

1. Patricia Cockburn



The House Merit Prize Winners for these years were:-

1958
Guest Roger Wilson
Holgate David Wigglesworth
Price Michael Cuthbert
Talbot David Hawcroft

1959
Guest Teresa Cosgrove
Holgate Albert Parkin
Price Ellen Toulson
Talbot Patricia Cockburn

1960
Guest David Sugden
Holgate Christine Gaskell
Price Christine Nicholson
Talbot David Williamson

As you see, Pat Cockburn took Talbot's Merit Prize in 1959, and her affection for the School shines through in her reply to one of my emails.

Dear Sheila,
....The House Merit prize was a book - I received a World Atlas! It was completely out of the blue, presented at Speech Day at the Hippodrome with an insert signed by Canon Duckett (Chair of the Governors). I still have the book, together with a Form Prize - also a book, "Doctor in the House" by Richard Gordon presented at Speech Day. Was it really 45 years ago? It really is great to be in touch with old school friends.
Best wishes,
Pat Cockburn, HGS 1955-62

If you think 45 years is a long time to keep a School Prize, what about the news I received recently about the son of a Hilmian who had unearthed a book of Longfellow's poems which had been awarded to his father in 1922! I think this 82 years' survival may well be the record for long-treasured mementoes - unless anyone knows better?
Sheila

2. Dee Tyrrell



Never having received any prize other than the ones I ran for, I assume the majority of our browsers, like me, would have no knowledge of the thread of organisation within School management which catered for this. Who purchased the prizes to be awarded, I wonder, and from where? Who decided on the titles of the books which were presented? Who organised the medals and cups?
Sheila Kelsall

Dear Sheila,
I still have my French Prize! I am pretty sure that subject prizes were awarded for the highest mark in GCE. (You will remember that we had marks and not grades.) I had the highest mark in French and tied for English with either Godfrey Wass, Wray Vamplew or Mick Harrison. (It was Mick. **Sheila**) Whichever, he was awarded the English prize. We were asked to choose a book - I chose the Oxford Book of English Verse - and it was presented on Speech Day along with our GCE's. The school badge is embossed in gold on the cover and the details are on a label pasted inside. They made a mistake on mine and put the wrong form! Canon Duckett had the grace to sign but the Headmaster used a rubber stamp. What I cannot remember is how we were informed that we had won. Hope this is useful.

Best wishes,
Dee Tyrrell, HGS 1955-61

3. Dick Bateman



Dear Dick,
We are currently trying to expand our information on the HGS website about the prizes which were awarded at School, and we noticed that you were a recipient of the one below. Would you mind telling us anything you can recall about it? Who decided which pupil would receive the prize? When and where were you told about the fact you had won? What exactly was the prize itself? Was it a book or book token, a voucher or certificate? Was it presented to you at Speech Day? Do you still have the prize? Did you have to prepare anything special to qualify for the prize, or was it a general appreciation of your standard of work? Since Speech Days were in November, we were thinking that the School year was only one month old at this point - not really long enough to evaluate a pupil's potential for a prize. Was it therefore based on the previous year's efforts, do you think? Anything you can contribute to the debate will be most appreciated.

Geography Prize

1957 Wild J.
1958 Cooper J.M.
1959 Bateman R.
1960 Clay A.W.
1961 Bashforth A.
1962 P.C. Kenyon

Look forward to hearing from you,
Sincerely,
Sheila.

Dear Sheila,
I have to say that your diligent research leaves me feeling distinctly envious of your energy. Anyway, I haven't won many prizes, so I was fairly sure I could put my hands on it, and I did. I was given, and am looking at now, a cloth-bound book (published by Anglo-Italian Publication and printed in Czechoslovakia!!) of black and white photos of Switzerland, with captions in English, French and German. A pasted 3" by 5" slip on the front inside page states:

HEMSWORTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL
PRESENTED TO

Name Richard Bateman
Form 5S
Subject Geography Prize

and it is signed by A. E. Duckett (Chairman of Governors) and R. W. Hamilton (Headmaster)
Date: 4th November 1959

Going through your questions:

1. I don't know who decided who won, but I would guess that it was Mr. Leonard, Head of Geography.
2. It was a book, as above.
3. It was presented to me on the Speech Day.
4. I was told about it the day before, I think by Kath Ward, my 6th form Geography teacher, and was told to wait downstairs in a queue at the side, which I did.
5. I didn't have to prepare anything to qualify for the prize; I just assumed, and still do, that the best looking student got the prize,

though it may also have been something to do with the "O" level grade in the summer 1959 exams, when I got my only grade "A", ever, in anything!!!

