

The Old Dy'vorian

The Journal of the former pupils of Dynevor School

www.dynevorrevisited.co.uk



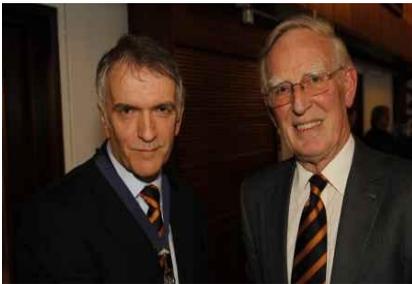
Number 21

September 2012

A NEW PRESIDENT for 2012/2013 : Dr. Phil Stone

There was a certain degree of trepidation around as plans matured for the 74th Annual Reunion Dinner of the Old Dy'vorian's Association, celebrated at Swansea University for the second year running on Friday, 27 April, 2012.

What sort of turnout could we expect? Would the event generate as much excitement as last year? Were there going to be any sideshows again, such as 'Year of ?? Reunions', weekend get-togethers of long-separated friends and acquaintances, another Golf Tournament?



Phil is installed by Dave Dickinson, in the absence of Archbishop Rowan

No-one need have feared. The Dynevor spirit triumphed again. It was a case of 'Oh! what a night – Mark II'. The Committee and incoming President Dr. Phil. Stone (1959) had done their work – well and effectively.

245 Old Dy'vorian's, Teachers, 'Boys' and 'Girls', sat down to Dinner and, apart from the fact that the Students had polished off all the beer in the Bars before we got there (a problem soon resolved), everything went entirely smoothly.

Phil's declared intention was to attract a younger breed of Old Dy'vorian, his long-term aim being to expand membership amongst those who had joined the school after the balmy days of earlier times, principally after 'comprehensivisation' in 1974.

To this end, he'd persuaded Behnaz Akhgar (1991), widely known and recognised as BBC Wales' 'Weathergirl', to be his Principal Speaker. She took full advantage of the opportunity to praise the school and thank her teachers, represented by a large contingent close-by; Behnaz was supported by Tudor Lewis (1958), who, in traditional style, told tales from an earlier era. Once again, Brian Willis did a sterling job as toastmaster/MC

Phil himself, far from being over-awed by any memories of his illustrious predecessor, Archbishop Rowan Williams, acquitted himself memorably. His Presidency is already witnessing further growth in membership, accompanied by an ever-expanding range of additional activities.



A Great Year .. a GROWTH year!from the EDITOR

Superlatives are easy to write, but often hard to justify. We live in a world where modesty is at a premium. Who shouts loudest wins favour; oftentimes, truth suffers in the quest for wider recognition.

That said, there's something about Dynevor and the mark it has made on successive generations. Somehow, it reflects a deeper acknowledgement that what so many of us experienced left us with an abiding sense of loyalty, of thanks to devoted teachers, of friendships forged at school and maintained over the years.

And that is best displayed year upon year at the Annual Reunion Dinner. It's catching, this sense of comradeship, as the spectacular growth in membership in recent years has demonstrated, as we reflect upon the contribution made to society by so many of our 'old' boys – and now continuing through those who came in more recent times, amongst them the young ladies!

It was the 'Rowan' effect which gave a great boost to our development last year. But it will be the 'Phil.Stone' and the 'Behnaz Akhgar' effects which will hopefully see a continuance of that energy and dynamic growth in wider activities and ever-expanding membership as the years go by.

Only in this way will the ODA continue for an unspecified number of years. Who in their wildest dreams could ever have foreseen this in 2002?

FLOREAT (SPIRITUS) DYNEVOR! CROESO i TOD21! WELCOME TO TOD21!

You can't afford to miss the

OLD DYVORIAN'S ANNUAL OPEN LECTURE, 2012

Thursday, 4th October 2012 at 7.30pm (Refreshments beforehand at 6.30pm)
Samuel Roberts Lecture Theatre, Dynevor Centre for Art, Design & Media
Swansea Metropolitan University

Tim Richards (1961)

(Law lecturer, Political Analyst, 'Private Eye' Contributor, TV Script Writer)

“THE REAL NEWS IS WHAT THEY DON'T WANT YOU TO KNOW”



HOLE IN ONE! – Golfing success again!

For the second year running, Ken Sharpe (1953) – *Photo -top right* - and Peter Samuel (1959) together organised a successful Golf Tournament at Clyne. It was held on the morning of the Annual Dinner, 27 April, at the attractively located and challenging Clyne Golf Course (6323 yards). A slightly reduced attendance of 20 members made up 5 teams. The poor weather may have had something to do with that.

In the unavoidable absence of Archbishop Rowan, incoming President Phil. Stone presented the prizes. Former Presidents Peter Macpherson, Noel Blows and David Dickinson lent their supporting presence. The ODA made a donation of £50, in support of the Prize Fund, which totalled £155.

