

TANFIELD ASSOCIATION



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Centennial Newsletter

No. 25
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Editorial

Alderman H. Curry Wood officially opened Tanfield Lea Higher Elementary School and Pupil Teacher Centre on the 16th October 1912. The name was a bit of a mouthful, so local people obviously shortened it to Tanfield. Very quickly the name changed to honour its founder and it became Alderman Wood School. To locals it was still Tanfield. When I succeeded in my 11+ exam in 1944, although my blazer badge showed Alderman Wood School, I was still congratulated on going to Tanfield. The name changed to Stanley Grammar School but not the local usage! Thus when grammar schools were abolished in favour of comprehensives and a new name was needed it was sensible to officially give it the name that everyone knew and used. Thus it became Tanfield School in its various guises, and so it is that in October 2012 we are celebrating the 100 year existence of Tanfield School.

The centenary celebrations appeared to be enjoyed by all who participated. A good many folks came to have a tour of, and be impressed by, the current school. (Can you claim to have travelled furthest to be there?) A team of our members, with help from some Governors, acted as guides around the school. We had assembled a large selection of photographs, some going back to 1912, and these were on display and generated much interest. The two Saturday evening parties were very successful too. The whole event involved a lot of voluntary work from a set of folks from your working executive. Without them we couldn't have managed. So - a big Thank You

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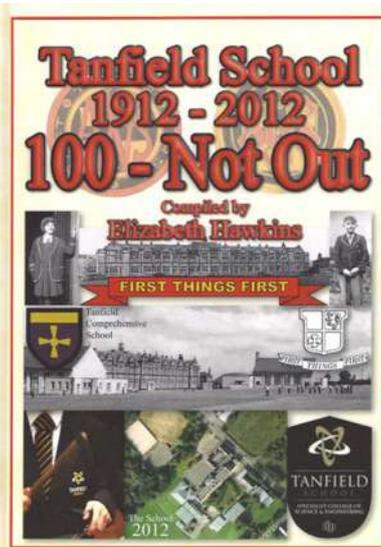
subsequently presented the school with a silver salver to be presented as a prize for achievement in English)



On the actual day, the 16th, the school staff dressed in early 20th century costume for the day, and this looked very impressive. The whole week had an air of happy celebration.

Sadly one face was missing at all of these shenanigans and that was our secretary, Fred Westwater. Having been heavily involved in all of the planning, Fred has been diagnosed with a problem that requires heart surgery. While he awaits the day, he has to avoid any stress or anything that will raise his blood pressure. His family have

therefore grounded him. He was a big miss, but present in all of our thoughts.



Of course the highlight of the week was the launch of the book '100 - Not Out'. 200 glossy pages in a hard back with many photos, some coloured, and all for £12.50. It is a superb record of the 100 years with contributions right across the decades, all collected, edited and compiled by Elizabeth Hawkins who has worked at it for nearly two years. What a mammoth task, and all put together by Elizabeth, with a large injection of technical help from Peter Brown. What a debt of gratitude we owe her for undertaking such a demanding project. You will have received your pre-ordered copies. Please do write to me with your thoughts about the book, and any events or stories that it may have awakened in your memory. Some praise for Elizabeth would not be remiss as well. If you haven't read it there are still some copies available. (Cheques for £15, to cover UK postage to Elizabeth at 15, Thirlemere, Vigo, Birtley. DH3 2JY)

Birthdays are usually accompanied by presents, and special birthdays by special presents. This special birthday was no exception! Our gift, on your behalf, is something that the school badly needed, but was finding it difficult to budget for. The stage curtains in the Assembly Hall were at least 25 years old and in very poor shape. The Association has replaced the full set, and a backdrop to complete the job. The new backdrop has been painted by Mrs L. Wood, Head of Art, and shows all the school badges around the most recent one in the centre. It is a superb piece of work. We have done the school proud, and the Headmaster is very grateful. (We have just about emptied our coffers in making the gift, and so we need to start again!)

If you would like to own one of those lovely lanyards that we all wore at the events, there are still a few available. They show all the school badges with the school name and dates, and all in colour. The price was included in the tickets for the events so they were just given out free, now you will have to pay £2. Like I said, we need to rebuild our funds!

Contact Peter Brown at: peterwbrown@tiscali.co.uk They are a great memento.

