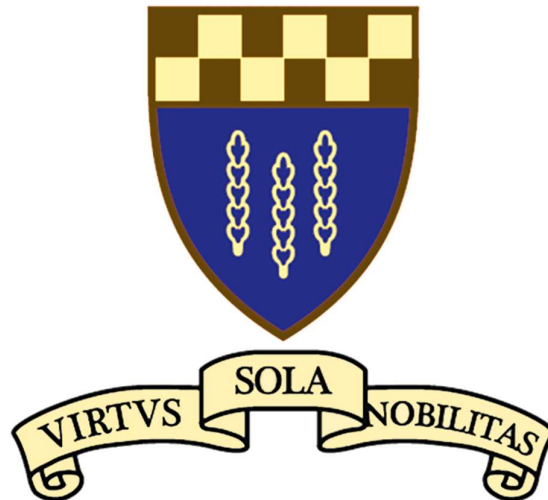


The Pavior

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



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

May 2024

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 Salisbury
Noel Gubbins

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

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



Faces to Remember George Earnest HARRISON Science Master

(taught Astro Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Hygiene, Mathematics, Mineralogy, Physics & Physiology)

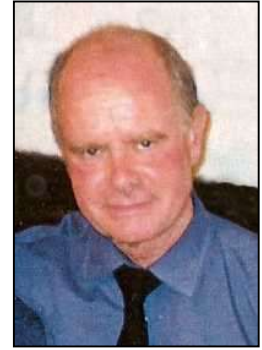
Peripatetic (Visiting) 1890-1907; Full Time HP 1907-1927+

RICHARD MASLEN

We have been informed by his wife that our former loyal member, Richard Maslen, died on October 14th 2022, aged 89 years after a long illness.

Richard, a former teacher and headmaster was an inspired poet and once wrote a memorable piece entitled '*Missing*' about the vernacular language of his youth which many Old Paviers would recognise and understand¹.

Richard lived for a time in the Suffolk village of Blythburgh where earlier William Benner, High Pavement's legendary Art Master (and Rugby Football initiator), lived in retirement. Bill Benner was buried in the churchyard at Blythburgh where Richard would tend his grave while he was able.



Committee Notices

50th Annivervary Celebrations

This year, 2024, marks the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the High Pavement 6th-Form College. The conversion from an all-boys Grammar School to a mixed 6th-Form College was actually phased over some 7 years, but the Mixed 6th-Form College came into being with the admission of the first girls to the 6th-Form in Sep 1974.

The Society proposed that we should celebrate this event and, in collaboration with Nottingham College, put together plans for an evening event at Chaucer Street in mid June. Unfortunately, this date proved inconvenient and that event has had to be cancelled.

However, we are now looking at the possibility of a similar event early in the new academic year (eg Oct-Dec 2024). The intention is to hold an event at the College premises in Chaucer Street (Nottingham. NG1 5LP) to which all current and former pupils and staff of the College / Schools would be welcome (subject to space constraints – “Pre-booking” essential). It is hoped that the event might include slide/video presentations covering:

- the long and fascinating History of High Pavement Schools (from 1788)
- the 6th-Form College years (1974-2024)
- a “Video Tour” of the Gainsford Crescent site - as it was in the Grammar School / 6th-Form days - including considerable “never before seen” photography
- the lives of some of our more interesting and distinguished Alumni

Further information will be made available later in the year.

ooOoo

Annual Luncheon, Thu 16 May 2024, Mapperley Golf Club - Cancellation

It has, unfortunately, been necessary to cancel this event. The number wishing to attend fell below the acceptable minimum.

¹ It may be read on the HPs website in the ‘Memories’ section page 10/31

NOTTINGHAM COLLEGE & CHAUCER STREET

Sir Kenneth Olisa visits Nottingham College

Nottingham College, the umbrella further education organisation which includes High Pavement Sixth Form, recently (Tue 26 Mar 2024) held an event at its newly built City Hub on Canal Street, Nottingham. The guest of honour was our distinguished HPS member, Sir Kenneth Olisa, and the Society was also represented at the event by our committee member John Chambers.

A buffet reception was followed by a play written and performed by college students, depicting events as they affected the ‘Windrush’ generation, from the first docking of HMT Windrush (formerly used as a troopship) at Tilbury, Essex some 75 years ago.

This powerful play was later entered into a national colleges competition and a video recording was made to display to other students at Nottingham College.

Sir Kenneth Olisa, speaking as an alumnus of High Pavement, addressed the students present about his background and career, culminating in His appointment as Lord Lieutenant of Greater London.

ooOoo



Sir Ken Olisa (left) with John Chambers at the Nottingham College reception on 26 Mar 2024.

