

Balshaw's C.E. High School

Old Balshavian Spring News Letter 2012



Non Sibi Sed Aliis

Hi everybody, welcome to the 2012 spring news letter. What a year to come! The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration is almost upon us, the Olympics to follow and then on October 5th we will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of our annual reunion. More to follow in our Autumn news letter about this, but rest assured that this will be no ordinary event and not to be missed!

At our last reunion held in school, it was gratifying to see more people who were there in the 50's and 60's and definitely more men! We would encourage them to invite their contemporaries to the next reunion. In the hall were an array of school photographs from 1945 onwards, with a few exceptions, on display and it was very interesting to look up your old class mates. After a lovely meal – a choice of hot or cold - and a glass of wine or a non alcoholic drink, those that were fully mobile were taken on a tour round the new classrooms finishing up the stairway in the extended Library which was well stocked with new books, audio books and videos. Remember the old detention room in 4a – that has now been absorbed into the new library which also covers the area which used to be the domestic science room.

Miss Venn had that morning caught the 6.30 train to London with two pupils, Sandy Kelly and Lizzie Elleray (who carried a special banner representing Church schools in the Blackburn Diocese) to take part in the Westminster Abbey Bi-Centenary celebration of the National Society. They had a private conducted tour of the Abbey, and met Dr Rowan Williams the Arch Bishop of Canterbury. After this they had a visit to the Houses of Parliament, a walk up Whitehall taking in Downing Street before arriving at Trafalger Square to get a taxi back to Euston station. Sandy & Lizzie said that they loved the service and the tour of the Abbey and Houses of Parliament which made them feel very special and proud to be part of the Church Family of Schools. When they got home in the evening, instead of Miss Venn putting her feet up and resting, she got changed and came to our reunion “do” in time to take us on a conducted tour round the new part of school before giving us a talk on all aspects of school life and achievements over the past year. It was impressed upon us that no money was spent on advertising the school – all the allocated money was spent on the pupils. The school examination results and inspection reports were all the advertising that was necessary. Miss Venn waited until everyone was out of school before locking up at about 10.45pm. What a wonderfully dedicated Head teacher the school has!

Sadly we have had reports of a number of Old Balshavians who have departed this life. Two teachers who spent most of their lives teaching at Balshaw's, Miss Anne Doherty and Miss Pat Leach passed away since our Autumn issue. They were very popular teachers and will be greatly missed. Also Colin Smith and Margaret Holt nee Hosker. Colin, who was a teacher at Albany High was also a keen photographer and gave talks to charity groups. Elizabeth Coral Chamberlain nee Hayes (BGS 1949) who was married to Derek Chamberlain also passed away.

Margaret Hosker was the eldest of four sisters all of whom attended Balshaw's, the others were Kathleen, Ruth and Eileen. Margaret was a prefect and a member of the Cuerden House hockey and tennis teams for several years and also represented Balshaw's school during the same period. She continued playing for a number of years after leaving school, at County level, winning many trophies in the process. She qualified as a teacher from St. Kathrine's, Liverpool and took a post at Hindley Green, Wigan where she continued teaching for 30 years. Margaret is survived by Norman – her husband, daughter Sharon and treasured grand daughter, Madeleine. Michael Simpson (76yrs) was a high ranking Police officer at Hutton Police Headquarters and was married to Delphine Swarbrick. On his retirement they moved to live in the Algarve. After his death Delphine, who suffers from Alzheimers disease, has now returned to live in Darwen.



The photo above could be 5C in 1951 or 2.

A number of boys in the adjacent photo started at Balshaw's in 1950. Can anyone put names to them all?

The top photo is possibly part of 5C in 1951 or 2 Am I right?

A number of the boys in the lower photo were in the 1950 first year entry. Those who were in 1B & 1C had their form rooms in the old concrete prefabs which were adjacent to the "boys" driveway. There was a coke burning stove in each section to keep everyone warm and a connecting door between the two. More about that in Roy Smith's memoirs in the Autumn issue.

Form 4a 1956



Back row -: Wendy Halton, John Gill, David Shimmin, Alan Davies, Stan Smith, Len Thwaite, ? Croskell and David Taylor. Next row -: Gordon King, Alan Bannister, Brian Singleton, Eric Liptrot, ? Woods and David Knipe. 2nd Row from Front -: Jackie Patterson, Ondre Halsall, Colleen Carter, Cynthia Seed, Valerie Preston, Pat Smith, Marie Halliwell, Muriel Clayton, Dorothy Shuttleworth, Joan Swarbrick and Barbara Robertson Front Row -: Shirley Tomlinson, Ann Bradshaw, Sheila Southworth, Carole Smith, Joan Trafford, Sheila Gow, Janet Hughes, Christine Holmes, Diane Ryding, Dinah Mee and Shirley Parker.

