

TANFIELD ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER No. 32

Summer 2015

Editorial

Here we go with Issue 32, and I'm hoping for more response than I got from 31! My request for items on 'Crime and Punishment' at Tanfield went down like a lead balloon! I hadn't realised that all of our members were such well-behaved pupils, or that they hadn't been witness to someone kicking over the traces. I didn't have a single response! So I wonder if you will tell me about 'out of the classroom' experiences. What did you do at break-time, and lunch time? Did you convert the legal Gamester ball into a lethal projectile by loading it? Did you witness or were you subject to any 'initiation practices'? I have memories of the school wall and a bed of nettles, and of a character known as Roppa. Did you escape into the Pea Wood or the Plantation at lunch time? Were you a closet smoker?

I didn't receive any suggestions regarding the identities of the persons in the photographs either. If you look back at 31 the person tangled up with the brass instrument is Mrs Craddock. Maybe she was after your time, so, going further back, the girl with the books and the bridesmaid should have struck a chord. Many of us knew her as 'Fifi', she

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was Miss Thompson of course. The pretty young girl with her on the wedding photo was one of my classmates a few years later – I knew her as Joyce Sterling.

Elizabeth made an appeal for contributions to a Challenge Fund to raise money towards updating the School computer suites. We are very grateful for the generosity of those who responded, but we are still well short of the objective. The Committee would like to request that each member contributes £5 to the fund. If we rallied round to this it would raise well over £1000 – and you wouldn't miss a fiver! So, howay folks, a little bit of help will make you feel good, and it is in a very good cause.

Howard continues to update the web site. I hope that you have managed to have a look at it:

<http://tanfield-association.org>

He is still looking for some missing editions of old school magazines to include, names to go with class groups; you may be able to help. He also has a news section with information about forthcoming events – like the 103rd birthday and the AGM. It's all there, have a look.

The 103rd Birthday is October 16th, when all subscriptions are due. We couldn't manage the **AGM** on that day, but it is being held on **Sat. 17th October** and we are going back to the **Peacock in Tanfield village** to hold it. We will hope to start business at **11.30 am** with the aim of concluding in time to have lunch which will be paid for by the Association. We would like to recoup some of the expenditure by holding a raffle, but for that we would need prizes. Please be generous! After lunch there will be time for natter and reminiscing!

Put it in your diary or planner now!!

AGM 2015

A date for your diary

Saturday 17th October

(the day after the school's 103rd birthday)

The AGM this year will coincide with the school's 103rd birthday, which is the best reason I know for getting together to celebrate and to drink a toast to our *alma mater!*

The venue will once again be the Peacock Inn in Tanfield Village, Stanley, DH9 9PX. Lunch will be provided and this will be paid for by the association.

The starting time will be 11.30a.m., to allow us time to complete the serious business of electing officers and presenting the Tanfield Glass before lunchtime. You will then be able to enjoy catching up with other members over lunch and for as long as you like afterwards.

There will be the usual raffle – any donations of prizes will be gratefully accepted.

We need to know how many members will be attending the AGM so that numbers can be finalised for the catering. Please let us know if you mean to attend. It would be helpful if you could also tell us if you have any special dietary requirements.

Please e-mail or phone me if you are coming to the AGM. My contact details are on the front page of the newsletter. If you prefer to reply in writing, please use the form below.

I look forward to seeing you!

Elizabeth

Hon. Sec.

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I / we will be attending the AGM at the Peacock Inn, Tanfield Village, on Saturday 17th October.

Name(s)

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Contact details

.....

Special dietary requirements

.....

.....

Webmaster

When I saw a webmaster was needed, I decided to offer my services although this was not an area in which I had a great deal of expertise. As a Manchester University student, I was lucky enough to get involved with computers in the late 1960s when

large rooms were required to house machines that would be considered puny by today's standards. At that time, the mention of "software" gave rise to blank looks.

Taking over Peter Brown's excellent work, I was able to enhance and publish the website, with suggestions from the association's committee. After that, the site was launched to the world and advertised in the Christmas 2014 magazine. Either people were shy or oblivious to its presence but there was little feedback.

I asked for the membership list so I could email those who had provided addresses. The results were encouraging with most who contacted me in favour of the format and content.

Looking at the statistics (collected anonymously), as well as the UK, we've had users from Brazil, Italy, Austria, Canada, Australia and USA.

Surprisingly, nearly 65% use Chrome and 32% Internet Explorer. Unsurprisingly, 90% use Windows 8.1 or 7.

I'm still happy to receive comments, suggestions and contributions to any of the sections.

Let me know what you think.

Howard Bott

Shirt Sponsors

Following our appeal for someone to sponsor school football strips, it is a real delight to tell you that we have had a response. Members Irene Cros and Nicole Thompson have each sponsored a set of football strips. It took a while for County Hall to give the go-ahead, but now the strips are printed and ready to use.

Thank you ladies, your generosity is greatly appreciated.



Tanfield Association strikes again!

WW1 Remembered

Some Tanfield Year 9 pupils (I think that these were 3rd Year in my day!) have been involved in art work commemorating WW1 in an exhibition held at the DLI Museum in Durham. Here is an example of their work.

Inspired Art

Gallery 3

The memories and artefacts that survive from the First World War have been used to inspire the work of year nine students from Windlestone School at Chilton, Bishop Barrington School and Tanfield School. Students have taken part in interactive sessions at Beamish Museum and the DLI to try and understand the impact and effect that the First World War had on both the soldiers and their families. Using experimentation through drawing and painting, textiles and clay they have developed personal responses that reflect their interpretation and understanding of the world events that have helped shaped the future which they enjoy.



I am sure that you will be as impressed as I am at the quality of their work. Well done Year 9.

Ted,

Following Amy's recommendation, I went to see an exhibition of art based on World War I in the Gallery at the Durham Light Infantry Museum, near County Hall. Three schools had been invited to submit work to the exhibition, including Tanfield. Mrs Wood, then Head of Art, asked me if I had any information on old boys from the school who had gone to war. There must have been many who enlisted, but the only ones we could really be sure of were the ones whose names appear on the brass memorial plaque located unobtrusively outside the assembly hall. I pointed out the plaque to Mrs Wood, and followed this up by doing some research into the old boys who had been killed in action. Amy added the name of her cousin, a former pupil who thankfully survived the war. The Art students took these men as their inspiration and produced a display that fills one wall of the exhibition room. It is well worth going to see (I think the entry fee is £3.95 for seniors, but this includes the museum as well as the gallery) but for those of you who might not be able to make the visit, Howard Bott is going to put twelve photos of the art work on our website. Type in tanfield-association.org and follow the link from 'News'. It is certainly worth a look!

