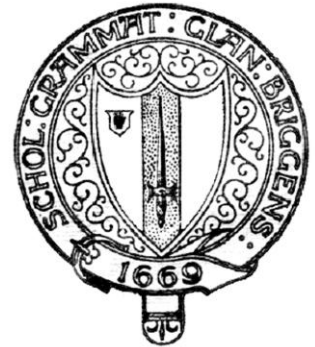


Briggensians' Newsletter

April 2025



Briggensians' Association 48th Annual Dinner

Saturday 17th May 2025 - 7.00 p.m. for 7.30 p.m.
Elsham Golf Club. Tickets £28.00

Guest Speaker: Rob Waltham

Welcome to the Briggensians Magazine 2025

As I am sure you all know, Mr Brittain passed away peacefully in hospital on 22nd March 2025 with Mickey by his side. He was a wonderful Head, husband, dad, sportsman and friend to many, keeping in touch with so many former pupils. The tributes to Dave have been quite overwhelming. We will all miss him and his amazing contribution to school and this Association. RIP Sir.

It is always wonderful to hear tales of travel, work and play from former pupils as well as the photos and stories that you send in. It would be great if the younger generations could get involved and let us know how they are getting on. If you have family or friends with interesting stories then please ask them to send them to julielawson7@hotmail.com. I attended BGHS from 1970 – 1977 and acted as an assistant to Mr Brittain. If you know of any former pupils who would like to read the newsletter, please get in touch so we can add to the distribution list. We need to keep email addresses up to date, so do let us know if you make a change. We hope that people will be able to attend the Annual Dinner and other events that are run through Sir John Nelthorpe School.

This year's magazine includes a wonderful article on Colonel Roger Nelthorpe researched by John Cresswell and a piece on Miss Lardelli as well as a grand reunion.

We are hoping that there will be a tour of the school, but we are awaiting official confirmation from The Head. If there are any developments I will email you.

Dates for your Diary

48th Annual Dinner – 17th May 2025

Golf

Spring Meeting: Sunday 4th May - first Tee 11.24

Past vs. present: Monday 7th July – first Tee 16.04

Autumn Meeting: Sunday 12th October - first Tee 11.54

Unfortunately the Spring fixture is a bank holiday weekend, if this is a problem for you I will look for another later date.

If you would like to play please contact David Harness – 01652 657270
dave.harness@outlook.com

Annual Dinner Menu

Starter

Roasted Tomato and Red Pepper Soup

Chicken Liver Pate

Melon

Main – Traditional Carvery

Roast Beef and Turkey with all the trimmings

Vegetarian Option

Mushroom, Brie and Cranberry Wellington

Cheese, Leek and Potato Tart

Dessert

Apple Pie and Vanilla Custard

White Chocolate and Raspberry Roulade

Cheese and Biscuits

Tea and Coffee

Please note, we require Briggensians to make their meal selections at the time of booking in order for us to inform the Golf Club in order to speed up service.

Booking forms on the last pages: please note reply address to Julie Taylor

Chair's Report 2024 - 2025

We have seen another chaotic year in the world. With two prime ministers, a general election, a presidential election, continuing wars across the globe, and, of course, another near miss for the England (men's) football team.

Knowing that our alumni are a very international group, I was pleased to see that Sir John Nelthorpe's have been awarded the British Council's prestigious International School Award in recognition of its work to bring the world into the classroom. The Award celebrates the achievements of schools that do exceptional work in international education, fostering an international dimension in the curriculum so that young people gain the cultural understanding and skills they need for life and work in today's world. Well done to the school, and particularly our Modern Foreign Languages Faculty.

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the annual dinner but reports have been very positive. Thanks to Clive Thompson for stepping back in to the chair's role, and of course our star speaker, Helen Cresswell. The move to a May date received the thumbs up and will continue again this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Briggensians committee. They give up their valuable time to support their organisation with enthusiasm and expertise, organising sporting events, the Annual Dinner, and promoting our school in the local community.

And don't forget the hard work put into creating this excellent newsletter, enabling all our alumni across the world to keep up-to-date with what's happening in the Briggensians community.

If you feel that you could contribute by joining us, then please get in touch or have a word with any committee member. We would be delighted to welcome you on board.

Unusually I would like to finish with highlighting one individual. Dave Brittain has recently stepped down from the committee after an involvement that spans decades. I don't think it would be an exaggeration to describe his contribution to the Briggensians as colossal. Of course, as a pupil of the 1970's I am taken back to lessons in the Physics Lab. Watching a recent TV series about the Solar System with Brian Cox, it was thanks to those lessons that I still know what Joules and Newtons are! Mr Brittain, thank you.

Do enjoy the rest of the newsletter and I look forward to seeing many of you at the Annual Dinner in May.

Mike Holmes

Chair

Lieutenant Colonel R S Sutton-Nelthorpe MBE TD JP

From Palestine to the Rhine with the Sherwood Rangers

Researched by Jon Cresswell (SJN 1985 – 1992)

I imagine most Briggensians of my generation and at least the one before will recall the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Colonel Roger Nelthorpe who died in 2000. Former Headmaster, Dave Brittain published an obituary in The Briggensian which can still be found online. Mr Brittain pays him a handsome tribute as a force to be reckoned with and notably for his service to the school and wider youth development through scouting and not to mention his country responsibility as magistrate, High Sheriff, and Deputy Lord Lieutenant. Yet, there was no mention in the obituary to what might be the obvious question, where did the title 'colonel' come from? He was clearly a soldier at some point, but it was rather difficult to picture the ageing chairman of Governors as anything other than an old man in worn tweed. Was this an honorary appointment? Was he a regular officer, a territorial or was this wartime service? Was he a full colonel or lieutenant colonel?

