

1. Mary Griffiths - Memories 1939-47



Dear Sheila,

I've just discovered the web site and I'm thrilled! I was at HGS 1939-47 (Talbot) and was a little disappointed to see so few faces from that era. However it was good to see photos of my fellow athletes Pash Tate and Derek Wilkinson (I remember the site of the photo) and those of Messrs. Hamilton and Leonard. I started in September 1939 - that was the expectation, but our start was erratic as the air raid shelters were not ready. Actually we were very fortunate compared with other parts of the country, and I do not think any of our visits to the shelters were emergencies. I remember picking currants in the kitchen gardens for jam making and brewing coffee in large pans for the staff who were on fire watch duty. Obviously I have many more memories, especially of people, staff and pupils, who played such a significant part in my life. I have much to be thankful for. I left South Yorks when I left school, but I would love to hear something about my contemporaries at Hemsworth. Thanks for your

work on the site.

Mary Griffiths
November 2008

Athletics 1946



Although, due to the snow, the annual cross country run had to be cancelled, the other events were held as usual. The highlight of the year is, of course, Sports Day. Last year, there was a very high standard of competition and four records were broken, one by Amy Hepton, one by Wilkinson and two by **Mary Griffiths** in the Girls' High Jump. She added a further 3¼ inches to the previous record of 4 ft. 6 ins. The boys' Senior Victor Ludorum was won by Wilkinson, D. and the junior counterpart by Brockhurst, D. On the girls' side, **Mary Griffiths** gained the Senior Trophy and Amy Hepton the Junior.

The champion house was Price, with Holgate a close second. During the summer holidays a senior relay team competed at Castleford where they won a valuable silver cup. On the 21st of May this year, the school sent an Athletics team to the Huddersfield Inter-School Sports, held for the first time since 1938. The team did exceptionally well and obtained 15 places. The senior girls were awarded a Certificate for the most points scored, as were the senior boys. The boys combined team, Junior, Middles and Seniors came out champions and achieved the distinction of winning the Shield. The girls had hard luck, failing by one point to emulate the boys' feat.

Wilkinson, D. Holgate.

2. What's In A Name? - The Opinions

The advantage of changing the name of Hemsworth Secondary School to "Grammar School" was discussed at a meeting of the Governors in December 1932. Ald. Price was missing, and the meeting was chaired by Captain L. Hallam, who had raised the question.

Captain Hallam..... It was his experience that students seeking appointments and able to produce testimonials from a grammar school had an advantage. "I think it is our duty to give every possible advantage to the students attending this school in that direction and especially in these days when it is so difficult to place boys and girls. I think if we can give them any advantage we ought to do so and therefore I place this suggestion before you. There is no doubt that the name 'Grammar School' does carry weight". Captain Hallam added that he understood from Mr. J. H. Hallam, Director of Education for the West Riding, that all that was necessary in the first instance was for the Governors to send forward a recommendation to the county authority and they would submit it to the Board of Education. He did not think there would be any difficulty.

Mr. J. Dunleavy..... some people might regard the suggested alteration as snobbish, but he thought there was much to be said for it. Thirty years ago he passed from a secondary school to a "high school". There was no difference in the curricula, but the status of one was regarded as higher than the other. He thought the title would be an advantage to the students.

Captain Hallam..... there is no thought of snobbishness behind the suggestion. He had brought the subject forward with the genuine desire that the Governors should do all they could to enable the pupils to get the best positions in the country.

Mr. E. Ford..... at Wath on Dearne a new school had blossomed out into a "grammar school" in a very short time, but the school at Mexborough was still a "secondary school."

Mr. W. Exley..... thought Captain Hallam had done good service by bringing this matter to the notice of the Governors. He moved that the suggestion be adopted and that a recommendation go forward to the county authority.

Mr. Dunleavy seconded.

The Headmaster..... said the idea was not new and it was supported by the Board of Education.

Mr. Isaac Burns..... said he did not think Captain Hallam wished to hurry the matter and he advised that this suggestion should be put as a notice of motion for consideration at the next meeting. "I am pleased Captain Hallam has raised this matter," added Mr. Burns, "and I am pleased to know it is not the word Hemsworth that he is objecting to".

The Chairman..... I never thought of that.

Mr. Burns..... said that by using their brains and vision they might get even a better word than "grammar" for the school.

