

# TANFIELD ASSOCIATION



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## NEWSLETTER No. 24

## Summer 2012

### Editorial

October and the celebrations are ever closer. We have had meetings at school and I am now able to give you the final details of what is going to happen.

#### Centennial Celebratory Events

- a) The School will be open to visitors during the working week of October 15<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>. Guides will be available to conduct visitors around the school to see how it works. There will be two morning 'windows': 9.00am - 11.00am and 11.30 - 12.15pm. Afternoon visiting will be 1.00pm until 3.00pm. It would be a great help if you would 'phone in advance to ensure that guides are available, and that numbers can be managed.
- b) The School will be open to visitors on two Saturdays, the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> October from 12 noon until 5.00pm. Guides will conduct visitors around the buildings, but obviously the rooms will be empty.
- c) Two evening functions are being arranged, one on each of the Saturdays (13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>) from 7pm until 11pm. Fire regulations limit the number of persons who can be in the school hall at any time. Rather than turning people away we decided that a duplicate event would solve the problem. It also means that numbers will need to be regulated, and thus each function will be by ticket only.

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Our First Advert!

Tickets will cost £15 each. You will be informed by mail of the purchasing arrangements. We are trying to adopt a system where all members, home or abroad, snail mail or e-mail will have an equal opportunity to obtain places.

The format of the evenings will follow the same pattern. A few brief speeches by prominent persons, a buffet supper (which is usually excellent!), the formal cutting of the Birthday Cake and plenty of time to greet old friends and to scrutinise the hundreds of photographs which we have accumulated. A photographer will be on hand to picture you with your contemporaries and probably a video kiosk where you can leave a 'vox-pop' comment or recollection. (Editing will be carried out!!) Dancing shoes will not be required- at least not at school, but be prepared to exercise your lungs in a rendition of the School Song!

Other items:

The launch by Peter of our e-mail distribution service was a success all round. For the Association it saved a considerable amount of postage, and the recipients received their copy instantaneously. We had comments about the PDF format enabling perfect printing, and about the quality of the photographs. We had no negative comments at all! So, well done Peter, and thanks. (As I was under some family stress, Peter actually did all of the distribution for me which was a great relief. I am extremely grateful.)

If you have an e-mail address and have not passed it on to us please do so, and help us to save even more on postage.

My list of Nicknames got some folks going, as you will see inside. I was amazed at both the sharpness of some memories, and of the limit of others. I am publishing the list of names that I was given, if you disagree feel free to let me know. Incidentally I have omitted a couple of 'cruel' names; that may be why you spot a gap.

It is very gratifying to receive some very interesting pieces that members have written for the Newsletter. We are always seeking items to fill it, so please lose your inhibitions and put pen to paper, or better still fingers to the keyboard! I look forward to being swamped.

This edition is going out sooner than usual in order to inform members about the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations. If there is sufficient material you may receive another prior to Christmas.

### **40 Years Later**

Can you cast your mind back 40 years to see if you can remember Brian Corbett, who taught French at Tanfield from September 1969 to July 1972, a very short time compared to some of you, but one that has remained with me with lots of happy memories.

A former pupil, Margaret Bunce, lives opposite my sister in Chester-le-Street. I also taught her brother David during my time at Tanfield. It was she who passed on the information about the centenary celebrations and who sent me a copy of Newsletter No.23.

Your article on "The Government Inspector" sent me scurrying to my archives and I've found something that I hope will be of interest. Of course, I had left Tanfield by 1974 but I'm fairly sure that the director of "The Government Inspector" would have been Angus Robinson. I was involved in two of his productions: "The Importance of Being Earnest" in which he persuaded me to play piano pieces during

the intervals in the style of the "Palm Court Orchestra" The second production was "The Fireraisers", which was produced exactly 40 years ago in March 1972. I have a programme and a set of photos of the production which I have scanned and attached to this email. You can see a younger version of yourself, with Angus and Derek Watson who, I understand, died at a tragically early age.