Like most others I gave it little thought and it was only recently when reading a quite outstanding memoir by Colonel Stanley Christopherson, edited by James Holland, that the wartime exploits of Roger Sutton-Nelthorpe revealed themselves. He was indeed a territorial army soldier and his family connections and status secured him a place in a particular distinguished county Yeomanry Regiment called the Sherwood Rangers.⁴ At the start of the Second World War they were commanded by the Earl of Yarborough and were still mounted on horseback. From the old and frail gentleman that we saw at school, a young and vibrant officer emerges who fought in Palestine, North Africa (Battle of El Alamein and the pursuit of Rommel's Panzerarmee into Tunisia and its capitulation), landed on D-Day itself and saw significant action in the savage battle for Normandy that followed, went through Belgium into Holland and fought in Operation Market Garden and was one of the first regiments into Germany. The story ends with the Rhine crossing, the battle of Bremen and the liberation of a concentration camp. The author notes how the then Major Nelthorpe was mentioned in dispatches.

The Sherwood Rangers was a Yeomanry Regiment (Territorial Army) who required their officers to be from the landed classes (preferably titled). With a distinguished history in the Great War, where they fought at Gallipoli and in the Near East, they rode to war in Palestine once again in 1940, on internal security duties yet by 1942 they had transformed completely and were an armoured regiment on Crusaders, Grants and then Shermans. While a thin veneer of the country classes remained, they transformed into one of the Army's most honoured, capable and sought-after armoured regiments, with, tragically, the terrible casualties to match, especially among the officers. So, imagine my fascination, not to mention my deep respect, to discover that the old gentleman who gave out prizes at Sports Day had the most extraordinary and distinguished record of war service and, with the modesty of his generation, never cared to speak of it.

'I can hardly imagine a British Army without the Sherwood Rangers, and there is no doubt no armoured regiment can show a finer record of hard fighting': he later added 'I still maintain that the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry took part in more fighting than any other armoured regiment during the period.'

General Sir Brian Horrocks, Corps Commander XXX Corps



Roger Sutton-Nelthorpe with Arthur Cranley in North Africa (photograph by kind permission of David Christopherson).

With a notable record from both the Boer and the Great Wars, The Nottinghamshire Yeomanry (better known as the Sherwood Rangers) mobilised in the Second World War, first in Malton in Yorkshire, and then Brocklesby, between Brigg and Grimsby. It was from here that in January 1940, they departed for Palestine with their horses as a cavalry regiment. Crossing France and sailing to the Near East was a significant challenge with their horses but by the end of the month they were settled in Haifa as part of the 5th Cavalry Brigade with other Midland Territorial units. Second Lieutenant Roger Sutton-Nelthorpe was in A Squadron whose role was imperial policing and this led to a cavalry action with sabres drawn on 27th March in Tel Aviv to quell a riot. The entry of Italy into the war and the fall of France changed the dynamics in the Near and Middle East. While isolated from Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain and the Blitz, the Sherwood Rangers' colonial existence transformed as they gave up their horses and re-rôled as coastal artillery, deploying batteries to Cyprus, Crete, Tobruk and Benghazi, once these two ports were captured from the Italians by the British army in North Africa. Lieutenant Sutton-Nelthorpe served in Tobruk during the nine-month siege, an arduous experience characterised by flies, fleas, regular bombing and shelling, cold then stifling heat, casualties and limited rations. Nelthorpe could count himself lucky not to have been in one of the two batteries deployed to Crete and captured by the Germans with a number of killed and wounded. Only a few of the Rangers managed to escape the island.

The Sherwood Rangers regrouped back in Palestine in the summer of 1941 and over the next year re-rôled as an armoured regiment on British Crusader and American Grant tanks. The first Shermans M4s also started to appear in the Regiment. Launched into action against Rommel's last attempt against Egypt at Alam El Halfa in September 1942 as part of 8th Armoured Brigade they took their first casualties to the German anti-tank screen of 88mm guns. The country yeomanry regiment of 1939 was fast disappearing as the Rangers become a modern tank regiment in the re-invigorated 8th Army under General Bernard Montgomery. The Regiment was in action the following month at El Alamein and then the pursued Rommel's retreating force through Libya. They assaulted the Mareth Line into Tunisia in 1943 and then linked up with 1st Army (which had landed in November around Algiers under Operation TORCH) and were present for the final capitulation of the Axis forces in North Africa. These battles are characterised by a significant attrition rate, especially among tank commanders. After four years overseas on active service, the Sherwood Rangers returned to England and re-formed on the Sherman M4. Major Sutton-Nelthorpe had become the Headquarters Squadron Leader in the Autumn of 1942. In this role he was responsible for the logistic and administrative support of the Regiment and in the case of the Western Desert this was over some considerable distance. In between the North African campaign and D-Day, he was responsible for the re-equipment and re-training of the Regiment. For this, he was recognised with an MBE.

