

# WOSA Newsletter 2013-14



*President 2013 -14  
Helen Morris*

**President 2013 - 2014**  
**Chairman**  
**Secretary**  
**Treasurer**  
**Editor**  
**Social Secretary**  
**Webmaster**  
**Committee**

Helen Morris  
Fred Hall  
Margaret Steel  
Ann Fort  
Marjorie Taylor  
Patsy Castree  
Fred Hall  
Jeanne Speed  
Malcolm Bell  
Malcolm Teasdale  
Max Friedheim  
Kay Gilmour

We always welcome new committee members, and we would be pleased to hear from you if you are willing to join. The Committee meets two or three times a year, once in Spring, and once the night before the Summer Reunion and in Autumn.. Please contact Marjorie Taylor by email or using the address below

## Editorial

Thank you to members who sent me reports, photographs and memories which have enabled this newsletter to cover items of interest to pupils who were at school from the 1930's right through to 1984 when the school closed. We now have a good input from younger members and this is inspiring more of them to attend reunions and to join WOSA. Archie Rankin told me two years ago that he thought that WOSA would only continue to be viable for another five years, but it seems from the influx and input of the younger members that the future of the Association will remain healthy for many years to come. We would however like to see more support for the July Reunion, particularly from those who live in the Carlisle area.

Marjorie Taylor (Editor)

## Address List update

Over the last few years we have tried to keep the WOSA address data base accurate. We have discovered some changes of address by chance this year. To help us keep our database up to date can you please send us any changes in your contact details to [m@rjorie.com](mailto:m@rjorie.com), or to Marjorie Taylor, 3 Cotswold Road, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE29 9QJ

## Dates for your Diary

### WOSA Reunion 2014

#### Saturday 12<sup>th</sup>. July

Meet at 11.00am for coffee followed by AGM  
at Foxy's Restaurant, Carlisle United FC  
Buffet Lunch at 12.30  
Dinner at Foxy's Restaurant  
7.00pm for 7.30pm

#### Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>. July

10.30pm Meeting for worship at Carlisle  
or Mosedale Meeting  
12.30pm Buffet Lunch at Denton House  
Hesket Newmarket  
Between 1.30 & 3.30 Tea & scones at Hillside  
(booking essential)  
2.30pm Walk off excess with a short walk via Cuddy  
Lonning and Wigton

### Southern Reunion 2014

#### Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>. May

Organised by Helen and Arnold Snowball in  
Melksham, Wiltshire.  
For details contact them by phone (01225708366)  
or email: [jarnoldsnowball@gmail.com](mailto:jarnoldsnowball@gmail.com)

# Presidential Address



A good friend of ours in Leeds said to us one day that “We are careless of our friends”, in reference to the loss of one of her friends who she had been meaning to go to see over the years. The years had slipped away and unfortunately so had the friend. As they might say in Aldi, “When they are gone, they are gone”.

If there is a reason for WOSA to still exist then that must be it – to make at least one more effort to contact that one person that for decades you have meant to find and tell them whatever it is that you want to tell, to ask the question that must be asked or best of all, just take pleasure in being with them once more, share stories of doings since you last met and retell the stories of when you were together.

Over the last few years I have had huge pleasure in doing just that with some of those people who were part of my life half a century or so ago. But, unfortunately I have missed some too. I regret missing David Burns and Mike Parkin. David taught me History and Mike, who

was never directly a teacher of mine, spent time with me and, with a team of others, we built a Go-cart. Both these men saw there might be some potential in me even if the Head was rather keen for my father to take me out of school and send me to work in Huntingdon’s garage in Wigton because I would never amount to anything much.

I let David down and failed his exam but he gave me a lifelong love of History as a dynamic whole and I have enjoyed being thrilled by discoveries in the story of how we got here ever since. I am doing some research into Medieval science which just might be showing some fruit. I wanted to tell him – but he is gone. I wanted to tell Mike Parkin that I gained enormously from his trust in me that helped me to fight through to become a Professional Engineer but he too has left just recently. Too late.

We have started this thing we call “The President’s Fund” (Fred says it should not have an apostrophe, not because he is Philistine but to ensure that cheques clear more easily) to provide a cache of money to help anyone who was ever a part of the school, regardless of role, to find others and make that critical link before it is too late. I cannot predict what it might find its way to doing – booking a room for a regional or year group meeting, paying for some documents or film to be copied, to send some flowers or comfort to a friend in need or hospital. You judge. It does not have to be on behalf of formal WOSA, it can be just between you and someone personal that mattered in some way to you alone but is part of the wider WOSA landscape in some way. Equally some recent events were very big and successful. Excellent. “Wider WOSA” is already active, has taken root and I would like us to encourage it.

