

### 1. Drinsey Nook and other memories

Maureen Ardron's auntie and uncle were Mr. and Mrs. Cliffe, the caretaker and cook at the school from 1938 to 1953, and we are lucky to have received her memories of their time at Hemsworth Grammar School. As pupils, we only got a glimpse of the kitchens from the Dining room side, as we passed along the line of jolly ladies ladling the mashed potato and gravy onto our plates.

My auntie and uncle lived in the caretaker's cottage, named "Drinsey Nook". The cottage had a back gate which opened onto Mr. Street's field and orchard, and the name was on a plaque on the gate. For a time, Miss Eva Shortridge lodged with the Cliffe's, until 1946. As a child I so revered her, almost to being frightened of her, and I always felt as though I needed to curtsy to her! I remember she bought me a little book every week.

I used to have all the school grounds to play in, but I was not allowed to go near the front of the school. Did you know about a tree in the centre plot of land as you come through the Green Gate? Carved all the way around the trunk about 5ft from the ground was - William Henry Leatham - but I can't remember the date. I was so sorry when it was chopped down to alter the School. It should have been preserved!!

The kitchens were across from the caretaker's house, which I used to visit often as a child. There were about 4 steps up to the kitchen. In the entrance hall were 2 doors to the right, and these were pantries. On the left was a toilet, wash hand basin and a telephone - of the type that looked like a horn to speak into, and a handset you held (a bit like an ice-cream cone) to your ear. There was a brass handle on the right hand side of the telephone which you turned clockwise and this would ring a bell in the telephone exchange at the bottom of Mount Avenue, on Westfield Road. I should know as I was always in trouble for going and messing about with it. The operator (I think they called her Miss Pearce) was always ringing up my auntie and telling her I had been ringing the exchange!

Mrs. Cliffe had 4 maids in the kitchens, Bessie Turner (senior maid), Ada Newton, Annie Wincer and Gladys Morris. The Kitchen Inspector from W. R. C. C. was Miss McClusky. The kitchen was a square room. If you stood with your back to the entrance there were ovens on either side. On the left was a huge food mixer then the hatch to the dining room and entrance doors. On the back wall was a table and in the right hand corner a huge fish frier. Down the left hand side were sinks with plate drainers above - the really old fashioned type where you slotted the plates into dowelling partitions and in the bottom right hand corner was a door leading to on the left a cellar - and straight forward overlooked the Fives court.

I had to go to HGS every Saturday morning when there was either a rugby or a cricket match, to set the tables, and put the food out. (Don't know if I was needed to do the work, or it was to keep me out of mischief). I used to go and help my Auntie to get the Governors' tea ready for after their meetings.

Maureen Ardron

## 2. Assistant Secretary



"The attached photograph was taken one morning by Mr. Leonard, about 50 years ago. He just popped his head round the door of the small office, and said, "Smile!" Click! and he was gone!" (Maureen Cooper)

A short time ago I was able to meet a lady whom many Hilmians would remember as the Assistant Secretary to Miss Blake at HGS. Formerly a pupil of the school, she was invited by Mr. Hamilton, the Headmaster, to fill this position in 1956, straight after leaving the Fifth Form. She described her working day started at 8.30, and ended at 4.30, and the two secretaries occupied a small room on the ground floor between the Prefects' rooms, and opposite the Main front door of the school. The window of this room looked onto the quad, and there was a small hatch onto the corridor with a sliding glass door upon which one could knock for attention. Registers were collected from, and returned to here every morning and afternoon, and as one passed the office, the sound of typewriters "clacking" could usually be heard.

All the telephone calls made to the school were answered in the office first of all, and then the Head was notified on an internal system. Notes were taken if he was not available, and return calls were put through on his behalf at his request.

When the Head needed to contact one of his secretaries, he would telephone the office, and if dictation was required, the secretary would walk across the corridor and into the Head's study. Mondays were busy days, as all the dinner money collected throughout the school had to be counted, and taken to the bank. The number of pupils taking a school lunch each day had to be calculated, and communicated to the catering staff, and despite this contact, Maureen had no memory of where she and Miss Blake ate their lunches! She did, however, recall that in the early days of her employment she was the one who rang the handbell to mark the beginning and end of each lesson.