8th Armoured Brigade would be an independent brigade throughout the campaign in Northwest Europe and this meant that it would be constantly re-assigned to where armoured support was required (i.e.: where the fighting was at its thickest with little rest between actions). It landed on D-Day with the 50th (Northumberland) Division with two squadrons in the Duplex Drive (DD) swimming role, of which eight tanks sank. The regiment saw fierce action in the first days around the area of Tilly-sur-Seules and Point 103 against the elite Panzer Lehr armoured division. Normandy was continually hard fighting for the Sherwood Rangers against Panther, Tiger and Mark IV panzers as well as the 88mm anti-tank gun and handheld Panzerfaust. The Regiment was the first to capture a German Tiger tank in Normandy. Supporting the failed EPSOM offensive to break through to Caen and the successful BLUECOAT, the Sherwood Rangers broke out of Normandy in August 1944 and by the following month were in pursuit of the Germans in Belgium where they saw their heaviest fighting of the war over 10-12 September at Gheel and the crossing of the Albert Canal by the 43rd (Wessex) Division in the face of fanatical opposition from the Hitlerjugend.

The Regiment went on to play its role in Operation MARKET GARDEN including supporting the 82nd US Airborne Division for which it was cited for its courage and conduct; the commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Stanley Christopherson DSO MC TD, receiving the US Silver Star. It went on to support the 84th US Infantry Division for the breaching of the Siegfried Line and the Reichswald before crossing the Rhine in March 1945. The final six weeks of the war in Europe saw it continually engaged in small, deadly and long forgotten actions on the road to the German capitulation in May. In April, Cloppenburg and Bremen were the scenes of fierce fighting for the Sherwood Rangers. Their last trooper was killed in action on 2nd May 1945 as the Regiment was preparing for the assault on Bremerhaven which would not take place. At the close of the war the Regiment liberated Sandbostel Concentration Camp. The Regiment was disbanded as a wartime service unit in 1946 but reformed once more the following year, back in its yeomanry and volunteer guise although horses were now gone forever. Only two officers who left Brocklesby Park on horseback in January 1940 were still with the Regiment at the end of the war: the commanding officer, Colonel Stanley Christopherson, and the HQ Squadron Leader, Major Roger Sutton-Nelthorpe MBE. The attrition rate was significant with Colonel Christopherson being the eighth commanding officer – four were killed or wounded in action. After the war, Roger Sutton-Nelthorpe returned to the Regiment on its reformation in 1947 as second in command before assuming command as its colonel from 1959 until 1964.

With particular thanks to Mr Tom Sutton-Nelthorpe and Captain Nick Robinson of the Sherwood Rangers Regimental Association for their kind assistance and advice in the research for this article. Further information on the history of the Regiment is readily accessible on their website:

Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry | SRY Association and Book Shop | Nottingham Carlton

His military obituary can be found here:

<https://www.sherwoodrangers.org.uk/rogersuttonnelthorpe>

Miss Lardelli

Most former students of Brigg Girls High School and Sir John Nelthorpe School will recognise the name 'Lardelli'. Miss Maria Lardelli was the first Headmistress of Brigg Girls High School when it started in 1919 in premises in Bigby Street. She was a headmistress of real quality, setting the tone of the school from the start. She showed courtesy for people and tremendous pride in the school and never gave up trying to improve the buildings. She was instrumental in the building of the new school on Wrawby Road, now part of Sir John Nelthorpe School, although sadly she died in 1935, the year before its opening in 1936.

When the school turned comprehensive in the 1970's, it was her name that was given to one of the houses. In 2019 a number of students, staff and Briggensians assembled round her grave for a short commemorative service to celebrate the centenary of the BGHS. The photo taken, showed a grassy mound, neatly cut but little else. So when it was remarked to me this Christmas that her grave was in a poor state I went to investigate. Sure enough it was a tangle of weeds and definitely in need of some TLC.



Armed with different tools and a wheel barrow my partner and I set to. Firstly we cleared the weeds and debris to reveal a most attractive York stone surround with a plain but classy headstone. We cleaned this up to see the inscription round the edge.... First Headmistress, Brigg Girls High School 1919 - 1935. Sadly the High has been damaged but the rest is in a fairly sound condition. We covered the area with a membrane and then covered it with pebbles so it now stands out in that section of Brigg Cemetery.

Before and after photos, now a fitting tribute to a fine lady.



I was so intrigued by Miss Lardelli's story that I am now investigating her family. I found out in 1911 she was teaching at a Girls school in Bradford. Her father was Italian, (although born in Sussex) an insurance clerk, and mother English. They were married in Hackney in 1878, and living in Islington when Maria was born. Sadly her mother Sarah died in 1882 and he must have emigrated to Australia where he married again in 1892. They produced two more children. In 1921 Maria was living in Staff House, Wrawby Street with four other teachers and a housekeeper. Interestingly Maria died in July 1935 in Bournemouth. Why she was there and who suggested she came back to Brigg to be buried? There is more to be discovered.



The teacher with the dog is, definitely, Miss Lardelli. She is on the photo along with Audrey Good (Bee) and Joan Hills.

Thanks to Helen Cresswell, Secretary of Briggensians' Association

News from Sir John Nelthorpe

First World War Battlefield Trip

Earlier this month thirty-six pupils and four staff experienced a memorable trip to the battlefields of the Great War, supported by the Briggensians. The trip took in some well-known sites such as Ypres and the Somme, but also places linked to our local area.

We walked the Hohenzollern Redoubt, where 110 years ago former pupil Captain George Sowter led men of the 15th Lincs in a bloody attack. Many North Lincolnshire men still lie beneath the battlefield. We were met there by the local mayor who welcomed us and explained how pleased his town was to honour visitors. In turn, we passed on a message and a gift from the mayor of Brigg.

