

Old Brymorian Profile- Alan Lavers **(September 1953 – July 1957)**

At 67 I don't know, or particularly care, what day it is but my memories of Brymore have stood the test of time and I still smile when I recall learning to dance with a chair and swap postage stamps for cakes at 'Bun Bailey's van!

I arrived at school in 1953 having first been fitted out by Crossman's who introduced me to clothing that was guaranteed to eliminate dozing during church. My memories of Brymore life are of the line-out skills of John Worle, the prodigious off-spin from 'Tiggy' Payne and Jason Burnett's table tennis mastery.

On leaving Brymore I had a period of farming in North Somerset and played rugby for Bristol Colts. I then returned to Cannington to attend the Farm Institute from which my interest in agricultural engineering took me to Lackham, Wiltshire where I completed a City and Guilds in Agricultural Engineering. A technical teacher's course in Wolverhampton completed my education before I had my first proper job as a lecturer at East Riding College of Agriculture. In the third of my five year tenure I married, my wife and I lived on the college campus for a further two years.

I enrolled at Writtle (Essex) in 1969 to study for the National Diploma in Ag Eng, whilst my wife taught at Witham. Following a protracted job search I joined Shellstar in Reading as field engineer to a team of agronomists researching new pesticide formulations. My interest in field spray efficiency led to my appointment as group leader and promotion to Shell International leading a multidisciplinary team concerned with both ariel and terrestrial spraying problems around the world. My Shellcentre office was opposite the National Theatre where the lunchtime concerts re-kindled my passion for jazz music, initially stimulated by George Galsworthy in his pre-assembly tinkering at Brymore. We eventually moved to Kent where I established a laboratory at Shell Research. My wife taught near Maidstone and both our boys completed their education in the county. Shell encouraged me to study for a degree which I eventually completed in 1988.

Shell sold its interest in agriculture in 1994 so I retired after 24 years service and set up as a consultant in spray technology; I had various UK assignments including visiting lecturer at Wye College and Newcastle University.

Throughout this period my main employer was the Food & Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) based in Rome. I travelled extensively for them visiting a hundred countries; my visits to North Korea proved the most memorable. During this period the University of Newcastle agreed to supervise my thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, which I duly completed in 2004.

Having seen both our boys through university we decided to leave Kent in 1999 and now live in a 'nearly converted' barn in Herefordshire, co-residents with a cluster of flies, man eating mice and moles.

My sporting action is mostly verbal and chair based, I played hockey until nearly fifty and I occasionally swing the golf clubs badly. I keep busy with the local council and am a governor of Hereford Technical College with special responsibility for the Holme Lacy Agricultural College.

It's not easy to end with some advice for today's Brymore students or to easily quantify the benefits I gained from my time at the school but the words 'could do better' will always stay when I think what I could have achieved if I had tried. Brymore developed my individuality, improved my ability to think for myself and introduced me to working in a team environment.

Other peripheral lessons also proved useful, my games with the 'Occasionals' rugby team taught me that gin needs a tonic. Bowling at Alan Hemming in the nets, in an attempt to dislodge the money on the stumps, showed me the value of line and length before speed. The unforgettable words of Peter Walker when he said 'time for a knock' heralded another table tennis thrashing, but my lasting memory must be of Mr. Lakeman who was convinced that were all uneducable. There is no doubt that, in my case, the values imparted to me at Brymore went a considerable way to proving him wrong.

Reunion Opportunities

The new Boarding House and Teaching Facility is to be officially opened in January 2009. The Headmaster has given all Old Boys the chance to view this development, with guided tours on February 14th 2009 at 11 a.m.

The Open Day will be Saturday June 27th 2009.

Pyms Night Dinner in 2009 will be Saturday 5th December.

Reserve these dates now and come and meet with your Committee and old friends.

For further information go to our Web Site - www.brymoreoldboys.co.uk

Letter from Roland Taylor to John Manning

Former teacher, housemaster after whom 'Taylor' house was named

Dear John.

I should like to thank you, and your Committee, for making me an honorary member of the Old Brymorians' Association. It gives me great pleasure to be linked, in this way, with a group of boys – middle aged men now! For whom I had great respect. It gives me a sense of belonging and will be a perpetual reminder of that close-knit little community which I was privileged to be part of fifty odd years ago.

Thank you for sending me a copy of 'The Spur'. It completes the picture. Together with the social events and the bursary, you now have, in place, an OBA of which any school would be proud. Congratulations!

I am afraid that I cannot accept your kind invitation to Pym's Dinner. I continue to be plagued by ill health and just could not cope with such an event. I have not given up hope, however, of being able to attend an Open Day. Fingers crossed!

Thank you, again, for thinking of me and for keeping me in touch.

Keep up the good work!

Yours sincerely,

Roland (Taylor)

Treasurers Report

This has been a most successful year. The current membership now stands at 253 but there are a few members, who paid by cash or cheque, who have failed to renew their subscription. Unfortunately if they have failed to renew their membership by 1st September 2007 they will become lapsed and will not receive their copy of the 2008 'Spur'.

