

# Fyling Hall Alumni Newsletter

No 6

## Welcome to the Winter 2009 Newsletter.

### New Link

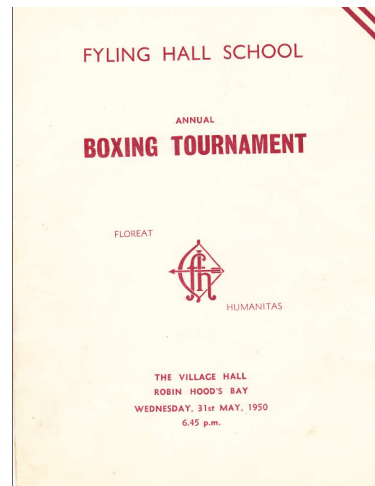
There is a new button on the first page of the Fyling Hall website now that reads **Fyling Hall Reunited** and it takes you straight to the Alumni page. I know many of you had to search around before to locate the Alumni section. I hope this makes things more straightforward. I would also, once again, ask you to put the Alumni email address in your computer address book ([alumniregister@fylinghall.org](mailto:alumniregister@fylinghall.org)). When we send out the alerts for a new Newsletter some do come bouncing back.

### News

As was indicated in the last Newsletter Jof Hardy's Help For Heroes event was cancelled did not manage to attract the support he needed to be able to stage. This was very sad because he had put an immense amount of work into the organisation of the event but, on the other hand, it is appreciated that Fyling Hall is a very long journey for many of its alumni.

Ex-pupils who have made contact since the last Newsletter include **Mark Bevan**, who was here in the 1980s. He has recently taken up a Chair in Neuroscience at Sheffield University after a stint teaching at Northwestern University, just north of Chicago.

**Tony Kirby (1949-51)** wrote: "I'm a former pupil who lived at the Cottage as a boarder above Danlar's room with contemporaries – Geoff Skinner, Tony Swift, Arthur Thompson, Stuart Moralee, Neil Cundy and other I just forgot. They were without doubt some of my happiest days at any school". Tony attached two programmes. One from the Swimming Gala in July 1950 and the other from the Boxing Tournament in May 1950.



Tony Kirby mentioned 'Geoff' Skinner but almost simultaneously an email arrived from **George Skinner (1949-53)** who was appealing for anyone who could "put me in touch with any of my former school chums who were boarders between 1949 and 1953 who are still above ground. I remember the following names: John Howes, Derek Steel, John Stroud, John Hanson, Barry Preston or his sister who was last living I think in NZ, Pat Valentine, Sarah Mount Hayes, Rachel Jones, Tamar Jones, Shirley Longley, Stuart Morrally, Vera Harrison (Matron), John Atkinson, Gis Greenop, Bobby Hill, Naomi Whittle, Brenda Easton to name but a few." I did ask Brenda Easton, now a Governor of Fyling Hall, to follow this up but repeat the list here in case anyone has any useful contacts.

Meanwhile I had replied to **Tony Kirby** who sent back some additional details of his time at school and the subsequent history of his contemporaries:

“Thanks for reply. Interesting that Peter Gross is still alive - He taught me all I know on Geography - He was a dab hand or should I say master at keeping everyone's attention in class as he was well known for his aim with a blackboard rubber. I am enclosing a photograph of him at the start of the relay race on School Sports Day in 1950.



The other photograph is of 'The Cottage' with the incumbents Stuart Moralee (Now sadly dead - used to farm at Cowbar Farm Staithes), Tony Swift (He now lives at Glaisdale and is well known in those parts for making very intricate scientific instruments), John Thompson (no news or information on him but he also lived on a farm, I believe down near York but....?) and Neil Cundy who I know came from Middlesbrough but I have not heard nor seen anything of him since I left the school in 1951. There were two others who are not on the photograph who lived at the Cottage in the two bedrooms assigned to pupils and looked after by 'Danlar' (Austen Davies). They were John Howse who went on to high positions in the hotel trade I believe and Geoff Skinner from Thornaby on Tees - Again no further information other than I know his parents had a shop on Mandale Road in Thornaby and believe he continued with it for some time after leaving school. My wife lived in Thornaby then in the 1950's and remembers Geoff.

