



# Draxonians Association

News  
Summer 2020

# WELCOME

The Draxonians' Association Winter Reunion dinner took place on Sunday, December 8th 2019. It was fantastic to welcome more than 60 Draxonians back to the school and we would like to thank you for sharing in such a lovely celebration with us. The tremendous support for the School that exists within the Association was palpable during the event and in the increased contact that Draxonians have made with the School since, for which we are very grateful.

The day kicked off for many of us with a lovely Advent Service delivered by Rev Jason Reid, at The Parish Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in the village. It was fabulous to hear from Headmistress, Mrs Ruth Ainley and Chair of Governors, Mr Brian Watts as to the progress of the school, and a well-delivered humorous address from current Head Boy Harry Woodall, who is himself the third generation from his family to attend Read School. Mr Saddler, our guest speaker for the Reunion, took stage once again to address the Draxonians' and it certainly took me back many years in a warm, nostalgic way! The School's catering team, Wilson Vale created a lovely environment for us to dine in, in the school dining room and of course a delightful

spread of food!

We look forward to future events with you at Read. Where possible, if you have friends whom you are still in touch with, who don't get news from us, I'd be really grateful to hear from them if they'd like to be kept up to date!

Nicola Mooney  
Draxonians' Administrator





## THE WINTER REUNION



## TRIBUTE TO PETER WATT

*Chairman of the Governors, Read School (2014 - 2020)*  
*Draxonian, Read School (1960 - 1967)*

Every successful organization needs a passionate Chairman. Over its 352 years of existence, Read School has had a number of noteworthy champions including Adamson, Moloney and Saddle to mention just three. None, however, I suggest have given the generosity nor shown the quality of leadership which Peter has provided to the school in recent years and it would not be an exaggeration to say that he has saved the school financially and developed a successful management organization for its sustainable future.



I first met Peter in 2011 when he decided to pay for the new floor in the Sports Hall, as a Memorial to his elder brother Ian. Ian and Peter had two other brothers, Brian and David. The family lived in Wistow and during the 1965/66 year all four brothers were pupils in the school at the same time. Peter was a pupil from 1960 to 1967.

When Peter took over Chairmanship of the Governors in November 2014, the school was struggling financially, living off reserves and trying to save money by not maintaining the infrastructure. To quote Peter's words, "the roof was not fixed while the sun was shining". More concerning, however, was the continuing decline in pupil numbers, which was not being matched by an equal or greater reduction in

costs. Clearly, a new strategy was needed. Peter was a deep thinker and moved cautiously after assessing all the facts and opportunities. He decided evolution rather than revolution was the answer. He realised that improving the image of the school was essential to increase pupil numbers and that marketing had to be an essential part of the school's activities and strategic direction. Perhaps his boldest decision was to recruit Mrs Ruth Ainley as a new Head. Ruth had previously taught languages at the school but then left to pursue a successful career in marketing in commercial business. This was a difficult appointment to make but Peter believed it would prove successful and greatly encouraging results are now being seen. Current school pupils now number 221, compared with a nadir of 149 and a completely new and positive atmosphere envelops

all that the school does.

Peter's other great contribution was to tackle costs and the neglected areas of maintenance in the school infrastructure. Cost reductions which could be achieved as the opportunities arose were implemented, almost without any adverse consequences, and Peter has left a "very tightly run ship" with a greatly improved morale and tightly managed costs.

Catching up on the many areas of neglected maintenance and improving the school's image, by moving the administration and reception to the Head's House, have been large and expensive tasks. Peter tackled the problems head on and, during recent years, has overseen a major transformation in the external image of the school, whilst ensuring the long-term sustainability of its infra-



structure.

I have served on the Board of Governors for the whole period of Peter's Chairmanship and I have had the privilege of a front seat view of the enormous burden and responsibility he has shouldered, all done carefully and calmly without a cross word and always with a successful outcome. Peter was truly one of nature's gentlemen. Mention must also be made of his wife Karen who, to sort out all the school's financial documentation and management, assumed the Bursar's role from Peter's Aberdeen office and, for well over a year, worked tirelessly and on a voluntary basis to ensure the school's financial management was soundly based and legally compliant.

Peter's passing at the relatively young age of 70 is an incalcu-

lable loss to the school. His memory, however, will live on, supported by his enormous achievements and nothing could give Peter more satisfaction than seeing a continued and healthy growth in pupil numbers and a sustained progression towards a strong and sustainable future for the school.

David Ward  
Governor and President  
Draxonian Association



## HEAD'S POST BAG

*In this section, we will publish excerpts of important and interesting correspondence received from the Draxonian family.*

Our first foreign cricket tour?