HP 6th-Form – Diversity

On a recent visit to High Pavement 6th-Form on Chaucer Street, it was noticed that the Entrance Hall was festooned with flags of different countries. Upon enquiring, we discovered that the intention was to celebrate College diversity by displaying flags to represent the nationalities of the current Year 1 and Year 2 students in the 6th-Form College. We were told that, in all, there were 59 different flags representing 59 different nationalities, an achievement of which the College is justly proud. According to Google, there are 223 different nationalities in the world, making 59 just over 26% of the World’s total.

Unfortunately, the Entrance Hall is very limited in space. The “Bridge” (shown) has valiantly managed to accommodate 36 of the 59 flags, but they are still looking for space for the remaining 23.

Graham Wybrow



BESTWOOD REMEMBERED

The Main Entrance

Visitors to Gainsford Crescent would enter the school buildings through the quietly dignified Main Entrance. Four wide steps led up to three adjacent sets of double doors, each of dark stained wood and glass (with embedded wire grid). Like almost all the exterior doors at Bestwood, these were all “double doors”, with a second set of doors behind the first, leaving a “telephone box” sized cubicle (air-lock²) between.

These doors led into the Entrance Hall from where it was possible to proceed either directly on into the Assembly Hall (for major events like Plays or Prize-Givings) or turn left into the Administration Corridor for the School Office / Headmaster’s Study. The Entrance Hall and the Assembly Hall were two of the few areas in the school where the walls were actually finished with a layer of plaster.

Photo 2 shows the inside of the Entrance Hall. The Entrance Doors are on the left, adjacent to the phone booth, fire extinguisher and red vending machine! In the centre distance, just to the right of the Administration Corridor there is a new office / cubicle made of wood and glass. In the 1960s, the wall adjacent to the School Office, now obscured by this new office, was covered by a floor-to-ceiling glass fronted display cabinet that proudly displayed the School’s silverware (ie trophies, cups and shields).

Photo 3 shows 3 of the 4 sets of double doors that originally led into the Assembly Hall. The set on the extreme right led to the “Through Corridor” that ran down the side of the Hall, bypassing the main body, to the Boys’ Changing Rooms and Gym beyond. The remaining 2 sets of doors led directly into the main body of the Hall. In the 1960s, there were 3 sets of such doors but one set has been sacrificed to accommodate the additional wood and glass cubicle. Photo 3 also shows the original location of the School’s WW1 War Memorial, marked by the paint outline above the radiator (right).



1. The Main Entrance.:



2. Main Entrance Hall: Entrance Doors (centre left – beyond the red vending machine) and Doors to Assembly Hall (right). Centre distance, the Administration Corridor and Staff Room.



3. Main Entrance Hall: Partition extreme right separates off the Music Room/Dining Room. A distinctive paint outline above radiator (right) marks former location of the WW1 War Memorial.

² This was of course the era of the BBC Radio adventure “Journey into Space” and the Dan Dare magazine.

A Very Pleasant Afternoon

One day in early March, I found myself in Nottingham City Centre with some time on my hands. I had completed my business for the day and decided to take a look at the new Nottingham Central Library. This long overdue development had opened its doors in Nov 2023 and I was eager to see inside.

The New Library is built on the site of the old Broad Marsh Bus Station / Multi-Storey Car Park. The building is completely new, but a new Bus Station and Car Park replace the old in roughly the



The New Nottingham Central Library at the junction of Collin St (left) and Carrington St (right). In the distance, about 200 yds is Nottingham Midland Station. The library occupies the Ground, 1st and 2nd Floors on these 2 faces, running the full length of each.



The Local Studies Library is located at the far end of this very long bookcase / corridor.

same positions. The new Central Library occupies the frontage on the sides which face onto Collin St and Carrington St respectively, giving the Library an unusual “L” shaped plan with the entrance at the meeting of the 2 arms.

A couple of years ago, before the old Central Library on Angel Row closed, the Library organised a book sale to down-size their collection. I attended this sale and was horrified to see how many books they were selling from their previously excellent Local Studies collection. I managed to buy about 30 of these – many now out of print - all at about £2 each, so I did fairly well out of the event, but I remained

concerned that there might be very little remaining for the new Local Studies library.

I made my way to the Local Studies dept. at the end of an exceptionally long bookcase / corridor. I approached the young lady on reception and asked for a copy of “High Pavement Remembered”. This is still the best book on the history of HP School and I recalled seeing at least one copy in the “downsizing sale”. After consulting her computer, she assured me that they currently had 3 copies available. She kindly escorted me to one such copy, I thanked her and, clutching the copy, I went off to find myself a comfy chair.

I settled down in the very pleasant surroundings and was soon deeply engrossed in the “goings on” at HP Stanley Road in the 1920s (P129-148). The eccentricities of Dr Harry Joseph Spenser (Headmaster 1921-28), a



The exceptionally comfortable and relaxed seating area in the new Local Studies Library – with views (and memories) of the former Redmayne & Todds Sports shop (now Caffè Nero).

Cambridge double-first, as he set about reforming the school along Public School lines³. A real-life Hogwarts !

