



Heath Old Boys' Association Newsletter

Issue July 2009

Website: www.heatholdboys.org.uk

WORDS FROM THE HEAD

Extracts- Head Teacher's Prize Giving Speech 2008

We have continued to achieve great things at Crossley Heath. You will have seen or heard of these in my letters, in Dispatches – our termly newsletter, in media reports or on our website. At the end of the year came another excellent set of A level, GCSE and SAT's results with many outstanding individual, group and subject performances. By the end of this summer's results day the majority of university applicants had places confirmed at their first choice institutions. Alongside this we have, both individually and collectively gained a great many other achievements and accolades.

These successes and achievements arise from strong teamwork. Individuals working together to provide support and guidance and to help one another through difficulties and adversities. Crossley Heath School consists of such a team of people - staff, students, governors and parents and the mutual friendship and support that exists in both the best of times and the worst of times has ensured another **very successful year**.

Indeed, we have spent much of the last 7 years building some very strong links, in becoming an extremely inclusive school, in demonstrating numerous areas of strength and expertise and in working collaboratively to share the good practice that exists across and beyond Calderdale.

In 2007 we received High Performing Specialist School status as a direct consequence of MFL being judged to be an outstanding department and it continues to go from strength to strength. I believe it would be difficult to find a better MFL department in any other school in the country.

Having received High Performing Specialist School status, we were granted a second specialism, that of Leadership Partner School (1 of only 14 in the country) with a focus on raising achievement for all students through the development of high quality leadership at all levels through partnership work. Since Last December, we have been working in very close partnership with 2 Calderdale and 2 Rochdale secondary schools. As a result of this collaboration, we have also received support for our involvement in 2 new pilot studies aimed at Narrowing the Gap between the outcomes of performance for different groups of students in English and in MFL.

As a school we know very well (and we are constantly being reminded by students and parents) that our 144 year old building, although outwardly very grand and of great historic value, is not fit for purpose in terms of 21st century education AND that our facilities are greatly lacking. Our Asset Management Plan sets out our accommodation needs very clearly. However, this on its own is not enough for us to be placed at the top of the list when it comes to the need for major refurbishment and/or new build. In order to meet the Government's requirements, we at Crossley Heath have to identify collaborative, transformational ways of further developing educational provision for the young people of Calderdale. We do not qualify for additional funding streams as the criteria that triggers the release of such additional sources of money are primarily based upon low ability and/or deprivation. Our school may be included in the plans submitted for the early phase of BSF funding in 2011 or we may have to wait for the 2013 round.

In any event, we do not expect (as a result of BSF) to see significant changes to our accommodation or facilities until at least 2011.

However, we can and will continue to see significant changes in the nature of educational provision, for our children and in the exciting opportunities arising from the partnerships that are being developed - both for staff and students.

Staying on the subject of facilities for the moment, I would like you to cast your minds back to this time last year when I told you that we had just embarked upon a major project to raise monies to build a new sports/community hall at Crossley Heath. I told you we would need to raise £2.3million pounds in order to make this happen.

Raising money is not easy at the best of times and we certainly picked our moment - during the credit crunch and when the country is on the verge of a major recession. I am now able to report to you that we go out to tender at the end of November with a view to starting work on site next spring and completing building works towards the end of 2010. We are in this position because we have managed to raise approximately £400,000 ourselves (some from parents, former students and other supporters of the School); the LA have agreed to a Prudential Borrowing loan of £650,000; we are confident that our bid to the Football Foundation for £350,000 will be approved and we have committed a further £450,000 of the School's capital budget over a period of 5 years. This leaves us approximately £350,000 short of our total and we intend to continue fundraising until we have the full amount. So our students WILL have the kind of facility they deserve for sport, dance, drama and so on. At this point I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has helped or supported us in reaching this position.

Results in 2008 were some of the best ever achieved at A2. The average point score per student and the Percentage of grades A and B increased for the third year running to an all time high. 13 subjects exceeded the school target for the proportion of students achieving A/B grades, with Geography at 95% and History at 86%. In these two subjects, along with Film Studies, Art, French, Maths and Further Maths in excess of 75% of students achieved A and B grades. Alongside this, the Year 13's were a bright, bubbly, conscientious and committed group of individuals. The quality of Post 16 leadership reached an all time high and Verity and Edwin, our Head girl and boy, certainly kept the Leadership Group on our toes.

At GCSE the average total point score per student rose as all students took the dual ICT award for the first time. 9 subjects exceeded the school target for the percentage of A*-A grades, with 79% of students in RS and 73% in English Language achieving at the highest level.

Despite the high expectations that we have of our students we manage to get the right balance at Crossley Heath. It is clearly visible in the cheerful demeanour of students, which is a delight each day, makes association with our school a pleasure and a privilege and which visitors comment upon.

Schools do not improve by sacrificing extra curricular activities on the altar of academic achievement; there is a balance to be sought, and beyond the classroom, we continue to offer a simply outstanding range of activities. Our students enjoy a wealth of opportunities, many departmental based, which continue to expand. An addition to the numerous international opportunities that were already in place came this year with the 2008 trip to Iceland (staff and students created a BLOG during the trip which they updated every day with photographs and a record of their experiences). We really felt we were able to enjoy the trip with them.

Many students had the chance to be involved in the fantastic production of Les Miserables, every performance of which earned standing ovations.

Others have found chances to shine in the field of young enterprise. Indeed last year's Year 11 team, Spiral was crowned best in West Yorkshire despite being pitted against teams largely from other sixth forms. The range of sports provision on offer to our students continues to expand and we hope will get even better when our sports hall is ready for use.

