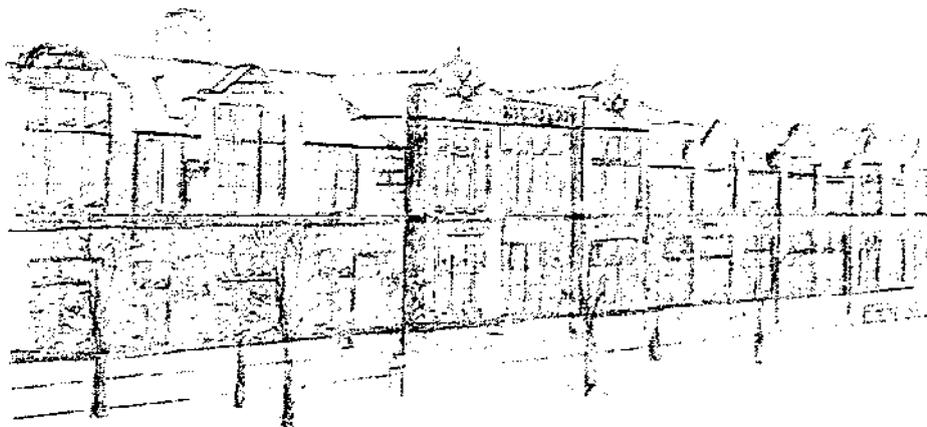


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ISSUE No. 7

Newsletter Spring 2004 Editorial

What do you think about the Tanfield Association's new heading? Although the cap and gowned male and female figures of the previous heading let people know it was to do with education, it was not Tanfield specifically. We owe our grateful thanks once again to Joy Drake, from the school office, who handles administration for the Association, for designing the new heading, which of course, is specifically Tanfield.

Another mile-stone in the story of the "name alteration" of our school! While retaining the name Tanfield School, the Governors, to comply with government rules, have been requested to enhance the name by adding on Specialist College of Science and Engineering.

We would be grateful if members would send articles concerning their times and memories at Tanfield. In our next newsletter we would like to print some Youth Organisations' memories', so all of you ex-Boys Brigade members and ex Girl-Guide members, please set your pen to paper.

I have also been asked to respectfully jog the memories of any member who has not yet paid their administration fee of £5.00 for the current year. We would be grateful to have your contribution.

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Profiles

The two profiles chosen for this newsletter show how two girls who graduated from Tanfield went on to do so much with their lives. Each girl achieved success in an age when the pathways to achieving anything were made twice as difficult for girls. Right up to the Second World War, it was thought by many, that the female role should be confined to the kitchen and household duties. Educational theory up to the 1970s was also geared to girls taking Cookery or Domestic Science, and Needlework, and boys taking Woodwork and Metalwork. There was generally little choice in the Educational framework. However, there were one or two avenues in which girls could choose a career if

they had the necessary talent and skills, and one of those avenues was in 'Education'.

Our two ladies who are profiled, decided on the Educational Career pathways, and although each way is completely different from the other, one can see common trends i.e. the ability to study and work hard; perseverance against the odds; to have faith or belief in others; and very importantly, a good sense of humour. We hope the profiles may be of interest to members of the association, and on behalf of the members, would take the opportunity to thank Barbara and Nancy for giving their time for the Newsletter.

Barbara Churcher

Barbara Bott was born at Craghead in 1916, the youngest of four children and the only girl in the family. Barbara remembers a very happy and lively family life in Craghead where, she says, humour and the spirit of kindness prevailed. Barbara attended Craghead School, which, she recalls, had some excellent teachers, and a headmaster with a wooden leg. When she was seven years old, a new girl, who was small and had dark hair, came to sit next to her. Her name was Mary Robson, and she became Barbara's lifelong friend. At the age of eleven, Mary and Barbara, together with Mary Martin, (all classmates) passed the exam for Alderman Wood School. They usually took the bus to Stanley, which was a 1½-d fare, and then walked down the road to school. At school, Barbara formed the 'Gang of Five' with Mary Robson, Jean Cameron, May Greenwell and Ruth Herdman. Sadly, Ruth has since died, but, at 87 years of age, Barbara is still in contact with the other three ladies, meeting regularly for lunch and outings. The conversation always includes Tanfield School and some of the teachers who influenced their lives -Mr. Hardy (the inspirational Headmaster), Mr. Scott (Chemistry), Mr. Livesey (Physics), Miss Allison (English), Miss Lewis (Music), Miss Lumsden (Domestic Science) and Miss Miller (French) amongst others. Barbara recalls her last day at school when she and her friends sat on the pipes and cried. Mr Elliot the Maths teacher stopped to

comfort them. Barbara has a vivid memory of her first day at Tanfield when Miss Mortimer her form teacher took the class to the upstairs corridor where lunches were being served. She looked around for suitable places for the new starters to sit. Barbara was placed on Walter Churcher's table with Miss Mortimer saying, "There Barbara, Churcher will look after you." Walter was then a fourth year pupil, who subsequently left school in 1932 to go to Bede College, Durham to train as a P.E. teacher. Barbara did not see Walter again until 1943, when on a visit to Whitley Bay, she spotted him in army uniform walking with his parents and some relatives when on leave from the forces. Barbara was too shy to speak to him.

At school Barbara wanted to be a Gym Mistress, because she admired Miss Brown the P.E. teacher so much. Miss Brown had trained at Chelsea College and recommended it to Barbara but Miss Brown left the school shortly afterwards as she married the P.E. teacher Mr. Connors and resigned her post, as was customary at the time. Miss Brown was replaced by Miss Krenzl who suggested her old college Anstey to Barbara. However, Barbara had heard of a local girl called Lilian Blackburn who trained at an international P.E. college in Silkeborg in Denmark. Lilian's sister Joan arranged a meeting for the two girls and Lilian came to Tanfield with the college prospectus and a photo album. Mr.