The busy twosome created agendas for the Governors' meetings and typed the references for old students to give to prospective employers, or to enhance university and college applications. They distributed the Report books at the end of each term, and they collected them at the beginning of a new term after they had been read by the parents. Letters were sent to the local authority requesting funds for maintenance work on the school buildings or classrooms, and estimates were received, listed and filed. Members of staff who intended to be absent due to illness, or for any other reason, called the office, and the secretaries consulted a "master timetable" in order to arrange cover for the affected lessons. In fact, this timetable was a source of information which could give the Head a good idea of where every member of his staff was situated at any given moment of the day. Each lesson had its title in the centre of a rectangular box, and in the bottom left-hand corner was the room number of that lesson. In the top right-hand corner were the initials of the teacher, and at the top of the column was the time of that lesson. Each day was covered, and this efficiency ensured the smooth running of the school.

One of the less pleasurable duties which Maureen described to me was when she was required by the Head to enter a classroom during a lesson in order to notify a pupil that the Head wished to see him or her. This was quite an unusual event, and usually meant trouble! If the miscreant knew the reason for the summons, there was quaking when she opened the door. If not, then there was still a fear of bad news, or at least puzzlement and trepidation. Such was the respect in which the Head was held. Maureen came to recognise well the effect she had when entering a classroom unannounced!

At some point during the late 1950's, the use of the classroom opposite the Head's study was given over to be the office. All the files, cabinets, keys, typewriters and paperwork were transferred, and Maureen found herself at a desk situated at one of the two windows of the room, now overlooking the school's frontage. Miss Blake had her desk at the other window, and both had a much improved view, sunny aspect and so much more space! From the selling of rubbers, protractors and rulers to the pupils for pennies, to the respecting of privileged information about staff and pupils, these busy ladies unobtrusively oiled the wheels of HGS.

**Sheila Kelsall**

### 3. Golf at HGS!

I was recently lucky enough to read some school magazines from the mid-nineteen-twenties, and was amazed to discover that there was a flourishing Golf Club at the school. Although the following article of 1926 strikes a self-deprecating note, by 1928 the greens had become 'ship-shape' and a golf tournament was being organised by the sixty members of the Golf Club. Subscriptions were collected by the Society's secretary, and the school possessed twenty-four sound clubs, with ten others which had been used by the Staff in the 1927 tournament.

Sheila Kelsall

#### **Golf at Hemsworth - An excerpt from a 1926 enthusiast.**

There may be one or two golf courses, which in many respects are superior to that of Hemsworth. Broader fairways, better preserved greens, better-looking caddies and tee-boxes we have certainly seen, but in one respect we may fairly claim to stand alone. For glorious, luxuriant, awe-inspiring "rough" we are absolutely unbeatable. Not for the Hemsworth golfer the monotony of the drive down a perfect fairway, the approach on to the green like a billiard table and the steady two putts. Play on our course and you have the 'glorious uncertainty of golf' intensified a hundredfold. The game becomes an adventure, full of hazardous undertakings and hairbreadth escapes.

The thousand and one (or should we say the million and one) tufts of waving grass confront you on the first tee, choose where you will! Hemsworthian! - Up and smite it! Smack! or Tap! The result is the same. Deep into the heart of a tuft you go. You grasp the niblick firmly and with grim determination swing a nasty shot at the offending sphere nestling in the forest. Millions of blades of grass darken the air and dim the vision; a mole disturbed in its retreat a foot from the surface scuttles for safety; the ball remains untouched and grins disdainfully at you; you unravel yourself and after gazing at the 'Dunlop' with mild reproach you smile again, and at least get your own back on the ball by hitting it on the top, carving out a very respectable lump from its face and driving it two inches into the earth. Character training did you say? No finer thing in the world! Prepare for a long ordeal! Make the swing rhythmic in its clock-like regularity and at the end of five minutes' strenuous effort the ball trickles out looking somewhat battered and ashamed, while the tuft aforementioned so luxuriant appears as though shingled with a small tooth-comb and pair of nail scissors. Now for the approach on to the green, three square yards in extent. A chip shot! Easy! A perfect beauty! Only three yards from the hole! Steady swing - eyes well above the ball for the putt. Hard luck! The ball pursues a zig-zag course, turns sharply off at right angles and comes to rest slightly breathless and seasick five yards from the hole. Again! And again! You take the niblick and loft it. Hurrah! Bless the old cow that trod on the hole and enlarged it last week! It trickles in.