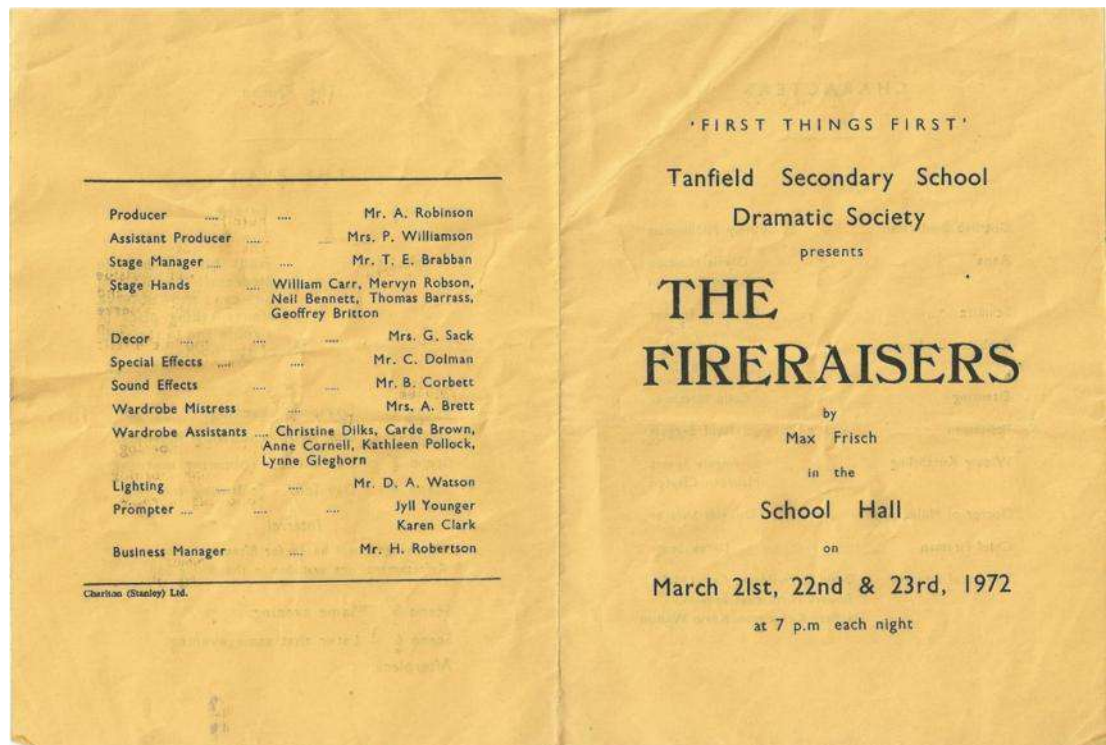
Other highlights for me were the three trips to France that I organized during my time at Tanfield. I also have a set of photos from the first trip, most of them taken by Harry Robertson. I also, inadvertently, played Cupid on the first trip by including both John Phillips and Maureen Clayton in my group. I subsequently attended their wedding, am reliably informed that their twins were conceived at my flat in Antibes and am also godfather to their younger son.

I can never think about Tanfield without a vision of Dr. Sharp appearing, dressed in what, for me, seemed like his World War 2 demob suit. This vision immediately stirs another memory. Mr Yockney, the music teacher, was never very keen on playing piano for morning assembly so Norman Williams and I took on that responsibility. One of Dr. Sharp's favourite hymns was "Jerusalem" and whenever it came up for assembly I had a practice the previous afternoon, as it was quite difficult to play. The Doc's office was close to the assembly hall and he would invariably join me when he heard me playing. He would then perform "Jerusalem" with a gusto and fervour that would have had any passing pupil in fits of laughter.

On a sadder note I remember very clearly the day that Miss Thompson, the head of French, died. Mavis, the headmaster's secretary, came round every classroom and simply handed the teacher a piece of paper informing us of her death. I still shiver with emotion when I recall the atmosphere in school that afternoon.

Incidentally, since leaving Tanfield I have had a home in France, although I spent most of my working life in the Arabian Gulf. I am now retired and live in Mougins in the South of France.