Speaking of rebuilding funds, 16th October, as well as being the school birthday, is also the date on which your annual subscriptions are due. We have felt for a while that subscriptions were not keeping pace with costs, and

so for this year and onwards the subs will become £10 annually. So far, life membership is unchanged at £100. In the past we have been generous in not chasing up lapsed payments, but I'm afraid that we can no longer be so kind. If your Newsletter doesn't arrive in future it is probably because your payment has lapsed. It is easy to set up a standing order with your bank which means that you are covered and it also means that we can rely on income from subscriptions. We would be very grateful if you would do this for us. (Many members already have, but please amend your order!) I will include a Standing Order form at the end of the Newsletter to make things easy for you.

We keep hearing stories of the Newsletter being passed on to past pupils – or staff – who are not members of the Association. Howay folks – if you are interested enough to want to read it, surely £10 a year is not a lot to pay to have your own copy, -plus any other benefits that may come up! Send your details (Name, Address, e-mail address, and years at Tanfield) to Susan Donkin, 19 Lindom Avenue, Chester le Street. DH3 3PP, plus your cheque, and read with an easy conscience!

We are convinced that there are still some who have not yet passed on to us an e-mail address. We would be grateful to have them in order to pass on to you copies of the Newsletter on line. It comes in a PDF format, and the picture quality is much better than in the printed version. Those who receive it this way are all complimentary about it, so, please join them and save us some postage.

To make the Newsletter interesting (I hope!) I rely heavily on your contributions and the response to items that we publish. I am pleased to say that the response to Newsletter 24 has provided some good material for this one. Please don't be shy about sending me words and pictures by e-mail or snail mail. If you send paper photos they will be scanned and returned to you. Don't miss your chance to shine!!

The Two Parties

As far as was possible we tried to make the two Saturdays the same. As you would expect that wasn't entirely possible, but they were close. The first was conducted by John Hogg as M.C. He dressed as a headmaster and did a Dr. Sharp on the guests!



Yours truly moved a toast to the future of the school.



The Headmaster, Graeme Lloyd, welcomed guests to the school.



Our President, Prof Bob Harrison, welcomed the guests on behalf of the Association.



A special one off Tanfield Glass was created by Claire Humpherson (Flowers) and presented by Peter Brown to Elizabeth Hawkins for the work that she had done on the Birthday Book.



Amy Bilton had researched Alderman Wood (it's in the book!) and located two of his great grandsons. They were presented with portraits of our founder.

Chris Morrison rounded off the evening with his 'Tales of Tanfield'



The party of Oct 20th was much the same. Ted Brabban hosted in John Hogg's absence, and we were graced with the presence of the constituency M.P., Mr Kevan Jones (shown with Prof Bob Harrison). Mr. Jones is an Honorary Vice President of our Association, and has always shown a great interest in the school and its activities.



He congratulated the school on its current performance, its longevity, and wished it well into the future.

As well as the formal part of the evenings, those present enjoyed a good meal and plenty of reunion and chat. From a teacher's point of view it was so good to meet up again with names, and faces from the past and to learn how they had fared in the wide world after Tanfield. I think too that those present enjoyed meeting again teachers who had taught them in their youth. They were two good evenings, and well worth the work and the planning.

Some Comments Regarding the Centennial

Below are some of the things that have been said about the celebrations:

We had a very enjoyable time at the reunion and congratulations are due to all involved in making it such a success.

Thanks Howard & Lestryne Bott

Love the book. Whoever worked on some of the photographs I submitted have made an excellent job of it.
Maureen Peacock

It's really a lovely building, never noticed that when I was at school. Ayshea Waugh

I loved my time spent here - didn't realise it at the time until I had left. Lynn Webb

Mr Howat was a fab head. Very sad. He would be so proud if he could see the school celebrations. Joanne Jenkinson

I have just received my publication today, and would like to congratulate you on a wonderful job. Harry Taylor

I have just received my copy of '100 Not Out' and I cannot wait to bury my nose in it. It does you credit and you must be very proud. Barry Hutchinson



I enjoyed the evening very much. I thought that the food was the best we've had, so that's worth knowing for the future. The book is excellent - very impressive - a lot of work for you but worth it, I liked the way it was set out and the hard back. Thank you for making the event such a success. Gina Jack

