

## BURTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The school was founded about the year 1520 by Abbot William Beyne of Burton Abbey.

He re-established the school, already flourishing within the Abbey walls, as a separate entity, and endowed it with lands in 1529. His action ensured that the School did not perish when the Abbey was dissolved in 1541.

It is known that boys from the School were sent up to Cambridge, and probably to Oxford, before 1530.

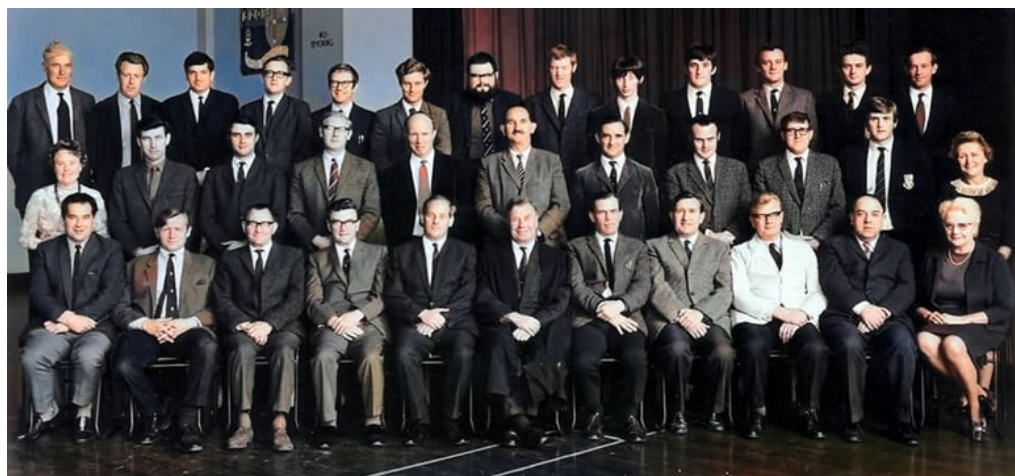
Over the centuries, further endowments were added, though the article in 2021 made clear that funding and management were a problem by 1858. In 1869, all the revenues were amalgamated, and the Burton Endowed Schools came into being. In 1877, the Grammar School moved from Friars Walk to the premises in Bond Street that some of us remember.

In 1957, the school moved to a new building in Winshill, where it remained until 1975, when it was absorbed into the Abbot Beyne comprehensive.

The most famous of the School's known Old Boys was:

### Admiral John Jervis, 1735-1823, 1st Earl of St Vincent

Jervis, son of a lawyer, was educated at Burton-on-Trent Grammar School and at Swinden's school, Greenwich – a fellow pupil at the latter being James Wolfe, with whom he later served in the capture of Quebec. Nelson served under him, and he earned a reputation as both a highly professional fighting captain and a disciplinarian.



BGS staff in the mid-1960s



## Burton Grammar School Old Boys' Newsletter Number 50



Published: December 2024 by Eric Bodger



## Letter from the Editor

### RIP Burton Grammar School Old Boys' Association — 1921-2021

The 2022 newsletter mourned the closure of the OBA, and went to everyone who had been in the Association. This time, I can only send it to those who gave their consent to remain on the distribution, so please pass it on to any friends who might be interested but have not heard from me. They can join the mailing list by emailing their consent to [bgs@cicsplex.co.uk](mailto:bgs@cicsplex.co.uk)

My ability to put a newsletter together relies entirely on input from Old Boys, and I hope you will send enough material to ensure that this is not the last one. Photos are very welcome, as are reports of what **living** alumni are doing.



This photograph of the 1967-68 2nd XV is much more recent than most of our memorabilia. It would be interesting to know what the subjects are doing now.

*Eric Bodger (1956-62)*

### Continuing to stay in touch

The Association has now been dissolved. If you haven't already given your consent to remaining on record, please email [bgs@cicsplex.co.uk](mailto:bgs@cicsplex.co.uk). Anyone who attended the School is very welcome to join, as are widows of Old Boys.

I am happy to pass on messages from anyone on the list to anyone else — though of course it's up to the recipient whether they respond.

*Eric*



## MEMORIES

### Mike Hamilton (1950-56) has provided some photos:

Mike continued a family tradition by coming to BGS, following his father, his brother, and three uncles on his mother's side.

The Grammar School 1st Eleven C.C. 1916



W. E. Ramsey C. J. Willshee J. L. Beely R. G. Gerratt L. G. Everett  
C. W. Beely C. E. Woodrow J. D. Beevers R. Boddice W. H. Radford  
E. R. Fox G. Hamilton

Mike's father appears in the 1916 line-up. He is "the little chap on the right-hand side of the photo."

He scored a century against Tamworth Grammar School at the age of 13, which must have been a record.

This photograph is of the Old Boys' XI in the late 1950s.

Please let us know if you appear in this picture.



## 5B Class of 1952

In September 1952 a group of boys from the junior schools of Burton-on Trent walked through the doors of The Burton Grammar School in Bond Street. They were greeted by masters who looked very formidable in their black gowns and by older pupils who wanted to enjoy the fact that they were no longer the new boys. These boys came from families from all the social levels of the town selected based on the fact that they could benefit from the disciplined education the School offered. Strangely and confusingly the school didn't know the alphabet and the classes were designated A, C, B. Being the brightest of pupils we soon cottoned onto this and when the school realised that we knew the alphabet they changed it to A, B, C the following year. This meant that some who were upgraded remained in the now corrected 'B' stream. It was this form that gelled into a formidable force, backing each other with the masters and taking on any other forms. We had our own choir, led by our form captain, Peter Evanson with our own anthem. If any games went on in the schoolyard we would watch with interest and take on the winners.

The masters tried to discipline us and we were obedient so long as we felt right. However our Headmaster Horace Pitchford called us the "worst 'B' form in his time with the school." This comment earned him a reprimand for using the word 'B'.

So what happened to these members of the "worst 'B' form"? Unlike other forms we did not lose contact when we left school. We scattered the world to Canada, Australia, Africa and throughout the UK but there was always a special bond. When we turned fifty, David Bunting's wife organised a reunion for 5B and their spouses as she was curious to meet these people whom her husband kept talking about. At Burton Grammar School Old Boys dinners, 5B had their own table.



So here we are well into a new century, sadly we have lost some of our form to the grim reaper but on the first Wednesday each month, 5B still meet for lunch. Our numbers slowly diminish but we have some new members join.

Old Grammar School lads who are only just turning eighty whose fellow pupils did not form the solid group that 5B have. Owing to distance and health problems we cannot all be there but we email each other and send Christmas cards. The attached photo was taken on the 7th February 2024. Friends for seventy two years. This will be in the BGSOBA newsletter but will also be sent to all the 5B pupils. Best wishes to all from the renaming members of 5B 'the worst B form in the school's history'.