One of the most exciting developments of last academic year, of which we are very proud at CHS, is the way in which use of the VLE has grown across all areas of the School. We embrace new technology, and at Crossley Heath we are making huge steps forward.

We must not forget our governors for their voluntary commitment to the school. We are fortunate to have a governing body that is dedicated to the school and that has its finger on the pulse but never interferes in its running, which certainly cannot be said for all such organizations. In particular, I would like to extend our good wishes and thanks to Grayham Smith, Old Boy of the Heath Grammar School and governor for 13 years, who retired from the Governing Body this summer and, at the same time, welcome several new governors who come with highly developed skills from a range of professional backgrounds. We are fortunate to have their support

NEWS

HOBA Bowls Day/Social Gathering Sunday 18th May 2008 at Green Royd Bowling Club, Skircoat Green

The Heath Old Boys Invitation Bowling Competition attracted fewer participants than the previous year but those attending proved to be fierce and worthy competitors. All pairs were guaranteed six matches and in the early exchanges last years winners Jon Hamer and John Hamer (senior) were looking strong, aiming to secure a newly commissioned and magnificent winners trophy.

Chris Gostridge and Mick Hynes were also looking useful along with Roger Morley and John Armitage who were accurate from the off.

As the day progressed last years beaten semi finalists John Bunch and David Bailey were growing in stature and confidence and becoming a serious threat in the competition, posting some 11-0 drubbings.

As the finals loomed the Hamer clan guaranteed themselves a place finishing unbeaten in the pool stages. The other potential finalists were locked in bowling combat with Russ Smith/Tony Knowles, John Easton/Robin Marks and Bunch/Bailey all battling hard for the other finalist spot.

In the end it was Bunch/Bailey v Hamer/Hamer in the final and what a final!

Bunch and Bailey started strongly leaving nothing for the Hamers, at one point building an 8-0 lead with some superb bowling. A brief fight back got the game to 8-4 before Bunch and Bailey secured the win at 11-4.

HOBA Chairman Mick Hynes made the presentation to the worthy winners who will be keen to defend it at next year's event.

Competitors

Russell Smith, Tony Knowles, Chris Gostridge, Mick Hynes, Jon Hamer, John Hamer, John Bunch, David Bailey, John Easton, Robin Marks, Roger Morley, John Armitage, John Davey, Michael Denton, Rod Eastwood.

Former Heath teacher Yvonne 'Doc' Walls - A British Fencing Champion 2007



Heath OBA Annual Dinner & AGM Friday 5th September 2008 at Heath RUFC, West Vale, Halifax.

Another excellent evening was enjoyed by Old Heathens, some of whom had travelled hundreds of miles, to catch up on old times and new times with old pals.

Following a rapid AGM the social event got into full flow with former pupils and teachers re-acquainting themselves.

At 7.45pm diners were invited to take their places for a five-course banquet at a bargain price containing gourmet delights such as Sproggitts Soup and Free School Lane Chicken followed by a selection of puddings, cheese board and coffee n mints.

With the ale and wine flowing our Chairman Mick Hynes grasped the nettle to say a few words and get the 'stand up sit down' bingo going. Then it was over to our secretary Jon Hamer to eventually find two winners from two games for two fabulous prizes. This was followed by a swift raffle for an extravagant Leeds Tykes RU prize selection. This part of the evening raised £200 to local good causes.

Then it was back to our Chairman to introduce current CrossleyHeath Deputy Head John Morton who gave an update on the schools excellent progress.

This was followed by our Chairman again interacting with the eager and vociferous audience before announcing the next speaker Alan Brearley, one of our older 'old boys', who attended Heath from 1932 to 1937. Alan's memories and humour had the audience spell bound as he gave them an insight into school life in the 30s.

With the food eaten and the speakers spoken the festivities went on into the early hours for many with the usual suspects of Potter, Burnitt, all the Stollerys, Holden, Morley, Richardson, Russell and Orlie being the last to leave

Look out for next years date and make the effort to attend and remember drinking is not compulsory – plenty of old boys leave in the same condition as they arrive.

Invitation Bowling Competition - May 2009

Heath Old Boys gathered in numbers for this years event – Sunday 10th May – at Greenroyd BC with a few Old Heathens making their bowling debut.

Ten pairs took to the green at 1.45pm, with others there to support, in a round robin format ensuring all pairs got nine short matches (5 ends scored or first to 11points).

Early front-runners were debutants Mark Baxendale and Andy Garside who were finding a good early road on the green.

As the matches flowed Tony Chislett and Rob Wallace were proving difficult to beat along with Dom Potter and Phil Stollery

With most teams snatching victories off each other an early shock came about with Jon Hamer and Richard Firth beating last years winner John Bunch who was alongside John Robertshaw, by a narrow 4-3 margin.

As the afternoon progressed Chris Gostridge and Philip Solan were proving to be the dark horses notching up win after win.

With all round robin games complete top of the table were Gostridge /Solan (1 loss) followed by Bunch/Robertshaw (2 losses) with joint third place going to Keith and Richard Fawthrop, Harry Brearley/Roger Dixon, Russell Smith/John Hoggard and Hamer/Firth who had all lost just three games all afternoon.

In an epic final Gostridge /Solan edged ahead by 4-3 after four ends before Bunch/Robertshaw stormed back to take the final by 9-4

HOBA Chairman Mick Hynes presented the splendid trophies to the winners and runners up before a superb buffet was served up to finish off the day.