Hi, Just finished the book. It is excellent, you have missed nothing out. All your hard work. It was a pleasure to read. Anne Hunter

We really enjoyed Saturday, it was a lovely evening. We were very impressed with the running of the whole event and realise a huge amount of work went into organising it. I also felt the affection and passion felt for the school by the Tanfield Association. I am really enjoying 100 Not Out and am interested in the early years of the school. Jennifer Furnas

Walter and I thoroughly enjoyed the night. Love the photos and meeting old friends. We were on a table with people from different years and had fun comparing notes. We would like to thank you for all your hard work and for making Saturday evening so special. Maureen Peacock

We thoroughly enjoyed our evening at Tanfield listening to the speeches, socialising, looking at the exhibition and having a tasty meal. The book is excellent. You must be very pleased with the results of all your hard work. Audrey Sharp

Congratulations to everyone for a very successful event. Everything worked extremely well and the atmosphere was the perfect balance between formality and fun. John (Hogg) in particular was excellent. Everyone felt it was an important event and worth attending but it was relaxed and enjoyable at the same time. My sisters and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I think Graeme was very impressed with the scale of support which the association has. Bob Harrison

It was a good night, last night, and the book was well received. Ted

Just a short note to wish you well for the Tanfield celebrations. You have put SO much effort into it all that I hope you are left feeling satisfied that it was all worthwhile. Mary Saunders

Nice to see you and the school again and congratulations on the book. Graeme Hall

Brill evening, catching up with everyone. Hard work, well worth it. Anne Clasper

I enjoyed having a look around during the day. Thanks. Andrew Shaw



Mrs Hawkins, Mrs Hodgson, Mr Brabban,
Mr Peacock, Mrs Jack



Mrs Hawkins, Mr Cousins
Mr Cooper

It's changed quite a bit, had a short stroll in the 1912 block trying to remember our school days. Saw a few of our teachers too - Mr Jolly, Mrs Stoddart, Mrs Craddock, Mr Dolman, Mrs Bilton (O'Loughlen), Mr Wainwright, Mrs Jack, Mrs Batty, Mr Brabban & Mr Peacock. Andrea Scholey

Could not believe the change (in the Music Room) - all that technology and not a recorder or glockenspiel in sight. !!! Gillianne Meek

It was weird - everything is different. It was great to come back and see such a change. It was oddly rather nice to see the school used in such a different manner. Steps into the future for another 100 years. Sarah Hannington

We thoroughly enjoyed our tour on Friday, it was great to finally set foot back in my old comp! It brought back a lot of great memories. Lorraine Johnson

Please thank everyone involved in organising the Centenary. My sister Joan Olund and I thoroughly enjoyed the day. I enjoyed meeting up with lots of people from the past in the evening. Ted, a personal thank you for the interesting and thorough tour you gave us in the afternoon. Margaret Talintyre (Wanless)

Just a brief line. Thanks for all your efforts on the anniversary events. It was lovely to see the old place again, especially to see it thriving. And discovering old friends still about. Sid Clough

Comments from Canada

Hi: Here are my observations about the celebration from an ex-pat perspective. I thought the committee did a wonderful job, co-ordinating the celebration. I did think that when so many stood for the years 50's & 60's, that perhaps each year should have been asked to stand. There were so many past students from 1952 admission year that they took up more than one table. I saw few people from my admission year of 1954, but it would have been nice to see just who was in attendance. We have all changed so much over these past 50 years, that unless you actually saw a name tag up close, it was hard to recognize others from your year, especially if no or very little contact was kept. This is made more difficult when you live abroad, and do not meet up on a regular basis.

On the whole, I did enjoy showing my husband where I attended school, and introducing him to those I did recognize. On the whole, I really enjoyed the evening, and again commend the committee on a very good job. Thanks, and regards, Barbara Davison (née Dawson) from outside Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Joan Wanless Olund (Canada) wrote: "It was wonderful - especially the old part of the building which I remember so well. The evening on Saturday was a journey down memory lane, so many people I haven't seen for more years than I would like to admit to! Had a wonderful evening - so much fun - thanks to everyone involved in organizing the event."

Who Do You Know Who Was There?







