

1. Ropes



Reference Sheila's "New Block" thesis on the apparatus in the hall, and "Pirates". To date I have never seen such a wonderful "playground". Regarding the brown wooden benches, Sheila, like you I cannot for the life of me recall from whence we pulled them into use. In addition to the wall-bars, can you recall the square climbing frame at the back of the hall? How many ropes were there across the width of the hall, Fourteen? I am now 68.5 years old but given the chance. I wrote in my comment about my lack of sporting attributes. Even in the Gym, the buck, the parallel bars and the box were not for me.

To stray a little - I don't recall any "roped - rings". I would have stayed there all day and night climbing a foot up rope one, two feet up rope 2 etc. to the centre and back down the other side. To swing across on the ropes from half way up the square climbing frame was "greatly frowned upon" but was truly "BLISS! Even at 68/69 years of age, I would run a mile to re-experience my joy of climbing on those ropes. Even in my days in the Army I never came across such an array, and they certainly were high! I am sure that my "memory" would drive/permit me to repeat the pleasure. Those benches we knew, were completely made out of planking. One 9" wide atop, one half width on either side and one 9" wide piece with a VEE notch cut out of its at the bottom at each end. With a couple of stringers at 30/60 degrees underneath to stop the ends splaying. Whilst writing I feel I am sitting on one! Was it last week, or last year, Sheila! It seems like yesterday!

Malc. Thomas

2. Shorthand in the Forties



During the years after the War, Hemsworth Grammar School provided the opportunity for its pupils to gain practical qualifications in Shorthand. There is no indication on the Staff Lists about who ran these courses, nor where they were held. One pupil, John Dixon, actually improved his speed by 20 w.p.m. in 1947-8 from his result the year before.

Royal Society of Arts Certificates 1946-47

Shorthand 50 w.p.m. T. Hutchinson, Beryl Bate, P. Heath, J. Wackett.

Shorthand 60 w.p.m. M. Oxley, E. Coats, S. Sawdon, A. Whitefield, Orange, Dixon J.

Royal Society of Arts Certificates 1947-48

Shorthand 50 w.p.m. Violet Gott, Margaret Simm, Jones B. Trueman R. Carlon P.

Shorthand 60 w.p.m. Barbara Nurney, Patricia Senior, Doreen Drake, Betty Ashwell, Daley N.

Shorthand 80 w.p.m. Audrey P. Towler, Doreen Drake, Betty Ashwell, Alice M. Williams, Marie Johnson, Anne Higginson, Patricia Senior, Steel R., Dixon J.

Royal Society of Arts Certificates 1948-49

Shorthand 50 w.p.m.

S. Close, F. Crossley, E. Gardham, R. Eyre, J. Thompson

Shorthand 50 w.p.m. (with credit)

K. Lowery

Shorthand 60 w.p.m. (with credit)

W. Fish, D. Hobson, Brook

Sheila Kelsall

3. Memories from the Forties



Dear Dave,

Having had a good browse through the web site, I have come up with some random memories of HGS during my time there. I trust they might be of interest to you and others.

Transfer Scholarships

I believe these began in the 1943-1944 year as I went up into Form 2B. I remember that to us the transfer pupils looked a lot older than us - people like Jack Greenhough, Jim Foster and Pete Thorpe. We did not merge until Year 4 when we had to choose between Art or Science and I went from 3B to 4C. I remember my next door neighbour's boy - Bob Atkinson - transferring from Doncaster Technical School to HGS in order to do School Certificate. He was a fine cricketer and sprinter but never took to Rugby Union - being a soccer player on the books of Bolton Wanderers as a teenager. Jim Foster, another transferee, had a fine career at HGS culminating in being Head Boy in 1948-1949 year.

Air Raid Shelters

As I remember these were to be found between the old Cricket Pavillion and the top corner of the 1st XV rugger pitch. In 1942, when I started at HGS, we were still obliged to carry our gas masks and we had Air Raid Drill. When the alarm bell was sounded, we all trooped out to the shelters to sit on hard wooden benches in cold damp surroundings lit only by lamps. After a suitable interval we all trooped back to class. Whether or not the shelters would have provided any protection against bombs is problematical in hindsight but it was exciting at the time.

