

1. A memory of Mr. Lock



Hello Dave,

I was looking at the site yesterday evening and a picture came into my mind of Mr Lock speaking to us all, in morning assembly, with regard to his impending retirement and thanking us for the presents he had received. I remember him being highly amused at a present of an ashtray in the form of a human skull! He even commented on whether the purchasers had thought there may be a likeness.

Regards,

John Robinson

2. The Timetable



I had a long conversation with Miss Ward (May 2002). During that conversation she explained that the HGS timetable was constructed by Mr. Collette and herself usually off-site at Mr. Collette's home. Obviously it was put together manually "fitting people in". This took quite a time to do especially as the school became larger. Hopefully Miss. Ward will be sending some memorabilia to the site for publication - e.g. staff photos and plays etc. I am sure that the teacher's view will be fascinating. Miss Ward worked at HGS from 1948 to 1968 and will have seen considerable change within the pupil population. She will also have observed the changeover from HGS to HHS.

Dave McKenzie

3. Thoughts and Hindsight



I have just been listening to a radio programme which mentioned the observation that in instances where the education system of a country does not take account of the development of inter-personal skills and the spiritual and moral guidance of young people, then extreme philosophies and sects such as the one in Japan which perpetrated the poisoning of air in the subway in Tokyo will almost inevitably thrive. In that case, the acquiring and reproducing of large amounts of data in order for pupils to pass exams failed to take account of the "whole" personality of a child. This created a void which could be easily filled by belonging to organisations which engender a sense of belonging and give a structured framework of (reprehensible) behaviour absent in their members' early childhood development. This must also have relevance to the terrorism of today.

As I re-examine the records of my schooldays at HGS, I can't help noting the number of times I see the thanks of team captains for the support and encouragement of differing members of staff who gave their time freely to advise and coach the inexperienced but enthusiastic participants in Sports. Other areas of encouragement included Drama, Travels Abroad, Debating and Music. I don't maintain that those who did not participate in these activities were in danger of becoming Moonies or the like, but everyone at School was surrounded by the philosophy of caring about things other than learning facts in order to reproduce them for exams. Each person seemed to take on board what they would or could, and I suppose we can only appreciate how much was on offer with the benefit of hindsight.

Sheila

4. Sewing and Miss Fleming

I remember Miss Fleming. She taught us Needlework in the wooden hut up the stairs by the milk crates. She had beautiful hands and nails, and a gentle manner. We made cotton skirts by gathering one edge of the fabric and tucking it into a waistband measured to fit. We worked a buttonhole and sewed on a button to fasten the waistband, and then we sewed the hem by hand. As we approached the end of term, it had become obvious to me that I would not finish my skirt in the few lessons remaining. Bear in mind this was the first wearable garment that any of us had attempted to make for ourselves, and we were only second-formers. We handed our unfinished skirts in at the end of each lesson, so we couldn't take them home and work on them without asking specially. I can't remember a sewing machine in that classroom, so we must have done all the sewing by hand. During the final

Needlework lesson of the term, when I collected my skirt from her, I saw that Miss Fleming had completed my buttonhole for me, sewed on my button, and just left me with enough hemming to do in the lesson so that all would be finished on time. Such kindness! Since then I have earned a living with a sewing machine or two.

Sheila

5. Staff Plays



How many secondary schools nowadays present an annual Staff Play? Attending a Staff Play allowed the pupils of HGS and their families to see another side to the personalities of members of Staff. It was an enrichment of our education, both socially and personally, and was given to us as a result of the Staff's unpaid effort. We were lucky!

Sheila Kelsall

6. Posture Stripes



I wonder whether anyone will remember "Posture Stripes", which contrary to what we would assume from the word "stripe" was actually an award given by the PE Department to any girl who demonstrated good posture by "walking tall". It was a strip of red material, about 1 inch by 1/2 inch which was attached (in roughly the same place as a soldier's medals) to a girl's gymslip, not permanently, and could be transferred to Summer uniform if required. I have no recollection of these myself, and I started at HGS in 1955, but shortly before that, the stripes were still being awarded. Does anyone remember them?

Sheila

The photo is of Joan May in 1952. The Posture Stripe is clearly visible next to the House badge.