We are still looking for more photographs from the two events. If you took any, please select the best and email them, with the subject details to:

photographs@tanfield-association.org

Photographs can be viewed, as they become available at

<http://centenary.tanfield-association.org>

Now and Then -or Then and Now

My wife Mavis (nee Pattison) was with me at both of the Centennial parties. Here we are looking very happy about it! We are in the School Hall with the stage and new curtains in the background.

At the party we were shown the other photograph from 1951. It is of a gathering of all the pupils who had won trophies that year. Can you spot my missus on that one? The photo was shown to us by Margery Smalley (Henderson) who is seated front right.

How many cup winners can you name?

Ted

Wet Weather Reading Brings Back Memories

The dreadful weather which passed for Summer (even here in South Devon) saw me reading more than usual - including past copies of Newsletters - and prompted me to get in touch, something I had intended to do for some time. Procrastination is the thief of time! ('O' level, Julius Caesar, Miss Allison, 1954).

My memories of SGS are mostly very happy and reflect huge credit on the staff. Mr Ratcliffe, probably my favourite teacher, with his stories of the trams of Cairo and headwinds causing his plane to hover over the runway five minutes after take-off. Mr. Morris who showed infinite patience with me though I was one of the least numerate pupils in the class. Mr Proud who introduced us to a wider world in his Civics lessons- I still remember his description of an El Greco painting. Miss Mortimer who usually packed up a couple of minutes before the bell and had us sit with our hands on our heads in total silence waiting for it to ring. I enjoyed her discipline and approach. Shortly before I retired a girl pupil told me to 'f... off'. Our Head chose not to take any action over the incident. Would the pupil have said such a thing to Miss Mortimer? Perhaps this influenced me to take early retirement.

Even the most ultra serious, gown wearing members of staff, like Miss Thornton, had their Achilles heel. George Morton (in A Level History) could make smart remarks which disrupted her flow and brought a wry smile, and which would have resulted in a reprimand for anyone else, but not for him. Perhaps she fancied him!

In Newsletters reference to health and safety - or rather lack of it brings back memories. Why were we not scalded, gassed, blinded, or suffered broken bones? Boiling up animal glue in woodwork (Mr Harrison), melting lead in art (Mr Binks) handling mercury in chemistry (Mr Scott) or clinging on top of a load of camping gear on the back of Harry Harm's open coal lorry, with Alex Smith riding shotgun on the apex. I remember the 'Big Bang' when Mr Robinson (or was it Mr Ratcliffe?) was preparing oxygen in the Physics Lab. And the

whole thing blew up with such a bang that it brought Scotty rushing in from the Chemistry Lab. My main memory of the aftermath was that we had free time while the lab. was decontaminated of broken glass!

Notwithstanding health and safety, SGS must have got its academic curriculum right for in addition to myself at Birmingham University there were at least eight other ex SGS pupils there at the same time: Neil Baggett, John Baggett, Tommy Thompson, 'Zonky' Thompson, Jack Dodds, Doreen Ash, Ann Wilson and Gordon Mallows. Did they have a 'special relationship' at that time?

I look back on the two headmasters of SGS with very different memories. While at school I was not aware that Mr Carr was a quaker, or that Dr Sharp had served in MI5. Now all my prejudices are reinforced. David Portsmouth's letter (winter 2010) describes Dr. Sharp as 'creepy' and Mr Carr as 'comfortable and an outstanding model for pupils and teachers alike'. Georgina Jack's recollection of Dr. Sharp (summer 2009) 'materialising like Dracula behind me' and 'clearing the staff room at the end of break in two seconds'. John Cameron (winter 2010 'eyes like Lord Kitchener's - enigmatic and unfathomable' and Jean Hetherington (spring 2012) after 'A' levels in 1953, being ordered from the tennis courts during free time and given a long lecture on religious education.

My own experience reflects the summary justice recalled by Duncan Davis (winter 2011) 'a brief hearing of the case by way of a nod to justice' followed by six heavy strokes to one's bottom.

Our class was in Mr Yockney's music room, the member of staff was late for the lesson and we were gently rioting. Dr Sharpe appeared in the doorway, selected me at random, marched me to his study and gave me six of his best. Fair enough - I knew that he had to take some action and it was just my unlucky day. I returned to the classroom (the teacher had still not arrived) and everyone was keen to know what had happened and feeling fortunate not to have been selected for the treatment. I was demonstrating on one of my friends what had been done to me when Dr. Sharp re-appeared, curled his finger in invitation, marched me to his study and without explanation repeated the treatment. It hurt me both physically and mentally. Memories are sharp fifty eight years later. At that time I was probably not aware of the term sadism, but this event has neither been forgotten nor forgiven, and during my years at the chalk face I hope that I have been a Mr Carr rather than a Dr. Sharp.