Best wishes,

Elizabeth

A LIFE CHANGING MOMENT

"Life changing moment" is an overused cliché but at 69 years of age and looking back at something which happened to me well over half a century ago I can safely say that in my case, the statement stands up to scrutiny.

As an enthusiastic 13 year old who was a very committed cyclist - a member of the Stanley Road Club, I would regularly cycle over 100 miles on a Sunday club ride as well as joining in twice weekly training sessions with the senior riders.

I lacked ambition in any other sport but enjoyed pretty much all aspects of PE without excelling in any area. One Friday afternoon sometime in February 1960 Bill Geddes our PE teacher was struggling to complete a full team of runners for the Stanley District Cross Country Championships the next day. He buttonholed me and with undefeatable logic convinced me that my cycling pursuits had given me a reservoir of endurance ability which would help me round the course the next day and **"I would make up the numbers, finish the race and help the school wouldn't I?"** Somewhat reluctantly I agreed.

Imagine the reaction when I won the next day and was selected along with boys from other local schools to go to the County Championships a week later.

At this juncture it should be pointed out that I was a distinctly average academic performer and was frequently in trouble with staff and “The Doc”. So on the following Monday morning it was a totally new experience for me to be congratulated by several teachers – and not at all unpleasant for someone usually on the wrong end of staff attention. By the summer term of 1960 I was gaining interest in my running and gradually losing interest in cycling. Within a year I’d joined an athletics club, started training in an organised fashion, enjoying the benefits of good coaching and regular competition on country, roads and track.

Moving through the age groups I improved to the point where I won County Championships, English Schools Championships and eventually the Home Countries International Championship. My running continued to progress and in March 65 I ran in the World Cross Country Champs for England Juniors while still a pupil.

However, back in the real world my academic performances weren’t breaking any records. Thanks to my mother I still have my Stanley Grammar School report book and my kids cannot believe the twice a year battering I took from the pens of the teachers – with the benefit of hindsight, all deserved.

Outside of my running, my expectations and ambitions weren’t exactly challenging. As GCE “O” levels approached, the horizon started accelerating towards me and it dawned on me that the apprenticeship job I was being offered at British Engines in Newcastle wasn’t going to be conducive to twice a day training sessions and International Athletics dreams. Bravely [or foolhardy] I turned down the offer and continued my education at Consett Tech because “the Doc” wouldn’t have me in the 6th form. A year later with improved O levels I returned to SGS to complete my A levels.

With Doc Sharp’s parting advice ringing in my ears - “Caine. You’d better work hard at college because you’ll never make a living out of running” I headed off to Loughborough College in September 65 to train as a PE teacher.

The transition to the senior athletics ranks was, and still is, a very difficult step up; many aspiring junior [U21] athletes fall by the wayside at this point. I was fortunate, at college I was surrounded by ambitious, talented performers in every conceivable sport. Excellence was the norm, so it was easy to maintain focus. At home I was a member of a very competitive group of dedicated runners in Gateshead Harriers. Even though my times continued to improve it was three long years before I secured my first senior international vest. Having eventually made the transition to senior ranks, the following year—1970, I qualified for England and ran 10,000m in the



Commonwealth Games some 10 years after Bill Geddes press-ganged me into turning out in that Stanley District Schools race.

I continued racing until 1976 but never gave up running, continuing to enjoy the activity for decades beyond my racing days.

Interesting though the above might be to a few readers, none of it constitutes “Life changing”.

However, as a result of Bill Geddes’ arm twisting in Feb 1960 I changed my schoolboy ambitions. Instead of spending my life as a fitter and turner I became a schoolteacher, firstly in a special school for Educationally Sub Normal boys [can you imagine such a non PC label being allowed today?], then for 4 years as head of PE at Greencroft Comprehensive. Whilst at Greencroft I came across a young boy in one of the first form classes called Hassall, further enquiry revealed him to be the son of “Ma” Hassall, my English teacher at SGS who carried her blackboard duster in the sleeve pocket of her “batgown” and used to club me over the head when I was out of order. Naturally I thought “There is a god”, and he was threatened with vengeance if he ever stepped out of line.

John (No 8) 1971, 10,000 mtrs, England v France

In 1975 I left teaching to become manager of Gateshead Stadium and for seven years organised and staged international athletics events as well as overseeing the redevelopment of the stadium itself. Moving again in 1981 I left Gateshead Council to join my Gateshead Harriers colleague Brendan Foster in the creation of the UK arm of US sportswear brand Nike. My responsibility was Promotions and Marketing, involving working with top flight sports stars of the day who endorsed the brand. It was exciting, fun and demanding work meeting and working with some of world’s greatest sports stars, Coe, Ovett, McEnroe, Ballesteros, Carl Lewis, Ian Rush, Glenn Hoddle and Michael Jordan, eventually leading to my family and I living and working for a year in Oregon in the Pacific NW of USA.

While all this was going on, a group of 5 Gateshead Harriers led by Brendan and including myself set about creating the Great North Run. Organising the largest running event in the UK was also a pretty useful tool when you're trying to sell running shoes! It was all pioneering work and a lot of agencies weren't too enthusiastic about the inconvenience our ambitions were going to cause – 35 years on and September without the GNR on Tyneside would be unthinkable now. Back in '81 I had no idea I would be GNR race director for the next 20 years. In '88 we left Nike to set up our own business - Nova International Ltd, [just renamed The Great Run Company.] Our new business was dedicated to organising mass participation events including runs, bike rides, open water swimming, walks etc. As the company grew we dabbled in European Tour Golf tournaments, triathlons etc and also developed our own TV production arm. Today we employ some 70 staff with offices in London, Manchester, Glasgow & HQ in Newcastle. Our programme includes fitness initiatives and Great Runs all over the UK and Ireland plus one of my personal favourite projects The Great Ethiopian Run. In 2001 we were approached by the British Embassy in Addis Ababa to explore the possibility of creating a "Great Run in the land of Great Runners". It is now the largest run in Africa with almost 40,000 entries, but that really is another story.