Morning Assembly

These were fairly conventional with prayers and a hymn plus School announcements (games results, society meetings, etc.) As a Prefect in later years, I was allowed to hit boys over the head with my hymn book for misbehaviour. Prefects also had the nerve-racking task of reading an extract from the Bible during Assembly. This was a duty shared by all Prefects. We waited outside the Head's study until he went to Assembly to accompany him on to the stage. My abiding memory of Assembly was RWH reading out a roll call of Old Hilmians killed, wounded in action, missing, or prisoners of war - a sobering experience.

School Uniform and Rationing

In 1942, clothing was rationed so there was some relaxation in school uniform regulations - only tie and cap were compulsory. Parents were allowed to buy where they could. However, to take the point in one of the Forums, Sawdons of Cross Hills were the official suppliers of school uniform as far as I remember. Sheila Sawdon was a pupil at HGS when I was there, between 1942-1949, though not in my form. Regarding rationing, anyone with an old Report Book will remember having their weight and height recorded on the back page at intervals - done by Mr Leonard in PT lessons. We also had our feet measured and I well remember exceeding the Government limits for foot size and age and being able to go home and tell my Mother that I had been awarded an extra 40 clothing coupons for this. As you can imagine, these were received with delight as extra bargaining power in the bartering culture of the times.

School Dinners

I can still remember my first school dinner at HGS. The pudding was apple dumpling which as I recall never appeared on the menu again all the time I was there. As one entered the Dining Hall, the girls were on the right and the boys were on the left with the first table on the right being Staff. Each table was headed by a Prefect and seated 12-14 with 1st Form at the bottom acting as Skivvies to clear away dishes and to scavenge for extra food if possible. There was an excess of boys over girls, so I remember being a skivvy on a girls' table headed by Margaret Townend, whose photograph appears on the website. Main meals tended to be of the meat and two veg. type (quantity rather than quality) with Shepherds Pie well to the fore. Puddings were of the following variety:

Wooden Leg - baked jam roll - a popular favourite and skivvies were guaranteed the knob end - all pastry and no jam;

Spotted Dick - Sultana Sponge;

Jelly and Custard in summer;

Frog Spawn - sago; and always rice pudding.

Custard was eaten at one's peril and regularly we had the infamous Black Death - stewed prunes. As I remember the school record for eating prunes was 41, by a lad from Grimethorpe called Johnny Orange. The skivvies were bringing in prunes from all over the room when he went for the record - I cannot recall it being broken while I was there. The Staff menu was much better than ours and when their trolley trundled from the kitchen to their table, it was like a scene from Oliver. As First Formers, we were amazed at the amount of food Mr Waters, Maths Teacher, was able to get onto his fork! There was a twist to school dinners in that you could take your own if you wished. These were consumed in the Domestic Science room at the end of the corridor next to the Main Hall. Crockery was supplied from the main Dining Hall. It was a Prefect's job to collect and return a basketful of this every

day. I had a spell of about a year doing my own food and I remember that dried egg sandwiches figured prominently. As a Prefect, I finally graduated to having a table of my own in the Dining Hall, but the only skivvy I can remember was a cheeky young First Former by the name of Eric Sale.

To be fair, the kitchen staff worked miracles really, especially as things became in short supply towards the end of the war and the early years of peace. If I remember correctly, the head cook was Mrs. Cliffe who was the wife of the School Caretaker. Here ends the first epistle, Dave! I hope it is both of interest and of value to the Site.

Regards from

Eric Jones.