One thing that has come home to me over the last year is that Brookfield has many ambiguities for many people. Some hate it with a passion and want no more to do with it, some were bullied like me, some feel that it failed them in some way or, sadly, that they think that somehow they failed Brookfield. Many just want to move on and leave memories for memories without modification by reality – a friend who was a great success personally in the school but who does not want to return said, “I want to remember

you and my other friends as sixteen year olds". The implication of that is too worrying to contemplate. For many who have not been in contact the idea of coming back is deeply daunting. The fear not to be remembered, not to recognise anyone in the room, not to have some fantastic glamorous career to show off about, not to have been one of the stars of the old days, perhaps a young relationship won or lost, puts many off. Then of course, the School is gone, nowhere else will do – many ask what is the



point? No cricket matches, tennis competitions or swimming. Nowhere familiar to sit comfortably and talk for hours about .. lets say .. "adventures". I have no answer to that, it was my full time home for nearly twenty years, so I do understand and I wonder too. Any suggestions?

For those surprisingly large number of people, coming back to even one of the parts of the formal "Reunion", full of strangers, is a non-starter. But many

still want to have some kind of contact, they eagerly read the important Magazine, looking for faces, names and stories that matter to them. Many want to keep their part of Brookfield as they knew it for themselves, and it was different for every year and that made it special for them. I am a bit of that mindset, I primarily identify with my year, I really did not know the years above or below, at least not until the very end of my school life. I would like to talk more with those of you who I shared a classroom with for five years or so. Why? I don't know but you mattered to me in so many different ways. I am glad to be part of WOSA and proud of my Brookfield culture, whatever that is, but the full, extensive, reunion is a problem for me as I now know it is for many others.

It is knowing that "their" Brookfield still exists in some way that matters to many. We all found a way through that life experience, good and bad, and those who were alongside on the journey helping or hindering are locked into our lives. I understand, I too did not come back for very many years.

But .... we do have a shared inheritance, culture – something - and I have gained from widening my Brookfield horizons as I have come know more people of other generations and seen something more of that common thread. I hope that "Wider WOSA" will find more people, draw them together with their friends and teachers and then maybe in time with the whole. The most important thing for me is the first step.

Whatever the reason or purpose, the President's Fund is for you, it is to help you to find someone valued from your time at Brookfield. If we can help that to happen in any way, then something very important has happened. Out there is "Wider WOSA"; nurture and deepen it, even if it is not the old WOSA as we once knew it.

Just have a private word with the President.

**We must be careful of our friends – when they are gone, they are gone.**

**Malcolm Bell July 2013**

# WOSA Weekend July 13th - 14th 2013



## Lunch at Aspatria Rugby Club

*Ann Fort, Robert Rankin, Paul Davison, Raymond Graham, Fred Hall, Donald Dobson, Peter Kurer, Jill Forrest, Jean Yates, Max Friedheim*  
*Theresa Davis, Mary Peile, Margaret Robson, Keith Robson, Cameron Walker, Tony Kemp, Margaret Ball, Barbara Dodd, Marjorie Lawton, Colin Lawton, Marjorie Taylor*  
*Ann Source, Margaret Steele, Maurice Tate, Beryl Risino, Sheila Rankin, Joyce Nanson, Alison Hetherington, Diana Robison, David Perry, Greta Saul, Mary Lowe, Margaret Taylor, Michael Taylor, Helen Morris*  
*Arnold Snowball, Heather McIntosh, Ronnie Robinson, Mary Robinson, Malcolm Atkinson, Bob Williamson, Elaine Atkinson, Judith Beeby, David Yates, Bryony Bell, Helen Snowball, John Taylor*  
*Patsy Castree, Pat Dobson, Jill Kemp, Avril Solari, Malcolm Bell, June Walker, Ann Skelton, Mary Youles, Bill Sykes, Dorothy Pearlman, Tony Ferguson, Kaye Gilmour*

## Brookfield Reunion 2013

It had been 37 years since I last stood on what was the front lawn at Brookfield, why it had taken so long to return I don't really know. In the past on reading the WOSA newsletter I had often considered attending the July reunion but had never got round to arranging anything, this year was going to be different.

On our way to Aspatria Rugby Club Terri and I stopped off at Wigton for a quick look around, enjoyed a cup of coffee at the Spotted Cow and I reacquainted myself with the aroma of the plastics factory. On arrival at the Rugby Club we were soon deep in conversation and recounting stories of our time at Brookfield. After the AGM a splendid buffet lunch was laid on which gave us more opportunity to catch up on the news and reaffirm friendships.

