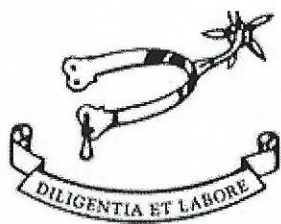


The SPUR

OLD BRYMORIANS ASSOCIATION



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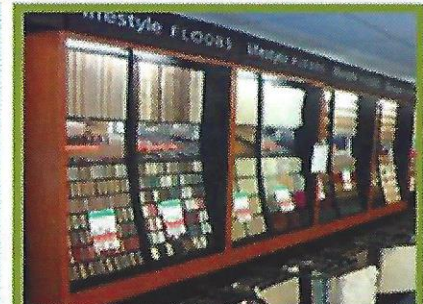
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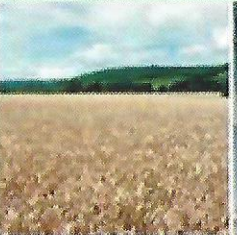


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Chairman's Report – Peter Harris

Welcome to the 10th edition of The Spur. Your continued support and commitment as an Old Brymorian is very much appreciated by the Committee who continue to fulfil the aims of the Association on your behalf.

The Committee would like to thank all those who support the OBA, whether it be through subscriptions, generous donations, advertising or just moral support. However, there are two people who I would like to give a special mention to – Rex and Pat Steer.

Rex, with the support of his wife Pat, has run our Summer Draw since its inception. It was Rex's idea originally, and although some people were sceptical about it, the Summer Draw has raised a tremendous amount of money over the years for bursaries, etc. Rex has now handed over the organisation of the Summer Draw to Tim Hurley and Graham Summerhayes: so Rex and Pat a big thank you from us all.

Brymore continues to evolve, which of course it must, if it is to provide a sound education and experience for its pupils. I am sure that there will be changes at Brymore in the future which we, as Old Boys, may not necessarily agree with, but we must look to the future for the pupils in this rapidly changing world of ours. The esprit de Coeur of the Academy is as strong as ever, even if the shoes are not quite as clean as in our day!

Finally, I will wish you all a Happy New Year and please enjoy this edition of The Spur.

Peter G Harris

Head Teacher - Mark Thomas

It is fair to say that 2015 has been a successful year at Brymore on many fronts. As a Head teacher I was understandably delighted with an Ofsted inspection that rated the school as 'good' and which reported that 'The culture of the school is clearly focussed on high standards of achievement and good behaviour'. I am equally proud that examination results again placed us in the top 23% of schools nationally, with English and Maths results placing us in the top 11% and 13% of schools in the country. Design and Technology yet again produced the highest results in Somerset with the newly introduced engineering course delivering equally impressive results.

However, there is much more to Brymore than exam results. Herb Elliott became the National race walking champion. He was joined at the championships by Charlie Wilson and George Clay and all three managed a clean sweep of the medals at the South West championships. George Watts also represented Brymore at the national championships in the combined events competition. Brymore became District cross country champions for all three age groups when the competition was held at Brymore for the first time in nine years during the winter term. Finally our Year 10 rugby team has made the District final, which will be held early in 2016. Not bad when you consider we have a maximum of 58 boys in a year group, compared with many schools we compete against, who will have well over 100 to choose from.

The reputation of the school continues to flourish. During the Ofsted inspection 100% of parents reported that they would recommend the school to other parents. Four years ago, we received 16 applications for places as an out boarder at Brymore. For September 2016 this has risen to 58 parents who have put Brymore down as their first choice school which means we now have over twice as many applications as we have places available.

A recent visit by Sir David Carter, the Regional School's Commissioner who oversees all schools and academies in the South West of England, described Brymore as the 'jewel in Somerset's crown'.

Nearly half a million pounds has been spent in the past year on improving the buildings and facilities through successful bids to the Education Funding Agency. A new dining hall has been built and the horticultural facilities, potting shed, stores and offices have been refurbished. We continue to explore other ways of bringing in money through providing meals for local primary schools, letting out the grounds and dormitories during the holidays, hosting dinners and even weddings. These all help provide funds to help support the running of the school.

Most importantly, it is the boys of Brymore who continue to make me proud. Boys have worked with the local and wider community during the FOBSA bingo and the South West Winter Fair, in helping to host the Somerset federation of Young Farmers AGM, through a variety of guest speakers at the Young Farmers Club, by helping to set up and pack away at the Blackmore by Candlelight event and with the visit of CBeebies radio. They have shown real responsibility through raising money for Children in Need and the 'Smiles for Christmas' hamper competition, where they collected foodstuffs for those members of the local community who needed support over Christmas. They have much to live up to, and I am confident that the Brymore boys of today will continue to demonstrate the qualities of those that have gone before them.

Mark Thomas

Head teacher

Treasurer's Report Mike Fry

Our accounts continue to show that the OBA continues to grow in a most acceptable way. With 411 paid members, and after paying £9,525 for this year's Bursaries to support a further three students we had a nett surplus of £7,500 to carry forward as a 'safety net'. Our donations to Bursaries now exceeds £76,000.