Please keep the Newsletters coming - if the summers are as bad as this one has been I will have plenty of time to read and re-read them.

John Bowes (1949-56)

Ted,

Many thanks indeed for the e-mail copy of the excellent Newsletter No 24.

I particularly enjoyed the item on teaching French at SGS by Mrs Muriel Guerrero (Miss Grieveson).

As a SGS pupil from 1961-64, I was taught French by Miss Grieveson in my second year, 1962-63. If it's not too sexist a remark, she was a favourite teacher amongst the boys in the class - young and attractive, speaking a foreign language with an accent like Françoise Hardy or Sylvie Vartan! In our first year we'd been taught by the excellent Mr Jolly but how could he compete with 'Muriel'? She also made lessons interesting by bringing in records (Johnny Hallyday etc), arranging french pen pals and getting us to write to syndicats d'initiatives to find out about France. Sadly, in my case my enthusiasm was greater than my ability in French - the grammar (passé antérieur, subjonctif etc) was my 'point faible', closely followed by my pronunciation - je parlais français comme une vache espagnole!

Despite my minimal grasp of the language and total lack of any acting ability, I was given a part in the 1962 French Play, 'Chez le Dentiste', directed and produced by Miss Grieveson with assistance, I think, from Miss Heslop and possibly Miss (Nova) Williamson, who taught English. The French Play may have been one of the activities of the French Club, also run by Miss Grieveson. In the play I was type-cast as the big stupid Monsieur LeGros who had a fear of dentists. One of my few lines was 'J'y suis et j'y reste', which at the time I failed to identify as MacMahon's famous words at Sebastopol.

In my teens and twenties I had a career as an amateur racing cyclist on road and track so, in order to follow the French radio commentaries on the Tour de France, Paris-Roubaix etc, I had to make rapid progress in French, which later led to an enthusiasm for French Literature, especially the poets of the nineteenth century and contemporary fiction and Georges Simenon's undervalued writings. Even though she must sometimes have despaired of teaching French to the likes of me at SGS, I am grateful for the efforts she made half a century ago. Belated thanks, Mrs Guerrero.

John Cameron

Hello Muriel,

I thought that you would like to see this appreciative response to your article about teaching at SGS. The article was published in the Tanfield Association Newsletter, and solicited this immediate response from John.

We would love to have you as part of the Association. (Open to anyone with Tanfield links!) At the moment are preparing events for the School's 100th birthday in October. It's good to be in contact again.

Best wishes.

Ted Brabban

Hello Ted,

Thanks for sending on the response to my article. At least it proves somebody read it! I may eventually contact him as it's quite a while since I came across past pupils. Maybe I offended too many of them.....Yes, I will eventually join the association. I am still in contact with Shirley Jackson who tells me what is going on.

Unfortunately the celebration on the 13 October clashes with my birthday when, horror of horrors, I shall be 80 and there is a distinct possibility that my family will be planning something.

Muriel.

Dear Ted

Very much enjoyed the on-line newsletter No 24 with much clearer photographs than its printed version. It has prompted me to send some photographs back. I hope that you can manipulate them. Our late 1940s picture quality was not great.

I still have a few photographs of our school trip to Paris, circa 1950, with Amy Thomson. It opened our eyes to a different life and style of food and she clearly inspired me as I am still taking part in U3A French classes in Blandford. I have attached a photograph of Miss Thomson sitting on the outside deck of our cross-channel ferry.

My sister, Nora, who has just died a couple of months short of 91, left AWS about 1939 to train as a Domestic Science teacher at the Northern Counties College which had been evacuated from Newcastle to Berwick at the outbreak of the war would have remembered many of the teachers listed, particularly Mr Scott. Most of the nicknames are as I remember but I cannot recall Pongo being used for Mr Carr. He was always known as Billy Bogs to us because of his initials, WC. He was a gentle soul and I think contributed much to the tone of the school.