That evening about 45 of us met up for dinner at the Hallmark Hotel in Carlisle, with similar year groups being seated together this gave us another chance to share experiences and stories we had in common to reminisce about. This chatter was only subdued by the arrival of a lovely meal. After an auction to raise funds for WOSA and the official hand over to the new president a few of us younger ones decided to sample the night life of Carlisle until the early hours.



## Tea on the lawn outside sick bay



On the Sunday morning a little bit worse for wear we travelled to Brookfield to enjoy tea, scones and cakes on the lawn in front of the old sick bay cottage. This was followed by a walk up Cuddy Lonning, some even managing to complete the circuit via Wigton. The haunted house and back was far enough for me. On returning to Brookfield we said our goodbyes and promised to keep in touch, then set off home after having experienced a very enjoyable weekend.

My only concern is that I was the only one there from my year group. We really need more pupils to attend especially those who left after 1970, I am sure you will not be disappointed.

Paul Davison

Sadly The Sick Bay is the only part of the main building to have survived the fire. It is now a private house, and we were welcomed to look round to see if we could recognise any of the rooms. Many thanks are due to Mr & Mrs Mottershead the present owners of the house for their hospitality and the interest they have shown in the history of the school. The photograph below shows us all assembled outside the front door of the house.



# Southern Reunion



## Slinfold, West Sussex Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2013

It was a strange feeling— fifty four years for me and sixty years for Diana since leaving school - and here we were on our way to a reunion. It had started from a casual question “why had the old school burnt down?”. The inevitable Google search revealed that a second school history existed and having requested a copy phone calls came winging in from people I didn't know: “when were you there?”, that was easy, “who do you remember?” that was harder! And then an e-mail from Ann Fort “I remember you” she said and from deep down I remembered too.

It was a beautiful sunny day and Angela Bourn (Taylor) had done us proud with great food and wine. We had drinks outside under the Wisteria before lunch and lunch in the attached marquee. We told the story of our lives to the few we knew and to many we didn't. We talked of those far off days and asked about those absent, sadly quite a few now departed.



*Lunch in the marquee*



*Drinks under the Wisteria*

After our long lunch we repaired to the large garden and in the wonderful sunshine the group photos were taken. Then farewells were made and Diana and I were on the train back to London. It had all gone very quickly and been a great day with a very pleasant feeling. What was that feeling? Diana put her finger on it, it was the feeling that comes when socialising after a family ceremony, the easy familiarity with relatives very rarely seen or never met before - the feeling that comes from a family bond.



# Leeds Reunion

The usual crowd assembled for the “Trans-Pennine Reunion”, this time hosted at the home of Malcolm and Bryony Bell in Leeds.

Most of us arrived without difficulty but as usual one party were unable to find the house, even with the high-tech (for them) use of Sat Nav. The fact that they had used the wrong Post Code did not help, and



there was much discussion about whose fault it was that the wrong post code had been used. Mobile phones came to the rescue however and the missing couple were eventually guided to base by Malcolm.

Once we were all assembled lunch was served, and a very fine meal it was, with choices of main course and of dessert.

Suitably refreshed we proceeded to the main reason for the meeting.

Reminiscences of school

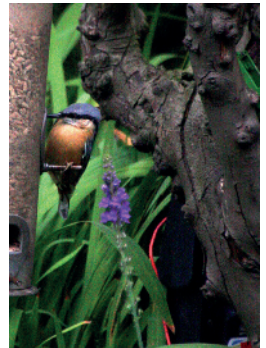
life and inspection of many photographs. Some of these had been the property of Fred Bell, and we looked for ourselves on the pictures of the gym displays at GM Day as well as on the group photographs.

Later we had tea, and a slice of a specially made “Brookfield Cake”, made by Bryony and decorated in the school colours.

The Bell’s house is situated beside a large wooded area, and the bird lovers amongst us were treated to a wide variety of bird life arriving at the feeding stations, star of the show being a family of Nuthatches (photograph included in gallery).

All too soon it was time to go, and we left with promises to keep in touch and attend the next meeting.

John Taylor



# Congratulations

Congratulations to Sheila Wood (nee Gillies) and her husband on the occasion of their Golden Wedding in December. Sheila said how lucky they were that her mother was able to join them and members of the family for the celebration.

Her mother, Margaret Gillies (nee Hinde) is our oldest “Old Scholar”. She was at Brookfield from 1921 to 1926.

# Carlisle Reunion - November 16th.

Having missed the previous 43 years of school reunions I decided to take the plunge and attend the November reunion at Carlisle Rugby Club.

