



THE CLOVE'S LINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE CLOVE CLUB

The Association for former pupils and Staff of
Hackney Downs School (formerly The Grocers' Company's School)

VOLUME SEVEN, No.3

MARCH, 2017

Text and images
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Edited by: The President.

FOUNDER'S DAY

27th September

CLUB TOAST

"Happy Days"

NEXT CLUB REUNION

Sunday, 11th June, 2017

at

Doggett's Coat and Badge

WEBSITE

www.cloveclub.com

E-MAIL

cloveclub@btinternet.com

GROUPS

"hds1876" for Club chat

or

"hds67" for 67year group

@yahoogroups.co.uk

CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT EDITION

Mid-September, 2017

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ARE DUE ON 1st APRIL

ANNUALLY PLEASE

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"The Clove Club".

Standing order forms are available.

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transfers are given on the inside
cover.

The School was founded by the Company in 1876, in its corporate right, and was gifted to the Board of Education in 1905. At the request of The Clove Club - the Association for former pupils and Staff of the School, founded in 1884 - the heritage of the School's foundation was inserted into its formal title and remained there from 1906 until closure in 1995. The Club continues to use the full Coat of Arms of the Worshipful Company of Grocers with their kind understanding. For this edition The Clove's Lines masthead is using the camel and shield design, drawn by Old Boy Barry Snowden and used as the artwork for the medal presented to the President in 2015.

SAD NEWS

Barry Snowden and I were shocked to receive the news of the death of Albert Calland on 21st December, 2016. Not only was he our former teacher, but he had become an outstandingly loyal friend for most of the 63 years since we first met. He can never be replaced. An obituary commences on page 3.

WELCOME TO THE NEW CLERK

Bob Pridham has taken his well-earned retirement from his post as Clerk to the Grocers' Company and we thank him for his kindness in fostering relations with The Clove Club. His replacement, Brigadier Greville Bibby, C.B.E. is a former Sandhurst Cadet of the Year who has seen service with the Coldstream Guards in Northern Ireland and in Afghanistan, as well as having been regional commander in York, where he enjoyed dealing with the Cadet Forces in his area. We look forward to working with him when occasions arise - in the meantime, we wish him well in the challenging, but quite different, tasks ahead!

POLITICIANS AND THEIR PROMISES

Could the Government really have offered us the chance (and the money) build a new HDS? With a camel on the pocket of the blue uniform? Well the small print is not yet available but we may have to move swiftly - are YOU interested? If so please drop me a line before Easter and we'll go forward if the support is there.

WW

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INTERNET CHAT GROUPS

hds1876@yahoogroups.com for general Club chat

HDS67@yahoogroups.co.uk for 1967 entry news

To join, subscribe@yahoogroups.co.uk, prefixing the address by the appropriate group name, i.e. hds1876-subscribe@...

ARCHIVES: There is a large body of historical material, originally kept at the School, now safely stored in Hackney Archives at Dalston Square (adjacent to Dalston Station) and some is available on line. (Visit www.hackney-gov.uk/ca-archives.htm and the new Friends website www.hackneyhistory.org.uk).

CLUB HISTORY: Steve Bench (1964-1971). Steve researches various aspects of the Club and its history, and was responsible for the research on our First World War Roll of Honour. He is currently endeavouring to record the names of all who ever attended the School including their Name, Date of Birth and the House they were in. This is useful when dealing with applications for membership and for answering family genealogists when they enquire if their relative attended the School.

REGALIA AND HISTORY SALES Details may be found on the outside cover.

PLEASE NOTE: Views expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of the Club. We are not always advised of the relevant source where copyright exists on articles and photographs included in the newsletter, but will gladly acknowledge our gratitude if made aware.

THE CLOVE'S LINES is edited by the President (All the typo's are mine!)

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IN MEMORIAM
ALBERT REGINALD CALLAND

20 April, 1928 - 2016
Hackney Downs 1952 - 1961



Yugoslavia, 1948 and Downham Market, 2008

Albert Calland died on 21st December, 2016 after a short illness, only recently having returned from a cruise to Helsinki and St.Petersburg. In the last few years, ever the intrepid traveller, he had visited Macchu Picchu and fulfilled a lifetime ambition to sail through the Panama Canal, shortly before that having voyaged to the Arctic on a Hurtigruten Cruise to see the Northern Lights. His only son lives in Capetown which was a frequent destination, especially at Christmas when he visited to see his grandson and granddaughter.

Albert will be remembered as a teacher of geography and producer of school plays. His impact on Hackney Downs School, despite his comparatively short tenure, was almost without parallel.

To deal first with geography, he taught the understanding of contour maps by asking the class to make a simple, layered, cardboard model. He patiently explained truncated spurs, Karst scenery, and basket of eggs topography, many of which he had seen when working, as a student in the late 40s, in Yugoslavia helping to build a railway line near Split. He revealed to me the secret of his ultra-fast drawing of detailed maps on the blackboard in front of a class - he had drawn the outline in pencil, invisible to the class, but he knew where to look, and all that was needed was a quick line with chalk to cover up his trick.

From an early age he had developed a keen interest in music. Piano lessons were still the norm in his milieu, though I never heard him play. Wagner and trips to Bayreuth were a passion; but classical music, by any composer could enthuse him. At a late stage in rehearsals for the School Production of "Oedipus Rex" he introduced as "background" music, the then new and revolutionary 11th Symphony by Shostakovitch, within days of its release on record.

He was asked by the Headmaster, Barkway Pye, to consider producing the School play as a consequence of Joe Brearley's promotion to Deputy Head.

He laid down one condition - that he be allowed to do so in the School Theatre, whereupon Pye produced a condition of his own - that there would be nothing to cause him to trip up on his way to assembly. There followed a series of plays "rarely equalled" in a School Production, according to the Head of English (John Kemp). Thornton Wilder, Sophocles, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Shaw, Eliot and Brecht were all innovatively produced on the open stage of the semi-circular theatre of the original Grocers' School. Douglas Fry (then Art Master) who designed the sets, was to describe the Calland Years as the most exciting and eventful of his career, and surely Harry Warburton, the woodwork master, would have echoed these thoughts.

That Albert chose to leave us in 1961 was a huge loss and, partly because of the great fire of 1963 and the subsequent change in the status of the School, marked the end of the lavish Theatre Club as it had been developed by Albert and his predecessor, Joe Brearley (with whom he enjoyed an enduring friendship).

Geography, art, music, theatre were the hallmarks of Albert - a true aesthete if ever there was one. He also enjoyed great architecture, storing away nuggets for possible use at a later date. To an extent this was realised when he moved to his final home in Downham Market where he designed a garden on Japanese lines, complete with a Japanese Arch, constructed by a local builder and painted bright red. All this was to stand above white and grey marble and granite chippings with planting in odd numbers of plants, to each side. Passers-by, having heard of the garden on the grapevine, knocked on his door to ask if they could have a viewing!

His father had been a policeman in the Liverpool Constabulary, one of whose duties had been to lead in the winner of the Grand National at Aintree, thus appearing centre stage. But this was not Albert's style. He loved performance, he loved setting the scene - but he loved them most by retiring to his private world to enjoy the view.

He met his wife, Olwen, when she taught at Laura Place (to some extent explaining the shift from Dalston County girls in School Plays to the brown uniform of John Howard!). She shared Albert's *joie de vivre*, but with sufficient difference to ensure a happy partnership. They both became Inspectors, in Barnet. When Olwen died, 6 years ago, a light went out and some of his later compulsive travelling was to avoid the feeling of loneliness.

Each week he would tell of attending this or that art exhibition in London, an avant-garde film after lunch, and in the evening, a concert. All to be followed the next day, perhaps, by an opera and another exhibition.

Albert exhausted many people by his abundant energy. But, lately, his enthusiasms hid the dark secret of illness to which he finally succumbed at the age of 87. **WW.**

TRIBUTES TO ALBERT CALLAND

When Albert died, in the busy run up to Christmas, there was not time to reach as many people as I might have wished. However, some were contacted and the sad news did get passed on. Here are some of the tributes received:

MICHAEL HERMAN: So sorry to see your e-mail and learn of the death of dear Albert Calland whom I shall remember above all as a brilliant and charismatic drama producer/director and teacher.

GEOFFREY HOLE from Canada: Albert changed my whole life. I was an also ran in English, but Albert re-started the school's production of plays and I happened to be good at Geography. You will remember that Albert was way ahead of his time as far as his directing of productions: all in what was a Greek classical theatre using minimal props and painted scenery and with a phenomenal choice of music throughout the play. Most of the science volunteers helped with the light and sound systems. I was unusual as an actor, as I was very shy and ended up in the Science Sixth forms. So I appeared in the first four plays he directed, starting as a member of the crowd in Ibsen's *Enemy of the People* in 1955, through one line in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* in 1956, to playing Pothinus in *Shaw's Caesar and Cleopatra* in 1957 and Dr. Gibbs in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* in 1958. So this was where my life-long love of theatre came from. My career benefited as well, never afraid to stand and give my point of view, I rose to be a Director at Statistics Canada. After I retired, I was fortunate to come to England for some Clove Club events where Albert was an invited guest and so have the opportunity of thanking him for how he changed my life. The first time I sent a letter stating why, a bit like this appreciation. I was amazed to receive a three page hand-written letter back from Albert.

He was a remarkable man and must have had a marked effect on, and influenced, the lives of many others.

BARRY SNOWDEN: I was so glad I was able to see Albert the other week and to enjoy, with him and Willie, some amusing, laughter filled reminiscences. Albert was a pivotal figure, along with Douglas Fry, in forging my outlook and approach to my life and career in design. His wide range of interest and knowledge always left me spellbound and inspired. I shall miss receiving his cards with the note 'I thought you might like this'. It would be of a drawing, painting or piece of sculpture that had taken his fancy on one of his many forays to exhibitions.

What a man! He will be sorely missed.

CLIFFORD FORSYTH: It is difficult to express my sadness at the news of Albert's passing. He was my form master, geography teacher and life long inspiration with the theatre. Of the many fine teachers who touched my life at HDS he was outstanding. It's a shame that we don't realise this until later in life.

The skills I learned as part of his school plays served me well in later corporate life where I was confidently able to address large events. I have always treasured meeting and chatting with him at the Clove Club annual lunches. Thank you, Willie, for making those reunions possible. It will be a thoughtful Christmas this year.

GERALD CAIDEN: Stanley Hillel forwarded the sad news to me. I personally owed a great deal to him, Hooton and Marr. They put up with me, let me go my own way, and encouraged me to aim for a state scholarship, after I had only passed 5 'O' levels including Art (with Benson), a very poor result. They recognised that I did have something different between my ears and may have been the only ones not to have been surprised when Keith Pavitt, the maths genius, and I pulled it off. I was cheeky with ARC who was quite fresh to teaching but loved music, opera, and acting and his enthusiasm was clear. He was a model instructor and I had the sneaking suspicion that we were usually on the same side of the barricade. I'll never forget him and right now I hear his Lancastrian accent ringing in my ears.

GEOFFREY ALDERMAN: Very sorry to hear this news. Albert Calland was a great influence on me, and also a good friend. I once had the effrontery to catch - in mid-air - a blackboard duster that he had thrown at a boy at the back of a geography class. He stopped the lesson to congratulate me!

BRIAN HARDING: Sad news, for Albert was a much-loved man; I too was fortunate enough to have been swept up in his theatricals, which I remember with great affection. And through the offices of the Clove Club I was able to tell him when I met him again at reunion lunches.