*Robert F (Bob) Andrews 1952-58*

1921-22	AH Yeomans	1968-69	W.T.Burman
1922-23	F.Evershed	1969-70	F.W.Fawkes
1923-24	W.Shelley	1970-71	W.H.Gillian
1924-25	A.Slator	1971-72	R.L.Knight
1925-26	R. Samble	1972-73	B.E.Warren
1926-27	W.P.Lowe	1973-74	J.H.Mander
1927-28	H.Leigh-Newton	1974-75	N.A.Binns
1928-29	J.H.Moir	1975-76	D.G.Hardwick
1929-30	C.F.Gothard	1976-77	R.A.Clark
1930-31	F.J.Manners	1977-78	A.Fallon
1931-32	F.Newton-Husbands	1978-79	G.M.Hamilton
1932-33	J.H.Birch	1979-80	A.T.Cole
1933-34	W.E.Briggs	1980-81	P.Minns
1934-35	J.D.Robertson	1981-82	J.A.Woolley
1935-36	B.F.Sadle	1982-83	R.Outhwaite
1936-37	F.J.Hodges	1983-89	G.T.Milnes
1937-38	Col.D.H.Mason	1989-90	H.E.Smith
1938-39	R.T.Robinson	1990-91	E.A.Bailey
1939-40	B.C.Newbold	1991-92	D.A.Sharatt
1940-41	R.C.Sims	1992-93	B.Clements
1941-42	J.B.Smith	1993-94	G.Starback
1942-43	F.T.Shelley	1994-95	N.A.Tomkins
1943-44	T.W.Parkin	1995-96	T.A.Trigg
1944-45	P.J.Williams	1996-97	J.M.Illingworth
1945-46	E.J.Dallard	1997-98	J.P.Hartley
1946-47	H.J.Wain	1998-99	R.Deacon
1947-48	G.W.Britton	1999-00	L.S.Dunkerly
1948-49	F.E.James	2000-01	P.G.Booth
1949-50	B.L.Hubbard	2001-02	G.K.Rushton
1950-51	L.A.Haywood	2002-03	S.A.Neal
1951-52	R.P.Stevenson	2003-04	J.S.Pickering
1952-53	G.H.Cooper	2004-05	R.J.Wain
1953-54	L.E.Churchill	2005-06	F.Toon
1954-55	J.D.Rowland	2006-07	Rev. R.Gilbert
1955-56	D.P.Haywood	2007-08	M. E. Watson
1956-57	J.F.Rose	2008-09	G. P. Evans.
1957-58	W.R.Souster	2009-10	R.F.Andrews
1958-59	F.C.Jenks	2010-11	D.J.Grimmsley
1959-60	H.H.Pitchford	2011-12	K.B. Large
1960-61	D.J.Grimmsley	2012-13	R.F. Kerry
1961-62	A.E.G.Hardwick	2013-14	M. Brown
1962-63	A.C.Bowden	2014-15	G.S. Marshment
1963-64	R.H.Eggington	2015-16	A. Gentles
1964-65	K.A.Stanyon	2016-17	S Wilcox
1965-66	D.M.Davies	2017-18	J. Ash
1966-67	H.E.C.Weston	2018-20	J. A. Taylor
1967-68	W.F.Howarth		Association closed October 2020





Two Junior forms at work in the Art Room. On the left is the Art Master, Mr. W. G. Spooner, A.R.C.A., and on the right the Headmaster and Major M. F. Orchard, who is in charge of the smaller boys, and is also the Director of Music.

too, one of the boys obtained a Scholarship in Mathematics of £100 per annum at King's College, Cambridge.

On the playing field and in other spheres of sport, the record is equally good, though the proper balance is always kept between the intellectual and the athletic sides. The compulsory sports include Rugby football, cricket, cross-country running, athletic sports and

swimming, and inter-school matches are played in all these. The swimming team is particularly strong and this year contains a boy who swam in the trials for the Olympic Games. Boxing is also encouraged, and there is a vigorous rowing club, which is fortunate in possessing, in the Trent, an excellent river for its purpose. The club takes part in regattas and inter-school races throughout the Midlands. An Old Boy, J. H. Moir was a finalist last year in the Colquhoun Sculls at Cambridge.

Many other interests are represented in the school life, the aim being not to force the individual boy into a set mould, but to bring out whatever latent abilities he has, be they intellectual, physical or artistic. There are the usual societies and activities, one of the strongest being the Choral Society, which has a considerable reputation locally. Its recent performances have included Stanford's *Revenge* and Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* and *Death of Minnehaha*.

The school is administered by a Board of Governors, under the chairmanship of Mr. T. E. Lowe, J.P., and including Sir Herbert Evershed, for many years captain of the Derbyshire cricket XI, while Mr. F. Evershed, a former English Rugby international and a keen Old Boy, is the Clerk to the Governors. Mr. Lowe is also an Old Boy and is keenly interested in the school's welfare, particularly as regards the Choral Society, for he is himself a distinguished amateur musician. Perhaps the school's most distinguished Old Boy is Admiral Earl St. Vincent. The Old Boys' Association is a particularly flourishing one, with an enthusiastic Dramatic Section, recent productions including *Outward Bound*, *The Bird in Hand*, and *Twelfth Night*.

The present headmaster is Mr. S. E. Wilson, M.A., sometime Scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Wrangler; he is assisted by a staff of fifteen masters, mainly Oxford and Cambridge graduates.

## John Clubb (1939-47) remembers Scout Camp

I was evacuated to Burton from Manchester to live with my grandfather in September 1939 and I stayed with him until August 1946. Much of what I missed in lessons for Life from my parents, I gained from my 7 years at Burton Grammar School. I can't say I learned much academically, but I did pick up quite a lot of useful lessons from rugby, cricket, boxing, athletics, swimming, Cubs, Scouts and Air Training Corps (351 Squadron I seem to remember).

A particular occasion in about 1942 has remained in my memory in the 82 years since. I had just joined the school Scout troop and we were going on my first camp. It was the usual Midlands Summer day: low, thick, dark clouds and a heavy drizzle, which developed into steady rain as we began to pitch our tents on the field sloping down from the farmhouse whose owner had allowed us to use.

The tents in those days were designed to catch as much rainwater as possible and dump it on the occupants. They were also difficult to erect and let in water through the groundsheets – if we had any.

I think our scoutmaster was "Tweak" (that's another story) Hearn, our Maths master. Whoever it was, he had developed a soft spot, or he was getting wet too, and he managed to persuade the farmer to allow us to move into one of his barns for the night, in the hope that the morning might bring some better weather.

We gathered our sodden clothes and moved into this very large barn which was about the size of a basketball pitch, climbed the rickety steps to the upper floor and looked for places to settle down for the night.