This achievement has been ably assisted, in no small way, by the continued success of the Summer Draw organised by Rex Steer and, continued generous donations from members. This was to be Rex's last draw, and what a draw to go out on. Just short of £3,600 [an all-time record] was raised this time, which also included many generous donations from members. Well done Rex, and thanks for your unstinted efforts over the years. Next year's Draw will be organised and run by Tim Hurley and Graham Summerhayes... a daunting act to follow!!

We are always open to suggestions from departments at Brymore for financial assistance if possible. This year we were asked if we could assist with the purchase of a cylinder mower for the cricket pitch. A fully reconditioned mower, with 12 months guarantee, was purchased for £275, to which £100 has since been donated by a senior member.

Donations of this kind continue to come in, and another line of support has been activated by the introduction of a MONTHLY STANDING ORDER, to which members may commit a small amount each month. The odd few £s, or so, may not be missed by some of the more established members and becomes a valid argument for not raising the annual subscriptions, which could result in a deterrent for younger members to maintain their subs. FOOD FOR THOUGHT!!

It is now exactly TEN TEARS since I approached, the then new headmaster, Malcom Lloyd, with a list of seven names, and asked him if we could form a committee to re-launch a new OBA. Ten years on, and most of the original 'seven' are still on the committee. However, more new blood is required to relieve those of us who are approaching our useful 'sale-by' date! We are well set for a secure future, but at all costs, we must not let history repeat itself by a lack of commitment, dedication, and continuity. While we now have four younger members serving on the committee, more 'youthfulness' will be required soon.

The Leavers Service produced twenty new members again this year, and a further twenty five from Open Day. Following the leavers service, the Deputy Head said that the OBA are mentioned to the students nearly every day, and that they look upon us as a form of role model. She further said that Brymore would not be the same place without us!!(You can take that as you will).The highest accolades from the highest levels have to be earned, and I have to say, they have only been earned by you, the Membership as a whole, for which we are eternally grateful

Visitors to Old Brymorians HQ

Matthew	Atyeo	Richard	Greenway	Nicholas	Smith
Peter	Atyeo	James	Griffin	Paul	Steer
Terence	Ayre	Rodger	Hanham	Rex	Steer
Gary	Bagg	Peter	Harris	Mile	Stephens
Lionel	Bagg	Alan	Hemming	Patrick	Stephens
Andre	Bailey	William	Hemmings	Bryan	Stevens
Clive	Baker	John	Hill	Stephen	Stoodley
Keith	Baker	Mike	Hill	Graham	Summerhayes
Stephen	Baker	Richard	Hill	Gordon	Suter
Brian	Bennett	Ben	Horler	Martin	Tapp
Kelton	Black	Joe	Horler	Paul	Taylor
Bill	Bolland	Tony	Horler	Eldrid	Tucker
Will	Bowen	Nick	Howe	Phillip	Vaux
Robert	Brick	Tim	Hurley	David	Viger
Robert	Bryce	Robin	Irvine	Adam	Warren
Jeremy	Burnell	Robert	James	Martin	Watts
Ian	Chedzey	James	Ladd	Geoff	Webb
Stuart	Clatworthy	Alan	Lavers	David	Weeks
Charlie	Coleman	William	Loftus	Gareth	Wilcox
Tom	Coleman	Mike	Lucking	Henry	Williams
Tim	Collings	Jonathon	Lyons	Peter	Wood
Patrick	Collins	Mike	Lyons	Mike	Yeandle
Riussell	Coombes	John	Manning		
Jason	Dickson	Roy	Masson		
Ben	Druitt	Reg	Mildon		
Gray	Druitt	John	Mogridge		
Robert	Druitt	Mike	Perry		
Rex	Eastment	Henry	Phillips		
Andrew	Elliott	Michael	Ponton		
John	Field	Todd	Purcell		
Andy	Ford	Matthew	Ranson		
Rob	Fowler	Simon	Ranson		
Michael	Fry	Lynn	Roberts Mudge		
Philip	George	Ian	Sage		
Brian	Godwin	Roger	Sellick		
Eddie	Gould	Julian	Sheppard		

Summer Draw 2015 – Rex Steer

At open day in June we set up our stall in the front of school with a touch of apprehension as to how the day would pan out.

As this was my last task before retiring from my post as fundraiser before handing over the reins to Tim and Graham for next year Well as I said last year I wanted to go out with a bang, well I said I would like to brake the £3000 barrier and thanks to you all we did it

Our net profit this year was over £3500 so a very big well done to everybody involved.

I have to say my helpers all excelled and thank you John Field, Mike Perry Martin Tapp Pat Steer and the 2 youngsters Tim Hurley and Graham Summerhayes who tried a new approach by mingling with the crowd and very successfully selling lots of tickets also Rex and Lyne Eastment for keeping us supplied with refreshments.

We had a whole range of prizes from a T V down to a ride on a Tractor, and the star of the show a Maurice Bishop print of Waters Meet on Exmoor

By 2.30 pm we had sold out of tickets not a single one left (if only the old boys who did not sell their 2 books had sent unsold books back) we could have sold them as well, we had to send customers away disappointed.