People present included:

Jon Hamer
Mick Hynes
John Bunch
Tony Chisslett
Rob Wallace
Andy Garside

Keith Fawthrop
Russell Smith
Harry Brearley
Mark Baxendale
John Robertshaw
Rod Eastwood

Richard Fawthrop
Dom Potter
John Hoggard
Phil Stollery
Chris Gostridge
Mike Bingham

Philip Solan
Richard Firth
Roger Dixon
Ian Freeman
John Davey

Photos



Bowling Comp 09 runners up Chris Gostridge and Philip Solan with HOBA Chairman Mick Hynes



Winners John Bunch and John Robertshaw with Mick Hynes



Action from Russell Smith watched by Tony Chisslett

MEMORIES / LETTERS FROM OLD BOYS

Memories of Heath 50 Years On

I entered Heath Grammar School in 1957, one of five successful pupils from Queen's Road School, though the only one of my fellow Queen's Roaders whose name I remember is John Broughton.

My father had been at Heath in the 1930s and five of the teachers whom he had known were still there, Mr Owen, the classics master, 'Tichy,' the French master, the English and the Art masters whose names I forget and Mr Burchall, the gym teacher, though he had not actually taught my father. If my memory serves me, he also mentioned that he had been in the Scout Troop and the model railway club at Heath.

My father told me that at that time, when boys were 14, they left school, started wearing long trousers and started to smoke. So, when he came home on leave from India where he was working, he went to the parents evening and told one of the masters, the English master I think, that I had given him the opportunity he had never had while at school - to smoke in the hall.

In 1957 I was living in Mixenden next door to the son of a Probation Officer who was in the fifth form. Mixenden was then quite a desirable location - my primary school deputy head lived there. I remember getting the uniform and the 20 rules - or were there really only 19 because the last one was that ignorance of these rules was an offence?

We travelled down from Mixenden on the bus, collecting fellow pupils on the way, and we would call in at a cafe just below the bottom of Pellon Lane which had a jukebox on which we could hear the latest releases. We only had Radio Luxembourg to keep us up-to-date, no pirate radio stations let alone Radio 1. We then made our way to the old Halifax Building Society building where the West End bus would take us the rest of the way - or rather it wouldn't because we were supposed to get off in Pellon and go round the other way to the school which we rarely did. So we were supposed to get off one stop before the school.

I mentioned the journey on the bus because one of the pupils who joined us on the way down was a musician who was enthralled by the visit of Shostakovich to England. We were all terribly impressed by Shostakovich because we had learnt in music that Beethoven, Schubert and Mahler hadn't been able to get beyond nine symphonies but Shostakovich had just published his tenth.

At that time we went to school on Saturday morning and had Wednesday afternoon off in order to support the rugby team though most of us went home instead. Homework was incredibly civilised compared with many of the arrangements I have encountered in schools since. We were given two subjects a night and homework for each subject was supposed to take up to 30 minutes. It was stressed that, if we had not finished it within 30 minutes, we could get our parents to send in a note saying we had been unable to complete it in the time. I don't know if anyone ever did; I don't remember ever having homework that took more than 30 minutes per subject. In later years the number of subjects per night was increased but, as I recall, the 30-minute limit remained.

I was in 1B with Mr Guy who taught us Latin and Ancient History. As an aside, we started with Ancient History and progressed through English History in years 2 and 3 and I happened to leave Heath to go to India just when we had done the Tudors arriving in India to find that I would be studying British Commonwealth History from Queen Elizabeth. So I received a continuous historical narrative over the two schools I attended up to O levels.

I hope I have got his name right but I think I sat next to Paul Thompson in 1B and we used to play chess during boring lessons, the travelling set being on the bench between us. We managed pretty well but, unfortunately, Mr Guy had a habit of strolling round the classroom and on one occasion he walked far enough round the class to catch sight of our chess set; so we had to stay behind after class for suitable punishment. I don't think we gave up; I think we just learnt to be more careful.

During our first term Sputnik was launched and I remember Mr Swales, the Headmaster, who taught us geography, going through the proofs that the earth is round and adding the launch of the Sputnik to the list. I later learnt that his approach to geography was very old-fashioned but I do know all the headlands and all the rivers of Great Britain.

The chemistry master was known to us as 'Kettle;' years later I met Mr Guy in Halifax and we were reminiscing when he referred to 'Kettle' as 'Kettle' much to my surprise; only later did I learn that he was always carrying the kettle because the only source of fresh water for the staff room kettle was in the chemistry lab.

In 1957 the new gym and canteen were being built and, for lunch, we all had to walk down to Clare Hall School and back. However, when the canteen was completed, I didn't think much to the quality of the food and, instead of handing in my shilling dinner money, would spend it on a crisp or OXO butty at the tuck shop down the road instead. The tuck shop was a fine institution, which we could visit during break and at lunchtime.

The gym was a different matter; Mr Burchall introduced us to circuit training but in a way I have never encountered since. As I recall, at the start of the term, he timed us round each element of the circuit and then he halved the amount we had done at each element and we had to do that amount at the start of each gym session. Though I have never been very good at sport, I enjoyed the rugby because we were

taught the tactics of rugby in a way, which made great sense to me and enabled me to enjoy the game so much better. I also enjoyed playing touch rigger as a serious game but I was most interested in fives which, with basketball, which I learnt in India, were the games I have most enjoyed playing.

We used to go swimming at Park Road baths and it was well into the second year before I achieved the full length expected by Mr Birchall; the following week the roof fell in (perhaps shock that I had finally achieved a length) and I did not go swimming at school again until I was in India where we had an outdoor pool 6,500 ft up in the Himalayas with a view of Kangchendzonga - a slightly different experience from Park Road!

However, the highlight of going to Park Road baths was the return journey since a slight detour would take us past the back of a bakery which would sell us teacakes fresh from the oven for 2d, whereas they cost 3d in the tuck shop.

