

1. 1958 3A Signatures



We collected some autographs of classmates during the last week of being in 3A, and I have the signatures of the following: Doreen Tyrrell, Patricia Lockett, Christine Whittaker, Pat Whitehall, Patricia Stollard, Valerie Warwick, Helena Gascoigne, Catherine Dooley, Patricia Snow, Joane Foster, Margaret Birkin, Susan Marsh, Pat Cockburn, John Colley, Ron Holland, Gordon Bond, Frank Picken, Mick Harrison, Godfrey Wass, Wray Vamplew, W. A. (Tony) Hince, Peter Kaye, Len Linsey, Albert Parkin, K.J. (Keith) Gaaney, David Hartley, DH (Dave) Thorpe, Robert Taylor, and as a final addition some humorist wrote Fred Bloggins!

I write these out for you as they are the definitive spellings of the names, being recorded by the children themselves. I don't know why you're not there (Looks like I missed out again. Webmaster), or how this list compares with the photo. Only 28 signatures here. The staff who taught us that year

included:

KB (Ken) Sale (Biology);
 RG Hodson (History);
 Olive Walker (PE);
 JB Kennedy (English);
 Miss M Sharpe (Maths)
 Sheila

2. Miss (Ms, Mrs) Smith 1955-56 Bob Taylor asks.....



I can remember Miss/Mrs Smith in the 1st Form (1955/56). She taught maths, but she seemed to "disappear" after that year. She had bleach-blonde hair and a bun at the back. Can anyone remember what happened to her?

Bob Taylor

Just so that Robert Taylor doesn't think he imagined the 'other' Miss Smith, I remember her also, although she was not one of 1b's teachers. She was a big lady, with, as he says, blonde hair which she wore in a bun. She had a straight fringe, and wore stiletto heels and straight black skirts. I don't recall seeing her after our 1st year, but she definitely taught our 1st year, as I remember her in and around the 1st form block. Was Maths her subject?

Sheila

3. Pig sties! What pig sties?



Dear Dave,

Concerning Pig Sties. I remember them. They were "uninhabited", and had been for some time. They were built of yellow sandstone blocks standing about four feet high, and situated about fifty yards away diagonally from the Dining Hall. Those wooden stairs I mentioned a while ago near the milk crates were part of the structure in that playground which included the Lost Property office (wooden shed), and a classroom at the top of those stairs where we had a needlework lesson in the 2nd year, and RK lessons with Mr. Hassall in the 6th form. The playground sloped down towards the pig sties which stood at the lower end of this 'block', apart from it by about six feet. They formed the lower boundary at the end of the garden of Mr. Leary, our school caretaker. Remember, his house was near the bottom of the steps which led up to the changing rooms of the Gym? You could also reach the pig sties from the bottom end of the main Boy's playground.

Terry McCroakam, a pupil and later a teacher at HGS, is shown above.



It was fascinating to read the correspondence about the pigsties. I'm sure I speak for all my fellow pupils in the Celts class of 1958-59 when I say that the smells coming from the direction of the pigsties were very real! I seem to remember that our classroom was even nearer than the Dog 'Ole!

Dave Biggs

The reason for the name "**Dog 'Ole**" - it was the drawing office and had D O above the door for years. The place was used to train RAF technicians during WW11.

Terry McCroakam



Dog Ole. This was a classroom at the bottom of the playground just below the woodwork shop. The **pig sties** were next door. During my 4th year this was our classroom and before assembly we were allowed to copy homework (with a few corrections / mistakes) from the girls. If they didn't agree then they went into the pig sty. I seem to recall Mr Lock was our form master.

Colin Richardson

4. What we had.



Dear Dave,

I came across this little gem in a green Exercise Book with a linen spine. The entries at the back list height and weight twice a year as taken by the PE teacher, which in my case was Miss Parkin 1955 and 56. She married and became Mrs Blatherwick for 1957, and by the end of 1957 Olive Walker had taken over until 1959. Miss Musgrave then made the rest of the entries until I left in 1962. There was also a House record on this back page, filled in for the whole of my HGS school life by the Holgate teacher - Miss Kath Ward. It listed involvement in Music Competitions, House Dramatics, Swimming(!), Netball, Hockey, Tennis, Athletics, House Relay Team, and added to these, in the 6th year House Vice-Captain, 7th year House Captain. How did we ever have time for lessons! These activities which we took so much for granted are now paraded as something special in today's educational scene. Such diversity of opportunity was the norm for us, and included after-school clubs,