ALAN KAUFFMAN: I was so sad to hear of Albert Calland's passing. I had assumed he would be there forever. He certainly was a major force in my life at HDS back in the 50s. Not so much as a geography teacher - which happened to be one of my weakest subjects - but as a director of plays. And what fabulous productions they all were! For me, of course, taking part in Brecht's 'Galileo' was an unforgettable experience. (As were Albert's comments on my interpretation of the role at the time.) I'm so very glad that I managed to have a chat with him at the last Clove Club lunch I attended. A great man.

EDWARD THOMAS: A tremendous number of memories have been stirred, sparked not only by Albert's death but by all the various responses. I have been reminded, for example, what a *tour de force* Alan Kauffman was as Galileo, and I can still see Mr. Wibberley at the piano providing remarkable music (by Hanns Eisler).

I recall two Albert Callands, just as there were two Joe Brearleys. It must surely be said that Albert had a violently screaming side to him that led to unreasonable reaction. At a technical rehearsal for one of the plays, someone did not attend a lighting cue. He was howled at and on protesting that he had not been given a script, Albert shouted at him: "Well WRITE wan (*sic*), and don't answer back." Likewise the last night of *Oedipus Rex* brought even more drama off stage than on. We all committed the unmentionable, by going on for a curtain call. The audience loved it. Albert went ballistic, to the extent of throwing one of the earthenware props which landed on the arm of Emily Chayen, who had just given a blinder of a performance as Jocasta. When Albert finally calmed down, he went across to Emily, still nursing her bruise, and said, not 'Sorry!' but 'You're forgiven.' It was the aforementioned Joe Brearley who brought the temperature down on all sides.

But the reverse was also certainly true of Albert. There was also a kindness in his approach towards his cast members. To get me to improve in rehearsal, he let me down gently by saying not that I was rubbish but stating politely: 'Your style of acting is different to the others, Thomas.' And then he showed me how I might go about it. You finished up by wanting to do the best by him.

Geoffrey Hole is so right. Theatre is not just about fantasies on becoming famous, though God knows I nurtured enough of those in earlier times. A more realistic route on being touched by it was to go into the am-dram world in later life. But even if not that, one was inspired by a sense of confidence in public speaking, as Geoffrey said: 'never afraid to stand an express a point of view'. And how one is reminded of that 1958 production of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, arguably the most moving of all those presentations of Albert's, with its unforgettable last scene of the departed citizens of Grover's Corners sitting quietly in chairs and reflecting on the lives they had.

It is true that Albert did appreciate Old Boys getting in touch. I too had a long handwritten letter from him responding to something I had sent him. Somehow I can imagine him now, like those souls at the end of *Our Town*, sitting quietly in a chair and surveying all of us and having a chuckle at all our responses, knowing that one day all of us will be sitting on chairs alongside him. Not a bad prospect that.

MICHAEL GOLDSTEIN: All at HDS who were taught by 'Bert' learned much more than geography - in my time he seemed to be just that bit older than us to command respect, but close enough to show understanding and empathy. A good man, a fine teacher and a great example to us all.

ROD WHITE: So glad that we sat together and talked outside the Doggett's Coat and Badge last June, before lunch. Albert Calland, John Kemp and Douglas Fry were the most influential teachers during my time at HDS and possibly beyond.

Albert Calland taught me geography to the degree that I passed my 'O' level first time and when I was interviewed for the Industrial Design course at the Central School, it was the only subject that was acceptable instead of 'O' level English (which I failed four times) to get me on the course that became my career for the rest of my working life. So thank you, Albert Calland. I did manage to tell him this at one of the earlier lunches.

TONY WIBBERLEY: Ever since our days at HDS, where I assisted and then succeed him as head of Geography we kept in touch, even when I moved to Devon for a long time. Then when he and Olwen retired to Lancashire we saw more of one another because soon afterwards by coincidence, I was offered a post in Preston. From there I retired to Cambridge and then Albert and Olwen retired to nearby Downham Market! I remember helping him move into his first house in Blackheath and accidentally breaking a window in his attic with a ladder. In later years he believed it had been a mistake to move from that house, with easy access to the West End, but he did enjoy living in his converted mill near Lancaster.

Apart from us both being geographers, we shared an interest in music and when he was preparing Brecht's *Galileo* at HDS we both spend a couple of days in the old British Library copying out by hand Hanns Eisler's music written for the play. This was the only place at that time where the music could be obtained. It required a choir with piano, flute and clarinet accompaniment, which I got together, me at the piano for the performances.

I always got a postcard from Albert when he was on one of his holidays abroad, something which I looked forward to and which I will miss. But I will miss much more the pleasure of visiting a good friend and enjoying good conversation and generous hospitality.

-o0o-

Albert was prepared for his end. He had been given six weeks by a specialist and this turned out to be quite accurate. During his last weeks, I was determined that we should all keep a cheerful face, in the hope that the doctors were wrong.

To this end I ran a little newsletter in which I recounted many of the jokes he and I had shared during weekly (and sometimes almost daily!) phone calls. It was called “Amberley News” after the care home where he was. Albert was amused - he appeared as Alberto Callandini, or as Herr Doktor Albrecht von Calland and numerous other titles which were the setting for our joint sense of humour. This had followed from my having renamed Downham Market as “Niederschinken Markt”, and we shared the joke when I said he should get a “Langsamkocher” (Slow-cooker) because of his love of casseroles. I am pleased to say that Albert’s family were equally delighted and shared the jokes, which were aligned to his love of the programme “MASH”. But it was to no avail and, apart from a brief visit to his home, in the company of his family, Albert’s journeying was ended when he died on 21st December.

Albert’s funeral took place on 30th December in the Fenland Crematorium at March in Cambridgeshire. There was no religious service, nor prayers or hymns - instead a eulogy read by Albert’s son Richard with contributions read by other members of the family, all interspersed with music chosen by Albert. A very sad and moving occasion in the chilly dark of the late afternoon. Barry Snowden, Zac Harazi, Mr and Mrs. Tony Wibberley, Brian and Mrs. Harding, Roy and Jean Dunning, Bob Gordon and the President were among those who had travelled to be present to bid farewell to a great man, teacher and friend. How fortunate we were to have been able to share a little of his life. **WW**

IN MEMORIAM

ALBERT CALLAND

The collection at Albert’s funeral was dedicated to Macmillan Nurses and to the English National Opera.

I thought it would be the finest tribute, in recognition of the artistic and dramatic legacy described in the foregoing tributes, if we were to make a collective donation in his memory to the Opera Company.

If you would care to contribute to this fund, please send your cheque payable to The Clove Club, with a note to state that it is for the Albert Calland fund, to the President at
12, The Crescent, Whittlebury, NN12 8XP.

The progress of the fund will be reported on the Website and further updated in the next issue of The Clove’s Lines

MAGNUM OPUS - IN THE BEGINNING

Ray Dawkins

Soon after becoming a member of the Clove Club I reported to Willie Watkins that three ex-HDS pupils from the one family now resided in South Australia whereupon he suggested that I write an article for 'The Clove Lines' and in his words, presumably as a scholar of Latin, it would be my 'Magnum Opus'. Initially I was thrilled at the thought of putting words to paper but despite the six-months available in which to compose a literary masterpiece my early elation palled. Re-reading the pages of my Report Book conveyed messages that my academic journey through the classrooms of HDS had not been noteworthy.

My sporting abilities were run-of-the mill except for one away game when I was chosen for the Second Eleven where I bowled fast, but inaccurately, for a couple of overs and managed to hit one of their batsmen instead of the wicket. I played soccer but never had the skill to dribble a tennis ball around the back bitumen as did Peter Maynard, seemingly at every break and lunch period.

At athletics, being the second fastest runner of the lads in our street did not translate to winning the 100 or 200 yards but I did come close to Roy Morris in the high jump in our early years. He was much better at the newly introduced Western Roll way of getting over the bar being a lighter and a better athlete. By the 4th or 5th years I was a reasonable swimmer, representing Richards' in the 880 yards at the house competition in the school indoor pool. On that occasion I learnt, for the first time, that it was compulsory to use a racing dive as jumping in was not permitted.

My closest attempt at fame or infamy in athletics was with a javelin, a slim piece of tapering aluminium tubing with a dangerous looking tip of stainless steel. Throwing one of these took place in the far back corner of the field at Edmonton where our efforts were being monitored by Joe Brearley and two prefects. One of my throws had the random flight path of a Doodlebug (V1) with its fuel supply cut-off and auto-pilot out of action. Fortunately the two recorders were tracking the flight and impact zone of this missile and the group scattered in time to avoid the landing. Of course this action was unintentional as Joe was much appreciated for his teaching, along with his unpredictable and enjoyable bouts of theatrical demonstrations in class.

I cannot remember whether we had much in-house coaching either for cricket or football as generally we just went out and played. However, Les Mitchell did introduce cricket fielding practice at the school using an iron framed contraption shaped like a flattish centre section of a Red Indian canoe maybe about 3 to 4 feet (915 to 1220mm) wide and around five feet long (1525mm). This had a number of longitudinal wooden slats, riveted to the curved profile of the supporting steel frame with a small gap between each slat. The middle slat was about one foot above the ground with the other slats rising on both sides and slightly cupped towards the ends. This device, called a cradle, was placed on the bitumen outside the Gym. It allowed us to throw a cricket ball into the curved bowl of lathes where it came skidding out on a deflected course to be hopefully caught by a fielder at the other end.

Football is called Soccer in Australia. Australian Rules football which is mainly handball with kicks competes with Rugby League, Rugby Union and to some extent Gridiron by having the oval ball and I confess not to understand the mayhem and the rules that control their scrimmages.

Mr. Owain either because he was Welsh or Irish, or both, introduced us to the game of Shinty which seemed to be a form of hockey using a cricket ball and wooded walking sticks. I am not at all sure of the Rules but it entailed dribbling the ball and whacking it with the hooked end towards a goal or perhaps to accidentally hook around an opponent's ankle. This game was played in a gym period on a Downs pitch across the road from the school. At our Edmonton Sports Field we split either into random teams or into Houses and just went out there to take part. We absorbed the rules or they were inherent in our genes or learnt from back street games.

The only time I witnessed a mass cricket lesson was one morning (probably in 1952) after the usual school assembly when Mr. Fox came to the front of the Theatre stage and gave the school a demonstration of batting. Why there and for how long and why I do not know and the only thing that has stuck in my mind after some 60 plus years is his demonstration of a swinging action with his bat and the words – ‘and TONK it (the ball) round to leg’.

Like a Ronnie Corbett's dialogue I was supposed to be telling you why I had not fulfilled my pact with Willie. In some way I likened it to the tests back in school where we were marked & judged for academic ability. That thought put me off. Up to a point I could handle English Literature but English Grammar where one was expected to dissect a sentence then identify and name its various components parts such as past-participles, pronouns, subjunctives etc. was for me then and still is, a great unknown. Mr. De la Feld for Spanish and Mr. Corner teaching French must have said ‘oi vai!’ over my efforts to master those other languages. These days a faster method of learning by speaking the language conversationally and becoming familiar with it first seems to me a better option than initially learning the grammar.

At one stage in my career I did try to learn Japanese at evening classes but gave that up after the 2nd term as my contacts overseas spoke English far better than I ever would their language.

My 1952 GCE results were not good but after starting night classes in Adelaide in 1954 I eventually passed the five subjects including Eng. Lit. Thus obtaining a South Australian Matriculation Certificate, which was necessary if I wanted to obtain a Diploma. There was some sort of -‘what do you want to do or be’- question at the time my schooling was coming to an end. Mr. Hooton seemed dumbfounded when I said ‘a farmer’ with no idea at the time why I said that other than I just did not know. It may have been the different lifestyles seen our during wartime evacuations making an impression for a life on a farm. My first evacuation, at the outbreak of WW2 and in the period of the Phony War, was at age 4 with my mother to a farm at Mears Ashby, near Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. We came back to Hackney and Dad at Christmas 1939.

