



Heath Old Boys' Association Newsletter

Issue April 2008

Website: www.heatholdboys.org.uk

WORDS FROM THE HEAD

Head's Speech, Prize Giving 23 November 2007

We've had another successful year at Crossley Heath – as most of you have seen or heard from my letters, termly newsletter, articles, photographs, published results, our newly designed website, media reports, the school Profile and in tonight's programme. At the end of it came another very good set of A level, GCSE and SAT's results, the dependably high level of achievement that students and parents alike rely on us to deliver. By the end of results day this summer the majority of our A Level candidates had places confirmed at their first choice institutions. **A very good year.**

The school has moved forward in many respects during the past 12 months and, as well as having address the issues raised by Ofsted in the last inspections, the following examples will, I hope, give you a flavour of the progress that is being made.

- Our curriculum has been further enhanced and we are allowing students to develop important skills at their own pace with fewer artificial restrictions imposed by traditional time scales and course content. If it is right for them to do so, students will be able to take exams early in some subjects and move on to higher levels of learning. For the first time, in 2006/7, all but 4 Year 10 students achieved a full course GCSE in ICT and Drama was offered as an after school GCSE course. All Year 10 students achieved a full GCSE in Science and in this examination 3 of the 5 highest marks nationally were achieved by Crossley Heath Students.
- We have continued to create enhanced leadership opportunities for students, promoting responsibility, enabling them to become more self-reliant and resourceful and helping them to develop an even greater sense of service to the community. Since the beginning of term, over 50 Post 16 students have been trained in Peer Coaching and are currently supporting younger students. Prefects, buddies, team captains, house captains, junior sports coaches, charity committee representatives, student ambassadors are just some of the roles our students undertake, all enabling them to develop their leadership skills and make a real contribution to decision making and to the smooth running of the school.
- We are broadening the range of opportunities for parents to engage with the School and their child's learning. This year will be the first when parents of students in most year groups will have had an opportunity to meet with Form Tutors (on the Form Tutor Review day, which was an addition to the usual parents evenings) to discuss their child's progress. Two extra information evenings were provided for parents of students in the current Year 8 to keep them informed and to discuss the implications of the new curriculum for their child.
- Our Virtual Learning Environment is constantly being developed. Teaching staff in all departments have invested many hours on work creating and resourcing their subject VLE's. This now allows students remote access to information, resources and guidance, giving them more control over their own learning as they now have access to these areas and to their work from the home environment.
- The number of schools and other organisations with whom we collaborate is ever increasing, the aim being to further raise achievements and broaden the range of opportunities for staff and students (in our own school and others). In addition to extending the number of school we are partnered with through language college links, we have forged mutually collaborative links with several local primary schools.
- The number and range of extra curricular activities has continued to increase. A lunchtime photography club, annual maths challenges, student enterprise competitions and various additional sporting activities have been some of the ways in which the out of hours provisions for students has recently been enhanced.
- Day-to-day standards of uniform have improved. Our Year 11 students now have their own, unique tie, which was designed by a student. The pride with which they now wear the school uniform is partly attributable to this small but significant change, which is really a symbol of the importance we place on the Student Voice.

- In August we received the International Schools Award in recognition of overall provision and the numerous international partnerships and links we have developed. The opportunities provided to students and staff to visit places as far afield as China, New Zealand and Canada, as well as many European countries, has enriched the range of opportunities and experiences for the whole school community and has increased global and cultural awareness.
- We received the Healthy Schools Wards last term. We have made healthy lifestyle a key focus area at Crossley Heath because we know that children who are fit and alert generally achieve better and concentrate for longer. Our Student Council bring suggestions to the catering manager, who is always willing to try to further enhance the range of healthy eating options on offer. All students take part in a range of activities and sport, which enables them to keep fit and the PSHCE curriculum, experienced by all students, helps them learn how to develop their emotional intelligence.
- This summer we received confirmation of second phase funding (for a further four years) as a specialist language college and the Specialist School Trust invited Crossley Heath to join an elite group of schools by awarding us the status of High Performing Specialist School. This is an accolade that has only been awarded to 14% of all specialist schools and is in recognition of success in the specialist subjects, standards and achievements across the school and an overall excellent Ofsted report. We have been invited to take on a second specialism, not in a particular curriculum area but by focusing on Leadership Development. We will be given the opportunity to work with other schools, the National College of School Leadership and the Youth Sports Trust, to further develop leadership skills for both staff and students. The underlying attention being to build our capacity to raise levels of achievement even higher.
- Personal and individual support and guidance for students is a strong feature at Crossley Heath, but we have continued to develop this provision. We now have three student learning mentors, one who has been appointed recently to provide additional support for Post 16 students in particular.

They say that the beauty of life does not depend on how happy we are but on how happy others are because of us. So, is the real answer to finding happiness to think outside of ourselves and to serve others? We are, at our core, relational beings. This is why solitary confinement is thought as one of the worst possible scenarios we could find ourselves in. But when we stop thinking about our own wants and desires and start helping others with their needs, amazing things happen. We are forced to stop focusing on ourselves and we become thankful because we realise how much we have. We experience the true love of giving without receiving and ultimately we develop a deep connection with the human condition. All of us, whatever our profession, can find ways of serving others and I am very proud that Crossley Heath School nurtures this quality in our students. In the past year, our students – your children – have raised almost £20,000 in support of many charities, including Children in Need, UNICEF, the NSPCC, The Laura Crane Trust, Jeans for Genes, Christian Aid, Kidney Research, the Tsunami Appeal, Christmash Child and the Shoebox appeal. Well done to all of them for their efforts on behalf of these causes.

Moving to our plans for the future. Feedback from students, staff and parents is largely positive. It does, however, tell us that the major priority for development (in their view) is school facilities. In particular they confirm what we already know, i.e. that we need better sports facilities and improved Post 16 study areas.

