

Summer Times



*Summer Times is the Journal
of the
Old
Scarborians
Association*

*Members of the Association are
former pupils and members of
staff of
Scarborough High School for Boys*

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Editorial

When I was a lad, the Scarborough Cricket Festival used to mark the end of the Summer and the imminent return to school for the Autumn term. This year the weather in early September was typical of the weather we used to enjoy for the event though I do remember a dreary wet day for the first day of the Australians match in 1948. But the Festival allowed you to look forward to the end of the holidays with enthusiasm. Nine days of fun and as one got older, the possibility of nine days of lucrative employment in the scoreboard or the changing rooms and offices; (nine days in the company of Fay Rollett was a further bonus). The standard programme was Yorkshire vs. MCC, Gentlemen vs. Players and the Festival President's XI vs. the Tourists; what memories flood back. The only music was the Town Silver Band and no-one felt it necessary to dress up to go to the cricket. I

attended a Test Match this summer and it was like visiting Hull Fair in the company of ten thousand transvestites. Don't try to tell me that's an improvement!

My reason for addressing the subject of the Festival is to try to rekindle in someone the enthusiasm we used to feel at that time of year and to encourage them to translate that enthusiasm into a resolve to help the OSA with the publication of this Newsletter and eventually with the publication of *Summer Times* in magazine form. Following my appeal for someone to take over the Editorship in the last Newsletter we've had one or two nibbles but no firm offers. Your Committee want to continue to communicate with the membership on the same frequency as at present but we need a younger member to pick up their pen and help us. Technically it's a simple piece of word processing and anyone who has a computer can do it efficiently. Please give

it a thought and contact me if you want to discuss it further.

Peter Robson

Letters to the Editor

Harold Jordan (43–51)

Ref: People who have contributed to Scarborough's identity as a town.

I'd like to recommend William Smith, the geologist who made the first geological map of the British Isles.

Born in Churchill, Oxfordshire, in 1769, he went on to become a surveyor employed in projects to find seams of coal and later to build canals across the length and breadth of the country. While doing this work he collected fossils and observed the strata, leading him to formulate his theories that led him to the idea that one could draw a map of the underneath of England just as readily as one could map the overground. In 1801 he produced Britain's first-ever national geological map.

After a series of unfortunate circumstances he went to live in Scarborough in 1820. In 1821, he published his detailed geological map of Yorkshire. He helped set up the Scarborough City Museum; yes that Rotunda near the Spa bridge. His idea was for it to be built in the Doric style with a circular staircase so that his thousands of fossils could be arranged around the outer walls in their proper relative positions.

From 1828 to 1834 he resided in Hackness in the vicarage close to where Hackness Grange stands. A large hand-coloured map of the Hackness Estate by William Smith hangs in the Hall. Smith later lived in a small house called Newborough Cottage in Bar Street.

The last time I visited the Museum sometime in the 1970's I recall it being filled

with an odd mixture of memorabilia but no evidence of what it had once been like so I think the least we can do is recognise William Smith for his achievements.

If anyone is interested in knowing more about William Smith I would recommend they read, "The Map That Changed The World" by Simon Winchester.

Geoffrey Taylor (46–54)

Canadian Trip

I think it was at the memorable OSA gathering on HMS Belfast that John Webster and I renewed our acquaintance since that time we trekked through the Scottish Highlands with Gerry Hinchliffe and other kindred spirits. On the more recent occasion, John suggested that my wife and I consider a trip to the Canadian far West, where John is a professor at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. Since then John has made the journey to at least one other OSA meeting while the Taylors vacillated over the decision to respond to the call of the not so Wild West. Finally the invitation from a cousin of my wife Sue, living in Toronto, made up our minds, but we would see John in Vancouver first.

The flight to Vancouver via Toronto from Manchester was relatively straightforward. The September sun accompanied us the whole way to Vancouver where we landed at 7.30 in the evening. There, jaded through lack of sleep, we confronted our first problem: how to cope with an automatic drive car after five minutes tuition back home. The second problem, finding the hotel, was aggravated by the fact that there are at least two Executive Hotels in Vancouver. We found ours after a kindly Canadian, sick of seeing us drift from one traffic lane to another, invited us to stop and then gave us the most courteous directions.