We also traced art teacher Mr Huskinson who left school to join the Inniskillin Fusiliers and was killed at Thiepval on the first day of the Somme. His name is recorded on the memorial along with former Grammar School pupils Joseph Neall, John Salisbury and Sydney Goates. At Tyne Cot respects were paid to Reggie Westoby, another Briggensian who was killed leading his men at Passchendaele.

The new school Combined Cadet force has been meeting after school since September. Several staff have volunteered to lead the unit, supported by instructors from the army. Cadets Harriet, Connor and Jake laid a wreath at the Menin Gate during the Last Post Ceremony. This is the third time that the school has hosted a military cadet unit, the other two being during the world wars. We were also able to trace the fallen relatives of some of our pupils and visit their graves and memorials to pay respects individually. In a moving ceremony, one girl laid a wreath at the grave of her great-great-grandfather who had died of wounds, before reading out the letter from his commanding officer informing his family of the circumstances of death.



SJN cadets laying a wreath at the 46th Division memorial on the Hohenzollern Redoubt, with the mayor of Auchy-Les-Mines

The coach drivers and our accommodation provider both said that our pupils were the best-behaved they had seen for many months, and the accompanying staff were also impressed by their time-keeping and the interest the pupils showed in all the sites we visited. As well as the historical aspect, we were also able to visit sites where Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen were inspired to write poetry.

Sadly, overseas trips are becoming increasingly expensive, putting them out of reach for some families. The generous support from the Briggensians allowed another pupil to participate, giving him memories that will last for many years.



At the Welsh Division memorial, Mametz Wood, where Sassoon saw action at the Battle of the Somme.

From David Waite
English Teacher

Obituaries

Dave Brittain (Staff 1963 – 2001)

Dave passed away in hospital after a brave battle with cancer on 22nd March 2025. Born on 16th June 1941 he led a very full and active life. He was a well-loved Physics teacher before becoming Head. There have been so many wonderful tributes to a charitable and family man.

His funeral will be held at Scunthorpe Crematorium on 23rd April at 11.20, followed by Elsham Golf Club. There will be a webcast, details to follow.

A more fitting obituary will be published after his funeral, but we have lost a true gentleman and an inspiration to many.

Thomas Roger Sargeant

Thomas Roger Sargeant, late of Scawby, died in March 2024 leaving 2 sons and a daughter Mark, Jamie and Jessica. His wife Jacky died a few years ago. They lived at Burton-upon-Stather. Roger attended Brigg Grammar School in the 1950's and then went on to St John's College York for teacher training specialising in primary teaching.

He then returned to the area teaching at Brigg Primary School and also in Scunthorpe.

A service was held at the Crematorium on Wednesday 17th April 2024.

Informed by Sylvia Barber, his cousin

Ronald Eric Hair

I'm writing to let you know that my dad, Ronald Eric Hair, known to all as Eric, passed away last year after a long and brave battle with Parkinson's disease. I know he was a proud former pupil of Brigg and enjoyed reading the Briggensian.

Among the many things he left behind were some copies of the Briggensian dating back as far as the mid - 1950s. I don't know if these would be of interest to you or any of your colleagues but I would be pleased to send them to you if they were.

Informed by Sally Hair

Giles Henthorn

We have had this message from Fran Henthorn

Sad news unfortunately, we lost our Dad, Giles Henthorn last summer. He would have been at the old Grammar school from 1946 to around 1951 I think. Frank Henthorn, my grandfather, was a school master there also.

Message from Tony Coulson 1953 - 1959

Tony reports that the wife (Julie) of his cousin Peter Bradshaw 1961 - 1966 passed away after a long illness. He continues to visit Waddington Airfield to take great photos of the Red Arrows now that they have moved from Scampton.

News of Old Briggensians 2024 - 2025

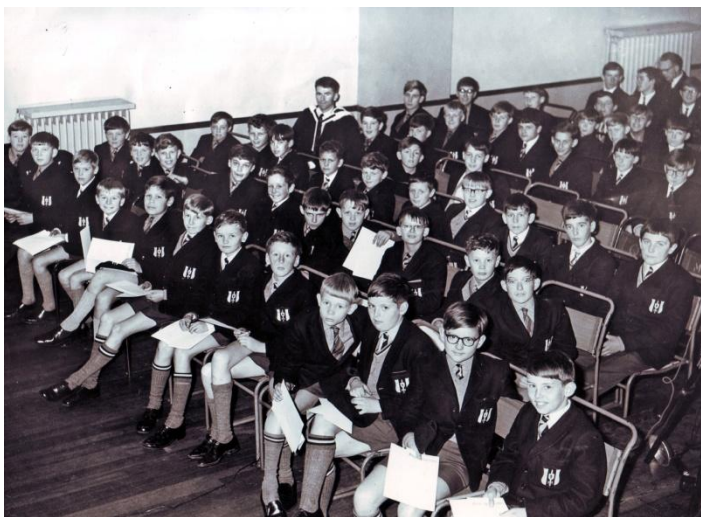
Committee Members: If any Briggensian living locally would be willing to join the committee then please contact Helen Cresswell at: hcresswell@westrum.co.uk or Tel: 01652 653216. There are only 4 meetings annually and they last approximately 1 hour so the commitment is not great but the value of your opinion to the association is huge. **Please help if you can.**

I would like to thank all those who have contributed towards this Newsletter and remind Briggensians that they should advise me of any email address changes so that they continue to receive notifications about events, news and activities of the association. If anyone is in contact with other Briggensians who do not receive our emails please encourage them to contact us so that they can be added to the circulation list. We look forward to seeing many of you at the Annual Dinner.