Enhancement of the physical environment is something that remains high on the list of the governing body's priorities. You will have noticed that the existing accommodation is very well maintained. The languages wing was enhanced by the addition of two classrooms in 2003 and investment was made to improve the accommodation for Technology subjects in 2005. Any building development on the Crossley Heath site is, of course, very expensive because we are housed in a Grade II listing building and we are in the middle of a conservation area.

Governors have extensive plans for the School, the starting point being the development of a sports hall, a separate building on the school site. Once a sports hall has been built, it would free up other areas in school and it would then be possible to improve Post 16 accommodation, to provide better study areas for all students, improve dining facilities and make provision for drama and other such activities.

There is, however, a catch. A sports hall will cost approximately £2.3 million. There is no external funding available to the School (and I can assure you we have explored every avenue). Not to be thwarted, the governing body has embarked upon a major project to raise at least £750,000, which will be quite a challenge. The rest of the money is to be raised by a combination of prudential borrowing and investment of the school's dedicated capital grant.

We are holding a series of information evenings for parents and other interested parties. We have already held 8 so far this term and there will be a further 4 events in the new year. Contributions have started to come in, but we need all members of the school community to support us in any way they can, either through direct donations or by providing support in other ways. Planning permission has already been granted and, if we are successful in raising the necessary funds, we intend to have a sports hall on site within two years. Please contact us if you would like further information and/or you would like to support the school.

Prize Giving is a chance to look back and reflect on the successes of the previous year. However, if we think solely of it in terms of examination success and the events that have taken place, we are somewhat missing the point. Prize Giving is about individuals. Every person receiving a prize tonight should rightly be proud of their achievements. They know that their success required discipline, effort, commitment and the courage to succeed. They are not here tonight because they never made mistakes. They are here because they learned to appreciate that it's ok to make mistakes – as long as you learn from them and don't keep repeating the same ones.

As well as the prize winner, I would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to all of the Crossley Heath students who are not here but who worked hard, make valuable contributions to the school and whose perseverance and commitment are characteristics typified by our students. Although I have been Head for over 6 years, I do not take for granted the team spirit and the mutual support exemplified by our students and I observe this on a daily basis. It is part of what makes Crossley Heath a very special place.

- I feel privileged when I observe teams of students motivating and supporting one another in sporting events, which is of course very challenging when you are playing at the very highest level and against equally strong teams.
- I have been moved by the way they help and support one another through personal crises, and
- I have felt a great sense of pride when I have been in the audience at the end of some extremely competitive House events as they take the time to share their success and defeat and to console or congratulate one another.

Perhaps, in anticipation of the refreshment to follow, you will forgive me for describing you are a delightful, sustaining and endlessly effervescent cocktail. Our good wishes go with you and, because so often, the friendships formed at Crossley Heath are sustained for many years, I hope you will continue to consider us your friends and come back and visit us as you progress through life.

In drawing to a close I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to my colleagues on the staff at Crossley Heath, both teaching and support staff. It is a privilege to work with such a dedicated and professional team and we are a very strong team. A team in which everyone has an equal part to play and everyone's contribution is equally valuable in providing a rewarding, rich, enjoyable and safe learning experience for our children.

In the pioneering days of space research, President John Kennedy was visiting NASA at Cape Canaveral. He had met many great scientists and researchers. He had met the men whose great ambition was to conquer space and to walk on the surface of the moon. He had met administrators and accountants and many others whose contribution to the project was immense. Men and women who had a sense of destiny, purpose and pride. Walking through the corridors on his way back to his limousine he came across a stooped, grey-haired man with a bucket in one hand and a mop in the other. It seemed quite a redundant question, but the President asked him politely, "And what do you do here at the Cape?"

Straightening his back, the cleaner looked at the President in the eyes and, with a strong sense of pride and dignity in his voice replied: "Sir, I'm doing the same as everyone else. I'm working here to put a man on the moon. That's exactly what I'm doing here."

Finally, I would like to record my gratitude to the Governors of the School who give so freely and generously of their time to support us. Such ongoing support and counsel is invaluable to the School and we are fortunate to have such wise and willing friends.

Thank You.

NEWS

Heath Old Boys Association Invitation Bowling Competition

This was an excellent and competitive HOBA event with more than 30 entrants, mostly old boys, taking part at Green Royd Bowling Green, Halifax, on Sunday, 20th May 2007. Old Boys travelled from as far away as Cumbria and North Yorkshire to enjoy the day. The eventual winners were HOBA secretary Jon Hamer and partner(his dad) with the runner's up being HOBA Chairman Jim Farrell and partner. Congratulations to all involved for making it an enjoyable day.



"The sun shone bravely on this inaugural Tournament held at Greenroyd Bowling Club. 'Inaugural' because all who attended were clear in their enjoyment of the sport, the surroundings and, above all, the company of the participating bowlers, and in their hope that the event can be repeated in 2008.

There is no reason why that cannot be so.

There was a healthy contingent of HOBs (19 in number) plus John Bunch, the former Head Teacher, 3 Old Crossleyans and 8 others drawn from sundry walks of life and schools - but all gelled together happily as they were thrown into combat on the Green by the necessary controller for the day - G P Smith.

The competition was for pairs in 2 divisions so that all had 6 or 7 games, best of 5 ends. The points allotted for wins (2) and draw (1) produced a first and second pair in each division with them becoming embroiled in the cut and thrust of the knockout stage.

First it was your Chairman, Jim Farrell and Mr Marks against John Bunch and Mr Bailey; a tight struggle (5-3) resulted in victory for the former. On the Green in the other semi-final, the Secretary, John Hamer and his father were locked in winning combat with Mike Bingham and David Robinson (7-2).