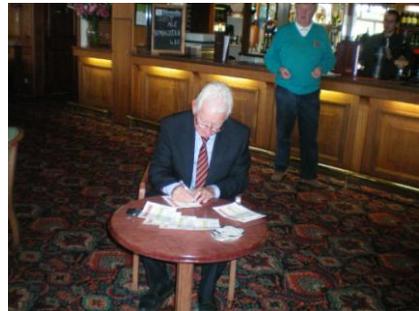
The match was an 18-hole Stableford:

Winner: Peter Samuel (39 points) *Photo – top left*

Team Prize: John Hollis (1968), Jeff Fackrell (1953), Stuart Jefferson (1960) and Hugh John (1953). *Photo – bottom right*

Nearest the Pin (17th Hole): Clem Williams(1955) *Photo – bottom left*

Longest Drive: Roger Pike



Next year? SAME PLACE....Friday 10 May 2013... Tee Off 10.00am

4. *The Old Dy'orian*



THROUGH THE BACK GATE

John Jeffers (1934)

(When I took over the Editorship, almost 3 years ago, I was presented with a file of unpublished, unsorted and often unrelated items. As so often happens, the present overtakes the past and so the article you will read below has lain buried since then. It is a great pleasure to publish it now, coming as it does from someone who has to be one of our very oldest members. Sorry about the delay, John!)

It must be about 17 years ago, when visiting Swansea, I thought I'd take a look at the old school. Finding the back gate (Pell Street?) open and nobody about, I entered the yard, only to find the dividing wall between De-la-beche (Girls) and Dynevor (Boys) was no more! Ah! me, the days when we kicked the dividing door under the Gym to attract the girls' attention!

I noticed two things immediately: first, how the yard had somehow shrunk and secondly, with horror, that the Fives Courts were no longer places where we once raced to get a game (incidentally, with a very hard black ball, unlike the white one mentioned in TOD17), but garages! Things must have come to a pretty pass for that to be allowed to happen. However, when looking through a window, I was pleased to see an immaculate classroom, with shining parquet flooring, just as so many years ago.

One of my memories was of our Latin Master, WT Davies (Bill Latin). He had a battered nose; he had been the Champion Boxer of the Welsh Regiment in the First World War (*He was reputed to have killed a man –accidentally, of course! – in the ring –Ed*). One day, he called a pal of mine, Wobby Poote, who had committed some misdemeanour, out of the classroom. A few moments later, Wobby came back, holding a handkerchief to his nose and we heard Bill saying 'Sorry, Poote, I didn't mean to hit you so hard!' For all that, we all (including Wobby) thought the world of him.

In 1938, he asked me what I was thinking of doing when I left school. I told him I'd already sat an examination to join the RAF. He said I couldn't do better. Clearly, he knew I was no Latin academic. I'm quite certain he also knew that all my Latin homework was done on the Mumbles train, on the way to school, either by A. Millichip or R.Hullen!

In the event, I spent up to late 1943 with what was known initially as *Glider Experimental*, where the first Airborne Division soldiers were trained to fly 9-man Gliders, thence to a Paratroop and Glider Towing Squadron, with Whitley Bombers. I then volunteered to be seconded to the Fleet Air Arm, where I served until 1946. Thereafter, until, 1978, I served with the RAF in many places.

Thinking back to Wobby, I'm also reminded of attending a Music lesson, Mr. Davies (another one, not so well thought of as Bill Latin!) said that because we were Welsh, we must be able to sing well. Wobby immediately piped up 'Sir, I'm Irish, so that won't include me?', to which Davies replied 'Where do you live, then?' 'Port Tennant', was the rejoinder, to which the answer was 'Well, that means you're Welsh by adoption, so sing up, boy!'

**HAVE YOU A STORY TO TELL? START WRITING NOW.
COPY DEADLINE FOR TOD22 IS NEW YEAR'S EVE !!!!!**



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*We are conscious that articles by former pupils and staff of Dynevor **Comprehensive** School rarely appear in these pages. Indeed, the articles that follow, by Graham Hanford and Behnaz Akhgar, have created something of a precedent. Needless to say, we are anxious to broaden the Association (ODA) and TOD's appeal and would welcome more contributions reflecting the experience and the too often unpublicised achievements of Staff and Pupils of Dynevor Comprehensive. That can only happen if members are recruited from the 'comprehensive' years. So – More younger members, please !!!*

At the moment, of 617 ODA members, only 50 are from the 70's, 80's and 90's, whereas 450 are from the 50's and 60's. The 'fall-off' actually starts with the year of '68, of whom only 3 are members.

Dynevor began a new life in 1971 when it went Comprehensive, serving a catchment area based in and around the centre of Swansea. The school faced new challenges in meeting the educational needs of an intake very different from that of the Grammar School era. **We are most grateful to Graham and Behnaz for giving us two different but complementary perspectives on the often undervalued work of Dynevor after it went Comprehensive.** Graham was Deputy Head when the School closed; Behnaz needs little introduction as one of its best known former pupils. Their articles reflect in contrasting ways the strengths and successes of Dynevor in meeting the challenges faced following its reorganisation.

DYNEVOR: THE LAST DAYS Graham Hanford, Dep'y Head, 1987-2002

I cannot remember the exact time on Wednesday 24th July 2002, but my actions, witnessed by two loyal colleagues, brought almost 120 years of educational history in Swansea to a close. Dynevor had been declared surplus to requirements. No tears, no expansive fanfare (that had already taken place in the School Hall some hours earlier at an overwhelming gathering of 'Old Dy'vorian'), just a simple act of turning a key in a pair of doors below a stained glass window. Dynevor had had a profound effect on the educational provision of thousands of Swansea schoolchildren. No more! It was surreal !