Over the years, my running endeavours and employment has taken me to all corners of the globe and given me a vast worldwide network of colleagues, friends and experiences.

I retired in 2006 and took some satisfaction at my leaving party recalling Doc Sharp's advice 41 years earlier about never making a living from running. I also paid tribute to Bill Geddes and my "life changing moment".

Two other teachers in the 60s unwittingly contributed in a major way to my later life.

I enjoy fine art and visit galleries, museums and auction houses whenever I can, simply marvelling at the creativity in front of me. I frequently bump into Gina Jack at events in Newcastle and she must take the credit for opening up that avenue in her History of Art and Architecture lessons.

Secondly, I have an avid interest in antiques, particularly furniture, but I especially like restoration projects. This interest has grown into making furniture. Step forward Ted Brabban and take a bow. Without the foundation you gave me I'd be producing firewood. [Actually, he might think that's what it is good for !]

John Caine

Carly Telford



Former Tanfield pupil Carly Telford is in the England Women's Football World Cup squad. We wish her all the very best as she jets off to Canada for the competition.

Carly, now aged 27, went from Tanfield to Gateshead College on the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme. She joined Sunderland Women's team in 2002 and since then has

played for Leeds, Chelsea and Perth (Australia). Her current club is Notts County Ladies.

Her talent as a goalkeeper was spotted when she tried out for Sunderland and that is the position she plays in. While playing for Leeds, she was named *Player of the Match* in the Women's Cup Final, which Leeds won 4-1 against Arsenal. She debuted for the senior England Women's team in March 2007 against Scotland, having previously played at Under-17, 19, 21 and 23 levels. She was included in the England Women's World Cup squad in 2007. In May 2009, Carly was one of the first 17 female players to be given central contracts by The Football Association.

When we contacted Carly to wish her the best of luck from the association, she replied, "Thank you, that means so much. I hope I'm making the school proud. I wasn't the best student but I knew I had to have a good education in case my football didn't shine, thankfully Tanfield supported me in both, it was hard but I came out with a great education and also fully supported in my football career... It sounds clichéd, because I sound like my mum and dad, but I'll say it- "Use Tanfield to make yourself a future" - because I'm now 27 and I look back like a lot of my friends and wish I could go back.... school is easy, trust me, but also because I made some amazing friends and memories.... So thank you."

The J B Hardy Award for Girls in Engineering



The J B Hardy Award salver

Still Going Strong

Mavis and I had an uplifting evening last weekend when we went to a concert given by the Annfield Plain Gleemen. They were in very good voice, and their guest artists, Jonathan Stokoe (from Craghead!) on violin and Ruth Armishaw on piano were superb. What an enjoyable event it was.

It was also noteworthy to us because of the Tanfield connection. The Gleemen Conductor is Norman Taylor who was a couple of years ahead of me at school. He has been with the choir since the 1950s and has been conductor for 40 years! The accompanist is Patricia Stobbs (nee Green) who was a couple of years above me at school and who has accompanied the choir since she was a young teenager, -about 70 years! What a record! The Chairman is Ray (Sandy) Newton who was a year ahead of me at school, and he is a long standing member of the choir. They are the ones that I know! You know that I am no 'spring chicken', and obviously these folks aren't either, but they are still active and still 'going strong'. Quite inspirational!

The audience too has a good spattering of ex Tanfield folks, so the interval is a bit like a mini reunion, catching up with folks and passing on the news.

As I said, we had a very enjoyable evening, and it made me wonder if there are any other organisations that have a strong Tanfield representation that are going on around about. If you know of any, or are a member of any please let me know and I will shine the light of publicity on them.

Ted Brabban. ted.brabban@nasuwt.net

P.S. We subsequently attended a concert given by the Glendale Choir in Consett. Their Musical Director/Conductor is Christabel Harkness (Greenwell). She was a year

ahead of me, in the same form as Sandy Newton. What a nucleus of musical talent that must have been.

Eric Rainbow

Elizabeth, it was very kind of you to let me know of the addition of two missing copies (No 14 and 16) of The Grammarian to the Tanfield Association web site; I probably would not have chanced on these without your prompt. Thanks also for the Honours Board photograph.

I found both issues very interesting, particularly No 16; my memory has been playing me false since I had thought that only Jack Wilson and I had State Scholarships. Despite having been at school with Jack at Greenland/South Moor as well as in the same form throughout SGS I largely lost touch with him. He was not a member of the 1st Annfield Plain Scouts or a regular at Stanley Palais on Saturday nights. He also did National Service straight after the sixth form while most of the rest went directly to university. After NS, he went on to Oxford and Harvard and spent most of his working life in Peru as a geologist, moving later to Aberdeen. Last time I saw him was at Barnard Castle School where our three sons boarded; I think he had had five daughters before his last child who was a boy and the son was starting his boarding life at Barnard Castle, at that time only a boys school.

The other two State Scholars mentioned in The Grammarian, Dick Rose and Brian Price, along with David York (now living in Vancouver) were a small group who had kept in touch with each other throughout most of our lives. Sadly Dick and Brian died some years ago as did their wives, respectively Sheila Young (SGS 1947-54) and Joan Parnaby (SGS 1945-52).

Reading your website and The Grammarians I was struck by:

- a. The impressive production quality and content in The Grammarian using the primitive office aids available. The content includes much detail of societies written by pupils and illustrates the exceptional performance of the school and its students. A good sixth form is evident and clearly beneficial to the whole school. I never felt that my SGS education was inferior to that of my public school peers at university then or indeed of those at my grandchildren's public schools all of which, of course, have sixth forms now. Those responsible for taking the sixth form have done a great disservice to the area and to my old school.
- b. There is currently much concern at low participation in sport at state schools compared with public schools. The detail of sports reports in The Grammarian right down to school house level shows how important it was at that time and how effective the teachers in charge were in its support. While I could not aspire to school team status because I had to work to earn my pocket money on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings the school inspired a lifelong interest. I rowed at university, changed over to rugby until mid-thirties, squash until 50 and finally gave up tennis at

70 when I had a serious Achilles tendon rupture on the court. The sixth form was a big part of the school's inspirational sporting life.

- c. The great job Tanfield Association are doing in preserving history, gathering the old school magazines and publishing them on the website. Apart from former pupils, I am sure that educational researchers could find much useful material; the team and especially Howard Bott should be congratulated. I hope you can find the remaining missing copies.