Issue 24 mentioned the 2nd Annfield Plain scouts which I believe still exists. The SGS troop of choice in our day was the 1st Annfield Plain with Scoutmaster Jack Makkison, who was a contemporary I think of my eldest sister at AWS. The Group Scoutmaster was Rev Dent, vicar of Hare Law. Our scout hut was near the entrance to Annfield Plain Park ± on the ground now occupied by five bungalows. We did not have much to do with 2nd Annfield who had their scout hut behind the area occupied by the Co-op Dairy where I worked during one long summer holiday. 1st Annfield boasted quite a few King's Scouts and I have attached a photograph of three of them, Brian Price (sadly died last year), myself and David York on a Venture Badge hike near Glencoe. I think the photographer was Jimmy Nicholson who was in the year below because I have another group photograph from the same hike which includes him. Brian and I were invested as King's Scouts by the Chief Scout, Lord Rowallan, in London. I think David was invested at the World Jamboree which he attended with Fred Turner, who may also have been a King's Scout. My memory of Fred, who featured in Issue 24, was that he had a passion for eating condensed milk from a can.

5HJUHWWDEOYKQPDNHLWWRWKHFHQHQVYKDYHFRPPLWPHQVIRUERWKZHNNHQVDQLWL way from Dorset. We are still in touch with David and Jean YRUNDQEHOLHYHWKHKQEHDEOHWRWUD from Vancouver and most of our other contemporaries have passed on. My best memories of SGS are of the sixth form and I was saddened when that disappeared from Tanfield. However, I wish good fortune on the celebrations and hope the weather has changed for the better. Keep up the good work.

Best wishes

Eric Rainbow (1945-52)

Jim Robson Remembers

My name is James Robson and I attended Stanley Grammar School from 1950 until 1955. It was a very happy time. Introducing me to various aspects of life that have helped me in the following years. I remember quite a few of the teachers, especially the woodwork teacher who I think was called Bob Chapman, and (It was Mr Harrison, Jim. -Editor.) I still have to this day a bedside table I made under his supervision. I was fourteen years old at the time, It is a constant reminder of my stay at SGS. A form teacher at one time was a Miss Mortimer, who liked to be called Mistress Mortimer, a real dour Scottish lady, but was the epitome of a Mathematics teacher, she was brilliant. and got me through my GCE exam, The art teacher. one Joe Binks was forever at loggerheads with quite a few of the class, but I found him excellent at his job. He was another teacher that got me through the GCEs. The whole five years was a great experience and provided a sounding board for later life. Unfortunately I lost contact with all the friends I made whilst there, because I joined the RAF straight from school, spending the next fourteen years in uniform. I was however constantly singing the School Song and have tried to emulate its meaning.

I have inserted a photo of my table that has weathered the passage of time. Good luck with your book project.

Jim Robson

My Years at Stanley Grammar, and After

I have recently been made aware of the Tanfield Association newsletter by my sister Rosalyn (she lives in Durham) who mailed me four issues of the newsletter that her friend Eleanor Arnold had given her. I was delighted to read some of the stories that were published about Stanley Grammar School and would like to reminisce briefly about some of my memories about SGS and its effect on my life since graduating from the school.

The Haggett family moved from Newark-on-Trent to Annfield Plain in 1952 because of our father's employment at Ransome and Marles new factory at Greencroft. I had been successfully attending Magnus Grammar School in Newark for four years so I entered 5th year in the Fall at SGS in 1952. I completed the 5th form and both 6th forms with 4 A-level passes at the school certificate exams.

I remember some of our teachers, some with admiration and others with less endearing feelings. For example, Mr. Scott, who taught us chemistry, was unique in his approach to keep our attention during his classes. Mr. Livesey was a real inspiration, and Mr. Gee gave us encouragement to succeed. I felt intimidated by Dr Sharp, and it was rumoured that he was able to watch us through reflections in his spectacles while he was writing on the blackboard!

I was fortunate enough to play soccer for the school along with some very talented players like Tony Atkinson, Keith Marshall, George Morton, Alan Westwater, Doug Arnold and others whose names I don't remember. In addition, I participated in cricket and athletics at SGS, and I also played soccer for Annfield Plain Juniors and had some outings with the senior team.