And so to the final - where the skill and guile of the Hamers prevailed - 4-1. John Bunch presented the handsome and valuable Trophy which up to that point had been the object of everyone's sporting endeavour!!

Here's to the next time - but be quick with your application to play. The Controller cannot cope with more than 32!"

G P Smith

HEATH GRAMMAR SCHOOL DINNER & AGM

Friday 7th September 2007. Heath RUFC West Vale.



A packed house down at Heath RUFC West Vale enjoyed another excellent School Reunion Dinner. The evening's events started at 6.45pm with the AGM which was commenced and concluded, in ultra quick fashion, by 7.05pm. Then it was onto the pre -dinner drinks, socialising and catching up as many Old Boys continued to flood into the clubhouse for the main event –REUNITING and EATING.

The Dinner was opened by the out -going Chairman Jim Farrell, as the Old Heathens took their seats. What followed was a five course banquet, for only £16 per head, with waitress service included! As the plates were been cleared the evenings speakers were checking their prompt cards and clearing their throats.

First up was Jim Farrell who introduced the speakers Gordon Stansfield and Helen Gaunt in his usual light hearted but savagely cutting manner. Gordon then took to the floor and kept the audience spellbound with his school memories of staff and pupils through the eras. Helen Gaunt was next to her feet and entertained the masses with her humour, which generally targeted Messrs Farrell and Hamer, to the delight of the chuckling guests! A serious update on the upkeep and wellbeing of the current school was also very professionally delivered.

The meal eaten, the speakers spoken, the new chair Mick Hynes introduced and £300 raised on the night brought a close to formalities. All that was left was more socialising between the younger Old Boys (some still in their 30s) and older Old Boys (some in their 80s) that had all spent time at Heath Grammar through the ages.

Needless to say Messrs Stollery brothers, Tobin, Harrison, Ellis, Hynes, Hamer, Potter, Richardson, Potts, Farrell and many others were still enjoying the reunion at 2am and beyond.

Some of those attending the 2007 Dinner included: John Greenwood, Andrew Connell, Graham Simpson, Gordon Washington, Paul n Keith Goulden, Walter Shackleton, Ian Freeman, Keith Fawthrop, Ian Hamer, John Bunch, Alan Brearley, Ralph Best, Graham n Russell Smith, Alan Robinson, Chris Sanderson, David Bottomley, Stuart Hoyle, John Charnock, Dave Garforth, Rod Eastwood, John Normanton, Douglas Pilcher, Michael Bingham, Alan Parker, John Davy, Ken Tidswell, Paul Keenan, Rod Kay, John Russell, Mick Orlic, John Wasylw . 2008's Dinner will be in September so get your seat booked early when the date is published.

Your humble Secretary
Jon Hamer

A Thank You from Heath RUFC

“Dear Jim

Just a note to say thank you very much to the Heath Old Boys Association for their very generous donation of £500 to help start our Club Development Fund Raising Appeal. I have attached a covering letter that is going out to the club membership which I have purposely mentioned your kind donation to show that the club and its Heath Old Boy members still have that connection – and long may it continue.

Once again on behalf of Heath RUFC thank you.”

Dave Grayson
Chairman
Heath RUFC – 15th March 2007

Development of Heath RUFC and Fund Raising

Dear Club Member

As you are aware the club has undergone some significant positive developments on the field with the successful set up of the junior section, the regular success of the 3 open age teams etc.

This success coupled with the use of the clubs facilities by the Stainland Lions Runners, the Anglers, netball and others has put a great deal of strain on the club's already tired facilities and it's infrastructure. As discussed with you all at last year's AGM and at monthly committee meetings, various decisions at improving these facilities have been made and this is where we are at currently:

1. RFU funding applied for to improve the grounds and clubhouse. There was initially some lengthy discussion around security of the loan and the ability to repay. This was overcome but then we have had the RFU architects being very particular about the size of the changing rooms, showers and drying areas insisting that their specifications are met as a condition of the loan. This would lead to the proposed extension being twice the size as that proposed and the costs rising accordingly so we are now investigating a new build as an alternative and, in many ways, possibly a better way forward. Initial plans have been drawn up and are to be submitted in time for the next review meeting of the Rugby Foundation, which is to be held in April. The outcome of this meeting will then determine how we move forward and the final decision will then go to an EGM.
2. Your committee feel that waiting any longer on the matters below is inappropriate and we must start to do work on key areas identified for development, be it from a health and safety perspective or presentation. To this end work will start immediately on building the new entrance to the site from the other side of the garage. You will have seen rubble being stacked there to form a base for this entrance and the entrance will be completed by the start of next season.
3. Funds have been secured to finish off the stand to incorporate terracing, seating and to possibly enclose the sides of the stand. Again this will be completed by the start of next season.

I am now at a point of launching a ground development appeal fund to raise £50,000 and have already secured our first £500 cheque from the Heath Old Boys Association, which is sat in a separate interest bearing deposit account.

A more detailed fund raising portfolio will be published later and it will allow people from all income brackets to contribute no matter how large or small the donation.

Here's to bringing Heath into the 21st century!

A Heathen Century – Heath in the Seventies

The final complete decade of the School began with a series of retirements of Staff who had given sterling service to the school.

Walter Swale, revered Headteacher from 1946-71

The 1971 Heathen paid many outstanding and complimentary tributes to the 23rd Headmaster of the School whose interests and traditions he nobly and enthusiastically championed. Under his guidance, the School developed in many ways: extensions, improvements and adaptations to buildings as we see them today; the Old Boys Association was re-founded by him along with the Parents Association. Others besides Mr Swale contributed to the School's successes, of course, but it is he above all others, who co-ordinated and directed the policy of the school. His vision was clear, matched by courage and determination. He supported each pupil and member of staff which earned him sincere and profound respect.