The barn was pretty dirty, the floor covered with dust, grains of wheat, pieces of string and farm tools. It also contained what seemed to be quite a large amount of machinery, scattered round the barn and connected with lengths of narrow strips of leather. But it was dry. And warm.

So we started to hang out our clothes to dry and get into our wet pyjamas and prepare for a good night's sleep.

I was new to the Troop and didn't know many of the others and had found myself a reasonably comfortable corner and was getting myself sorted out when I heard Tweak Hearn shout: "Get a move on Clubb, we want to get to sleep." This was followed a few minutes later by: "You're last Clubb, switch the lights off".

I cast around for a while and eventually spotted a switch – not an up/down one, but a circular one. So I went over and turned the switch anticlockwise (not being a complete idiot, at least I knew which way to turn it). However, it wouldn't move.

**Lesson 1.** If you try to turn a switch to "Off" and it doesn't move, that's because it's off already.

**Lesson 2.** Following Lesson 1, if the switch is off and the lights are still on this indicates that it is not controlling the lights.

## Finishing with an anecdote



Graham's final contribution to this newsletter is about the renowned BGS Old Boy Sir Oscar DeVill (1936-43) who lived to a grand old age, recording a huge number of achievements in his lifetime. His obituary is in this issue. He sent us a copy of his life story which is now in the Archive Loft. He once wrote me and asked if I was a relative of a footballer he used to watch as a schoolboy whilst supporting in

Gresley Rovers; a player he described as outstanding, called Les Marshment. That was my father's brother who, had it not been for the war, would probably have gone on to have a successful professional career as a footballer.

I communicated a few times with Oscar, who was a very interesting man to talk with. He sent me this update to our records when we were renewing our database around 2011.

Was Rugby Fv Captain, etc. etc.  
In 1947 married Pamela, sister of Peter Ellis (1937-48)  
4 years War Service in RNR. Then 3yrs Cambridge.  
Up to age 67 in industry (2 part time Government work)  
Then 3yrs London Univ. Research thesis. Ph.D. at 70.



**Lesson 3.** If you go to switch the lights off and the switch you go to is already off, leave it alone! Don't touch it again,

This is where I made my mistake. I turned the switch clockwise.

The result was sensational! At least three large pieces of machinery started up with a screech, howl and clatter. The strips of leather (which turned out to be a conveyor belt connecting the machinery) started to thrash around, the sight made more spectacular by the many items of clothing (underpants, shirts, socks, hats etc.) that had been draped over it to dry. These flew round the room and were heading towards the machine which was designed to chop straw into small pieces. Background music was provided by the howls of fright and dismay coming from the recently awakened scouts. Clouds of dust rose.

I turned the switch anti-clockwise. Peace began to reign.

I felt I did quite well to turn the switch off so quickly. Although it seemed like ages, it could only have been seconds, as no clothes were chopped up.

Tweak found the light switch. I slept quite well that night. I'm not sure about the others.

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Thinking of Scout camps, the editor remembers camping at Loch an Eilein near Aviemore, having been sent with a ginger cake from home. This was rapidly followed by an urgent letter from my mother, who'd spotted that her bag of "ginger" actually contained white pepper. She had obviously not put much in, as the cake was rather more pleasant than you'd expect. It still gave a bit of a shock to all those I shared it with!

That was the summer when two of us trekked to Loch Garten to see the ospreys' nest. The buses stopped quite early, so we walked the 12 miles back, grateful that the July twilight persists until quarter to midnight so far north.

### The team charged with the sad duty of winding up the Association

#### Officers of the Burton Grammar School Old Boys' Association 2019-20

<b>President</b>	<b>Mr John Taylor</b>	<b>1950-55</b>
<b>Hon Secretary</b>	<b>Mr Graham Marshment</b>	<b>1957-62</b>
<b>Archivist</b>	<b>Mr RF Andrews</b>	<b>1952-58</b>
<b>Hon Treasurer</b>	<b>Mr S Wilcox</b>	<b>1963-68</b>
<b>Newsletter Editor and BGS Database</b>	<b>Mr Eric Bodger</b>	<b>1956-62</b>
	<b>email: <a href="mailto:bgs@cicsplex.co.uk">bgs@cicsplex.co.uk</a></b>	
<b>Hon Membership Officer</b>	<b>Mr KB Large</b>	<b>1967-72</b>

*Graham Marshment writes:*

#### GRAMMAR SCHOOL OLD BOYS.

ASSOCIATION FORMED IN  
BURTON.

#### DISTINGUISHED NAMES IN FOUR CENTURIES HISTORY.

The suggested association of "Old Boys" in connection with Burton Grammar School was formally inaugurated at Burton Town Hall, amidst scenes of considerable enthusiasm, on Saturday evening, when former pupils came from many parts of the country, some journeying hundreds of miles, for the occasion. Mr. Frank Evershed was voted to the chair. He pointed out that the replies received to the circular sent out showed that there was a desire for an association such as had been suggested by the Headmaster of the School, Mr. R. T. Robinson. Since then an informal committee had spent a good deal of time in assisting the Association to its present stage, each member having attended every meeting yet called. He had pleasure in proposing that the Burton-on-Trent Grammar School Old Boys' Association be formed.

Mr. H. Burton seconded, and the proposition was carried with enthusiasm, after which Mr. Evershed expressed the opinion that the Association would have a long and useful career.

#### MAYOR AS PRESIDENT.

Mr. Evershed said he had not the slightest hesitation in proposing that the Mayor be the first president of the Association. It was peculiarly fitting that in the first year of the Association an Old Boy should be Mayor of the town. It was singular that although the borough was formed in 1878, and Councillor Yeomans was the twenty-second Mayor, he was only the third Old Boy to be Mayor, the other two being Alderman A. J. Roberts, and Alderman T. E. Lowe. The Mayor had been most enthusiastic over the formation of the Association, and he was sure they could not have a better president than Councillor Yeomans.

Mr. Beesley seconded, and the proposition was carried with acclamation.

The Mayor, in accepting office, said that someone more noteworthy should have been selected for the honour.

Mr. Frank Evershed was elected vice-president, Mr. H. J. Wain, hon. secretary, Mr. W. Shelly, hon. treasurer, and the following gentlemen were appointed to the committee: Messrs. H. D. Beesley, C. J. Hunter, R. H. Mayger, W. L. M. Pye, Read-Samble, A. G. Shepherd, H. Adams, E. J. Gothard, and Dr. A. Slater.

