

The Peter Kaye Drama Group 1961

I don't think any of us were aware in 1961 that we were treading boards at HGS that had already been trodden when we were three or four years old! This account in the 1948 Old Hilmian Magazine, while recounting some 1940's lukewarm support which was never in evidence with our group, nevertheless proves that our efforts were nothing new!

Dramatic Society

In January 1947 the above Society once again came into being. Almost immediately a play was chosen - "Love from a Stranger". Though the response was not as it should have been, the few who showed an interest were keen and willing. After many rehearsals however, the play was deemed to be unsuitable and it wasn't until September 1947 that the production of "Happy Days", a farce in three acts, was begun. A great deal of hard work was put into this play and it was eventually presented on November 26th, 27th and 29th 1947. Though it was by no means a masterpiece of great acting it was nevertheless a success socially and financially. An early start was once more made for the next production, but again there was a great deal of time lost while a play was chosen. At last it was decided to produce another play by Wilfred Massey - "Such Things Happen." However, holidays and the usual lack of co-operation resulted in the play being put off. The few remaining members are still very keen to produce a play and it is hoped that more people will come forward to take part in or help with a further production.

J.A. Halsall (Hon. Secretary)

The Drama Club 1961



This year has seen the formation of a new club, "The Drama Club", which is open to all members of the Lower Sixth. Briefly the aim of the club is to present a play throughout the district for various clubs and charitable organisations. Obvious financial difficulties have been overcome by offering to perform for those who could provide us with a hall and who would be willing to pay the royalties for the play itself. The play chosen was "Happy Days", a farce by Wilfred Massey, and rehearsals were under way throughout the Summer Term. The actual performances were given during late June and early July. It is hoped that future Sixth Formers will continue this hard but rewarding work, and that eventually the club will become a permanent feature of the School.

In conclusion, on behalf of the members, I would like to thank the Headmaster and Mr. Reed for their advice and guidance and also all other members of staff who have so willingly given up their time to help and encourage us.

Peter Kaye, L6A (Talbot)



HGS Drama Club 1961 Happy Days Cast

Back Row L-R: Wray Vamplew, Godfrey Wass, Pete Dickens, Pete Kaye, Tony Hince

Middle Row L-R: Ellen Toulson, Carol Johns, Joan Laycock, Susan Marsh

Front Row L-R: Margaret Curran, Pat Cockburn, Sheila Kelsall

Crucial to the whole organisation was Fran Harrison for transporting all our props and costumes. Thanks, Fran!

The Performances of the Play took place in 1961:-

Tues 20 June	Fitzwilliam
Sat 24 June	Shafton
Mon 26 June	Goldthorpe
Thurs 29 June	Rossington
Fri 30 June	Ryhill



Drama Club presents Happy Days

About three months ago, a sixth form pupil at Hemsworth Grammar School, had the idea of forming a Drama Club among members of the Lower Sixth to perform plays for various charities and churches in the area. He got together a group of Sixth Form pupils and told them of his idea which they liked immediately, and so the Hemsworth Drama club was formed. They chose a play and started rehearsals and on Tuesday night they gave the first performance of "Happy Days", an hilarious comedy by William Massey, at the Church Hall, Fitzwilliam in aid of Kinsley Parish Church and Youth Club. The play tells the story of Reginald Blougham, a young man who, under his mother's will has a monthly allowance so long as he does some kind of work. To overcome the difficulty of work, Reginald writes occasionally, although not very profitably. Reginald's allowance is looked after by his uncle, Bagshot Pilkington, who is anxious for him to marry a sausage magnate's daughter. Reginald, however, has his own ideas about matrimony and intends to marry Leslie Royston. Of course, Uncle Bagshot is not pleased about this, but after many ups and downs and arguments, everything, as is to be expected, turns out well.

Peter Kaye, in the part of Reginald Blougham (pronounced "Bloom"), takes the heaviest burden in the play and is the mainstay behind the production. He portrays the unfortunate young man with a professional ease which is so rarely seen on the amateur stage. The part of his uncle is convincingly played by Peter Dickens. Patricia Cockburn is a charming fiancée. Margaret Curran, as Ruth Eltringham, Wray Vamplew as Jimmy Harbottle and Sheila Kelsall as Twinky Farrell are delightfully true to life. Carol Johns plays the part of Mrs. Lash, the daily help, and gives a convincing performance. Other parts are played by Joan Laycock (Miss Twinge), Susan Marsh (Miss Cattermole), Ellen Toulson (Cordelia B. Parkenstalker) and Anthony HInce (Ramshaw Skentlebury), all of the Daily Comet. Responsible for the production were Godfrey Wass and Peter Kaye. All the costumes, make up, lighting and scenery were arranged by members of the Drama Club.

Other performances of the play are to be given tomorrow (Saturday) at the Methodist Hall, Shafton (in aid of the Shafton Darby and Joan Club);

June 26th at the Church Hall, Goldthorpe (in aid of the Goldthorpe Old Age Pensioners);

June 29th at the Welfare Hall, Rossington (in aid of the Rossington Guild of Cripples);

June 30th at the Church Hall, Ryhill (in aid of Ryhill Parish Church);

July 4th at the Miners' Institute, Moorthorpe (in aid of the South Kirkby Spastic Group) and July 11th at the Grammar School, Hemsworth. The proceeds from the last performance will go towards expenses of the club and to entertaining a group of children from the Hemsworth Children's Home. The remainder will be given to the Save the Children Fund.

A newspaper clipping dated June 24th 1961 has come to light. It reads as follows:

GRAMMAR SCHOOL DRAMA CLUB – GOOD START AT HEMSWORTH

The dream of a Hemsworth Grammar School Sixth former Peter Kaye to form a drama club at the school to perform for charity came true on Tuesday, when the club broke the ice with a production of "Happy Days" at the Church Hall, Fitzwilliam. The proceeds were in aid of Kinsley Parish Church and the Church Youth Club. Peter, who lives at Brierley, put forward his idea to several classmates and the response was so good that the Hemsworth Drama Club has been born. The aim of the club is to run a series of one-night productions throughout the district and give the proceeds to local charitable organisations such as the Darby and Joan clubs, spastics and old age pensioners. The group decided on a comedy for their first attempt and Wilfred Massey's "Happy Days" proved a hilarious success at Kinsley. It is the story of a rich young man, who as well as working, receives a substantial allowance from his mother's will, and the tussle he has with his uncle in trying to get permission to marry. Peter Kaye sets a shining example as the young man, while his uncle is convincingly portrayed by Peter Dickens, with Patricia Cockburn a charming fiancée. Other parts are played by Margaret Curran, Wray Vamplew, Sheila Kelsall, Carol Johns, Joan Laycock, Susan Marsh, Ellen Toulson and Anthony Hince. The producers were Peter Kaye and Godfrey Wass.



Sheila Kelsall

I seem to remember that the Headmaster only allowed the formation of the Drama Club on the understanding that it would not continue beyond our Lower 6th year, as we all had A level exams to take the following year, and of course they took precedence.