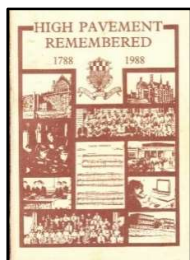
Old boy Harold Atkins (HP: 1921-28, later to become a leading Fleet St journalist) recalls that it was Dr Spenser who introduced the “House System” in order to improve pastoral care and provide for “within-school” competitions. He also introduced the new sports of Rugby⁴, Rowing and Boxing (P132). In their first year (1922), the HP Rugby Team lost heavily to the High School but all were surprised when the newly-formed HP ‘Fours’ Rowing team (with borrowed boat and equipment) beat the High School to win the Spenser Cup. Dr Spenser also introduced the principle of self-government (P133) in which Prefects were responsible for all discipline outside the classroom, leaving the staff to concentrate on teaching. Later, when the Local Education Authority (LEA) withdrew the £15 p.a. benefit for boys staying on for A-Levels, he protested most strongly and then publicly declared that, “as a gentleman he had no option but to pay them himself”. The LEA relented and paid up (P131).



Another old boy, John Hugh (Jack) Chesters (later to be OBE, FRS) recalled the time when, as School Captain, he was invited to dine one evening with Dr Spenser at his club and had to hastily master the art of eating buttered asparagus (P131). Dr Spenser also put on a production of “Alcestis” by Euripides using his own translation from the Greek (P130). Performed over 3 nights, it was a great success and, as a celebration, Dr Spenser organised a trip for all concerned with a champagne lunch at a hotel near Ollerton. After coffee, cigars were brought, one boy accepted and Dr Spenser lit it for him ! Dr Spenser also loved boxing and once requested (and survived) a round with “Tip” Flanders, landlord of the White Horse, Newark (P136). Flinders had earned himself a reputation when, as a 19 year old potboy in Radford, he had forcibly ejected a well-oiled William Thompson “Bendigo” without realising who he was.

Then, of course, there was the Woodthorpe Park affair (P48-51) which finally forced the resignation of Dr Spenser. . .but I will leave that for another day.

As I left the Library, I reflected on the fact that I could have stayed at home and read this book (I have my own copy), but somehow it wouldn’t have been the same. I had had a pleasant afternoon in very civilised surroundings ... and saved on my heating bill ! Might I suggest that some of our members consider following my example when next near the library.



The Book in question was “High Pavement Remembered, 1788-1988”, edited by Alan Bates, 1988 [170 pages, A5]. The book has soft-covers and 170 pages, including 16 illustrations. Specially written by the staff of the College to commemorate the Bicentenary of the School, it is probably the best single book covering the history of High Pavement. Regrettably, this excellent book is now out of print – hence my concern about the preservation of the 3 precious Library copies.

Graham Wybrow

ooOoo

³ Dr Spenser was himself an ex-Nottingham High School boy.

⁴ Although retaining the option of Football.

‘Revell’ Revealed and Remembered

On page 12 of February 2024 issue of *The Pavior*, Keith Woolley recalled some memories of his time (1944-1952) at High Pavement, one of which recalled a football wager with a fellow pupil, remembered only as ‘Revell’. The uncertain event around which the wager centred was which of the two football clubs, Notts County or Nottingham Forest (both then in the former Division 3 (South)), would be promoted first to the old Division 2. Woolley chose Forest and Revell County.



Derek Revell in a school photo

As it turned out County were promoted in 1949-50 and Forest the following season. However, Revell had left school before the outcome became certain and the wager was never paid out – a fact that had occupied Keith’s thoughts ever since.

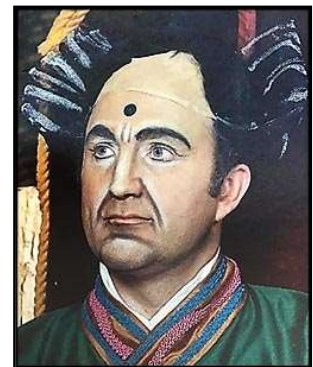
It occurred to me that the mystery winner might well be my beloved brother-in-law, Derek Revell (b.20 March 1933 – d.30 August 2016), whose years at High Pavement overlapped those of Keith. My subsequent enquiries and the affectionate recollections of Derek’s son, Andrew, persuaded us both that it was he.

Derek was a Bulwell boy, coming from one of the sprawling Nottingham Corporation estates that fringed the city in the 1940s and still do today. Without Keith’s recent prompting, his time at High Pavement might well have gone unremarked, as is the case of many boys who, like me, weren’t destined for university and left for work after five years with a few O levels.

Derek’s time at High Pavement, where he was happy and of which he was proud, prepared him well for later life. Amongst other jobs, he worked in the Accounts section at Bestwood Colliery and the Revenues section of the City Treasurer’s department. Later he owned a newsagent’s business at the junction of Hucknall Road with Perry Road, Sherwood, which he ran together with his wife, my sister Gillian.