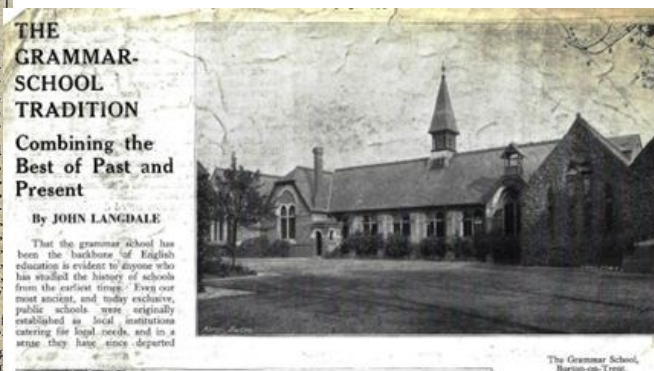
After the meeting the gathering adjourned for dinner, at which the Mayor presided, others present including Prof. J. F. Hobday, Dr. W. G. Lowe, Councillor J. Robertson, Messrs. F. Evershed (vice-president), R. T. Robinson (headmaster), F. Newton-Husbands, B. Sadler, D. R. Tergueson, G. H. Storer, Read-Samble, F. E. P. Forster, H. Burton, H. D. Beesley, W. B. Briggs, F. R. Bell, G. E. Reading, F. J. Coxon, Dr. A. Slater, Dr. W. P. Lowe, and the hon. secretary (Mr. H. J. Wain).

The Mayor, in submitting the toast of "The School, and the Old Boys' Association," after expressing the pride he felt in being elected the first president, said it seemed very appropriate that it should have been formed on the 400th anniversary of their old Grammar School. In wishing success to the

**Richard Wain (1944-50)** lives geographically close to me. I occasionally hear from him and his wife Shelagh and he has sent us a number of press cuttings in recent times.



The Burton Observer from 1921 records the meeting that set up the Old Boys' Association, marking the culmination of an idea that H.J. (Jack) Wain (1907-11) had first floated in 1914, but which was delayed by the Great War. Jack became the BGA's first Honorary Secretary, and was president in 1946.



Town & Country article, 3 February 1933



## From Keith Large and Mike Brown

The painting was created at the time the school was being converted into a comprehensive school, now known as the Abbott Beyne School.



It was created to record the history of the school from 1520 to 1974. You will notice that the crest used from 1956 was based on that shown with Abbot Beyne.

The artists were art teacher Chippy Heath, pupil Jamie Casement RIP and pupil David F. Setford who emigrated to USA many years ago and has been Curator of many Art Museums over there.

This picture is a fairly heavy and substantial piece of work that was saved and stored by Keith Large. Without his effort, it would have been lost and probably thrown away. Keith has recently moved to Spain where he spends much of the year and could no longer store the picture.

Our thanks go to BGS Old Boy and former president Mike Brown who provided the transport to move this piece of work to his farm and to store it until it can be moved to a more permanent venue. (Hopefully, the new Burton Museum!)

## Ian Sutherland (1964-71) writes:

On first moving to New Jersey, in the United States, in 1981, I was able to join a local rugby team, Princeton AC, and played regularly until 1986, when the arrival of my fourth child meant I could no longer afford the time for training and playing.

Not wanting to be idle, I started playing indoor football (or soccer as it is called here) in a recreational capacity, once a week, always completed with some post-game socialising at the local bar. Before long, I was coerced into playing outdoors, at weekends, in a loosely organised league for "veteran" players (over 35 years of age, as it was then). It was traditional to socialise after those games, which included some beer consumption.

I soon persuaded players from my local area to join me in playing together in one of the teams, which was somewhat formalized by me forming an Adult Program in the local "soccer" association.

It was at this time that I decided to source post-game beer from my local brewery, River Horse (founded in 1996).

As is the nature of bottling beer, there were always numerous short measures produced that could not be sold. Without charge, it was these short measure bottled beers that made their way to the post-game socialising, much to the pleasure of our various opponents.

Since the games are played at weekends, it made sense to visit the brewery on a Friday afternoon to acquire the post-game liquid, which has become a very regular occurrence.

The pictures celebrate my last twenty five years of visiting the brewery tap, which made me a somewhat local celebrity for a short while. The output from the one-off forty barrel batch featured around the region (New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Connecticut).

It was River Horse's "tongue in cheek" response to the Queen's Jubilee back in September of 2022.

The head brewer is familiar with my beer preferences, so the beer



TASTING ROOM	
AL PUMPKIN ALE EWING, NJ Go \$14	 <b>NEW 7. RIVER HORSE IAN'S JUBILEE</b> IPA - AMERICAN · 7.8% ABV · 50 IBU · EWING, NJ 16oz DRAFT \$6 · 64oz GROWLER To-Go \$14
EWING, NJ Go \$14	 <b>8. RIVER HORSE TART CHERRY TRIPEL HORSE</b> BELGIAN TRIPEL · 10% ABV · 10 IBU · EWING, NJ 12oz DRAFT · 64oz GROWLER
BU · EWING, NJ Go \$14	 <b>9. RIVER HORSE SUPER BLUEPERS</b> SOUR - FRUITED · 4.5% ABV · 8 IBU · EWING, NJ

itself was indeed very much to my liking.

At seventy one, I am still playing football here, albeit a little slower than almost forty years ago.

## Richard Bell (1956-63) Remembers the 1960 Spanish Trip

The “SCHOOL NOTES” appearing in the Summer 1960 Edition of the school magazine *The Cygnet* record that “At the end of term many boys will be going off on journeys to various parts of Europe. Ten boys will be with Mr Harris in Spain and eighteen in Luxembourg with Mr Ward.” I was one of those boys, for I was going on the journey to Spain with Mr Harris.

My first ever passport arrives in the post. It has a hard black cover and contains a photograph of a person wearing the expression of someone who fears that the photographic equipment will attack him at any moment. I work out that it must be me.

Towards the date fixed for our departure attention turns to the question of suitable clothing for the trip. A tweed sports jacket (although not a Harris Tweed as would have been appropriate) is selected as one of the principal items of attire. It proves to be reasonably efficient for the outward leg of the journey but on arrival in Spain is rendered entirely surplus to requirements unless I wish to turn myself into an omelette. It would also have been more than helpful if I had remembered the word “Sombrero” and even more to the point, had gone so far as to pack one, although it would not have been, as we were taught in one of our first Spanish lessons, a “Broad brimmed Andalucian hat”.

On the day of our departure we assemble at the home of Mr Harris together with our luggage (or perhaps I should use the word “equipaje”, in the hope that you will not object to my slipping in the odd Spanish word here and there to add a little flavour), which together with ourselves, we pile into Mr Harris’ vehicle. Part of our journey includes driving on the new motorway, the M1. It is a first for me and leaves me feeling that I have accomplished something special before heading to the point where we disembark from our first means of transport – which is to be left on British soil to recuperate.