Tributes to his services were repeated on several occasions leading to his retirement. They were spontaneous and a recognition of his worth and devotion. Such was his lasting impression upon both students and staff that, on his entry to the Hall during the 400th Year Celebration in 1985, his sudden appearance witnessed a standing ovation from all present. In short, Mr WR Swale is Heath.

The following year saw the retirement of Arthur Owen who had been appointed to the School in 1935. Again, and understandably, glowing tributes were paid to a Classics Teacher whose enthusiasm was infectious. NJ Gain's tributes states, "In Arthur Owen, Heath has had one of the best of schoolmasters and the country an educational statesman".

Kindness, patience, dignity, authority, wit and wisdom are only a few of his qualities outlined in detail amid many references to Latin, which I have long forgotten (probably never did understand, in the first place, if honest!) the meaning of but understand the intimations of an outstanding teacher.

Mr Harry Birchall came from Carnegie College in 1936 and took charge of Physical Education until 1973. During that time he used his considerable athletic talent, attention to detail in organisation, tireless effort, persistence and patience. He served throughout the 2nd World War, being seriously wounded in the invasion of Italy before returning to ensure the standards of rugby reached record heights from an establishment so small and were, especially in rugby 7s history at Ilkley, ones to use as an example of good practice. How ironic, that, in his final years he was to ensure that that reputation was to be repeated with one of his last ever 1st Form intakes in the early 70s.

Science master, Mr Herbert Morris, was another long serving member of staff who retired in 1972 with a distinguished career both in performance, commitment and respect from pupils and staff. In his time, he supervised the expansion of scientific studies at the school as well as buildings where he spent much of his time. As a teacher typical of his time, attention and commitment to detail as well as no nonsense discipline with an underlying sense of humour, he ensured that high standards by sixth formers were achieved. His interest in Photography saw the fruition of the Photography Society, Radio and Electronics Society as well as trips to Austria and Switzerland.

Mr Littlefair too retired in '72 after first coming to the school in 1966 as Senior Modern Languages. Despite adapting to new methods of examinations and syllabuses he ensured high standards which went beyond languages and into dramatic productions and he was Queens House Master. He, like others before him, was well liked by students particularly for his pastoral qualities and his colleagues alike.

Birchall, Morris and Littlefair "all have orderly minds, a real capacity for hard work, great determination and efficiency, a great love of their subjects and desire to impart it to others, undoubted loyalty to the school and ability to communicate with pupils and arouse interest." If losing those staff was not bad enough, the retirement of long serving and committed Staff continued over the next few years.

Mr Frank Haigh, came to Heath for his first and last post fresh from Cambridge in 1936. Daily he made the trip to Halifax and back by train from Leeds. His service particularly to First Formers throughout his career must surely be unrivaled, including playing full back for the First Form Team when allowed as well as organising the Choir. Beyond his playing career, he continued alongside Mr Birchall to provide a vital and supportive foundation in the early years of schooling at the school. Equal zeal and respect of high standards were given to music and the school Choir. A Classics and Geography teacher as well as

Music Master, many generations of boys who were not perhaps gifted in languages or science or maths earned their passes (and Distinctions) which they otherwise might have missed. They owe much to him!

Not until 1978 did the School see the retirement of Mr DM Hallows who served the school for 31 year particularly in Maths, as Deputy Headteacher (from '72, 1972!) numerous Society and Parent Association Treasurers and Tuck Shop Accountant! "The man had so many facets to his character that it is difficult to know where to start The contribution made by 'DMH' is immense, let there be no mistake to this." All this plus his outstanding knowledge and teaching of Maths. As many boys and men were to discover, his bark was worse than his bite along with a genuine, friendly warm hearted teacher and colleague.

Albert Crosby succeeded Swale as Headteacher and reigned before JT Bunch - with JEM Blythe his deputy - held the post to the final closure of the School. They were within a younger but nevertheless equally talented and committed members of staff, including AN Connell, DRA Morton, AV Edwards, GM Stansfield, PKeenan, Dr Dean, PF Hand R Kay F Rule, IC Hogley, JM Newton, RF Eastwood to name a few who entered the School giving further impetus and upholding the traditions to the end and on into the new "C.Heath School" after the merger. My apologies to the many others whose hardwork and loyalty was valued by pupils and colleagues, alike, but space does not allow.

Close scrutiny of Heathen Magazines of the 70s era provides ample evidence of the vibrant School with many Clubs, both sporting, arts and academic, being run by staff on a voluntary basis both during and after School.

Clubs include: Fives, Badminton Cross Country, Knur & Spell, Chess, Young Scientists, Transport, Scout Group (thanks 'Bonzo' Makin for allowing me in during wet lucthimes even though I wasn't a Scout) Radio and Electronics, Christian Discussion, Favourites, Basketball, Biology Club and The War Games Society . All deserve more than a mention but it would take another decade to recount some of the many memorable events. Their provision by a dedicated and committed staff and elder pupils is none the less valued by many who benefitted.

Music Society

This decade also saw and heard a superb School Choir under the baton of Michael Hampshire. The Choir made regular performances in Cathedrals around Yorkshire and such a healthy reputation was created that they also became the Choir in residence for a week at Bath Cathedral.

The House System continued to flourish with series of competitions. The new Pool at Huddersfield Road created opportunity for Swimming and of course the legendary 'Plunge', dominated by Sunderland's 64' 4" record; English Schools Championship swimmer MJ Seary, Yorkshire Schoolboys CJ Short, MWood-ives and Atherton to name but a few outstanding performers.

Drama Society

Befitting the history of the school, the Dramatic Society, continued to flourish in the 70s, with a series of outstanding Drama Productions.

"Hamlet" (JH Peevers) ably supported by B.B. Baxter (Polonius) and Horatio (P.D.M Grabham) was one of the final productions under Mr Hardill before Mr Bunch and Mr Talbot became Directors.