We were able to meet our commitment to the first Old Brymorians' Bursary during September 2007 which will support a student for his three year stay at the school. This was made possible by your subscriptions and further enhanced by the fund raising events of the Pym's Night reunion dinner and once again Rex Steer's extremely successful Summer Draw on Open Day. By the time this edition of the 'Spur' goes to press we will have completed our second full bursary; a great achievement!

A silver salver was purchased to be awarded with the OBA prize, and £100 was donated to the Brymore Sailing Club to purchase a 'walkie talkie' set. We are also repaying all postage costs to the school thereby saving the OBA 3p for each OBA letter put through the franking machine.

John Manning and I had a great day at this years Leavers Service where we recruited ten new members. We are still looking for some young blood for the committee so please volunteer if you are able to spare a few hours a month.

Many thanks to ALL for your continued support.

Mike Fry (Honorary Treasurer)

Old Brymorian Profile - Tony Cook (September 1955 - July 1959)



Starting life at Brymore in September 1955 coincided with the arrival of the new headmaster, Mr Adcock. During my four years, I served an extra year, we were a class of 12. My housemaster was Mr Hemming. I see from my school reports, yes I still have them, words such as fair, satisfactory, quite good and steady but uninspired crop up frequently. I did however manage to grow ten inches and put on three and a half stone!

I left Brymore and joined S. Luckes & Son, the Massey Ferguson agent in Taunton, as an engineering apprentice. Here I joined two other ex Brymore pupils, John Manning and Brian Godwin. We were joined by Chris Jezzard a year later. I enjoyed my time in engineering and the knowledge has proved valuable ever since. I can keep my mower going but would be lost on the monster tractors of today. An engineer's money was not good and working with a family firm offered few opportunities so I kept an eye open for a job with prospects. I needed a little extra as I had married Ruth in 1963.

I am sure fate provided the next move in my life. John Manning had left Luckes and was now working as a trainee salesman for an animal feed 'compounder', R & W Paul. By chance I met John and he said he had been promoted to his own area in Wiltshire and that his move would leave a vacancy in the company. I quickly applied and five interviews later I became a trainee salesman at the grand salary of £750 per annum! It must have got better because I was with Pauls until March 2000.

The company has changed names many times from R & W Paul to Paul & Whites to Pauls Agriculture and now it is known as BOCM Pauls. During this time the farming industry was changing fast and change provided opportunity. During the next thirty five years with Pauls I changed business roles a number of times, moved house four times and Ruth and I produced two children.

After my initial training I was allocated the West Midlands as a wholesale salesman based in Evesham. After three years I moved to Somerton working from the new Radstock mill, firstly as a retail sales manager but then as the area Pig Contracts Manager that entailed farming pigs in partnership with farmers. There were more pigs in the east of England so I moved to Ipswich to manage the pig scheme there. After a few years managing pig production I became Regional Sales Manager responsible for feed sales for all species. Three years later it was back to pig farming as the company's Director of Livestock. I was working closely with major processors and retailers also assisting with formation of the national pig welfare scheme and was active in the British Pig Association.

Retiring at the age of fifty-eight I used my knowledge and contacts to provide a consultancy service to the food sector for the next two years. I now have the best occupation so far - retirement, able to garden, paint, travel and play as much golf as possible.



Old Brymorian Profile- Robert Norman September 1955 – July 1959

My four years at Brymore started in September 1955. It was my first experience of being away from home for any length of time and I felt very homesick which thankfully soon passed as I became used to life as a boarder. On reflection I think that the years I spent at Brymore were beneficial both academically and in developing my personality

On leaving school I obtained a position with the agricultural machinery manufacturer, Massey Ferguson, at their International Sales Training establishment at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire. Unfortunately my somewhat brief employment with MF was terminated when I was diagnosed with Tubercular Meningitis, an infection of the brain and spinal cord; an extremely serious illness.

I was transported by ambulance at full speed from Frenchay Hospital to an isolation unit at Ham Green Hospital where I underwent treatment for a year. I can assure you that receiving an intra-muscular injection with a two inch long needle every three hours together with daily lumbar punctures was the worst period of my life. On discharge from Ham Green I was allowed home where I continued have daily injections from a district nurse whose visits occurred a various times depending on her work load so I never knew when she would arrive. This uncertainty could be overcome either by a family member administering the jab after brief tuition or I could do it myself. I chose the latter!

It was whilst convalescing that I was approached by a friend who asked if I fancied selling new and used cars for a living. A year in hospital left my finances depleted so I accepted the offer and started selling Jaguar, Humber and Singer cars. My involvement with the motor trade lasted approximately twelve years at the end of which I was promoted to the position of Western Fleet Commercial Sales Manager with Unigate's Wincanton Garages.