The second evacuation of Mum and I was when the Blitz started. We followed my brothers and sister to East Anglia. George and Norman went with HDS to Upwell and subsequently to King's Lynn and Margaret to Bishop's Stortford. (Refer earlier edition of ‘The Cloves Lines’). With Dad working, sleeping and firewatching at the Hackney Town Hall our Mother obtained lodgings in Kensington Road, Gaywood, which is between King's Lynn and South Wootton, and where I first attended a Primary School. Farm fields, woods and a river not far away at the top end of our road provided another adventure into country life.

My third introduction to a different type of country life was myself and two other Orchard School boys from Christie Road being evacuated without our parents to Worsley

Mesnes, near Wigan at the onset of the VI attacks. We attended the local school, had fights with the local boys, ran around the local farm land at night playing ‘Shine-a Light’ (a form of Hide & Seek where one never caught the one with the torch), and having different food such as Lancashire Hotpot.

Our foster parents Bill and Alice were very kind and caring and Bill, a miner, took us to the local pictures every Saturday to see Hopalong Cassidy or Roy Rogers etc. catch or shoot the bad guys. On one occasion we assisted the local farmer to harvest his spuds and on another to watch the threshing. I can still picture his farmyard with a steam traction engine driving a threshing machine via a totally unprotected flywheel and a long and exposed rapidly moving leather belt, something that Occupational Health and Safety would not approve of today. So maybe my answer to Mr. Hooton prompted a hidden memory of times that were in a many ways different, exciting and appealing.

Shortly before Dad died in 1946 my sister had followed her Australian (ex-RAAF) husband to Adelaide, South Australia and Mum returned to her pre-marriage workplace at the London Electricity Board office, opposite the King’s Hall on Lower Clapton Road. So, at the end of the school year in 1952 I forgot about being a farmer and had to find a job. Fortunately, the Hackney Gazette ran an ad. for a Laboratory Assistant at the Wilton Way School, which was situated a few streets away at the back of the Hackney Town Hall. Looking at a recent AAA guide book the school does not appear to be there anymore. I was not too bad at Chemistry and Physics and probably with Mr. Balk’s assistance got the job. Basically it was simply being in a well lit room on the top floor behind the Chemistry lab from 9am-5pm, and assisted and setting out apparatus for the two male Chemistry and Physics teachers and keeping the place tidy as well as conducting my own ‘experiments’ with the equipment on hand. Once a fortnight I had to attend Queens Park Technical School for laboratory assistant courses. This job lasted for around six months until we were approved for emigration to South Australia, which is another story.

BRIAN GODFREY (1945-1950)

Writing from Australia (October 2016), Brian had been saddened to learn of the death of Geoffrey Ries, with whom he had been a great friend but sadly had lost touch over the years, despite having worked together in Geoff’s shop in Neasden for a short while.

And surprise, surprise, Brian was pictured in Vol. 7, No. 2 on page 33, in the photograph of VI Science, 1951-52. At the right hand end of the fourth row, there is Brian, not Manny (who thinks he is far better looking!). Manny had been a year ahead of Brian who, you may remember, was last seen in these pages, holding up an Australian

ONE OF LIFE’S CERTAINTIES!

When Stan Greenberg writes a book, you know it will be full of facts and a large measure of humour. His latest offering consists of publishing all those nuggets squirreled away over a lifetime - some athletics, a lot of wisdom and a great deal of experience - just the thing for a miserable winter’s day, or for a holiday on the beach where novels are often too long. This is a must for those who like “books to dip into”. Brilliant!

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BLOOD SWEAT AND EMBROCATION



Barry Snowden (1953-1960)

On most Sundays of Term time and indeed on many days throughout holiday periods, the running track at Victoria Park was home to members of the School athletics team. Pleasantly situated in the middle of the Park, with its black cinder track and surrounded by a low iron fence, always with a few people watching the activities. To encourage the team members to attend, the school paid an allowance for the bus fare to the track which meant we always had a good turnout.

To this day, it is the smell of White Horse Oils and sweating youth which comes so readily to my mind and olfactory receptors. Les Mitchell insisted that a rub down of White Horse Oils before training would assist the warming up and the use after would prevent stiffness. There were not any shower facilities that I remember. We obeyed, as in the same way we dutifully took a spoonful of glucose powder before leaving to take part in some athletics contest. I sometimes think it was a good thing that various, now prohibited, performance enhancing substances were not available and acceptable since we would probably have innocently accepted them too. Not that I really believe Les would have stooped so low.



Alan Fairweather (top) and
Bob Gordon (bottom)

Wherever we went in those days, to Parliament Hill Fields, Eton Manor, White City and the School Field, those smells pervaded everywhere.

Victoria Park was the home of the Harriers Athletics Team and Jack Stone, who threw Discus and Javelin, and Shot Putt for us, was also a member there and a constant all the time as I remember. It was always necessary to spend at least 15 mins. preparing each of the sand pits for long and high jumps. These, especially after periods of rain, would be packed and solid, not likely to soften any landing from speed or height. By the time you'd finished digging and raking you were almost too tired to train. Today's high jumpers with their raised and inflated landing beds, don't know they are born. We often had to land in solid, wet sand which was probably a foot lower than our take off surface.

Also not for us the 'Fosbury Flop', landing on your back and neck; we were restricted to the Western Roll and Straddle for safe landings. At the annual Clove v School athletics meet that Arthur Gold of AAA fame competed in for the Club in the high jump, he used the Eastern Cut-Off, a style popular before WW2, which involved



David Porteous (left) and Peter Nottingham, with Bob Hellen and David Murray looking on

running straight towards the bar, leaping up with one leg extended forward, turning the body so that you faced downwards, when the ankle passed over the bar sweeping the other leg up to the side with the knee almost touching the armpit, then sweeping it down again once, passing the bar. A very athletic style and Arthur was still doing this over 5'0" in the early 1960s when he was in his middle 40s.

The memory is that those were sublimely sun filled, easy exercised days, in fact they were probably wet, gut wrenching, lung bursting experiences with the occasional post 400 yard retching event, or fall and grazed knees, with Les's yell of 'Put some effort into it boy!'

Happy days!

N.B. The background shows the Fairground arriving for its annual visit to the Park.

A MISUNDERSTOOD MAN? OR AN ENIGMA!

Our Fifth Headmaster, Vernon Barkway Pye was, according to a number of observers, slightly potty, eccentric, unsympathetic to the needs of the boys in his charge (and members of staff?). He was cold, officious and his perceived hard exterior earned him the nick name "Crusty". Yet we were unaware that the bride he had wed in 1948 (his first marriage) became an alcoholic, and perhaps domestic tensions outswayed the true nature of the man we knew. At all events, she was to die in 1962.

A pupil at Portsmouth Grammar School, where he had taught since 1929, had recorded "To the present writer Mr.Pye has always seemed, and that means consistently and for a very long time, a complete picture of the University of Cambridge. Cool alike in judgment as in movement, unruffled, unhurried, Mr.Pye used a clear and careful thought.

"Learned in the Law as well as in History, he taught with a brilliant and incisive lucidity which evoked a brilliant response in all his pupils.

"Mr.Pye's influence in the School has been very great. Not only have all boys achieved outstanding success in a study of which many of them did not believe themselves capable, but they freely gave to Mr.Pye the full measure of respect and regard which is the due of one who has the grace to be passionately strong and tirelessly fair."

Was it his marriage which changed him, or was it something during his war-time service, we may never know. He married again in Devon and died in November 1989, a man who we may just have badly misunderstood. Apart from that he re-introduced Rugby Fives to the Portsmouth School - I wonder if the game survives there?

IN THE NEWS AT LAST (October 2016)

Ian Juniper (1943-1950) in Australia

I had begun to find that there were very few news or historical items relating to my period at HDS between the years 1943 and 1950, and not having been of a sporting or theatrical persuasion was unlikely to see much of relevance to my other interests at that time.

Now, in one issue I find two photographs, thanks to Arthur Simmons, which include me among the school groups, as a prefect and as a member of the Sixth Science Upper in 1950! My good friend, Dave J Hubbard, appears to have his surname misspelled in the credits as 'Habebard'. Some of the names and faces I can recognise among other members of the group, in particular my friends Alan Wood and Dewi Price-Jenkins, but those of the other lads I do not recall. Sixty-five years is after all a long time.

During one period of Jewish holidays in 1949 when normal lessons were in abeyance, Dave and I skived off to visit the Radiolympia Exhibition in Earls Court, where I recall being entranced by hearing Dvořák's and Elgar's Serenades for Strings being relayed as background music. Dave and I were both very interested in radio and electronics and we used to haunt the Kingsland Waste on Saturday mornings where you could still pick up bits of ex-service wireless equipment and radio parts. We once constructed an amplifier and superregenerative receiver which would tune into the sound channel of BBC-TV but we had to abandon its use because it blocked all TV reception in the locality! Dave did, however, manage to convert an ex-RAF oscilloscope and receiver to view the BBC transmission – he was much cleverer at electronics than I, but I was the one who did National Service with the Royal Signals while all my other friends somehow managed to avoid doing it. I guess I might have had the edge on them by having been in the School Cadets for several years, and was able to indulge my electronic interests by serving as a radio mechanic in the Canal Zone for eighteen months. I last saw Dave in 1951 when I was on departure leave and we cycled to Putney to see the start of the Boat Race. We lost each other in the crowd and I found I had a flat tyre and no repair kit. On a Sunday, nothing for it – I had to push my bike 13 miles across London following bus routes to Homerton, just in time to put my kit on and get the bus from Kings Cross to Catterick Camp that evening.

My wife Alison and I spent a week in London in 2014 after visiting Malta and stayed in an hotel just off the Whitechapel Road. The environment, demography and atmosphere had completely changed since we were previously in London, with no sign at all of the former Jewish presence, most small businesses in Aldgate and Whitechapel now being run by Indian, African or Bangladeshi people, and in order to find a pub we had to walk as far as Cambridge Heath Road – inevitably the “Blind Beggar”, notorious for its association with the Kray Brothers! We also noted that terrace houses in Coopersale Rd., Homerton, where my parents once lived, were now being offered for sale at £750,000 – I wonder what rent my parents paid in the 1940's!

Nothing very much remains to mark the site of the Sir John Cass College in Jewry Street where I used to attend evening classes preparatory for sitting the Royal Institute of Chemistry examination in the late 1950s, except for a glass-caged office block Marked CASS on the street corner, and the old Aldgate East bus station to which I used to travel by trolleybus has long since disappeared.

Sic tempus gloria mundi. Judging by the present deteriorating world situation in the Levant, Trumpery and Brexit (how could you!), our generation were fortunate to have perhaps seen the best of it despite the hardships of living through WWII and the postwar years of austerity. As Harold MacMillan might well have observed; “The majority of people never had it so good.”

TEACHING STAFF OF THE FIFTIES.

Part The First (1950-1954) WW.

Anyone who went to the School in the Fifties will have experienced, or at least heard of, Thomas Oscar Balk as Headmaster and most will have “suffered” the reign of the much maligned and misunderstood Vernon Barkway Pye, a very different man entirely. And, at the end of the decade, they ventured into the School a third type in the form of Alexander Williams – the 4th, 5th and 6th Headmasters respectively.

But what of the others on the front line teaching us? This article, the first of a series, will deal with those who left, or who arrived – and includes some who just passed through.