Kate English and Marion Hope who arranged the reunion were able to use the relatively new Brookfield Facebook site, the WOSA site and their own personnel connections (which seem considerable) to ensure that as many 'Brookies' as possible were informed about the event. Those attending came from near and far, a few Scots like me, the majority from the north of England and good representation from the midlands.



*The Organisers*

The evening itself was a great opportunity for people to make connections, reminisce and to renew and build new friendships, the venue was just the right size for our numbers and it lent itself to a feeling of intimacy. A disco played in the background though I never actually saw anybody dancing,

we were too busy talking about the old days and catching up. There was a buffet that was enjoyed by all and near the close of the evening Helen Morris took the opportunity to say a few words and to raise funds for WOSA through the sale of Brookfield marmalade and of a number limited prints of paintings of Brookfield scenes by the artist and former pupil Malcolm Teasdale, one of which I bought and now takes pride of place hanging on my hall wall.



At the close of the evening we all said our extended goodbyes and whilst a number of us traipsed back to our hotels and a welcoming bed a small contingent of 'Brookies' hit the City night life.

The 16<sup>th</sup> was a tremendous evening and many of us personally encourage those that may be hesitant to attend such a reunion to take the plunge as I and many others have, you will find 'Brookies' are an inclusive bunch and will welcome you with open arms.

look forward to the summer reunion. I would

Lastly a heartfelt thank you to Kate and Marion for the tremendous effort they put in to make this event happen, for me and I am sure for many others, it was a truly memorable evening.

John Bernklow





# New Memorial Plaque unveiled

On a cold Sunday morning in November over forty people turned up for the unveiling ceremony of the school plaque on the gate post. John Bernklow had commented on Facebook that there was nothing to indicate that the school had been on that site. The committee decided that a plaque would be an appropriate addition and the suggestion was raised at the AGM of WOSA last July. The suggestion was met with universal approval and Ann and Alan Mottershead who own the house and gatepost were approached and fully supported the idea. Bill Sykes asked a local firm to quote and design a suitable plaque. After some discussion of the various designs presented the committee selected a plaque made of local slate with the text etched in white. The plaque was completed and installed on the gate post in early November. As some younger members were coming to Carlisle for a reunion on Saturday November 16<sup>th</sup>. It was decided to hold the unveiling on the Sunday morning. We were surprised and pleased that so many members of WOSA turned out. There were people who had been at school encompassing a range of years from the 1930's and 1940's right up to the year the school closed. Malcolm Bell spoke about what the school had meant to so many and he called for a brief silence so we could think about the past. Helen Morris (President) then opened the curtains to reveal the plaque. Once again Ann and Alan offered the use of their house for refreshments which were welcome on a cold morning.



# Spotlight on Music

In the early days of the school there was no music of any kind, neither vocal nor instrumental. Hymns were learnt for recitation purposes but were never sung, and there was of course no piano. We believe that the first piano came into the school in 1894 and was still in use in 1931 in the boys' practice room. The first music lessons in 1894 were given by Annie Stamper. At first there were only nine music pupils but by 1915 the number had grown to over thirty, and the violin and clarinet had also made an appearance.



*After tea on the lawn on Sunday at the July reunion, Peter Kurer was pleased to find a piano still in the rooms where he had enjoyed music lessons as a boy. He played a few pieces as he recollected those lessons long ago.*

David Yates and Cameron Walker recalled the morning assemblies of over 70 years ago which always began with a classical record playing. Cameron recalls one morning when the music should have been "The Finlandia Karelia Suite" by Sibelius, but someone had changed the records and the labels. Pee Wee Hunt's "Twelfth Street Rag" only lasted three notes before it was whipped off!

Does anyone know who the culprit was? Were you in that assembly?

David also remembers that Hans and Peter Kurer were great pianists. He can remember Hans playing Chopin's "Fantasie Impromptu" and Schubert's "Impromptu". Both pieces are still favourites of his.

## News of some of the music teachers

We have been reminded of some of Brookfield's music teachers this year.

Kenneth Ashford donated a photograph album which had belonged to his aunt Gwen Ashford (1936-50). Several old scholars enjoyed looking at this at the last reunion in July.

Sylvia Kidd (Miss Metcalfe) (1958-63) who is a member of WOSA, joined us for dinner at The Hallmark Hotel last July. Several people enjoyed catching up with her and recalling a school trip to France they had been on when she accompanied Mike Parkin and there were several interesting adventures enjoyed by the pupils!

Miss Potter (Mrs Maxwell) (1952-54) who lives on West Road, Wigton came to the unveiling ceremony for the new plaque on the school gate in November. She said that her first two years of teaching were at Brookfield and that she has very fond memories of that time. She returned again for one year (1964-65) as Mrs Maxwell to help out with a pupil taking A-level Music.