Away from work, Derek served for some time as the secretary of the Bestwood Colliery football team. He was also a gifted off-break bowler; fully conversant with the mysteries of flight and spin. Fellow players in the colliery cricket team included Bill Voce of ‘Bodyline’ fame (an Australian would say ‘infamy’) and the distinguished actor Michael Jayston, who also played for the Lords Taverners.

However, Derek was neither flannelled fool nor muddled oaf. He had a magnificent singing voice, being a lover of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and was an accomplished performer and longtime member of the West Bridgford Operatic Society, with whom he performed the major bass baritone roles. Years on, his *Pirate King*, *Dick Deadeye* and the *Mikado* remain in the memory. On the dissolution of the Savoy Opera Company, Derek was one of the local performers chosen to support the cast in a tour organised under the heading ‘Gilbert and Sullivan for All’. Indeed, his stage appearance at the Nottingham Albert Hall even attracted a fee.



Derek in the Mikado

It’s likely that Derek’s wager with Keith was the one and only wager he made in his life. The Corinthian spirit was deep in him and, had he still been in school at the time, his priority

would have been to congratulate Keith when Forest won promotion in the following season. Keith's idea of a modest contribution to the Education Fund would have certainly met with his approval.

Barrie Smith

ooOoo

FROM: Dennis WHITTAKER [HP: 1943-50, Woodthorpe House]

This weekend I was reading the history of High Pavement over the last 200 years and both good and sad memories were in full flow. At 91 years of age that sort of thing does happen.

At school during those wartime years and up to 1950, there were many happy days with some excellent teaching. 'That Man' Mr. Crossland who took us in the sixth form had us reading the Classics instead of trying to understand chemistry. It has been amazing how those books, so well written, have been with me throughout my life. It was a happy and successful time for me. I had a spell as a successful athletics sprinter in my 16th, 17th and 18th years which gave me the interest and determination for life.

I was fortunate to be coached by Jack Archer, ex-HP and European sprint champion (1946 Oslo 100m) and Olympic Silver Medallist (1948 London 4x100m), and MacDonald Bailey Commonwealth sprint champion, both temporarily on the staff at HP⁵. We had many evening training sessions on the city sports ground off Middleton Boulevard in Nottingham. Perhaps I might brag a little when I say that as a result of this training, at a meeting one evening at the Nottingham University sports centre, I beat a selected few from around the UK including *their* sprint champion.

However, that was to be the final race I ever ran.

I was Captain of Woodthorpe House for two years, but failed my first attempt at the Higher School Certificate. I was allowed to stay on for a third year - (athletics banned by the Head), partly because I was always one year younger than the norm when I sat the first HSC at 16, and the rerun before 18. The second attempt included advanced level in, for example, maths. The school never put me forward for university entrance - their failure.

Whilst waiting for my National Service 'Call Up', I received an invitation, following some private chats, for a place in Durham University; King's College (some of the buildings were from the era of Armstrong and Whitworth, of engineering and nuts and bolts thread fame).

I contacted Durham for an entry and the result was quite the reverse of the school's. and in the autumn I entered Durham University. We were a poor family; damn all cash and scraping around each week. I had to concentrate on my courses, completing a good degree in only two years. There were no funds for training and running!

One achievement of which I was proud was being 'promoted' by my University to an honoured but active position as President of a very old society in Newcastle: 'The Tyne and Wear Metallurgical Engineering Society' which I readily accepted.

So subsequently, in the 1950s after the degree, like most of my generation, I entered National Service, then of two years duration. During basic training I took the option to change to long-term service, and in early 1954 was commissioned into REME and, after the first year

⁵ According to Wikipedia, Jack served as a Bomber Pilot in World War 2, reaching the rank of Flight Lieutenant.

of service, I received fast promotions to Captain. Alas, I was 'chopped' from the Service during the extensive slashing of the army in the 1950's.

With my wife and our two very young boys, I relocated to Canada. (Militarily I was still on the UK's 'Special Reserve'). We lived in the province of British Columbia, where I obtained a sound job with Cominco, the metals mining and engineering company. (This time as a requirement for leaving the UK I had to enlist in the Canadian Army Reserves and was promoted Major).

We returned to England after four years in Canada, when I was offered a senior appointment in English Steel Corporation in Manchester. Alas, only months before I was to be appointed a director, the nationalisation hammer hit hard. That enforced our final return to Canada, where I now live retired in Ontario.

Even so, I have another pleasant memory: while visiting England, Dorothy and I attended only one HP Society Christmas lunch but enjoyed it so much, we spoke about it often. We would have returned to one or two more, but Dorothy had poor health and passed away 10 years ago.

Now in my nineties I am fixed in a battery-operated chair. Its top speed is just 4.5 mph with a following wind!