Once again thanks for keeping me in touch.

Kind Regards

Eric Rainbow (1945-52)

PHYSICS AND THE DIFFERENTIAL CALCULUS

A memory of certainty

BOB HARRISON 1955-62

Some adolescent boys are plagued by all sorts of confusions and insecurities, so it was with me. I was a non-descript teenager who didn't know who he was or where he was going. I had spent most of lower school reading adventure novels-Rider Haggard was one who filled my head with dreams of adventure and mysterious and unattainable women; Ayesha, She-who-must-be-obeyed. I was also mesmerised by Hans and Lotte Hass (Lotte has sadly just recently died, but she was beautiful) and I had a vague plan to be scuba diver. So I was a dreamer, and still am, but that was no good in the 4th form I had to decide what I was going to do! My elder sister had just gone to Leeds University so I had a look at it and thought "this is all right" but how to get there? This was where Physics came to the rescue. Its certainties were not just whims. Newton's laws of motion were the same everywhere and every day, you could count on them, and if you could understand them you could pass exams. This was the rub, understanding only came through application. But I loved the clean precision of it all so that came easy. Young's slits and Newton's rings were objects of beauty and electricity was a magical mystery in itself. It was all closely linked to my real love, astronomy. A real dreamer's subject in those days before Startrek. Telescopes were so limited that they only really gave outline information and the rest was left to imagination. But I also had to work on other things. To get accepted you needed O levels in English, maths and a foreign language. I read the English set books until they fell apart; "Eothen" by Charles Kinglake (has anybody heard of it?) and "Macbeth", which I came to like. Maths was OK, that was just a matter of concentrating. But French was the problem. I had obtained a miserable 30% in the 3rd year.

So I struggled and struggled under the sympathetic but stern guidance of Mr Jolly and eventually was successful. It changed my life!

The calculus and the wave nature of light came in the sixth form, where a privileged group of boys and girls were introduced to these marvels of science and maths by Mr Livesey, Mr Dolman, Mr Gee and Mr Hall. Physics was divided into mechanics, heat, light, and sound, it felt like almost the whole of human experience apart from chemistry and biology and all of the arts and crafts of course which do not fit. Maths was pure maths and applied maths – it was almost a religious order with us as the novices and perhaps the asceticism was part of the appeal; we were radicalised into science. The differential calculus came in as an essential tool in physics and as a marvel of mathematics. To be able to write lines and curves as algebraic equations and then to be able to use a simple operation to express the curvature as another equation seem to be a high intellectual power. Also to be able to do it from first principles and hence understand it gave great confidence which carried me into my university course.

I followed Isobel to Leeds but to do Physics. It was a lot harder than doing A levels and, if I am honest, my understanding was never so complete as then, there just wasn't the time to study the vast jumble of subjects which were thrown at you. I graduated and did all sorts of things in physics and physics related subjects over 35 years. But I am only nostalgic for the time in the sixth form and still look at some old exercise books and text books which remain as mementoes of the time and they help me to dream about certainty and security.

Is any one else as daft as this.

Douglas Smith

If you use Facebook you are probably aware that Elizabeth has a dedicated Tanfield site that she opened trawling for memories and items for the 100 Not Out book. . The following item recently appeared 'out of the blue' from a past pupil who had found it. Enjoy.

Dear Secretary

I came across by chance your request for memories of Stanley Grammar School and here are a few although perhaps rather late.

I was at the Grammar School from about 1954 to 1956 and took my O levels there. Because of my father's work I moved frequently and went to 12 schools in total including 5 Grammar Schools. Despite this I gained 8 O Levels with 6 distinctions. I feel fairly sure that Dr Sharp was the Headmaster but do not remember him as a hardliner at all.

What I do remember to this day is the kindness of teachers towards a very lonely boy. It was difficult going to yet another new school as of course groups of friends had already been formed and it wasn't easy breaking in. The teaching was of a very high standard and stood me in good stead. I can only remember one name which is Miss Thomson (maybe the wrong

spelling) who taught French. I can however remember the faces and presence in class particularly of the lady History teacher and the masters who taught Chemistry and Maths. What was so noteworthy was the dedication shown by these teachers. The only exception was the RE teacher who was frankly lazy.

I don't remember much of my fellow pupils but I do remember one called Ewan Ross and another who was the son of the vicar. If I remember rightly, the son of the vicar came top of the O Level year, Ewan came second and I came third.

They were happy times and I remember the school even now with gratitude.

I also remember lots about living in Stanley which was of course a mining town then. Close to the school, there was the railway line from the coast to Consett where there was a steel works. One could see a very short goods train double-headed with two engines dragging iron ore up to Consett. Iron ore weighs very heavy.

Just to complete the picture, the grammar schools I attended in order were:

Falmouth Grammar
Cotham Grammar, Bristol
Stanley Grammar
Spennymoor Grammar-Technical
Wisbech Grammar

With many regards

Douglas Smith

[Elizabeth says: at this point I was able to reply to Douglas, e-mailing him a photo, taken in 1956, of class 5a, of which he was a member. Euan Ross had supplied the photo for the centenary book, as well as the names of everyone on it. I also sent a photo of the staff, taken in 1959. This produced the following interesting reply from Douglas]

Dear Elizabeth

It was lovely to hear back from you and the photo brought the memories flooding back. The History teacher was, I'm certain, Miss Thornton though I thought she was a Mrs. Her teaching left me with an enduring interest in 19th Century history which has lasted to this day.

I remember most of the faces in the class but not all the names. Some I do recall, having seen them in print.

I was interested in Euan Ross's comment about Miss Thompson when identifying the faces on the photograph. All these years on, I still remember her with affection. She taught so well and the French I gained from her I used for real later in life when working in Africa with People from Mali and Morocco and with Italians as well.

I went to Stanley because my father was a Salvation Army Officer and we moved every two years, that is why so many schools. Looking back, I can hardly believe how full life was. On Sunday, there were three services and three "open air" services as well. During the week there was band practice, choir practice, bible class, youth club and on Saturday night an additional open air service and an indoor service. On Saturday night as well, I went round all the pubs in Stanley selling the War Cry (the Salvation Army paper). What a life!