At the beginning of the decade the French Assistant J.Vergnerie (from Clermont Ferrand University) returned home and was, in due time, replaced by Monsieur R.Rogier from Aix-en-Provence. Monsieur Vergnerie became a member of the Staff Football Team, though he was a rugby player and had never seen a “soccer” match. Despite this, and after a very short period of coaching, he had the satisfaction of being on the winning side when the Staff won 3-2 against the School First XI. Someone must remember their lessons, and perhaps even has a photo which includes them. They were the among the first post-war “foreign” teachers we would meet, and were joined later by German nationals – but we must not jump ahead.

Who recalls Mr.C.D.Pritchett who joined the staff as Classics Master in 1947, but left to take up a post at Harrow School in 1950. The Review records that he took a turn at playing the organ in Assembly and the valedictory note praised his voluntaries as well as pianoforte recitals. He even managed to increase the number of boys taking Latin! Mr.Pritchett’s departure occasioned the arrival of William G.Boyd from Gravesend County Grammar School to take the helm at the Classics Department.

For one term, we entertained Mr.J.C.Thomson from Natal, who was in England for one year to gain experience in teaching in English Schools. He gave sterling service in Geography, English and P.T. (as we used to call it!) with forms I to IV and deputised for Mr.Norman P.Sutton as Form Master of form IIIC while Mr.S was elsewhere on military duties. Mr.Thomson was noted for his keenness and coaching in cricket, making a considerable contribution to the Staff victory in the Staff vs School match on July 20th that year! Sadly, Mr.Sutton’s death was reported in The Review at Easter 1951.

Britten’s House Master, “Tiny” de la Feld, who was to retire in 1952 after thirty-three years’ on the Staff, was ill for much of the last two years or so of his service at the School, requiring Mr.M.Gayle (and later Mr T.K.Wheeler) to deputise for him during his absence, while Mr.J.F.Tucker performed similar duties, taking over VIth form Biology when Mr.C.A.Gee was seriously ill.

In September, 1951, Mr.J.Campbell, Ph.D., M.A. of New Zealand who was spending a year in England to gain experience of teaching in English Schools, joined the staff and took over the vacancy caused by Mr.Sutton’s death. Monsieur L. Gillier from Paris, joined as French Assistant.

Mr.J.Maclean, who had been a maths teacher at the School since September 1949, retired at Easter 1952 and was succeeded by Mr.Kenneth H.Hatherley of Melbourne University, who later joined the permanent staff, but who was to leave us in July, 1953 to take up an appointment in Istanbul!

Mr. Percy E.Coffin, B.Sc. (Econ). retired at the end of April 1952. Not only had he revived the teaching of Economics at the School, but he had also taught maths, English and music as well as training the cadet band! Two more notable retirements (apart from the much-loved and respected T.O.B.), were Mr.Tom Prosser-Thomas and Mr.H.W.Benson – the latter’s claim to fame in the Art Room had been the series of postcards he had produced, recording the shooting down of the first Zeppelin over England in 1916. Eric Hargreaves, who taught German with a Yorkshire accent, departed to join the staff Morecambe Grammar School. An amusing tale is told of Mr.Hargreaves thundering at a miscreant boy “the trouble with you x is that when they circumcised you, they threw the wrong piece away!” Mr.Balk classically pacified the irate Jewish mother who stormed up to the School with “Well, Mr.Hargreaves has a very strong Yorkshire accent and was misunderstood!”

Mr.P.L.Poel left us in December, 1952 to take a new post as Head of Mathematics at Southall Technical School, while Mr.J.H.Green went on to become Senior English Master at Ludlow Grammar School. Mr. A.C.P.Gamble, D.F.C. took the place of Mr Poel and two more masters, Mr.P.W.P.Browne and Mr.A.E.Money, arrived to give temporary assistance in Maths and History, though the latter left at Easter and was replaced by New Zealander Mr.F.W.Chapman, but he had to return home after only two terms at HDS.

The series of retirements ordained the welcoming of a new band of stalwarts in 1952, in alphabetical order: Messrs. A.R.Calland, R.S.Dunning, D.R.Fry, S.Glenny and M.C.Jacobs. The new French Assistant, Monsieur Yves Margotat, completed he line-up. One could almost label the new staff as Theatre, Football, Theatre, Music and Biology – but this would belittle their appointments in Geography, German, Art, Music and Biology. The first-named revolutionised the School Play productions when he brought them in to the School Theatre, the second taught German without the Yorkshire accent and also organised Football, Mr.Fry similarly brought a new approach to Art, and Mr.Glenny enlivened assembly with some stirring music on the organ. Malcolm Jacobs, laboured under the shadow of the mighty Gee but, nonetheless brought a humane and sometimes humorous approach to his teaching.

In the Autumn Term of 1953, three more masters were welcomed into the Staff Room; Mr.F.S.Huss, Mr.C.M.Collins and Mr.D.Heaton: the last two were both Maths teachers while Francis Huss taught French and Spanish (and was also a noted Guitar Player!). Monsieur Boinot succeeded to the title “French Assistant”.

The departures continued, with the retirement at Christmas 1953 of Mr.W.E.G.Howell after thirty-four years’ service. He had been Second Master since 1949 and House Master of Hammonds’ House since 1941. Mr.A.R.Hall left on his appointment to St.Dunstan’s College, Catford, as Senior Physics Master.

John Kemp, later to become the Seventh Headmaster, arrived in January, 1954, to teach English, with Mr.W.D.Thomas (History and English) and, from the Navy where he had been an Instructor-Lieutenant, Mr. N.MacGregor who took over Mr.Hall’s work, although to the regret of the School for one term only.

The Summer Term saw farewells to Mr.Gamble (who had taken an appointment with the Lycée Français), and to Mr. C.M.Collins, Mr.D.Heaton and Mr.W.D.Thomas as well as the French Assistant Monsieur Boinot. In April, however, Mr.Robert C.Champeny joined the staff to take charge of the Physics Department.

Autumn Term 1954 arrived with another intake of staff: Mr.F.C.Hayes and Mr.N.A.Pass for Mathematics, Mr.C.D.Juckles and Mr.Richard.G.Williams for History and English, and a Northern Irish Geography teacher in the form of Mr.James W.Saunders (soon, of course, to be named “Paddy” – such is the fate of all Irishmen!). Juckles did not stay long, mauled at the hands of HDS boys, and departed for the gentler climate of Cheltenham College! The sudden death on 24th October of Mr.E.Lindsay-Berry, who had been a valuable swimming instructor in the preceding summer term, was received with sadness by the school.

Norman Pass proved to be a very popular teacher and later became a good friend to Albert Richards the School’s swimming champion. Norman introduced Albert to Water Polo but was also noted for another story. He lived in a part of Tottenham where just about everydoor had a stained wood grain and varnished front door. Not so our Norman – his door was pillar-box red, from which his neighbours assumed he had communist ideals!

In January 1955 we were joined by Mr.Graham Holmes as Senior History Master and Mr.David B. Weston as Chemistry specialist. At the end of term Mr.F.C.Hayes had to leave and his place was taken, on a temporary basis, by Mrs. M.J.Nesbitt, M.Sc. from New Zealand, thus breaking the long-run of male dominance in the Staff Room and causing panic among the boys in case she should happen to step in to the Swimming Bath during a lesson! Later we were to be joined by Mrs. M. De Paravicini.

Autumn Term came and the school was saddened by the departure of Messrs. Hawes (to Kingston Technical College), Owain (to a post in Gloucestershire), Glenny to Staffordshire) and Juckles (to Cheltenham College). These losses were offset by a number of new arrivals: Mr.E.T.Abbott (P.T.), Mr. R.Bell (English), Mr. D.J.Bradley (Maths and Physics), Mr.D.A.Evison (French and German), Mr.J.C.Laird (Classics), Mr.K.A.Payne (Maths and Science) and Mr.S.P.Weekes (as Senior Mathematics Master). Monsieur Michel Couturier was our new French “assistant”.

The period immediately after the war seems to have consisted of an intake of hastily trained ex-servicemen replacing the older men who had, in many cases, come out of retirement to ease shortages. But the younger men, eager for advancement, did not always remain long enough, as the changes for 1956 (to be recalled in the next issue) will demonstrate. At HDS the line-up of stalwart teachers referred to in the final paragraph below presented a cohort of remarkable stability (and durability!).

Acute observers will notice the absence of some names such as Ball, Corner, Fox, Gee, Marr, Medcalf, Owain, Pressnell, Warburton and many others. This is because they joined in the Forties and will get their mention when they retire or leave – the intention of this article is to draw attention to those who have otherwise received little notice in The Clove’s Lines thus far. I hope, therefore, to receive a rush of post from Old Boys who were there in 1950-1955 to capture their memories of the arrival of new blood and the departure of some older, but nonetheless valued, servants of the School.

The next issue (in later 2017) will take the story into 1956 . But what can YOU add to these tales so far?

SSOGA - SKINNERS’ SCHOOL OLD GIRLS’ ASSOCIATION

The Committee of SSOGA has indicated that, unless a willing volunteer appears very soon, they will, during 2017, have to close the Association down. Well done to the ladies who have struggled so valiantly to keep it going and well done to the Skinners Company for their unstinting support.

REMEMBERING MAURICE PESTON

Martin Schwarz (1942-1949)

Your recent and brief note following the sad death of (Lord) Maurice Peston prompted some further thoughts about our days together at HDS (1942-1949). Maurice first became conspicuous during the classroom debates we had in 1945, mirroring the General Election activity of that year: he was already vociferous and committed to Labour and Nationalisation - a portent of what was to follow.

Maurice's contribution to academia has been well documented in the national press, and I prefer to remember him as a joint entrant to the first formation of the Economic 6th in September 1947 under the caring and sympathetic guidance of Percy Coffin and Ken Hooton. During those two years in the 6th Form Maurice rapidly developed as an embryonic economist and enlivened our small classes (only five students in all) with perception, sharp discussion, and wit.

He was a member of Lucas House (as was I) and he participated in House sporting activities with application and endeavour: football in winter where his large frame and physique imposed itself on the opposition, and summer cricket where his forward defensive technique as an opening batsman made him difficult to dislodge.

I remember an occasion following his return to school after an Oxford interview - he created great hilarity by his description of duffle-coated undergraduates. On another occasion he took in good part our teasing when we reached a chapter in a geography textbook entitled "Flora in the Hotbelt" since that was the name of his girlfriend.

Our classes were always spiced with some fun and wit though Maurice's thoughts were serious too in his first forays into Economic Theory. However, Oxford was not for Maurice, and in 1949 he went on to LSE (together with Barry Supple and me) and then began in earnest his distinguished academic career which eventually led to politics and his peerage



This show, using material originally produced by Old Boy Colonel Roberts and his chums at the Front in WW1, will run at The Arts Theatre in London (Gt. Newport St., WC2) for 6 weeks from 21st March.

See also two further additions to our own WW1 Roll of Honour on page 36

IN THE LAND OF GRIEG

Dennis Cummins (1948-1953)

Hi, my name is Dennis!

I bought a Computer a few years ago, mainly because it enabled me listen to Radio 4 in comfort.

I had a close encounter with THE GRIM REAPER a couple of years ago, and this caused me to reflect a little on my life, and my desire to write about it, that is where the Computer was useful, there was seemingly a subconscious desire to contribute to The Clove's Lines.

We lived at 38 Beechwood Road, Dalston.