We are very grateful to Chris McEvoy (nee Holmes – Front row 4th from the right) for emailing us the above photograph (with names) of form 4A in 1956. If any reader has a similar photo they can send for use in an issue of this news letter please email it to me – Robert Haydock roberthaydock@btinternet.com or send it by post to “Haydock House” Wigan Road, Leyland PR25 5SD, or alternatively to Barbara Wright 3 Kings Drive, Fulwood, Preston PR2 3HN, or email it to her at bwrig03@live.co.uk . All Photo's received will be returned fairly quickly if required.



Thanks to Judith Kenworthy nee Burrell for the 1956/7 Balshaw's Old Girls Hockey team above. From the left – Pat Leach, Rene McKittrick, Nancy Iddon, Valerie Bamber Ruth Brennand and Audrey ? Front row – Kathleen Blundell, Doreen Dalton, Madge Bamber, Margery Allison and Judith Burrell .



On Monday 28th November 2011 a memorial service was held in the special garden created in a quadrangle in 2009 as a response by pupils to the untimely death of Ryan Masterson who was in year 9 at the time. There was quite a crowd of people who came to pay their respects to those who have passed on. As we arrived we were greeted by music played by some pupils who had given up their time to welcome us there and play for the hymns that were sung. A big thank you to those pupils. It was a lovely touch to the remembrance service. Everyone was given a candle to hold and a light was passed round. The idea was to have the service candle lit but the wind had other ideas and regularly blew out most of the candles on one side of the quadrangle. There were readings and prayers by various people to complete the service.

Having asked around for school memories amusing or otherwise I was delighted to receive copious notes from Roy Smith with some of his memories. After reading them I proceeded to chuckle for days afterwards as the writings kept disturbing memories long since forgotten. The whole is far too long for one edition so I will have to edit and split the memories up into manageable proportions. If anyone would like to read the unabridged version Roy has given his permission for them to be passed on.

The following is part one of Roy Smith's memories of his time at Balshaw's augmented by his wife, Dorothy, also a Balshavian. (1949-1956 & 5) Some of their memories will be relevant to a lot of pupils who attended Balshaw's many years later. (The memories stretch to 13no sides of an A4 sheet of very enjoyable reading. Because of limitations of space I have had to reduce the content to a manageable size. Part two, three & four will be in subsequent issues of the news letter. Ed.)

Memories of Roy & Dorothy Smith 1949-1956 & 5

"Dorothy & I possess quite an extensive collection of BGS memorabilia thanks to both our mothers who never dreamed of throwing them away. It was only with their deaths that many of them have come to light when clearing their houses. It began with THAT LETTER which announced one's success following THAT EXAMINATION popularly known as the Eleven Plus, giving the time & date of your interview with the Headmaster and the date that the new term would commence. The day of the interview was regarded with great trepidation, I recall! The huge, manicured front lawns and massive beech trees created a very big impression as we entered down the boys' drive.

To someone from a little village school the size of the place was totally overwhelming. Why! It was so big that it even had corridors!

First we met the dynamic Miss Moss, school secretary, and then Mr V.U.Oldland (Vic) the headmaster : tall, athletic and with a booming Oxford accent. The girls also made their first acquaintance with Miss M.A.Rahill (Mary Ag.) the senior Mistress.

Sorting through the memorabilia in recent times I became very conscious of the incredible amount of work that Miss Moss got through in a year, and with what nowadays would be regarded as the most primitive technology. This day and age I reckon that she would probably have been able to run a world-wide corporation single handed – with her pencil stuck behind her ear of course!

The next step was getting together the new school uniform. We came across a list of equipment, made at the time by Dorothy's mother, which listed the initial outlay on her daughter. It came to the grand total of £30-15-8d – a considerable amount in 1949. It would be more than a little interesting to know what that sum equates to in current financial terms.

OUR FIRST DAY: At assembly, sitting in rows on the floor at the front of the hall craning our necks to see the members of staff on the stage all in academic gowns, we sang “Lord Behold Us With Thy Blessing”. Pupils in years one two and three sat on the floor; Years four and five on chairs to the rear of the hall, with members of the Lower and Upper sixth in the balcony above. And Oh, those girl prefects: goddesses in grey (even though they would prove to be my persecutors for several years to come.) Then Vic began to intone the names of those who would make up each form (not classes) beginning with the Upper Sixth. For someone who was going to be in 1C there was a long wait. Eventually we were called and led by Miss Probert to the prefabs where we were registered. We were given blank timetable forms to complete and received ready completed homework timetables. At the same time one would look furtively around at one's fellow conscripts wondering if they were feeling as scared as you were. On another morning early in that first term Vic droned through the school rules. One rule that still lives in my memory concerned ‘ dangerous and unusual objects ‘ and a strict exhortation that they should not be poked with a stick. (It was after all not very long after WW2). Another forbade us to jump across the brook which meandered through the school grounds. Jumping across ditches and brooks was a normal part of life for most boys: this was like an open invitation to go ahead and do it! Little wonder that my first school report shows that I had been in detention three times in my first term – no doubt spotted by one of those Goddesses in grey!.