With many regards

Douglas (Smith)



Form 5a in the second half of school year 1956-1957. Sitting are (left to right): Ray Hanretty, Patricia Bell, Sheila Talbot, Jean Yetts, Lorraine Beattie, Miss Amy Thompson (form teacher – make that an excellent form teacher), Deirdre Edwards, Valerie Rutherford, Margaret Bell, Anne Stoddart, Irene Meek; standing: George Gibbon, George Myers, David Crosby, Derek Slater, John Daghish, Mavis Ross, Margaret Robson, David Portsmouth, Peter Atkinson, Frank Loftus, Euan Ross, Peter Shipston; standing, elevated: Anthony Usher, Douglas Smith, Michael Ardron, John March, Harry Baxter, Richard Christon, Alan Taylor.

Malcolm Bell

For the attention of Mrs Elizabeth Hawkins

Dear Elizabeth

Thank you for sparing the time to talk to me on Monday when I called you to enquire about some of my teachers, having noted their names in a recent newsletter. Since then I have been looking through the other newsletters which I found most interesting. (I know I shouldn't probably begin a sentence with 'since' but I'm sure you appreciate that times have changed - I sometimes do wonder in fact how much they have changed, especially down in Brummie land, what with their "we was'es" and "you wasn'ts" and things but being in Warwickshire rather than Birmingham I have largely retained my Queen's English!)

I suspect that Nova Williamson would find it difficult to accept that my love of Shakespeare attracted me to this neck of the woods and to shopping most weeks in Stratford-upon-Avon! Perhaps it was more the opportunity for retribution against the county that was the source of so much boredom, stress and frustration for me that led to it! I well remember her additional special extra efforts at lunchtimes to help one or two of us with our English Literature but which were, alas, to no avail. I have read some (or at least one, anyway) of the books since, however. Similarly Misses Heslop and Grieveson that I would spend some of my career working for a large French company where my grasp of that language through their efforts benefitted (or is it now benefited?) me immensely, especially during my visits to France, enabling me to order food effectively (in McDonalds anyway)!

On the subject of languages, one of my most memorable occasions was the day when Dr Sharp walked into the classroom a few minutes into my first German lesson and pronounced there had been a mistake in the timetables and the 'B' stream were not intended to study German - hallelujah!

As for History and Miss Petersen, all I can say is that interest and ability with this subject missed me out completely although my daughter did well with this to 'A' level en-route to becoming a Solicitor. In fact, with my son being a police officer I do have to watch my step with the pair of them! If she sees this note (Miss Petersen) she may well be amazed perhaps by the fact that I can now write more than half a page at a time about anything! I do think of her most weeks however whilst passing Kenilworth Castle and wonder if I might have developed an interest in the subject if the syllabus hadn't warranted so much time being spent on ancient Picts!

Incidentally, you may wish to note that the website shows issue 28 for both of the 2014 issues. A colleague of mine will swear that I could spot a missing dot from a document at a thousand metres.

Do you still need names for the photographs in newsletter issue 18? It being my class, (3B, I think 61-'62 or thereabouts) I can provide most of the names from Miss Williamson's photo shown in newsletter no. 18. I am on the extreme left of the middle row, next to Raymond Cairns, then Gerald Huggins and Jean Toft.

Anyway, back to the main purpose of my call. I often think back to the enjoyment I derived from my Pure Maths lessons with Hector Hall and my Physics with Cedric Dolman. I've always been a bit concerned that I effectively walked out of the school following my 'A' levels without thanking them for their dedication and efforts, and for not really saying goodbye. I bumped into Mr Hall in the corridor outside Dr Sharp's office just after one of my maths exams and he asked how it had gone. I remember telling him that I hadn't done very well due to getting tied up with a particular calculus question, and just leaving it at that before departing as I was so upset at not having reached my expectations, but as with my physics I had actually attained 'A' grades.

Mr Dolman may remember me as the foolhardy person who dared to raise his hand when he asked if anyone knew how an electric bell worked.

So, Mr Dolman and Mr Hall, thank you for all your efforts and help - I really did look forward to your lessons, and I believe I still have all my notes and exercise books from that time which I may need to refer to sometime as I am now starting to forget my formulae.

Also, Mr Cousins, Ken, thank you for your understanding during the Chemistry lessons - I think you knew I had little understanding of what it was all about at 'A' level. I still don't think I know what organic chemistry is about, and really could not understand the excitement of mixing one clear colourless liquid with another, and obtaining yet another clear colourless liquid!

I understand it is unfortunately too late to thank Mr Proud - I will never forget his soldiers crossing the bridge and changing their signs, in his introduction to Algebra - this stood me in good stead for the rest of my mathematical work.

You may also mention to Mr Brabban that yes, I still do have some of the artifacts produced in the woodwork room, but my efforts now usually relate to bespoke furniture making or house projects for children and grandchildren, or constructing

retaining structures for the small menagerie we have. I do find I'm starting to become more dependent on power tools though - I don't feel too guilty at this as I've done my fair share of using hand tools over the years. I wonder if the two feet by twelve inches blade hockey stick he fabricated to keep goal against the girls' team is still around? I also recollect the time when, despite specific instruction to the contrary, a certain boy inserted the chuck key into the electric drill which he then switched on. The only damage, I think, fortunately, was to that particular boy's head subsequently. I hasten to add that I wasn't the culprit but co-incidentally, it was someone with the same initials and number of letters in his name as myself.

Oh - just remembered - I never got my project back on the 'History and Architecture of Durham Cathedral' - if you could find which wall it adorns currently I should appreciate it back!

A further recollection is that about four years ago in mid-Wales, we were having breakfast when I recognised the accent from the adjacent table - I forget her name but she hailed from No Place and guess which school she attended. Then, two years ago, in Minehead, again from the adjacent breakfast table, another Stanley accent - again, I forget the name but she was from Tanfield Lea and yes, went to our school also. We're everywhere!

Thank you and best regards.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Bell, pupil - (is this still a recognised word or should it be student now?)
1959 - 66

BSc (Hons), CEng., MIMechE. (maybe not quite as long as my eldest cousin's (David Tregoning) but Engineers are trained to be efficient in their use of resources)

Calling all Canadian Members

One of our members, Kenneth Drabble, is living in Canada. He has a business in Toronto, but lives in Ontario. He is interested in making contact with other Association members who are living in Canada.