In our first year there was no ability streaming but in our second year, Latin, Maths and French were taught in streamed groups and I encountered 'Tichy,' the legendary French master whose last classes of each term always started with the instruction to open the book at a particular page and do a particular exercise which was followed by pleas from the class for a story; after token resistance, he would give in and tell us a wonderful story, usually of French origin.

In my second year, I remember an elderly geography teacher who often got into a flap. If someone misbehaved he might send them to stand outside the Headmaster's office but we soon realised that he only did this when he knew (or thought he knew) that the Headmaster was out. At the end of the class he would go up to the lad and say he was fortunate this time and that he might not be so lucky next time. I remember at least one occasion when the Headmaster did return unexpectedly and the miscreant got more than he, and the teacher, had bargained for.

In my third year I encountered a greatly respected maths master - sorry, I cannot remember his name. He would confiscate sweets from boys found eating in class and then eat them himself in front of the class so much so that some boys would deliberately arrive at his class with sweets to eat. So on the last day before I went to India, I stopped working in his class. When he asked me why I wasn't working, I said I wanted one of the sweets he had confiscated. After a bit of banter, he gave me one.

When I returned from India I spent a term back in Heath and remember the way that Mr Swales addressed all the sixth formers by their first name from day one, having addressed them in the lower forms only by their surnames.

My work has brought me into contact with many mature students who have spoken about their experiences of school and I have been struck by how civilised Heath was - none of the problems with teachers or fellow pupils that so many have described. There was a lad who used to try to bully people but I met him alone in a corridor on one occasion, stood up to him and was never troubled by him again - I never heard of him troubling anyone else though victims don't always say that they have been bullied.

John Hudson

Andrew Stoner [1978-1980]

"Just wanted to drop a note to your site.

I attended Heath Grammar school back in 1978-80 – 2 years total.

My name is Andrew Stoner, I left after my second year to join my Father in Melton Mowbray, later relocating to Chicago, USA to join my Mother and Step-father.

I do recall playing rugby on the under 13 team, James Scrimshaw was a close buddy of my mine. I recall he was probably the fastest person on the team, but I could hold my own. I played mostly Inside \ outside center.

On the web site, I do recognize one additional name, Stuart Anderson. Actually my one lasting memory of him, was that he could "sing" the horn noise from the Dukes of Hazzard TV show.

Anyhow, I still live in America, I am now a US citizen. During my time here, I graduated from high school, 2 colleges (Indiana University and Purdue University) with degrees in Finance and Computer science. I am still single, no children, but have had same girlfriend for the past 14 years (living in sin is so much fun !!!!)

Well, there is a quick update.

Andrew Stoner, 78-80.”

Added December 2008:

"A couple pictures...the only ones I have remaining...1 of a very young Stuart Anderson and me (in France), the other James Scrimshaw."



The Best Heath Rugby Team? Update

The Game that never was!

Rob Stollery's opening discussion on the best team ever was an interesting contribution as was Dorian's follow up. As a member of the 77-78 squad a felt that I should add some recollections.

As Dorian correctly states, Tony Edwards was the coach of the team. He was also assisted in forward play by Frank Schofield – father of Bo Schofield – whose glowering patched-eye presence on the touchline terrified the opposition as well as us. FRS's tactical advice stood me in good stead then, and throughout the rest of my career, " At the kick off you pick out your opposite number and whether he's got the ball or notYou hit him!"

He also once described my play as being like a "Lighthouse at Wainstalls". I took this as being a great compliment, thinking he was referring to my towering play in the lineout. It was Bo who kindly informed me later that what his father really meant was "brilliant...but useless!"



Looking across the team photo there is

Tony Edwards, Jonny "JP" Potter, Quentin Mitchell, "Dilly" Dawson, Alex "George" Best, Neil "Dougie" Greenwood, Stephen "Sue" Beverley, "Slugger" Sutcliffe, "Slim" Taylforth

Phil "Gappy" Bates, "Jod" Bates, Dorian Brooksby, "Bo" Scofield, Phil Beverley, Paul "Spud" Taylor, "Pugs" Marshall

There are many others who played a part in the success of the team particularly Roy Headey, who now as Head of Science and Medicine at the RFU is passing on the skills learnt on Conway's and Kensington to – possibly - a slightly better team.

Others from memory, who were also involved, included Martin "Wilf" Baldwin, Iain Beverley (predictably making up the trio of brothers/cousins known as the "Beverley Sisters"). Others who played cameo roles will forgive me for not remembering all of them.

Naturally we played the game at a time when it still was recognisably proper rugby; no lifting at the line out, handling on the floor was allowed and where even the most callow winger could be drafted in at a moments notice as a replacement Prop.

There were several notable results mentioned already, but in many ways the game that was never played provides more of an indication to the teams success. By December we were still unbeaten and the Yorkshire Post was leading its school rugby reports with our games rather than QEGS or the other leading Rugby Schools. In early January our strongest test yet was faced with an away fixture to Bradford Grammar. However on the Thursday morning prior to the weekend game, Bradford called cancelling the match due to a frozen pitch, which apparently would have no chance of thawing over the next two and half days! Kensington was inspected and the offer to play the game there was made but this was declined as the boys had already been given Prep. So that season Bradford Grammar preserved its 100% record. But for those of us who know, and harbour these things, it was a very hollow record!

Other high spots included a clean sweep of victories over Crossleys (3 times) against a side that contained future British Lion Brian Moore - who these days in his television appearances has less hair but more teeth than he did then!