Moan out of way.

I have enjoyed my time as fund raiser for the O B A and urge you all to get behind Tim & Graham in the same way you all did for me.

I will still be on the committee and help continue the fantastic work the rest of the old boys do for the school I am proud of all the committee's work and achievements they have done

I would like to thank the following companies for their support over the years Mole Valley Farmers Yeo Valley Farmers, Cossey Products Countrywide, For Farmers, Natoro Builders, Puxton Park (Derek Mead)

Also the following Old boys Maurice Bishop, Harold Bult, Mike Fry, Lionel Bagg, John Field Rex Eastment, Tony Bradford ,Mike Yeandle, Peter Harris, Peter Wood, Pat Steer, Mike Fackrell, Bob Brice

I must also thank the office staff for all their help in helping distribute the prizes.

Thank you to all old boys for their support over the years.

Oliver Mahon - a year after leaving Brymore

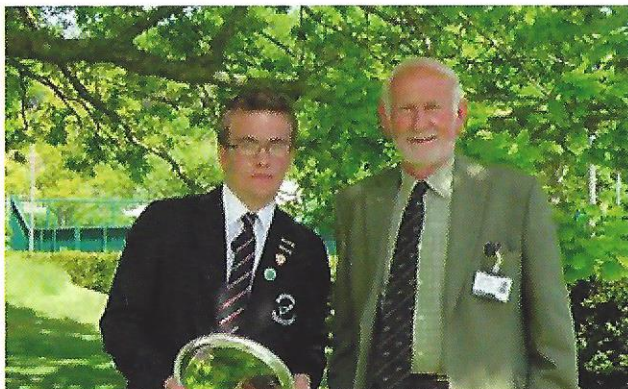
Well, I joined Brymore back in the summer of 2009 as a Year 9 boy - the time passed quickly. Soon I was in Year 12 and the Deputy Head Boy. A year on from that I was employed by the school as one of the first Gap tutors that the school had had in a number of years. During this time I was studying a Level 3 in Horticulture at Bridgwater College's Cannington Centre 3 days a week. In my spare time I used to work on the schools grounds. When I finished my college course, I was made the school's groundsman. I did this for just over a year, working on my own and with the boys during the lessons.

I then found out that there was a groundsman's job going at a school near where I live in Bath. I was lucky enough to get that job, thanks to all I had learnt at Brymore. I have so many happy memories from my time at Brymore, both as a school boy and as a member of staff.

So then it was time to start, as the new groundsman at Monkton Combe School. I have been there a year now and what a year it's been. I have got more knowledge about how to look after all the grounds, but love keeping up with my Brymore friends.

I start my day at 8:00 and finish at 4:30. In the morning have a quick meeting with my boss to discuss what needs to be done. In the winter months it all picking up the leaves and marking out the rugby pitches. In the spring it is time to mark out the athletics track and start the rolling of the cricket squares. Then in the summer it all about cutting the grass and during the cricket season we try and make sure that the squares are cut on a daily basis. We also have rounders' in the summer. There are a lot of sport fixtures so we very busy. We also have a hockey astro pitch which we have to maintain all year round.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff and boys at Brymore who helped get to where I am today and the OBA who have welcomed me onto the committee.



Robert Kerr

Winner of the Old Brymorians Agricultural Award 2015

Pictured with Chair Peter Harris

Brymore and beyond

It's exactly 60 years since I set foot on Brymore soil; looking back the school gave me independence, self-respect, determination a balanced view of life and sporting encouragement. What it didn't was academic achievement but that was my fault due to the latter, as most of my after school activities were spent, not in the Library but in the cricket nets or playing football, which in a Rugby playing school was frowned upon, especially by our rugby masters Phil Walker and Tony Edwards who luckily for us lived off site. However Mike Chedgy and I at least achieved semi-professional status on leaving school.

The question then arises, what did I do for Brymore. My only contribution I gave other than dormitory prefect for the top floor, was to represent the school at cricket, playing for the county schools at Taunton against Hampshire and Bristol against Gloucester. Then as school cricket captain we managed the unthinkable by beating Wellington School away on the 16th July 1958, with Mike Chedgy scoring enough runs to allow us to win by 6 wks.

On leaving school I did what most boys did that was to get a job on a farm. I did this for a few years, but the working hours eventually got in the way of football especially on Saturdays when having little time to catch the coach to places like, Frome, Bath, and Glastonbury etc. I often got on board smelling of stale milk and cow muck. So I left farming behind and went in for construction, learning to plaster and lay bricks.

Soon the call of Agriculture took hold and I joined the Unilever Research Laboratory in Bedford researching Poultry feed. This occurred at the time I got married. We then moved to the well-known Poultry development farm at Stoke Mandeville where I took the assistant managers post. We stayed here for some years where our new family of 2 sons came along. The next moves took us all over the country moving 12 times in all. Finally settling in York.