There were some very happy times at Fyling Hall and my mother used to love telling everybody how I always looked forward to returning to school after the holidays. I travelled by train from

Nunthorpe, near Middlesbrough where I lived. The route via Guisborough, Loftus, Brotton, Sandsend, Whitby West Cliffe, Hawsker and then to Robin Hoods Bay where Mr Jones would meet us (other pupils joined the train on the route) to take us up to school. I cannot remember how my Trunk and 'tuck box' got to the school. I presume arrangements were made with station master as there were in those days!”



**James Valentine (1945-48)**, now 75 years of age, wrote of his time at Fyling Hall:

“I was interested to see the photographs posted on the website by Eileen Lenham. I well remember Eileen and her sister Liz but confess to not recognising anyone in the photos. If my memory serves me right, their parents owned an inn in Great Malvern and I seem to recall visiting it for a birthday party. How I got there and back home I'll never know.

My parents sent me to FHS for two reasons. Firstly, because of the Gerrard family connection. My father was a director of the Gerrard family building business located in Swinton, Manchester. Secondly, and more importantly, they hoped that I might get some decent grub in times of food rationing.

Sadly, the only teachers I remember are Mrs B, Austen Davies and Bill Flood. When it came to a beating, Bill, bless him used to offer you the choice of his cane or his wooden hairbrush.

I often wonder what happened to the Keddies (Nigel and his sister), Dot Clarke, Gus Greenup, Les Bellas, Gill? (another eccentric who used to smoke a pipe with part of the stem missing) and many more. Like others both before and after me (Mike Swales, Derek Cooke, Dave Kirkham, the Woolley brothers) I went on to Denstone where I prospered reasonably well. I was then called up for national service and rose to the dizzy rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery. On demob, I became articled to a chartered accountant and went on to qualify in the profession.”



**Billy Howe**, here in the 1970s, wrote remembering **Mrs (Inez) Jones**: “From her lessons I remember that moles have 42 teeth. Funny what one remembers.” I wrote back telling him Mrs Jones had died about a quarter of a century ago and he replied:

“My maths was never good, I really liked Mrs Jones, pity about death, puts a damper on life.

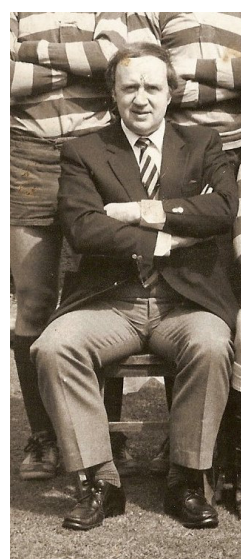
The project I was involved in at Kolwezi was 65% finished (putting the old Belgian dumps through the mill again) has been closed by Mr Moise Katombie. (Governor of Katanga) Pity I am a bit over the hill, a job as a mercenary to launch a coup would have been right up my street.

I am now at head office waiting to be placed, just like waiting outside Mr Woolley's house to be chastised, I even look guilty.

Anyway I await my fate!”

**Stuart Fusco (1988-94)**, who was both a pupil and later a Governor of Fyling Hall went with another ex-FHS pupil, **James Locker (left in 1996)** on a trek along the Great Wall of China to raise funds for the Fishermans Mission. Over the course of ten days the party (there were 13 of them) walked over 100 kms in quite remote areas and raised more than £15,000.

**Andrew Pern (1974-85)** the third generation of his family to attend Fyling Hall and Michelin starred proprietor of The Star Inn, Harome has published a book this year “Black Pudding and Foie Gras”. It won the Gourmand World Book Silver award in Paris and also ‘Best UK Chef Book’ prize. In the early part of the book he recalls his upbringing at Bank House Farm (where **Paul Blackwell, member of staff 1973-present**) now lives. He also describes the Fyling Hall of his time, saying the school motto ‘The days that make us happy make us wise’ translated as ‘the school with no rules’. He mentions **Alex Gregg (staff 1973-2000)**, who is often recalled by ex-pupils with great affection and respect.



We wish you a merry Christmas. Please keep in touch.  
John Jeakins