When I was appointed Deputy Head at Dynevor, in July 1987, Old Dy'vorian John Beale was Director of Education. The 'Grammar school' image had long gone. Comprehensive education had been embraced by West Glamorgan in the 70s; the demise of the School's VIth Form followed in the early 80s. Tertiary Education had become the vogue. Dynevor was not the only school in Swansea to lose its VIth Form and to become an 11 – 16 Comprehensive.

Allan Smith replaced Hubert Davies as Head in January 1986. Significantly, he was the 10th Head of Dynevor...and the last!! *At the time, changes were afoot within the educational system. It was the era of Margaret Thatcher and schools were given control of their own budgets. The CSE and 'O' Level examinations disappeared and GCSE's were introduced in 1988.*

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I suppose I was an 'outsider'. Born and educated in Neath, my first teaching job was in Hertfordshire. I remained there for 23 years, teaching in two secondary schools, one in St.Alban's, the other in Stevenage. *Hertfordshire was considered a very progressive educational authority and I was most fortunate to be involved in many initiatives.*

My Head in Stevenage described my moving to Swansea as to "the graveyard of ambition". He could not have been more wrong. I viewed Dynevor School as a challenge. It was not my brief to ruffle feathers; I did not consider myself as the font of all knowledge, but I did know that the school had to change and adapt to the challenges that lay ahead. Allan Smith also knew this; it made my task easier. Thankfully, I received support from members of staff who were of like mind. Slowly but surely we began to make a difference.

No one person can make radical changes in an organisation without the co-operation and assistance of its other members. There is always the need for a catalyst but **teamwork** is required for ideas to flourish and blossom. Dynevor had the right people to develop innovation and to allow it to prosper. Thus, its quality of education improved from a base of existing good practice. Courses were developed to suit the needs of students of all abilities. The school established an excellent **Pastoral System**, comprising committed staff who worked over and beyond their brief. Dynevor was like a large family, with numerous 'mums and dads' who had a very large brood of children. Pupils were never short of guidance, advice and 'after hours help' with their academic studies.

Our intake of students was truly comprehensive with regard to academic ability. Some pupils were extremely challenging, often lacking even basic social graces. Others were a credit to themselves and to the School, developing into well-rounded young ladies and gentlemen. The ability range was broad, but Staff strove to help every pupil achieve a level of attainment that fulfilled their potential, often beyond. In holiday time, staff could often be found in school, preparing Year 11 pupils for their forthcoming GCSE examinations. Pupils were most appreciative of the time and effort that their teachers gave them; thus, loyalty prevailed.

The indigenous population of the school was not the only one to benefit from these initiatives. A **Language Unit** was established. It offered integrated provision for new pupils who did not have sufficient command of the English language to allow them access to the whole school curriculum. Specialist staff were employed to provide this facility which at the time was unique in Swansea. From small beginnings, it eventually developed into the eminently successful **EMLAS Unit** now found in LEA schools. So, Dynevor's catchment area stretched thousands of miles to such exotic lands as Japan, China and the Indian subcontinent !!



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Sadly, all this came to an end when the Local Education Authority decided in 2001 to close Dynevor. Although the number of pupils had shrunk over preceding years, Dynevor was still capable of offering a unique educational experience to many. **It had a purpose and offered opportunities to pupils who did not necessarily aspire to be future Archbishops or Captains of Industry, but to be reliable and dependable citizens.** Its demise was considered necessary because its pupils could not fulfil such targets as 75% + Grades A – C in the GCSE examinations. *Premier League standard we were not but FA Cup giant-killers was certainly on the cards and within our capabilities.*

The City of Swansea is educationally a poorer place today than when Dynevor was in existence. People often ask ‘Why did Dynevor close?’ To date, no one has ever offered an acceptable answer based on educational grounds. In retrospect, I’m glad that in 1987 I moved to “the graveyard of ambition”, where my teaching career was enriched by being part of a unique institution that offered an immeasurable level of ‘value added’ to the education of those young girls and boys who had the good fortune to spend five years at De-la-beche Street.

GOING THROUGH THE ‘NAZ’ TEST

Behnaz Akhgar (1991)

Moving from Iran to Swansea was a big culture shock for me. I wasn’t happy about it and I really wanted to go back. I couldn’t speak a word of English, didn’t like the food or the weather☺. After one year at Primary school I went to Dynevor with very broken English and lots of fear. But I was 10 years old and my parents made the decision for me. Looking back it was the best decision ever, but at the time I hated it.



Behnaz at the 2012 dinner



Top Table at the 2012 dinner

*In 1991 the school had a very bad reputation. I had heard a lot of negative reviews and was very apprehensive about going. I was told I had to go there because it had a **Language Unit** and was the only place in Swansea I could go to improve my English. So it really was a*



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blessing to be able to go to the unit and get help daily. Thanks to the help of Mrs Vanston and Mrs Harris and their patience I was able to improve my English to a very high level.

Yes, we did have a lot of naughty kids, including myself, but one thing was certain, the teachers were the best and always tried to pull everyone through, regardless of what grades they were going to get.

I was very troublesome for my first 3 years at the school. You could say I was 'disturbing the peace' on more than a few occasions. I remember spending a lot of time outside the class room. I went as far as putting paint on a chair and making one of the girls sit on it. I look back now and feel horrified, but it was part of my growing up.