In 1955 I entered Kings College in Newcastle (then a part of Durham University) and received a first in Chemistry in 1958 (thanks Mr. Scott!), and continued for a Ph.D. in physical chemistry at Kings in 1961. Again, soccer was a significant part of my life at university, playing for Kings College and Durham University.

In December 1958, I married Jane Stoker, who lived in Catchgate, at the small church which no longer exists in Greencroft.

After getting my Ph.D., I was awarded a Fulbright scholarship in September 1961 and Jane and I spent fifteen enjoyable months in Rhode Island where I carried out post doctoral research at Brown University with Prof. J. O. Edwards. We sailed from Southampton to New York on the SS United States and returned on the Queen Mary. What an experience for a young naïve couple!

On returning to England, I was employed in 1963-64 at Kings as a research associate in the chemistry department with Dr. Peter Jones. In December 1964 we emigrated to Canada where I took up a research position with Dow Chemical at their labs in Sarnia, Ontario. Our two daughters, Lynn and Tracy, were born in Sarnia in 1966 and 1968 respectively, and we now have four grandchildren from them. I played soccer for some years after arriving in Canada and when that became too strenuous I tried golf but it was too slow for me, taking four hours or more to play a round. So I switched to tennis and am still playing twice a week, only doubles though!

In 1968 I took up a chemistry professor's position at a new college that had just been started in Sarnia, and taught various chemistry courses. In 1978-79, I took a one-year sabbatical leave to return to Kings (then Newcastle University) to take a Masters degree in Occupational Hygiene under the guidance of Dr. John Steel. The college in Sarnia had started a program in this field. During that year in England, Jane and our two daughters and myself lived in a rented house in Whickham, the two girls attending a school there.

For a month in 1991 and two months in 1992, I was in Salvador, Brazil, helping to set up a physical chemistry course for a new college there.

I retired from the college in Sarnia in 1996 but continued to do some consultant work for the Canadian Department of National Defence, presenting a 4-day course on Occupational Health at various bases across Canada. And in 1998 I spent 4 months as a consultant in Islamabad, Pakistan putting together a program on Occupational Health and Safety for presentation in the polytechnics and colleges in the country.

In 2005, Jane and I moved from Sarnia to the city of Guelph to be closer to our daughters and grandchildren, all of whom live here. I am now fully retired and live by myself as, sadly, Jane has Alzheimer's and lives in a long-term care home in Guelph.

The three years that I spent at SGS from 1952 to 1955 were very important to me in establishing a sound educational basis on which to build over the next many years of my life. My two daughters have both graduated from university, and my granddaughter starts university in September.

I look back fondly on my time at SGS and would dearly like to hear from others who were at SGS during the same three years, 1952-55.

Max Haggett

P.S. I vaguely remember that a P.E. teacher (whose name I don't remember) at SGS either broke a leg when there was a kickback on a motor bike he was trying to start or he broke an arm from a kickback of the crank of a car he was trying to start. Does anyone remember this or am I dreaming it?

Hello Ted

I read the lists of nicknames with interest and remember pupils calling Mr Hewitt "The Pink Panther", no doubt because of his complexion. Also, Norman Williams was "Tufty" because of his little beard.

Two stories about Norman stick in my mind. They date back to the 70s when I was a member of staff. The first concerns playing the piano in assembly; he often reached the piano on the stage just as the hymn was announced, and he used to play super pieces for going out. One morning he played the rousing Sousa march used in the Monty Python film. How we loved walking out to this. However, later that day Norman told us that he'd been summoned to Mr McKie's office to explain himself. The Head was not pleased to say the least, and quizzed Norman about the Monty Python tune. Norman, being an extremely wise man pleaded ignorance to Monty Python & maintained that it was just a Sousa march!!

Despite his wonderful musical ability, Norman taught History at Tanfield & Doris, his wife told me one day that he had no formal qualifications in music.

The next story is just a snippet from his leaving speech which has always stuck in my mind. He said "I left university with a double honours degree and I'm leaving here, having reached the dizzy heights of a scale 2". Strange isn't it, the things we remember.

You might be able to use this, Ted, but if not, just print it out, make it into an aeroplane and fly it out of the window.

Amy Bilton

From Mark Hodgson

Thanks for my 1st newsletter, but in future feel free to email me an electric copy, every effort needs to be made to reduce costs, only wish that I could see previous issues.