In 1976 I was invited to join a small specialist engineering company which manufactured equipment for the water industry. The package was too good to miss; in the new job I was responsible for marketing and sales internationally from Helsinki to Vancouver. Such was the success of the company that a major West German industrial company made an offer for the firm which was accepted. I joined the new company as the UK Sales Director and proceeded to market their specialist range of pumps both on and off shore. The job was extremely demanding which I found both challenging and rewarding. In 1984 something hit the fan! I suffered a heart attack which was followed by a diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes. These hiccups were largely responsible for my decision to take early retirement.

On the domestic front, I was married in 1967 to my first wife. I have a son and daughter; both have BA and Masters Degrees. My son is a Chartered Financial Analyst with HBSC bank in Geneva and my daughter is a Psychologist studying for her doctorate. They each have two sons making me a granddad x 4. Having spent almost 13 years wooing her, I married my second wife Lillian in October last year.

Obituaries

It is with great sadness that we have to report the loss of the following members of the OBA:

Reginald Adcock 1955 - 1983
Headmaster
See next page

Tony Criddle 1952 -1957

Mike Pharo 1954 -1957

We have also heard of the deaths of three old boys:

Malcolm Watts 1955 - 1958

Alan Board 1959 - 1963

Ashley Taylor 1999 - 2003

Editors Comment

May I take this opportunity of thanking all those who advertised in, and provided articles for, the 2008 edition of the 'Spur'. For those who are into computers and have an internet connection it would be helpful if you could send all contributions for 2009 in Ariel 12 font to Gina Bryant at Brymore School (GBryant@educ.somerset.gov.uk) marked for the attention of the editor of the Spur. It would also be helpful if articles were of no more than 600 words.

David Young (Ed)

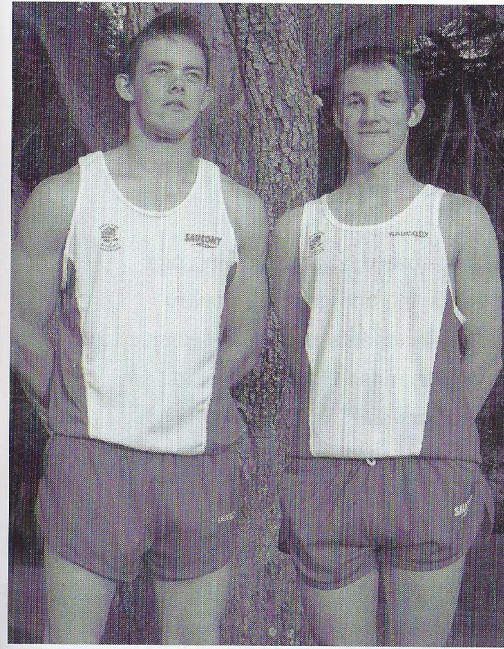
Reginald Adcock, Headmaster 1952 - 1988

It is with deep regret that I have to report the death of Mr Reginald Adcock the Headmaster of Brymore from 1955-1983. He died at this home in Lincolnshire, aged 88 years, on 15th August. An Old Brymorian, Tony Cook, attended the funeral representing the Old Brymorian Association and past pupils. Mr Adcock was an Honorary Member of our association and a staunch supporter for many years. I wrote a letter of condolence to his family on your behalf.

JHM



June 1961

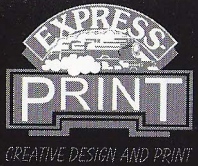


Ben Gibb and Alex Wright left Brymore in the summer term having been Deputy Head Boy and Head Boy respectively, and England Schoolboy Internationals in Athletics. Alex holds the National Title for 5k Race Walking and entered the Olympic Trials in Birmingham where he came third!! As a 17 year old racing against men this was a fantastic achievement.

At the National Schools Competition this September, Alex came second in the higher age group. Ben Gibb, moving up to Decathlon achieved five personal bests (and five school records), won the title and broke the national record by 200 points!!

A gold and silver medal at the National Schools Athletics Championships – well done to Ben and Alex.

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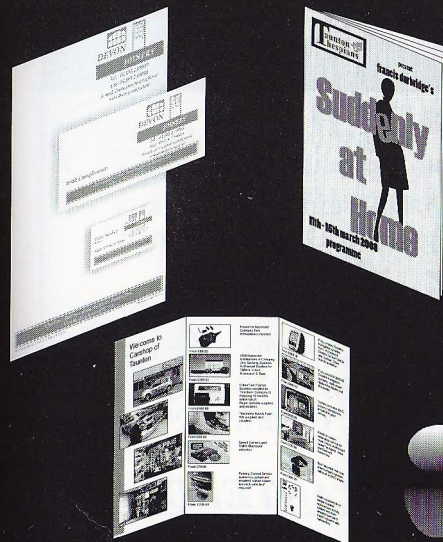


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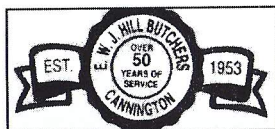
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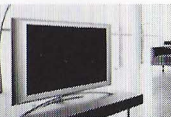
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