1974 Boarders Reunion from Andrew Longden

School House on Sunday 8th September 1974, 11 anxious 11 year old boys met for the first time in a dormitory at Brigg Grammar School. Over the years the number swelled to 18 with some new pupils and a few day-boys who became boarders. With some meticulous planning by Andrew Longden, Vaughan Lindley, David Yelland and Peter Riley in a curry house near Clapham Junction, a plan was hatched for a reunion. A few of the former

boarders had kept in touch, but with a few phone calls and a bit of cyber stalking, 15 others were successfully tracked down including Martin Haworth who was located at the Mount Everest base camp. A date was agreed and almost exactly 50 years after that first meeting in School House 15 of those now aging men assembled on the weekend of 7th September 2024 in Brigg. The fact that all 15 who were contacted were delighted to attend tells you something about the bonds that were forged in School House. Some still live quite close to Brigg, but others made journeys from as far as France (David Hopkins) and even from Australia (Tim Wright). Paul Foster, despite only spending two years as a boarder, couldn't resist the prospect of meeting many old friends.



The festivities started on Friday afternoon when Simon Havard, John Greenbeck, Andrew Longden and David Hopkins played a fourball at Forest Pines. The golfers adjourned to East Halton where Stephen Gorwood, after a former life as a farmer, is now the Landlord of the Black Bull. Many of the others, including Jonathan Cheeseman, Andrew Page and Ian Marlow joined us there. Some had not seen each other for 50 years, but virtually all were instantly recognisable to each other. Despite those many years of separation the atmosphere instantly reverted back to the time in School House. It felt like we had only just seen each other a few days before. Stephen and his mother Fay were the perfect hosts and laid on a delicious evening meal and comfortable accommodation for the night. We all recommend this delightful hostelry for anyone else in the area looking for accommodation. The following morning started with a variety of activities including a cycle ride with Martin Haworth leading Tim Wright, Jonathan Cheeseman, Simon Havard and Andrew Longden on a tour of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Andrew Page ran a very fast 5km at the Epworth Parkrun and Stephen Gorwood led Peter Riley on a much slower 10km jog through flatter Lincolnshire farmland. An altercation with a local farmer who accused the pair of trespassing on his land was soon smoothed over when Stephen explained that he was a local landlord. Not everyone was that energetic but continuing with the sporting theme, Ian Marlow a

former international Rugby league player and Vaughan Lindley spent a lively time in a debate about who had actually won the school 110m hurdles in 1980.



Then we moved on to visit the school. The former boarders, now joined by Roger Hemming, were met by Matt Mosey (Head of Sixth Form) at the school who gave us a full guided tour of all areas. The tour started in the original building, known by ourselves as Rooms 1 and 2. The portrait of the benevolent Sir John still looked down on us as we reminisced about the assemblies that were held there with the Headmaster Brian Williams, Deputy Head Geoffrey Jarvis and Charlie Mailing on the piano for hymns. We then went ahead to see the other ground floor classrooms and laboratories including the Chem lab where David Hopkins had nearly blown himself up when he ignited a hydrogen generating experiment during one of Jack Moore's lessons. In the former Physics lab John Greenbeck found some equipment that was labelled BGS (Brigg Grammar School) – we had probably used that during our 1st year lessons about forces. That was also the lab where Martin Haworth had caused a fire by igniting bubbles filled with methane that had accumulated just on the ceiling. We had been trusted to use the Chemistry and Physics labs totally unsupervised in the evenings to complete our A level projects. I don't think that would happen these days. On and up to the first floor of the main building. The room numbers were still the same, but the inside of the room had not really changed that much. We all shuddered a bit when entering room (7) where we had to go after school and before supper to do "prep" under the supervision of a prefect. For some odd reason we always had to answer with the Latin word "Adsum" for registration, meaning I am present. After a mother of a boarder had once complained that she hadn't received any letters from her son, we subsequently had compulsory letter writing in that same room on Sunday morning after church. The first floor rooms gave us great views of School House and from the Biology Lab annexe we could see the site of the former unheated swimming pool where we had spent many hours. Many of us recalled how Tim Wright had tried to swim as many lengths as possible underwater- he had to be pulled out when he lost consciousness- and also the time that somebody had smuggled a large lump of sodium out of the Chem lab and thrown it into the swimming pool with spectacular effect.

Much to the relief of many residents of Brigg, as boarders we were only allowed to roam around the town at restricted times which meant we let off steam using all the school facilities. The quad has now been built over. We talked about how we used to play spot against the wall of the dreaded outside toilets. Part of the quad had

a cloistered walkway where there had been a vending machine. Drinks cost 10p but there was a way of fooling the machine to get a drink for 2p. A large trolley was also kept in the quad. Some of us would sit on it as others pushed it at high speed. The trolley could be steered by the person sitting on the front but inevitably one day with Ian Marlow doing the steering the trolley crashed in a wall breaking the axle. We were able to make a temporary repair but that didn't last long. I remember seeing a very bemused Ben Lyons, one of our history teachers, staring at it. The wheels had fallen off in front of him as he had moved it. We then explored the gym in which we had spent many hours playing pirates using all the gym equipment. It was an exciting and dangerous game that was again played unsupervised. As boarders we were only allowed to leave the school at restricted times, but we had been given free rein to do a lot of things around the school during the evenings and weekends. We were even allowed to use all the athletics equipment including javelins, shot puts and discuses without a master in site. Outside the gym we also had a quick game of pat-ball – a form of outdoor squash.