Many of you will remember Peter Iliffe (sadly deceased) who taught music for thirty one years between 1948 and 1979. After he left Brookfield he acted as organist at St. John's Church in Keswick where he lived with his sister in the church house.



# Where are they now?

A practice session in the music rooms circa 1965. Can you identify any of the musicians.



This was one of Fred Bell's annual displays for GM Day in 1963. Can you put a name to any of these faces and let us know what they are doing now.



Has any one got any decent photographs of activities from the seventies and eighties?

# Feedback from Spotlight on Woodwork



*Russell Teasdale can remember that he worked at the bench front right during his woodwork lessons. Shortly after this photograph was taken, the woodwork shop was moved to its new position, and the new workshop building still exists and is used, though it is in a state of disrepair. This room became the boys common room and the boys then made tops for table tennis tables, painting them and adding the white lines.*

We had a very good response to our "Spotlight on Woodwork" feature in the last newsletter.

Several people contacted to say that they had also won the John Harris-Walker Prize for woodwork. The prize was first awarded in 1936 after a gift of £50 by Hannah Walker in memory of her husband, a former pupil, and president of WOSA, in 1922. The money was invested and the interest used to give prizes for boys and girls for good work in handicraft. The prize was awarded annually, but towards the end of the school it was not always presented.

In 1938 Phyllis Wells was awarded the prize for her carved wooden teapot stand. In 1949 Derek Bramwell was awarded the prize for woodwork. Thirty years later his son John Bramwell was also awarded the prize for woodwork. John made a wardrobe that year.

In another family triumph, Roger Prescott was awarded the prize in 1971 and again in 1973, and his brother Ian then won it in 1976 for his "Welsh Dresser". (See Roger's report on the next page)

One of the last winners was David Robinson in 1982

Colin Hyatt contacted us to say he had won the woodwork prize in 1959. Sadly he left his woodwork pieces in the UK when he emigrated to Canada in 1965. Colin was a friend of Russell Teasdale who made the table that was highlighted in the last issue. While in Canada he worked as a teacher of woodwork and art. On retirement he made fine furniture and was particularly interested to read of the work of Max Freidheim.

Peter Kurer says he got the idea for his internationally known dental post from work he did in the woodwork shop. It also turned out that John Speilman and Max Freidheim had trained in the same college.

The school was quite unique in that girls were encouraged to take up woodwork and significant numbers did so from the 1930's onwards. As well as Phyllis Wells, Judith Beeby and Mary Yules took part in woodwork sessions in the 1940's, and Angela Bourn (nee Taylor) remembers having lessons with Fred Bell in the 1950's





Roger Prescott won the prize in 1971 and 1973. He sent the report below

Please see the attached photograph of a chair and footstool that I made at school. It is still used in my mother's flat although I have replaced the webbing which probably foiled my mother's wish to dispose of it! She also still uses a dining table that I made.

I can still remember woodwork teacher John Woodcock taking over from Fred Bell. John Woodcock came into the workshop where we had been waiting and were probably messing around. He said, as way of an introduction, that he had worked in an inner city school where he had been threatened by a pupil with a chisel. He picked up

a chisel and said if anyone wanted to challenge his authority it was best to do it now. There was total silence and I suspect we were standing stunned and wide eyed.

The story of taking home Ian's Welsh Dresser was that my mother had a mini traveller at the time, which was the size of the mini van with glazing in the back and decorative woodwork on its sides. The base of the dresser was hauled onto a roof rack with the legs pointing skyward and the shelving part just fitted diagonally in the back with the seats down and the front seats forward. It was all right driving along the straight roads but I soon learned to slow down as I navigated the corners on the railway bridge just after Wigton ( heading towards Carlisle) and the car leaned to one side and veered towards the ditch! It was worse for my poor mother when we got home because guess who had to help me get the dresser base off the car roof!

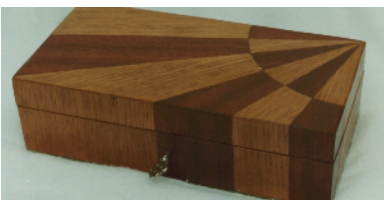
I think my mother was glad when we left home! She wasn't involved when I moved north from Surrey and drove up the M1 with a freezer on top of a mini. My partner who was in another mini said I was easy to follow because she could always see the freezer above all the other cars.

I went on to complete a degree in three dimensional design, specializing in furniture, followed by a professional career in museum exhibition design, latterly in project management reshaping how a Council provides its Customer Services and building library and information centres.