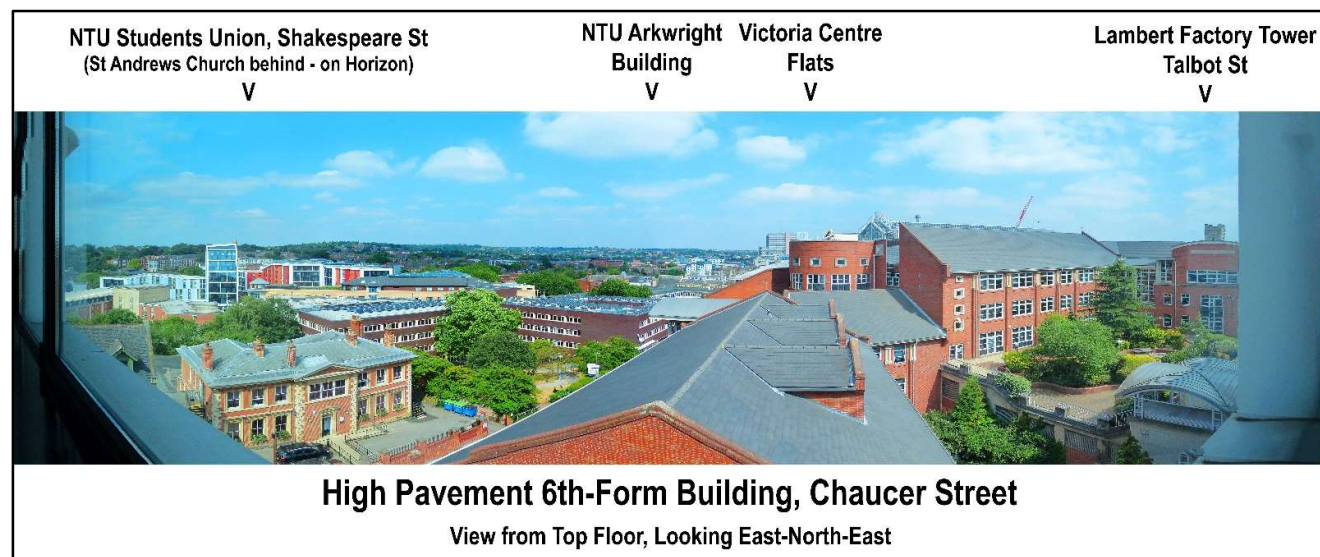
I will always remember with thanks and fondness a few names from school days. Apart from Jack Archer these include Messrs Crossland, Page (Snr), and E W N Smith (Mr Smith insisted on calling me 'Elephant', when moving at speed). Stan Thrasher, my housemaster at HP, lived in Wollaton, a short distance from the lady I married and whenever he saw me (us) he always stopped to greet us and made a very nice quip remark; he truly helped me through school.

Sorry if I bored you with this nonsense. I just thought that I might provide a 'sniff' at an Old Pavior's travels in life; after first enjoying outstanding school success, then rated as a failure. Followed by success in two armed forces, and some notable positions in the world of heavy industry.

High Pavement was a damned fine school; I am proud to be an Old Pavior.

Dennis Whittaker

ooOoo



Recollections of Life at High Pavement in the 1960s

David (DG) Taylor recalls life in his early days at High Pavement School. Many members will know David as one of the founder members of the School's 'Omnibus Society' and he has retained a keen interest in buses all his life, helped by working for many years in the field.

The letter advising me that I had been awarded a place at HPGS arrived in Mar 1958 and I commenced my 7 year education at Bestwood in Sept of that year. I had previously won a scholarship to the Boys' High School but I didn't wish to go there as I didn't know anyone else who would be going there and they also had classes on a Saturday morning of which I did not approve (my old school Highbury Junior, in Albert St, Bulwell only worked Mon-Fri). The Boys' High School also had military training which I didn't agree with, being a Christian Pacifist.



David (DG) Taylor
(in 2019)

Across my road lived twin boys Andrew and Anthony Smith who were both 2 days older than me and had also gained places at HPGS. So, on the first full day we all caught the 08:27 No 17 Bus to Marble Arch (a railway bridge beside Hucknall Road opposite what is now Gorse Court – the Arch long since demolished). We then walked under Marble Arch and up Teviot Road to Gainsford Crescent and the School Main Entrance. I recall the bus fare was 1d and the ticket was issued from an 'Ultimate' ticket machine by a conductress who I later found was named Molly Drury. This information was obtained as a result of working at NCT after leaving school and spending 20 years working at the Lower Parliament Street Offices.

My first impression of the school was its size. It had 20 classrooms as well as Science Labs, Woodwork and Metalwork shops and a Music Room. This compared with only 6 classrooms at my Junior School at Highbury. The class size in form 1A was slightly over 30, noticeably smaller than the top class in my Junior School where we had 46 children (both boys and girls) - HPGS was boys only. The Main Block had 3 storeys as compared with Highbury which was a single storey building.



No 17 Bus heading south on Hucknall Road, 1960. Marble Arch at bottom of hill.