"The Devil's Disciple" (played by M.J.Shaw, alongside S.Bonfield [General Burgoyne] and many more), set the scene for the new, more professional approach with a larger stage and 'real girls' from Princess Mary's High School.

Flushed with theatrical success, this was followed by Shakespeare's "The Winter's Tale" starring G.J. Hyland as Leartes and many more notable performances. As usual, there were many supporting the scenes, especially Mr Morton who continued to produce fantastic artistry with backdrop scenes and Mr Newton with his lighting expertise.

Further success continued with an Upper School production of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible", by S.Shipman (John Proctor) P.Lucas (John Hale) and C.Green as (Danforth). This was followed by a Lower School performance of "The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew" with talented leading role being played by KN Walton (Bolligrew), S.M. Beverley (Fitzoblong) and D.A.G. Brooksby (Bobble-knob – I still take this casting personally!).

"The Fiddler on the Roof", directed by Mr Talbot, was worthy of a stretch on Broadway and rightly performed to packed houses. It was arguably the most ambitious but nevertheless outstanding performance of the decade and for quite some time. The success of the Drama Society was bolstered by the emerging actors becoming 'elder statesmen' along with a combination with the highly talented School Choir anchored by the talented KN Walton (Teyve). The props and scenery were equally

impressive being produced by 6th Form woodworkers under the enthusiastic and skilful workmanship of Mr Keenan.

The end of the decade saw a series of lavish musical productions brilliantly directed by Brenda Hewitt and Michael Hampshire, starting with 'Oliver' and a cast of hundreds.

The involvement of girls from Princess Mary High School brought a new tradition to these productions – real females playing female roles. This lent itself to the only sex education being offered within the school curriculum at the time – a memorable decade of performances.

Sport continued to play a major role in developing pupils' healthy lifestyles. Cross Country teams across the school were ably led by Mr Connell and later Mr Keenan along Linden Road and into Copley Woods.

The Inter-Form Cricket Competition featuring a handicap system for sides ranging from Staff XI to 1st Formers was the brainwave of Messrs. Edwards, Stansfield and Bunch. Their insight into promoting the game was surely a fore runner of twenty twenty cricket and razzmatazz later seen in the early 21st Century!

With buckets of water, garden rolling and pushing of grass cutters during Games lessons, a couple of wickets were created on the centre of Conways Rugby Pitch – I would love to have seen their lesson plans for this! From there, a series of competitive matches was watched in glorious sunshine on the 'Conways Hill' year upon year by all the school. The advent of Risk Assessments had not yet been born which enabled the Infirmary Car Park and House Windows across the road being put under constant threat of damage as big hitting and reckless running between the wickets was the order of the day as teams endeavoured to overcome challenging handicaps against younger teams. Tactics evolved and transferred into more traditional fixtures. It is worth noting here that the standard of cricket and enthusiasm for cricket continued to be excellent thanks to the staff, in particular Mr DRA Morton. Half of The Halifax Red Triangle League Representative XI come from the sixth form of 1978!

The decade cannot go without a serious mention of Rugby Football. Rugby continued to play a strong and important role within the school under the new guidance of Mr Ieuan Jones, the Welsh International Gymnast. The side of '74-'75 was one of the most notable sides in the School's History with the likes of Race, Seary, Reville, Brear, Oldfield Hilton, Smithies et al playing leading roles alongside one of the School's most talented sportsman ever, NJ Barrett. He played rugby and cricket for Yorkshire and North of England Schools and should be placed in the same bracket as JP Horrocks-Taylor, WM Bussey and RC Broughton. SJ Haliday (Yorks U19s in 1971) in the school's sporting elite.

However, it was the team of 1977-78 under the robust leadership of RJ Scholefield and Coaches Mr Edwards and Mr Hobson, that was unquestionably, yes unquestionably, the best ever side in the School's 400 year history, despite creditable claims from earlier decades and that of some pretenders to the crown in the coming 80s! to follow.

Notable victories were by the margin of 128-0 over Sowerby Bridge GS and over Crossley & Porter (including future British Lion Brian Moore) by 45-15 to become the first HGS side to become Calderdale & Kirklees Champions. A record of 608 points for and only 88 against speaks for itself. Surprisingly only centre Bates PJ gained County honours – he reached 100 points before Christmas as did Scrum Half D.A.G. Brooksby. Other notable performances were the high scoring speedy wingers, P.J. Beverley and D.G. Bates. It was the most successful side in Yorkshire School records that year, (the only defeat in England being at the hands of Cardinal Hindsley with an injury hit side).

The Sevens side epitomised previous 7s teams of the past reaching the Ilkley 7s Final, only to lose in injury time to a sudden death try against Leeds GS and reaching the Final of the Halifax Sutcliffe Cup. This was then followed by a ground breaking tour in Europe which saw a shared series against Racing Club de Rouen RFC Under 19s. Large crowds became the norm at Kensington each Saturday morning as the side's reputation for 15 man flowing rugby evolved. The quality of the side is emphasised by 2 players (D.G. Bates and Brooksby) playing for Halifax RUFC 1st XV whilst still at Heath GS – the latter later playing for England Universities and Yorkshire. They were later to be followed by 7 other players who were to play for Halifax 1st XV – again, no other school HGS side could match such a record.

Squad members names should be written into the School's history: Atkinson, Beverley P, Bates P, Mitchell, Bates D, Beverley S, Brooksby, Taylforth S, Marshall, Marshall, Taylor P, Dawson, Heady, Potter, Scholefield, Walton, Best, Shannon.

The provision of education within and beyond the curriculum in the 70s was outstanding. Many pupils passed under the Favour Gates and gained outstanding service from a talented and committed staff.

The same pupils eventually left under the Favour Gates, and to this day, benefit from the quality and unforgettable experiences provided by staff and peers.