Then we went into School House. This was probably the highlight but with a lot of mixed emotions. School house has not been used for boarders for many years and much has changed, but on the ground floor we saw what were in our time the dayrooms, dining room, “under the stairs” and the kitchenette. We recalled how a bell was rung to summon us to breakfast, dinner and tea. We would line up against a wall and troop into the dining room. Naturally there was a discussion about the school meals, some which surprisingly were remembered fondly. The kitchenette was where we were given our pocket money. It had a single ring cooker, saucepan as well as a kettle and a toaster. As you progressed through the years you were privileged to use those items. We kept our shoes in the boot room. We had to polish our shoes every evening and get them checked by a housemaster. Most housemasters lived in School House, with their families, for example Brian Williams and his wife and then later Gerry and Anne Longden. Gerry was very strict, but I think it is fair to say that we all remember him with great affection, likewise Ann who we were able to speak to by video call on the day of the visit. The upstairs to the dormitories in our day, there were four dorms each with about 15 beds including one bed for a prefect who attempted to keep the younger boys under control. We talked about the times we would have pillow fights or slipper fights and the times we would raid another dorm and rag the beds. These activities would always cause a lot of noise and the perpetrators would sometimes be caught by the housemaster or one of the other resident teachers who during our time included Steve Burton, Richard Rivron, Adrian Gibbons, John Hastings, Martin Levitt or some who didn't live there but occasionally did duties for example David Brittain and Keith Walker. Corporal punishment still existed, and the troublemakers would be slippered. In fact, the prefects were also allowed to meet our corporal punishment. Sometimes all the members of a dormitory would be slippered including those who has been asleep when the mischief had occurred. We chatted about some of the more adventurous activities such as climbing out of a dormitory window and shinning along a thin parapet before climbing back in, as well as the time that Tim Wright climbed out of the window, down the fire escape and down another wall in order to get some chips from the chippy on Glebe Road. On the tour we were also able to explore the “back stairs”. These areas had normally been out of

bounds, but we were able to see the sick bay, Garret (where some sixth formers slept) and “Caesar’s Palace,” – a flat where one of the resident housemasters would live. Also, I mustn’t forget to mention the matron’s room where “Maggie” Brumby and “Maggie” Pilsworth would provide a motherly environment.

Before we left the school, we came back to Rooms 1 and 2 where we had a few drinks (Champagne and beers supplied by Roger Hemming and Paul Foster) before being let loose in Brigg where we enjoyed the revisiting of many of the pubs. We ended the night with a curry where Andy Longden gave an entertaining speech. I think the family with two young children who were in the same room in the restaurant were given a free meal to make up for the raucous atmosphere.

Finally, we retired for the night. Some of us met up again at breakfast when Simon Havard showed us some old photos and clippings from the local newspapers with results of various sporting events at the school. This settled one argument. Ian Marlow did beat Vaughan Lindley in the 110m hurdles.

We mustn’t forget to say that the wives of Paul Foster, David Hopkins, Vaughan Lindley and Roger Hemming also came along. I hope they weren’t shocked too much by this bunch of 60+ year old schoolboys. They looked like they enjoyed the weekend. Many of us reported that over the next few days we suffered from a form of “reverse home sickness”. The only cure is to meet up again another reunion.

Thanks again to Matt Mosey who did an excellent job facilitating the visit and giving up his free time helping us to relive school life 1974-81. We would recommend this school tour to any other year who would like a trip down memory lane, and I’m sure this could be arranged by the school for a generous fee towards the school funds. We’re already planning the next one which will be 50 years since leaving the school i.e. Class of 81 in 2031 (7 years from now!). We will then all be approaching our 70th year, scary!

Ex-pupils who attended the reunion were: Marcus Beckers, Alan Broughton, Peter Briggs, Kiron Brown, the Rev David Bryan, Chris Day, Nigel Fisher, Tony Instone, Bill Noble, Paul Lalgee, Michael Scadding, Philip Spavin and Andrew Leaning.

The 'Some of our Masters' list, fine-tuned during the get-together, mentioned the following who taught during the late Grammar School era, 1967-74:

Maths - Robin Mattison, Harold Stinson, Brian Williams, Philip Page, Mike Stevenson.

Chemistry - Jack Moore, Gerry Longden.

History - Dr Frank Henthorn, Ray Jackson, Nick Lyons.

Geography - Geoff Jarvis, Mike Jefferson.

French - Vernon Atkin, Geoff Crew, Paddy Knox.

English - David Adams, Ken Miles, Mike Walker, John Cunningham, Mr Poole.

Physics - David Brittain, John Alcock.

P. E. - Gerry Longden.

Religious education - Brian Williams, the Rev David Evans.

Biology - Derek Appleyard.

Art - Ian Ramsay.

Woodwork & technical drawing: 'Woody' Watts, Mr Adams.

German - Ray Barker, Charles Mailing.

Music - Charles Mailing.

Nigel Fisher reports that £210 was raised for SJN which is wonderful and it sounds as if it was a great weekend for all concerned.

Chris Plumtree (1959-1965)

As the 2025 Reunion approaches to be held on Saturday 17th May I can confirm that this year I am able to attend and with my 2 oldest and best friends from first attending at Brigg Grammar School - Mike Hewson, also my cousin and the reason that I was first allowed to join the school after my father died when I was 11 years old – and Robin East whom I met there and gelled with immediately and who had suffered the same loss as I did, 3 years earlier.