Then after a few more years I retired from travelling the country as National Poultry Advisor for BOCM. Sadly my wife of 46 years passed away and not able to live alone I moved to Malton North Yorkshire where I live with my partner. Luckily for me she shares my enthusiasm for horse racing, golf, worldwide travelling and of course grandchildren. Looking back to the early years at Brymore I thank it for fond memories that it has brought me.

Mike Stephens 1955-58.

Farm Report - Paul Kingston

The boys have had a busy half term down on the farm, with lots of practical activities to get involved in. Our new Year 7 boys have had their first sessions as part of their carousel and have looked into animal welfare and health and safety. The Year 8 boys have visited Cannington Grain, the biggest in the south west, which is run by current parent Mr John Collins. The Year 10s and 11s have been involved in sponging the ewes and pre-movement TB testing whilst the Year 9s are starting their tractor driving!

We had 4 calves (2 bull calves and 2 heifer calves) the first half term to Millie, Primrose, Harmony and Cowslip. Cow 99 was also due to calve but after spending all day calving with no success, the vet was called and an emergency caesarean section performed; some boys were around to see this which is great experience as it doesn't happen every day. Unfortunately, the calf had not formed properly and was stillborn. The mother is now fully recovered. We have a new system of doing our own milk recording and once a month a member of staff from NMR (national milk records) comes to the farm to process all of the data, undertake health checks and just ensure all is well with the yield.

We had pre-movement testing on 4 cows; 2 to be sent to market imminently and 2 that were to be shown at the fatstock show in November. All passed and the new cattle handling system made moving the animals much easier.

We are delighted to say that local resident Freda Day has allowed us the use of her field which is adjacent to our fields near the drive; all very useful for the sheep and cattle so a big thank you to Freda.

We have sponged 60 ewes in total (a process to ensure they all cycle at the same time) with 20 done one week and the further 40 the week after. This process allows us to predict when they will start lambing and time this for certain lambing weekends when boys will help through the night with the process—a real 'hands on' opportunity to learn!

The rams: Ronnie (Texel), Sammy (Suffolk), Charlie (Charolais) and Maverick (Kerry) are now all having a rest in the fields following their very busy weekends

Our annual herd TB test was early in November and to our great relief the cattle all passed.

All the cows in milk at last month's Milk Recording had their milk tested for BVD by NML (National Milk Laboratories), all other cattle had a blood sample taken by the vet which was sent to the lab. The good news is that all the samples came back as negative. Any calf born from now on, will have a DNA sample taken at birth and sent off to NML for testing. This is a part of our Herd Health Policy to keep our cattle healthy.

We bought a Bateman calf weighing scale with the money that was donated from Jake Bowles family with the view to us buying educational equipment.

The 9th Annual South West Winter Fair was on Monday 30 November 2015 at Sedgemoor Auction Centre & the school took some boys to the market for the day to help the stewards and farmers with cattle, sheep and pigs entered for the Winter Fair. Mr Adamson took five boys, three of whom were showing cattle. Brooks Carey was showing one of his own cattle, an Aberdeen Angus cross, Jamie Barter showed one of our Brymore heifers, a Beef Shorthorn cross and Archie Hill showed on behalf of Brooks Carey a Limousin heifer. We came 5th and 6th in both classes and Brooks came 1st in the Young Farmers, judged on how he prepared his animal and showed her.

The pigs are now all indoors for the wettest months of the winter. One of our young homebred pure British Lop gilts, Shirley had 7 piglets (Large White x Land-race x British Lop) which were weaned and sold at Sedgemoor Auction Centre and our sow Audrey had 10 piglets, just before Christmas

'Over the Garden wall'

A Year in the Horticultural department

Reuben Willcocks

It's a beautiful day, the sun is shining and the breeze is warm as I climb to my usual perch. I dislodge yet another cap stone, boy are they getting in bad repair. I only notice this occasionally, but there is a huge job awaiting someone here!!

The school is quiet, the boys are home on their summer holidays and I've come in to complete some jobs which were left on my list as we finished term. An hour ago I was ferreting around in the soft fruit cage, gathering the bunches of grape sized black currants and the glistening, ruby coloured laden pendants of the red currants, an order to fulfil. These bushes have easily earned more than their keep this year, with plenty left over for the birds. Blackmore Farm Shop has been a willing recipient of our fruit as have the parents who attended Open Day and Swimming Gala.

The garden looks good from my vantage point, thriving crops; sugar snap peas, beans, onions, cabbages, leeks, courgette and marrows and a great space where we harvested the early potatoes. All set off by bark chip mulch (covering the Mypex sheet) and reducing the weed problem. The top fruit looks healthy and a good crop is developing (the boys will be pleased as they are always asking when we will have more apple juice to sell..... in September and October lads!!). The raised beds look stunning, packed with flowers which the bride will be gathering in the next few days, yes we have another wedding at Brymore and our Department are providing the flowers. All through the early summer months we have been delighting the hearts of many wives and mothers as we have sold bunches of highly scented, vibrant sweet peas and mixed posies of brightly coloured flowers.