On arrival at the hotel, we rang John and were assured that he would meet us at breakfast the following morning on his way to work. He duly arrived equipped with maps, leaflets and brochures, and proceeded to give copious advice on how to get about and what to see in Vancouver and issued a kind invitation to dinner on our last night in the city.

Travelling in Vancouver was easy. Within five minutes walk from the hotel, a state-of-the-art automated monorail took us to the city centre. Thence over the next several days we explored the city, beautifully situated between the sea and the mountains.

We trawled through the cornucopia of the public market on Granville Island, full of exotic goods of every description. We strolled through the wide green expanse of Stanley Park, absorbing the beauty of the landscape. We visited the exciting aquarium and watched animated demonstrations featuring among other attractions, sea otters and beluga whales, thanks to a free pass from John, who is a governor of that excellent institution.

We were so glad that John was not too unnerved by Geoff's inexperience of automatic drive to accompany us on our visit to Victoria and Vancouver Island.

Victoria boasts some fine examples of Victorian architecture and John conducted us on a tour of the old parliament building, and subsequently of the Empress Hotel, redolent of the English colonial style. As we drove through the island, John explained that its climate was considered to be reminiscent of England and residence there was popular among retired people. The highlight of our tour was the visit to the Buchardt gardens situated in a disused quarry and now a delightfully landscaped

showcase of horticultural splendour and diversity

On our last evening John invited us to his lovely home situated high on Grouse Mountain overlooking the city. We were able to relax over a welcoming drink on the verandah with John's wife Lyn and son Gordon, admiring the view before sitting down to a delicious meal. We shall long remember the kindness John and his family extended to us. The following day we headed for the Rockies, but that is another story.

Officer's Reports

President

Apart from opening the proceedings at the AGM, this report will mark the last act of my Presidency. The time has passed very quickly as things do when you get into your seventies and it has been very enjoyable. I thank you for your support and forbearance during my term of office. During my time as Secretary and President, I received outstanding support from David Fowler and Chris Found. Now, in successive years, both stepped down and I thank them for their work and wish them a happy 'retirement'.

I wish I could report that I leave the OSA in good shape as a I step down, but you will sense as I do on reading the Officer's reports that overall, we are losing momentum. Our recruiting has slowed to a trickle and we continue to have trouble in finding people to fill some of the 'executive' positions in the Association. In the various speeches I have made over the past two years, I have spoken several times about the need for the class of the (late) fifties to take over. Geoff Nalton and Frank Bamforth were the class of the thirties. I and my colleagues are representative of the class of the late forties and early fifties. Now it's the turn of the late

fifties (and early sixties) to assume control and drive the OSA forward.

You are just coming up to retirement and perhaps for the first time for many years have some spare time on your hands. The OSA needs your energy and ideas if it is to continue to exist and to support its membership. Please give it some serious thought. The AGM is the place to make your move.

Peter Robson

Secretary

The Old Scarborians have had another very enjoyable year. The meals in Scarborough and London were very well received and the Golfers had another interesting season.

From the insert with this newsletter you will note the dates of the Scarborough Dinner and the London Lunch. Please attend and do all you can to encourage the shyer members to take part.

Yet again the committee is experiencing change. After 5 years as Secretary and 2 years as President Peter Robson is stepping down. I am sure you will all join me in thanking him for the enormous amount of work he has done for the OSA. Peter has stepped into the breach and produced the last two newsletters when we were unable to find an editor. This position is still vacant. Filling it is a priority as we cannot expect people like Peter to continually come to our rescue. Any volunteers?

I am also saddened to report that Chris Found has to step down as our Treasurer. He has been a stalwart of the OSA, not only handling the money but running the golf tournaments and the golf dinner. He will be greatly missed and I am sure I speak for us all in wishing him well in the future.

Although I have continued as Secretary this year I believe it would be a good thing for the OSA if a Scarborough based volunteer could be found to take over. Local news takes a long time to travel over the North York Moors and leaves me somewhat out of touch with the main body of the OSA. Anyone interested?

Please note the date and time of the AGM. We have received permission to hold it at the Scarborough Rugby Club so there will be a bar to help move the meeting along. Please try to attend.