I think I put the skills I learned at Brookfield to good use



*Ian's Welsh dresser before the handles were added*



Their mother still uses this rather stylish Jewellery box made by Ian

# Where are they now?



***Brookfield First XV from 1961-2***

This picture was in the last issue of the magazine. We have been able to trace the whereabouts of all but two members of this team. If you know where we can find Colin Campbell and/or George Frank please let us know.

John S Hall played for Penrith Under 18 XV and Vagabonds. He is a retired farmer living near Ayr.

Graham Kirkpatrick lives at Cross Cannonby

John Taylor played for Tynedale and Ipswich 1<sup>st</sup> XV's. He is a retired teacher and lives in North Shields.

Michael Hodgson Played for Birkenhead Park and Keswick 1<sup>st</sup> XV's, being club captain for two years. He still works running the family building company in Keswick.

Gary Norman (sadly deceased)

Kenneth Ashford played for West of Scotland & Edinburgh Northern. He is retired and lives in West Lothian

Peter Hallows played for Blaydon 1<sup>st</sup> XV. He is a retired quantity surveyor and lives in Essex.

Robert Gillies played a few games for Beith Academy and lives near Glasgow

George Frank - unknown

John Castree lives in Scotland

Duncan Coates is an Architect and lives on an island in the Bahamas

Ashley Ismay played for Wigton 1<sup>st</sup> XV. He is a retired lecturer and lives between Bournemouth and Florida

Colin Campbell - unknown

Malcolm Teasdale played for Durham City, Morpeth, Nottingham and for several years on Blaydon 1<sup>st</sup> XV. He is a retired teacher, now making his living as an artist. He lives in Morpeth, Northumberland

Ian Blyth played for Tynedale 1<sup>st</sup> XV for over 20 years being club captain and eventually president of the club. He runs a cafe in Hexham

Ian McVie - worked in Hotels in London, sadly deceased

# WOSA Financial Report

Income and Expenditure for year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> , December 2012				2011	
Reunion	Receipts	Payments	Balance	Receipts	Payments
Income	2142			2168	
Aspatia RFC		56			47
Home Baking (Lunch)		744			638
Greenhill Hotel (Dinner)					1155
Hallmark (Dinner)		1078			
Denton House (Lunch)		285			224
Photocopying					35
Badges					0
<b>Total</b>			<b>69</b>	<b>2168</b>	<b>2099</b>
Owing: Badges					<b>13</b>
<b>General Fund</b>					
Subscriptions	60			40	
Donations	291			500	
Sales	17			144	
Investment Income (Consols)	36			36	
NS & I Interest	42			16	
Printing		369			359
Newsletter postage		207			142
Stationery etc.		85			
Envelopes/labels					39
Web					36
Carlisle Meeting house fees		15			
Sale of goods from WFMH				57	
Survey expenses - printing					56
Gift to editor					50
Gift to Secretary		33			
Hallmark deposit for 2013		300			
Badges 211		13			
Postage: August 2011		3			
<b>Total</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>1025</b>	<b>-578</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>682</b>
Owing					<b>27</b>
Gift to Editors wife 2011		9			
Postage: School histories		5			
<b>Bank balances at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012</b>					
HSBC			33	452	
NS&I			7850	8057	
Cash			1	1	
<b>Total</b>			<b>7883</b>	<b>8510</b>	<b>-626</b>
Owing			<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	
<b>Total</b>			<b>7870</b>	<b>8483</b>	<b>-613</b>

# A spy in our midst?

## Dorothy Gunn MBE - Language Teacher 1947-48



*Dorothy Gunn on the staff photo of 1947*

Quite how Dorothy Gunn came to teach at a Quaker school in Northern England in 1947 is, as so many aspects of her life, a bit of a mystery. It was of course in the aftermath of the war, staff were difficult to come by, and for women the more so as so many returning soldiers were taking the plum posts. Dorothy, I suppose took what she could get and no doubt caused a few old Quaker hearts to flutter amongst the selection committee. To me and my fellows, at thirteen, she arrived like a peacock butterfly on a dull day. Austerity had spread a chilling influence on school life when Dorothy, all tanned legs and bright colours, hove into view from some parallel universe.

My memory is selective but when she held court from the dais in the fifth form room she was always surrounded by an aura of sunshine. Our French perhaps did not improve but she gave us glimpses of another place where the exotic flourished and between which and our limited world no boat plied.

Coincidence or not? The school adopted Rugby in place of soccer that year: could it have been to cope with the testosterone rush in the Autumn term? I could not say whether or not she was a good teacher but was certainly unusual in being as interested in us as we were in her.