I became a pupil at our school (HDS) in September, 1948 (I was renamed Chas by my fellow pupils, I have no idea why). At that time there were three family members at the school, me in the first year, George in fifth and Ron in the sixth year. (Ron was repeating his sixth year, he thought that his exam results the year before had not been good enough). My elder brothers had been evacuated with the school to King's Lynn. We have a sister called Eileen, (she is two and a half years older than me) who went to The Central Foundation School for Girls at Spitalfields. Eileen and I were also evacuated, in our case to Blackpool, strangely, neither of us can recall how long we were there. I however can recall how we got there, we were taken in buses from Wilton Way School one day in 1944, with the cardboard boxes, which contained our gas masks, a label with our names and destination was hung around our necks and we were driven off in buses to a train station for onward transmission to Blackpool. That evening when we arrived we were taken to a large hall to spend the night. The following day we were driven around the streets of the town in coaches, which stopped occasionally and people that were interested in taking us in as lodgers, would pick out the ones they wanted, my sister and I were the last to leave the bus, the homeowners were reluctant to take two.

I will digress a little here, we were actually evacuated twice in WW2; first time the whole family to Northampton. I have no memories of this except, getting some stitches in my head! Apparently my mother was attending the local hospital with my sister, she feared that my sister had polio because she lost the ability to walk. Whilst they were in the hospital, I had been entrusted to the care of my elder brothers in the grounds of the hospital, where they, on spotting a Conker tree full of fruit, parked the pushchair with me strapped in under the tree and proceeded to throw rocks and lumps of wood up into the tree to try to dislodge the Conkers. I do not know if they were successful because I was soon screaming with pain with a gash in my head. (The scar is still there seventy odd years later), the cause of my sister's problem apparently, was fear induced by the sound of Air Raid Sirens.

Back to Blackpool.

Our benefactors were a decent couple, a fisherman and his wife. (I can't remember either of them). There was also another lodger, a schoolteacher who was rather preoccupied with her Methodist beliefs; she would continually give my sister and I pamphlets to read about the evils of alcohol. We attended the same school in Blackpool, Eileen in the senior and I the infant. We were the first Evacuees enrolled at the school, we stayed there for perhaps a year. I can definitely remember several seasons.

We were back in London before 5 Jan 1945, when the V2 hit the Library in Woodland

Street. We were then pupils at Tottenham Road School and were on our way home from school with Eileen's friend Maureen and her brother John when Maureen realized that she had forgotten her purse at school, so we agreed to wait for her outside the Odeon cinema whilst she went back to school to get it. We all intended then to go to the library; when she returned, we were about to cross Kingsland Rd when there was a tremendous thud, and things, advertising signs for example, started falling off buildings around us, so we ran home, as we crossed the railway bridge in Forest Rd we were confronted with a wall of dust, reminiscent today of the aftermath of 9/11 in New York. We were lucky in two respects, if Maureen had not forgotten her purse we might have been in the library. The Holy Trinity church in Beechwood Road, the street we lived in, absorbed the blast and our house was not seriously damaged; a window, including the frame, was blown in and was lying intact on a bed in an upper floor bedroom. Maureen's house and the rest in her block were uninhabitable and were condemned. She and family were moved to Stoke Newington, and we never saw them again. To the best of my knowledge no children were killed in the attack. Just the unfortunate two librarians Harry George Sparks and Gertrude May Parish. The rocket struck at the end of a school day, and children would probably go home after school before venturing out to the library. Holy Trinity Primary school was opposite the church in Beechwood Road and some of the children in our street would have attended that school. My sister and I cannot recall anyone killed or injured in the blast.

Back to Hackney Downs School.

By the late Fifties another brother David had entered the school. We have all admiringly read about the distinguished OLD BOYS of HDS. My brothers were all achievers, attending universities and becoming successful in their chosen fields. Nothing much has been written about some of us, the not so distinguished ex pupils of HDS (the C streamers). I left school with no academic qualifications at all. My memories of school life are quite vague, not surprising after all this time, I cannot remember many names of fellow pupils, however certain incidents are quite sharp. One of which occurred in the Gym during one of the Jewish festivals (we Gentiles called them Holidays) when we were unsupervised by any of the Masters. We were playing HE, (also known as TAG) in the Gym, Mats were strewn all over the floor and the idea was that the person, that was HE, would chase the others all over the Gym, using all the apparatus available, wall-bars, horses, horizontal-bars, anything, apart from the floor of the Gym, anybody who touched the floor became automatically HE. So, (the late) Peter Anderson (a name I remember) leapt from the wall-bar, ran along the back of a horse and jumped to grab a horizontal bar in a bid to escape his pursuer — but his forward momentum was such that his fingers lost their grip of the bar and he fell to the floor from quite a height, putting his arms out behind his body to cushion the impact but succeeded in breaking both wrists. Somebody rushed him off to seek help and the Gym was tidied up, returned to normal, like Magic,,,nothing unusual had been going on there...!

Some of the names I recall, in addition to Peter Anderson, are Roy Craske, Ronny Coombes, Terry Armstrong, Terry Flanagan, Tony Baker, Johnny Furlong, Dave Euens, Eric Powis and Dave Tilley.

Some of us were considered to be fairly good at Gymnastics, in that we could tumble around without getting hurt, so we were asked to participate in Joe Brearley's co-production of A Midsummer Night's Dream at Dalston County - we were Elves. We

were also asked to participate in the Festival of Britain which occurred in 1951. This required us to travel to Chelsea Barracks, to practice once a week, the art of vaulting over a Gym horse with the aid of a springboard. It was not particularly difficult, the idea was to get as many schools as possible to participate I suppose.

Whilst on the subject of physical activity, and the Gym, I did achieve a few certificates in swimming. Three in all, for Fifty Yards, a Hundred Yards, and a Mile, all on the same afternoon. It must have been another of those Jewish holidays, because swimming a mile in that twenty five yard pool would have taken a very long time, so it must have been outside normal schooling (I have just come across the afore mentioned certificates) and they are dated 27/7/51 signed by L Mitchell and T O Balk.

I forgot to mention that soon after I started at HDS, I was admitted to Homerton Hospital as an emergency patient suffering from a burst appendix. The operation to repair it went well, but I was suffering from the consequences, Peritonitis. This required massive doses of Penicillin and frequent draining of the abdominal cavity through a tube up my nose, not a very pleasant experience for an 11 year old. When I was well enough to get out of bed, I could see some of my school friends going home from school - from the hospital ward - and was quite envious. However, with the time in hospital and a period of convalescence at one my uncle's in Greenford, I survived, but the absence from school, for such a long period, resulted in me being so far behind my classmates that I never caught up.

Another incident I remember quite clearly, is when a teacher, I think his name was Dicker or Dickens, was demonstrating a Wimshurst machine to us in a Physics lesson, this required the turning of a handle to generate static electricity which would jump between two electrodes. Lightning in miniature. Unfortunately, the electrodes were too far apart so the charge took the alternative route which was through the handle and Mr Dicker to earth. It must have been quite painful.

Like my elder brothers, I joined the Army Cadet Corps, and went on a trip to Holland under the stewardship of Major Mitchell. One strange aspect I recall is that we did not need Passports. (I did not acquire one until much later in life). Our base was The Hague, from where we went on numerous coach trips to various towns of special interest, one of which was Utrecht, where Kaiser Wilhelm spent his final years. One amusing incident, which occurred in Amsterdam, was when our driver, in an attempt to cross one of the numerous humpback bridges over the canals, lost traction when the rear wheels of the bus lost contact with the road, and we all had to move to the back of the bus to allow the back wheels to regain road contact, allowing the driver to extricate himself from this embarrassing situation. I also went on a camping trip with the cadets to a place in Essex called Fingringhoe (near Colchester), it was there that with a great deal of effort that I taught myself to smoke, not a very smart move as I was to find out later. I cannot say that I have many fond memories of the staff, particularly one who can remain nameless, who took delight when wanting to admonish me for some reason and would say "come out the black sheep of the Cummins Family".

The Theatre, as you all will remember, had two flights of stairs going from the well to the top, about a third of the way round on each side. During exams, folding desks and chairs were positioned some distance apart from each other throughout the theatre. My desk, on one such occasion was placed adjacent to the flight of stairs closest to the Organ and, in the course of the exam, my desk and chair moved gradually backward until the back legs of my chair were hovering in space. I leaned back and accompanied my chair,

with a great deal of noise, to the Well of the Theatre. I was not hurt but tremendously embarrassed.

There I was aged sixteen, no qualifications, what can be done? Another HDS "family" the Browns, provided the solution. The eldest boy Jack, was a friend of my brother George, then there was Kenny, a couple of years older than me and Bobby a year younger, Kenny had become a Dental Mechanic (as they were called in those days), so it was decided that I would do likewise.

A Dental Laboratory at No 8 Upper Clapton Rd. was seeking an apprentice. I fitted the bill so the deed was done in 1953. A five-year apprenticeship was embarked upon. A couple of years or so into this, another HDS old boy appeared. My employer a Mr Stuart, (a canny Scot) rented most the building we worked from and sub-let rooms to various tenants. The basement was vacant, so a chap named Victor Knight became the tenant. Vic had recently been de-mobbed after a four year period in the Royal Air Force as an Air Frame Technician. Vic, I had never met before but I could remember some of his Art Work from the walls of the Art room at school, he was a quite talented artist and he could play the saxophone quite well also. He was selling himself as a Sign-writer, but did not get much work, and consequently spent a lot of time in our Lab. He entered a competition for Young Entrepreneur of the Year on the BBC, (this involved the moulding of plastic with Infra-red heat to form illuminated advertising signs) and apparently came second, I did not see the program as we did not have a TV at that time. He did however become a Freemason whilst bumming around at 8, Upper Clapton Rd, met a young lady, got married and emigrated to the USA.

Like any other young man at that time I was eligible for National Service, so when I was eighteen I duly went the local employment exchange to register. There I was asked if I wanted to work down a mine and I did not, so, because I was an apprentice, my service to the nation was deferred. However, I must point out that if I had been subjected to a medical to determine my fitness to serve at this time, I would have failed because I was under five feet and under eight stone.

I duly finished my apprenticeship and was called up for National Service, subjected to a medical examination which included being weighed and measured, eleven stone seven and six feet tall, so off to RAF Cardington as a recruit, followed by RAF Bridgnorth for square bashing, then on to RAF Halton where, because I had no paper qualifications, City and Guilds for example, the RAF did not recognize my trade. (Mr Stuart was of the opinion that Paper Qualifications were a waste of his time and money). I was to become a Dental Surgery Assistant and after training I was sent off to RAF Wittering near Stamford, Home to a squadron of "V Bombers".... It was a very, very cushy posting. The Dental Officer there, very nice guy called Dan Dewel, had organized the week such that we had a Sick Parade at 1-0 p.m. every weekday. We were therefore free after completion of the Sick Parade on Friday until Monday at 1-0 p.m., a long weekend, every weekend. This bliss of service to the nation did not last however thanks to a certain Flt Lt Wrathall!!! (would you believe it?). His job was to monitor me, and determine how good I was at administering this Dental Surgery; verdict, pretty awful. We had enough stores to sink a Battleship, he informed me that I was now in his sights, and would arrive unannounced at any time in the future. I arranged with the Guard Room that in future, they should ring me if he appeared. Any excess stores I kept in a large cardboard box which could be hidden easily elsewhere in the Medical Centre where we were situated, however the damage was done and I got my marching orders. Whilst I was at RAF Wittering I decided to enlist for a year, thus becoming

a Regular, my wages tripled and I bought a Dayton Albatross, a 250-cc twin cylindered motor Scooter which made my weekly commute to Camp a doddle, which made what was to follow an even more bitter pill to swallow. Flt. Lt. Wrathall had me transferred abroad.