I slid down from my perch and got quickly involved in a whole host of activities, but now, once again as the days shorten and the early morning mists linger low over jewelled lawns and there is a nip in the air, I resume my position to look over the past year.

Last autumn the apple crop was sparse, unlike this year where the branches are heavily laden and bend down to touch the ground. Yet there were autumn flowers in plenty, which we turned into confetti (the boys LOVED the opportunity to legitimately pull flowers apart....why do they so love being destructive?), cones and old man's beard which became Christmas wreaths and seeds to be harvested for spring planting. The winter months seemed to quickly pass. Boys spent much time digging, manuring and preening their plots in readiness for the warmer spring temperatures.

We took time to prune the top fruit and sorted the soft fruit cages, again cutting back, tying in, weeding and top dressing.

Some of the boys helped Mr. Williams to put up new edges to the raised beds in the walled garden, others helped Miss Nash and Mrs Stanley revamp the herbaceous border. Mrs Richards spent many lessons sowing seed, pricking out and potting on, whilst I had lads taking cuttings, mixing compost and potting on ("Oh not more, sir?").

We had a call from Spaxton Primary School who have a willow dome, which needed 'a little trimming', if we could help. That euphemism for major tree surgery was not lost on the boys when we turned up to see willow branches reaching ten or twelve feet into the sky. The pruning took much longer than we first expected and will be an ongoing project over a number of years I think!!! It was a useful experience for the lads and a chance to make greater connections with another school. Department staff have also given advice and help to both Mark College and Somerset Bridge School.

The spring time saw the walled garden looking good and the sales area full of repotted, trimmed and top dressed plants. The hellebores which we had raised a couple of years ago brought late winter flowers to some areas and the tulips and other bulbs in the beds gave us springtime colour. Now the boys were busy, sowing, weeding and watering whenever they had a chance....well some of them were!!! Others fell by the wayside, finding it hard to keep up with their plot, as well as Chads, rugby, prep and class work demands.

When Ofsted arrived in May, one of the first areas to be visited was the gardens, where the chief inspector found groups of year 7 boys engaged in a number of different tasks. In their groups they were busy, engaged, asking questions and learning new skills. My team and the boys got the inspection off to a good start.

We have also had trips to local garden centres, Cannington College gardens, National Trust properties to look at their walled gardens and also the local strawberry farm, where the boys REALLY enjoyed their visit!!!!

Open Day came around all too quickly and by this time the department was bursting at the seams. The number of visitors who came and the produce and plants sold, the boys who helped and again the staff team were amazing. It was indeed a very successful day for us.

Our involvement with Cannington in Bloom continues, headed up by Mrs Stanley, and once again we raised the plants and then planted up the planters which have graced the village throughout the summer and which the judge was at pains to comment on and commend.

The course results were once again a testament to all that the boys have learnt and experienced in their time in the department. Many gained not just a Pass but a Merit and a third of those who passed actually achieved a Distinction. Let's hope that some of them find their way into our industry.

Looking back, it's been a good year, not without its considerable stresses, but can those be sustained for long in a garden? I think not, as one takes time to consider the beauty of a flower or taste the sweetness of a fruit or simply marvel at the rate of growth of a young seedling.

What of the coming year? New challenges, excitement as the potting shed is re-roofed, lads to teach and encourage, rules to be taught and adhered to ("Yes, you WILL wear steel toe capped boots and overalls!") and more plants to grow and look after. What a privilege! More boys and other schools with whom to share our love of all things horticultural, oh and there's someone coming along now. I'd better stop my reminiscences and get on with the day job!! "Hi there, you want help with your project in BTEC? No problem and then we'll look at your plot...ok!"



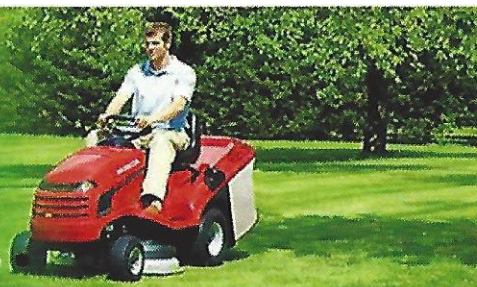
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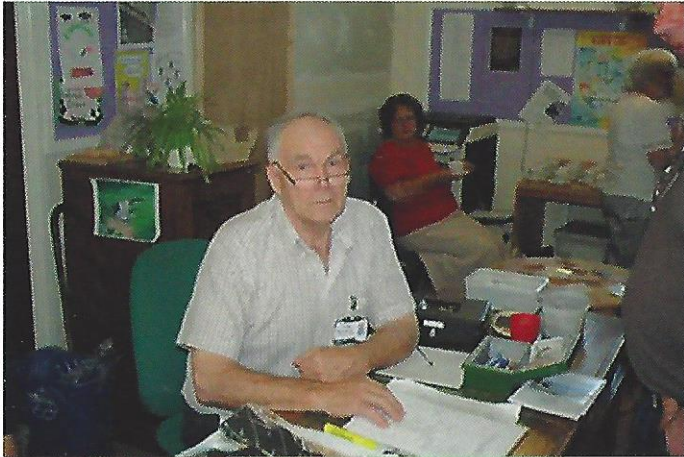
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Walled Gardens on Open Day