I notice you remember fondly the Christmas productions which you co produced with Mr Dawson, I have a photo somewhere (probably need to re photograph it) of you both at a post production celebration. I was part of the production in 1979, aptly named 'ALAD IN STANLEY' I also have a poor photo from the production 'CINDY' which had a tribute mock band of Showaddywaddy, Two of the players who also played main parts in the production, (Buttons, and can't remember the other characters name), were Andrew Nicholson and Geoff Hinds; My sister Lyn also took part.

Grease Tribute (I'm front right)

John Hodgson & David Robson

Showaddywaddy (Geoff Hinds centre right Andrew Nicholson right)

My nickname for my English teacher Mrs Saunders was little Mary

Mark Hodgson BSc. SR Para.

Tanfield 1974-1980

6th Form Pantos

Some photos taken December 1980 for the production 'A Lad in Stanley'.

In the photos are Margaret Watson, Neil Winship, Lyndsey McGregor, Doug Robson, and Janet Bonnard.
There is also a take on the group 'Bad Manners'. - *Mark Hodgson*

I have a twin brother, John:

~~THE PHOTO OVERLEAF~~

The photo overleaf was the school cross country team 1979-80. You may recognise one of the senior runners as being Barry Venison who played for Sunderland, Newcastle, and Liverpool, and gained a full England cap.

Mark Hodgson

Hello Ted

I've just finished reading Newsletter 24, and many memories of my time at Tanfield have been stirred.

It was fascinating to read Brian Corbett's letter: He was my French teacher as well as my form tutor in the 2nd year (Year 8 for the younger readers!!). A favourite reply of his when it was pointed out he had made a mistake was, "Just testing".

Other memories were evoked when you made reference to the school pantomime, Cindy '75. I was one of the many 6th formers who contributed to its production, and we all had the time of our lives. I can remember Liz Crisp really hamming it up as one of the ugly sisters, wearing steel toe-capped boots, and an outrageous and hideous illuminated wig which she referred to as "the current fashion".

Incidentally, I can also recall doing a barbershop quartet during one of the intervals, along with Iain Thompson and two male members of staff, whose names embarrassingly escape me. Perhaps you, or other association members could jog my memory! Belated apologies to anyone in the audience whose hearing may have been damaged!!!

As you know, I returned to Tanfield April 2009 as a teacher of Maths, so I think I can refer to myself as an old boy in every sense of the word. Indeed, Tanfield School has played a major part in the rest of my family's life too. I am the youngest of five siblings who all attended, a fact of which my parents were extremely proud. For the record, Sheila Reay (1951 - 1956), Marian Reay (1954 - 1961), Margaret Reay (1957 - 1962), Billy Reay (1967 - 1974), and yours truly (1970 - 1977).

I look forward to seeing you again soon

Kindest regards,

Alan Reay

Dear Ted

Thank you for Issue 24. I was particularly interested in the article on Amy Thompson who taught French during my time at S.G.S.

Miss Thompson and my father were childhood friends (or acquaintances) as her father ran the Stanley Swimming Club in which my father was an enthusiastic member. Hence she took an interest in my progress (or lack of it!) in learning the language.

My competence (or lack of it!) was shown in my O level oral exam when the examiner, in the presence of Amy, asked me how many brothers and sisters I had. Unfortunately, I thought that she asked me how many pupils were in my class. "Trente" was my reply which was followed by a shriek of "trente", "trente" and a look of surprise from Miss T. Rather flummoxed, I thought that I must have miscounted so I said "trente et une" which was not the expected reply.

Needless to say, I failed the oral and, no doubt, Amy reflected on the incompetence of the son of her one-time friend.

George Fraser

Hello Ted

Many thanks for the latest edition of the Tanfield Newsletter. As always it is an interesting and entertaining read. The feature on teachers' nicknames is particularly interesting. It's amazing how many names have not been forgotten. It did occur to me, however, that a name I remember seems to be missing. It was that of our biology teacher. He was at SGS during my time or part of it (1952-53). His name, I think, was Robertson but we all referred to him as "Fish man." I have no idea how that came about. I wonder if anyone else remembers this; or have I got it wrong?

With every good wish.

Peter Atkinson

Dear Ted

Many thanks for the Newsletter. Many memories there.

Best wishes,

Jack Jeffery

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