Best regards,  
Brian Corbett





## **Les Deux Amy**

Those of you who have been around Tanfield since 1952 will know/remember Amy Seccombe/O'Loughlin/Bilton. She was a pupil back in the 50s and later a very enthusiastic teacher of French in the school. Did you know however that she was carrying on a great family tradition? She was named Amy after her great cousin Amy, who was also a very enthusiastic teacher of French at Tanfield, Amy Thompson, who many of us will remember as 'Fifi'.

Amy Thompson was also a pupil at Tanfield from 1927 until she went to Leeds University in 1934. She became Head of French at Tanfield in 1948 following the retirement of 'Froggy' Miller.

Enthusiastic is putting it mildly. I remember the shock as Miss Thompson burst into the classroom speaking in French which went on unrelenting for every 40 minute lesson. What a shock to the system. I believe it was called the 'Direct Approach' and its directness left you breathless. She was very quickly discerned to be obviously French and so became known to all pupils as 'Fifi'. This, the lass who grew up in View Lane, Stanley!

She was a good teacher. Even a lad from Sleepy Valley whose background could indicate no obvious use for the language finished with a reasonable school cert. due to her efforts. In those days part of the final exam was an Oral, conducted individually by Miss Thompson. Being a B for Brabban I was in at the top of the list. The rest of the class were all curious and when I emerged full of questions. I told them that when she started she said "Alors Brabban" (you'll remember that we were always known by our surnames in those days). My response, I informed them was "Hello Miss Thompson" Not true of course, but it got a laugh.

Fifi became Sixth Form Mistress late in the 50s. Sadly she died of cancer in 1971 when she was only 55. (Amy pre-dated Imelda Marcos- on her death the family discovered that she had 39 pairs of shoes.) Amy Bilton came back to Tanfield to teach in 1972 and taught out her days there. She too became Head of French in 1984 and was Sixth Form Mistress alongside myself before the school eventually lost its post 16 pupils. Amy retired in 2003. She is still enthusiastic about the school and the Association. The '52ers' group meet every 6 weeks for lunch.

Recently Amy has taken it upon herself to discover the identity and background of Alderman Wood (Mr H Curry-Wood) who was a driving force behind the founding of the school and initially gave it his name. You can read the results of her research in the centenary book '100 Not Out'.

Ted Brabban.

(Are there any memories out there of the trips to France that either of the Amys organised?)

## **Titanic**

Dear Ted,

I have just returned from a very special holiday - the Titanic Memorial Cruise - which I understand has featured quite largely on BBC news programmes. I was talking to my cousin, Marian Hinds, about it and she said I simply must write about it for the Newsletter, as no-one else would have been on it.

So I don't know if it's the sort of thing you would be interested in - and if it's too long, but here it is. I leave it in your hands.

Best wishes,  
Sheila Parkes

## ***TITANIC – my journey of a lifetime***

I have had a fascination with all things Titanic since forever. I believe it stemmed from a remark of my father's, who had been in the Royal Navy during the war. As a child I used to love hearing his wartime stories. One concerned an incident when he saw a ship go down. As he described it, he said what a terrible thing it was to witness "the death of a ship". That wonderfully emotive expression stayed with me and as I grew older and learned the story of Titanic, it seemed to me that she had also died, along with her hundreds of ill-fated passengers.

Over the years I have attended several lectures and visited local and national exhibitions. I have also built up a large collection of films, documentaries, books, pictures and even frivolous things such as T-shirts, pens, fridge magnets and other memorabilia. I think I could set up my own exhibition!

So when, in May 2009, I learned that there was to be a one and only Memorial Cruise in April 2012 to commemorate the centenary of the original voyage, I applied, without any hope of success. However, to my amazement I gained a place. The cruise was completely booked up within three months, to passengers from all around the world, including some with personal connections to the first passengers or crew. The idea was to retrace the original voyage with the same number of passengers (1,309): sailing from Southampton and ending in New York where she should have docked.