Some of the games that weren't included in the statistics;

A hard fought victory over Halifax Colts on New Years Day at Ovenden Park. A packed stand of parents and Old Boys witnessed a bloody confrontation when former Heathens who had left at the end of the 5 th year – particularly Hadyr Perrett and "Manx" Masters took great delight in beating the crap out of those who had stayed on. Broken arms and teeth ensued but the battering was made worthwhile by the Old Boys who soothed the pain through lavish purchase of Webster's Pennine Bitter – but it was only 20p a pint in those days.

However, The Old Boys, wily as ever, did challenge the team to a social end of term fixture. Here they applied the Webster's before the game, ensuring that they ran out easy winners.

The team also went on tour to France where two games were played against Racing Club de Rouen. Belated thanks must go to the organisers who somehow managed to put us against possibly the biggest Colts side in France – something getting lost in translation – Apparently "Les Colts" in French means someone over 6ft 4in, 16st and recently released back into the community. (I still need convincing that Tony Edwards was in fact a French teacher). Regrettably, both matches were lost – 12 v 14 and 7 v 0 - but it was part of our rugby education in so many ways (particularly the player who kept returning for a number of months to practice his French with the daughter of the local bar owner).

The strong Yorkshire tradition of thrift also shone through in true style on this tour. On a stopover in Paris a young 5 th former was breathlessly recounting his visit to a certain type of establishment in the Place Pigalle. " It wer' brilliant! They had these films, – 5 Francs for t' pictures or 10 Francs with sound" When asked why he had only spent 5 francs he stared in disbelief. " Don't be daft," he said, "I don't speak French!"

The real spiritual home of the team was, neither Conways or Kensington but of course the Plummet Line – now a sad shadow of its former glory. The snug was usually filled most Fridays and Saturdays – but looking at the team photo – it's a miracle that we ever got served.

My Rugby these days is mainly restricted to watching and coaching minis - although I still turn out for the Vets at my local Club. I still keep in contact with Roy and on most International Match days you can find us in the St Margaret's Tavern, in St Margaret's, close to Twickenham. Any Old Boys particularly those from '77 -'78 who might be heading down to a game, do get in touch. We can bore the rest of the Bar with our tales of Rugby prowess and how much better the game was in our day. And if you hear me telling how I caught the ball behind my own line, running the length of the field to score the last-gasp winning try, please don't correct my memory by reminding me that it was in fact only from 2yds out!

Cheers!
JP

Stephen Joyce [1978+]

"Dear Secretary,

I have dropped emails off to you in the past on a purely random basis. Was sorry to hear the old School House is being knocked down. We had a lot of fun living there, although sharing with you Upper 6th jobs wasn't great. Great house to hide in when we wanted to skip cross country runs with Clint Eastwood. Lots of hidden rooms I swear U6 actually did live in judging by the mess and smell. Plus you could always get into the house before the caretaker opened up as the windows never locked.

I remember having many lessons there, English and History, both with Mr Nick Tobin. History lessons with just 4 or five of us discussing world trips covering all the great historical events of past centuries. Loved English lessons with Clint and Mr Bunch, both of whom became almost human when you became 6th formers. Both helped me get my degree in English Literature, for which I have found no use in the real world.

Had a quick scan through the website and found some pictures from April 08 of you lot playing bowls. My god how old we have become although some of us have faired better than the rest. Sorry Jon is that really how you look now?

Still disappointed to see so little contribution from those of my time there. Where are you guys? I did hear from Gavin Stansfield some years ago and I must apologise for not keeping in touch. Nursing in London last I heard.

I still have a full collection of The Heathen along with my school badge. Somewhere anyways. It's always hard looking back on those years. Some happy times but far too many that were less so. Luckily time is a great healer and the happier ones stand out more for me. However to this day I really can't stand any sport involving a ball of any size or shape! Thank god for Formula One. A true sport!!

Anyways, the old school will always be a part of me, and I promise to keep in touch via the website. I would be interested in hearing any news on the old house.

Yours, Steve Joyce.....1978 till the end.

Living in beautiful Fairford, Gloucestershire with one wife, one dog and an old cat.

Working in Cheltenham, DDM Manager for the Game Group of stores. No we don't play Games all day."

Mark Baxendale would like to hear from Neil Baird or anyone who knows his whereabouts. Contact Mark on baxendalevanzie@hotmail.com. Look

Reminiscences of an ancient Heathen Extracts from a letter by Norman Sunderland Heath 1932-1937

Thank you for sending me the Heath booklet and past HOB newsletters. It was gratifying to learn that the Old Boys assoc. still functions and I have had a lot of pleasure from the articles by masters whom I knew way back in the 30s and messages contributed by Old Boys.

I did in fact join the Association when I left school in 1937 and continued membership after my release from the RAF in 1946, but lost touch with the school when I left Yorkshire some years later. Alan Brearley and Clifford Marshall, both in my form, remained life long friends. Sadly George Lassey and Alan Waring lost their lives in the war. Mr Byrde was Headmaster in 1932, rather a terrifying figure I thought. He rebuked me sternly at an entry interview for not helping to milk cows on my father's farm, but an awareness of David Copperfield and other stories by Charles Dickens apparently won the day, It is a measure of my youthful naivety that the most persistent memory of Mr Byrde is of his breaking down at morning prayers in announcing the abdication of Edward VIII.

Mr Phoenix was probably the master I most respected. There was a sense of fun in his classes. He always referred to me as Sunderbus but, despite the raillery, certainly instilled a lot of chemistry.....