I had wanted to attend last year but the date clashed exactly with that of the graduation ceremony of my 5th daughter Katarina, who had completed a 4 year Honours degree in Accountancy and Finance in Fairfield University, Connecticut. Naturally I had to attend that with her mother Galina Duic, my Bosnian-Croat wife whom I was very fortunate to have met in London 27 years ago. So we made a big holiday to go to the graduation plus 5 days in New York with our daughter.

Galina was a war refugee from Bosnia – a legal immigrant – who made a success of her refugee status, graduated from University College London and is now teaching A level chemistry in Chichester College and also working in Chichester hospital.

This year, the dates are clashing exactly again, because our daughter will graduate with a Master's Degree in Finance on 17th May. But we have decided that this year it would be very beneficial for Galina to travel to New York on her own and be with her daughter to prepare her for the future because Katarina has been offered a job with Ernst & Young at their head office in New York.

Plus I really wanted to come to a Brigg GS Reunion again after having missed several years - firstly for several years because it was in March when I could not buy cheap flights from Split to UK until after Easter and then Covid struck. Now all is ok and the date has been changed to May. So I am looking forward to coming and seeing my oldest friends, plus a few more I hope and Dave Brittain who was always a friendly young teacher during my time in school and afterwards.

Now for some news about the big effect that Brigg Grammar School has had on my life. Firstly, and naturally on my work and business career. Brigg GS gave me lots of confidence in my good education which led me to take a Civil Engineering Degree in Newcastle University and then the belief that I would be able to succeed in my life and career. I have worked on, as Managing Director, some big and interesting projects, including the move of Scunthorpe United from The Old Showground. The sale of the site to Safeway/Sainsbury's and the design and build of Glanford Park. I was MD for the build of the Leatherhead to Reigate section of the M25. I bought Westbury Tubular Structures steelwork company from receivership when it was building the glass and steel roof of Waterloo Station and completed the construction. At that time it became the Terminal for The Eurostar to France. My last contract in UK with Westbury before I sold the company was to the steelwork contract for the West Stand and executive boxes at Chelsea for Ken Bates before Abramovic bought the club. Westbury also built the Tubular Steel and fabric grandstand roofs to the Formula One race track in Selangor Malaysia, and completed other works in South East Asia using British Steel with their support. What a sad loss to business in UK.

But now to the biggest influence that Brigg GS has had on my life: TENNIS

I now live in Split (for 19 years) and my last daughter is graduating and going to live and work in New York because of Tennis at Brigg Grammar School!!

I started playing tennis with my mother at 11 years old after my father died. I never enjoyed playing cricket. It could all be over in a split second whereas Tennis continues until the last point is won and you can always recover from a bad start.

So after 1 summer of cricket at Brigg I discovered that we had a tennis team that played on 2 grass courts behind the Boarding House. I wonder – Are they still there? I started playing for the school team age 13. I became captain at 16 and we won the Lincolnshire schools in my last year. I also became Under 18 Lincolnshire County tennis captain. Over 20 years later both of my first 2 daughters also became Lincolnshire County Tennis Champions and Captains.



So I have always played regular tennis in my life and still do so today at 77 years old.

24 years ago I was with my pregnant wife Galina at Wimbledon when the Croatian, Goran Ivanisevic won the title in 2001. He was from Split. Big coincidence.

Because of my love of tennis, our daughter Katarina started playing tennis at 4 years old when we were living in Malaysia. I finished my contract a year later and decided to have a break from working so we came to live in beautiful Split to be near my wife's Parents in Bosnia and so that our daughter could play lots of tennis and move into being coached whilst also learning the culture and language of her mother. The schools allow top young players to miss school for tournaments so long as they keep on top of their school work. It is the same with all sports and why Croatia is so strong in sport. I played lots of tennis here, I loved the life, the weather, the crystal clear sea and low cost of living. I have never left nor ever wanted to.

I started to take Katarina to tennis coaching and then tournaments all over Ex-Yugoslavia and then UK and other parts of Europe. She nearly made it to professional but suffered a couple of bad injuries at 17. Several of her opponents and a couple of friends are good professionals today. But as a family we decided that in the longer term Katarina would be more likely be successful and happy in life with a top education, and in the USA.

This is the final gain from me getting a place in Brigg Grammar School after my father died very young and I was allowed and encouraged to play tennis there – All those years ago. It caused me to love tennis and it gave me the opportunity to play it well from 13 years of age. From that beginning Katarina has won a fully paid scholarship to a top business College in USA and I live in beautiful, safe and friendly Split.

I always enjoy reading the Newsletter and look forward to meeting some of you there. Please come and talk to me about Split – if you are interested.

Bill Phipps



working!! Thanks again to Mike for organising it, a splendid time was had by all.

Mike McCleave organised another mini gathering for the 1968 cohort at The White Horse Brigg. Attendees this time were Mike McCleave, Bob McCleave, Bill and Eileen Phipps, Richard Lawson, Roger Braithwaite, Mike Sparling, Pete and Cherry Wells, John Dejardin, David Arbuckle and guest Richie Baker. Apologies were received from Dave Brittain, John Hastings and Brian 'Wes' Wesley. An excellent turn out and much time was spent reminiscing and keeping each other up to date with what we are now all doing.....retirement seems to be agreeing with us all, except for the usual aches and pains, and things stopping



Bill Phipps and David Arbuckle get together for the unofficial BGS dinner organised by Mike McCleave. It was great to see David again and catch up. We were best friends at BGS and still are although we live in different parts of the country now and don't get to meet up that often. Although we are older and perhaps wiser, we still have so much in common. Friendships made all those years ago have endured and continue to be strong.