Plays, Music Competitions, Film Society, Esperanto, Chess, a Bridge Club, the Student Christian Movement, and an annual London visit by a small group of pupils for the Conference of the Council for World Citizenship. We were entertained by the Staff Play and the Music Concert. We were stretched by the team games of Hockey, Tennis, Rugby, Netball, Rounders, and Cricket, where progress was rewarded with team colours. We could shine as individuals on the athletic field, in a debate in the lecture theatre or musically on the stage in the main hall. Form prizes were awarded annually during Speech Day at the Hippodrome to those who shone academically. Some wrote poetry, others produced the School Magazine. In 1961 a French Exhibition was staged in the library by the 4th form, and there was a Drama Club of lower 6th students which toured a production around the area in aid of various charities. I have probably missed something, other than the Fives court, but even from this ad hoc remembrance, one can see that the HGS philosophy was to equip its pupils to get the most out of life when they left, and to give them a taste of things other than those at which they were naturally gifted.

Those people we all met at HGS came into our lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime. Any way you look at it - it was a memorable time for everyone, and this site celebrates it.

Sheila Kelsall



Hi Dave,

The attached file carries some very rosy memories. When I write about HGS, I just cannot remain objective. That school was the single, most important feature in shaping what I became in so many ways. What is more, my regard for it and its place in an educational era have been enhanced by time not diminished. The awful thing is that by the time I became an adult and had my own children, I had a deep-rooted conviction that the avante garde educationalists were wrecking a precious system. Nothing has changed that view and I still recall the pain I felt as my kids had to attend a Comprehensive of 1200/1300 pupils in the early 1970's. You see, I know what a desert their years there would be whilst my own secondary education had been spent in a glorious garden. How sad that forty years went by before Governments seem to be trying to resurrect something that sounds like the same kind of system though under a different, less socially provocative set of titles. Anyway, I hope you like my notes and that they provoke others to dig out their own fond memories of the remarkable people who taught us.

Geoff Graham

5. Music and Dancing in the Main Hall

Mr. Tate, former pupil and Physical Education teacher is shown here.



I used to practice on the grand piano on the stage in the Main Hall every lunchtime during my final year, apart from on rainy days when we all danced there --- American Patrol?. I never officially asked

permission, I just sneaked in there one day and started playing my scales. The stage curtains were closed, and the 'legs' (side curtains) came in and around me so that I could imagine that the sound stayed within the area. Of course, someone in authority must have heard my hammering out Beethoven Sonatas and Chopin Waltzes but I was never asked to stop, nor sent away, and that suited me fine. I don't think I would have gained my Associate Exam in that final year without those practice opportunities. My appreciation of HGS and its staff comes straight from the heart.

Sheila

I agree with you. The staff were generally a dedicated group. I was never artistic in the slightest. With regard to sport, I can recall Les Tate and the rugby helpers such as George Pacy and Ken Sale spending long hours coaching us and then taking us to all the away matches. When we played in the Ilkley Sevens, Les Tate would often train us twice per day. We were really fit. If we ever complained of being tired during training, Les would suggest that we needed to be fitter and make us do "two laps" of the First Team pitch. He maintained good discipline and morale in the team. I think any of the First Team players from that era (late 50s – early 60s) will remember the dreaded words "TWO LAPS!".

During my last year, I can remember being allowed to use the school, its grounds and its facilities as I wished. Especially was this so with regard to athletics. Most summer evenings would see me staying at school until quite late trying to improve at the Shot. I would use the playground by the end of the gym and throw towards the trees. I had to make a reasonable distance or I would have pounded the concrete kerb to bits with the 12lb shot. It wasn't me that eventually broke the kerb! It always seemed to be sunny and quiet. I would then walk through the beautiful school grounds down into Hemsworth, often hearing the sound of St. Helen's Church bells as they called out the time.

Dave McKenzie

6. The Lecture Theatre and the School Shield



Dear Dave,

I'm sure some of the visitors to the site will remember attending the Staff Play -"Hobson's Choice". We were 2nd formers. Also that year the School Play was Bernard Shaw's "Arms and the Man". During 1957 the lecture theatre was opened, with its tiered rows of seats. Its entrance was a door at the end of the Science Block, which one passed on the way to the 'new' Gym. In the Sports photo of 1960 we can see a fair bit of the Science Block from the playing- fields side. I have a copy of "Hemsworth in History" by Mr Bulley. Its content is the history of Hemsworth and district from the Middle Ages. There is very little specifically about the Grammar School itself. There is a chapter on the Holgate Grammar School. That was not situated at HGS, but at today's RC Church in Hemsworth (if it is still there). The school shield was designed by Mr W J Leonard (**photo**), who also designed the House Shields which hung in the Hall. In his obituary for Mr Leonard in 1962, Mr. Hamilton wrote, "The school shield was designed by him (Mr Leonard). He did the necessary research, he did the preliminary sketches and generally pushed the job along to its completion".