Carr, the new Headmaster, was concerned that the qualifications from the college might not be recognised in England, and therefore it might be difficult to find a job afterwards. Mr. Carr asked to meet Mr. and Mrs. Bott to discuss the matter, but Barbara's oldest brother, Arthur, (who was now a Methodist minister) defended Barbara's choice by saying that she had been brought up in a male dominated house and that college in Denmark would refine her! Barbara was asked to go to Manchester to be interviewed by the principal of The Gymnastic Institute, Silkeborg who had travelled to England to meet prospective students. As it was out of the question for a girl to travel alone at the time, brother Arthur went instead, was interviewed by Mr. Junker, and Barbara got a place! Now the problem was finance. Mr. Bott could not pay and nor could anyone else in the family. Application was made to Durham County Council for a grant, but this was turned down. All seemed lost until news of the difficulties reached the local chapel, where the Bott family and relations were staunch members. The choirmaster suggested that the parents should apply for a bank loan for which he would stand as guarantor. A loan for £500, a huge amount of money in those days, was obtained. This covered £150 fees per year, for three years and £50 for equipment and travel. On August 29 1935, Barbara set off from Durham to Harwich where she was met by members of the College staff and other students from all over Britain. They sailed to Esbjerg where they spent the night, and then on to college. Lectures began on 1st September and Barbara remained there for nine months, as she could not afford to travel home. Principal Junker (known to every one as 'Junker'), and his wife gave all the girls who could not go home a marvellous Danish Christmas. The Junker family's youngest daughter, Karen was also training at the college at this time, and she and Barbara became good friends. Life at Silkeborg was marvellous. The students had wonderful living conditions and the food was excellent. The college grounds went down to the river where they swam and canoed, they cycled, had picnics, and in the winter they skated on the frozen lake. Sometimes the cycling trips involved all the students led by Junker,

looking for mushrooms and other fungi (on which subject Junker was an expert). These trips usually ended with fungi on toast for supper. Although all lessons were in English, Barbara participated in voluntary lessons to learn Danish. She left college in 1938, just as war was looming.

On leaving college Barbara obtained a teaching post at Wrexham, where she was very happy. The head teacher was very strict and Barbara remembers an occasion when she and her friend were reprimanded for being seen in town 'wearing neither hat nor gloves'. On another day in summer, when wearing a short sleeved blouse, Barbara was asked to cover up as the head thought there was something immoral about the sight of the 'mature elbow'. On working, Barbara also began to pay back the loan, which her parents had taken out. She remembers having a salary of around £16 per month. Out of this she paid £10 towards the loan, £5 for her lodgings and had just over £1 left for other things. She was unable to buy any new clothing for several years. After a while Barbara returned to the Northeast to work. She obtained a post at Hookergate School, where she spent an enjoyable four years. She recalls one snowy day, when the buses were not running, walking from Craghead to Hookergate and back. After these four years Barbara went to work as a P.E. lecturer at Nevilles Cross College. She was the first new appointment since the college opened; consequently all the other staff were in the 50 to 60 age range. She worked at the college from 1943-1948 and during this time also played county hockey. In September 1946 Barbara attended a P.E. course in Sunderland where she met Walter Churcher again. After the course Walter drove her to a concert in which she was performing and he decided to stay. (Walter himself had a fine voice and took leads in local Gilbert and Sullivan performances.) After the concert Walter drove Barbara, her father and her brother home and stayed to supper. On Christmas Eve 1946, Barbara and Walter became engaged. On leaving Summerfield's shop on Northumberland Street after buying the ring, the couple saw Miss Mortimer. They told her their news and Walter blamed her for asking him to look after Barbara whilst she was a first

year at school! The couple married, went to Switzerland on honeymoon, and set up home in a rented house in Fenham.

Barbara resigned her job on marriage but, shortly afterwards, was contacted by the Catholic Convent College in Fenham to fill in for two lecturers who had left. Initially, the post was for one term but Barbara stayed for six years. Reverend Mother Ward and Barbara hit it off immediately as Mother Ward had a wonderful sense of humour. Barbara can remember her coming into the gym, pinning up her skirts and doing a long-lly over the box. After six years Barbara became pregnant and had to leave her post but was asked to take her baby into school once a week to show the students child development. Her daughter was named Karen after her godmother Karen Junker and was christened by her Uncle Arthur. Barbara's father died about this time and her mother was very lonely. Barbara again had been asked to do some supply work at Alnwick College and her mother was delighted to look after the baby. As before, the term's supply teaching lasted for six years. In 1961 Barbara left Alnwick and began to work for Newcastle College. This was very much a new venture as the course was only the second in the country for mature students. Barbara wrote textbooks for the students, one of which 'Physical Education for Teaching' became a standard work and was translated into other languages, earning Barbara some royalties. She was promoted to principal lecturer, and the college merged with Newcastle Polytechnic. The college was the first in the north-east to have a dance studio and Barbara helped to design the Physical Education facilities. She also discovered that Liverpool College had a Sport Degree course, so she began writing a syllabus for a similar course at Newcastle. She had her plan validated by the C.N.N.A. and once the course was up and running, Barbara retired in 1979.

She had been retired for only one month when the Physical Education Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (of which Barbara had been made a fellow in 1977) asked her to go into headquarters in London to help rescue the association which was in desperate straits financially and in other ways. She commuted to London for the next eight months, leaving Newcastle at 6am on Mondays and returning at 10pm on Fridays. The association was so impoverished that Barbara sometimes had to pay for her own accommodation. Walter, who was now retired, kept the home fires burning and was a great support. In 2000, in recognition of her outstanding service to the profession and to the association Barbara was given the Ling Award-the highest honour from the association. She was only the seventh person in the world to be granted this award. Her daughter Karen, who teaches in Salybridge and lives in Glossop, carries on the family interest in P.E. Sadly Walter died in 1995.