My clumsiness over French, with an abysmal pronunciation and the occasional schoolboy howler must have caused dismay to Arthur Holt, but he it was who encouraged me to perform Mozart with him (when he found I could play the piano) and got me together with Eric Harrison, one of the school's star pupils, with a view to playing a Mozart double concerto in duo. I was not in Eric's league and though we tried, the dream never came to fruition. Eric was to become a highly rated professional pianist and I remember him performing in a Henry Wood promenade concert. About that time I gave up piano lessons in favour of the organ and later took up a teachers position for a few years at St Mary's Church, Illingworth.....

Mr Holt also introduced me to opera. On the schools first European trip to Belgium he took some of us to hear Gounod's Faust at the Brussels Opera House. For a humble farmer's lad who had not ventured far from the Wheatley valley that experience was overwhelming and it led to much more opera going over the years.....

Photography was my job in the RAF and produced a splendid collection of aerial pictures which were shown at an Old Boys meeting and captured the interest of Mr Gain. He borrowed them, presumably to give some verisimilitude in his lessons. The same photographs were subsequently purloined by the Professor of Botany at the University of Leeds, from which a series of slides were made for use in her varied lectures and talks....

The circumstances of war changed my outlook on the future. I felt ill at ease with pharmacy which I had taken up after leaving school and accordingly abandoned it when the Government, through its post war Educational and Vocational training scheme, gave me a grant to pursue a degree course, ostensibly to take up teaching. I thus began reading biology at the University of Leeds in 1947. On completion of a Ph D I was invited to join a small research unit in the Dept. of Agriculture in Oxford where I stayed for 4 years. I remained in genetic engineering and worked at the John Innes Horticultural Institute near Hertford and then East Anglia concentrating on reproductive cells.....

The 70s became frantic decade for me with invitations to speak at International Conventions at Universities all over the world, the most interesting being China in 1978.....

A far cry from Beacon Hill and millstone grit but a fitting tribute, I hope, to Halifax Education Committee for the reward of a Borough scholarship.

Norman Sunderland (1932-1937)

Speech Day 1963 Photo

"I have just been directed to the photograph of Speech Day 1963. Yes. I am the John Clegg (where did my parents get those glasses from?) in the picture. I am probably the umpteenth person to tell you, but the guy in the front row unidentified with the glasses is David Evans. I lost touch with him many years ago, when he was a high flying computer whizz in Italy. I believe he came back to England but I cannot tell you any more.

For my part, I have been living in the West Country for over 22 years. My career took many twists and turns after University (Bradford for a B Tech in Mechanical Engineering, then Birmingham for an M Sc in Machine Tool Engineering), before winding up in Bridport, Dorset as Production Director of a Company making Technical Netting. We made Camouflage, Cargo Nets for Aircraft, Underslung Nets for Helicopters and the like. Had 12 years in Netting and then left the industry, but not the area. Today my wife and I live in Crewkerne in Somerset where I do some Stock Taking and some Consultancy for an Electrical Engineering Company. We have two children, a 25 year old daughter living in London and a 22 year old son, living in Dorchester. I was never very good at Rugby, but my son is and he plays for Ivel Barbarians in Yeovil.

My contact with Halifax is diminished as my Father died last year and I have no more surviving relatives in Halifax. I am still in contact with Tony Chisslett (also in that infamous 1963 photograph) who lives in Harrogate, Robert Wallace a year above us who still lives in Halifax and Steve Barrett a further 3? years older who also still lives in Halifax.

Nice to reminisce occasionally
Regards
John Clegg"

"Well I must admit that it is many years since I last saw that photo. Oh. how young we looked and so innocent! I no longer live in Halifax and very rarely get over to the old town.

Regards to those who remember me.
Tony Chisslett"

John D LASSEY [1958-1963] Some Reflections of Heath GS

They're not very academic I'm afraid, my motivation came after leaving school when I managed to find some direction to my life. Heath GS did not do careers!
So...here I go..

Lunchtime at the Donkey Bridge to cop a Double Header and return with flattened pennies.
Tea cake and oxo from the tuck shop, with crisps if you were well off, I wonder if it's still there.
Ice cream from a van at the back gate bought from an ice cream pervert.
Trips to Ilkley to watch WM Bussey and Robert Broughton weaving patterns in opposition defences.
Drinking cider and smoking a pipe on the bus then throwing the pipe into the Wharfe, followed by my vomit.

God we were good at rugby, chanting with cheer leaders, what heady days!
Playing stab cricket during French and Latin, Boycott always got a hundred and Trueman bowled South Africa out for peanuts. I played truant, it's ok to say; now the school has closed. One Saturday I went to Bradford Park Avenue to watch Yorkshire play cricket, I was there early so that I could get autographs.
There was the dreaded PD (prefects detention)...write 2 sides on 'A day in the life of a milk bottle top' or teachers detention when you missed Wednesday afternoon matches, sitting in silence for one or two hours.

There were the one liners
'Keep your wood as long as possible as long as possible' Harry Lee
The dead parrot joke by Polly Hallows ...'it's a polygon!'
'I don't know what to give, let's have a bounce up' Jim Mackie refereeing the rugby match on the second pitch
'Stand back it might explode' Dr Fleet, as we all made for the doors

As I said in my preamble the memories are not very academic, but I did ok in maths 'Lassey you must have had a fairy sitting on your pencil' was the comment from Mr Hallows when I made top set maths.
Mr Ball inspired me in the art of map drawing and I could usually perform on the sports field. I wonder if the Beaufort Bronze is still alive (Intermediate 880yards)

So that's it, I eventually followed a career in education, did 16 years as a Head teacher and can still remember 27 names from my form at Heath, like the Capes and Bays of Great Britain learnt by fear, they are in my roots never to be forgotten.

John D Lassey 58-63

Another Famous Heath Old Boy?