All the teachers went through the 'Naz (I was called Naz for short) Test'. I would give them a hard time, but in the end we all learnt to get along. Big apologies to Mrs Kerslake (English and Drama) - I really made her life difficult but we ended up bonding very well and me enjoying Drama very much. Also Mrs Chivers (Physics), also had a tough time with me. Mr Webb was my form tutor. He was a great inspiration and understood me the most. Our Headmaster, Allan Smith also was very understanding and gave me plenty of chances to improve myself. *I am very grateful that none of my teachers gave up on me.*

When I got my act together, aged 14, I went from Set 4 to Set 1 in Maths. I worked pretty hard and got enough GCSE's to go to College and do A-levels. We didn't have 6th form at the school in the 90's so we had to leave.

I pretty much had 100% attendance through my time at Dynevor because I wanted to get the yellow merit cards. For some reason these meant a lot to me and my sister Golnaz. I still have them somewhere.

Another fond memory of Dynevor is lunch times. The food in the canteen was great at the time, super tasty, but we also had the option of heading into the Town Centre. My friends Maryse Kivell, Claire Hyett, Catherine Ayers and I would head out and get chip butties from the Windsor Café. Then into town shopping, mainly in John Menzie's, before rushing back to school to make our afternoon classes. I remember one afternoon we didn't go back we stayed queuing at a Sport shop - all to meet Ryan Giggs and get a signed picture! That was the only time I didn't go back.

I also have great memories of doing shows with Drama at the Grand Theatre. That was an amazing experience in my teenage years. I also enjoyed going to the Morfa Stadium and the Leisure Centre for our Sports day.

*All in all I had an amazing time at Dynevor, mainly because of my lovely teachers and great friends. **If I could go back I would still go there and wouldn't change a thing, not even the naughty bits 😊***



DYNEVOR at the OLYMPICS

Robert Treharne-Jones (1962)

While many people have been enjoying the Olympics and Paralympics as spectators, Dr Robert Treharne Jones, who has been commentating at Rowing events for more than 30 years, has been providing the official course-side commentary at Eton Dorney.

Robert, who started his Rowing career in 1970, while at Medical School at Bart's, in London, redirected from his Medical career as a GP some ten years ago to concentrate on his extensive interests in Sports Journalism and IT. Since then, his involvement has included membership of no less than 14 clubs, of which he was Captain of two and Chairman of another.



Robert 'full on' at the Olympics

Robert's commentating career began in Nottingham, where he led the multilingual race commentary team for the 1986 World Championships. For 15 years, he was a member of the BBC Radio commentary team for the Boat Race, and covered a number of world championships, commentating for Eurosport TV in Paris. He now commentates for RTE Radio in Ireland, also working as a consultant for FISA, the international rowing federation in Switzerland. There, he provides course-side and on-line commentary for all the World Cup regattas as well as World and Olympic Championships. In 2008 he was the official rowing

commentator in Beijing for the Olympics and Paralympics.

Elected to membership of the Leander Club at Henley-on-Thames in 1984 for services to rowing, he now works as the Club's Press and Publicity Officer, while balancing his other commitments as a Company Director and Consultant in Health Informatics.

CONGRATULATIONS! AWARD for BOB HOWELLS

We were delighted to learn that Bob, who taught Latin, French and Russian at Dynevor for 26 years, from 1958 until 1984, had been awarded the MBE in the Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours 'for services to Ornithology'.

Although formally educated at 'the other place', he qualifies as an Old Dy'vorian by virtue of his long service to the School, by being taught during the difficult War years, after the 1941 blitz, by such eminent men as Horace (Scruff) Griffiths, Myrddyn Harries, Bill Evans and Bill Latin (WT Davies) and by the fact that his connection with us started in 1896, with a family appointment to the original Higher Grade School (afterwards the MunSec, later Dynevor).

Bob's fascinating article about the Gower Ornithological Society will be published in TOD22. Over many years, he was responsible for arranging surveys of various wintering, migratory and breeding species of birds, especially in the Burry Inlet and at Blackpill.



POSTCARD FROM LUANG PRABANG

Gerry Paster (1956)

It sometimes feels only a few years since I was walking past the Albert Hall, in short pants, on my way to Dynevor. How the years fly by! Now I am retired and I live in Luang Prabang, Laos. *I have time to ponder on the influence of a Dynevor education and of the teachers who shaped me and set me on the path to be able to view and evaluate the world around me.* Two I remember clearly are Cliff 'Bunny' Evans, History and Mr. Gregory, a wonderful Chemistry teacher. If given an appropriate 'feed', Gregory could usually be relied on to get on one of his many interesting hobby horses.

What was instilled in me during my education gives me the breadth of vision and humanity I feel for the people of this wonderful, small city in which I now reside. Laos is not well known. The size of the UK, it has only 6 million people, most of whom have a strong Buddhist faith. With an average GDP/ person of about \$300 p.a., the majority live at subsistence level in small villages, growing rice and a few vegetables and hunting and foraging in the forests. Laos lies near the bottom of the world's least developed countries. You don't have to go to the countryside to see the extreme poverty and the people's struggle to survive, feed and educate their children, to have enough for when they are sick, to be able to seek help within the very stretched and poor health system. You live beside them or down the street from them; the poverty is with you every day.

Luang Prabang, the old royal capital, now a World Heritage site, sits between the Mekong and Kham rivers, nestling in a valley in the northern mountains. It's breathtakingly beautiful. There are thirty Buddhist temples. As you carry on with your daily life, the monks move around you, going about their daily business. Then, of course, there are the tourists who come to gawp at the monks and take photos of everything. Luang Prabang is one of the few places left in Asia where you can view the interaction between the people and their temples at the morning giving of alms. At the crack of dawn, long lines of orange-robed monks walk in barefoot procession through the town.