Barbara has had a wonderfully rich and interesting life. During her career she has lectured in many places including Vancouver, Israel and Paris where she has been an ambassador for Britain and Tanfield School. The Danish College was occupied by the Germans during the Second World War and afterwards never reopened. From 1948 - 1980 Barbara was the secretary of the Old Students Association. She still maintains contact with members of this Association and four years ago planted a tree, in the former college grounds, in memory of a tutor who had taught her gymnastics. Throughout her life she has maintained the friendship with Karen Junker and her family through visits and correspondence (in Danish!). We are delighted to have Barbara in the Tanfield Association, in which she takes a full and active part. At 87 she is enthusiastic and full of vitality. If you did not hear her give the reply from the Lassies on Burns' Night 2003, you missed a treat. It was magic!

Nancy Hall

On the 26th May 1917, in the last year of the "Great War", a miner Thomas Hall and his wife Sarah (née Cooper) had a daughter 'Nancy'. Nancy Hall was the eldest of a family

of five. She had three brothers and a sister, William (Bill), John, Margery and Dennis. The family home was at Dean Street, Oxhull where Grandmother Cooper ran a small

General Dealers shop. Two main themes where emphasised in the Hall family's lives, the Methodist Church and Education, and all the children swam very well in both these waters. Nancy attended Oxhill Infant and Junior School (now Oxhill Nursery School) and then The Upper Standards School at New Kyo for Secondary Education. She did so well at the "Uppers" as it was locally known, that she took her School Certificate a year early, at the age of 15.

She came to Alderman Wood School at Tanfield, where she joined other 15 year old girls who were studying for their School Certificate, and at the end of that year took her School Certificate again with the other pupils from Tanfield. On matriculation she entered Sixth Form Education, which in those days, offered two choices: 'Higher Certificate' which usually led to University or 'Intending Teacher Certificate' which led to Teacher Training College. Nancy chose the latter. The Teachers and Subjects at Alderman Wood School which have left the greatest impression were History with Mr Forster, who Nancy still remembers vividly, bringing history to life and his teaching being so interesting; Spanish (she was star pupil) with Miss Butters who also taught French; Miss Nichol gave Nancy her abiding love of English; and Mr Fewster for Maths who she remembered as a quiet, efficient teacher who made everything in Maths so understandable. PE and Games at Tanfield were not enjoyed in the same manner as academic subjects, and 'Physical Training' as it was known then, was by Nancy only endured! Two of her friends from 6th Form Days, were Isobel Ridley from Burnopfield and Jessie Kane from Oxhill, who was one of the best 'Country Dancers' of the area. One of Nancy's memorable times at Alderman Wood, was when Mr Carr organised a Day Trip to the Lake District, and the wonderful meal they enjoyed at a very grand hotel.

Oxhill Methodist Church played a major part in Nancy's early years in Sunday School, Junior Christian Endeavour, and other church activities. She became a Sunday School teacher when she was 15 years old in a Sunday School of 150 scholars. After gaining her Intending Teacher Certificate at Tanfield, Nancy went on to St Hilds College, Durham

University, for a two year course in Teacher Training, in September 1935. Because St Hild's the ladies college was Church of England based with a strong emphasis on religion, it was known throughout the University as "The Nunnery" (says Nancy with a twinkle in her eye). The course at St Hild's, was a disciplined and intensive course which was designed to extract every ounce of work from students that was humanly possible. A typical St Hild's day was: - Lectures and Seminars all morning, games or activities in the afternoon, lectures after tea, and after supper, preparation work, occasional Country Dancing, or attending Tutorials for Teaching Practice. It was often after midnight when students got to bed. Despite the hard work, the discipline, and the long hours the students enjoyed life to the full, and life-long friendships were made. Some particular friends of Nancy's were Gladys Cooper, Gertie Smith, Betty Tate, and Effie Bulmer. In January 1938 Nancy obtained her first teaching post at Dunston Hill Infants School, and taught there for ten very happy years, she also gained her Froebel Teaching Certificate, from Newcastle University, which was for special methods for teaching Infants and Juniors. It was during her early years at Dunston Hill in 1939/40 that a number of children were faced with war-time evacuation. Two teachers were chosen to accompany the children, one of course was Nancy. The evacuees were sent to the exotic countryside of Langley Park, where they remained for just over one term.

Nancy stayed in two different houses in Langley Park, where she remembers being well looked after. She also remembers playing Bridge and taking part in lots of Badminton games. Back home again after evacuation, Nancy became interested and involved in Girl's Brigade leadership under Mary Fisk of South Moor, and later with Gladys Bragan of Oxhill. In September 1947 Nancy was appointed to the Headship of Swalwell Infants School, (at the time, possibly the youngest Primary School Head Teacher in County Durham) an old school building (still with gas lamps) but a very happy school that Nancy still remembers with affection. It was during her four years as Head Teacher at Swalwell, that Nancy spent a number of holidays with the Methodist Group Fellowship Conferences,

and it was at one of these conferences she was challenged and felt a call to 'mission'.