Such are the basic elements of golf at Hemsworth. In addition we have an infinite variety of other eventualities. You play over the biggest bunker in the world. (100 yards by 10 yards) [Was this the Ha Ha ditch?] You chip over serried ranks of tennis players and cricketers. You invariably bag a calf or even a cow in the course of the event. You may break the windows of the Holly Bank School when the caretaker emerges and offers you your choice of cigars or nuts. Why don't you play?

### 4. Tennis Courts



I'm sure that every girl who attended the school will at some point have spent a lesson on the hard playing surface of the tennis courts at the far end of the playing fields. The dual function of that playing surface was marked out in white painted lines for netball as well as tennis. In my schooldays the girls practiced netball during PE lessons, and played the School and House netball matches there. We had no idea of the story of their creation, blithely accepting their existence without question, as only children can.

The story of the struggle to provide this facility is one of dogged determination and effort by pupils, Staff and Governors alike. The first mention of the need to have Tennis Courts was made by the Headmaster, Mr. A.G. Jenkinson at the Speech Days of 1924 and 1925. A formal request for the provision of two grass tennis courts and further, "hard tennis courts on the ground used as a kitchen garden" (where the Dining Hall was later built) went to the County Authority in 1927, and so began the struggle. A Tennis Court Fund was created, and weekly collections and events such as Mannequin Parades took place throughout the rest of the 1920's. The Governors lost no opportunity to regularly request funds from the County Authority for the provision of the courts, and were unsuccessful.

#### **The Tennis Courts**

Some talk of Suzanne Lenglen and some of Helen Wills,  
And praises of their exploits nearly half a paper fills;  
But both these famous players will be put right in the shade  
By the dashing girls of Hemsworth - when the tennis courts are made.

They've the necessary talent and the sinews of a man,  
And as for wearing bandeaus they look smarter than Suzanne;  
But their rise to fame is hindered, their paths to glory stayed,  
They're to wait until the necessary tennis courts are made.

Now do your bit towards them, to obtain them spare no pain,  
Don't forget to pay your pennies - pay up and pay again.  
Remember that you're helping now to make some Hemsworth girl  
In the not too far distant future Tennis Champion of the World.

Possibly written by James Keenan, VL in the summer of 1928

The Wimbledon Tennis Tournament was started in 1930, and early in that year, the West Riding local Authority actually approved the provision of the courts, but as the Depression took hold, the economic problems grew, and tennis courts were subsequently not deemed a necessary expense. So it continued throughout the Thirties, and when I find a record of when they were finally created, I will be able to complete this glimpse into the creation of the school's sports facilities!

Sheila Kelsall, HGS 1955-62

### 5. Talented Teachers in 1930

A large audience was looking forward to a dramatic performance from Mr. Roger Williams and his company on an evening early in October 1930, and when they failed to attend, the staff saved the day by nobly stepping into the breach with their delightfully informal entertainment, which was hugely enjoyed by all. Items were rendered as follows:

Mr. G. Hyde sleight of hand

Mr. J.A. Storer musical jokes

Mr. A.G. Jenkinson schoolboy "howlers" and spoonerisms. (Mr. Jenkinson has collected these for over 20 years.)

Miss E. Hodgson pianoforte solos

Miss M. Parsons violin solos.

This impromptu entertainment, which must have been staged with the minimum of notice, speaks volumes about the talents and characters of those who volunteered to save the day.