The Lao line the streets and carefully place the right amount of food in each of the alms bowls, thereby receiving merit. It is a privilege to live among such friendly people; they are still neighbourly and assist each other in time of need; everybody knows each other and helping is just a part of everyday life, influenced by their strong Buddhist beliefs. It all makes for a pleasant place to live and I have not even started to tell you about their food, climate, scenery and the thousands of butterflies. It is wonderful but so much is poor, dirt poor.

So as a portly old gent, of charitable disposition, having time on my hands and eyes in my head, I felt I had to do something. Many' expats' assist with sponsoring a neighbour's kid at school or donating to this or that. Tour operators build village schools. One thing I have learnt, seeing things from the ground up, is that it is easy to raise money but, because it's so difficult to find a trustworthy organization, it's hard to spend it wisely. Here I come to Ruth, a marvellous Australian lady, who has been doing sterling work for many years. She and her Lao family's network see to it that the money is spent where it is most needed, so helping most, particularly in the areas of education and health. Educating them and keeping them healthy can give them and Laos itself a brighter future. Ruth runs a strategic, manageable project and I am trying to help her to keep operating and provide for the needs of so many.



You can read more about our Lao kids' project on www.lao-kids.org. Please read it and see if and where you can help!

This year, our priority is to raise money for Luang Prabang Hospital. Built 7 years ago by the Chinese, to service a population of 30,000, it covers the whole Province and now tries to help nearer 70,000. It is staffed by dedicated but overstretched doctors and nurses who grapple daily with major traumas such as motorbike and car accidents, burn victims and of course UXO (unexploded bomb) victims, who are brought in from the other Provinces. It also offers the usual care for mother and child, rampant kidney disease because of the mineralized water and 'everyday' diseases such as Diarrhoea, Malaria, Denghi fever and TB and now increasing heart attacks and diabetes. There is not enough money for just about everything. Even the orthopaedic surgeon was reduced to using a cheap drill from the Chinese market.

Patients have to purchase their own medicine and supply bedding. This asks a lot from people who have just about enough for their next meal. So *Lao Kids* has agreed to replace their very old and worn out mattresses, linen, blankets and pillows - especially for the emergency and ICU areas where patients are treated on gurneys covered with torn and dirty plastic (200 of everything required!). They also provide cheap white fabric, so the very poor can have a shroud to wrap their dead in, to take them home... providing just a little bit of dignity at a devastating moment in people's lives. We've also supplied and installed new air conditioners in the Operating and Caesarian Operating Theatres and recovery rooms, repaired others and organized a 6 monthly contract for the maintenance of the generator, which is needed as electricity often fails.

***This is where you can help.** Take a minute to ponder on how much your family will spend on Christmas this year. Then put it against ... \$US 20 to save the eyesight of a child; \$100 to cover surgery for a UXO victim (that includes the artificial limb!). \$400 keeps 560 orphans healthy by providing protein foods and the basics of cleanliness; \$80 will buy a desperately needed blood pressure machine and \$50 a month will keep the hospital clean. *The list is endless and so little goes such a long, long way.**

*So that is why I hope that each and every one of you who read this will make a generous donation. Just £25 will make such a difference. Mark it 'Dynevor donation'. Then you will have done something really worthwhile to start 2013! So that you may know your money is being well spent, photos are regularly placed on the website. **'Kobchai lai lai' (thank you very much) and their smiles say it all.***

**** BOOK THIS DATE – NOW!! Friday, 10th May 2013.** *The 2013 Dinner, will be held at the same venue as this year namely, Swansea University. Membership recruitment is at an all-time high, so we're looking forward to another packed 'congregation'!*

Further details will be included in TOD22.



DYNEVOR BADMINTON, 1969

Paul Hughes (1964)

Paul Hughes (1964) sent in this foto. West Glamorgan Schools' Badminton scene was quite vibrant in 1969. Regular fixtures took place between 7 or 8 Swansea, Neath and Llanelli school teams. Dynevor remained unbeaten for about 5 years up to 1971. Outstanding players were Philip Maynard, Andrew Mendus and David Mercer, who went on to become a distinguished Tennis Umpire. Paul and Peter Andrewartha were narrowly defeated in the Final of the Welsh closed U18 doubles 1970.



Our foto shows : at rear – Bill Perrins (namesake only!), John Allison and David McConie (dec'd); front row – Master i/c Mike Richards (Snowball), Hughes, Mendus and Andrewartha.

'WS' – the last round-up!



Evans and Bethan Jones, Bill's Niece.

Readers who have followed the Bill Evans saga and publication of his letters to Terry Shorrock may enjoy seeing this happy group, snapped when Bill's Widow, Gwynedd, met Committee members for coffee at the regular Monday Club in February. She was visiting from New Zealand and was only prevented from attending the Annual Dinner at the last minute. Our foto shows : at rear – Noel Blows (1955), Jenny Sims, School Secretary, 1959-79, Terry Shorrock (1941) and TOD Editor, Peter Macpherson (1944); front row – Iorrie Mort (1938), Gwynedd



In TOD20, we spent some time illustrating with articles and photographs the way Dynevor's Choral tradition was launched and grew under the inspired baton and clear-eyed vision of Gwilym 'Bobby' Roberts and his successors. In response to our invitation, we received a further two articles.