We learned that the BBC were attaching great significance to the cruise and would be accompanying us, culminating in a live broadcast of the Memorial Service itself. There were to be 3 formal nights, for which we were invited to dress in period costume, to sit down to at least one original dinner menu. Thank goodness seven courses aren't the norm nowadays!

In March, I was asked by a local BBC news programme if I would be willing to be interviewed in my home to show off my assortment of Titanic memorabilia (a grand name for my gathering of "stuff"). Rather nervously I agreed, but luckily they were impressed by my collection - including a porcelain White Star Line mug bought for £2 in a charity shop, which I secretly hope might be worth thousands. As they left, the local BBC radio station rang to request a live interview before sailing, with promises of further radio interviews on board.

The day finally arrived - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2012, two days earlier than Titanic had sailed, because even modern ships can't sail as fast as she did. The embarkation hall was full of press, TV cameras and several people already in period costume. We set sail over an hour late, sailed past Cherbourg during the night and arrived in Cobh in Southern Ireland (known in 1912 as Queenstown) on the Monday evening, 2 hours late owing to bad weather. Even so, there were 7,000 people still waiting to greet us, along with the Mayor and a brass band. We disembarked to be taken on an evening walking tour of this charming little city, mostly unchanged from 1912, around all of the parts relevant to Titanic, culminating in a welcome visit to an Irish pub and a complimentary glass of (very strong!) Irish coffee.

The next few days were spent at sea, when we experienced some very rough weather, particularly one night when the ship rose and fell alarmingly, causing drawers to slide open and perfume bottles to hit the floor with a crash. On the Wednesday I was called up to the BBC studio for my second live interview at 6.30am. Goodness knows what I said! The third one took place on the Friday morning at the same time - I was more compos mentis that time. During that first week a passenger was airlifted off the ship with a serious heart condition, causing some people to remark that our trip was already being dogged by bad luck.

Our journey reached its climax on the Saturday night, 14<sup>th</sup> April, with the Memorial Service. Our Captain (ironically named BAMBERG - think about it!) announced that there would be a two minutes' silence at 11.40pm, when Titanic had struck the iceberg. As the ship's whistle blew, the whole ship fell completely silent. The engines had stopped and we knew we were sitting over the top of where Titanic is resting in 2 sections. 2,000 people stood in utter silence with heads bowed, reflecting on the tragic deaths of over 1500 men, women and children.

This was followed by a religious service, led by Canon Huw Mosford, Director of Chaplaincy for the Mission to Seafarers, a charming man with whom my friend and I had lunched the day before. As we entered the theatre in silence, a screen was displaying the individual names of all of those who had died, including whole families - father, mother and up to six children in some cases. The words and prayers of the service were beautifully written and carefully chosen, as were the hymns. At 2am, we all went out on deck to complete the service. The flag of the White Star Line was flying and as we ended, at exactly 2.20am when she plunged beneath the water forever three wreaths were cast into the water in a poignant tribute to the ship and her tragic passengers. Finally an opera singer, one of our company, sang over the loudspeakers "Nearer my God to Thee". At 3am the engines started up and we sailed slowly away from the site, leaving Titanic to her rest.

The next port of call was Halifax in Nova Scotia, where many of the bodies had been taken, although there were so many that those of the crew and third-class passengers had had to be buried at sea. Sadly, the class system was upheld to the end. We visited the 3 cemeteries, and saw the graves, all beautifully maintained and honoured in a public service by the Halifax authorities with the placement of single roses. Some bodies had been identified, but many other gravestones were moving in their simplicity, marked only as - "Died 15<sup>th</sup> April 1912".

Finally on April 19<sup>th</sup>, we sailed up the Hudson past the Statue of Liberty into New York. As we passed Pier 54, where Titanic should have docked, our ship's whistle sounded again, reminding us that we were the lucky ones and that our whole complement of passengers and crew had arrived safely, instead of only 705 survivors out of over 2,200 people.

This truly was the Trip of a Lifetime for me. In 50 years' time, Titanic will be no more, as she is rapidly collapsing in on herself and disintegrating. But her story will live on and it is comforting to know that most of the lessons learned from her tragic demise have made sea travel safer for modern passengers.