Thanks to Mr Eastwood for his advice, encouragement and usual corrections to my spelling and punctuation!! Back to the good old days!

Dorian Brooksby [1971-78]
13 June 2007

SPEECH DAY NOVEMBER 1963



Back Row

Robinson, Holland, Hodgson, ??, Read, Lumb, Hartley, Parker, ??, Collins.

Middle Row

Chisllett, Clegg, Stead, Riley-Gledhill, Pagan, ??, Buttle, Ingram.

Front Row

??, Crawshaw (partly hidden), ??, Littlefair, Moss, Meir.

If you are one of the boys in the picture - or know any of them - then please contact the Vice Chairman.
Photo kindly submitted by Alan Parker.

DEAN BAKE [1969-76]

I've just come across this great website by accident.

I was at Heath Grammar between 1969-1976. It was amusing to read the great Walt Swales introduction to the prefects. I remember him gliding down the hall with his gown flowing and taking command of the assembly like some great army general, leaning on the lectern with the eagle. Its a shame they don't have people like that in schools anymore.

I have very fond memories of my time at the Heath. It was also interesting to read about the people who have left and joined the police force, as that is what I did and have been in the Cheshire Constabulary as a Sergeant since 1981; only 4 years to retirement.

I look forward to visiting the site as it builds.

Many thanks, Dean Bake

BARRY HILL [1977-82]

"I attended Heath from 1977 to 1982 and wasn't exactly a model pupil. Attendance was more on a part time basis and, even when I was there, I wasted what I now know to be a very good opportunity. Still, I had a chance to make amends following a horrific car crash thirteen years ago that left me blind. In 1998, I enrolled at college then went on to university in Huddersfield and, two years ago, came out with a respectable 2:1 BSc Hons in Behavioural Sciences.

Since then, I have worked, on a voluntary basis, on several health and disabilities committees, including the Halifax Society for the Blind for whom I advise on technology used by and for visually impaired people.

This degree and voluntary work put me in good stead for a recent job application, for which I am delighted to say that I have been successful. I will soon be working for the BBC as the Access Technology Manager. This will mean that I will work with the Access Technology Strategist to provide continuous support and advice to project managers, disabled people and Heads of technical services to ensure a cohesive and generic level of service across the BBC. This will be done by my providing advice and practical support using assistive technology, allowing people with diverse disabilities to use the in-house applications throughout the BBC. I'm sorry, guys. I won't be able to influence programming schedules and content.

On reflection, I'm sure some of the lessons at Heath must have sunk in and provided a firm foundation for future education and consequent job offer. So, perhaps my time there wasn't completely wasted."

Barry Hill"

Derek Martin

"Dear Jon; this is just to report that we changed address in the early part of this year. The castle had grown too big for us and there seemed no alternative but to look for somewhere smaller. Also my very modest reserves of energy were being exhausted by the battle against windfarms, the imposition of which on remote and beautiful places is a con trick to match the Iraq war. Anyway, my address is now (address withheld). I was previously at Ardvoirie Castle in the Isle of Harris.

I find it very pleasant to be in touch, however remotely, with Heath, and I find I dwell on it all with surprising frequency and some melancholy. Good wishes to you and many thanks for all you do to keep it all alive.

Derek."

FAZAL ELLAHI [1977-84]

"I was just trying to update my entry on a networking website and add some details about Heath school, when I decided to quickly Google for it, and ended up reading this fascinating account at: <http://www.heatholdboys.org.uk/memories/80s.htm>

It alleges that I (Fazal Ellahi, at the time) was the candidate for the Alliance Party, which I can't remember doing! Okay, it might have happened, but the bit about throwing the towel in and joining the conservatives sticks in my throat.. Did we really do that? Holland never made it to Oxford, he came to Durham along with me and Simon Stead...

One thing I found missing was the dedication of the teachers at Heath, how for example they were willing to give free out-of-hours lessons to pupils.

I got an 'A' in O-level latin, and a good A-level in Further maths from free lessons. Can you imagine how much those lessons would have cost if you had to pay a professional teacher?

Hope you're doing well, and enjoying life, wherever you are.

Kind regards

Fazl Rahman (29th August 2007)

(Formerly: 'Ellahi' -- that was always my Dad's last name, not mine.. it's complicated, but it only cost £3.50 to correct..)

PS I have added this blurb to my linked-in entry:

I joined Heath unaware its forbidding walls enclosed one of the best teaching traditions in England. I got an 'A' in Latin via free lunchtime lessons from Mr Guy, and Simon Stead and I got free Further Maths lessons from Albert Crosby. Such dedication in teachers was certainly not seen at some of the other schools that friends of mine attended. Heath Grammar was given Royal Charter by the original Queen Elisabeth (1st) as a free school (no fees: you pass an exam) over four centuries ago. The road its on is named 'Free School Lane' after the school. The fools at the local education authority first dropped the 'Grammar' as a compromise to Crossley-Porter School (a bigger but not better rival..) who also wanted 'Grammar' in their name. Soon after Heath's 1985 Quatercentenary Anniversary, they closed it and moved its teachers and pupils to the now renamed 'Crossley Heath' school. "

Gaby Bussmann

"To all the old Heathens.

After 25 years of fond memories of my year as German assistant at Heath Grammar School I started 'Googling' for your former school and came across this site.

Since my memories of teaching German at Heath are still very vivid and only of the most pleasant sort I would just like to send some very sentimental regards over to you who share an affection for this really special school.

I have in fact been teaching English and History at a girls grammar school in Muenster, Germany for a while now and very happy in that job.

Some of the names sound familiar (Mick Hynes?) and I am still in touch with David Holland (L6 in 1982). I'd be very glad to hear from others who might remember me. Until then I wish you luck and all the best.

Gaby Bussmann, German Assistant in 1982/3."

Nigel Shields [1970-77]

"Where can I find old copies of Heathen magazines?