The Chairman..... said he appreciated the observations of the Governors, and he had no wish to precipitate. It had occurred to him that it would be a step in the right direction, and he had no objection to the matter being placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

The Headmaster..... remarked that the Board of Education were anxious to simplify matters by having the same name for the same type of school.

Mr. Burns' suggestion was agreed to.

Hemsworth Urban District Council

Councillor Isaac Burns reported the recent discussions of the School Governors about changing the name of the school from "Secondary" to "Grammar" to his colleagues on the Urban District Council, and strong reactions were expressed.

Coun. A. Bednall said there was little advantage in changing the name to "Grammar" school, which was not at all suitable.

Coun. G.W. Moses thought the move would be in the direction of the archaic, looking back to the times when schools primarily taught grammar. In his opinion, that word did not raise the status of the school. Modern education embraced a wider field than just grammar. Clearly the matter engendered strong opinions beyond the school itself.

3. Holgate House



On Tuesday mornings there was no main assembly, we had house meetings. Past the Library then on the right up the steps into Room11. Eventually I became House Captain looking over the young sprogs who would soon fill your shoes. There was a fireplace and over it a quotation from Voltaire, it said : "I disagree with what you are saying but I will fight to the Death to defend your right to say it." One of the tenets which made H.G.S. what it was, and which made me, a grocer's son from Fitzwilliam, into something I could never have aspired to let alone have achieved. Two experiences formed my life, my years at H.G.S. and my time in the Royal Navy. The total number of years is minimal compared with my lifespan but the impact of my education in these two systems, so different yet similar in so many ways. The philosophy was so similar, the team spirit and the discipline followed by everyone. The man in the next hammock, even though you hated him, might save your life the next day. All this was due to Russell William Hamilton, Percy Crossland, Les. Collette, Daddy Austin, Jas Storer, the Misses Prince, Bromley, Townsend, Shortridge et al. The people who did not have the privilege of attending Hemsworth Grammar School missed out and we are a very lucky few.

Geoff Booth (1939-1945)

4. Unknown Group 1945-46



Back Row L-R: Norma Burden (2C), J. Pearce (2C), E. Parker (2C), G. Howse (2C), Sheila Davison (3A), R. Jennison (2C), Dorothy Pickin (1C), Dorothy Dunning (1C)
Third Row L-R: Eric Sale (1B), Birley (1A), Riley (2C), Elaine Whiston (3A), Dallison (2C), Williamson (1A), Dennis Lawley (2C)
Second Row L-R: Joan Parker (1B), Pauline Chambers (1B), Betty Glover (1B), Miss Williams (Chemistry), S. Passant (1B), J. Watson (2C), E. Ward (1B)
First Row L-R: Wilcock (2C), Keith Megson (1C), Murray (1B), Keith Lodge (1B), Douglas Shackleton (1B)

Can you help with this group. The pupils come from different forms. Perhaps it is a club?

5. Latin text book



Hi Sheila,

I noted your comment in reply to Margaret Woodall (Aug. 13th 2010) and I, like you, enjoyed Latin. Back in the old days certain universities required Latin "O" level for entry to their medical course. Could you or anyone you know remember the [title of the text book](#) (blue, hard cover?) we used for the Latin course which I remember studying from second year (Miss Whitworth) to the exam year with Mr. Swinbank?

Many thanks,

Tony Pickering

Hi Tony

About the Latin textbook – it was either 'Latin Today' or 'Latin for Today', and it certainly did have a navy blue hard back. Somewhere I have a copy of this primer, and I will mail you again with more

information when it surfaces.

Best Wishes,
Sheila

6. A Poem from 1963

Here is a poem by a junior that won a place in the School Magazine for 1963. It was written by someone starting out at the Grammar School and suggests the poet has an inquisitive mind - just right for the situation that all pupils find themselves in when they go to HGS.

MY THOUGHTS

I wonder why trees grow so tall,
I wonder how they built the hall,
What will the Loch Ness monster be?
Does everyone wonder just like me?

Why will a cat eat a fish?
Why isn't there a metal dish?
Why will a cat chase a mouse?
Why aren't we as big as a house?

Who'll be the first man on the moon?
Will the person reach there soon?
Why does a dog chase a cat?
I wouldn't do a silly thing like that.

Why can't the chair at school be comfy?
Why are school mashed potatoes so lumpy?
Why is a girl always scared of a spider?
'Cause I'm certainly sure it couldn't bite her.

I wonder why, I wonder so;
Perhaps one day I'll really know
Till then I'll wonder every day
And that will pass the hours away.

S. A., Normans, Talbot