*Sheila Parkes*  
(née Wrightson  
SGS 1959-66)

### Teaching French at S.G.S

I have many memories of my time teaching French at Stanley Grammar School. It was a good school with a friendly and helpful staff. After two aborted interviews because I was away, I think that the Governors were pleased to settle things on the third attempt.

Does anyone have memories of the French plays that were put on for Speech Day? They were fun to rehearse, and were well received even if the audience didn't understand them.

Marie Heslop and I ran a French Club which was sometimes rather boisterous, but hopefully helped the participants get a little understanding of the language. I remember a sparse first meeting with the curious peeping in to see what transpired. More came the following week and eventually it was quite popular. We

played various games and I remember the confusion when Simon said “Levez le pied droit” followed by “Levez le pied gauche”

Some incidents stick in my memory. In winter slithering and sliding down the hill from Stanley to collapse in a heap in front of most of the pupils. Leaping inelegantly into Mrs Pritchard’s car as she erratically took off towards the school gates, and instructing my class to “Indiquez le Directeur” as he observed us from the corridor. He disappeared rather quickly as the class all turned and pointed!

To avoid carrying books home to Sunderland and back I usually stayed after school to do my marking. One night when I prepared to leave I discovered to my horror that I had been locked in. I resolved that the only way out would be through the windows. They opened in from the top and were not very wide - but neither was I, so I threw out my bags and gingerly followed, landing with a thump on the Terrace. Fortunately it was dark by then and so no one witnessed my inelegant and undignified departure.

My memories of Stanley winters are of snow, snow and more snow. Travelling from Sunderland by bus often meant late arrival at these times. I remember the loud groans on one occasion when I and the French exam papers arrived just as the class thought that they had got away without having to do it. How to be popular.

These are just some of my memories looking back at the time I enjoyed teaching at Stanley.  
Muriel Guerrero.

(Mrs Guerrero will be better remembered as Miss Grieveson. Ted)

Linda Coy (Hughff)

Hi Mr Brabban

I received the Tanfield Association Newsletter this week and read about the Government Inspector 1974.

Well I was in that play! At the time I was Linda Hughff and was in the Lower Sixth. I played the Mayoress and the play if I am right was about a small Russian town and corruption in the local government. Colin Mortimer was the Mayor and I know that Stewart Nicholson and I think Philip Middlemast were in the play. My memory is a bit shaky.

I think it was Mr Dawson who produced it (English teacher). It was great fun but was my first and last performance on the boards!!

I remember you too very well, you were my form tutor when I was in 1b c 1968-9. You also taught my brothers when you worked at Burnopfield Sec modern (George, Robert, David Hughff)

I went on to be Head Girl at Tanfield 1974-5- Helen Barrass was Deputy Head Girl with Keith Smith Head Boy and David Nunn Deputy Head Boy. After school I studied History at Leicester Uni and have taught all my life as a History teacher. I am currently Assistant Headteacher at a school in Woodstock Oxfordshire. Mr Nicol Webster and Mr Norman Williamson my history teachers were my inspiration

I loved Tanfield and have very happy memories of my time there and the teachers who were fantastic and of course the sport!



I am married now with two grown up daughters, both at University

I hope you are well and it was a real memory jerker to see the ticket in the Tanfield News!! I love keeping in touch with the publication, keep up the good work

Best wishes

Linda Coy (nee Hughff)

Thank you Linda, I remember you well. The 'Mr Brabban' days are long past, please call me Ted!  
Your brothers never benefited from my wisdom however. The Mr Brabban at Burnopfield School was my Uncle Frank, who would impart just as much wisdom!  
Ted.

### **Nicknames**

As you will see from the correspondence there was quite a response to my challenge to your memories. Some of the names were new to me, and supplied by Peter and Elizabeth when we had a meeting one evening. I will print below the list as I was given it, but I am open to 'challenges!!