Nancy resigned from her position as Head Teacher, and after three months intensive training with the Methodist Missionary Society, at Kingsmead College, Bournville, (The College was founded by the 'Quaker' Cadbury family) she was sent, (no choice) after tests and interviews in London, to the Meru tribal area of Kenya, in the foothills of Mount Kenya, in January 1952, to be employed in training native Kenyan Students to be teachers. Unfortunately Mau Mau terrorism was in full swing by then, but the Meru tribe that Nancy worked with, although related to, were not part of the main tribe "The Kikuyu", many of whom were involved in acts of terror, and in taking the 'oath' in part of which was to "kill all whites". During her time in Kenya, Nancy knew many people who were killed or injured, both white settlers and native Meru people. She was in Kenya during the Coronation ceremony of June 1953 which was celebrated by millions of Kenyan people, but it was during the celebration that some of the worst atrocities occurred. One announcement, from the District Commissioner was that almost everyone had been killed in an attack on a Christian village. She often heard the sound of gunfire, and they always had to lock and bar themselves in at night. Soldiers, police and security were part of everyday life. She experienced many terrifying times during her stay in Kenya.

Nancy had a great affection for her students, and they for her. After four years she went home for a short leave, and then to Methodist International House, London, to learn to speak "Yoruba" language, which is one of the main languages of Nigeria. She was then sent to Western Nigeria, doing the same kind of work as in Kenya, where she was assistant to Gwen Davis, the very well-known lady, who had started the whole operation, which by this time had reached a very high standard. It was hard work but extremely worth while.

After four years in Nigeria, Nancy returned to England, having given more than eight years of her career and life for others. It was perhaps time to resume her teaching career in England again. It was in 1961 when she came home,

and after a short spell of supply teaching at Oxhill Junior School (the school she went to as a pupil), she obtained a permanent teaching post at the Upper Standard School (again her old Secondary School). She taught RE up to 'O' Level standard as well as English alongside Kathleen Waggett (whose father was Head Teacher for many years at East Stanley Junior School). During the year 1963, the post of Head Teacher at Annfield Plain Infants School became vacant, and after interviews, Nancy was appointed Head Teacher by a Board of Governors who probably felt they were very fortunate to have such a qualified and experienced person at Annfield Plain. Many people will remember, and many also attended 'The Old Tin School' which had been erected as a temporary building to last for ten years in 1890, and was still performing educational wonders for generations of Infants children from the Annfield Plain area. Under the leadership of Nancy Hall the Infant School prospered and went from strength to strength. It is remembered as an extremely happy little school, for all concerned, teachers, pupils and parents.

On coming back to England, Nancy commenced her local preaching again, as well as being called to speak of her African experiences at many various venues. She was also appointed Area Secretary of the Girls' Guildry movement, which merged with the Girls' Brigade, and became the Girls' Life Brigade. Nancy supervised activities which included Camps and training courses for Girls and Leaders at Brigade House, South Shields. Retirement from Annfield Plain Infants School came in July 1979, after being involved in teaching for approximately 42 years. However, it was not retirement from other activities, because as well as an active social life Nancy carried out a full Local Preacher's programme, and she was a much sought-after speaker by many organisations. When asked to give a comment on the Tanfield Association, she said "The Tanfield Association is a wonderful organisation. I wish it had been started a few years earlier". She felt the 90th Birthday Celebration was a tremendous occasion, and hopes the Association will continue its work for Tanfield School.

Madrigal Society

Dear Fred,

Two items in recent newsletters have prompted me to write, namely a mention of the Madrigal Society by Ken Smith and the recent announcement of the death of Norma Hunter (Suddick).

Norma was the originator of the Madrigal Society. It was her idea and she soon had a group of twelve people as follows:- Sopranos, Chris Greenwell, Joan Rooke and Audrey Hair, Altos, Norma Suddick, Mary Anderson and Joan Richardson, Tenors, Stuart Reid, Ray Newton and Fen Lawson, Bass, Colin Armstrong, Jimmy Smith and Ken Smith. We were all 2nd Sixth years except for Ken and Jimmy who were 1st Sixth. We began singing madrigals but also sang any four part musical we could find enough copies for. We practised in the music room during the dinner hour and visited each other's homes. I remember meeting in my home in Dipton, Norma's in Catchgate, Joan Richardson's in Greencroft and Mary's in Quaking Houses. We were also invited to Mr Carr's (then Headmaster) home in Clough Dene and sang on the rear terrace for J.P.B Dobbs (former S.G.S. Music teacher) and Kenneth (I believe this is the correct spelling) Trodd (Schools Inspector) Norma always gave us our starting notes when there was no piano and Mr Dobbs and Mr Trodd were amazed to discover she had perfect pitch. We also visited the home of Mr John Scott (S.G.S. Chemistry teacher) in Chester-le-Street to sing carols and partake of festive food!! About this time it became possible to record your music at home and have a record produced. Lancaster's of Consett made the recording which we did on two occasions as the first attempt was not very successful. One side has "Sing we and chant it" and "April is in my mistress' face" and the other has "Merry Madrigal" from the "Mikado". I still have my copy of this if anyone is interested and still has the equipment to play it!!



Madrigal Society Summer 1950

Back Row

Fenwick Lawson, Joan Rooke, Joan Richardson, Colin Armstrong, Jimmy Smith

Front Row

Stuart Reid, Audrey Hair, Chris Greenwell, Mary Anderson, Norma Suddick.

Where are we all now? As you know Norma married Sam Hunter and they moved to Canada - Ontario then retirement in Victoria. Mary Anderson also moved to Canada (where she became Mrs Heder), also Ontario where she still lives. Joan Rooke and Fen Lawson married and live in Durham City. Audrey Hair is now Mrs Dent and lives in Coventry. Joan Richardson also married and lives near York. I am now Mrs Harkness and live in Blackhill. Ray and Heather Newton live in Stanley. Colin Armstrong lives in Bridgehill (Consett). Ken Smith has written from California. Stuart Reid we think lives in the Sheffield area and we don't know about Jimmy Smith. Where are you Stuart and Jimmy?

I enclose a photograph of the Madrigal Society minus Ray, who had left to do National Service after his eighteenth birthday, and Ken, who must have been absent that day. I also have found several others and hope some are not already in the archives.