Kenneth's e-mail address: Kenneth.drabble@gmail.com

If you fill the bill why not drop an e-mail?

What is currently happening at Tanfield

Community Update: L Bell

- We are heavily into the Year 11 exam period and it is a very busy time for all staff and students in school.
- We have 8 x Year 8 students competing in a County 'Future Business Magnates' Competition against all secondary schools in the County. They have to prepare a business plan, a funding forecast and prepare a presentation to a panel of judges.
- All of Year 9 students will be attending a show that I have been working on with Stanley Town Council called 'The Word' which explores issues in our community through hip hop and rap. This will be on the morning of Friday 22nd May at the Civic Hall, Stanley and one of our students will be singing as part of the main stage crew.
- We have had head boy and girl elections the same day as the general election and now have a head girl Georgia Fitch and head boy Chris Macdonald. All students prepared a speech that was delivered in the main hall, this was videoed and shared with all year groups. The candidates had to then attend a panel interview and answer questions relating to the role. The whole school including staff and students then had to complete a ballot paper and all votes were counted.
- We have been working in partnership with Stanley Rotary Club and some of our students entered a 'Young Writers Competition'. We were pleased that one of our year 7 students has won the local round and also the district round. M Newton's work has now been entered into the regional competition that brings a great prize for her and her family with a trip to London if she wins, so fingers crossed.

Sports News from Tanfield School

FUTSAL (similar to 5-a-side football, with a continental twist, for anyone who isn't sure what it is)

Year 9 boys – Chester-le-Street, Washington and Derwentside District Champions (playing in north east finals in a fortnight's time)

Year 11 boys – Chester- le- Street, Washington and Derwentside District Runners up

Football (5-a-side)

Year 7 boys – Chester- le- Street, Washington and Derwentside District Champions

Year 7 boys – Durham County Runners up (unbeaten in competition, but unfortunately played two draws, if one had been a victory then we would have won)

Table Tennis

Year 10 boys – Level 2 Winter School Games Runners up
Year 8 boys – Level 2 Winter School Games Runners up
Year 10 girls – Level 2 Winter School Games Winners
Year 10 girls – Level 3 Winter School Games - Bronze Medal

Basketball

Year 8 boys - Level 2 Winter School Games Runners up
Year 7 boys - Level 2 Winter School Games Winners
Year 7 boys - Level 3 Winter School Games Winners – Quarter Finalists

Swimming

R Powell (year 7) – Level 3 Winter School Games – Bronze Medal

Trampolining

J Turner (year 7) – National Schools Finalist, he is also competing in another national level competition very soon.

Editor : We hear stories that sport has taken a back seat in schools across the country. Obviously Tanfield does not support that theory. They are involved at all levels, and, to cheer you old timers, are still a force to be reckoned with.

School Dining 2015

Following your interesting memories of school dinners, the trolley system and so on, we thought that you would like to see how things operate today. Below is an image of the dining area, plus a set of menus from which that pupils choose. You may be surprised.



Breakfast & AM Break



Breakfast
8.00am-8.35am
Available Daily

Toast 25p
Cereal & Milk 60p
Packed Sandwiches £1.35
Fresh Fruit Salad Pot 75p
Muesli Pot 75p
Fresh Fruit 35p & Yoghurts 55p
Range of Chilled Fruit Juices and Plain & Flavoured Waters and Milk from 40p

Morning Break
11.00am-11.20am

Cold Pasta Pots 75p
Veg Crudites & Dips 65p
Dried Fruit 60p & Seeds 40p

As above, plus the following

MONDAY
Half Toasted Teacake & Flora 25p
Malt Loaf 25p
Pizza Slice £1.00
Garlic Bread 25p
Cheese & Onion Toasty 60p

TUESDAY
Half Toasted Bagel 25p
Cheese on Toast 65p
Bacon Bun 90p
Pizza Wrap 90p
Toasted Crumpet & Flora 25p

WEDNESDAY
Toasted Fruit Bread & Flora 25p
Garlic Bread 25p
Pizza Bun 60p
Spicy Chicken Pita £1.35
Frittata £1.00

THURSDAY
Half Toasted Bagel 25p
Bacon Bun 90p
Pizza Slice £1.00
Ham & Cheese Quesadillas 90p
Cheese & Tomato Toasty Triple 75p

FRIDAY
Half Toasted Teacake & Flora 25p
Pizza Baguette 90p
Fish Finger Roll 90p
Cheese & Baked Bean Wrap 80p
Garlic Bread 25p

Add an extra item for 30p; Bacon Rasher, Fried Egg

WEEK 2		creative		
	'Chef's Hot Fayre'	'Vegetarian'	'Vegetables'	'Dessert'
Monday	Mixed Beef & Vegetables with Herby Dumplings	Sweet & Sour Vegetables with Noodles	Medley of Fresh Mixed Vegetables Creamed Potatoes	Creamy Rice Pudding with Jam Sauce
Tuesday	Chicken Tikka Masala	Cheese & Broccoli Quiche	New Potatoes Whole Green Beans Fluffy Rice	Cornflake Tart with Custard Sauce
Wednesday	Homemade Corned Beef & Potato Pie with Gravy	Vegetable Korma with Rice	Parsley Potatoes Baked Carrots Buttered Spring Cabbage	Fruit Jelly & Strawberry Ice Cream
Thursday	Succulent Roast Shoulder of Pork Apple Sauce Yorkshire Pudding	Quorn Toadles	Braised Red Cabbage Broccoli Roast Potatoes Sweet Roast Potatoes	Bakewell Tart with Custard Sauce
Friday	Traditional Fish Shop Day		Garden Peas Traditional Mushy Peas Crisped Potatoes Curry Sauce	Steamed Syrup Sponge with Custard Sauce
ALSO AVAILABLE DAILY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh garden salad and homemade coleslaw or baked beans, as an alternative to vegetables • Salads – crisp and fresh, cold pasta pots made with tuna, ham or cheese • Sandwiches – made fresh on site, Deli-Bar – made for you while you wait, choose your bread, choose your filling (Four choices daily) • Freshly made pizza, toasted panini's, and hot baked potatoes • Hot pasta pots with meat and vegetarian option • Fresh and dried fruit, fresh fruit salad and yoghurts • Chilled plain and flavoured water, hot or cold beverages 			

The £1.00 Stop

HOT "POT" (One per day with one of the toppings below)
Rice, Pasta or Noodles

Cheese, Chilli Con Carne, Bolognese, Spicy Chicken, B B Q Pork, Tuna & Sweet corn, Bacon & Basil, Roast Vegetables, Chicken, Pork or Vegetable Curry, Pork Goulash, Tikka Chicken, Mossalla, Mushroom Stroganoff, Spicy Cous Cous, Sweet Chilli Sauce, Pork & Black bean Sauce, Lemon Chicken

Bread Roll Sandwich
Tuna & Sweet corn Mayo
Cheese Savoury
Ham Salad
Sliced Egg & Tomato

Soup & Bread Roll
Homemade Chunky Soup,
served in a HOT "POT" with a Bread Roll

Baked Jacket Potato
Baked Beans
Tuna Mayo
Cheddar Cheese



Bring back the trollies?