Sheila



Dear Dave,

I was told that the insignia on the shield were: Cross Keys of the County, Yorkshire Rose and the Bull's heads were from the coat of arms of the Holgate Family who had owned the land on which the Hall was built. The Yew tree is still in Hemsworth Church yard. It was traditional to plant one in the churchyard to keep away witches, and in the Middle Ages it was the law that men had to practice their archery, and they would make bows from the yew tree in the churchyard after attending services on a Sunday. This is what made the English Archers so good at the Battle of Agincourt!

Christine Slater



School Magazine 1953

"For nearly thirty years the school has used the White Rose of Yorkshire as its badge. For some time, however, it has been felt that we should have something more personal and individualistic for our shield. The new shield incorporates the crossed keys of St. Peter as used by Robert Holgate, Archbishop of York, who founded the original school in Hemsworth in 1546; the bend and bulls' heads of Archbishop Holgate's personal armorial bearings, and the White Rose of Yorkshire. In heraldic terms the shield is described as follows:-

A shield in tierce: per pale, per chevron.

Tierce dexter chief: Gules; Two keys crossed, argent.

Tierce sinister chief: Or; A bend between two bulls' heads couped, sable.

Tierce base: Azure, A rose, argent.2

Elaine Picken

7. The Loss of a Grammar School



Does anyone have thoughts about the loss of our Grammar School in the late 1960s? The creation of a new school must have meant that the House System and the Honours Boards had to go. I may be old-fashioned, but I valued those as a link with the past of HGS. People's achievements should not be discarded in such a way. Too late, of course. At my present sports club there are honours boards going back to the 19th century. They are a permanent reminder of those past achievements. I suppose change is inevitable.

Dave McKenzie

8. How was your first day?

On my very first assembly in 1955, Mr. Walker was on the stage in his teaching gown as we entered the Hall (gym). That first day was quite an experience. HGS seemed immense and the Prefects were huge. They stood at the side of the Hall while we sat at the front on the floor. The first year boys all wore short trousers. Hard to imagine that today. Who remembers buying ice lollies from the New Block Tuck Shop and being chased by wasps near the litter basket?

Mac



Hello David,

You asked about my thoughts of Hemsworth Grammar School. My most vivid memory is actually my very first day. I won a transfer scholarship from Kinsley Secondary School and commenced my years at Hemsworth Grammar School in January 1956. I walked through the enormous Green Gate into massive grounds that seemed to go on forever. As I walked tentatively up the drive towards the huge school building, my feelings were a mixture of pride and absolute panic. I felt so alone, and very conspicuous in my brand new school uniform. Nearing the top of the drive, I saw a young girl who looked as anxious as I was, dressed immaculately, also in a new school uniform. I can't remember now who was the first to speak, but we soon struck up a conversation and walked into school, "two new girls" together. That young girl was Ruth Ashley from Upton.

Bye for now,

Jean Tallet

PS --- Yes I do remember buying ice lollies from the New Block Tuck Shop!



Assemblies in the school hall call back some vivid memories. Standing there on the first day of each new school year waiting for your classlist to be read out and then departing with your classmates. On my very first day at the school I had to sit there through all the 700 or so names and was one of 3 small girls left over after everyone else had departed. I wonder if Jill Andrews and Marcia Gunhouse are out there somewhere as they were the other 2 girls. We were underage entries to the school and had not been allocated to forms. A quick glance at the numbers on the lists and Mr Hamilton allocated us to 1C. This was a stroke of luck for me as 1C's form room was room 3 (behind the head's study) and it was lovely to be in one of the older parts of the building in that first year.

Janet Thorley



Dave,

I remember with some clarity my first day at school. It was a custom in those days (certainly in the South Elmsall area) for your parents to arrange with the parents of an established student, for their offspring to act as your minder on day one. My minder was Sid T. who, having escorted me from the bus stop in Moorthorpe to the school playground, abandoned me with the words 'Now off you go and look after yourself.' In the best traditions of H.G.S., I repeated the scenario the following year when I acted as minder for Bill Annabel.