I attended Heath School from 1970-1977, along with my twin brother Nicholas. I found a copy of the magazine on your website (1973) I think. I haven't had anything to do with the school since I left, but do have very fond memories of the place.

I now teach English in Northumberland (middle school) and would be interested to find out anything interesting about my contemporaries.

Thanks,
Nigel Shields."

Ken McGill [1938-45]

"Dear Jon

Many thanks for the correspondence and data on Heath Old Boys – much appreciated.

I joined the august body of Heathens in 1938 as did my elder brother, Doug McGill, in 1937 before he joined H.M.S. Conway to be turned out as a young midshipman, suitably equipped to help win the war.

I was recommended by the Rev. D.J.D. Smith to be trained in the Fleet Air Arm as a pilot and, frankly, I think he knew what he was letting me in for!! If nobody knows, he flew in the Royal Flying corps with

Cyril Hirst who was the C.O. of the Huddersfield Air Cadet Corps in which I was a member whilst at Heath. I did the best I could to kill myself trying to land aircraft aboard H.M.S. "Vengeance" but, happily, survived, unlike Derek Nutter whose name appears on the gates of Heath in Free School Lane – sadly, one of many.

I recall all the listed masters of my era, including Harry Birchall who went to war early during the war and was a wonderfully rugby coach – so much so that I had a trial for Yorkshire school boys after joining the Royal Navy along with a friend called Richard Blakely of Huddersfield.

The name of Geoffrey Wells comes to the fore as the winner of the Victor Ludorum at Heath before becoming a Radio Officer in the Merchant Service. I do not know whether he survived the war but he was our 'star' player and sportsman during my time.

There seemed to be many Stocks', Lumbs at Heath, including later, a Horrocks-Taylor who was cousin to Geoffrey Horrocks-Taylor with whom I played much of my golf after we co-opted him into the Huddersfield Amateurs after leaving Repton School after I had been converted to the game of "soccer" which I had played at my Prep. school. I should have stayed with rugby as a wingman for Kings House at Heath. I skippered the Huddersfield Amateur Football Club in 1954 and 1955 – a club which was formed from mill people in Huddersfield in 1904.

I did venture back into Calderdale when I lived at The Howroyde at Barkisland where I brought up my three daughters which was the perfect scenario of so doing.

Thank you again for the Newsletter and good luck with HOBA in which members appear to be thinning out far too quickly!!

Kind regards and good luck.
Ken McGill

PS I am more than convinced that the Rev. D.J.D. Smith knew what he was doing when he recommended me for flying training in the F.A.A. We all had enormous affection for the man who wielded a powerful cane."

Donald Nicholl – Heath's Finest Scholar?

"A contribution to the Newsletter from someone in his mid-80's should contain a bit more than purely nostalgic reminiscences because, sadly, there will probably be a shortage of people to whom those reminiscences mean much. I hope that what follows meets that condition.

I recently found myself listening to a group of friends, all Old Boys of the same school over roughly a generation, discussing who had been the school's outstanding scholar of that generation. They started by proposing a variety of contenders but, rather to my surprise, finally agreed on one.

The incident made me wonder what the answer would have been if a group of HOBs had set out to identify the school's outstanding scholar of the 20th Century. It seemed like a topic which might spark some views in the Newsletter. I must clearly put up my own candidate and so I propose Donald Nicholl who was an exact contemporary of mine from 34-41. I shared a desk with him: I acted in 3 plays with him: I "farmed for victory" with him in the dark days of 40/41. I wish that more of his talent had rubbed off on me!! In support of my candidate I offer the following extracts from the obituary which appeared in the Times when he died.

"Prophetic" is not a word that should be casually used but there was a sense in which it applied to Donald Nicholl. There was something about the depth and incisiveness of his insight into human affairs, and about the scope and maturity of his moral and religious convictions, which lent his utterances a rare authority for our own times. There was in him a combination of qualities – intellectual and imaginative, affective but critical – that somehow contrived to make an impression of a quite exceptional mind and character..... At school he displayed intellectual qualities that could not be hidden. When the masters at his grammar school decided that he would do best by specialising in history, he promptly won a Brackenbury Scholarship to Balliol.... A student of Richard Southern's at Oxford in 1946 he initially seemed set to become a medievalist (it was typical of him that, having made that decision, he resolved that, to understand medieval Britain, he would need to be familiar not just with Latin but with Irish and Welsh as well. After four years teaching in Edinburgh he became a lecturer in history at Keele staying in Staffordshire for 20 years, being appointed a Reader in 1970 and receiving a personal Chair in 1972.

His interests, however, could not be confined to the Middle Ages. He was fascinated by the urgent intellectual and spiritual issues of our own time. In the 1950s he travelled widely in France and Germany, making contact with many of the leading Catholic thinkers of the day..... In 1974 he was appointed by the University of California to be Professor of History and Religious Studies. Here his informed and arresting teaching methods found full scope.... In 1981 he was chosen to be Director of the Ecumenical Institute at Tantur near Jerusalem, an international centre for theological research. By the time of his return to Britain in 1985 he was becoming known as a writer. *Holiness* (1981) was a classic – deceptively simple, both illuminating and disturbing. He was much in demand as a conductor of Retreats, particularly for Anglican communities.'

There is more but I rest my case. If votes could be sent from the hereafter I would be confident of one – the legendary C.O. Mackley who taught history to the 6th form – when Donald wasn't teaching him!"

From Major Donald Entwistle, Heath 1934-41.

Oliver Smithies – Nobel Prize Winner

Oliver Smithies left Heath in 1943 or 44 with a Brackenbury Scholarship to Balliol. At Heath he was a dedicated scientist and a stalwart of WO Bell's scout troop. His very distinguished career, all of it on the other side of the Atlantic, is copiously available by putting his name into google. I am glad to see that the press release from the University of North Carolina says that he "attended a high school for bright students" which gives us all a bit of reflected glory.