So, off to RAF Lyneham, next stop Nice on the French Riviera for refuelling, destination RAF El Adem in Libya, approximately fifteen miles into the desert south of Tobruk, this was a staging post for some flights from the Far East and Southern Africa, The Base consisted of a few buildings, a Control Tower, a runway, a circle of trees around a space known as the cricket pitch, and a couple of hundred tents, our living quarters. Welcome to the worst posting in the RAF anywhere in the world, it had become important to the British after the Suez crisis, it was built to accommodate 150 men; the RAF moved in 1500. Flt. Lt. Wrathall had done his worst.

Our accommodation was a tent, I think there were five of us sharing it. coincidentally one was named Ron Cummings! I arrived in September, the wet season, and if you got wet it was difficult dry your clothes. If you hung them out to dry over night they were gone in the morning. There was also a minor mutiny going on at time I arrived and there were placards all over the camp encouraging everyone to boycott the canteen because the food was so bad. The RAF's solution was to line everyone up and march them with their dinner plates past the line of servitors so that everyone had a plateful of food, they could not however make them eat it, so every airman promptly marched over to the dustbins and deposited the contents of their plates therein. I can't remember how it was all resolved because I was attached to the Medical Centre where the Dental Surgery was situated and we ate in our own canteen. My new boss was a Flt.Lt. Wilkinson, ex dental technician and a three year man like me, what he had done to end up in El Adem is anybody's guess. The Dental officer and I were required to travel to Tobruk every week, for two days to treat the service personnel and their families, so we tended to travel there and stay overnight. Whilst on the subject of Tobruk, I must mention the beache. These were segregated and fenced off appropriately; Officers and their Ladies, NCO'S and their Wives, Airmen and their Women. There was a sort of NAAFI on the beach, where we could buy beer, food and cigarettes, these cost one shilling for 20, and had to be signed for in a book, the book contained the signatures of countless, M.Mouse, D.Duck, P.Luto

One weekend a group of us decided to go on a trip to the east and rented a bus from the RAF, the goal was a Roman ruin, Cyrene, which had been partially excavated. To get there we followed the coast in a general way, often the road would be a dried up wadi and on the way we visited a Bee Farm run by a couple of elderly English ladies who provided us with a welcome drink of cold lemonade and a tour of the buildings that had previously been a rest camp for the Germans in WW2, the walls were covered in very artistic murals of life in the German army in the desert at that time. When we eventually reached the Roman site, it was well worth the journey it is magnificently situated on a plateau about five miles from and about fifty metres above the Mediterranean. The sea when viewed from the south is quite an extraordinary shade of blue, the site is quite unique. I subsequently learned that, in Roman times, this was one of the bread baskets of the Roman Empire.

My new boss and I did not get on well with each other, so he wasted no time and got me re-posted to Cyprus in February, so I was not in Libya long. The camp I was sent to on Cyprus was RAF Akrotiri not far from Limassol. The Dental Establishment was a part of the Hospital which consisted of a number of Bungalows all with various functions. Ours was staffed by a Group Captain Specialist in Oral Surgery, a Flt. Lt. General Practice

Dentist, a Hygienist, 4 Dental Technicians and three Dental Assistants, I was surplus to requirements so became (Tea-Boy). I mostly worked in the Lab, finally putting my skills from 8 Upper Clapton Rd to some good use. Occasionally, an emergency occurred when patients presented with broken jaws mostly as a result of a fight or, as in one case, a Parachutist who collided with the Plane he jumped from. This required working over-time to construct Silver Cap-Splints (a method of immobilizing the jaws) to help nature to facilitate the repair, I always volunteered for this task as it was a skill I needed to learn. Generally we worked from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the summer, so I spent every afternoon on the beach and nearly every weekend. There is a submerged village or town off the coast of Akrotiri so it is very interesting diving to the bottom to pick up pieces of ancient pottery. I quite enjoyed my year in Cyprus. The conflict between the British and the Cypriots had been resolved before I arrived.

February was de-mob time. The year was 1962. I applied for a job at the Eastman Dental Hospital as an Orthodontic Technician this required me to learn new skills such as the art of bending wire. There was also a culture of attending Evening Classes at Eastman's, so I set about getting my City and Guilds at long last. The Eastman's at the time consisted of four Technicians in the Orthodontic Dept. I applied for a rise in salary after a year, did not get it, so I left and got a new job at Guy's Hospital, there I was again one of four technicians - two of the Technicians were supposedly employed by the Institute as teaching staff, the other two, which included me, were employed by the Hospital. There was a huge difference in the salaries. However, Guy's was a great place to work, we all got on with each other so very well. The Orthodontic Laboratory at that time in (old Guy's) was situated adjacent to the roof of the Mortuary, very unpleasant in the summer time, as my window was opposite the extractor fan of the Mortuary, we had an alternative entrance/exit, down a circular stair which coincided with the entrance to the Mortuary, at this juncture one day, as I went out to buy some lunch, I bumped into another Old Boy, Lou Illis, a friend of my elder brothers'. He had been with them in King's Lynn and we would not have seen each other for at least ten years, so we exchanged a few words. He had apparently rung the bell to gain access to the Mortuary and at that moment the door opened and Lou went in. Lou was obviously a Doctor at Guy's but I cannot remember what branch of medicine he was in.

At this time I was suffering from an affair of the heart. It was unrequited love with a female I had met at Eastman's. One evening, whilst drowning my sorrows in a pub, I decided to toss a coin to decide whether to try my luck at Tottenham Royal's Dance floor or stay where I was (drinking and driving was not an issue in those days). Tottenham Royal won, so off I went in my newly acquired BMW Isetta, a three wheeled car, a sort of motor cycle, one could sit in, and there I met a beautiful young lady called Solfrid, of Norwegian heritage who could hardly speak any English. She was working as an Au-pair of sorts, at Wix House, a Jewish Old People's Home on Green Lanes near Finsbury Park. We started seeing a lot of each other and eventually got engaged. She was working on an Au-pair Visa and to change her status required a lot of work from me, fighting British Bureaucracy. It was not until I managed to get an individual in the Foreign Office Aliens Dept. interested in me and our problems that we overcame the obstacles stacked against us. So, finally, she was able to get a proper job, working as a Secretary for a firm of Solicitors in Lincoln's Inn.

We got married in Norway in August 1965. This entailed driving up to Newcastle in our recently acquired Mini, taking a ferry to Bergen and driving north over the mountains to Skatval about thirty miles north of Trondheim. Air travel by the everyman was not common in those days, so I was the only member of my family at the wedding. However,

my wife has six sisters and one brother and her family more than made up for the shortcomings. So a great time was had by all. Here I would like to recount a weird coincidence. We had taken over the rental of an apartment in Clapham from a Norwegian Student who was moving to Holland, the key to this apartment was at my parents' house, and we had realized that we would arrive in London in the middle of the night. Walking along the Quay prior to embarking on to the Ferry to Newcastle we met the aforementioned student, and inquired if he incidentally had a key to the apartment, and on looking through his briefcase, he found one. Amazing!!!

Back in the UK, reality had to be faced, at the end of a month. We barely could save 26 old pounds. There was no hope of promotion in the foreseeable future. So I applied for another job at The London Hospital, as a Physics Technician, I would need to learn a new skill (this required the construction of X-Ray opaque shields for the treatment of Rodent Ulcers for example). I got the job but when I told my boss, Prof. Jack Tulley about, it he thought it would be a bad idea to leave my present trade, but acknowledged that I had what he called " hot-feet". He knew that I was married to a Norwegian, so he suggested that he could write to some colleagues in Scandinavia to ask if anybody had use for me. He received a reply within a week and it resulted in us moving to Bergen. My wife was not happy because she loved London. So I became a member of the staff of the University of Bergen Dental School where subsequently I worked off and on for the next thirty-eight years.

My services initially were divided between the Prosthetic Dept. and the Orthodontic Dept. because that was the way they wanted to fund my position, it worked OK for a while. The head of the Orthodontic Dept. was not yet a Professor and was working to get Bergen recognized internationally as a Centre of learning in Orthodontics. He succeeded, I stopped working for the Prosthetic Dept. and was employed full time in the Ortho. Dept. Teaching was conducted in English on the Post Graduate course and I have been privileged to work with a multitude of interesting people from most countries in Europe, the Far East and North and South America .

I did not find the learning of Norwegian difficult. At work everyone could speak English and it took some time for me to distinguish the sounds I was hearing as words, and gradually I started speaking Norwegian not caring if I made mistakes.

In 1969 we bought a Summer place or Hytte as they are called in Norway. It is 33 square metres and was about ten meters above the fjord, on an island called Askøy, a fifteen minute Ferry ride from Bergen. We used it as a weekend retreat for a year or so then, as a result of one of those extremely weird co-incidences we sometimes experience in life, we were able to borrow some money from my mother which enabled us to build a house on the same site as the hut.

The strange coincidence was that I had a quite wealthy uncle George, my Dad's eldest brother, who had been the CEO of Pathe-News. He was married to a woman called Mary, who was quite wealthy in her own right. They were childless, and they died suddenly, their Wills stated that if they died within a month of each other, half of their Estate would go to their respective relatives on each side of their marriage. There were two Brothers remaining in my Dad's family. Our share was a considerable sum of money in those days, Strangely I had only seen this uncle once in my life, and that was at Grandma's Eightieth birthday. He was also the subject of the BBC's This is You Life programme, his mother and three brothers were alive at the time but did not feature in the show. My opinion of the BBC's research teams was diminished after that.

Another coincidence was the day we received building permission for our house, my wife dreamed that she was pregnant, and she was. Our daughter Vanessa was born in June of 1971 and we moved in on my birthday in September, a few years later I won a battle with the Norwegian State about money and received a considerable sum in back pay, enough to move the Hut from its previous position beside the house, down to the sea to become a Boathouse with a Hut on top. I have always had a small boat with outboard motor and whilst living on Askoy sea fishing is one of my greatest pleasures..

My wife and I considered at that time that our move to Norway was somewhat temporary in nature, so when it came to Vanessa's schooling we wanted to hedge our bets somewhat. The age at which children started school in Norway at that time was seven years, and in England five years. So at the appropriate time we applied to the local school authorities for Vanessa to start at aged six and our request was granted. There were however two neighbours who were teachers and had children of the same age as Vanessa and they thought that we were receiving unfair advantage over their children, and they did what they could to sabotage our plans and succeeded. We therefore received a letter after eight weeks or so of Vanessa starting, instructing us to cease sending our daughter to school forthwith. We were so enraged that we made plans to leave Norway immediately, which included sending our animals, a dog and cat, into quarantine in England. I resigned my position at the Dental School, but was given leave for year. We rented out the house to one of the Postgraduate Students on the Orthodontic Course and we moved to England. We rented a house in Fleet in Hampshire, fairly near to my Mother's house in Sandhurst and one of my brother's homes in Camberley. I found some premises in Farnham and I equipped it as a Dental Laboratory and worked self employed constructing orthodontic appliances on models being sent to me from Norway. My wife was employed by Toshiba in Frimley as a Credit Controller, and Vanessa enrolled at the local school in Fleet. All went well for about nine months. The animals came out of quarantine, I could take my daughter to school in the morning and pick her up afterwards. I would often prepare the evening meal, put it in the oven, before picking Solfrid up from work, which entailed entering the M3 illegally at Fleet Services, a ten minute drive to Frimley (where Toshiba were situated), then back to Fleet. The round trip took about half an hour. Then we started to receive bills from Norway for things which were supposedly not functioning with the house, selling it was out of the question, the regulations on Property sales and income tax were horrendous at that time in Norway. So what could we do ? My mother suggested that we send Vanessa to a Boarding School, so we explored the possibility and decided for a school in Northwood, on the outer edge of North London. St Helens School for Girls, where Vanessa would spend the rest of her school life, from nine to nineteen. We returned to Norway where I resumed my job, however my boss Professor Hasund was very kind and employed Solfrid in the Orthodontic Dept. and allowed her to take time off when Vanessa came home frequently, about every six weeks or so, and we resumed our somewhat different life in Norway. I read in a Women's Magazine Solfrid had bought, a good report on a car I had never heard of - a Subaru with four wheel drive. We bought one as we arrived back, this made life so much easier as the road to our house is so very steep. We have continued to drive with Four wheel drive ever since; today we have an Audi A4.