Hope this will be of interest to the Association.

Yours sincerely,
Christabel Harkness (Greenwell).

Tanfield Association for the Prosecution of Felons

No! We are not going to encourage members to go out looking for criminals, but when the poster to the right with its date of 1799, was given to us, it did make us realise that our name could be an important part of the rich heritage of the Stanley area.

On further research, it was discovered that in the year 1799 the appointed parish constables were unable to protect lands and property of the Chapelry of Tanfield. At that time of course, there was no town of Stanley or Annfield Plain and South Moor was just open fell land (the Tanfield south moor) so Tanfield was the centre of the area. Owing to the development of the coal mines the population was rapidly increasing in the surrounding area. To meet the growing lawless situation, a meeting of farmers, tradesmen and landowners was held, and a committee was elected. It was resolved to form a 'private police force' to be known as the "The Tanfield Association for the Prosecution of Felons".

Rules were drawn up which stated, "We whose names are here-under have agreed to form ourselves into an Association for the better protection of the persons and property of the members and that we will use our utmost endeavours to apprehend and prosecute to conviction all and every person who shall commit burglaries, thefts, assaults or other misdemeanours in or upon persons, properties or cattle, and that ample rewards shall be offered to any person giving information against offenders stealing turnips, peas, potatoes, raiding gardens, stealing horses, cattle or sheep, etc.

Persons apprehended will be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law.

The joining fee for members of the Association was 5 shillings and a yearly contribution at the rate of 5 shillings per £100 rental, or more if deemed necessary to meet contingencies. The committee fixed rewards

Established November 11th, 1799.

RULES

OF THE

TANFIELD ASSOCIATION

FOR THE

PROSECUTION OF FELONS

of from £2-5-0d to £50-5-0d and the Association also bore the expense of the prosecution.

The Tanfield Association prosecuted offenders right up to the Durham Constabulary being formed in 1849. They were still active up to 1910 offering rewards, by means of handbills, to anyone who gave information leading to a conviction of offenders who had committed crimes against the Members of the Association.

The Annual Meetings were held in the Peacock Inn, Tanfield and other hostleries of the area, after which the members sat down to a "Grand Dinner" followed by entertainment from those present, and it seems that the annual meeting of the Association was a good excuse for a very enjoyable evening.

The last Annual Meeting was held at Burnopfield in 1940 when the Tanfield Association was wound-up after being in existence for 141 years. On winding-up, the Association still had 50 members on the books.

We wonder! Can any of our members give further information? Were any of your family members of the original 'Tanfield Association'? Or do you know of anyone who was prosecuted through "The Tanfield Association"? Please let us know.

THREE STEPS TO HEBBURN

In the year of 1968, fate, bored with the easy success of the Beatles and The Rolling Stones, threw together a group of sixth formers at Stanley Grammar School who, encouraged by the less rigid musical coaching of the late Norman Williams, got together a concoction of slight musical talent, lusty desire to sing and a modest determination to grab some limelight before time took them into a less propitious environment.

So it was that Duncan Davis, Chris Morrison, Ken Turnbull and Ian Wilson planned their assault on the stronghold of Simon and Garfunkel, Bob Dylan and Peter, Paul and Mary. At first with the latter trio in mind, they encouraged a female singer to join them, Hazel Pattison was very ably equipped to augment their ensemble, but after a rehearsal and a tape recording of popular tunes she and they were content to go on differing musical paths. However, her valuable mandolin was allowed to remain. Over the next few months we rehearsed and acquired a name, given to us by the sixth form poet, Barry Golightly. The word poet I use in the loose, modernist sense. Ye Broddle Strappes then de-formalised to The Broddle Strappes. Well, the name got people talking anyway.

We were sometimes joined by an ex-pupil, John Armstrong and during the learning process we encouraged the talents of another pupil, Philip Adamson, an already accomplished musician, but not a fiddler, which we wanted, so he left straight away. We played at Folk Clubs in the Stanley area and Whickham and were in residency at the folk club at the Crawley Arms, Swalwell for quite some time.

Then, one day, much to our surprise we were approached by Dr Sharp to play in a concert in front of the school, and after rehearsing with amplification the big day arrived. We sang some Irish ballads, and jigs also Scottish songs' Marie's Wedding and McPherson's rant but the song that stole the show was Whiskey in the Jar, a song that several years later became a huge international hit for Thin Lizzy, which incidentally was Dr Sharp's favourite. After the show, things became even busier and we

had to engage Penny Routledge of the 4th form to become our secretary (fan mail you know), a post she still holds to this day.

We performed for quite some time after that playing at various parties, dances, and once on board a ship at Blyth, but studies and exams arrived and we fizzled out only to reappear at reunions and Christmas.

At this point the screen goes into soft focus and amidst smoke and wiggley lines we arrive at a much later date. Ian, or Fingers Wilson played his banjo at college and well after. Ken or Tex Turnbull played guitar, sang and wrote some songs. Philip Adamson continued with music but in the classical style. John Armstrong performed folk music as part of a duo or solo act. Duncan Davis took drumming lessons and turned into a Morris Dancer, though the connection isn't obvious. He then took up with a skiffle band called Earl Grey and the Charwallahs. Chris Morrison went from choral singing with the Salford Choral Society and then to local amateur operatics, in Consett, My Fair Lady, White Horse Inn, South Pacific and the like.

Then Duncan said to Chris how about rock and roll and really getting up to date. "I can drum, you can sing, everybody knows the songs" - and a band was formed called Big Dave and The Elastic Band. A couple of years of gigs followed doing rock and roll and other sixties songs at Hunt Balls, Weddings, Farmers' birthday parties, dances etc. Soon there was to be yet another change of line-up adding some brass and soul music, this time dressing up as the original artists, Bill Haley, Buddy Holly, Eddy Cochran, The Beatles and The Blues Brothers. The new name was Rocking Hoarse.