4. Cross Country and Tarzan Tag



Dave,

I remember the Cross Country and waiting under the railway bridge having a quick drag. Unfortunately Mr. Tate (P.E. Teacher) had binoculars or so he said ... End result. Five evenings detention doing..... Cross country. Another activity I remember was the Gym game Tarzan Tag. Basically the 3 guys who played Tarzan chased you round the gym equipment. If they caught you, you sat out the rest of the game on one of those long bench forms until there were only 3 left who became the next Tarzans. If, however, you fell off and touched the floor, you only sat out until a Tarzan fell off. So, being clever, we just conveniently fell off. Mr. Tate soon sorted this out! I leave you to guess what he did but we didn't fall off again I assure you.

Bryan Thomas

5. St. John Ambulance Association 1947-48



During 1947 and 1948 the St. John Ambulance Association awarded First Aid Certificates to the qualifying pupils of Hemsworth Grammar School. There is no indication on the Staff Lists for these years to inform us of who ran the courses in School, other than the name of Mr. W.J. Leonard, who was a member of the St John's Ambulance Brigade, and who held the position of First Aid Official of the Huddersfield Inter-School Sports for many years. He also attended to the First Aid during our School Sports Days. Judging by the numbers of those who gained a certificate, First Aid was a very popular activity in School.

The St. John Ambulance Association 1947

First Aid Certificates

Girls: Ethel Robinson, Muriel Addy, Freda M. Marples, Gabriel I. Adamson, Margaret Foster, Beryl Bate, Joyce Dixon, Joan Woodcock, Joyce Nicholls, Ruth James, Marion Land, Helen Buckley, Hilda Wheeldon, Phyllis Bagnall, Joyce Askey, Joan Moore, Audrey Brown, Mary Crannage, Joyce Smith.

Boys: Doohan T., Rainforth W., Kaye B., Eades B., Turton C., Atkinson R., Abbott M., Moore P., Bellamy F., Farmery S., Brockhurst D., Wilford D., Womersley A., Robinson J., Evans C.E., Boulton S., Theaker J., Kirkham B.

The St. John Ambulance Association 1948

First Aid Certificates

Girls: Barbara Collette, Greta Ellis, Sheila Smith, Mavis Stone, Sheila Davison, Muriel Hurst, Gladys Alderman, Patricia Atkinson, Ruth Hudson, Margaret Kendall, Constance Spence, Janet Bristow, Barbara Thomas, Betty Heathcote, Barbara Gardiner, Violet Gott, Rita Pickles, Rita Clatworthy, Marie Johnson, Alice Williams, Elaine Whiston.

Boys: Harper A., Worgan J.S., Smith G., Street J., Hall E., Whittaker R., Henry P., Griffiths G., Tulley L., White L., Wilkinson J.W., Trueman R., Woodcock J., Walton G., Goldthorp R., Ellis E., Parker E., Gorton R., Hughes J.E., Flavell S., Clarke D.G., Bower P., Bell R., Bent J., Beardsley D.R., Adamson G.D.,

Sheila Kelsall

6. The Two Headmasters



Dear Dave,

I don't know if this will be of interest but I have a few facts on our two Headmasters.

Firstly, Arthur G. Jenkinson was born 1875 in Streatham, Surrey. At the turn of the Century he was living in Yorkshire and employed as a schoolmaster.

Russell William Hamilton was born in York. He was living in South Shields when the 20th Century came along. He attended Durham University and graduated in English, Latin and Esperanto.

Best wishes,

John Hardy

7. Any ideas 1? 1957-62



Those of us who used the Dining-Room at School will surely remember the lunches, but in a recent conversation with my mother, I learned about a quite different repast served there which had slipped quietly away from my memory. The tables were laid with sandwiches, cakes and jellies, and some parents had been asked to attend and help to pour the teas. My mother travelled from Shafton with Mrs. Miles, Pat's mother, and upon arrival, the group of mothers sorted out how many and which tables they would serve. Such is my mother's memory that she recalls she had forgotten her pinafore! The room filled with pupils, and a table was set aside for the Staff near the kitchen end of the room. My mother saw me at the far end of the room, but was asked to pour the tea for the Staff table and another one nearby. She knew the names of a few of the pupils, so I deduce that I was in the Upper part of the School - 1957-62? It was dark outside, and the lights were on in the Dining Room. The tea was consumed, and the pupils were all excited. While doing the final clearing-up, Mr Hamilton came to my mother, and said "Thank you for coming to help, Mrs. Kelsall." This was not a particularly 'Christmassy' occasion, so exactly what was the reason for this 'evening' event? There was a roomful of my contemporaries at this tea, roughly 200 pupils. Surely someone will remember the occasion and let us know?