Miss Miller	- Froggy
Mr Elliot	- Little Ell
Mr Jolly	- Nick
Mr Carr	- Pongo
Miss Jeffery	- Ganny
Mr Watson	- Acker
Mr Hewitt	- Fat Alf or Harry
Mr Glendenning	- Spud
Mr Yockney	- Spike or Dettol Dick
Mr Proud	- Bob
Mrs Hassall	- Old Ma
Mr Livesy	- Pete
Mr Scott	- Skitty Scotty
Mr Cousins	- Kenny
Mr Fewster	- Fuzzy
Mr Westwater	- Titch
Miss Thompson	- Fifi
Mr Wood	- Abdul or The Bull
Mr Seed	- Pip
Mrs Pritchard	- Auntie Jennie
Dr. Sharpe	- Len or The Doc
Mrs Robson	- Jezebel
Mr E. Robson	- Hitler
Mr Geddes	- Charlie
Mr Reece	- Rastus
Mr Gee	- Daddy
Mr Brabban	- Tebs (My Initials!)

## John Cameron

Ted,  
Newsletter 23 received by email with many thanks.

As a SGS pupil from 1961-64, nicknames I remember from those years include:

Acker - Mr Watson (Physics) - His moustache/beard resembled that of Acker Bilk

'Fat Alf' - Mr Hewitt (Religious Education)

Dettol Dick - Mr G A Yockney (Music/Latin), whose father, I think, had taught years previously at my primary school, St Margaret's in Durham City?

Spike - I think this may well have been another of Mr Yockney's nicknames?

Kenny - Mr Cousins (Chemistry), now retired to Norfolk. I chatted to him on the phone last year, thanks to Sid Clough finding his phone number.

Titch/Titchy - Mr (Alan) Westwater (PE/Maths)

Fifi - Possibly (?) Miss Grievson (French), who with Nova Williamson helped organise (1962?) the French play Chez le Dentiste.

The Bull - Mr Wood (German) set out on skis to search for pupils lost in 1962-63 winter snowstorm incident

Pip - Mr Seed (Geog)

Aunty Jenny - Mrs Pritchard (Geog)

The Len - Dr L E Sharp (Headmaster) To call him simply Len would have been disrespectful - he was THE Len

Ma - could this have been Miss Thornton's nickname in the later part of her career?

Teb - the clue is that he was a popular woodwork teacher with initials TEB, Mr Brabban. Any ideas?

Warmest Wishes,

John Cameron

Hi John,

What a memory you have!

Fifi was Miss Thompson (Amy). Ma was apparently Mrs Hassall. I think that you might take a bit of beating, but we'll see!!

Hope that you are well and beating the recession.

Ted

Ted,

Thanks.

Yes of course Mrs Hassall who taught me second-year English in '62-'63 was 'Ma' [Chinese being a tonal language, 'ma' can be said in four tones :

mā(high)=mother;má(rising)=hemp;mǎ(falling/rising)=horse;mà(falling)=to blame, curse. So in China it seems you'd have to be careful with Mrs Hassall's nickname! Hope you find this information of some use!

'Pete' was probably Mr Livesey.



propelled from my table to spend the whole of the rest of the session **STANDING ON THE STAGE WHERE THE TEACHING STAFF WERE HAVING THEIR LUNCH.....IN FULL VIEW OF ALL INHABITANTS OF THE DINING-HALL!!!!!!** All I prayed for , during that time, was that the floor should open up to swallow me..... or that I should die!!!!!!

I later gained a great respect for Morrty, observing that she really **CARED** that she was there to help all pupils to reach their full potential and, in her book, that appeared to mean **TAKING NO PRISONERS!!**

Happy days!

Margaret

Bill Errington

Dear Ted

Thanks for the newsletter and because you have used Adobe I was able to print it properly i.e. two sided.

Best Wishes Bill

PS Spud and Daddy Gee were the deadliest with either chalk or blackboard rubber

Graham Kirtley

Hi Ted

My Dad and I thoroughly enjoyed reading the latest newsletter. I will definitely be purchasing a copy of the "100 - Not Out" book and may submit an article if meeting a few of my ex school mates again later in the month generates anything worthy of publication.