Correspondence:

Florence Darby

Dear Editor,

Thank you once again for the Newsletter. I enjoy receiving it and reading it with all the nostalgia that it evokes. There are always so many names which I recognise that bring back memories of very happy years (1946 – 53) at SGS.

The Oxford Exam results made me think of pupils a few years ahead of me. Sam Hunter, Jack Jeffery (son of the school caretaker who lived in the school house and was falsely reputed to be always late for school!), Hazel Hill, brilliant winger on the hockey field, Sheila Rose, Joyce Ward and Lenore Ewart (who lived in the next street in Annfield Plain).

Of the Prize Winners it was good to see the names of particular friends, June Ross and Roger Simpson. I admired them both so much for their intelligence (Oxbridge graduates) and for their treatment of us younger pupils. We had some wonderful musical weekends at Ormesby Hall where we sang madrigals, attempted to play musical instruments, walked in the hills and enjoyed barn-dances. The staff, Jack Dobbs, Miss Allison and others were all so friendly. Margaret Dobson was a sixth former that I much admired. She had a beautiful soprano voice and went on to sing with the D'Oyley Carte Company in London.

I enjoyed the reminiscences about school dinners. I remembered my first day at SGS when we were taken into the dining hall to learn how to lay the table, and some general table manners. I strayed into the kitchen, Miss Cairns (Aggie), learning my name, screamed at me to get out! Apparently my older brother, Ivan, who had left the school, had dropped a pile of plates that in his enthusiasm he thought that he could carry. (Ivan now lives in Hamble, near Southampton, and often sees Ramsey Hall, 40 – 46).

I was interested in the reference to Miss Lumsden, a very gentle lady, and so unlike a teacher. She died whilst I was a first year, and later when I read Agatha Christie I always pictured Miss Marple as Miss Lumsden.

One of my favourite teachers was Pop Forster (History) who taught us in Form 3. I remember still all the detail, including obscure dates of the Tudor period, which still fascinates me.

The inspirational teaching of English by Miss Allison has given me a lifelong love of English Literature by her introduction to authors like C P Snow, L P Hartley, as well as the great classics.

One disappointment of my time at SGS was that I never managed any acting. Other pupils did plays – I recall *The Ichneumon Fly* – how could I forget such a title?, and later *1066* and *All That*, and *I have Five Daughters*, but I was never in the year group that performed.

Does anyone remember the House Music Festivals we had, where each house chose an instrumentalist, a singer, a small choir etc. who performed on stage with an outside adjudicator who awarded marks?

This morning I met my schoolfriend Wendy (Herdman) in town for coffee, and we talked of old times. Next month another friend, Margaret Little, is coming for a visit. We shall window shop and sight-see by day, play *Scrabble* in the evening and I am

sure talk old times and school days. We often try to remember the names of our class-mates. We can remember the girls, Vera Daghish, Rosemary Coulson, Audrey Lewen, Millicent Parker, Margaret Williamson, Margaret Little, Joan Hutchinson, Ivy Robinson, Wendy Herdman, Mary Wilson, Sheila Lowther, Jean Woolcock, - but the list of boys is incomplete, - Jim Nicholson, Fred Turner, Brian Strong, Dennis Cuthbertson, John Michael Holgate, Bob Bell, George Robinson, Bob Hardy and Fred Batty.

Keep the Newsletter coming.

Florence Darby (nee Hutchinson)

Editor : Florence and friends have phenomenal memories of their classmates. I have tried to bring mine to mind but there are lots of blanks. Can you a) fill in the blanks for Florence or b) can you give me a list of your classmates –with dates?

Betty Watson

Dear Ted,

The mention of ‘Ganny Lumsden’ reminded me of when 5th years (like myself, who loved Domestic Science) returned to school in the evening to help her cater for an ‘Old Students’ event.

I walked home with John Radcliffe to Bloemfontein via South Stanley. Gwyneth Balmer’s mother was with us, it was very late, and we passed a man lying in the gutter besotted with alcohol!

I got an ‘A’ in Domestic Science, remembering how to iron embroidery with pressure from the underside of the table linen. We had tall drying cupboards then and I thought that I would fail the practical exam because I overlooked a laundered hankie that had fallen from the rack down to the base.

I remember travelling home by bus after a practical lesson trying not to spill a full bowl of stewed red currants.

We also had an oral component to the School Cert. We were expected to know about the vitamin content of the dishes that we had prepared.

Ah! Memories.

Sincerely,

Betty Watson (nee Needham)

John Jackson

Some items in the last Newsletter prompt me to make comments about my own experiences at school.

First of all I would like to sing the praises of my teachers who guided me to success in 8 O-Levels, even though I was not in the top academic stream and I missed six weeks schooling during the 4th year because of illness.

I would single out Mr Harrison for special mention because he enabled me to be successful at both O and A-Levels in Woodwork. After making the ubiquitous sea grass stool I went on to make a drop-leaf coffee table and a writing bureau (which won a prize at Stanley Show), amongst other things, and all made from Japanese oak. Among others in my class who were good at woodworking were Raymond Densham, Eric Blackburn, and David Errington.

Thanks to the efforts of the teachers, I was able to go to college and become a woodwork teacher myself. During the eleven years that I taught woodwork, I also ran a popular, twice weekly Woodwork evening class for adults. During my woodwork teaching years Mr Harrison called in to see me occasionally to offer support and advice when he became County Organiser/Advisor for Handicraft.