Dorothy Gunn came to Brookfield, shimmered in the light for a time, then vanished from our lives and it is amazing to learn of the excitement and variety of her life's journey before she was a memorable teacher.



*When this picture of Dorothy Gunn was taken she was working as Air Ministry Civilian, TSAO(D), Bletchley Park 1941 - 1945. During her time there she worked in the Mansion, Hut 10 and Block A, (room 117) Block F(A), (room 21) Air Section - Air intelligence.*

Cameron Walker

## Can anyone else remember being at this lecture that Tony recalls?

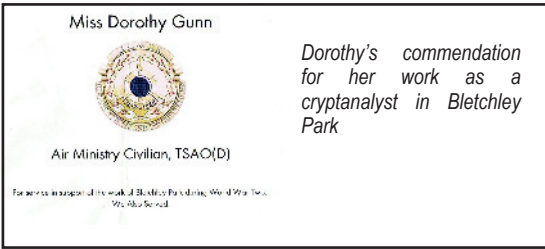
I must have been in about 1947, a couple of years after WWII, that we had a visiting lecturer by the name of Major Hooper. Apparently he had been cashiered from the Army and had no right to the rank of Major. He was to lecture us on the merits of Communism in Russia and Dorothy Gunn had prior knowledge of him so tried to persuade Joe Carruthers to cancel his lecture. For whatever reason Joe couldn't or wouldn't cancel and so the lecture went ahead. The whole school was gathered in the Lecture Room and we sat through the lecture (with lantern slides) about how kindergartens had blocks too heavy for one child to lift so had to get help from another child. The lecture concluded with Major Hooper saying he would put up a picture of the man who really won the war, not Churchill, not Roosevelt but Joe Stalin. That being the end of the lecture we all clapped. Unfortunately we had the school inspectors in at that time and had they walked past the Lecture Room and seen us all applauding Stalin it could have had nasty consequences.

Major Hooper had been cashiered for Communist activities and that I presume was why Dorothy Gunn knew of him. Communism was very much to be discouraged at the time..

Tony Kemp

I researched Major Hooper and found his name was on a list of Communist sympathisers that George Orwell had handed over to the British Government in 1949, shortly before he died. (Editor)





Dorothy's son Brian sent this account of her life before and after her time at Brookfield.

She was one of seven children, her father William Archibald Gunn was an artist in St Ives, Cornwall. She lost a merchant seaman brother in the Russian convoys from Britain. Another brother was a Physicist who worked on The Manhattan Project. She was at Strasbourg University before the war where she learned to speak fluent German and French. She told me a story of how she was in a crowd at Nuremberg listening to Hitler, and at the end was asked by a bystander why she was not saluting the Fuehrer, and replied she was not German!

I had a sinister picture of her with two Nazi officers in full regalia, but it went missing. She said she was gathering intelligence before the war broke out. Then she was offered the job as cryptanalyst at Bletchley, and told few stories as she was under the 40 year Official Secrets Act until she died February 1973.

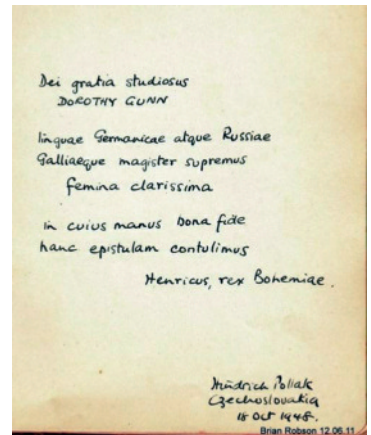
Apparently she was communicating with German high command in the project to parachute new tin legs for Douglas Bader, who became a POW in Germany. Also she was listening to intercepts from Scharnhorst holed up in Norway and she heard a change in radio traffic indicating it was going to sea. It was subsequently sunk by the Navy.

For some reason she went on holiday to Kenya and met some colonial farmers including my father around 1950. My mother said she would only accept his offer of marriage if he got a better career. He went to Lincoln's Inn and studied to become a barrister, which he did in 18 months! I was born 1953 and they emigrated with me to Kenya 1954. She worked as an airline ticket administrator for EAA (East African Airways) and British Caledonian in Nairobi until she died of cancer.

Good memories and a life well lived!



Dorothy Gunn with Gen Hepp in Trafalgar Square 1947. He was interrogated on March 2nd, 1947 as part of the Nuremberg War Crime Trials (1946-48), and Dorothy was probably acting as his translator.