My form master was Mr Tom Ormanroyd. I was appointed Form Monitor, a role which I had also held at Junior School. One daily task was to take the Absence Return to the School Secretary's office and I got to know Miss Chawner quite well. We would then go into assembly which was held in the School Hall. This was a large hall and would hold some 800 boys including 6th formers who were large compared with our small 11 year-olds. The sight of teachers in their gowns was something that was completely new to me and they were all male. For some strange reason, I had expected the assembly to be conducted in Latin, which it wasn't, although it was quite formal. The hymns and prayers were already known to me from my chapel upbringing and so were familiar.

The subjects that were studied at HPGS were also new to me – French, Latin and German also History. I coped well with the languages, in which I passed my A-Levels in

1965. Most of the boys were friendly and I found that some, like me, were interested in buses. We formed an Omnibus Society as I have explained in a previous Pavior article. Several of the boys are still interested in this topic today and some also working in the industry. The one aspect of school which I did not like was sport especially PE. I had worn spectacles since the age of 7 and was terrified of getting them broken and having a shard of glass in my eye. Unlike at Highbury we also had to have a shower after PE. Naturally this involved being naked in front of classmates which I think we all found embarrassing.

I did not stay for school lunch but went home each day. Morning school finished at 12:35 and I walked quickly down Gainsford Crescent to catch the bus home at 12:45 from the junction of Hucknall Rd and Arnold Rd. My mother had lunch ready for me as I had to catch the bus back at 1:20 to make school for 2pm. This gave me just 25 mins at home. It would have been useful to have had a mobile phone then if the bus failed to appear. I remember there was a school 'tuckshop' which was open during the morning break and was very well patronised. It had delightful items such as cream and jam rolls, Waggon Wheels, Mars Bars etc. The 6th-formers were allowed to skip the queue before the younger boys and I felt cheated when the highly unhealthy food that we had queued for was no longer available when we eventually got to be served.

One or two happenings which I remember quite clearly from my days in the 6th-form – firstly the fire which had broken out at a factory in Basford (Pearsons) and was quite intense with plumes of smoke billowing out over the area. The other was when the winter sun went behind a bank of dense cloud which caused fog to descend rapidly. One moment you could see across the yard and the next it had completely disappeared. Similarly, I remember walking home with the Smith twins along St Alban's Rd – it was so foggy that we could not see anything across the road.

Tuition in the 1960s was chalk and talk. Modern technology such as PCs, iPads and mobile phones, had not yet appeared and I feel that teaching was more personal as a result. I did not feel quite the pressure then to achieve qualifications and to get to university.

One annual event was the school Speech Day. In my early years, this was held in the School Hall⁶. However, later, particularly under Headmaster Mr MH Brown, the event returned to the Albert Hall with all the Boys on the platform. In the 6th-Form I gained the Modern Language Prize which I collected from the Lord Mayor of Nottingham in 1965, Alderman W Derbyshire. As always, we sang the School Song 'Carmen Paviorum' with great gusto – I have always felt great pride in going to HPGS and respected the way of life. I have many happy memories and good friends from those years – it was a really great school.

David (DG) Taylor

Does anyone else remember the name of the Bus Conductress who brought them to school on their first day or the type of ticket machine that she used ? . . . Thought not !!! - Ed

ooOoo

⁶ Following the move to Gainsford Crescent in 1955, School Speech Days tended to be held in the School Hall at Bestwood. I suspect that this was done as an economy measure, to save money whilst making full use of the facilities at Bestwood. However, there was insufficient room to accommodate the whole school plus parents / guests on one evening and so it was necessary to hold a Junior and a Senior Speech Day on separate evenings. Later, in the 1960s, the school tended to return to the Albert Hall for Speech Days so that we could once again present the fine spectacle of a single Speech Day for the whole school – and very impressive it was too.

My Father's Story

My father, Lawrence Gleadle, was a lithographic artist for Stafford's, a Nottingham printing house, in the 1920's and 30's. At that time Stafford's was the largest poster printer in England employing more than 800 staff.

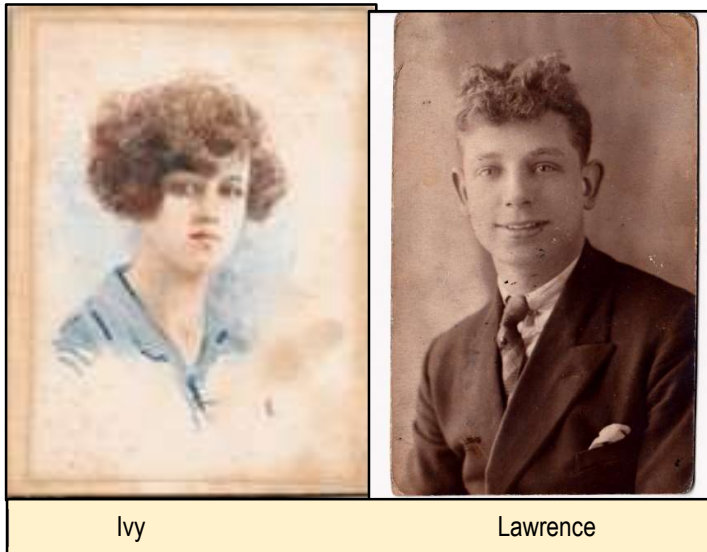
After spending time at the Nottingham School of Art, he joined Stafford's in 1923 aged 16 on a 5-year apprenticeship beginning at 12 shillings a week.