I would also like to mention that group of teachers who joined with Tanfield on the amalgamation with Shield Row. From 1958 to 59 I worked for a year as an unqualified teacher at Shield Row Boys' School and was very impressed with the skill and dedication shown by the teachers there. I hope that their move to Tanfield was successful for them. Incidentally I know of several ex Shield Row pupils who have done very well in their lives, which must, in part, be due to the start they were given at Shield Row.

On the subject of school dinners, I have to say that I hated them because I was a very 'parky' eater. The exceptions were lemon custard pie and jam roly-poly which I loved.

On 'Crime and Punishment' I did commit a very serious crime one day during my 4th year! I was throwing snowballs and was duly caned by Dr. Sharp.

Best of luck raising money for computer updates.

John Jackson (1951 – 58)

Editor As you probably know John, you took up woodwork when I left Tanfield in 1951, and I too owe an enormous debt to Bob Harrison for the tuition, guidance and encouragement which he gave me. What I find fascinating is that our paths must have crossed in 58/59 at Shield Row. I taught there for three years before taking up the post at Tanfield in 1959 so I must have been one of those 'skilful and dedicated' teachers that you mention. (Or perhaps the exception!)

ELIZABETH (Betty) TREGONING nee Payne, b 1928

LESLIE TREGONING 1918-1997

I saw my mum's copy of the newsletter recently and read the list of some of those who passed their school certificates in 1946. I imagined my mum would have been doing her exams that year, plus or minus. Her name wasn't on your list so I thought I'd 'interview' her about her time at Tanfield, for people who were there at the same time and their families. I've always known she went to Stanley Grammar but have never probed that.

Mum is currently in Stoneleigh Care Home in Annfield Plan, where the staff are very good to her. Interviewing her in the residents' lounge at the care home was interesting. Luckily the residents were more interested in the Jeremy Kyle programme on the big TV - I believe this is an amateur boxing reality show.

My mum was born in March 1928 so I'm pretty sure she would have gone to what was then apparently Alderman Wood School in September 1939. Alan Bennett, the playwright, who is four years younger than mum, talks about being ready to go to a new school in Leeds on Monday 4th September 1939, only for Chamberlain to declare war the day before and the school start to be put off for fear of air raids. I asked my mum if she remembered that happening to her but she didn't. We're obviously tougher than those soft southerners in Leeds. Though I suppose Stanley isn't a mighty conurbation that could attract the might of the Luftwaffe, so you could see how the school might judge the risk to be low.

I asked mum if she knew who Alderman Wood was, but she didn't - I got the same look as when I once asked who this Arndale was who had all of these shopping centres named after him or her - I assume he was the councillor in charge of education in Durham county or the Stanley area.

What my mum did remember was her uniform and her new tennis racquet. There is a picture somewhere in the house of mum in her blazer, standing in the front garden

of their house at 56 Tweed Terrace, South Stanley, holding the racquet. I must find that.

Mum told me that the racquet was a present from her Auntie Winnie, one of her mum's sisters, to recognise the achievement of getting to what was soon (I think) to be the grammar school. I had never heard that story before. I said it must have been a significant present, I don't suppose everyone had a tennis racquet. Mum seemed to think it probably was a big deal, and she smiled – it was nice to see her casting her mind back to that pleasant experience.

I remember when I went to Greencroft Grammar in 1970, our PE teacher, John Caine, a Tanfield old boy and Commonwealth Games 10,000 metres runner, told us our young bones and muscles wouldn't bear tennis until we were 13 or 14, which was disappointing. He obviously thought we hit the ball harder than we did.

I asked mum if she had had to pass an 11+ test to get to the grammar, because I was aware that her brother and two sisters had gone somewhere else. She couldn't tell me that, I will ask again another day. My Auntie Joyce, who visits her sister in Stoneleigh very often, is just as clever as mum, but didn't go to the grammar.

My mum can't remember lots of teachers now. She said she remembered Miss Allison, senior English mistress, and Miss Mortimer for maths. She wasn't sure who the head teacher was.

Mum is sure she was at Stanley Grammar for six years rather than five. I said was this because the teaching had been affected because teachers were away at the war, but she wasn't sure. I'm not sure whether she sat her school certificate exams in 1945 or 1946. She thinks she passed 4 or 5 subjects.

Then she went to work for the civil service at Longbenton, which I think was the Ministry of Works. It seems quite ambitious to me to have gone so far away from Stanley – she said there was a special bus, so I assume there had been some kind of systematic trawl of the schools. 30 years later, she got me a summer job in the same place, writing postcodes onto computer-readable forms for child benefit. I've never forgiven her.

My dad, Leslie, was also at Tanfield. He was 10 years older than mum. I don't know much about his time at Tanfield. I asked mum where they met – I have this vague family story that they met at the youth club or chapel at Oxhill, where my dad was some kind of organiser – but she didn't seem to want to talk about that so I've left it for another day. I know dad struggled with his pacifist beliefs during the war but

joined the army, the DLI, and found it was a hugely important experience. He went to Officer Training School and became a lieutenant, was acting captain for a time. Our biggest arguments when I was an angry, smart-mouthed teenager were about politics and the value of military service for school leavers – I was a right-wing hippy, a paradox that has just struck me now, as I write this.

I've also always been impatient at the appeasement of the 1930s, so I am glad now that my dad and I never really had discussions about his pacifism, I wouldn't have understood it and would have said so. Now, twenty years after his death, I can understand it and would have the good grace, if I didn't agree with it, to keep my mouth shut.

When mum and dad got married, they moved to Derbyshire for my dad's teaching job, but mum was a home bird and they came back to the north after a year or so. My dad taught at Consett Grammar and then at what was called a special school at Hare Law, also doing lots of events and voluntary work for the charity now called Scope. My mum did several civil service jobs, worked at Shotley Bridge Hospital, was in charge of the NEEB shop (the electricity board) at Consett, and did lots of WRVS work. She has a magical mystery gift of getting on with everyone, I wish I had inherited that.

I'm so proud of both of them and feel extremely lucky to have had such a fabulous start, and great unquestioning support all my life, whenever I've needed it.

Paul Tregoning

Finally - A School

The photo image taken of board. It is nice our efforts to public to the at the school. in years to these same take up the continue the ensuring that



Notice in

below is an a school notice to know that help are made current pupils We hope that come some of people will reins and good work memories of

Tanfield will live on for another 100 years.