In The Autumn News Letter we will have part two – BRIEF MEMORIES OF A FEW MEMBERS OF STAFF.

Majorie Lawrie nee McKittrick's Memories of school.

Marjorie is our most senior Old Balshavian at 95 yet has the outlook of a person far younger in years. She lived with her parents over a shop which sold baby linen next door to what we now know as the new Asda shop at the top of Hough Lane (which originally was the Regent Cinema). Marjorie walked to the Golden Hill Lane school when she started there in 1927 and had enough time to walk home again for lunch.

Marjorie has happy memories of her days at school and still remembers her school friends – among them are two well known Leyland names Margery Cross and Isabel Haydock. She thought that the headmaster's wife was an extremely nice person and she has good memories of the teachers that many of you will still remember ie Miss Rahill, Mr Wilkinson, Mr Bull, Mr Hilditch and even Mr Miller the groundsman. Marjorie remembers that Mr Bull, when he started at Balshaw's, was a very shy and quiet person. Miss Milroy, the French teacher, was one of her favourites. She never got into trouble at school so was not asked to do “tots” ie sums after school as those did who mis-behaved. If the girls were caught talking to boys outside school they were punished with the “Strap”.

Sports day at Golden Hill was started with the whole school marching round the playing field following the Leyland Motors Brass Band which made it a big occasion. The uniform was a navy tunic worn with a white blouse and black stockings. Marjorie enjoyed playing Hockey and Tennis and can be seen in the team photographs below. She remembers playing against other school teams as at present – Upholland Grammar School being one of them. Mr Miller, who was a very good hockey player, used to be there at all the matches as their coach. He also is featured in the Hockey photograph .

Moving to the new school caused great excitement among the pupils. Marjorie moved straight into the lower sixth form as she had taken her Matriculation exams at Golden Hill. In the cookery class there was one recipe called German cake. The word German had been crossed out and the word Continental had been inserted. The only foreign language taught at that time was French which Marjorie enjoyed. She did not have any boyfriends (so she tells us) at school but little notes of communication were passed round the classroom .

Marjorie moved into the upper sixth form with aspirations of a place at university but one day in mid term when she got home her mother said that there was a job waiting for her in the office at the Leyland & Birmingham Rubber Works. Marjorie was not able to go back to school to say goodbye to her friends, which upset her. With her hopes of going to University dashed she went to night school for short-hand typing . Thanks to David Lawrie for both Photographs.

Marjorie in the School Hockey Team in 1932



Marjorie as she is today at 95.

A more comprehensive 2011 Reunion account submitted by Barbara Wright nee Ward

After 220 people had been contacted re the 2011 reunion, 69 were actually able to attend. However it was a very happy gathering. Following an excellent buffet in the dining room (for which our grateful thanks go to Wendy the catering manager and her helpers) we enjoyed a tour of the new parts of the school conducted by Miss Venn which included the newly refurbished library – our old domestic science room.

After I had given a speech thanking everyone I asked that anyone who could remember any of the old school meals to let me have a copy of the recipe and mentioning in particular the Vegetable Pie we used to be given. Miss Venn gave her annual account of present day Balshavian achievements and activities. It is always interesting to learn how Balshaws' is moving with the times and keeping up with all the modern innovations, particularly with regard to engineering and communications. We were provided with copies of the latest issues of the school magazine Transform. These are extremely interesting, describing as they do activities relevant to Balshaws' today.

Perusing my copy of issue No 11, I was astounded to read a letter from Margaret Armstrong (nee Semple) in which she refers to the Vegetable Pie served at school dinners in our time (1940's & 50's) which I had referred to in my speech. It must have been good even though composed of left-over's. This is followed by impressions from teachers from other European countries who have visited Balshaws' and it is interesting to learn of their feelings re education in this country and how it compares/contrasts with education in their homelands. There follows various accounts of visits made by staff and students to places like CERN in Geneva, NASA in Florida and an trip to Radio Lancashire. Also a very successful Shakespearian production at the Charter Theatre and a Sri Lanka day which made very interesting reading.

Issue 12 brought thank you messages from local Primary schools who had visited Balshaws' , accounts of trips to France, New York and Borneo, a report on the success of the musical Grease, a competition based on a poetic Maths problem from the 1800's and lots of news re the 2012 Olympics. We particularly note the Olympic and Paralympic values as mentioned by Miss Venn being equivalent to Balshavian values I.E. RESPECT, FRIENDSHIP, EQUALITY, EXCELLENCE, INSPIRATION, COURAGE and DETERMINATION.