Old Brymorians Open Day



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the place to
catch up**



The end of another successful Open day



Out and about around the day

Open Day Images



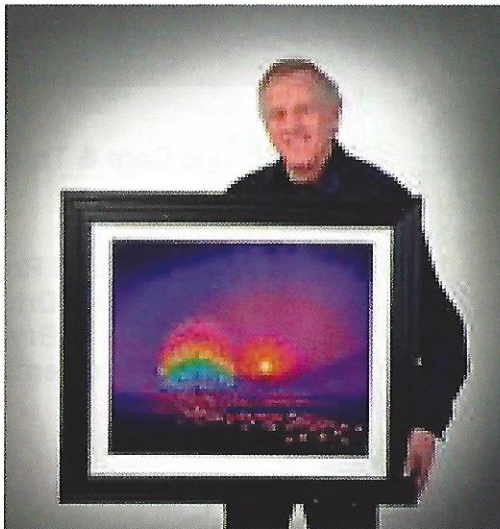
Classic Cars & Tractor Engines

Old Boy Richard Rook's Fund Raising Tractor Drive from Biggleswade to Brymore in aid of PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide)

Maurice Bishop

Maurice was born at Highbridge, Somerset and enjoyed drawing and painting from early childhood. After leaving Brymore School, Cannington, he had various jobs, whilst continuing to paint as a hobby, eventually painting full-time at Burnham on Sea in 1979. In 1987 Maurice moved his gallery to Dunster and has since opened an additional gallery in Lynmouth where he now spends the majority of his time.

Maurice is self-taught, painting in oils on canvas using his drawings, photographs and imagination together with personal experience to create his impression of a landscape. Exmoor is particularly inspirational to Maurice and his work includes many of the scenes which make Exmoor a firm favourite with visitors – Watersmeet, Malmsmead, Tarr Steps, Porlock, Dunkery and Lynmouth Harbour. It also captures the more elusive images through paintings such as 'Final Over at the Valley of the Rocks', 'Home to Lynmouth on a Moonlit Tide' and 'Exmoor Majesty' which features the famous red deer. Maurice has painted themes depicting a journey towards the light such as 'The Journey', 'Against All Odds' and 'Together at Sunset' reflecting, perhaps, his optimistic view of our world. More recently Maurice has been exploring with the colours of the spectrum through his Rainbow Series which combines the beauty of nature with the vibrancy of colour.



GRANDDAD

Reading the 2014 Spur, an article took my interest, it was the Remembrance Day Ceremony. 11 O'clock, the Last Post, The Fallen, the procession and the wreaths. 100 years ago. The passage of time to some extent buffers us from the event. Who were these men that were involved in the Great War or 1914 – 1918?

I have known such a man. He was my Grandfather; a Somerset man in the Somerset Light Infantry, who went away to France in April 1915. So please indulge me whilst I ask some questions of a man, about an event long gone.

Grandad: When did the excitement disappear and the terror take hold, the first sight, sound, smell the first corpse or the first artillery barrage? You look dirty, Grandad, the Flanders mud is stuck to you. Your face is drawn and your eyes – YOUR EYES! The 1000 yard stare, more like the 100 yard stare. How long did the memories stay with you, did they ever go away?



Yet you survived. You were gassed, some shrapnel and bullet wounds but you came home. Did you ever feel guilty Grandad, that you left behind so many in shallow pits that Forever Would Be England? A war against tyranny they said, a war to end wars!

Twenty years later your sons were doing the same as you did, for the same reasons. Like you they fought, survived and never talked about it.

Grandad died in his own bed when he was 74, I was 9 years old. To me he was this little old man with a Kitchener moustache, who always wore a flat cap and a white muffler.

He never spoke about the war, I never knew of his involvement until many years after his death and I came into possession of the photograph, taken in France, when he was out of the line for a few days. So a face to match with the event, The Western Front 1915 – 1918.

THOMAS PERRY

A Somerset Man, in the Somerset Light Infantry!



NB. Some research at the Somerset Heritage Centre and with the help of my wife & on-line at various military sites.

This photo is of Grandad Perry, spoken of in the article above, a survivor of WWI with three of his sons, survivors of WW2, taken early in the 1950's. As can be seen they were ordinary working class men. They were never rich, never owned their own homes & at the end of their days left very little of value; but what price their contribution to our way of life, our values and our freedom? Their generations paid a huge price for us, so we must never forget!



RESPECT

Mike Perry – 1956 - 59

BRYMORE – THE HOME OF JOHN PYM

The original house was the birthplace, a few years before the Spanish Armada, of that man of rare judgement and high courage, one of the greatest Parliamentarians Westminster has ever known – John Pym.

He first angered King James I by promoting a petition to voice the prevailing discontents, and then defending the privileges of the Commons in a speech which was torn from the records by the infuriated King himself. Pym was arrested and sent as a prisoner to Brymore; but in two years he was back in Parliament.