On the subject of nick-names there are a quite a few listed that I recall but I'm sure others will know more. Regarding omissions I find it hard to believe that the nick-name of our much revered Careers and Geography teacher has not been listed?! Miss Richardson (I think) my Art Teacher 1970/71 was known as Snap for some reason?!

Best wishes and keep up the good work.  
Graham Kirtley.

Editor's Note: Miss Richardson mentioned above is not "Jenny", later Mrs Pritchard, Geography teacher from an earlier era.

Lynne Lumsden

Dear Mr.Brabban,

I read your article about nick-names for teachers. Even though I attended Tanfield Comp a little later than others- 1984-89- I did recognise one of them. There are two in my memory that I won't mention!

Yours embarrassedly,

Lynne Lumsdon (Ivan Garnham's daughter!)

## Don Chapman

Dear Ted,

In the Spring issue of The Tanfield Association magazine I noted with interest the article on Nicknames.

I was always fascinated by the ingenuity and humour of these.

From your list I can only recall those of my generation i.e. 1947-54; these are:  
Pongo Carr, Little Ell Elliott, Ganny Jeffrey, Spud Glendinning, Spike Yockney, Pete Livesey, Bob Harrison, Kenny Cousins, Fifi Thompson, Pip Seed, Jenny Richardson, Doc Sharp, Old Ma Nichol and Ratty Ratchiffe.

No doubt others will fill in the gaps of more recent (or older !) teachers.

Kind Regards,  
Don Chapman.

## David Cook

Ted,

with regard to your request about "The Government Inspector", I recall attending the play, and think Noel Dawson and Mr Robinson(both English teachers) were involved in its production.

I was only in 3rd year, so I don't think any pupils from my year were in it. Possibly Claire Williams, who was an elder sister of Geoff, who was in my year, as I remember she was particularly keen on drama.

In terms of school performances, I have better recollection of my year's show which we put on in 1977 (?) Based on Snow White and the seven dwarfs. I have a couple of photos too.

With regards to the nickname list, I can only recall 8:-

Hitler - Dr Sharpe  
Rastus - Mr Rees  
Spike - Mr Yockney  
Fat Alf- Mr Hewitt  
Kenny - Mr Cousins  
Fifi - Miss Thomson  
Abdul - Mr Ramjit  
Jennie - Miss Thornton  
Len - Dr Sharpe  
the red Barron - Mr Barron(PE)

Also one I was recently reminded about, for Miss Thirlaway(now Mrs Hawkins) but too rude to mention !!

I look forward to the full list !

Regards,  
David Cook (1971-1978)

I would like to see your photos of the 'Snow White' production. That was one of the 'pantomimes' that Noel Dawson and I produced for the 6<sup>th</sup> Form. We started in 1975 with a show called 'Cindy '75' (No prizes for guessing which fairy story that is based on!) and produced them each year until 1980 I think. They are one of the highlights in my memories of teaching at the school.  
Ted.

## Fred Turner

Dear Ted

Many thanks for your prompt email, and the date is now in our diaries. I have received the first e-newsletter, and congratulations in getting this off the ground.

I can answer a few of the "Who's who" but the first is Mr W Carr, immediate predecessor of Mr Clarke. Mr Carr must have retired sometime at the beginning of 1953. Another is "Pip Seed". "Little el" was Mr Elliott - maths teacher, who used to take the 6th form and he must have retired at the summer of 1951 before I went up to 6th form because his successor was Mr Gee, who then took the 6th forms in 1951 - 52 and 1952 - 53. A great guy was Mr Gee.

Regards and thanks again. Looking forward to talking to you in October.

FRED TURNER

Pongo was indeed Mr Carr the Headmaster, but who is this Mr. Clarke? Pongo was succeeded by the Doc (Dr. Sharp).

## School and Scouts

I read with interest Bill Armstrong's memories of 2<sup>nd</sup> Annfield Plain Scout Troop which was founded in 1931 by Ted Smith and is still in existence today.

