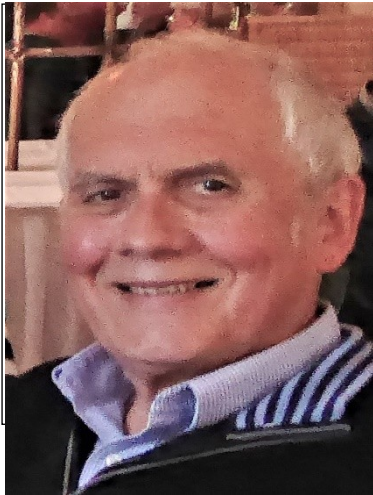


LIFE AFTER TANFIELD

HOWARD BOTT

PUPIL AT TANFIELD FROM 1957 TO 1964

MY LIFE AFTER LEAVING TANFIELD



I left SGS in 1964 with A levels in Maths, Applied Maths and Physics and started a Maths degree at Manchester University in September 1964 - the swinging sixties!

I spent 3 years in Needham Hall of residence and made friendships that have survived 50+ years, including (most years) a reunion.

In my third year, I was fortunate to take a short course in computing - specifically Autocode for Manchester's Atlas computer, although I never got anywhere near the beast. I liked the idea of perfecting a program to accomplish a task and this gave me a taste of something that was to guide my whole career.

I wanted to follow computing and found a suitable post-graduate course at Newcastle University. I wasn't eligible for a grant but English Electric Computers (later becoming ICL, part of Harold Wilson's "white heat of technology") sponsored me. In 1967, being involved in "Computer Software" was rare!

In 1968, I started work in Kidsgrove on the J Operating System for ICL's System 4 range of machines. Lestryne (also ex SGS and later to become my wife), was also in computing, got a job with ICSL nearby.

When Northern Gas (Killingworth) advertised for a Software Manager to look after one of the range of computers I'd been working on at Kidsgrove, I applied successfully. When I mentioned that Lestryne, who was shopping in Newcastle at the time, was also a programmer, she was interviewed that day and also offered a job.

We married in 1969 and, in 1972, another similar opportunity arose at Manchester City Council. This time, we applied together and were both successful. Lestryne gave up work after 3 years to bring up a family of 2 beautiful, talented girls.

I continued in my Technical Support Manager's post at MCC until 2006 when I took early retirement. As computing changed, I acquired skills in different hardware, operating systems and databases always enjoying the challenge of being up to date with technology.

My interest in computer technology continues to this day and I was pleased to become the Webmaster for Tanfield Association and teach myself new skills.