Charles I was king now, and Pym leader of the Short Parliament when Charles dissolved it. Pym spent the time before the calling of the Long Parliament in riding around the country with John Hampden, rousing the people to think for themselves and to save their liberty and their religion. There came the day when he ordered the doors of the Commons to be locked for four hours while he carried through the debate which ended in the impeachment of Strafford, the chief power on the King's side, who had himself hurried to London that day in the hope of getting Pym and the other leaders impeached before the debate took place.

Two years later the King determined on the impeachment of the five members. Charles came himself to the House of Commons with an armed band to seize them. On entering he looked for his great opponent and was disconcerted to see his place empty. "Is Mr Pym here?" he asked, and no one answered. Mr Pym was not there because he had been warned of the King's plans.

So Charles retired baffled and looking foolish. Not only did he retire from the House, but he retired from London to prepare for the struggle his act had made certain, while the five members were brought back in triumph to the House. Pym, thus escorted in triumph to Parliament on 11 January 1642 had less than two years more to live, but it was the most fateful period of the war that was now about to begin.

Pym at once appealed to the Lords not to leave the Commons to save the kingdom alone, and his speech was circulated throughout the country. A Committee of Safety was formed consisting of ten members of the Commons and five Peers, and Pym was its controlling spirit. At first the King's party had the best of the scattered fighting, but the turning-point came when Pym persuaded his side to enter into an alliance with the Scots, even though it involved signing the Covenant. In the tenth week after he had signed it he died, but the critical part of the war had passed. Rupert's master, Oliver Cromwell, had begun his career that was to make him as powerful on the battlefield as Pym had been in the House of Commons.

Pym did not want war, but he was determined that the country should have a progressive constitutional government and not be swayed here and there by the will of a King. When war became inevitable he remained at headquarters in control of the executive.

Pym's had been the controlling mind on the Parliamentary side up to the turning of the tide. It is interesting to speculate what would have happened could he have lived. There are those who think he would have saved the Puritan experiment from collapse, and in the case of the Stuart dynasty it might have ended with Charles Stuart and have been saved from the shame brought upon it by his sons.

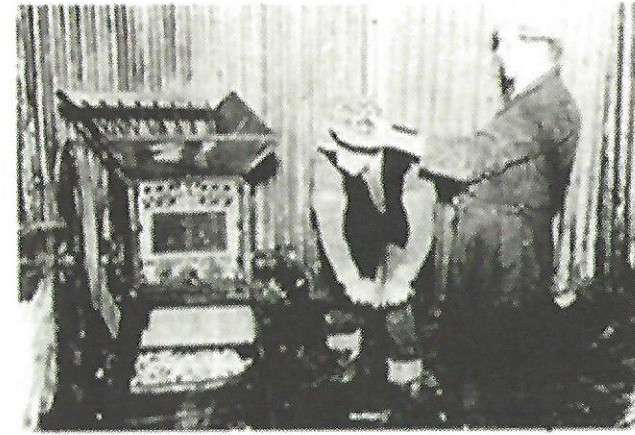
Extract taken from *The King's England – Somerset* by Arthur Mee October 1940 23

Humble Beginnings

It must be difficult for the younger generations at Brymore, when considering the rate of progress which has developed over recent times, to even imagine what the school was like in those first years of Brymore's existence. A recent invitation to address the school's YFC about the 'Early Years' brought home to me the amount of interest which the current lads have.

What still amazes me to this day, was the total lack of financial support available to even consider starting to set up a School Farm. Our then Agricultural Teacher Mr Tony Edwards, the very dedicated man who's determination created the farm from scratch and must NEVER be forgotten, reported in the very first 'SPUR' that 'against all predictions' the farm now had some usable buildings, all of which had been at 'no cost' because there was 'zero funds' in the bank...but he said 'we were all stronger characters through our experience', (now regarded as the Brymore Experience – to last a lifetime), and to which, in my own case I can contribute to Tony Edwards.

This brings me to the example of 'THE ROOT PULPER'. The first cattle to arrive at Brymore were four Devon steers, financed by Mr Payne, father of long remembered Michael Payne, a student who unfortunately died quite a few years ago. The 'deal' was that Mr Payne provided the four cattle 'F.O.C.', and the farm grazed and took them through to a finished standard. The four cattle would be sold, half going to Mr Payne and half remained for Brymore. On their arrival the cattle had to be housed in non-existent 'cattle proof' buildings. In those days, woodland existed at the back of the Walled Gardens, so we were able to access some long straight ash poles to slide in and 'gate' the cattle in, we had our own hay and a supply of fodder beet grown on the farm. We started off by chopping these beet into small pieces using a spade. One day I was visiting Mr Baker next door, when I spotted a disused 'root cutter' half hidden in the brambles. He offered to sell it to us for £1 as it was in quite a bad state of repair. I reported back to Mr Edwards, who said 'well done Fry'; went to his desk in the staff room and took out a tobacco tin, containing cash. After he gave me the required £1 to pay for the machine, he said 'there you are what remains (which was less than £1), is the extent of the farm funds!' We fetched the pulper back to the school workshops, replaced any rotten timber and put it to good use.