Eventually he became the Big Head Man (a term used in the printing trade), the most skilled artist, specialising in the *portraits* of the cinema stars and/or advertising characters (e.g. the Oxo Guardsman), while other artists would draw the backgrounds and lettering.

My mother, Ivy, joined the company three years after my father at the age of 15.

They soon became an item and were married for 65 years.

In WW2 Lawrence was called up and became a lorry driver for the Ministry of War. He never went back to the printing industry, eventually becoming a bus driver for Nottingham

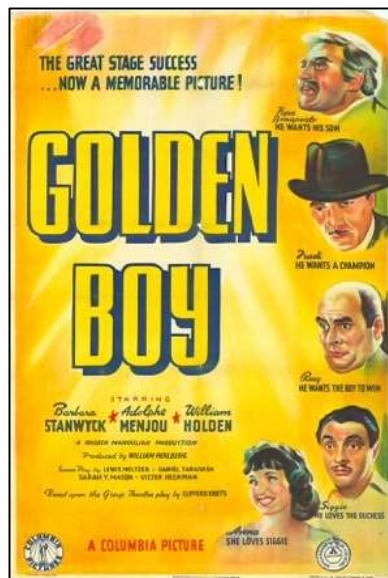


City Transport. However, he *had* kept samples of his work.

I was born in 1942, the past was seldom talked about, and I knew little about his past life and was completely unaware of the existence of the posters. I grew up on Broxtowe council estate, went on to High Pavement and then to university in Leeds, still unaware of my father's past. I spent 10 years living and working abroad before returning to settle on the South Coast.

It wasn't until the early 1980's that my father gave me a dustbin liner full of old paper (the posters!). At that time, before PC's, it was difficult to identify them. They were mostly part of a much bigger poster designed for a large billboard. I didn't then know why, but I realised later he had only kept *his* work, the portraits. The names, credits, etc. were on other sheets. It wasn't until 2016 that I decided to research them once more.

I had them scanned at Portsmouth University on to computer files, so I was able to make prints of them. There were more than 40. A young artist friend, Kendal James, was able to repair damaged posters online



and with her help we held exhibitions, gave talks. did interviews on the local TV and radio and even eventually a piece on The One Show!

We had an exhibition at the Bonington Gallery, Nottingham Trent University. The Nottingham School of Art had become the Nottingham College of Art and eventually part of Nottingham Trent.

The posters are now with the Cinema and Television History archives at De Montfort University for conservation and digitisation under Professor Steve Chibnall.

Throughout this 8-year adventure I had been finding out more and more about the story



of my father and mother, about Stafford's, the processes of the printing, the stories of the films and the stars in them.

I had been writing them as

an illustrated book and with the help of Steve Chibnall and De Montfort, I now have it in print.

The book (see on the right) is an A4 format of 40 pages with over 50 mostly colour images and I am selling the first print run at £10 + £5 P&P. a copy.



Godfrey Gleadle

[Editor's note. This most interesting and absorbing contribution from Godfrey Gleadle took me back to my childhood days when I was taken to the cinema and saw the MGM film for which one of these posters was produced: 'The Boy from Barnardos' featured Freddie Bartholomew and Mickey Rooney.]

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OUR END PIECE

Alan A SMITH [HP:1943-48, Basford House]

Just An Ordinary Bloke – 5. Signy Island in the South Orkneys (1952)

[93 year old Alan (now living in Australia) describes his move in 1952 to Signy, a small island in the South Orkneys at a latitude of 61° South, about 380 miles from the Antarctic Peninsula]

The annual supplies brought in by RRS John Biscoe included perhaps a dozen books and a dozen records. At each base there was an old gramophone which had a winding handle. The older the gramophone the more frequently it had to be 'wound up'. We seldom used it. A new staff member arrived in 1953 with a new style record player. It was electric: just plug it into the electricity point and switch it on. He also had a selection of discs. They were of the new 33½ format and two discs are prominent in my memory: Tchaikovsky's 1812 and Max Bruch's Violin Concerto.

A Royal Navy corvette visited us. We all went on board to see a film. Another time the Navy came and the Governor was on board. It was a 'showing the flag' exercise— only the magistrate was invited on board! Another ship to visit was the Kista Dan. It had been chartered by a Hollywood film company and on board was a film crew. They were filming a Hammond Innes story titled, 'The White South.' The hero of the film was Alan Ladd but he was not with them. However, the role of the bad man was being filled by the Welsh actor Stanley Baker, and he was present. They entertained us splendidly. Other free time would be essentially related to the young people's activities. In the summer time day walks were frequently taken and in the winter skiing was the main activity.