DISTANT DRUMS

Laurence Macpherson-Jones (1955)

Music was a very important part of life in our home. My Father was a member of St. David's RC Church Choir and other male voice choirs and had played more than one principal Tenor role in Gilbert and Sullivan Operas. Thus, from an early age, my Twin Brother, Adrian and I were familiar with many famous oratorios and operas.

At our first Music lesson at Dynevor, John Richards ('Porky') asked us each to sing a scale, success at which either got us into the choir or condemned us to the outer darkness! My first experience was singing Treble in Ebenezer Chapel – 'Zadok the Priest', by Handel, with some stratospherically high notes! We next sang at the Royal Albert Hall – the St. David's Day Festival, 1956. Porky had warned us that, in the vastness of the Albert Hall, every boy would imagine he was the only singer. How right he was! The acoustical magnificence created just that terrifying sensation. That Concert also formed the debut of a young Welsh Baritone who would ultimately scale the operatic heights of Covent Garden, Glyndebourne, Salzburg, Vienna and the 'Met' – none other than Sir Geraint Evans!

By now, Adrian was playing Violin in the Swansea Schools' Orchestra, under 'Bobby' Roberts. He told me they needed a Timpanist. I needed no further encouragement, found a copy of the score of Haydn's London Symphony in the Reference Library, copied out the part and, on the borrowed School Drums, practised at every opportunity. The School Magazine even published a note, explaining that the 'distant rumble of drums' came from the Gym, because the School now had a Timpanist!

I always had excellent advice in Dynevor from Peter James (1952) (Double Bass) and the wonderfully talented Organist and outstanding Composer of Church Music, Alan Rees, who joined the Benedictine Order at Belmont Abbey, Hereford as a Monk, eventually being ordained a Priest, before finally becoming Abbot.

Porky and I were together involved in one hilarious incident! We were playing in the Palace Theatre, High Street. At my first entry, in the Overture, the felt beater on one of my drumsticks flew off and hit Porky in the eye! 'Ouch!' he cried, but carried on gamely! By the interval, though, he looked as though he'd had 5 Rounds with Rocky Marciano! I failed an audition for the National Youth Orchestra of Wales, at which Porky expressed some reservation about my ambitions. However, more determined than ever, about a year later, I was 'noticed' by Morgan Lloyd whilst he was rehearsing the School Orchestra. Afterwards, he announced that he was recruiting both me and Oboeist David Mendus to his own professional orchestra. Our first professional engagement was with the Morgan Lloyd Orchestra and Swansea Philharmonic Choir, in December, 1959, when we



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performed Handel's 'Messiah' in the first concert to be held at St.Mary's after its devastation in the 1941 blitz.

My association with the Orchestra lasted more than 30 years, playing everywhere around South Wales until, sadly, declining congregations and advancing years took their toll of the chapels, who were the mainstay of the Oratorio scene.

Twin Brother Adrian was not left out of the musical scene, either, singing principal G&S roles with the Uplands Arts.

I had the privilege of playing for many international artistes, including David Maxwell singing Don Pasquale in the tiny Adelina Patti Theatre at Craig-y-nos and David Mason, a brilliant Trumpeter from the Philharmonia, who played the notoriously difficult exposed part in Bach's B Minor Mass. *He told me that, as a session player, he had recorded the immortal Piccolo Trumpet part in the Beatles' 'Penny Lane'!*

Music has really formed the mainstay of my life, tutoring for the County as a peripatetic Percussion teacher, covering 13 schools, 3 Orchestra and Wind and Brass Bands, one of which was sited at Dynevor – the wheel had turned full circle! My principal interest now is with the Swansea Community Orchestra.

And I owe most of this wonderful life in Music to the opportunity, assistance and encouragement given me by successive Dynevor teachers. What a debt!

VERDI AND ALL THATa personal memoir

Robert Caie (1947)

My first Dynevor Choir Concert experience was singing in Verdi's 'Requiem' in May, 1948. I had never heard of it. It was written and sung in Latin and we were taught the words parrot-fashion by Bobby, first in Music Lessons, later in the Gym, as there was no Hall (It had been bombed in 1941). I cannot remember whether we were told what the words meant, but I know now that the work is a musical setting of the Roman Catholic Funeral Mass. *(I sang in that, too, and remember well that just before the Brangwyn Hall performance, we had a Latin pronunciation session with Mr. WT Davies (Bill Latin), whose own pronunciation had a distinctly Morristonian accent and would never have got past the Vatican! - Ed.)*

It was not until the final rehearsal that I found out what a big work it was! Lasting about 90 minutes and comprising 7 sections, it involved a full Choir and Orchestra plus four Soloists, one of whom was the world-famous Australian Soprano, Joan Hammond. It is a masterpiece and to this day is performed all over the world by leading musicians. For this reason, I am full of admiration for Mr. Roberts. Not only did he conduct the whole performance, a 'tour de force' in itself, but he also taught 11 and 12 year old boys, largely unmusical boys to sing in a foreign (dead!?) language and in harmony with the Orchestra and Soloists. Furthermore, we never used music books.



Once the Concert started, I was enthralled by the music, so much so that at times I forgot to sing. This was the first time I had heard such beautiful and powerful music played so well. That day gave rise to my love of classical music, which remains today. The audience (a full house, or so it seemed to me) seemed very appreciative, although it is likely it was made up mostly of fond parents. (*I doubt it; in those days, before 'elf 'n' safety' took over, the capacity of the Brangwyn was about 1300! – Ed*).