Mike Fry &
Graham
Porter

This was just one example of how Mr Edwards inspired us into action, by mending and making things work with little or no cost. The stock numbers slowly increased and it was only in recent years that I learnt from Mr Taylor (of Taylor House) that Mr Edwards bought and paid for the first sheep and the first Welsh Gilt that came to Brymore.

When I attended Tony's funeral in 1972, I realised that not only had I lost a good and honest friend, but his loss to Brymore was unimaginable. He was the acorn from which stemmed the growth and strength by which Brymore now flourishes, and was part and parcel of Brymore's reputation as it stands today.

Thank you Tony for the ROOT PULPER experience. It has become a part of me for the rest of my life.

Mike Fry



Graham Porter
Feeding Steers

Pym's Night 2015

Pym's Night was once again held on the last day of the autumn half term and for the first time in the new dining room.

We met up in the teaching block where on arrival we were registered and given the opportunity to buy raffle tickets and then visit the bar set up in what was officially the Art Room.

Mingling with the Old Boys and their partners and friends was the evening's guest speaker Emma Britton of Radio Somerset.

Before too long it was time to stroll across to the new dining room, which was beautifully laid out, waiting to greet us were the six current Brymore boys, who had talked their parents into coming late to collect them, allowing them to be our waiters for the evening. Before the meal started they were presented with their Spur lapel badge by Emma.



The meal was excellent, well prepared and presented by James Ryan and his catering staff.

After the meal Peter Harris gave a short speech and was followed by Mark Thomas, Head Teacher who updated us all on the where the academy was and where it hoped to go especially why the school was more than

happy to settle for being a Good School which was achieved after the last Ofsted Inspection; to become an outstanding school, there could be no farm, gardens, Chads Hill run or after school sports! Therefore; good, the school is happy to remain.

Emma's after diner talk was interesting, informative and funny, the perfect mix, with plenty of anecdotes about local radio, the perils of fat fingers and having too big a bag whilst traveling on an Election 'Battle Bus'. As a thank you Rex Steer presented Emma with a ceramic cow.

The evening concluded with the raffle which raised a total of £215.

A big thank you to the committee for organising the evening, Mark Thomas for allowing the school to host us and most importantly all the Old Boys who came along.

H A Bradford

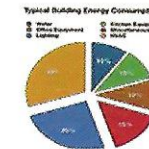
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From the Editors Chair

I would like to begin my bit from the chair by thanking the committee for moving the publishing date of The Spur from October to January, it has certainly lessened the pressure on the start of the year.

I attend the meetings as Editor and as a note taker, I see at each meeting the commitment and dedication of your committee, the sheer hard work that goes into organising Open Day, Pym's Night, me and The Spur to say nothing of contacting you all about these events and chasing up membership.

So, if you're reading a friend's copy of the Spur, how about joining the Old Brymorsians yourself and if you are a member, change to a Standing Order rather than a cheque; help your fellow Old Boys. Contact Mike Fry details on page 1.

Head boy

It seems only yesterday that I was sitting in Mr Thomas's office being offered a place at Brymore. Now three years later I am sitting here preparing to take my GCSEs as Head Boy with my future career set out in front of me. I find it hard to believe the amount I have achieved; this is because I decided to throw myself into all the activities Brymore has to offer. As I prepare to leave I am keen to leave the message that you will only achieve what you put in. Now due to the school expanding and taking in year 7s there is far more they can achieve in the five years here compared to my three. Therefore I encourage them to get involved because 'experience to last a lifetime' will only work if you put in the same amount of effort as the teachers do, they can only do half the work, the rest is up to you.

I would not be who I am today if it wasn't for the Old Brymorsians Association. It is due to their hard work and dedication that they offered me a bursary for the boarding fees as my mum struggled to make ends meet. I am aware that these places don't come easily and therefore I wasn't going to let them down, something which I am proud of today. When I leave Brymore in the summer I hope to keep in contact with the school and become an Old Brymorian to help support other boys who may struggle with making their future happen, I will be eternally grateful for the support the Old Boys have offered me in the shaping of my future and will carry the experience Brymore has taught me into my future.

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Sunday Observance

During the spring of 1958, Reg Adcock proudly announced to the school assembly that he was now a lay reader.

The following Sunday he was to give his first sermon and he expected all of us to be present and correctly dressed for the occasion. This however was like a red rag to a bull as we did not enjoy Sunday mornings walking to church, especially if the weather was bad.

It so happened that our crocodile filed past the Methodist Chapel, someone had the bright idea to peel off and attend their service. As one could imagine, this put the Methodists in a panic as 30 or so extra congregation needed seats which were eventually found. The upshot was that Reg was furious, but because there were so many of us, punishment was difficult.

His only cause of action was to write to all parents, requesting a statement as to the religious bent of their offspring, he then warned us not to try the prank again as he now knew where we all should be!

Mike Stephens 1955-1958.



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