Mick Bowman

Treasurer

I am having to retire at the next A.G.M. because of ill-health and impending radical treatment and I am sorry to be relinquishing my position as it has been a real privilege having the opportunity to meet or be in contact with a large number of Old Scarborians.

Our financial position continues to be soundly based for the immediate future and I send best wishes to my successor when he is elected at our next A.G.M.

Chris Found

New Members

Frank Guy Barnett (55–61)

Ian David Ledgard (55–61)

Missing members

We have had *Summer Times*, which was mailed to the following people, returned to us. If anyone knows their whereabouts, please contact Mick Bowman.

T.E. Almack (last address in Scarborough), Blower (Mill Hill), D. Booth (Reading), B.S. Cartwright (Keighley), H.W. Cassel (Canada). H.J. Cundall (Halesworth), A.

Dewdney (Scarborough), J.M.H. Graves (Scarborough), P. Harding (Watford), D. Hepworth (Grantham), P.A. Hodgson (Scarborough), P. Johnson (Scarborough), D.S. Messenger (Scarborough), G. Middleditch (Scarborough), J.S. Nockels (Scarborough), K.R. Poskitt (Scarborough), B.D. Poole (Scarborough), N.A. Robinson (Kingston Upon Thames), R.W. Seymour (Pontefract), P.A. Timms (Upton), D.W. Welburn (Birmingham), J.B. Wilkinson (Halifax), M. Wooley.

Jottings

Excerpt from the Daily Telegraph 9th August 2006

Recent Wills

Geoffrey Nalton of Scarborough, North Yorks, who died last February, left estate valued at £1,209,661 net.

He left shares in his estate to RNLI, Royal Star and Garter Home, Green Howards Museum, Cancer Research UK and Parkinson's Disease Society, £2000 each to the Green Howards Association, Borough Bowling Club and St Columba's Church, Columbus Ravine, Scarborough.

John Cooper (51–59)

John has submitted a long article about the 739 Squadron ATC at the School. We will publish it in full but over more than one issue of *Summer Times* because of restrictions of space. The first instalment follows.

739 Squadron ATC, 1954–61

My war had been spent as child in the West Riding and in Scarborough. Aircraft and contrails were majestically visible on a daily basis. All my guardian aunts patriotically identified them as a 'Lanc', 'Spit', 'Tiffy', 'Wimp' or some such 'one of ours'. During the night at home near Leeds the rumbling of the heavies either overhead

or being run up at the ghost factory at Yeadon pervaded the atmosphere.

Of my male relatives in the forces, three cousins were in the Royal Air Force and a further cousin was in the Parachute Regiment. On VE day in Morley, two of my cousins paraded on the Town Hall steps in their ATC uniform as the sole Spitfire flew overhead and the sole battle tank trundled—late—up the main street. But surrounded as I was by the home bric-a-brac of the air war and insulated against its effects, the only aircraft to which I had been close was the Lancaster that appeared in Leeds city centre as the local exhibit of the Wings fund raising appeal.

My interest in aviation remained inexhaustible and unsatisfied. On entering SBHS in 1951, my first acquaintanceship with fellow pupils, after the traumas of the 'bushing', made me aware that there were others with similar interests and joining the 739 Squadron ATC at the earliest opportunity was therefore inevitable. Many of us joined a little before the minimum permissible age of fourteen.

The unit had been formed in 1941 to pre-train and recruit for the Royal Air Force and the Fleet Air Arm as a part of 64 (N) Group ATC. In 1954, it seemed not a lot had changed in training and aims as we headed towards National Service—from which most of us were later exempt. Our officers had previous military experience, our uniforms were as in the early forties, the training manuals were unchanged, visits were to bases with wartime equipment, and the Cold War had replaced the World War.

CO at the time was Flt. Lt. H.S.P. Taylor, who had joined the Squadron in 1941 and had been promoted to his then current role in 1945. He, as most know, was an aesthete rather than a warmonger and used the Squadron to further our wider education. We were informed by Mr. Smith in History that our CO had been in the First War and

must have concealed his youth to be recruited. We tended to wish HSPT had been as youthful and dashing when we met aircrew officers with the slang and manner more to fire boyish enthusiasms. Another officer was FO Cyril Poole, an old boy of the School, who had done war service as an air gunner and joined 739 in 1947.