For some reason it was decided to create new professorship in our department, and in due course a new Professor was appointed to teach undergraduates. However, he was more interested in Cleft Palate treatment, and when Bergen became a centre for Cleft

Palate treatment, I automatically became a member of this team. About this time I was asked to take over the teaching of the Undergraduates in the construction of removable Orthodontic Appliances, so for three months every year I taught 40 students in groups of 10, to construct 5 removable orthodontic appliances which could treat successfully minor orthodontic problems, in preparation for the students fourth year of study, when they started treating patients under the watchful eyes of qualified orthodontists.

Also in the Seventies, the Norwegians, possibly intoxicated by the flow of money, from the North Sea, and in a gesture of solidarity with other non-EU States, decided to build a Dental School for the Portuguese in Porto, so for several years there was a lot of interaction between the staff of the Dental Schools; however this cooperation came to an abrupt halt when the Portuguese applied for membership of the EU. A few Norwegian Dentists established Practices in Portugal and one member of the Prosthetics Staff, a Technician, left and moved to Portugal, the outcome of this was that I was asked if I would take over the Oral Surgical Department's Technical services. I agreed on the proviso that I encountered no problems, I did not know how I would react when meeting somebody with half their face missing, this however did not occur and I became involved with Anaplastology, as the Swedes call it, Maxillo-Facial Technology in English. So I have created some facial prostheses for some unfortunate patients over the years, Initially these were constructed in normal dental acrylic but later Cardiff University developed a wonderful Silicone kit which facilitated the creation of prostheses with really a lifelike appearance.

About fifteen years ago a bridge was built between Askøy and the mainland. It was wonderful not to need to look at one's watch when deciding to travel somewhere.(the ferry time-table being firmly imprinted in my memory).

Vanessa completed her schooling at St Helens aged nineteen, achieving three A levels and she decided to take a year off spending a year in Hamburg as an Au-pair, also studying German. She then went to the University of Buckingham, where she took a degree in Business Studies with German, and then returned to Norway, where she encountered some difficulties finding a job. She decided to Norwegianise her education by getting a Diploma from a Bergen Business School, that seemed to do the trick, and doors started to open. She is now in a managerial position in an oil company. In 2001 she got married to an Englishman at a pub across the Thames from the Dome, and they subsequently had two boys, Ryan (now 14) and Callum (10) this was the last time my family were gathered together. George was suffering from Prostate Cancer and had had a Stroke. We agreed to get our Prostates checked over. I did and after two blood samples were taken it was found that there were no problems with my Prostate but I learned that I have Essential Thrombocythaemia, which means that my bone marrow is producing too many Thrombocytes. I therefore have a predisposition for blood clots and go every two months or so to the hospital for blood tests.

I retired at aged sixty seven (normal retirement age in Norway), but continued to work from a Lab I established in 1999 as a result of an EU directive but I was forced to give up working in 2009(my landlord wanted his premises back). It was probably just as well because soon after I fleetingly met the Grim Reaper. He manifested himself in the form of an A.A.A. (Abdominal, Aortic Aneurism), probably a result of a lifetime of heavy smoking, which ruptured(nine and a half centimetres apparently) and I lost about a litre and a half of blood into my Chest cavity, so I was very lucky. Not so lucky with aftermath though, as I was left with an Incisal Hernia which they were reluctant to treat in Norway

(and it grew and grew). My wife found a site on the internet, The British Hernia Centre who we consulted for help and I was given an appointment for surgery so we travelled to Northwick Park Hospital near Wembley to get it fixed (cost twelve thousand pounds). In terms of trauma, I imagine that being run over by a bus is a good comparison. The hernia was big, so the surgeon used two of the biggest" meshes " available to facilitate the repair. After discharge from hospital, a fistula manifested itself at the site of the operation which took seven months to heal.

Last year, I fell and broke my hip. We were staying with one of my in-laws in Trondheim at the time, as we were there for only for the weekend it was decided that I would receive a replacement in Trondheim and be transferred to Bergen almost immediately. I was flown by Air Ambulance to Bergen, one night in hospital, followed by a week in a Convalescent Centre. I then received twice weekly Physiotherapy for a period of six months, I have subsequently started to frequent a health studio where I exercise daily on a tread mill and do some arm exercises as I had noticed that I was having some difficulty pulling the boat in before my health problems started.

My wife of fifty years has been a fantastic companion throughout all the trials and tribulations we have been through, particularly the last three years.

When recounting the story of my life in such a fashion, over such a long period of time, there have obviously been some tragedies which I have deliberately omitted because they do not belong here .

That is the abridged story of this Old Boy of HDS.

Farewell to you all.

Dennis J Cummins

PS whilst continuing with the sessions on the treadmill, I recently suffered a Pulmonary Embolism, spent a few days in Hospital and am currently on blood thinning medication. Second encounter with the Grim Reaper!

Sadly, having contributed this article, Dennis had his third encounter with the Grim Reaper and died in February this year, The article stands as a tribute to him and our condolences are sent to his widow, Solfrid, his family and his brothers.



AND THIS IS WILTON WAY NOW!

Cleaned up and converted into flats, the Wilton Way building has survived, and is almost unrecognisable from its days as a Secondary School.

A LIFE INTERRUPTED

Dr. Emil Landes (1950-1952)

The life I speak of was that of my parents and myself.

It was a life interrupted which catapulted me into the Old Boys Associations of two grammar schools in London.

My father was a dentist in Vienna when the Nazis marched in, in March 1938. I was not quite six years old. Neither my father nor my mother spoke of the horror of the months between that cataclysmic event and our escape six months later in September 1938. And to my eternal regret I never asked.

All I gleaned of that time is from residual family documents. My father was able to procure tourist visas to Australia via Southampton at a time when it was still Eichmann's policy to allow, even to encourage, Jews with appropriate documentation to leave Austria.

I don't remember much, but I do remember the trauma of the departure and goodbyes at the railway station, and before that the days and nights of marching jackboots and swastikas, and the all pervading enveloping fear. I remember the long train journey through terrifying border controls to Düsseldorf airport and looking up to the enormous engines of the Dakota about to fly us to Croydon airport.

Being destitute except for some dental gold and bits of jewellery, which my father smuggled out, and his dental qualification unrecognized by the British authorities, we ended up in the Shelter in the East End of London, supported by the Jewish Refugee Aid Committee. The reason for that? Apparently I came down with whooping cough and was medically certified unfit to continue our journey to Australia. I suspect that this suited my father, as I doubt he wanted to undertake the six to eight week voyage. And so it was a series of medical certificates that enabled us to remain in the UK, together with the thousands of Jewish refugees until war broke out in September 1939 when of course there was no question of resuming our journey.

My father was interned instead as an enemy alien.

Subsequent vicissitudes propelled me at the age of eleven to Parmiters in 1943, then to HDS in 1950, specifically to Mr Gee's ("Why am I laughing?") biology tuition, whence to King's College London to fulfil my father's ambition to have a dentist son.

Then, in 1957, the son tutored the father to pass the Dental Statutory Exam to enable him to be registered once more to join his son as a practitioner of his beloved dental profession.

FRIENDS OF THE FALLEN

My very good friend Ted Patten has written a little tribute to some Old Boys who served in WW2 and who were friends of the late Ken Wigglesworth (who died, in action, as a Spitfire Pilot in 1944).

Ken, Frank Rosher, Harry Pettit and Jack Barnard were HDS lads. They would meet, up after School, at Jack's home in Mayola Road, E5. I knew the Barnard family well.

Jack survived WW2. He had joined the RAF, aged 16, as an Aeronautical Engineering Apprentice. He served, servicing aircraft. The other three lads all made the Roll of Honour.

Ted Patten

ERINNERUNGEN

Klaus Herbst

(Alert readers will notice that Klaus submitted his article in German and that this was published in the preceding edition. Here is an English version for the benefit of those who were silly enough to study Latin!!! - or who were asleep in German lessons!!!)

Dear Willi, former colleagues and students, and anyone who is interested!

The reason why I chose a quotation from Dickens as a heading is simply explained. I was in a similar mood on that particular morning (not “afternoon”!) when I presented myself, punctually, to stand for the first time before that building which would bring me a whole load of new experiences over the coming year.

I was not uneasy but, rather, nervous and insecure when I saw the sign “Hackney Downs School for Boys – The Former Grocers’ Company’s School – ILEA” and wondered whether I should go in . . . and not retrace my steps back to Victoria Station.

This lasted only a couple of seconds, only fractions perhaps. I went in. I explained to the caretaker why I was there. Of course, I was not the first ever foreign language assistant he had met. He quickly understood and showed me the way to the ‘Head’. A really friendly Secretary, though a little distant, waited for me.

The door opened and I was invited to enter. John Kemp (R.I.P.) greeted me with a unique mix of reserve and – the friendly side – joviality. He clarified a few of the ground rules and what was expected of me and told me that Rod Nash would take charge of me, described the path to a classroom and told me when break-time was.

Rod and I got on like a house on fire. His excellent German and easy going nature made me feel immediately at home. I began to feel a whole lot better.

I thought, “This could be good”, and began to relax. All the Dickens ghosts dispersed and for a few moments (I think in reality!) the sun came out.

After this rather drawn out introduction to my Hackney Downs memories, suddenly comes the Finale. In all the years since I have received only fragments of news, and I should like to know more

I soon got used to the building: a quite normal and practical, architect designed School in London, like many others – though not with such an illustrious past. It seemed there was now no sign of the earlier “Palace” with Theatre and Swimming Bath. I thought perhaps there would be some remnants of the old building. Where? A couple of stones? A wall? A pillar monument? I do not know any longer.

I got to know intelligent and interested students, each of whom took all possible chances to speak with a “real German” in his mother tongue in order to improve their own knowledge of his language. Rod knows the names.

Quite soon very interesting dialogues developed, for example about the “Red Army Faction”, also widely known as the “Baader-Meinhoff Gang”, who were especially active in Germany in that year. That was of course quite exciting.

I was also asked to make comments about the so-called “Third Reich, but here my personal circumstances stood in me in good stead since I was only born in 1953 and was not directly involved in any of the worst excesses of my forefathers.

At other times I felt, and still feel, that I was a kind of ‘ambassador’ who carried a share of the responsibility for the past and who spoke about it when approached by a Hackney Downs student I began to feel repressed. The result was that I became an information channel which was largely self-taught!

I remember very well the lively and sometimes controversial discussions in the Staff Common Room. These were always full of tolerance, they had to be, since all shades of opinion were represented.

I remember one discussion that was rather difficult to resolve. A young female colleague used the word “racism”, others rallied to her and used the word more times. A middle-aged lady teacher tried to pour oil on the waters. An older colleague said “What a lot of fuss. The word does not exist. If it is needed then it should be “racialism”. And especially if one has not yet mastered English . . .” That sounded pretty good to me.

All the same, professional life functioned pretty well. With fair discussions you could work in a friendly way, with colleagues. No dispute was allowed to drag on.