After an overnight voyage across sea and land we arrive in Paris. It is very early in the morning. We wander the streets until we find a café that is open. Here we debate what we should do to make the most of our brief visit to this famous city. Some of us conclude that the best way to explore the capital will be by way of the Metro and make our way to the nearest station. We trundle through numerous other stations until we decide that the train, because it has halted for a while, has probably reached its terminus. Not knowing quite where we are we continue travelling on the Metro for a considerable time until we arrive back at the station from which we started. We leave Paris having viewed an impressive collection of underground stations (many twice) but few of the city’s other attractions.

Eventually after another overnight journey we arrive, via Irun, at Santander on the north coast of Spain which will be our base for the first part of the trip. We stay in a pension which has nothing to do with pensions and is in fact a type of boarding house. It is here, where seated at a long table with Mr Harris at the head, we sample the traditional dish of paella. It is the first time that I have been confronted with this dish. The host enters carrying a large pan which, with a tremendous flourish, he places before Mr Harris who proceeds to divide it between us. It seems that it is a mixture of rice and pretty well any other ingredient that you may care to add. I make short work of it and decide that it runs a close second to my mother’s rice pudding.

We stay in Santander for a good few days taking the opportunity to explore the port, beaches and other attractions before we set off again, working our way towards Madrid

## Graham Marshment remembers the Radio Club and an enjoyable lunch with Alan Winfield

Alan is a BGS Old Boy (1967–74) who enjoyed our recent BGS Valedictory Dinner.

We were both members of Ellick (Ernie) Ward’s school radio club, though not in the same era – he joined the school as I left.

G3KZA (King Zebra Able) – CQ / CQ 40 as Ernie called for contacts on the 40 metre waveband (giving his name as *Easy London London Item Charlie King*).

He used an R1155 receiver and the more colourful T1154 transmitter. These were used by the Lancasters in

WW2 and were available cheaply after the War years!



I wonder how many BGS Old Boys enjoyed that Radio Club and gained so much from it.

I enjoyed it with so much enthusiasm; I remember the crystal radio, then a first valve set which nearly lit up the room and finally a two transistor device which was so much cheaper. It didn’t need large HT or LT electrical supplies, which were costly to buy at the time. All of those radios worked first time and the excitement meant a lot in those days!

My greatest memory is of joining the BGS in September 1957, joining the Radio Club and on

October 4<sup>th</sup> 1957 (the day before my birthday). Ernie gathered us round the ‘set’ to listen to the Sputnik sending out that memorable bleep.

Alan took his interest to a new and higher level (I took mine into teaching Physics) and he has become a world-renowned Professor of Robot Ethics. In 2017 was interviewed by Stephen Sackur on the theme of: “**Are we creating machines which could turn the dark visions of science fiction into fact?**” <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p05kgq78>



Alan joined me at lunch at the Club recently when he was visiting Burton and I’ve attached a picture taken when he was looking around our Archive Loft.

He is coming to the Burton Club shortly to give a presentation about Robots and Robot Ethics.



## From the Cudworth Family



Old boy Chris Cudworth has contributed a selection of pictures and items from his time at BGS. It included this Straw Boater hat worn by his father John Cudworth, who also attended the school – from 1933–35.

His father was always known as Jack Cudworth. That reminded Graham of his nickname throughout his years at BGS when he was always known as ‘George’!



and Salamanca. During our stay in Madrid we visit the Prado Museum and El Escorial and there is talk that we may be able to watch the famous footballers of Real Madrid in training. Unfortunately this does not come to pass for we would surely have gained from it judging by our less than successful efforts against a group of young Spanish boys in a game on the beach.

A further possibility which quickly becomes a proposition is that we should consider attending a bullfight. Opinion is divided. At least one person maintains that it is an art form whilst others say that baiting and stabbing a bull to death is nothing short of a barbaric custom. As usual when presented with more than one choice I am undecided but after a lot of “on the one hand on the other hand” I elect to join the party attending the bullfight. Afterwards I conclude that although it was a colourful spectacle and clearly very popular it is unlikely that I will be drawn to see another one.

Our stay in Salamanca requires that we split into two groups for accommodation purposes. I am somewhat envious to learn that the other group have dined on a huge and hugely delicious paella which even they were unable to finish, the task being completed with gusto by a large Algerian gentleman.

As our trip nears its conclusion I decide that I must take one or two souvenirs back with me. I end up with a large poster advertising a “GRAN CORRIDA de NOVILLOS” to be held on “EL DOMINGO. 26 de Abril de 1959” at the PLAZA DE TOROS MADRID and whilst it would have been better if I could have obtained a poster advertising our bullfight rather than one over a year earlier I feel it fits the bill nicely. I also purchase what I contend is a parasol but which others say is an umbrella. Either way, I am forced to admit that it’s an odd choice to take back home because if it is a parasol then it’s unlikely that there will be much use for it in our climate and if it is an umbrella then it’s a strange souvenir of a visit to Spain where we encountered little or no rain.

We spend our last night in Spain in a pension run by an elderly lady. It is here, when upon retiring for the night, that I discover, stowed beneath the bed which has been allocated to me, a large number of loaves of bread. We surmise that this might be an old Spanish custom to provide the hungry traveller with a bite to eat should they awake during the night. Or maybe it is like one of the other customs we encountered whereby any loose change arising from purchases at a bar is kept back until departure when it is then thrown at the bottles behind the bar. Or maybe we have invented a new British Spanish custom. In any event I awake in the morning having left the loaves intact and we set off for home.

On regaining British soil we stop only for a brief snack at the station buffet, including in my case, snapping up a pickled onion, before returning to Burton upon Trent.

On my return I discover one other souvenir in my luggage. A rather ugly black smear, looking suspiciously like axle grease, which at some point had attached itself to my coat.

Many thanks to Mr Harris for guiding us safely through a very interesting and enjoyable trip.

### 64 Years Later.....

The above account is written in a way which I think is perhaps not too far removed from the way in which I might have written it had I done so shortly after my return from Spain in 1960. Simply a matter of being a little late with the homework.

According to the “School Notes” ten boys were due to make the trip but my recollection is that there were only eight in the party. They included my class mates Tim Hill and John Ward. *Muchas gracias* to you my good friends for your memory joggers. I would welcome hearing from any other members of the party, who can reach me through Eric.



## My First Day at Burton Grammar School: 'We now have the full set!'

In early 1956, a new job for my Father meant that we would relocate to Burton upon Trent, described in the Blue Guide to England as 'the Mecca of beer.' We were leaving our hometown of Swansea in South Wales. I was 13 years old.

Since the age of 11, I had been attending a Boys' Grammar Schools which had recently relocated to a new building. Situated on the edge of a large park in a smart suburb, it had 2 Gyms, a swimming pool and stunning views over the Bay.