And so up to the present day: we perform a lot of the previous material with theatrical costumes changes, adding Roy Orbison, The Searchers, Brian Poole and the Tremeloes and ultimately the KING OF ROCK AND ROLL, discharging the ever popular music of the sixties at outdoor shows, in tents and on stages big enough to get all of us on...and sometimes not! The biggest stage of all was at Wallington Hall where we played at the outdoor shindig

for several years and now we are "Three Steps to Hebburn". The name conjures up a rock and roll classic song, on the banks of the Tyne where Duncan's late father patrolled his beat, possibly to the other beat of Eddie Cochran escaping from a nearby Café juke box.

See us at Tanfield School 21st April on the same stage where the dream started all those years ago.

The line up is -

Chris Morrison	-vocals
Duncan Davis	-drums
Paul Sowden	-keyboards
Tony Dare	-bass
Mark Webb	-trumpet
Tony Kindlin	-lead guitar
John Davis	-saxophone



Snippets from the Grammarian

Two occasions were listed in the history of Tanfield as follows.

Autumn Term 1978

The formal opening of the School Extension (now called "The New Block" or "Humanities Block") was performed by County Councillor Mrs H Donnelly.

An address of Welcome by Councillor Sid Dixon (Chairman of Derwentside District Council).

Formal vote of Thanks, proposed by Councillor Albert Wilson, The dedicatory Prayer given by Rev. E. C. Wyngard (Vicar of St Andrew's, Stanley).

Following the singing of the National Anthem, the school was open for inspection between 2.00 pm and 3.00 pm.

Spring Term 1956

Annual Speech Day Wednesday 29 February, 1956 Presented by Mr W. M. Linkleter. (Deputy Director of Education).

Prize Winners

- 1a. Muriel Burn, Elaine Armstrong
John Gardiner
- 1h. John Hogg, Alan Johnson
Damien Hodgson

- 1s. Eveline Wilson, Edna Watson
Eileen Walker
- 2a. Alexander Waggot, Michael Radcliffe
Clifford Stubbs
- 2h. Frank Adams, Norma H White
Joan Wanless
- 2s. Edwin Stott, Norman Wilkinson
Terrence Piggins
- 3a. Ellen Ross, Margaret Robson
David Portsmouth
- 3h. Lorraine Beattie, Harry Peck
Cyril Ledger
- 3s. John Iceton, George Raine
Valerie Rutherford
- 4a. Kathleen Waggot, Cynthia Stoker
Margaret Iceton
- 4h. William Armstrong, Patricia Mitchell
Jenny Batty

Special Prize Winners

- J.C. Forster Memorial History Prize: Margaret Fisk.
- Physical Education: Senior: George Morton
Junior: William Errington.
- Past Student Prizes: Anne Wilson; John Dean.
- Vicar of Beamish Divinity Prize: Valerie Lynn.
- Rotary Club Jubilee Prize: Margaret Fisk,
Brian Logan.

School Day Stories

A story is recounted of Florence Hutchinson when she was a first year pupil at the Grammar School. After teasing a sixth form boy, (which was one of the first year girls' main amusements) she was picked up by the very tall sixth form boys, and to teach her a lesson they sat her on top of one of the high cupboards that lined the main corridor leading to the Hall. She was quite small at the time, and was stuck there unable to get down, much to the amusement of all who were passing by.

Mr Gee eventually came along and lifted her down only to march her straight to the Headmaster's room. Florence received a ticking off from Mr Carr and no doubt her name was noted for the future. She did not split on the tall sixth former who had sat her on top of the cupboard, but of course his punishment was that the teasing continued by Florence and her first year friends.

School Escapades

The story is told of Clifford Beecroft and School Sports Day in July 1953. When most people were out in the sunshine concentrating on sporting events, on the field were three sixth form girls, Florence Hutchinson, Pearl Mitchison, and Jean Hetherington who persuaded Clifford, also in the sixth form, (and who possibly didn't need a great deal of persuading) to take them up to the Bell Tower on top of the main (1912) school building. Clifford was a very good athlete but was unable to take part in the Sports Day events because of his contracting tuberculosis earlier and was still recovering from the after effects. The girls, led by Florence, had earlier been asking fellow sixth formers "How could one get up to the Bell Tower on the school roof?" Clifford had told them he knew of a way up from previously having to rescue balls from the flat roof to the rear of the school. When the day came, Clifford remembers the incident vividly of leading the three girls up the stairs from the main corridor to the half way landing where there were two doors facing each other. One door opened to the male staff room and the

other to an old porch which wasn't used very much. He led the three girls into the old porch room, opened and got out of the sash window and stepped over the small flat roof. They were faced with two sets of ladders to climb, which they did. They then came to a walkway, approximately 2 feet wide, which runs the length of the school between the two sloping roofs. This led them to another short ladder and the Bell Tower. Here the girls had decided to make their mark for posterity. This was their last chance before they left school forever in a few days time. They produced a pen knife and carved their initials on the side of the tower.

As far as it known, these initials are still there after 51 years! Perhaps Clifford might like to ask permission from Mr Howat to lead another expedition of the three girls to prove this theory.

Editor's note

Did anyone else have a secret escapade at school which they never told anyone about?

Patron of Tanfield School

Although the above scheme was initially thought of as helping to raise the £50,000 needed for the Specialist School Bid, it quickly became apparent that people thought that the Patron scheme should be continued into the future. It should be noted that anyone who so generously contributed by giving a minimum of £100.00 (and many who could afford it, gave more than the minimum of £100.00) are as promised, "Tanfield Patrons" for life.