7. One of the unsung heroes

I haven't seen any reference to Mr. Leary in our acknowledgements of the people who kept the School ticking over well, but his work, although largely unseen by most of us, must have been a constant battle with litter, lost property and the responsibility of making sure all those windows and doors were closed and locked. Just imagine the mess to be cleared away after a School Dance or a Sports Day! The use of the school did not end at the last bell. After-school clubs, Play and Choir rehearsals, Sports teams practices and Hilmians activities still continued, and there were all those lolly-papers to see to in the New Block! On Saturdays he was on hand to take telephone messages if the weather was so bad that the matches were cancelled, and living right next to the Gym Block would have had its moments of stress and noise. I can't actually recall the faces of any of the cleaners, but I do remember Mr. Leary, who always seemed to be heading somewhere 'on a mission'. I never saw him in the afternoons, though, which probably could be explained by his early starts and late finishes.

Sheila Kelsall

8. Acting Senior Master 1956?



In 1956 there was an Acting Senior Master listed in the Speech Day Programme beneath Mr. Hamilton, Miss Smith, and Mr Collette's names. It was A. Stewart, B.Sc. Leeds (Mathematics). Could this have been due to a prolonged absence from School by Mr. Collette? Perhaps someone will remember the circumstances.

Sheila Kelsall

In answer to Sheila, Mr Stewart (photo) became Senior Master for the year 1956-57 due to the illness of Mr Collette and also at that time Mr Manning was later taken ill which meant that U6 A level physics classes were taken at Ackworth Quaker School. Mr Stewart left in 1957 to take up a post of Deputy Head at Leeds Boys Central High School.

Terry McCroakam

9. Wet Breaks, Lunchtimes and the school day



What did you do at break or lunchtime when it was raining? Did we use rooms 7 and 8? Who played 2 pencils cricket? Details please. What were the times of the start of the school day, lessons, breaks, lunch and "home time". Details please.

Dave McKenzie

Wet lunchtimes evoke musical memories such as Cliff Richard's 'Living Doll', Buddy Holly and "Peggy Sue" and Glen Miller's 78 with "American Patrol", which was the only quickstep record, and therefore played endlessly. As first and second formers we stood around the edge of the Hall watching older pupils glide by, usually girls dancing with girls. We learned the steps by watching, and then we launched ourselves on to the herringbone parquet, having first negotiated who was to 'be the man'. There was also a foxtrot record, but I never knew the name of that tune, and I never really mastered the dance either. Very few boys would take to the floor unless they could already dance well - no experimentation for them! Most boys were spectators, standing against the wall bars at the corridor-side of the Hall, looking unconcerned and chatting to their mates as the windows and outer doors gradually steamed up. Someone would be up on the stage ready to change the records as they finished - no automatic feed there, and very occasionally a record was brought from home, and the change of musical selection was most welcome. Chubby Checker's "Lets Twist Again" and Elvis' "Jailhouse Rock" and "Blue Suede Shoes" had us bopping away, until either the bell rang for afternoon school, or a prefect or member of Staff would inform everyone that the rain had stopped, and would we please disperse? We would all then go to the place where we had "dumped" our sacs - in a heap, either in a corner of the Hall or somewhere in a nearby corridor - sling them on our shoulders, and ask one another, "Where's the next lesson?"

Sheila Kelsall

10. A painful memory



Dave,

As I remember it, only the Headmaster was allowed to cane students. The penalty was one whack on the backside for each year (i.e. Year 3, three whacks). They were sometimes given in public as well. Having managed to stay whack free for 5 years, I thought I had beat the system again, but..... In 5T we studied Engineering Drawing, in a classroom above the workshops. Someone carved a rude word on one of the desks. Our teacher, probably Mr Atack, deduced it must have been one of our class. I am convinced it was not as honour would have made him own up. Mr Hamilton was called and in the absence of a culprit, we all got 5 whacks each. Sweat was pouring from his brow by the time he finished. However, every cloud has a silver lining (or in our case red and purple ones). In the showers next sports lesson, to the envy of the other boys, we all proudly showed off our "trophies". I often wonder if the Head realised the social standing a sound and tear free whack was. As an aside to this story, I won the school prize for Engineering Theory and Practice that year and finally got on the stage at Speech Day!

Frank Poskett