

Summer Draw 2012 – Rex Steer

Yet again we had a fabulous day, lots of people around the stand, as we had a prize everyone wanted to win; it was an amazing piece of artwork by Maurice Bishop of "Watersmeet" on Exmore and took pride of place on our stand. Maurice is an old boy of Brymore, attending 1955/58 and has his galleries at Dunster, Taunton & Lynmouth, so if you are in Lynmouth pop in to see his fantastic display, you will find him working hard on his latest project, so introduce yourself, he will be pleased to see you.

We had 34 prizes this year and made a fantastic £2354.00

This year the County has cut funding to the Horticulture department, so perhaps we can purchase some equipment for them, as well as funding some students.

One thing puzzles me about our members, some buy or sell their draw ticket books & return them with a prize or donation, while others don't do either and then fail to return the unsold books to us ??????????

Thank you to the old boys who helped on the day and considering the weather we did very well!

A big thank you to all sponsors who support us every year, please support them when ever you can.

YEO VALLEY, PUXTON PARK (Derek Mead) MOLE VALLEY, COSSEY PRODUCE, COUNTRYWIDE & NATARO WINDOWS.

Special thanks to Maurice Bishop for his kind donation, I think his prize accounted for a lot of tickets being sold.

Finally, thanks to the following Old Boys & their partners who support us every year:

Lionel Bagg, Harold Bult, Rex Eastment, Mike Fackrell, John Field, Mike Fry, Peter Harris, Mike Perry, Paul Steer, Rex Steer, Graham Summerhayes & Peter Wood.

Don't forget next year's celebrations for the schools 60th birthday, so please come along to the "Country Fayre" as there will be lots of displays of the school's history, we are expecting a big turn out of Old Boys, so see you there ... last Saturday in June 2013.

Visit of the Class of '52

A reunion of the Class of 1952 was organised by John Manning to coincide with the 60th year of the opening of Brymore. Unfortunately Paul Taylor, Martin Webber, Matthew Chubb, Tim Calder and David Rubury could not attend and Colin Grandfield had to miss the photo session.

I was sorry to have to report to the gathering that Colin Hore, Derek Waddon, Michael Vickery, John Rogers, David Gunningham and Lance Baker had died. I could not find Alan Chubb, Redvers Spinks, Peter Davis, Richard Potton, Robert Masters and David Hembury.

The reunion took place at the Walnut Tree Hotel, with lunch. We then travelled to Brymore where we were then met by the Headmaster, Mark Thomas, who together with a group of current boys we toured the House, Classrooms, Farm and Gardens. A superb tea was provided by the school kitchen. Although I visit the school quite often, for some it had been 57 years since they last saw it and were most impressed with all they saw and those they met.

The photographs on the front cover shows the class of '52 then and now

Now – Back row: John Dill, John Manning, Robert James, Norman Howard, Richard Cleverdon, David Meade, Graham Withers, Robert Pearce, Richard Stevens, John Fry, Eric Fry, Fred Pocock

Front Row: Alan Driver, Alan Weaver, Richard Morgan Mark Thomas (Headmaster), Alan Hemming (Deputy Head 1952 – 82) Philip Eavis (Head Boy 1952 – 55), Peter Wood, Eldred Tucker, Len Hatcher

John Manning – 1952

Visit of the Class of '52

By Charlie Coleman – Class of '11

Meeting the first ever Brymore Boys for their 60th Anniversary was a great honour, after car parking them I spent a good amount of time asking questions on how Brymore and its buildings had changed and about all the “Brymore” tales that went with it. After the Old Boys had a “School Photo” I and four other Boys from my year had a photo with the Old Boys which was featured in the Bridgwater Mercury. We then with Mr Thomas took the Old Boys around School-house, they were extremely surprised about how it had changed; one of the biggest comments were how the Dorms had changed sizes from the original Twenty down to sizes of Seven and Four. There were many comments such as “This is Luxury compared to what we had.” It was also interesting seeing the Old Boys trying to find where they had engraved their names. The Old Boys then went for a tour round the remaining School with Mr Thomas and the Senior Student Leadership Team.