Mike sent in this photo, it would be great if we could put a name to the faces

Clive Thompson 1975 - 1982

Briggensians Clive Thompson and Niamh McIntyre welcomed a new addition to their household last year. Rex Walter Thompson arrived on 30th November 2024. He is in rude health and enjoys eating, drinking, sleeping and going down to The Yarborough Hunt. Just like his parents!



Briggensians Sports Golf

Spring Fixture – 21st April 2024



We had an excellent day's golf, no rain, mostly sunshine, albeit it a pretty cold wind. The course was in fabulous condition - almost like in a June condition, there was no standing water, no squelchy areas, buggies were allowed, some run on most fairways, and the greens were fast. Unfortunately only 7 of us were able to play, and it was probably one of our lowest turnouts.

We had one of our closest finishes, with 3 people scoring 32 points:

1. In first was Jon Taylor with 16 on the back 9
2. In second was Keith Barnes with 15 on the back 9
3. In third was Roger Holmes with 13 on the back 9

No one managed to score a 2, so the 2's pot rolls on to the October fixture at £20.

Many thanks to everyone who was able to make it, and to ensure we keep the fixture going.

The July Past v Present did not take place due to unavailability of players

Autumn Fixture – 13th October 2024

Well what a day we had today - dry all day with a little sunshine, the course was in fabulous condition, and despite the heavy rain yesterday the going was quite firm underfoot. We had 17 players out, one of our highest for a while - many thanks to everyone who came along, particularly those who no longer live locally.

In 1st place was Keith Barnes with 40 pts
2nd place was Jack Siddall with 37 pts
3rd place was Mark Boast with 35 pts

2's were scored by 3 people - Keith Barnes, Mark Boast and Phil Gillard.

We held a short AGM following the game, and elected the following officers for 2025 season:

President - Dave Brittain (sadly subject to change)
Vice President - Ross McFarlane
Captain - Richard Golland
Vice-Captain - Adam Ellis
Secretary - Dave Harness

We would like to thank everyone who has taken part in this year's competitions, and kept our tradition going.
Dave Harness



Thanks to Jon Taylor for the photo - showing Keith Barnes (winner) and Nick Golland (Captain).

Ties and Badges for Sale

The association has available for sale a few ties and pin badge.



Members who would like to purchase these items can: Append a note to their Dinner booking form and add the appropriate payment or

1. Email Helen Cresswell requesting items are reserved for purchase at the Dinner or
2. Send an S.A.E and remittance to Helen



The very attractive pin badge is approx. 2cm x 2.5 cm with a butterfly securing to a pin on the reverse
Badges £10 each Ties £10 each

New members

Membership of the Association is open to all former pupils of:

- Brigg Grammar School**
- Brigg Girls' High School**
- Brigg Sixth Form College**
- Sir John Nelthorpe School**
- Staff of either school**

The life membership charge is **£5** (It would be helpful if those living outside the UK could arrange to pay via a friend in the UK) and anyone wishing to join should make contact giving their details:

The Briggensians' Association, c/o **Helen Cresswell**, 3 Westrum Lane, Brigg, North Lincolnshire. DN20 9EY. Telephone: (01652) 653216 Email: hcresswell@westrum.co.uk

For those using the postal service

I/We have received the 2024/25 Newsletter

Name, Address (Block capitals please) plus telephone number and email

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Email: _____

Postage is charged by size so we ask you to **send to Secretary, Helen Cresswell, a self-addressed A4 envelope stamped with a 'large A4 letter stamp' to confirm receipt of this Newsletter and to ensure that you receive a copy of the 2024/25 Newsletter (or you can receive it for free by email)**

Briggensians' Association

48th Annual Dinner 2025 - Booking Form

I will be attending the Briggensians' Dinner on **Saturday 17th May 2025** (application closing date: **30th April**) at **7.00 pm Elsham Golf Club** and enclose a cheque or Bank Transfer made payable to the Briggensians Association

To the value of £..... For..... Places at **£28.00 each**.

**Tables are set for
8 or 10 places**

Name:

Address:

Post Code: Email:

Please indicate if you have any seating preference other than with your guests or year group:

| Contact Person's Details: | | Starter | | | Main | | | Dessert | | |
|--|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|--|------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Name: Tel. No. Email: <i>(please write clearly)</i> | | Roasted Tomato and Red Pepper Soup | Chicken Liver Pate | Melon | Roast Beef and Turkey Crown with all the trimmings | Cheese, Leek and Potato Tart | Mushroom, Brie and Cranberry Wellington | White Chocolate and Raspberry Roulade | Apple Pie and Custard | Cheese and Biscuits |
| Guests Names | School Dates | | | | | | | | | |
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Please send this completed booking with menu choices, along with payment to:
The Briggensians Association by cheque or bank transfer to
 Barclays Bank Account: Sort Code: 20-76-14 Account: 90194050. Please add your name to the transfer, i.e. 48Dinner:
 Julie Lawson. (Cheques payable to The Briggensians Association):
Please send your forms to: Julie Taylor, 16 Kingfisher Close, Scawby Brook, Brigg, DN20 9FN or email to
 briggensiansassociation@gmail.com