The Squadron met on Friday evenings during term at 7:00 in the upper lecture theatre. Parade and drill took place in the summer in the School yards and in the winter or wet in the hall when it was free from the claims of a rather staid middle-aged dancing club! Uniforms and other equipment were kept in a small store room up the stair from Joe's study and included our weapons—First War .303s with no firing bolts. Miscreants at drill were sometimes induced to run around the lower quads with one of the Lee-Enfields above their heads to make them more cooperative.

All NCOs were promoted cadets, though from 1960, the rank of Cadet Warrant Officer was introduced. Promotion was first to Corporal, of which there might be several at any one time, Sergeant, of which there might be two or three, and then to Flight Sergeant. NCOs had considerable power and could impose punishments.



ATC Wing Parade, Scarborough Boys High School, Oct 1957.

L to R: Cpl Dave Hepworth, Sgt Dave Webster, Cpl Pete Green. F/Sgt John Cooper, W/C Masser, P/O Kent, P/O Cyril Poole, AG, S/L Cryer.

A range of qualifications were available to cadets, the more important of which were marked externally. It was usually necessary to be in the Squadron for three or four years to obtain a range of awards as opportunities to sit them were infrequent and some necessitated visiting RAF stations at considerable distance.

The attainments included the First Class Cadet badge, awarded on passing out of basic training, the Proficiency badge, which made one a Leading Cadet, and the Advance Training badge, which required study and which few attained. Other badges were awarded for the 'A' and 'B' Gliding Certificates and for Marksmanship with the .303. Certificates were also awarded for swimming and athletics, but the latter were few and far between. The plum award, of which three hundred were available nationally each year, was the Flying Scholarship, which paid for the course of civilian flying training, which led to the Private Pilot's License.

The Proficiency Badge entitled the bearer to a reduction in basic training on joining the RAF, but some of those who had left our ranks and had been imprudent enough to claim their entitlement returned to emphasise the nil and negative results of so doing.

Overseas trips in service aircraft were sometimes available, as were special courses at service bases. We all had opportunities to take part in Squadron days at RAF stations and to participate in a week's annual camp, which was the highlight of the year. It was on these occasions that most flying took place. The Squadron also ran a .22 shooting team with the School caretaker as coach, and we shot regularly in the local small bore league.



739 Squadron annual camp
at RAF Lyneham, Wilts, Aug 1957.

Golf

We have had two successful competitions this year and an excellent Dinner, and the weather smiled on us on both occasions. The results were as follows:

Dr. Meadley

1. J.Riley (Cottingham)
2. R.Emms (North Cliff)
3. P.Gridley (Ganton)

T.A.Smith

1. F.Crosby (North Cliff)
2. J.Riley (Cottingham)
3. G.Winn (South Cliff)

Chris Found

Coming events

Scarborough Dinner; Palm Court Hotel on Friday 1st December 2007 at 7:00 for 8:00.

London Lunch; House of Commons on Wednesday 21st March 2008 at 12:00 for 1:00.

An application form for tickets for these events [was] included in this Newsletter.

Annual General Meeting Tuesday November 28th 2006 at the Scarborough Rugby Club at 7:30 pm.

Boxing Day Rugby at Scarborough RFC.

Obituaries

John Firstbrook Clarke (36–41)

My first impressions of John were when he appeared at the High School in September 1936. I had already been at the School a year and was in Form 2L. We were soon aware that John had a connection with F. Clarke, otherwise known as ‘Bon’, who as a martinet for class order and discipline was possibly the most feared master in the School. We in 2L had been rather apprehensive of learning German under him, but to our surprise we got a new master, Maurice Cornish, instead.

John spent his first term in 1L but was moved to 2L in January 1937 and joined us. I later learned that that it was his planned presence among us that led to us having Cornish for German, as it was thought inappropriate for Bon to teach his nephew, as it was now rumoured John was.