[Does anyone else think that they got their prize for being the best looking? We could start a sub-group - once able, but now deluded!]

Other than that, I remember nothing but the atmosphere in the picture house (Hippodrome) we went to. With no picture to watch and only the keeners getting any action, it was licence to be as naughty as we could be without getting the blame. Great fun, except for the teachers. I must admit, I'm a bit chuffed to follow in the footsteps of Jim Wild and Johnny Cooper. Where are they now? I know Johnny worked up in Aberdeen for a while before we lost touch. I wonder if anyone else remembers Jim Wild's famous and stirring captain's half-time exhortation to the First Rugby XV. It went on a bit, but the crucial bit was, "C'mon lads, you are playing like a load of Marys." We all really respected Jim, but had to hide a giggle at his gentle language, so unlike the rough speech of most of us. Then I remember thinking "What if I have misjudged the deeply intellectual Jim. Mary's what?" I remember still debating the issue as we walked off, having won the match. Good old Jim Wild, says I.

All the very best, and once again many thanks for all your hard work.

Dick Bateman, HGS 1954-62

4. Frank Poskett



Hi Sheila,

I was awarded my prize for Engineering Workshop Theory and Practice for achieving the top marks in my GCE O Level in that subject. The teacher Mr Attack must have had some input or feed back on the marks achieved in the 3 subjects. I left school after the 5th year and so the award was made the November after I left. I was notified by post and confirmed I would be attending. One of the subjects in this 3 part GCE was Engineering Drawing. We used a text book Engineering Drawing level 1 for the course.

My prize was the next book in the series Level 2. I did not have any input into the choice of prize but it was a useful one. It had a certificate on the inside cover stating the year and reason for the award. I used it in my technical college education and kept it as a reference book during my working life of 40 years. Now here is the really sad bit. When I retired and bought my computer and all the trimmings to go with it I had to make some room. I decided that I would never again would I need the 20 or so technical books I had accumulated over the years and this was one that was sadly disposed of. It was awarded on Speech Day at the Hemsworth Hippodrome. The names were read out by the Head and the Guest dignitary handed out the prizes. I cannot for the life of me remember if we were allowed to wear "civies" but I cannot see me still having the old uniform so I must have.

Best regards,

Frank Poskett, HGS 1955-60

Dear Frank,

Many thanks for your swift response, and clear memories. We had no idea that those prizes were so firmly linked to GCE results until Dee Tyrrell, Dick Bateman and yourself mentioned it. Personally, I have no memory of receiving the actual marks of my results (although I may have, and preferred to forget them! I'm sure they were not marvellous - I hated exams!) I just recall the subjects listed on the big certificate given to us at Speech Day.

Now there's another thing which this discussion has brought to light! The ones who left School after the 5th Form must have returned to School or at least to the Hippodrome during the following November to collect their GCE Certificates. We who stayed on for 'A' Levels would have just taken Speech Day as a matter of course, but I suppose those who had got a job, or started a course meantime, must have had to arrange time off, as Speech Day lasted a whole afternoon. What a fine detail you illuminated - that of the dress code decision which would have had to be faced by the returning 'leavers'! I heard of cap-burning ceremonies on the last day of the Summer term, and I suppose it was highly unlikely that uniforms would be retained until the following November. Anyway, this 'returning to collect certificates' topic has finally offered me an explanation as to how I came by a Speech Day Programme for November 1962 when I left in the July!

(By the way, your dignitary was Alderman Mrs. M. Brannan.)

Thanks once again,

Sincerely,

Sheila.