During the Spring half-term holiday my mother and I attended Burton Grammar School for an interview with the Head, Mr. H. Pitchford. The School was then situated in Bond Street which was about as far away from its famous London namesake as could be imagined. Our first impressions were far from positive. It was very Dickensian, very Dotheboys Hall.

Mr. Pitchford informed us that the School was due to move to a new building for the start of the following academic year. Therefore, I would only need to wear the tie and cap and the dark grey suit I was wearing that day, until the new uniform came into force. I was told to report to his Office at 8.45am on Monday. First impressions were not improved.

Fortunately, the boy living next door was in the 4<sup>th</sup> Form and kindly offered to escort me on my first morning. He ensured I was outside the Head's Office on time. Standing there in the gloomy corridor I felt extremely lonely and nervous. This was not eased when the Office door flew open, Mr. Pitchford emerged at high speed saying, 'follow me boy.' Trotting behind, we rushed through more dark corridors, outside across a small playground through a narrow alleyway into a modern looking small building and entered into the Classroom of Form 2A.

The teacher sitting there looked up and Mr. Pitchford announced, 'We have a new boy starting today Mr. Ward, his name is Martin Thomas.' He turned and left the classroom. I was uncomfortable standing there feeling very vulnerable with everyone looking at me.

Mr. 'Ernie' Ward, a kind looking man I thought, said, 'Welcome to Form 2A Martin Thomas. He then asked the question that would mark me out for the rest of my days at BGS. 'Where have you come from?' 'Swansea Sir,' I replied.

His response was expressed with great delight, 'That's great news. We now have the full set. We have a Taff. Go back there and join Paddy and Jock !'

He then announced, to the Form, that by having a boy from Ireland, Scotland and Wales, Paddy, Jock and now Taff, they had the full set. Thereafter I was called Taff all through my time at BGS.

### FOOTNOTES

I am still friends with 'Jock' and meet annually. He had joined in late 1955 so had six month start on me. His kindness, support and help enabled me settle in and to find my way around.

The move to the new building was delayed for one year. In late March a gale force wind did severe damage to the roof, opening it up like a sardine tin.

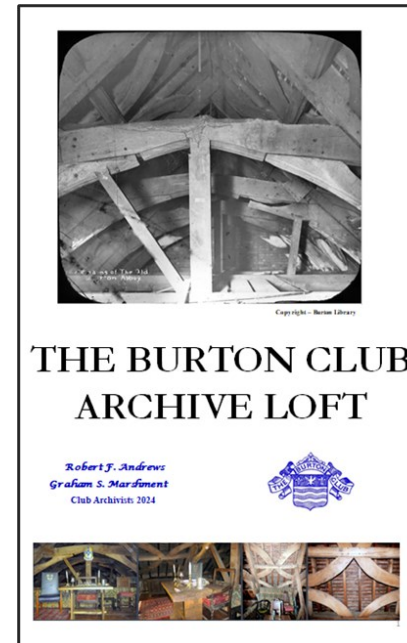
*Martin 'Taff' Thomas: July 2022*

## BGS Memorabilia

Our BGS memorabilia are currently being stored by courtesy of the Burton Club.

Bob Andrews and Graham Marshment are now the joint archivists which allows them not only to acknowledge the foundations of the BGS in the Abbey building, which occurred around 1520, but we can look after all the items which are now being passed on by fellow Old Boys.

If the town Regeneration Scheme goes ahead and the provision of a new museum comes to fruition, then we hope that much of the memorabilia could be transferred there. If that doesn't happen, at least it is being held safely in the Loft of the Burton Club!



### No shortage of relics!





## Quoted From Burton's Town Regeneration Plan



The main staircase (Image: Derby Telegraph/Jacqueline Theodosi)

Bass House is a unique and historic building in Burton in its own right and is a huge part of the town's brewing history. However, the news that it will soon house the relics currently at the [National Brewery Centre](#) has been met with shock and anger in some quarters.

Bosses at Molson Coors revealed earlier this month that it plans to move its Carling House headquarters and 500 staff into the National Brewery Centre, in Horninglow Street. This means that all of the artefacts will be moved into [Burton's Town House](#) and [Old Bass House](#) buildings in the town centre.

The brewery centre will close on October 31, after just six weeks' notice which will mean events like wedding booked for after this date are cancelled. There was concern that some of the brewery centre's relics will be lost while work is done to bring the Town House and Bass House buildings up to scratch. However Molson Coors and East Staffordshire Borough Council have said they are committed to keeping all the items.



Details about this regeneration scheme can be seen in a video on this link [Burton High Street Project-Animation Full 2024-10-01](#)

## Condolences are expressed to the families of recently deceased Old Boys

**Dr Sir Oscar De Ville**

**1936-43**

**Died 18 Jan 2024**

*Bert Young (1940-45) writes:*

Sir Oscar died at the Care Home in Sonning on Thames yesterday morning. He was 98 years old and would have been 99 in April. His wife of 70 years, Lady Pamela, is at the same Care Home and is 101 years old; she is still active but with considerable memory loss. I have known and been a close friend of Oscar since I first went to the Grammar School in 1939/40. He was Captain of Clive House, played Saxophone in the orchestra, and secured a place at Trinity College Cambridge. During the war he joined the Royal Navy and after a period as a Seaman on the Belfast on Russian convoys – including the battle with the Scharnhorst – he was commissioned and in charge of a Motor Torpedo Boat during the Invasion of Normandy; he was the youngest Captain of a Corvette in the Navy prior to returning it to the USA. After returning to Cambridge (reading Russian), where his tutor was Prince Obelensky, he joined Ford in Personnel Management. He then moved to BICC as their Personnel Director and General Manager of the Division based near Liverpool. After considerable exposure and successful Industrial Relations negotiations, he was appointed BICC's Group Managing Director. Another appointment was as a Non Executive Director to British Rail and to the Board of different Government Bodies. After BICC he became the Executive Chairman of Meyer International right up to his eventual retirement. His interest in his family history linking it to the Robin Hood mystery led him to a Doctorate at London University in his waning 60s. He was always involved in some kind of research project right up to the injury that eventually forced him into a Care Home. Oscar was my closest friend and I will sorely miss him.



There is an excellent account of Sir Oscar's life at p.4 of the Autumn 2018 Sonning Eye Society magazine: [www.sonning.org.uk/Public/pdf/Bridge\\_56.pdf](http://www.sonning.org.uk/Public/pdf/Bridge_56.pdf)

**Roy John Biddulph**

**1938-43**

**Died 11 May 2024**

*Roy's daughter Amanda writes:*

Roy left BGS to start an apprenticeship at International Combustion in Derby, he stayed with his mother in Oxford Street Burton on Trent until he married Doreen in 1953. They went to live in Australia and New Zealand, returning in 1955 to live in Derby. Roy eventually rose to become manufacturing director of International Combustion. After retirement he enjoyed many years of travel, golf and spending time with his family, leaving behind three children, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren. He was a regular attendee of the BGS Old Boy's Association functions.