Looking back, my guess is that this was not just a school concert. Whilst we boys numbered over 200 Trebles and Altos, the Orchestra and Soloists were Professional and the Tenor and Bass sections were provided by the Swansea Male Voice Choir. How else would world-famous Artistes have been persuaded to come – and funded? Ticket sales alone would not have provided enough revenue. *Or am I under-estimating Bobby's ability and reputation?*

The following year, we performed the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's 'Messiah' and a concert version of Edward German's 'Merrie England' with the well-known Soprano, Jennifer Vyvyan. This work is hardly ever heard nowadays, but I don't think we can be blamed for that!!

Despite the passing years, I still remember those concerts, particularly the first. They sparked my interest in Classical Music, which has been the source of so much pleasure in my life. Thank you, Bobby!!

RANDOM SNIPPETS (Part 2)

Graham Davies (1944)

*In concluding this Feature, we return to the contribution made in TOD20 (Page 8) by Graham Davies. Readers will recall that, after leaving Dynevor in 1951 and doing his National Service and Higher Education, **Graham returned in 1963 and taught English and Drama at the School until 1968.** We conclude, then, as promised in TOD20, with Part Two of his musical memoir.*

I am back in Dynevor, as a Teacher! It took me at least two months to stop knocking on the Staff Room door before entering!

By now, Clive John (1948), renowned Swansea music-maker and Conductor of the Philharmonic Choir, was Head of Music. In my first year, he staged an impressive concert of Benjamin Britten's 'The Little Sweep'. Wally Quick, of the PE Staff, played one of the leading roles.

After I had got a few Drama productions under my belt, Clive and I staged an evening of Music and Verse together. Rowan Williams and Tim Richards were in it. (*Tim will be giving the ODA Annual Lecture on 4 October; he writes for 'Private Eye', amongst other publications!*).



16. The Old Dy'borian

An anonymous letter both thrilled and pleased Clive and myself : 'I was most thrilled by the whole performance. The verse speaking, acting and singing was a real joy to experience, second to none. Indeed, the musical ability of some of the boys was masterly. In future years, I feel sure they will be adding further honours to the School, as they enter into the life of the nation' (*praise indeed and so prophetic - Ed.*).

(The next edition of the School Magazine, published later that year, showered fulsome praise on the combined efforts of Messrs.Davies and John. Graham is too modest to mention it. However, a lengthy review, written by one Carl Johnson UVIA, itself a masterpiece of reportage, after paying tribute to the many talents of the boys (plus 3

Glanmor girls, lent for the occasion!),' opined ' on the printed programme, the names of Graham Davies and Clive John appeared at the bottom of the back page; they deserved to be at the top of the first'!

(This is what our school was producing in those now far-off days! No wonder we are so proud of our combined achievements and grateful to the dedicated Teachers who made them possible. Thus we conclude this feature on Music at Dynevor. We hope you have enjoyed it. - Ed).

ACCOLADE for BILL PERRINS (1943)



The long and loyal service given to the ODA by Bill was acknowledged at the Annual Reunion Dinner. Our picture shows President Phil. Stone making a special presentation to him, on behalf of us all. After Dynevor and National Service, Bill taught in Oxford Street and Olchfa, where the House he headed had more pupils than many schools! Always a popular and well-respected member of the ODA, he was our MC at Annual Dinners until interrupted by ill-

health. Our special good wishes go with him.



TODnotes

** Past Presidents! Have you booked your place(s) yet for the **Annual Lunch**? Once again, Edgar McCarthy has organised it at the Langland Bay Golf Club for **Friday, 9 November, 2012**. Call Edgar now on 01920 334950.

** Religion and money – a potent mix? *Advance notice!* Lord (Brian) Griffiths of Fforestfach (1953) will deliver the Swansea University Theology Public Lecture on 'The Christian Faith and the Financial Crisis' next year, on 7 March. Make a note of the date in your 2013 Diary now! More info. in our February issue.

** Testing the Market! Postal charges are going up ... and up... inexorably! Economy beckons. Would you be happy to read your twice-yearly copy of TOD electronically? Or would you prefer to continue receiving it by post? Answers on a PC or by E-mail to the Editor, please, by 21 October, 2012. **Do not fear, no decision has been taken. We are just 'testing the market'.**

** 40 yrs. N.O ! *St. Helen's Balconiers benefit from ODA enterprise!!* 42 of our members, friends or spouses were at St.Helen's on 1 August for the opening day of the Swansea/ West Wales Cricket Festival., Glamorgan v. Gloucestershire. Ken Sharpe, our annual Golf organiser, extended his sporting enthusiasm by organising a splendid day – all in the cause of keeping First-class Cricket at St. Helen's.

** Fighting Fund – to refine the WEB. The upgrading and re-styling of www.dynevorrevisited continues apace. Led by Webmaster Dave Tovey and our Contractors, BSS, a dedicated team, consisting of Keith Evans, Jim Waygood and Keith Morris have worked unceasingly. The new site goes 'live' on 1 October.... 200 hits/ month are already being recorded. Although BSS waived the set-up fee, a monthly charge of £140 + VAT still falls due. If you would like to boost the £2,500 already generously donated, further contributions are always welcome.