Sheila Kelsall

Dear Sheila,



My mother also helped at this occasion. Was it an after school function such as a dance?

Christine Whittaker

If a School Dance were the occasion, and if we were all having our tea at School, didn't we need to get changed into our gladrags somewhere, or did we attend the Dance wearing School Uniform? The Dance Ticket in the Memorabilia Section states that things started at 6.30 pm, so that would be consistent with Christine's suggestion if it were a Winter Dance, as it would still be light at that time in the Summer. I remember someone recently recalling the sense of shock/horror which rippled round the room when two

girls appeared at a School Dance wearing blue eyeshadow!!! Heavens! Can we have a response to this from either of these two trailblazers?

Sheila

8. Any ideas 2? 1933



Dave,

I spotted this in the Barnsley Chronicle dated 5th. August 1933.

Hemsworth Grammar School held its first swimming gala last Thursday. The event was for girls only and consisted of a "Balloons Race", "Umbrella Race", and "Bedtime Race".

Geoff Govier

9. Traditions



I have a few Sports Day Programmes, and as I placed them on the table in front of me, the Guests of Honour caught my eye.

They were as follows:

- Wed. 24th July, 1957: Mrs. T. Manning J.P. (Was this the wife of our member of staff Mr. T. Manning?)
- Wed. 21st May, 1958: Mrs. D. Duckett (The wife of Canon A.E. Duckett, Chairman of the School Governors until 1962)
- Wed. 13th May, 1959: Mrs. E.M. Daykin, J.P. (A School Governor who became Vice-Chairman in 1962)
- Wed. 1st June, 1960: Mrs. I. Roche
- Wed. 17th May, 1961: H.J.V. Tyrrell Esq. M.A. (A School Governor for many years)
- Fri. 8th June, 1962: Mr. and Mrs. R.E. Morgan (Mr. Morgan was from Leeds University)

The photos of most of these Guests of Honour are shown in the Sports section of the site. This tiny six-year snapshot picture of a specific facet of our School life serves to illustrate in microcosm a broader, general point of how traditions at HGS were built up, year on year. Many of us found that the certainty of the format of what was to happen in the years to follow lent a stability and structure to our daily lives. It's hard for anyone who has not experienced this 'layering' effect to understand the sense of belonging to, and being a part of a School which has a strong history, and which expects its pupils to carry forward its best traditions. There are those who would sweep away such concepts, replacing them with unpredictability and flexibility, but how do they engender the affection which is so regularly expressed by the Hilmians who had Major Jenkinson and Mr. Hamilton for their Headmasters?

Sheila

10. Sports Day 1960



Hi Mac,

I've just been reading about Geoff Trueman winning the 100yds. in a record time of 10.00sec. It is my recollection that Pete Lockett almost dead-heated with Geoff in that race. That in itself is remarkable but it becomes even more so when you realise that Pete had to run in a 7th. extra lane. This was because he was away on interview when Heats Day was held. I am sure people will remember that there were two trees that grew each side of the running track at about 45 yds. from the start thus limiting the track to 6 proper lanes. The 7th. lane became the one nearest the Cricket Pavilion and Pete had to run up and over the raised base of the right-hand tree. With this handicap his run that day was phenomenal. I do believe that the teachers operating the mechanical stopwatches had a bit of difficulty separating the two times. Incidentally, during that 1960 season, Geoff was recorded at something of the order of 9.8secs. for 100yds. albeit running down a steep slope at a meeting in Sheffield. Hope these remembrances help.

Yours,

Geoff Cartledge