*Mike Clements writes:*

Michael was born in Burton, and lived on Stanton Road, Stapenhill, facing my house, We were both only children, and grew up together as firm friends. He was one year behind me in Grammar School.

His father David was a manager at Lloyds Foundry in Wellington Street Extension, as it then was known, and his mother had a haberdashery shop near Derby Turn. They were both very keen golfers at Bretby, and they tried to get us both playing well, but to no avail.

Michael went to Bristol University to read Advanced Maths and Physics. Whilst there, he met Anthony, the brother of Carol who was to become his wife.

She was French-speaking fluently, and was working as secretary to the French boss of Citroen Cars at their factory in Slough. She and Mike were married in her native town of Usk, and the factory sent the new top of the range Citroen DS21 as their wedding car.

Their first home together was in Thornbury, where he worked at the Nuclear Station at Oldbury on Severn.

Then he joined an international combine set up to build a nuclear power station on the Rhine north of Zurich, for the Swiss. He worked in the design offices in Amsterdam, and they moved to a fine house outside Zurich, when construction work started, and where their twin sons Matthew and Robin were born.

Mike was a very keen skier, runner, and then a cyclist, a love which he passed on to the boys.

They moved back to Weybridge, when he worked from a London Office, but his work meant him commuting up to be on-site at Sellafield.

At the age of about 40, he was diagnosed with a form of leukaemia, but he survived with a lot of chemo, "nothing to do with work" he said, "I always wore my badge properly."

Later they moved down to Uley near Gloucester, where he became a consultant for the work of decommissioning the nuclear power station at Oldbury, and the oldest part of the one at Berkeley, further upstream.

At this time he developed a love of building and flying model aircraft.

Suddenly in 2021, he was struck down with a severe viral infection, and spent months in hospital in Gloucester before being discharged. When I last saw him, he was fighting back to regain strength and fitness, but a sudden relapse in 2023 caused him to die quickly, back in the hospital in Gloucester.

Sadly missed by his wife Carol in Uley, his son and family in London, and his son and family near Derby.



Well, that funding has now run out and the costs of maintaining the site have increased. To try and raise enough funds to keep the site going, for at least as long as there are still some BGS Old Boys alive, is something we are currently working on.

We may need to approach the Old Boys and seek support which we will do via an email to all past members who have given their consent for us to retain their email addresses.

## **Archiving of Memorabilia of the BGS and the 'The Abbey'**

As the Burton Club's two Archivists, Bob Andrews and myself have been pleased to accept lots of memorabilia, clothing and all sorts of items from Old Boys during the last year. We plan to continue doing this and there is still plenty of storage space in which to keep these mementoes of our school.

Old Boys living out of Burton may well be pleased to know that plans are afoot to turn the beautiful Bass Building in High Street, (the former home of William Bass) into a new museum for the town.

**Our hope is that one day we might be able to preserve the history of the Burton Grammar School and all the material we are currently looking after in the Archive Loft, might one day be moved there. It is only a hope, though!**

## **Bass Town House**

William Bass ran a successful carrier business with his brother John from Hinckley, Leicestershire. In around 1756, after his marriage, he settled in Burton-on-Trent, attracted by the fact that it lay on the newly opened Trent and Mersey canal and it was en-route of his weekly freight service which ran between London and Manchester. He continued his business in Burton with beer being the most common freight.



In 1777, although now aged 60, William saw the greater potential for brewing and was presented with an ideal opportunity when Reverend John Hepworth and Nathaniel Dawson looked to sell their large house in High Street, built around 1750, with brewing facility and malt-house added on adjacent land soon after. They had previously been customers of William's freight business.

William sold his transportation business to the Pickford family and used the funds to purchase the substantial house and existing facilities and thus began the Bass brewing business.



## Graham Marshment Reflects on Recent Years

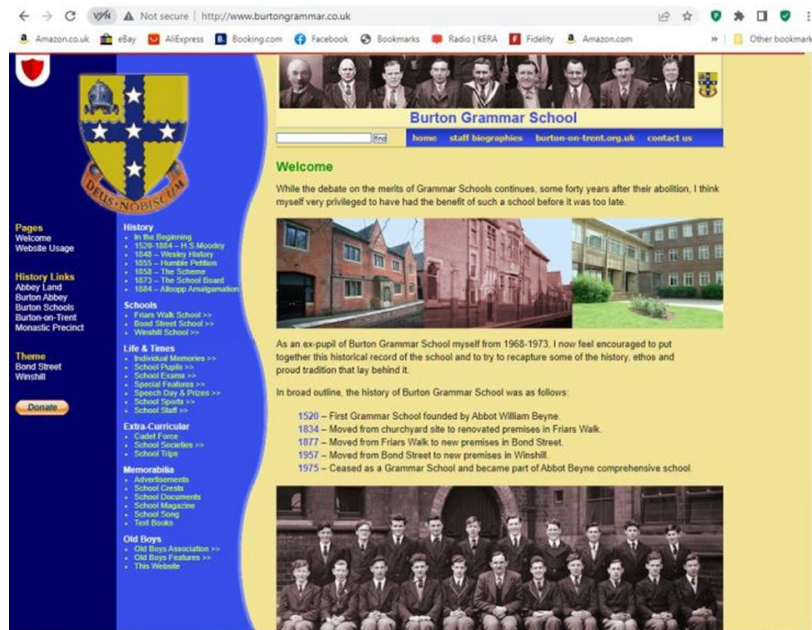
Remember this from our last newsletter?

### The Grammar School Web Sites

You will be familiar with the [site](http://www.burtongrammar.co.uk/) you've downloaded this from, but that exists only as a hang-on from the former Old Boys' Association. It provides newsletters and other current information, but does not aim to provide a detailed history of BGS. That role is met by Kevin Gallagher's excellent site at [www.burtongrammar.co.uk/](http://www.burtongrammar.co.uk/). For many years, Kevin has not only put an enormous amount of effort into creating and maintaining it, but has also been paying the significant cost of renting the domain service.

There was a bit of money left in the OBA coffers, which is used to maintain items in the Archive (such as cleaning clothing so it doesn't become moth-eaten). The former committee members believe that we should also spend some of it to fund the web-site.