The following enquiry came in via the HOBA web site:

'I wonder whether you can tell me the titles of the spy stories, other than The 3-Coloured Pencil, that were written by S .P .B. Mais. As he was an old boy of your school, I imagine you might have copies of these books. I can only find the titles of his many travel books and literary criticisms. I should be very grateful for your help, so that I can try to find them through second hand booksellers.' - V Stopford

Rose Taylor, the Learning Resource Centre Manager, at Crossley Heath School scanned the Heath Grammar School Archive and discovered Mais attended Heath from december 1896 to december 1897, being a pupil in the lower 3rd and upper 3rd during his brief time at the school.

Any ideas regarding his spy novels?

Stuart Petre Brodie Mais (1885 - 1975) was a prolific British author, journalist and broadcaster. The son of a Bristolian rector, he was born in Birmingham but raised in Tansley, Derbyshire where his family moved shortly afterwards. After graduating in English Literature at Christ Church, Oxford and then teaching at a number of schools including Rossall and Sherborne, Mais later worked for National Press at Fleet Street. He was a prolific author writing over 200 books, his reputation was such that Churchill once joked that the speed of his output made him feel tired.

Mais broadcast for numerous wireless programmes for the BBC between the 1920's and 1940's. He was married twice to Doris Snow and then to Jill Doughty. S.P.B (who preferred to be called Petre), was an ardent campaigner for the English countryside and traditions, he was also broad minded and innovative. He began to broadcast a "Letter From America" in 1933, a ground breaking venture at the time, and an idea that has been used by other media figures since. S.P.B. died at in April 1975 at Lindfield, Sussex.

He worked as a journalist for the *Oxford Times* newspaper, and also for the BBC as a radio broadcaster. He presented *Letter from America* from 1933, 13 years before it was made famous by Alistair Cooke, he also presented a series on *This Unknown Island*.

A grandson is the *Evening Standard* writer Sebastian Shakespeare who writes, "My grandfather, SPB Mais, wrote more than 200 books and was a household name in his day. Prolific production alas was no guarantee of riches. He wrote to keep the bailiffs at bay. I'll never forget when my mother told me how she once had to hand over the contents of her piggy bank to his creditors."

OBITUARIES

Martin POTTS : 1966 - 2008 [Heath 1977 -1984]

Martin sadly passed away in November 2008, following his two-year battle with motor neurone disease.

Since leaving school Martin played pro RL with Bradford Northern as well as being an excellent cricketer in the local leagues. Following his retirement from pro rugby he continued to play for Queensbury and Clayton RL before moving into amateur coaching.

He was a regular attendee at the Old Boy functions, enjoying a few pints with his pals and was generally one of the last to leave. Such was his popularity over 400 people attended his funeral. The bands he chose to play him out were The Clash, The Pogues, Billy Bragg and Stiff Little Fingers.

Martin lived in Queensbury with his family. He will be missed by many.

Rest In Peace

*_*_*

Martin Potts - Eulogy by Phil Sharples

Well done, Martin, your final performance is a sell out. The number of people here today is testimony to the warmest, most generous, and wittiest human being that any of us have had the pleasure and privilege to know and his families' loss is shared by us all. Martin died the way he lived with a twinkle in his eye and that's how we will all remember him. He never had a harsh word for anyone and he met those twin impostors of triumph and disaster with the same even-handed, calm response.

He was passionate about everything he did and never more so when it came to his great hobbies in life...rugby and cricket and music and smoking, and drinking and women!!!!

But for all his bravado, all his attempts to convince you younger lads that drinking was the most important thing, for all his attempts to convince me that it was cricket that drove him, for all you ladies who thought I am the one...

Well, I'm afraid your all wrong. Rugby was Martin's mistress. Rugby was his life. It always was and always will be. Martin was lucky enough to play with some of the great players of his generation...Brian Noble, Jeff Grayshon, Jon Hamer to name but a few.

A massively talented and quick full back Martin was player of the year at Bradford Colts. But for the senior side some would say he was in an untenable position, playing behind the greatest full back of all time. Not a bit of it. Martin relished both the challenge and accepted the honour of being the great mans replacement. He was Martin's idol, his mentor, his friend. When Martin meets Jesus and he is introduced to his father I just hope Jesus doesn't say as they shake hands "do you know God" because Martin will reply yes... Keith Mumby and I are the best of friends!

Martin played 19 first team games and numerous reserve matches for Bradford Northern but it is at this point in his career that change occurred. Having a clause in his contract that paid a handsome bonus at 20 league starts Martin was shipped out to Doncaster for a season long loan. Not a bad move, regular first X1 rugby, culminating in a great Challenge Cup game at home against the unbeatable Wigan side of the early 90s. Hanley, Edwards, Lydon and half time score of 6 a piece which nearly took the tin roof off what was left of the ground. Defeat inevitably followed but Martin had done Donny proud.

Following his return to Bradford Martin was informed he was going out on loan again. Now when most people fall out of favour they usually get sent to Coventry. Martin dreamed of going to Coventry - He ended up at Barrow. Hell in black and white according to Martin! A town stuck in the 70s. The 1870s. Pottsy, his brother Steve, Heath Godfrey and Paul Rhodes. The four horseman of the apocalypse - stopped for all of one game against hull - a battering and a sixty point reverse at the Boulevard and then decided hell was just not for them.

Its at this point in time Martin was tapped up by his friend Mark Anderson to go to play at Clayton, under legendary man motivator, and according to Martin part time training sadist, Glenn Marriott. At Clayton his ability shone through and they went on to win numerous Pennine League trophies, Pennine Cups and Bradford Cups. Martin made lifelong friends at Clayton, and it is a testament to that friendship that the players and officials at Clayton have helped to support Martin throughout his illness. He would have wanted me to acknowledge and thank them for their friendship today.