We enjoyed further mingling and reminiscing with friends from long ago, peering into classrooms and labs where we spent many hours in lessons. We almost felt young again being able to spend time reliving memories in this place which means so much to most of us.

Finally, May I thank you all most sincerely for the lovely flowers presented to me. They were appreciated very much and brought me much pleasure. (Thank you Barbara.)

A short while ago Mrs Pickersgill nee Hutchings submitted the following poem composed by one of her pupils.

A JOLLY GOOD SPORT??

I tried to keep myself in trim
by working out in Balshaw's gym
I climbed the bars and leaped the horse
But frequently I went off course.
In Hockey, once, I scored a goal,
I spied my chance and seized the ball,
But, having little sporting sense
forgot that I was on defence.
No point in saying you were ill
in front of Mrs Pickersgill,
However much you tried to cough
you never, ever got sent off!
My prowess on the tennis court
looked bad on my school report,
I never saw an "EXCELLENT"
and though the "FAIR" was kindly meant
There certainly was no "VG" –
Just "SATISFACTORY, M.H.P. "

I remember Miss Hutchings well waltzing along
the corridor probably going to a PE class dressed
in a sporty skirt, white ankle socks and plimsos.
Yes, she taught PE and Games and also taught
Geography amongst other subjects. As in the poem
you did not get away with anything. (Ed.)

Written by Dorothy Mapley nee Brown,

Leader name:	Hazel Shorrock (team member)
Team name:	Balshaws CE High School
Team members:	JOSH LONSDALE, THOMAS HUGHES, MARIE SHORROCK, JOEL JACUBOVIC
Project name:	BIN IT TO WIN IT
Attachments:	Litter 1.ppt (490KB) Presentation Speech For Assembly.doc (514KB)

Project information

Project summary:

In order to decrease the litter and increase awareness of this serious problem, we carried out a number of tasks which involved the wider community and eventually lead to our final assembly. Our main aims throughout the project included: Informing the wider community about the gravity of the situation, introducing our individual ideas about tackling the problem and preventing the accumulation of litter once and for all. Examples of the activities we organised are things like a litter audit, several questionnaires, an anti-litter poster competition, a visit to the Farington Waste Recovery Centre, and a final assembly.

Project subject:

We noticed that there was a lot of litter lying around, and people couldn't be bothered to walk 10 metres to the bin. Due to this litter problem, we decided to change not only what people do, but what they think. We aimed to get a cleaner environment and to reduce our carbon footprint by increasing the recycling taking place in school. We have identified what the entire school believes are the main issues by using questionnaires, audits and assemblies, which has allowed us to work with everyone in order to reduce the amount of litter.

Image 1: Litter

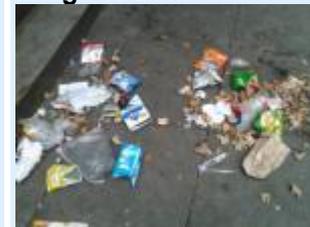


Image 2: Bin



Project objectives

Our main aim to distribute our ideas throughout school, make our school and local community aware of the litter problem and stop litter altogether. We also aim to emphasise the benefits of recycling to everyone, showing them how crucial the state of our environment is to all of us. This is because without recycling the health of our local environment will deteriorate. To achieve this aim, we have purchased new outdoor bins and changed the role of school stewards to monitor and enforce the litter policy within school. By working with Keep Britain Tidy and South Ribble Borough Council we hope to get our message across to a wider audience.

Congratulations to Balshaw's High School team above for being highly commended in the Volvo Adventure competition held on behalf of the United Nations Decade of Education for sustainable development (2005 - 2014). This decade aims to integrate the values inherent in sustainable development. The above team was one of three chosen to represent the U.K. in the Volvo competition. There were 44 other countries who entered. This article is part of that posted on line under the heading of Balshaws CE High School which has been "slimmed down" to fit our news letter.

What a wonderful example to us all. We never seemed to do anything like this when I was at school (or perhaps I just did not take any notice of what was happening). If you would like to read the un-edited article go on-line to www.balshawscehighschool.com, News, Summer 2012 and find out the full details.

The recent exorbitant rise in the cost of postage has mean't that we have had to review our method of distribution of the news letter. We find that there is too much cost to bear on our small budget to continue posting the news letter without financial help. Those who are on our email address system will continue to receive the emails as before without cost. With 125 old Balshavians on our list not being on email the cost of getting the news letter to them has suddenly escalated with the change in the price of stamps. We are having to change the way we operate.

Those who receive the news letter through the letter box are being asked to post TWO second class stamps to Barbara Wright, 3 Kings Drive, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 3HN. This will enable us to send, to those that wish to read the news about school, both a Spring and an Autumn news letter.

This system will begin operation AFTER the Autumn issue of the news letter. Do not forget - No Stamps - No News letter.