Boys of 1952 with boys of 2012



Farm Report - Paul Kingston

The only thing I can remember is what a terrible summer, except I think that we got off lightly compared to some other poor farmers.

We have made hay this summer however not the best, due to not being able to string more than three good days together. We have made quite a bit more silage than normal which I am hoping is quite good. The straw yield from a local farmer was really disappointing, as I think we were well over half the amount of bales down from last year- still there are no bales outside getting wet this winter!

Looking back over the last year our biggest decision was to leave the organic scheme in January. What a difficult decision, as in many ways being organic is right for a small low input, multi enterprise farm. However with ever increasing input prices and off farm prices almost the same as conventional prices, the decision was made to give up and go back to conventional. We are now selling our milk to Dairy Crest, and although the milk market has been very volatile over the summer we believe the decision was right.

This decision meant that the lamb, beef and pork had to be sold conventionally. However some of the organic went this way before and current prices are really strong anyway. This also gives us some more avenues to maybe explore, such as milling cereals on farm. We are also hoping to clean up a few of the fields from the docks and thistles that we have problems with.

Cattle are still doing well with the Beef Shorthorn crosses growing on well. Some store cattle made around the £1280 mark at Easter. We were declared TB free just before Easter which allowed us to sell, and not before time, as funds were running short along with silage and straw.

We are looking to buy some replacement dairy heifers either in calf or bulling heifers to replace some of the older dairy cows. We have recently bought a first lactation Swedish Red Cross which we are looking forward to calve- to Saler bull.

We have just bought a Texel two tooth ram to run with our ewes, really good looking ram for only £220.

We have had extremely bad problems with our lamb's feet this year- mostly strip (or scold) and recently the flies have set in with maggots causing a big problem. We are going to treat the ewes for foot-rot and treat each case of strip in the lambs next year to try and ease the problem.

The lambs from 2011 sold really well and I am hoping 2012 will do the same. None have been sold yet, but this helps educationally, as we have plenty of lambs to look at and practice our stock judging and assessing fitness for market.

Along with all of Brymore farms resources we are keen to take the boys on visits to local farms which are slightly different in the way they do things. We have been visiting a robotic parlour, Sedgemoor market, hunt kennels and are hoping to visit a rotary parlour and a local milk processing plant. By doing this we hope to give a broad spectrum of the different enterprises in the area.



**Ronnie the
Ram**

**Litter of British
Lop Pig**

**Tabitha & Bob
Born 12/11/12**

'Over the Garden wall' A Year in the Horticultural department Reuben Willcocks

It is one of those rare afternoons this year when the sun is shining, sending it's long shadows across the colourful countryside, as I scramble to my perch to look over the garden wall. The glints of diamond drops on the grass show that it has been raining once again but that hasn't stopped the work in the garden.

The runner beans hang in clusters, ready to be picked, the boy's plots have mainly been cleared by an enthusiastic band of overall clad students. Some of them have been down to the farm and raided the muck heap for some of the choicest barrow loads ready to spread on their plots and dig in for the next seasons' crops.

Mrs Stanley emerges from the new polytunnel in the top corner of the walled garden. She has grown a range of salad crops in there this year and still there are more which are being tended by other boys on Garden Duties. The cider apples have all been harvested and juiced. The crop was quite good, but new equipment purchased back in the summer has made the process much more safe and efficient, and so now we have bottles lined up ready for sale, whilst the cider bubbles away in the containers. Mrs Stanley, whilst having oversight of the whole department has a particular focus in the walled garden, and is planning the moving of the soft fruit cage, using money kindly provided by the Old Boys Association, redevelopment of the demonstration plots (for use by each year 10 and year 11 class for their BTEC work) and a pruning programme to keep the fruit trees in shape.

Over the far garden wall I can just catch sight of James Kerry tending the bees. It's been a hard year for bees and we have only four colonies remaining, which was not helped by cattle getting into the enclosure and knocking some hives over. Back in May two hives swarmed, and we had the spectacle of a swarm landing in the middle of school just at lunch time. So the boys had a demonstration of how to collect bees, given by James and aided by Mr Baker. There are a number of other students who are showing an interest in this aspect of horticulture and we are grateful to Ken Edwards for his help, encouragement and tuition.