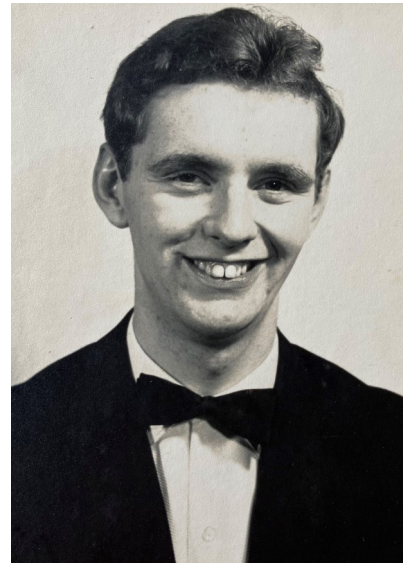
The kitty will only stretch to one year's funding, after which we'll need to ask for donations.



Kevin also runs a site for the history of Burton ([www.burton-on-trent.org.uk](http://www.burton-on-trent.org.uk))

## HH Judge David W Brunning 1954-62 Died 27 Oct 2023

Old Boys' Association members will remember David as a brilliant speaker at our dinners, and it was very sad that he was not well enough to join us for our valedictory meal in 2022.



Some Old Boys will remember David in the choir at St Paul's Church, the start of his lifetime enthusiasm for choral music. When his voice broke, he switched to bell-ringing. In Leicester, he was enthusiastic about the music at St James the Greater, and was a long-term strong supporter of the Leicestershire Chorale.

David was possibly the most successful of the five of us who went to Oxford from BGS in 1962. After reading History at Worcester College, he took a post-graduate diploma in Public Administration, giving him another year in the city.

On the day he learned of his place at Oxford, David met Deirdre Shotton, beginning a

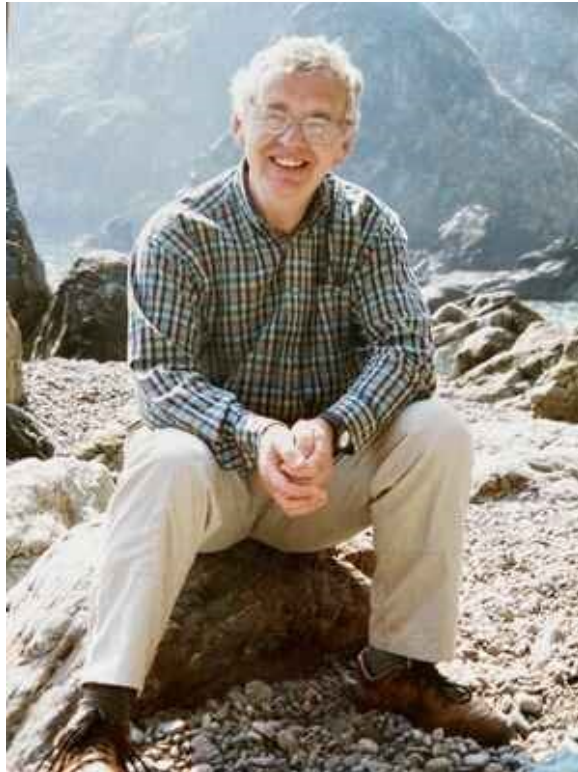
relationship that lasted over 61 years. Dee came to Oxford the next year, reading Maths at LMH. In 1967, they married and settled in Leicestershire, where he joined the County Council as a trainee solicitor.

That gave him experience of barristers in Court, inspiring him to switch roles and train for the bar.

David practised at King Street Chambers in Leicester in the 1970s and 80s, and was appointed a full-time circuit judge in 1988; a story from his early career is recounted in his eulogy – 'he was about to pass sentence in a criminal case. A non-custodial sentence. There was an earth tremor. The building shook. A large book shuffled across the desk on Counsels' row and fell to the floor. The defendant was startled. David was unfazed: "That's your final warning", he said. "Offend again and you know what's coming."



In 1994 David became the Designated Civil Judge and Designated Family Judge at Nottingham. That meant he was in charge of both family and civil cases at a busy court centre. The following year he was appointed a Deputy High Court Judge for both the Queen's Bench Division and Family Division.



David was a member of Leicester University Council from 2003-2011, and advised on a number of complex, sensitive matters. David was highly valued by his colleagues on Council as a wise, thoughtful confidant and advisor. After eight years on Council, David was appointed a life member of the University Court.

David and Dee loved Sark in the Channel Islands. This photograph was taken there on David's 60th birthday.

Sark was much more than a holiday destination. When there, it was their home. It was a place for David and Dee to welcome family and friends. For their three sons, Matthew, Simon and James, it was a treasured formative part of their childhood (then, in turn, for their own children).

David, true to form, participated in other ways in the life of Sark. He was a Lay Reader there, as well as at the Church of St James the Greater, Leicester. He was on the Board which appointed the Seneschal, the on-island judge. Quietly, under the radar, David devoted a lot of time and patience to helping individuals in need, particularly in family disputes where there was an imbalance of power.

David was an enthusiastic and highly accomplished bell ringer. He had the skill and power of concentration to conduct a full peel, lasting three hours and requiring 500 changes to the order in which the bells are rung.

*I am grateful to Dee and the University of Leicester for allowing me to use content from David's obituary and eulogy.*

*Eric Bodger (1956-62)*

**Ian Charles (Tom) Derrett**

**(1964-72)**

**Died 30 August 2023**

*Andrew Bodger writes:*

Ian, known as Tom at school, sadly passed away just before his 71st Birthday. At School he had been Library Prefect 1970-71. Like me, he was heavily influenced by Chris Shepherd, a former pupil who had gone on to become a wonderful teacher; this was reflected in his politics and radical nature. Always controversial, he took part in an invasion of the Wargames Society.

After School he went on to St Peters College Saltley, where he trained as a Teacher although he never actually went on to teach, but instead joined the Inland Revenue.

He remained in Burton and we frequently visited Chris Shepherd's book shop in New Street and we both have many of the books purchased at the time. Tom took part in local politics and although never standing himself was an election agent.

Tom subsequently married Heather and became the proud father of two stepchildren who he loved as his own. In later years this was followed by the arrival of grandchildren to whom he was devoted.

Sadly, illness prevented him from continuing at work but he remained active making many visits in Europe and collecting iconic classical CDs. He will be sadly missed.



### *Other Condolences*

**Herbert Edward Charles (Ted) Weston 1939-1945**

**died Aug 2023**

Ted died in Tutbury at the age of 95, having spent most of his life in Repton.

**Clive J Waltho**

**1950-1956**

**died November 2024**

We extend our sympathies to Andy and Sharon on the loss of a much loved father and grandfather.

**Ken Stanyon**

**1942-52**

**died October 2023**

Ken was an active member of the Hockey Club, and very central to the development of the Tennis and Squash Club on Ashby Road. He was also active in the Burton Club, and was due a meal in his honour to celebrate his 50 years of membership of the Club, but he was unable to take up the offer because of declining health.

**David Hardwick**

**1944-50**

**died 16 November 2024**