Keith Twigg



Speaking of being a 'sprog' and seeing the Salvete and Valette lists on the website for the first time in years reminded me of my first morning at Hemsworth. The girls were always referred to by their Christian names and surname whereas the lads were always referred to only by their surnames. Well I'd never experienced that before and this little incident goes to show how we think the world revolves around ourselves especially when you're only 11. We were all assembled in the Dining Hall opposite the 1st year block and Mr Collette was 'marching' up and down, gown flowing and making a speech. I'd sort of drifted off and not really paying much attention as it was all going over my head. I believe he must have been telling us about the great sporting traditions of HGS. Suddenly he referred to the fact that Kenny Johnson had been picked to captain the England Schoolboy Rugby Union team, except his words were "...and Johnson has been picked to captain England at rugby..." That woke me up. I must have gone white with fear and I nearly fell off my seat in panic thinking "I don't want to captain England at rugby I've only just got here..." Of course I daren't tell anybody about this but was

mighty relieved to discover that he actually meant Kenny Johnson and not me.

Fred Johnson

9. Lines



Did you ever have to do "Lines"? Do you remember trying to tie three pencils together so that you could write three-at-a-time? The 'default' sentence was the first School Rule: "Any offence against common sense is an offence against school rules". Does anyone remember, or have a copy of the rest of the school rules? Did any others exist? Was the rule that Prefects could demand Lines, but not Asst. Prefects? I seem to recall that I mentioned that Prefects could give pupils lines to write, and wondered what they could be awarded for. Well... I've since thought of 5 occasions.

1. *Not wearing your hat/cap on the way to/from school.*
2. *Talking during Assembly. (The Prefs stood along the side of the Hall to watch the lines of younger forms.)*
3. *Running/ fighting in the corridors.*
4. *Going into or staying within a classroom at break or dinnertime without permission.*
5. *Messing about in the Dining Hall during the queuing for or eating of the meal.*

There were only one? or two? Prefects on duty in the Dining Hall and when one side of the line of pupils had all finished either first or second course, the prefect would indicate when to rise and either collect the pudding, or stack the pudding plate on the trolley on wheels and exit, or should I say exeunt the Hall.

Sheila Kelsall



Frank Poskett

Hi Dave,

You have an article on lines that brought back memories. Do you remember how you could bind three pencils together with those coloured elastic bands (used for catapults) and write three rows of lines together. Or get a mate to do a couple of pages and slip them in the middle hoping the teacher would not find them. I was once found out because the writing was so obviously different. When asked why, I said that my right hand was getting tired and so had done some with my left hand! I remember once trying to do a couple of pages of lines in an English Literature class. We were debating *The Merchant of Venice* that term. (Our first choice, the works of D H Lawrence, were not on the reading list that year). "What are you doing Poskett?" startled me. I looked up and could see no one else had a book open, never mind a pen in their hands "Taking notes, sir." I replied. Spike Wilson slowly turned round and gave me a look of bewilderment and said "NOTES"?

Dave,

I recall quite clearly that Mr. Leonard would administer lines with a boring regularity to pupils despite their protestations of innocence ("It wasn't me, Sir."). His favourite saying was: 'A wise old owl sat on an oak. The more he heard the less he spoke. The less he spoke the more he heard. Wasn't he a wise old bird?' I was that innocent child!!!

Regards,

Keith Twigg

10. Rose Hips



When we were in the lower forms I remember Miss Metcalfe (*photo above*) made a request for the children of HGS to collect Rose Hips and bring them to the Domestic Science room for weighing. We were given a few pence per pound for them, and they were to be used in the making of Rose Hip Syrup. It was obviously a seasonal activity, during late September/October, and I recall my friends used to come over to Shafton during the October half-term holiday, and together we would go into the hedgerows down the "Blackety" (a local footpath through fields) with my Mum's old shopping bag or an old pot basin, and reach up to harvest the crop. We did take gloves to protect our hands from the thorns, but they were made of wool, and were soon discarded because they slowed up the procedure by snagging themselves in the bushes. We arrived home with scratched arms, faces and hands, but the anticipation of earning our own coppers alleviated the pain. That, and Germolene! Usually the gloves had been lost, and we were saying how we would remember for next year where the most heavily-laden bushes were. At the end of the collection season, the Headmaster used to announce in Assembly the total weight of hips collected. I wonder does anyone else remember this?

Sheila

Definitely! It was an annual event in which many enjoyed taking part. Didn't we also collect for the Save the Children Fund and Sue Ryder Homes?

Dave McKenzie