Bill's journeys to camp were pretty similar to my own, although the wide brimmed hat had gone. The washed out coal lorry belonged to Harry Harm of Tantobie who drove at two speeds - "very slow" and "not very much faster" one year memorably completing the 60 or so miles from Annfield Plain to Brampton in just under four hours.

Camping in the 1960s before the onset of "Health and Safety" was a much freer experience, my parents were typical, pleased if I returned from camp without anything broken; cuts, bruises and gashes being acceptable and delighted if I returned with all the kit I had left with.

I understand that in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century parents sign all kinds of permissions and waivers before their children can go to camp and that all walking off the beaten track can only be done with the aid of a hand held GPS - clearly dead reckoning using a map and compass is a lost art

The Queen's Scout badge is the highest honour which can be gained in the Scout Movement, Tanfield School provided many recipients including: Alex Smith (1949- 1956) Bill Moore (1950-1957) Denis Hinds (1951- 1958) Bill Armstrong (1951 - 1958) Alan Johnson (1954 - 1959) Geoff Hinds (1955 - 1962) Peter W Brown (1959 -1964) David Whittaker (1964 - 1966) and a King's Scout Colin Armstrong (1943- 1950)

Peter W Brown (1959 -1964)



Photographs:

Camp 1 - Alex Smith (1949 - 1956) on top of a loaded wagon ready to leave for camp July 1961

Camp 2 - Loaded wagon leaving Annfield Plain July 1961 at back left Alex Smith (1949 - 1956) right Norman White (1954 - 1961) - (How much would the number plate be worth now I wonder?)

### Bill Errington

Dear Ted

You may or may not want to put the following in one of the next Newsletters.

Reading Bill Armstrong's letter in Newsletter 23 reminded me of the times I spent at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annfield Plain Scouts.

However, he was very lucky being able to go down the Busty as I wasn't allowed as my Dad worked there and always said that I wasn't going down to see where he worked as nobody should work in those conditions - eighteen inches and half of that in water. To this day I have only been in the Drift at Beamish. And sadly today no pits are being worked in either Durham or Northumberland with over 500 million tons just of the Durham coast waiting to be utilized, albeit a few fathoms down

Tom Fisk, Norman White and myself must have been about two years behind Bill at the Scouts and my most vivid memory was in organizing the dances and collecting the money and having to run down the Charley road to get home in the Moor before 10.30 pm before my Dad got back from Micky's. The three of us had many happy times at the scouts. Bill also mentioned Colin Armstrong and I still have picture of the Scout's rapper team which included Tom, Norman, me and David Coates (all from SGS).

Bill Errington 1953-60"

## Jean & David York

Hello Ted,

We received 23 while on holiday. I have just printed it now that we are home again.

We are very impressed with the format and the clarity of the photographs. Peter deserves much praise for all his time spent on the project and also for his idea of an Association website. Indeed, we again compliment all the volunteers for their time and pains given to the Association.

Thank you,  
Jean and David (York)

## Isobel Jenkins

Dear Ted

The newsletter 23 just dropped into my email- box what a treat.

Best wishes  
Isobel

## Barry Hutchinson

Ted

I am sure you will get a good response to your list of nicknames quite a few of which are easily recognisable from the early fifties. You did not however include 'Bet' whose maiden name I did not know until the letter from Jean Hetherington in the same issue.

I was also pleased to see reference to 2nd Anfield scout group by Bill Armstrong, which if memory serves was actually in Catchgate, and also played a significant part in my education.

Barry Hutchinson 1950 - 1955

## Our First Advert! (One of Elizabeth's contacts!)

[www.ultimate-clean.co.uk](http://www.ultimate-clean.co.uk) Graham 07888049525

Mention Tanfield Association and my name to receive 10% discount on oven clean, dishwasher etc

I thought my oven was clean and efficient till I booked Graham....the shame!!

Much hotter and quicker to heat up, we lived on microwavable meals for a week until the "newness" wore off.

Maybe print in newsletter as an Association perk??