I remember the regular meetings in a nearby pub. What I remember: After a few minutes the “Shop Talk” would begin. I cannot remember much of the detail. Often the teachers were very interested in their charges, in their work and in their own special school, for which they had special feelings.

I remember one lunch time. There was a raspberry dessert. As I spooned on the custard rather heavily, the pink colour started to turn into green foam, at first at the edges, quickly spreading out from there.

By chance an older Chemistry teacher was sitting directly opposite me. I asked him “What is this? The Chemistry teacher: “A chemical reaction.” Thus I learned two things at once. First, of a previously unknown chemical reaction. And secondly a wonderful example of the famed dry humour.

A short trip into the neighbouring Dalston Mount School for Girls where I had a few lessons to teach. One afternoon their German teacher invited me to their parents’ evening. What parents! Thank God I was only responsible for a few of the school girls, not the whole school! Someone gave me a folder, details of about a dozen students were inside. None was known to me.

Soon the parents arrived. I scanned through the folder in case there was something of note, like a report. And then I greeted the often worried arrivals by name and introduced myself. That created some trust.

Then I spoke of some improvements, and some deterioration and gave some wise words of advice, for example, that the daughter must clearly improve. They must pay attention to this subject regularly (“Sorry, girls!”). But overall it was good.

The parents thanked me and went joyfully home. The pedagogic “flying blind” was successful. And I walked to the very next pub in order to down one or two pints.

The standard school books I found a bit misleading in places; as though the authors had allowed themselves a not very intelligent joke. “This is Herr Braun, He is a Fachmann,” As the pubertal girls read this out without the required ‘ch’ sound, but with ‘k’, they understandably laughed.

“Herr Braun, the fa(ch)mann is making scrambled eggs.” It went on for days, until I brought it to an end stating that it was not [r̄ü:/ri, but [r̄ü:r/ai]. Is there anything more important than a Diphthong? So much trouble for a scrambled egg?

I remember that I took weeks to try the optimum way home to my basement flat in Kilburn. The so-called Secret Line, known as the North London Line (a British Rail kind of S-Bahn) was the key.

I should have liked to live in Hackney but I could find nowhere and did not wish to waste too much time looking.

By the way, I shared the flat with the French foreign language assistant, Martine. We spoke only English. I did not want to waste my time in London learning French!

Naturally, I did have some homesickness. Then I would find my way in the evenings on the number 16 bus to Victoria and would look at the 2300 Boat Train to Dover Priory, Eastern Docks and sometimes Western Docks. As the train went off – without me – I lost my homesickness and, as a reward, happily went home using the Victoria and Bakerloo Lines.

Since then, I have told many people that this was the best year of my life.

It really was!

Uncounted times I have travelled to London since my year in Hackney, and I worked there for six weeks in the 90s as a science journalist.

Thursday evenings the British Midlands flight from Frankfurt, then two days of intensive hard work with interviews and partly live broadcasts from Broadcasting House or BBC White City. It was exciting.

Sunday morning early in Hyde Park reading The Observer and the Sunday Times on a bench was relaxing, with the sound of traffic soft in the background, and then back home from Heathrow at midday. (On workdays, I liked The Independent and from midday onwards, every two hours, the new Evening Standard.) It was an interesting time, professionally productive with echoes of that first year in Hackney

Now I hope, that under the present political situation, which I find personally very unfortunate, the free travel without Visa, and above all, without employment permit will remain possible in the future.

At the moment this does not appear to be very likely.

I remain thankful for the friendly welcome and membership of The Clove Club, of which I am very proud. I should be pleased to receive any comments on my article.

Herzliche Grüße und alles Gute **Klaus Herbst**

A FAMILY PICTURE



Here's a surprise! Just after a Christmas I was contacted by Hilary in Anston, Nr. Sheffield, a relative of the family pictured in the photograph alongside. No less an illustrious member of the former staff of HDS than Charles Adrian Gee - always known as Adrian by his family. The age of the picture is not known, though I would hazard a guess at 1918-1920 when young A. would have been either at, or just about to go to University - hence the family portrait.

His father was a butcher and Hilary has kindly sent me some other photos of the family shop and the house where Adrian was raised. Though he always appeared to be rather stern to us, he was responsible for the training of many who later became surgeons of standing and repute. Memories please.

REMINISCENCES OF A PAST ERA

Melvyn Carlowe (1952-1959)

Recently I travelled on the London Overground Railwat from Enfield Town to Liverpool Street. I calculated that the last time I went on this line was in 1959 when I walked from HDS playing fields in Church Street, Edmonton after our weekly sports session to Lower Edmonton Station. When the train approached the Downs I thought it seemed much smaller than I remembered and then the huge blue wall of the Mossbourne Academy loomed forth. I recalled the railway spotting 'anoraks' hanging out of the windows, checking steam engine serial numbers and screaming with delight if a rare locomotive appeared in their sight. I also thought about my rapid cycle ride across the Downs when I was in the upper sixth form.

With the tacit approval of Jimmy Marr and agreement to turn a blind eye from Joe Brearley on condition that I agreed to sing in his production of 'The Mikado', I revised for my exams at home and in Stoke Newington Reference Library. One morning I was alarmed to receive a telephone call from Joe telling me to get back promptly as the Head, Vernon Barkway Pye, wanted to see me. I lived in Clapton and it took me about 20 minutes tearing away on my bike and zooming down the central path through the centre of the Downs. I arrived breathless and leapt up the concrete steps to the Head's Study. I was ushered in and a cold, stone-faced V B Pye said "Do you normally ride like a lunatic, and do you usually come to School in your carpet slippers?" I mumbled some words and received a verbal tongue lashing in return.

This was one of several confrontations I experienced with the Headmaster. A few years earlier I slipped on ice by the open toilets in the playground and fractured my wrist. I did not sue the LCC for neglect but was told by the cold fish VBP that "as Nelson had to learn with his remaining arm" I, too, would be expected write with my right arm! I think if I had been in command of *HMS Victory* I would have fired a broadside at the cold-hearted Head. I had enough problems, as a left-hander, using a scratchy dip-in pen, using the ink well embedded in the right hand corner of the desk and dripping ink all over my exercise books and clothes.

The next face to face was when the school wall in Downs Park Road had a huge "Ban The Bomb!" slogan painted on it. I was summoned to VBP's office and he asked me to spread my hands so that he could check if I had white paint on them. I told him that I was incensed by his action and only got a sneering scowl in return. As this was my final year, he told me that he would be writing the requested reference for my university applications and I could only draw my own conclusions what this meant. But his prejudice actually worked for my benefit. As a result of a highly negative reference the university admissions tutor decided to invite me for an interview in order to meet the miscreant depicted in my application, I was offered a place and subsequently my university tutor told me about the Head's action.

I was delighted to exact my own satisfaction when the 'A' level results were announced. In the 1950's we didn't get them sent by post, but they were pinned to the main front door at HDS. I arrived at exactly the same time as Pye and we both walked up the steps to read their results. Without reading them first he told me that I would not be permitted to retake the exams at the school. I looked at the sheet and thankfully saw

I had passed all my ‘A’ levels and had attained the required grades. To his astonishment, I was able to inform him that I had also been offered a university place and thanked him for his assistance!

I was interested reading in an earlier edition of The Clove’s Lines, how coldly and lacking any compassion had been Jimmy Marr’s treatment when he was delayed in returning from the Channel Islands following his wife’s funeral. So it seems that it was not only pupils who were singled out for special treatment.

THE JUBILEE IN 1926

I had always been under the impression that Albert Calland’s School Plays in the 1950s had been the first such performances in the School Theatre (apart, that is, from play readings and extracts which may have been included in School Concerts). Not so! It transpires that the Monitors had performed a short play (about 15 minutes, I think) by Arthur Eckersley under the title “A Collection Will Be Made”, with a cast of 8. Not a patch on the full-scale, costumed productions of the 1950s, so I think the record should be allowed to stand! **WW**

PAUL ROBINSON, HDS 1967-1974

Friends of Paul were stunned by the news of his tragic and accidental death in a fire at his home in Eastbourne in October, 2016. Paul had been a keen supporter and backer of Eastbourne Football Club (as well as the Rugby Club and other local organisations) through his company Winning Designs Ltd. He was also a keen writer and was thought to be due to become the chair of the New Eastbourne Group.

INTO THE NINETIES WITH

ROY DUNNING

Yes, he will be 90 years of age later this year!

Were you taught - German or French - by R.S.D?

Reminiscences of Roy’s Twenty Years or so of service at HDS are sought for publication in a future issue.

But, even if memory fails you, perhaps you can let me know the answer to the question above as a matter of some urgency so that I can pass on greetings in time for the celebratory day

FURTHER ADDITIONS TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR ROLL OF HONOUR

A chance purchase by the President in, of all places,, a garden centre, found further details of another HDS Old Boy serving, but sadly dying at the Front, and then another chance reference found one more in the Archives. Both names have been checked by Steve Bench.

Bearcock, (also Barker), Charles Edwin.

Date of Birth: Third Quarter 1884. Date died: 21st March, 1918, aged 33. (Died of wounds.).
Charles Bearcock is buried in Bancourt Cemetery, in Grave 1-G-9.

Home Address: 18, Cadogan Terrace, Victoria Park.

Father's Occupation: Builder. Father's Names: John Bartholomew.

Attended School: 9/09/97. - 27/07/99.

School Notes:

Service Notes: 28856, Private, Royal Fusiliers, then 86465, Private, 36 Labour Company, Northamptonshire Regiment. Private Bearcock is listed in the School Register and in Army Records under the surname Barker.



Lapinski, Albert.

Date of Birth: - Date died: 1st July, 1916, aged 19.

Private Albert Lapinski is buried in Danzig Alley Cemetery, Mametz, in grave VIII-T-1

Home Address: 18, Osbaldeston Road, Stoke Newington.

Father's Occupation: Commercial Jewellery Traveller. Father's Name: David.

Attended School: from 15.9.08

School Notes: He was a member of Pickford's House.

Service Notes: Albert Lapinski served under the Anglicised name Albert LAPPIN.

1914-1915: H18516 Hussars.

20/07/15 - 24/11/15: Private, GS/16400, 9th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, in France.

31/05/16 - 16/06/16: 20th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, in France.

17/06/16 - 01/07/16: Attached to 7th Battalion, Royal West Surrey Regiment., In France.

N.B. His father was Naturalised on 30th December, 1902



THE CLOVE CLUB ORDER FORM - MARCH 2017
(Please Print)

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

.....**POSTCODE**

Subscription (£10p.a.) £

New Tie @ £17-50 incl p& p £

Socks @ £12-50 incl postage (or £10 if ordered with a tie) £
(A camel motif is woven into the sock! 2 pairs for the price!)

Solid Silver Lapel Pin shaped like a Clove, handmade
in Bedfordshire (17-50 incl postage or can be included
with socks and or ties for £15 only) £

Hackney Downs 1876-1995. The authoritative History
by Dr.Geoffrey Alderman . . . (£12-50 Post free)£

Addendum to the Roll of Honour 1914-1918
Servants of the Grocers' Company, the Mersey Ferry and
Old Boys from migrant German families - researched
by Steve Bench. £15-00 now inclusive of postage £

TICKETS FOR LUNCH at £32-50 each £
Please include the names of your guests and your own and
their menu choices on the reverse of this form) _____

TOTAL £

Please send to The President at 12, The Crescent,
Whittlebury, Northants. NN12 8XP with your cheque
payable to The Clove Club.

If you would like to make a donation to the English National Opera in memory of
Albert Calland, please record this overleaf, even if the amount is included in your
cheque above..

2017 Lunch Menu Choices