5. Isabell Snowden



Dear Sheila,

Many thanks for your e-mail. The medal was presented to me on that day by Mrs. H.A. Redburn (the wife of the then Barnsley Director of Education), venue Hemsworth Hippodrome. It was awarded for highest marks received in G.C.E., my Biology teacher was Ken Sale. The only documentation received was the paper with all the G.C.E. results on.

The medal was silver, about 1" in diameter, with the words "Kenward Biology Medal" etched on it. Unfortunately I don't know anything about "Kenward". Alas at the age of sixteen such things unfortunately never crossed my mind. The Chairman of Governors at that time was Canon A.E. Duckett. Obviously we kept the medal for one year and then it was passed on to the next recipient. Hope this is of use to you.

Best wishes,

Isabell Snowden, HGS 1953-60

6. Doris Richardson



Dear Sheila,

I will now attempt to answer your queries about the Kenward medal. I remember very little about it. At that time I was in the middle of my 'School Certificate' year (I believe it was the last year before it finished and became something else). I don't even remember how I was given it but it was not in any sort of ceremony. I have no idea who Kenward was but would love to find out. I took the Biology Medal back to school and handed it over to Mr. Collette in the entrance hall. That was in early 1950. It really was a proper medal but of course I never got to wear it as such. I believe the Biology master or mistress chose whoever they thought worthy of it. I really hope I can find out more about it as it was the culmination of my biological pursuit. I have a page here at home which shows a diagram of the blood vessels of a frog. I have written on it 'The end of my Biological Career'.

Doris Richardson, HGS 1944-49

7. Eric Jones



Dear Dave,

Reference the lists of prizes/awards on the site which I have only just spotted, there is no mention as far as I can tell of House Merit awards. At the final assembly of Year 1943/44, much to my surprise, RWH called me out and presented me with the Guest House Merit Badge for services to the House during the year. If you look at the Photograph of Form 3B/1944-45 on the site you will see that I am wearing it. There must have been similar awards to the other Houses (Holgate, Talbot and Price) but I cannot recall them. Perhaps someone else may do so as recipients.

Regards,

Eric Jones, HGS 1942-49

8. Ron Newitt



Dear Ron,

We are currently trying to expand our information on the HGS website about the prizes which were awarded at School, and we noticed that you were a recipient of the one below. Would you mind telling us anything you can recall about it? Who decided which pupil would receive the prize? Was it Mr. Tate? When and where were you told about the fact you had won? Was it presented to you at Speech Day? Do you still have the plaque? Were you allowed to keep it? Did you have to achieve anything special to qualify for the prize (team captain?), or was it a general appreciation of your standard of work? Since Speech Days were in November, we were thinking that the School year was only one month old at this point - not really long enough to evaluate a pupil's potential for a prize. Was it therefore based on the previous year's efforts, do you think? Anything you can contribute to the debate will be most appreciated.

The Dr. H. Walker Plaque for improvement in Sport:

1952 Brian Moore

1956 Pickering A.

1957 Wild J.

1958 Trueman G.

1959 Parkin A.

1960 Sugden D.

1961 Newitt R.

1962 Nuttall D.J.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely,

Sheila Kelsall, HGS 1955-62

Dear Sheila,

As to the information you require, the trophy was school wide but it appears that it went to someone at least in the 4th Year and above and a male. I do not know who the people were that decided who should receive the Plaque but Les Tate was the person who informed me about it. The Plaque was presented at the School Speech day at the Hippodrome. I still have the plaque and have used it to front many an assembly in the schools in which I was headteacher. I was allowed to keep it and still have it hanging in my study. I cannot recount doing anything special in the previous year but I did play for the 2nd XV at rugby and the 1st XI at cricket which was a major achievement for a 5th year student. I do not think there were any hurdles to climb to achieve the award, more a notion of improving in a wide range of sporting activities. I had no idea of the previous recipients of the award but most of the names seem to have had a good summer and winter sport. Brian Moore was a very good centre at rugby and an excellent 440 yards performer. Albert Parkin was an excellent fly half, a very good athlete and a competent cricketer. Dave

Sugden, a very good rugby player, excellent athlete and a competent cricketer. He was also a good all round sportsman. Dave Nuttall was good with a bat and an excellent hooker. One interesting tie up was when Jimmy Wild played for Yorkshire Rugby XV, I took his place in the Wakefield RFU side when I was home from University. That's about all I can tell you.