### Translation

By the grace of God devoted to learning  
Total master of German Russian and French  
languages  
A most renowned lady  
Into whose hand in good faith we have  
brought this letter  
(found in her album by her son)

The picture alongside is of Dorothy's flat in Berlin during her time while gathering intelligence. This was shortly before the outbreak of war, and the picture shows a swastika visible on the building on the left

# For Sale



Any offers for this blazer from the 1940's? The badge is rather worn, but the condition is good considering it is over 70 years old. We also have an "Old Scholars" scarf.

You may have slept here, but you won't have had marmalade for breakfast



*Wied and Fruitful*

*Maker of Specialist  
Homemade  
Preserves*

Specially commissioned Brookfield Marmalade made in Hillside, Cuddy Lonning, Wigton

£3.50 plus postage

Or collect at Reunion weekend

We have several Panora Photographs including  
1956 in frame

1948, 1951, 1953, 1956, 1958 1960 unframed

We have many other sports and group photographs. Contact us if you would like to purchase a particular photograph.

Telephone Marjorie Taylor on 01912595689

If you have any school memorabilia you no longer want please donate it to be sold for WOSA funds.

## The School Gate



Malcolm Teasdale is a former pupil and artist whose work is now exhibited in many galleries around the country and has been included in "Best Of British", a collection of some of the best of 21<sup>st</sup> century British Art.

This painting was originally commissioned by an old scholar

Malcolm's work is very collectable and you can see examples at [www.panterandhall.com/Artists.aspx](http://www.panterandhall.com/Artists.aspx)

Malcolm has produced signed limited edition prints size 40cm x 31cms which are for sale at £30. The proceeds will be used to fund future reunions.

To order one of these prints contact Marjorie Taylor  
☎ 01912595689 or email: [m@rjorie.com](mailto:m@rjorie.com)

**All proceeds to WOSA funds**

# School Memories

The annual WOSA Ball in The Market Hall Wigton in February 1955. These were popular events in the 1950's. They were well supported by teaching staff as well as former pupils. The giant badge was used as a focus for the group photograph in each one of these balls. We wonder what happened to the badge after the balls stopped.

Do you remember attending one of these balls?



Michael Taylor can remember being part of this cycling display on GM day riding a "Lenton Raleigh Sport". The boys who took part provided their own bikes. The display was also performed in Wigton, we believe as part of the celebrations for the coronation of the queen in 1953. Can you recognise any of the cyclists?



An unusual GM display. This one made the local newspapers and readers were invited to recognise the school name. Were you one of the letters?

**The 2015 Newsletter will feature "A spotlight on Summer Excursions", so please send us your memories and photographs**





## In Memoriam



Michael Parkin Teacher 19660-63 Died 7th May 2009  
David Burn Teacher 1959-66 Died May 2012  
Laura Mitchell(Miller) 1929-35 Died August 2012  
Nina Clennell 1942-47 Died 6th January 2013  
Freda Cooke (Thornley) 1936-40 Died 7th. January 2013  
Mary Graham(Peile) 1937-41 Died 19th April 2013  
John Bull Teacher 1966-69 Died 16th April 2013  
William Hunter 1951-57 Died June 2013  
Lindsay Martin 1942-51 Died 2nd. September 2013  
William (Billy) Jackson 1945-48 Died September 2013  
Keith Lawley 1948-52 Died 25th. January 2014

Sadly Freda Cooke died before she received her newsletter containing her wonderful piece about her school memories

## The Future of WOSA

Most of you who receive this newsletter will have paid a single joining fee of £10 (lately £20) to become a member of WOSA. The costs involved in running WOSA have gone up considerably in recent years. For example the newsletter costs around £1.00 each to print plus around 60p to post this year, with cost rises expected for next year. The many reunion meetings and the weekend are largely self-financing, but other costs include gifts to long serving retiring officers plus stationery etc. In addition this year for example we placed the plaque on the school gate.

The committee would like to ask you to make some sort of donation to help defray these costs in the future. These could be in the form of a cash gift, or you could follow the example of the chairman Fred Hall who has just included a sum of £1000 to WOSA in his will alongside other charitable bequests.

During the last three or four years more of you than ever before have attended separate meetings at various locations around the country and we estimate that there will be continued need for the organisation for at least the next twenty years. This is your organisation, and we hope you will want to see it continue in the future. We would also like you to consider receiving the newsletter by email in pdf format, particularly if you live abroad which can cost up to £3.50 to post to you. It goes without saying that we need to know of any change in email address as well as other contact changes.

I hope that you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. We are always pleased to receive contributions and would welcome text or ideas for the next issue. Please send your text by email to [m@rjorie.com](mailto:m@rjorie.com), or by post to: 3 Cotswold Road, North Shields, Tyne & Wear, NE299QJ

[www.wosa.org.uk](http://www.wosa.org.uk) (To access members area the code is: pilgrim247)