It is now felt that the Patron scheme should be independent of the Tanfield Association and possibly make its own decisions, through the school.

We hope to bring more news of this development in the near future, and we would welcome any thoughts or suggestions, by anyone on how the "Patrons of Tanfield School" scheme should develop - Please give us your views

Head Boy and Head Girl

It was recently pointed out that there are no written records of the very important appointments that were made in School each year of Head Boy and Head Girl. These two positions were chosen from people in the upper sixth form and they represented our school at Tanfield on all important occasions, as well as being the pupil spokespersons to the Headteacher and School Management.

We would like to rectify this omission and provide, as far as we can, a list of Head Boys and Head Girls with the year of their office.

Some initial research has come up with the following list, but we need the help of all members of the Association to provide us with the names, dates and if possible the area of Stanley District in which they lived. We would be grateful if members would send information by either telephone to Fred Westwater 01207 234548, or by letter to 10 Oxhill Villas, Oxhill, Stanley Co Durham, DH9 7JT.

As an added bonus, if you could also relate any incident or story concerning the Head Girl or Head Boy of your time at Tanfield

Head Boy		Head Girl	
Stuart Reid	1949-50	Mary Anderson	1949-50
David Portsmouth	1958-59 (Leadgate)	Hilary Atkinson	1954-55
Alan Taylor	1959-60		
John Hogg	1960-61 (Annfield Plain)	Vivian Hodgson	1960-61
Bob Harrison	1961-62		
Tony Brown	1968-69 (Annfield Plain)	Joan Phillips	1965-66
Tom Ayre	1969-70 (Annfield Plain)	Anne Cole	1969-70 (Annfield Plain)
Gavin Watt	1970-71 (Annfield Plain)		
Gary Clarkson	1976-77 (Stanley)		

Headteachers at Tanfield

Some schools that are 91 years old will have had many Headteachers but our school at Tanfield is quite remarkable in that it has only had five Headteachers.

The school came into being on the 16 October 1912 as Tanfield Higher Elementary and Pupil Teacher Training Centre, under Headmaster John B Hardy. Mr Hardy was a remarkable man, who was well ahead of his time. One of his first rules was NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT and according to his staff, it worked. His educational ideas were very sound and he was held in high esteem by all who knew him, and under his guidance a secure foundation was laid at Tanfield.

Mr Hardy was succeeded by Mr William Carr in 1930 when he retired. The school had changed its name to Alderman Wood School in 1919, and was regarded as the Grammar School of the District. The new Headmaster, Mr William Carr, was a member of the 'Society of Friends' (Quakers) and an active member of the Labour party. His Quaker-Socialist approach coloured his whole life. He firmly held the Quaker testimony that "there is that of God in every man and woman". He devoted his life to Alderman Wood School, to be renamed in 1950 Stanley Grammar School. Although pages could be written about the school under Mr Carr, and all its achievements, perhaps a quote from Mr Carr himself sums it up: "Who could ask for more? On retirement I was presented with a silver tray with the inscription 'Presented to William Carr by pupils, past students and staff as a token of their esteem and affection'. Could a Headmaster after twenty years in such an exposed position ask for more"? Mr Carr retired in 1953 and was succeeded by Dr L E Sharp. Doctor Sharp (he was always given his full title) was a different kind of Headteacher to Mr Carr. He was highly respected by all and perhaps feared by many. A quote from Rosemary Brabbon (pupil 1951-58) gives an accurate feeling of him by many pupils: "His presence was felt throughout the school. He walked quickly and his academic gown flowed behind him. His bright piercing eyes seemed to miss nothing". His standards were set very high and he expected others to follow his

example; he expected dedication from teachers and hard work (and strict obedience) from pupils. Stanley Grammar School did achieve notable success in sport, academic pursuits and in extra curricular activities. To many pupils (and some staff) Dr. Sharp was a remote, formal, even frightening figure who firmly believed in the following statement he made to teaching staff in the late 1950s: "As teachers, our only memorial are the pupils who leave our school". Perhaps as Dr Sharp and his teaching staff considered the many very fine people who have emerged from their formative years of training at Tanfield, they would know their work had not been in vain. Dr Sharp retired to live in North Yorkshire, and was succeeded by Mr Alban McKie in 1974. The name of the school had changed to Tanfield Secondary School in Dr Sharp's last few years and when Mr McKie assumed the Headship, it was 11 - 18 years and selective, and drew pupils from the whole of the Stanley Area. It was a difficult time for education, and within a very short time, numerous meetings were held with all interested parties concerning the proposed 'Comprehensive Education'. In September 1977 'Tanfield Comprehensive School' was formed by amalgamating the existing Tanfield School with Shield Row Secondary School. Mr McKie was appointed as Headteacher of the new school which had in excess of 1,300 pupils on two sites with some 77 teachers, a number of whom travelled between the two sites. Over the next few years, despite the lack of space to teach and hold activities, the school did continue to achieve in a variety of fields, thanks in no small way to the dedication of the teaching staff. Mr McKie's time as Headteacher contained some notable happenings in education at Tanfield, ranging from a lack of educational funding from Central Government for nearly twenty years from 1977, to the introduction of GCSEs and the scrapping of 'O' Levels; the (very sad) phasing out of the sixth form and the opening of the Tertiary College at Consett; Local Management of Schools; The National Curriculum; National Testing and many other, often unpopular, political educational initiatives. However, in spite of difficult times, including the tightening of the financial belt and the numerous changes, Alban McKie led a

team of staff who often performed educational miracles. A quote from Joanne Urquhart (pupil 1983-88) may sum up the feelings of many, about the school under Mr McKie, "Thinking back, I could not have asked for a better education than I had at Tanfield. Both the school and the teachers were a great inspiration to me with their warmth and kindness, and no doubt they will inspire the generation to follow". Mr Alban McKie retired in 1988 to be succeeded by his very able Deputy Head, Archie Howat. It could possibly be said, that Mr Howat had the hardest task of any of his fellow headteachers at Tanfield. The school had now become a much more complex society than in previous years, and the stress and pressure which is on Headteachers in today's world of Education must sometimes have seemed overwhelming. Under his leadership the school continued to enjoy great success in sport, music, academic achievement, community projects and also to be in the forefront of education developments. Archie Howat will be the name that has taken education at Tanfield into the 21st Century, and probably the two most important happenings of his time as Headteacher to date have been:

- (1) The refurbishment of the school at a cost of almost £4,000,000.
- (2) The achieving of Specialist School status in Science and Engineering. Mr Howat is

fortunate in having an excellent Deputy Headteacher, Eric Fisk, and a staff who are, as in past years, dedicated to the provision of high quality education at Tanfield.

He sees the years ahead to be as challenging as those that are behind, with massive development in the use of information technology and virtual learning. All this future change and development he believes will continue to be underpinned by the Tanfield spirit and philosophy, which in so many cases guides former pupils through life, with their experience of being educated at Tanfield - "First Things First" being an abiding motto

Mr John B Hardy BA BSc 1912 - 1932
(20 years)

Mr William Carr BSc 1932 - 1953
(21 years)

Dr L E Sharp BSc 1953 - 1974
(21 Years)

Mr Alban McKie BA 1974 - 1988
(14 years)

Mr Archie Howat B.A.M.Ed. 1989 -
(16 years to date)

Prefects at Stanley Grammar School 1949/50

In our last Newsletter re "Snippets from the Grammarian" it was reported that a very good photograph of 48 prefects was on show, but only five names were given, and we asked for help in identifying the other 43 prefects.

This plea was answered by Christabel Harkness (nee Greenwell) who sent an original photograph and an almost complete list of names - as follows:-

Sixth or Back row -

Rob Hunter, Alan Armstrong, Lawrence Campbell, Jimmy Smith, Bill Pattison, Jackie Fenwick, Teddy Brabban, Colin Armstrong.

Fifth Row -

John Greenwell, John Temple, Bill Smith, Ken Smith, Alan Crosby, Albert Bellerby, George Bolan, Bob Patterson, Ernie Barrass.

Fourth Row -

Colin Milburn, Corinna Simpson,

Ailsa Smurthwaite, Audrey Hair, Rita Scott, Sheila Lyons, Grace Steele, Cathy Todd, Jean Ross, Winnie Thompson.

Third Row -

June Ross, Sylvia Pearson, Robina Thompkins, Joyce Sterling,, Dorothy Hardy, Kathleen Lawson.

Second Row -

Fenwick Lawson, Norma Suddick, Joan Richardson, Stuart Reid (Head Boy), Mary Anderson (Head Girl), Joan Rooke, Chris Greenwell, Warren Pescod.

First Row -

Brian Skilbeck, Ray Newton, Eric Forster, Billy Gill, Brian Charlton, Jack Graham.

Our thanks go to Chris for her time and effort in providing the above information and photograph which has been copied and is on display at school.



Tanfield Today

Extension of School Name

The Governors of the school are required to agree and recommend the name of the school as a consequence of achieving Specialist School status. The Specialist Schools branch of the DfES do ask that the term 'College' is used. At their January meeting the Governors agreed to request the Local Authority (Durham County) to approve the following

TANFIELD SCHOOL SPECIALIST COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

It was also agreed to have an Official Opening for the College and Kevan Jones, the MP for North Durham, has agreed to be in attendance for this very important occasion.

Teaching Staff

The school welcomed a member of the Tanfield Association and former pupil, Graham Comer (pupil 1960-67) to teach in the science department. Graham, a physics specialist joins the staff from industry, bringing with him a width of experience which will be a definite asset to the department and the school.

Young Achiever Awards

The Evening Chronicle recently sponsored the above awards which reward young people for their efforts in IT; Education; Community; Sport; Business and the Arts. There are 12 categories and the nominees gathered at St James' Park, Newcastle with family, friends, teachers, lecturers and representatives from business and organisations across the region to celebrate the Chronicle's Young Achiever Awards. The audience heard inspirational stories of how young people have achieved success through their hard work, courage and determination. Lisa Shaw of Century Radio announced the awards to the winners and

runners-up and was joined by Pop Idol Aaron Bayley to pay tribute to the achievements of all the finalists.

Tanfield School was represented by Martin Gladden who was the lead member of the group of Tanfield pupils who had won Students Innovation Challenge (as reported in our last Newsletter). He also achieved the highest science mark in his year and took an engineering course on top of his GCSEs. In sports he represents his year group at football. Martin is a budding entrepreneur and hopes one day to start his own business, but only after gaining a place at university to study science or a technology-related subject. Martin is only 15 years old and was the youngest student entered in the competition, and when they announced that Martin had won the Technology Achievement, he modestly said he was only a member of an excellent team. His Coordinator of Learning, Elizabeth Hawkins, said he took the lead role in the team and she felt he was the most deserving as he had to articulate the group's ideas.

The Head of Technology and Engineering Andrew Peak, who accompanied Martin to St James' Park said he is an excellent student whom he is sure will do extremely well in the future.

To give some idea of the competition that Martin was up against: second place went to a 20 year old from City of Sunderland College, who is studying for GCMA Certificate and three 'A' Level subjects; third place went to another 20 year old from Newcastle College who has applied to Oxford University to study Mathematics and Computer Science. So from the members of Tanfield Association, congratulations, Martin, on your success and also in carrying on the very fine traditions of Tanfield School

Contact Numbers

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