I requested a move to another base for my second year. It was December 1953 the RRS Biscoe arrived and I went aboard expecting a trip straight to Stanley in the Falklands; but no, she turned southwards and made for Hope Bay. Perhaps that was to be my destination; but again, no: from there it was to Dundee Island. The Argentinians had erected a base there. There were no staff present so their flag was removed and a protest note nailed to the door. Then the Biscoe made for Stanley, a side trip of perhaps 1000 miles.

At Stanley I learned that I was destined for Signy Island in the South Orkneys some 450 miles southwest of South Georgia. I was issued with two pairs of inner mukluks and one outer pair. I also received another pair of leather mittens more appropriate for sledging trips, and I exchanged my soft peaked cap for a balaclava. I met John, diesel mechanic, who was also going to Signy. I worked in the Met. Office until the Biscoe's departure was imminent. We arrived at Signy on 1st February and joined Graham, radio operator, and Peter, met and ornithology. They had arrived a few weeks previously. Harold arrived on the Biscoe's next and last call of the season. It was 30th March and he had spent the previous year at Marguerite Bay.

The largest island in the South Orkneys is Coronation Island lying roughly west to east and Signy is a small place about midway along its south side. From about 1920 to 1924 a small whaling station had been located on Signy and then abandoned. It was adjacent to the site of our establishment located on Factory Cove. Signy's *average* annual temperature is minus 3 degrees Celsius and



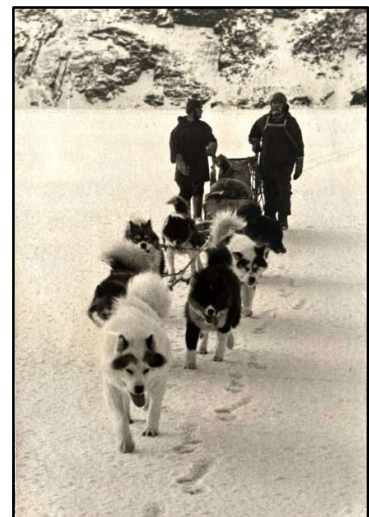
Alan gutting a Weddell seal in South Orkneys.

its extreme minimum is minus 39 degrees Celsius. In the winter the sea freezes. Occasionally we would go to the highest point to do an ice observation, from there we calculated that the horizon was 20 miles distant. Usually in the winter the ice extended to the horizon. Ice observations were carried out over 40 years and the average duration of the sea being frozen was 145 days. In 1954 we had ice for 154 days, a little longer than the average. Twice we dug through the ice in Factory Cove, on both occasions the ice being measured as being 28 inches thick.

It is a windy place and shortly after our arrival a gale blew the Stevenson thermometer screen off its metal frame. It destroyed the screen, and examination of the frame revealed that it had not been assembled correctly in the first place. The Beaufort scale was devised to gauge the strength of the wind in days of sailing ships. The definition of a gale is of a Force 8 wind that blows continually for 10 minutes. A severe hurricane is a Force 13 wind. Later in our stay on Signy a very strong wind was blowing, measuring close to 90 kph, that is Force 10, when the 3-cup anemometer became defective. That wind blew for ten hours! The Stevenson screen was OK; we had it anchored down.

Although our routine was similar to that of South Georgia with respect to the meteorological aspects and radio schedules other demands existed. For example, the individual on cooking duties also had to make a daily base diary entry. However the demands of another 20 something mouths to feed was at the forefront of our minds. There were 17 adult huskies and 5 pups to look after. They were fed every second day and generally received a penguin or substantial piece of seal meat. In very inclement weather they had to do with a block of pemmican each. A span was a length of cable lying along the ground and securely anchored around rocks at the ends. Every adult dog was attached to the span at regular intervals by a 6 foot chain which was attached to the dog's collar. The distance between each dog was sufficient to keep them separated. The pups largely ran loose. Our eyes were ever alert for seals in the area. On the base was a .303 rifle, a .22 rifle and .45 revolver. The .303 was used on the seals.

Bill was the largest dog and the most aggressive: he was the King dog. The Royal Navy visited and a request came from the ship. Could the skipper's Staffordshire bull terrier come ashore and be walked along the beach by a rating? Permission was granted and it was brought ashore. Our dogs went barmy. We were glad to see the ship depart but were soon sorry. We found Bill dead. Heart attack? Belinda, a young female, developed a lump in the throat. The doctor at Hope Bay was consulted and he advised penicillin, but it was either not soon enough or not sufficient in amount. The dead dogs were carried up to a ridge and dropped into the sea.



Smoky in the lead with Graham rear left. Alan with ice in his beard, rear right.

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