### 6. Such a narrow victory!

Hemsworth Secondary School and Mexborough Secondary School played a June 1932 cricket match at Hemsworth which saw the visitors securing victory by 5 runs. But for Colin Desborough (12) and George Potts (7) the Hemsworth batsmen did little with the bowling of Trickett (5 for 16) and the innings only made 39. However.....at the commencement of Mexboro's innings, Heath E. and Bernard Hemstock bowled with such deadly effect that five of the first six batsmen were dismissed without scoring! A timely effort by Trickett (13) and Thorpe (9) pulled the game round, though the position was interesting when Parker, the Mexborough last man, went in with five runs still required for victory. He survived two narrow escapes before making the winning hit and was bowled three runs later. Hemstock secured 6 for 17 and Heath 4 for 25.

This is such a clear description of the game given by the local newspaper that it's easy to picture oneself there as a spectator!

### 7. Absolutely Tripe!

In late 1931 an idea had been discussed by the Governors that Honours Boards in School would be a good method of displaying the academic successes of the pupils. A request had been made to the West Riding Education Authority for the requisite funds to supply and fix these Boards, and in February 1932 the reply of County Hall was received. The provision of Honours Boards was refused, "owing to the present need for economy". The Clerk to the Governors, Mr. Charles Crossley, reported that the Authorities had recommended a book in which to place the Honours Lists. The price of the Honours Boards would be about £15 / 0s / 0d, and the Book would cost a little over £2 / 0s / 0d. Capt. Hallam (one of the Governors) had an extreme reaction to this. He said that the Governors should press for the Boards to be installed, adding "the County Hall's suggestions are absolutely tripe."

The straitened economic circumstances in the country at that time (the Hungry Thirties) and especially in the North of England, meant that many of the 7 million people depending on the dole lived in the North, and riots provoked by hunger marchers were taking place in many cities. The refusal of the body which held the purse strings to supply such non-essential items can have come as no surprise to anyone other than the Governors!

Sheila Kelsall

## 8. Hockey Sashes



Hi Dave,

Do you remember our discussion about different coloured sashes worn on gymslips? The colours were royal blue for girls in the second hockey team and bright red for girls in the school first hockey team. How proud I was when I got mine at the age of 15 - also my half colours at 16 and full colours at 17. I loved Hockey!!! Does this ring a bell with anyone else?

Irene Wright

## 9. Homework not done

It becomes boring to hear so many of the unoriginal excuses offered for this somewhat common malady. This is so much so, one almost thinks the age of originality has passed. First of all, it is advisable to remember that these schoolteachers in the dim and distant past were themselves scholars. Because of this, we must find original excuses, to which their decrepit intellects will fail to rise.

The excuses that you have, 'left it at home' or you have 'lost it', were in use when Adam was at school. To suppose that the teachers believe you is stretching the bounds of imagination beyond limit. If you say you were ill, you rouse a little sympathy but you are still not believed. Therefore, fellow-students, forget these outworn and outdated excuses.

One way is to say that you have tried to do it but can't understand it. Compose several intelligent questions to support this claim. If, on the other hand, you can't even be bothered to do this, contrive to have your book put in the pound, and the following day, complain in injured tones and with martyred expression that you can't do your homework when the Prefects steal your books.

To married teachers, make the plaint that your mother is ill and you have to do the housework. (Married teachers appreciate services rendered in the home.) A most ingenious method is to take out your book to the teacher and contrive to make him/her forget to give it you back. The next day, well! you can't do homework without a book. My supply of original excuses is still quite plentiful, but why, fellow students, should I impart them to you when I still have another year at School? You must make up a repertoire of them for yourselves. A final hint - it may save time if you make them into a list. Number them (1), (2), (3), etc, hand the list to the teacher concerned, then instead of repeating the excuse, cry 'con spirito', "Excuse (2)."

Peter Sutcliffe, L6A (Guest).

## 10. Fourth Form Survey Spring Term 1962

It was designed to discover general trends and opinions by means of a 30 point questionnaire, completed anonymously and collated by **Mick Harrison** (photo).

1. The vast majority of the Fourth formers say that they believe in God. Indeed, only two answered negatively. However, this could indicate that they have not begun to think seriously about the problem. It would be very encouraging for the Christian churches if the opposite were true. However, less than half the fourth attend church regularly.