It transpired that John had been brought up in Bulgaria in circumstances that do not concern us here, and had attended the American School in Sofia, so he had a grounding in English. His term in 1L was to acclimatize him to the School. Because of Bon’s reputation as a strict disciplinarian, there were some in the School who made John’s life difficult—so much so that Bon offered to send him to Bootham School, a Quaker School in York. John, however, was made of sterner stuff, and elected to tough it out at SBHS, which he did very successfully, taking a full part in the life and games of the School, eventually being a valuable prop forward in the First XV. He also went on that disastrous

school camp in August 1940, when some participants were struck down with polio.

I am writing this tribute to John because he turned out to be my best friend, with whom I had a continuing relationship right up to his death. In fact, he was a groomsman at my wedding and he and his wife Muriel are godparents to my daughter.

We were not friends until the Summer of 1938, when we found we had a mutual interest in camping. With me at that time, it was purely theoretical, but when he learned of our interest, Bon bought a fairly large tent and other camping equipment for John. I constructed a not entirely satisfactory trailer to tow behind our bicycles and eventually we set off to spend a weekend at Langdale End. I remember that Frank Bamforth was with us on that occasion. Subsequently, John and I went on our own and I remember Bon coming over to visit and his partaking of the messes we cooked in a billycan over the primus stove. "Very nice", he would say in that familiar clipped tone.

John did well in his School Certificate and entered the Sixth Form on the Science side. At some point during the course, he decided not to continue and went to work on a farm in Lincolnshire prior to joining the Royal Engineers. The Army sponsored him for a six month course in Engineering at Manchester University and he was subsequently commissioned in the Royal Engineers, serving in the Mediterranean area. After release from the Army, he obtained a Higher National Diploma and worked at Rover in Solihull, a firm in Ossett, and ultimately Girdings. He was a specialist in shock absorbers, particularly on railway equipment. I remember standing with him on a Metro station in Paris and, when the train came in, he listened attentively and said, "Those are our shock absorbers."

It was while he was working in Osset that he met and married Muriel. They have two sons, Richard and Peter, whom we have seen grow up into successful members of society.

I was very saddened when John's health deteriorated in the year or so before his death. My memories of him are as a fine upstanding man and a loyal and generous friend. My son and I attended his funeral in Solihull and it was evident from the size of the congregation and subsequent conversation that John was very highly thought of. His death has left void in many people's lives, certainly in mine.

As a kind of postscript to this tribute, I should like to add that through my friendship with John I came to know Bon and his wife Kathleen very well and indeed was in constant touch with them up to their deaths. With my family, I visited them many times at their delightful cottage in Cartmel in the Furness area. Incidentally, I should like to set the record straight about Bon and military service. It was stated in a previous article that Bon was a conscientious objector in WW1. Nothing could be further from the truth. Bon was, as I recollect, a Lieutenant in, I think, the North Staffordshire Regiment. He was severely wounded and was awarded the Military Cross. Because of his leg, he designed a special pedal which the James Cycle Company manufactured for him, to enable him to ride his bicycle.

Arthur Prust (35–42)

Leonard Holmes (48–53)

My brother Leonard died on 1st May 2006. He was at the High School from 1948 to 1953.

After his National Service in the RAF, he chose to train as an accountant and was

fortunate to be able to prepare for his qualifying exams while continuing to live in Scarborough. He looked back on his training, under Geoff Heselton, with gratitude and pleasure.

After his marriage to Pat, Leonard decided to concentrate on accountancy within a business organisation. He worked in Doncaster, Leeds and Settle and for the greater part of his working life, he lived in Harrogate.

His health in retirement was not good. He had persistent respiratory problems and was eventually forced to use a wheel chair. For months, he was a regular patient at the Respiratory Unit in Harrogate General Hospital and could not praise too highly the care and attention he received there.

Unfortunately, neither Leonard nor I found it easy to travel, so in the latter part of Leonard's life we spoke regularly on the phone. In almost our last conversation, Leonard told me how grateful he was for the education he had received at the School, and how he recognised the skill and dedication of those who taught him.

Despite the excellent treatment he received in hospital, Leonard did not wish to die there. In fact, his death came suddenly and peacefully at home. That was only possible because Pat cared for him for years. She would not like the word "devotion", but that is what she showed.

They were married for 45 years and have four sons.

Frank Holmes (37–45)

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