Best Regards,

Ron Newitt, HGS 1957-64

ps Keep up the good work. I visit the web site often.

Dear Ron,

Glad you enjoy your visits to the site, and are willing to help make it more interesting. We're trying to reflect all the different facets of our School life, and your latest mail gives the first-hand memories which are so valuable. If you have any more recollections/queries/corrections/questions, or just a tiny memory of an interesting incident or person, we would be happy to receive them.

Many thanks once again,

Sincerely,

Sheila.

9. Wray Vamplew



Dear Wray,

We are currently looking at the 'Prizes' section on the site, and wondering just exactly what was received by the recipients. You seem to be the only person on our list (below) concerning this prize who is in touch with us, so we're relying on you to tell us all about it. For instance, who informed you of the award, and when? I think I remember it was given at Speech Day? Do you still have whatever it was? Did you ever get a Form Prize? If so, what was it, and do you recall anything about it? Calculations were done to assess which pupil had the Highest Aggregate score in the 'O' level marks, and a prize was awarded for this achievement.

1952 Bill Baxendale (see 10 below)

1956 Margaret E. Biggs

1957 Carol E. Holder

1958 Diana D. Wood

1959 Adamson J.

1960 Vamplew W.

1961 Jean Armitage

1962 Nova Websdale

Hope you can tell us something, even though it's 44 years ago!

Sincerely,

Sheila Kelsall, HGS 1955-62

Hi, Sheila.

I did get one prize. It was a book and we were allowed to choose our own. Mine was the Road to Rome with chapters by British Olympians such as Arthur Rowe the local shot-putter. I am fairly certain that it was presented on Speech day by whoever was the guest dignitary (Alderman Mrs. M. Brannan, Sheila). I still have it on my office shelf. Must have known I was going to be a Sports Historian!! The cover is embossed with the School Badge and motto. Inside is a certificate dated 2 November 1960 saying what it was for and signed by the Chairman of Governors and the Headmaster.

Cheers,

Wray Vamplew, HGS 1955-62

Dear Wray,

Isn't it amazing how many of these School prizes have survived house moves, and in your case moves between continents! It just highlights the value of the giving of rewards in a young person's early education. Well, I suppose rewards are meaningful at any age! Thanks again for your response - keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Sheila.

10. Bill Baxendale



Hello Sheila,

I still have the awarded prizes. 'English Thought in the Nineteenth Century' as aggregate award. Good read as a precursor to Higher Education. Much in vogue at the time, but subsequently largely discredited, someone persuaded me that Vol.1 of H.A.L. Fisher's 'History of Europe' was a suitable prize for French! I bought Vol.2 to complete the set. Neither was much help in my higher studies. Both books are embossed and signed in ink by Cooper and rubber stamped by R.W.H. (Modern technology at the time?)

Best wishes,

Bill Baxendale

11. Christine Whittaker



Hello Sheila,

I can confirm that the subject prizes [in my case, Latin] were awarded for top marks in GCE in 1960 and I was told about it when I went to school to collect my results from Mr. Hamilton. Luckily Mr. Swinbank chose mine. It was The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature which sounded much too intellectual for me at the time. However, I can now say that it was the most useful book I have ever had and is still consulted fairly regularly. It lists in alphabetical order all the people, places and historical events mentioned in Greek and Roman literature. It covers mythology; customs; daily life; houses; theatres and countless other topics which are of more general interest. My children would often consult the book when they were at school and my husband often uses it to refresh his memory about some incident in Greek history. When he had his restaurant he was asked all kinds of questions which customers thought he should be able to answer, being a Greek. He used to keep my book on the shelf under the cash machine and sneak a look when necessary. Everyone thought he was such a mine of information! The prize was presented by Canon Duckett on Nov 2nd at the Hippodrome. I wonder what happened if two people got the same mark? I never heard of two prizes for the same subject. I suppose the teacher would have to choose, taking into account the year's work.

Christine Whittaker, HGS 1955-62