2. Political allegiances are typical of the area, Labour taking half the votes, the Liberals three-quarters of the remainder. Faced with the problem of Britain 'going it alone' in nuclear disarmament, only about a third of the Fourth are in favour. However, about half would like to see capital punishment abolished. To my mind there is an inconsistency in favouring one and not the other.

3. The majority consider that their parents treat them as they would like to be treated, despite the fact that three-quarters are punished at some time or other. Average pocket money is around 7/6 [38p] the higher incomes being found in forms 4T, G and R. A sizeable number declare they get no pocket money at all.

4. The problems of teenage drinking and smoking are highly magnified by the press and public if the results from our 14/15 age group are typical and honest. No-one admits being a regular smoker, and half never drink at all. Only about a fifth say that they smoke. Twenty cigarettes a week is about the average, although the hardened cases get through 70-100.

5. About half are youth club members and just over half play games other than in compulsory school periods.

6. The widespread appeal of pop music is reflected in the answers to the music question. About four-fifths prefer pop music, jazz being the choice of the rest. There are few dedicated fans of classical music, though in fairness it must be added that the question asked for preferences, and that half the fourth form like classical music as distinct from preferring it. Elvis and Cliff are the most popular singers, and the Kenny Ball Jazz Band was voted top of the Trad poll.

7. Art interests about half the Fourth. Very few people are regular readers, and most tagged themselves as moderate readers, a few having the courage to admit that they read very rarely indeed. Apparently there is room for much more encouragement from parents, particularly in 4T, G and R.
8. Two-fifths do not like school, and three out of four of these would leave immediately if given the chance. Again, forms 4T, G and R make up most of this number.
9. An interesting comparison between boys' and girls' attitudes emerges concerning school uniform. Almost all the girls are in favour of a uniform, whereas almost all the boys are not. They agree on one point, however - their unanimous approval of co-education! Very few people admit that they look down on other types of school.
10. The choice of career has been made by only half the boys. Less than one fifth of those who have decided, want to become teachers, whereas two-fifths of all the girls chose this profession.
11. Although a good many of the boys go dancing and to the cinema, very few visit the theatre or concert hall. More girls go dancing than boys but fewer, (one in fifty, in fact) go to concerts or to the theatre.
12. The pattern of T.V. viewing is alarming. A quarter view for more than three hours a night, and half between one and two hours. Favourite programmes are 'Coronation Street', 'Dr. Kildare', and 'Z Cars'. Westerns are popular too, but only one in ten prefers programmes of topical or cultural interest.
13. Most fourth-formers read the 'Daily Herald' and 'News of the World' or 'The People'. There is an alarming absence of non-sensational Sunday newspapers from homes in the area, and there is evidence that Sunday newspapers, filled as they are with reports of violence, sex and crime, have as much effect on young people as T.V. Yet the Sundays are among the leading voices in advocating a probe into the evils of television.
14. Mr. Krushchev and Mr. Kennedy are regarded by many as the most important people in the world. A number voted themselves as the most important.
15. On the whole, the survey gave an interesting and I think, true picture of the Fourth form. It reveals that some problems such as smoking are overrated, but also points to some alarming features such as the reading and T.V. viewing habits. Perhaps something can be done to rectify the situation, and in particular to tackle the hard core of discontent in 4T, G and R where almost half the pupils would leave if given the chance.

Thanks are due to **Mr. Knox** for typing and duplicating the questionnaires, to **Peter Dickens** and **Pat Cockburn** for helping to record the results, and to several members of staff who have pointed out limitations and defects in the questions, in particular **Mr. Butler** whose criticisms, apart from occupying an R.K. period, have proved most helpful.

**Mick Harrison, UVIS.**

Dear Mac,  
You will see clearly the contrast of lifestyle and opinion in today's 15 yr olds. No mention here of today's drugs, pregnancies, anorexia, computers and playstations, or 'partners' involved in parenting. Of course we preferred dancing or the cinema, as they were on our doorsteps. Of course we read the newspapers our parents read, as we had no choice there. The most interesting highlight of the survey is the discontent of the non-academic streams of the school. I don't think their needs were best served by the system of that time, but the staff were geared to one type of production line, weren't they?

**Sheila Kelsall**