Over my shoulder I am aware of groups of boys, each led by a year 11 Head Of Department who are carrying out various tasks; tidying the tool shed and potting shed, sieving soil from the compost heap ready to be sterilised and made into compost again, bringing up barrow loads of two year old leaf mulch from the pile in the bottom woods and so on. I am very grateful for the help which the HODs give to the department, for their patience in working with the year 9s and for their positive input.

Ollie Mahon can be seen in the greenhouse where he focuses on the propagation side of the department. The mist bench is full of cuttings taken by the students during the last few lessons and winter bedding fills the benches ready for planting out. The sales area is gradually looking smarter as we weed and top-dress the shrubs. Ollie is working in the department for two days a week (officially) on work experience but he spends much more time helping out and has managed the transition from student to member of staff very efficiently. We really appreciate his input, ideas and help.

Some of the borders around school are looking a little bare as Sara Nash redevelops them. The students have been busy digging out some of the large shrubs and trimming up others, and Sara has got a lot of good ideas as she takes over the responsibility of the beds and borders around the school. Again she is a valued member of our staff.

A new addition to our team is Alison Richards who joins us as a Teaching Assistant, both in practical and theory lessons. She is an accomplished and enthusiastic gardener and has such an encouraging way with the boys. She was working in science, but is now in the horticulture department full time and has begun to have a real impact.

There are also three other members of staff, Mr Fitzsimons, Mr Baker and Mr Oliver who deputise for me and teach the year nine theory and practical lessons. Again these three men bring their unique qualities and abilities to the subject and try to enthuse the students and help them to see that horticulture is so much more than a bunch of flowers.

Across the school I can hear the sound of a lawn mower, but it is not Malcolm in charge. He retired during the summer and we were very sorry to see him leave. He was a real character who worked well with the boys, and was appreciated by all, and sorely missed. However, we have appointed a new grounds man, David Beckett, who comes with a lot of experience and ability. He is settling in well and at present he does not work with the boys as Malcolm did, as the role has changed, but we hope that in the future he will be able to have a few boys working alongside him. Working with experts in a way that is acceptable in industry is an important part of what we teach.

It has been a trying year in the garden with the weather making harvests small or of poor quality. In the classroom results were good (64% gained a BTEC First Certificate level 2) but not as good as we had hoped, so we will be looking to improve this year, which is why I must stop my musings and get back to the marking and pupil tracking. The boys have finished their tasks and have washed and put away their tools, the staff have changed and locked the office door, the Autumn sun has sunk beneath the horizon and a chill wind blows around my shoulders. We are indeed very grateful for all the support people have given the department, especially our link governor, Simon Larkins, who enabled the department staff to have a day at Barrington Court. Yes, there is a lot more to do, because horticulture is so diverse, but I wonder what we will have done by the next time I climb up and look over the garden wall.

Simon Larkin 1986 - 1990

For me the decision to go to Brymore had been an easy one, then and now my preference would be to be outside, learning practical skills and for someone who had not been brought up on a farm, the chance to work with animals was something that really interested me.



Like so many I look back on my time at Brymore fondly. However given a bit more thought, I do remember that first day being dropped off for the autumn term and thinking about how many weeks until the end of term. I need not have worried, for as far as I can remember there seemed to be very little time in the day when there wasn't either lessons, practicals, prep or some sort of sport to do. Then, as now when things did go wrong there was always Matron there to patch you up, there was nothing that a couple of paracetamol, a cough sweet or deep heat couldn't put right!

Whilst at Brymore I was a Head of Department in both the Garden's and the Farm; where I started the poultry department, building the first chicken house myself. I was a monitor and prefect, a responsibility which I greatly appreciated. I also enjoyed woodwork and spent many hours after prep working on projects in the workshops. I took part in most sports including Chad's and to this day am still a keen runner.

The thing that Brymore really taught me is that anything is possible; you just have to want it enough to put the hard work into to achieve your goal.

I left to study Construction at SCAT, going onto to Plymouth University to study for a Civil Engineering Degree. Through my school, College and University time I continued to work in the holidays for a Nurseryman and Landscaper, which when I look back on this, I now realise was my real passion and interest.