When Glenn left Clayton to take up the coaching post at Queensbury, Martin returned home. Success once again followed. Martin eventually took on the coaching role himself for a season but it was not for him. Martin was not an authoritarian figure. He was a leader, but he led from within the group, by example. He instilled unshakable belief. He had that presence that said we will not go quietly into the night, we will not go down without a fight. Even when the odds were hopeless, even when matches were clearly lost Martin would not surrender, he would not give in. He would drive you on with an unswerving commitment to succeed. He created the atmosphere that said we play for each other.

Now some people equate camaraderie with being jovial. It is anything but. Camaraderie is born from sharing hardship. It is bruises and cuts. It's a sore back and lungs that burn from exhaustion. It's the heat on your neck and the pit in your stomach. It's not being asleep when it's your turn at watch. It is trust, it is respect, it is acting honourably.

And Martin was one of the best, most honourable losers I have ever met. Never one to make excuses if he lost fair and square..he said so. He had a sense of humility.

And he needed it cause he was damned unlucky.

When he lived on Thornton Road his car was parked in between 2 others. Martin was awoken at 3am by the local constabulary asking him to move a twisted heap of junk off the pavement. What is it asked Martin, in a not so polite manner. Your car sir was the reply... Martin said afterwards that then woman driving couldn't have been that drunk as she swerved expertly just to hit his car.

When he won the play your cards right in the Con Club, which had been won the week before to the tune of £300. Martin announced a round for everyone...he won £19 and the round cost £28.60.

But this was Martin. He had the ability to laugh at himself and at others in the same even handed way. He was a fiercely intelligent and free thinking man. He abhorred prejudice, pompousness and hated discrimination. He wasn't a tactile man. Indeed if you were to go him for a manly hug he'd give you the cold shoulder. But to me he was deeply emotional. I spent months in Martin's company in the New Dolphin and Queensbury Conservative Club after our friend Richard David Smith passed away.

We talked but it was the company that mattered, there was a sense that some things between us just didn't need saying to be understood.

In fact to those of us who know Martin well know it was a bit of a standing joke that we spent so much time in a Conservative Club. A man of the people, for the people. Martin will regret leaving this mortal coil before Maggie Thatcher. I do believe that he will already have the no vacancies sign up as and when she tries to join him. He would never forgive me if I if I didn't get that in.

I don't think Martin's ever regretted that much in his colourfully short life. But I know what his biggest disappointments will be. He will miss his daughter Gemma and lovely grandson, Wesley's growth and development. He was a devoted grandfather, for a big kid himself, and I know he was so proud of his newest family member.

Finally I'd like to make a few gesture of thanks on Martin's behalf.

Martin was a team man - so the thanks offered will not be to individuals although you know who you are.. Thank you to Queensbury Rugby Club whose fundraising efforts, friendship and hard work ensured Martin lived as comfortably as possible in his later days. The organisation required to host the Charity Day at Odsal and the Dinner at the Hilton hotel was revered by Martin and he was truly honoured by the events and those who helped and attended. Thank you to the carer services who I know Martin respected and who treated him with the utmost dignity in sometimes undignified situations.

Thank you to his close friends and family who enriched Martin's life and who helped him continue to enjoy life until the very end.

I'd like to make one final thank you on Martin's behalf.

To Christine and Michael, his mum and dad. I cannot begin to imagine the strength of character it has taken to see you through and to support Martin through these troubled days. I know, that whilst he did not always show it, he was truly grateful for the love, comfort and care you gave to him. He understood that he could not have been anywhere more caring, more safe, more secure than home. You are truly remarkable people and we all admire you more than words can really express.

Martin maintained his indomitable sense of humour right until the very end.

He dealt with his final challenge with enormous courage and dignity. I can honestly say I never once heard him say why me. Indeed he said not long after his diagnosis that he would rather not have MND but would not swop his life for anyone elses. I know, Martin, that all of us here today would not swop our lives because we have had you in them. He brought pride where there was defeat, happiness in times of despair, colour where there was black and white and light where there was only shade.

Martin James Potts, you will be sorely missed.

Martin's choice of songs at his funeral
Entrance: Stiff Little Fingers, Get a Life
Song 1: Billy Bragg, Accident Waiting to Happen
Song 2: Joe Strummer, Silver and Gold
Leaving: Pogues, Sally McLennane

James Arthur CHISSLETT: 1919-2008

My Uncle was born on December 16 1919, the large age gap between him and my Father being attributable to the fact that Grandfather was away in the Royal Navy for a few years. The time he attended Heath is something I never asked him, probably because I never thought I would be writing his obituary, but I assume he must have attended during the 1930's. I have great memories of an Old Boys dinner at the school in the 80's which Jim enjoyed enormously.

His working life was taken up with The Halifax Building Society, initially based in Halifax then moving to Manchester. Before his retirement he moved to Leeds and bought a house in Collingham where he spent his last years.

He married Constance Ackroyd in 1951 and they had a daughter, Helen, who was born in 1953. In 1982 he was presented with a Grandson, Andrew James, of whom he was extremely proud. Although always a supporter of Rugby Union his great pastime was golf, a game he played well into his eighties.

He was Captain at one club and President at another. I think one of his saddest days was when he finally sold his golf clubs and cart.

His wife sadly passed away in 1990 and Jim's last few years were plagued by a blood disorder cheerfully endured. He managed to remain virtually independent right to the end when he was taken ill and admitted to hospital, dying peacefully his sleep after a week on December 2, two weeks before his 90 th birthday.

Tony Chisslett

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