**** Noel calls it a day!** Noel Blows has indicated that this will be his last year of total involvement in ODA affairs. His will be a hard act to follow? Any offers? In the interim, in the light of the vastly increased membership, not inconsiderable thought is being given to the question of Committee restructuring and succession-planning. ***Please read the enclosed leaflet and consider whether YOU can help.***

**** Learned Society of Wales.** Bill George (1946) was formally elected and admitted to Membership in May. Other Dy'orian members include Rowan Williams, FBA, Archbishop of Canterbury, Ken Walters, FRS, former Head of Mathematics at Aberystwyth and the late Lord Brian Flowers FRS, sometime Vice-Chancellor of Imperial College. Bill was formerly Dean of Science at the University of Glamorgan

**** Dynevor Memorabilia?** How much have you got tucked away and almost forgotten? Discussions, led by Vice-Chancellor David Warner CBE and Allan Smith, last Head of Dynevor, are taking place, with a view to establishing a Dynevor Archive at SMU. The services of the SMU Archivist have been promised and the possibility of an Exhibition is being floated. ***If you can help, or wish to get involved, please contact Noel on 368768***

**** Subs. Are UP!!** Just a gentle reminder about your Standing Order or Direct Debit. Please ask your Bank to amend your payment to £10 from 1 January, 2013.

**** Generosity unbounded :** Some of the Waitresses at our 2012 Reunion Dinner got together and decided to give a portion of their tips to the Samaritans, in memory of the young lady who collapsed and died after the London Marathon, which she had run to generate funds for the charity. The total sum donated was £30.

**** Margaret Bassett,** daughter of Sam, who taught at Dynevor for many years and died in February, aged 93, wrote to thank those who attended his funeral and for their 'lovely' tributes and the ODA for the invitation to join us at the Dinner.

**** Like to see yourself in print? TOD22 Ahoy!** Why not write something? Memoirs, nostalgia, life experiences, 'the road not taken!' Just send it in, we'll help you to get it into print. Just one rule : max. 500 words.



A 'FIRST YEAR' AT DYNEVOR (Part 1)

Roger Brown (1953)

(with acknowledgements to Roger Beynon, who helped out with some of the facts!)

It is a warm September morning in 1953. Two youngsters, dressed in grey shorts, white shirt, Dynevor tie, blazer and cap, stand waiting at a bus stop. Will the bus be late? Will they have detention if they are late? Beside them, a school prefect, probably killing himself with laughter.

I was one of those youngsters, the other my closest friend from Sketty Junior School, Richard Phillips. In the assembly hall, in June, we had heard the dreaded 'Scholarship' results. With hindsight, one realises how cruel the procedure was. Those who had passed were called out and allowed to go home to inform their parents, while those who had not remained behind. As Richard's eldest brother, Seymour, was already at Dynevor, he had persuaded his mother to put Dynevor down as his first choice; I followed suit. Seymour later became School Captain. I was one of his colleagues at the Institute of Historical Research in London in 1963-6.

The decision to go to Dynevor was one I never regretted. Bishop Gore would have been ten minutes walk from home, but I am convinced that Dynevor was a far happier school. Perhaps being confined to a narrow site, and using a building that still bore the scars of bomb damage, gave us a sense of solidarity. The gentle leadership of Glan Powell as Head also contributed to this impression.

The entrance was in Pell Street, after negotiating bomb sites and half-finished new buildings. A derelict building sat on the corner of De-la-Beche St. and Dynevor Place. Later on, in the 60's, the new school hall was built there. The top storey of the school, site of the old hall, remained a roofless and windowless ruin, access to it sealed off by corrugated metal sheets. Assembly was held 3 times a week at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church. The VIth Form sat in the Deacons' pews, the Vth on the balcony and the Head was in the pulpit. Glan Powell generally said a few words in response to the Scripture passage read by a Prefect, and though I cannot remember anything he said, that he did so had a profound effect on me.

I cannot remember exactly all the circumstances of that first day. How we were selected for our forms escapes my memory, but I found myself in Form 1c. It overlooked Dynevor Place, a long terrace of three-storey Victorian houses, as shabby as our school. The Townhill buses had their terminus below us. Roger Beynon had the desk behind me; we have been in contact ever since that first day. Our form master was Mr John, who had taught me at Sketty, a familiar face. He later became an educational officer in Nigeria.

That day was my first experience of school dinners. The Canteen was on the first floor of the main block. Ma Morris was the big chief there, and Ma Baker her deputy. We used to line up in the corridor and, if on the first sitting, watch with envy as the Staff meals were taken in on porcelain(!) plates to an adjoining classroom and served with tea!

(to be continued)



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The other Members of this active and experienced Committee are:

Kevin Johns (1974) <i>Vice –President</i>	Edgar McCarthy (1953) <i>Publicity</i>
Peter Samuel (1959) <i>Golf</i>	Keith Morris (1956) <i>Ties</i>
Brian Willis (1955) & David Dickinson (1948) <i>Past Presidents</i>	

‘IN MEMORIAM’ :

We regret to report the deaths of the following Old Dy'vorians and Teachers. More extensive tributes may sometimes be found in www.dynevorrevisited.co.uk

- 27 April, 2012 : Peter Saword (1948).
- 16 May, 2012 : Gordon Blackler (1941).

“May they rest in peace”

Copy deadline for TOD 22 – New Years Eve

Please submit in ‘WORD’ format – 500/600 words MAX + fotos if poss.

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