But anyway I imagine this is the first and only Nobel prize for a Heathen.

Submitted by
John Palmer (1939-1946)

OBITUARIES

David CROSSLAND ?-2007 [Heath 1931-1936]

We have been informed of the death of David Crossland who died on 1st March 2007 at the age of 87.

Heath OBA send their condolences to his family.

Trevor DENHAM 1920-2006 - Update

From an email dated 21 August 2007:

"I have just found a short note about the death of Trevor Denham on the Heath Old Boys site addressed to 'Russell' from 'Graham'. He was the grandson of Sharlington Denham, brother of my great grandfather William. I wonder if you or other members have any further information about Trevor or other Denham family members?

My father was Eric Denham, b 23 Sep 1919 d 22 Oct 2002 - he and his older brothers Lawrence and Gerald were also Heath Old Boys.

Thanks for your help.

Jill Denham"

John Geoffrey WASHINGTON: 1925-2007 [Heath 1936-1941]

"Geoffrey died on 24 August 2007 aged 82 years at the Calderdale Royal Hospital after a short illness, courageously borne.

His parents left Halifax for Sowerby Bridge where both he and his younger brother Charles Gordon were born, before returning to Halifax in 1930.

On leaving Heath School Geoffrey worked in the Pathology Department of the Halifax Infirmary for a short time until he realised that he required degree status, which he achieved with a London University B.Sc. He started teaching Chemistry and Physics at the Modern School – Clare Hall, now Halifax High and then left to join the Halifax Corporation Water Board as an analytical chemist. He later returned to teaching as a lecturer at the Percival Whitley College before furthering and ending his career as a Principal lecturer at Huddersfield Polytechnic where he gained a Masters degree in Chemistry – again from London University.

Geoffrey and his wife Margaret celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in year 2000 along with their two children Ruth and Timothy – Timothy also being a Heathen.

Although retired, his energy was unending, especially in his pursuit of photography when he became a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society. He also acted as a Tourist Guide for Halifax, was Secretary of the Calderdale Guides Association and a long-standing member of the Halifax Antiquarian Society. He also enjoyed researching and writing various papers, in particular the History of Peoples Park, Halifax hospitals and workhouses. Many local groups listened with pleasure to his historical talks on Halifax. He really was a keen historian with a passion for his home town Halifax.”

Sent by Gordon Washington.

Eric WEBSTER 1920-2005 [Heath 1931-1937]

“Eric Webster was born in Halifax and brought up in one of the terrace houses between Parkinson Lane and Hopwood Lane. He started school aged five at Parkinson Lane School from which he moved to Heath in 1931. His favourite subjects were history and geography, interests which remained with him throughout his life. He also enjoyed some sports, but regretted that his physique did not allow him to be more active. Eric was touch judge and ‘orange boy’ with the School Rugby XV. He also participated in the school camps held in St, Helen’s on the Isle of Wight in 1936, 1937 and – even though he had left school – in 1938.

At the time that he left after taking his School Certificate, few if any of his class stayed on at school and went to University; “maybe,” Eric said, when recalling his schooldays at Heath, “we were all dim!” He added that “there was a group of about 16 of us who didn’t even get a job for a few months, and we were accepted back at school as an ‘Extra Vllth’ form.” Three mornings a week they attended the Technical College for business studies. He paid tribute, in his contribution to our Newsletter, to DJD Smith as “the best of headmasters” who had made all the arrangements.

Working first in the machine-tool industry on leaving school, Eric then joined the Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy as an engineer in 1940. He served on aircraft carriers, and in India and Sri Lanka towards the end of his service, returning to Halifax on demobilisation in 1946. He trained as a teacher and taught in several secondary schools in Halifax and Sowerby Bridge for twenty years. He was then appointed the first Warden of the Teachers’ Centre, which he helped to set up in Horton House, and later at Bermerside. He retired in 1980 but continued using his teaching skills by lecturing for the Workers’ Education Association (The W.E.A.). He specialised in the history of Halifax, and was heard on radio being interviewed by Brian Johnston in “Down Your Way” and later appeared on television in the BBC series “History on Your Doorstep”. He wrote a number of books – “Halifax, the Town we live in”, and “Halifax – an Industrial Town” were written before he retired, and afterwards he produced a number of works covering various aspects of the history and development of the town, such as the Market, the industries and transport. He held a number of positions in the Halifax Antiquarian Society, including that of President, and contributed many articles to their transactions. For Heath School he was instrumental in carrying out research into the names on the World War II War Memorial, so that the achievements of the scholars who gave their lives should not be forgotten. The results of his work were featured in this Newsletter, and the documents were deposited with the Headmaster for the school archives, office bearers of the Old Boys’ Association, with the Teachers’ Training Centre offices – outside of which the memorial gates stand – and with the Central Reference Library in Halifax.

At the celebratory dinner to mark the 400th Anniversary of Founder’s Day, held in the main hall of Crossley Heath School on 4th July 1997, it was Eric Webster who proposed the toast to the memory of the Rev’d Dr. John Favour and to the School. In 2001 he contributed an interesting item to this Newsletter remarking that, although retired, he had been asked to accompany a group of German teachers studying the industrial history of Halifax to the Teachers’ Training Centre by then based in the

Heath School Buildings. Eric thought it strange how he as a lad had gone to school there and then much later had set up the first Teachers' Centre in the town and then returned to his old school, Heath, at the age of 80 to make a small contribution to the work going on there as a Teachers' Centre!

Heath Old Boys' Association wish to offer their sympathy to his widow, Hazel and to his family. His knowledge of and interest in the history of the school and town have been much appreciated, and will be sadly missed."

Sent by David Bottomley.

YOUR COMMITTEE

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