Bearing in mind that while some readers of this piece will be as old as me, I am aware that most will have experienced Read School/Drax Grammar School much more recently than the 1957-61 period it concerns. So, I should point out that in the first of those years, Drax had 250 pupils (68 of them boarders) and just 13 full-time teachers plus the Head – and it was an exclusively masculine establishment. We had a matron, but I only recall seeing her when the whole school photograph was being taken, and I believe the headmaster (R. S. Adamson) had a wife and daughter, but they were rarely glimpsed by anyone. When you had passed the 11+ and were faced with the choice of grammar school, everyone was aware that Drax was renowned, beyond all else, as the school that 'would make a man of you!' Over the next five years or so, you discovered all that that meant. One of the main man-making features was certainly the heavy emphasis on sport. Sport has become a major part of any education programme in the 21st century, but whereas now the emphasis is on variety, diversity and personal choice leading to fruitful development, in the 1950s Drax offered rugby in the autumn term, cross-country/athletics in the spring term and cricket in summer – and choice was not an option; on Wednesday afternoon EVERYONE took part in the one activity on offer.\* Whilst I loved cricket from day one, and rugby (eventually), I still have nightmares about slithering my way through the sodden or solidly frozen ploughed fields between the school and the river Ouse on Wednesday afternoons in January and February. Perhaps it was only the knowledge that it was 'making a man of me' that kept me going.

If you were good enough at one or more of the sports to represent the school, you were transported to play at other Grammar Schools in the West Riding, or to York, Scarborough or Hull perhaps. If you were not, and didn't take part in the annual trip to Switzerland in the summer holidays, you were unlikely to escape Drax's isolated setting at all, to gain some experience of the world outside; hugely different from the experience that is on offer today.

With that in mind, you will perhaps understand my surprise when, at the beginning of the summer term in 1957, it was revealed that the School 1st XI cricket team was to visit Scotland as guests of Greenock Cricket Club on the banks of the River Clyde, and to play three matches way up there during the Whitsuntide half-term break. I was surprised, firstly, because I didn't believe it was possible to play cricket in Scotland. After all, on many days in April and May, it was barely possible to play cricket on the front field at Drax and anywhere beyond Yorkshire was the 'frozen north' as far as I knew. Secondly, I was only a Colt (i.e. under 15) at the time but I and Geoff Holah (another Colt) were invited by 'Fred' (i.e. Mr R.E.F. Moloney \*\*) to join the 1st XI to make up a travelling party of 13. I have recently been given two slightly conflicting explanations as to how the idea of the visit originated. Keith Williams, a 1st XI player at the time, tells how he was at the Scarborough Cricket Festival in August 1956 where he met and, as was his way, got into conversation with some visitors from Greenock, Scotland. This led to one of the Scots, Jim Gardiner, secretary of the Greenock CC, Scotland's oldest club, suggesting that Drax GS might be interested in sending a team to play against the Greenock Juniors and some school sides in the area in the following summer. Bob Adamson, on the other hand, reports that he, Mike Gillian and other 1st XI players were holidaying at Blackpool where they had a similar meeting with a Greenock teacher passionate about cricket. Presumably one or the other, or both, passed their contact details on to Fred, and



he did the rest.

Our party, under his command, gathered at Selby station on the morning of Friday 7th June (Whitsuntide was very late that year) to start the 6 or 7 hour train journey, via Leeds, to Glasgow. This was long before the age of high-speed rail travel. As Fred put it in the 1957 Draxonian, 'the party had an experience which they will always remember with pleasure. From the moment we left the train at Glasgow to the moment we boarded it again our visit was an enviable example of organisation. We had four days of sunshine, we played on three beautiful wickets, one of them used by Yorkshire only a few days before, and it may fairly be said that we repaid our hosts by playing as well as we were able.' In fact, we beat Glasgow High School resoundingly, had much the better of a draw against Kelburne at Paisley, and finally showed our hosts typical Yorkshire gratitude for their splendid hospitality by defeating them by 6 wickets on their beautiful Glenpark ground. We had been very generously accommodated and entertained by all at Greenock throughout our stay and, to quote our leader again, 'A cheerful supper in the pavilion, a procession of motor cars to Glasgow St Enoch and a send-off by a platoon of members of the Greenock club brought this most pleasant interlude to an end.'

But that was far from the end of Drax's link with Scotland. A connection with Greenock had been firmly forged, and in the July of the following year a Scottish party came to Yorkshire to play several school teams before finishing their tour with a match against us on Thursday July 24th. This time we were hosts but, again, we had a 6 wicket win over our guests. Fred records the match in detail and concludes with: 'the match ended and the teams adjourned to the gym, whence mysterious Scottish noises—not all of them of purely Caledonian origin, it is believed—could be heard until late in the evening.' Those were wild times! He went on to remark 'This exchange has established itself as the happiest feature of our cricket season: long may it continue.'

And so it did. We visited Greenock in May 1959. Playing three games again, we scraped a draw against Glasgow, won by one run against Ayr Academy and again triumphed over Greenock, this time by 5 wickets. It is quite clear from REF's summary of this trip that he enjoyed the venture at least as much as we did. It is gratifying, more than 60 years later, to find his delight expressed in the Draxonian of that year; he was not the sort of teacher who revealed his responses to achievements in any obvious way at the time they occurred. Greenock came to us the following year and

again we maintained our winning run over them. Finally, as far as my own involvement went, in May 1961 we visited Scotland where, as Fred put it 'we are coming to be treated as old friends, and not only by our hosts at Greenock'. Once again our enjoyment of the 'Tour' was enhanced by success on the field: after a draw against Glasgow and a strong victory at Ayr, we returned to Glenpark for the final match in which John Sherwood proved to be a great all-round cricketer, as well as an emerging international athlete. He scored 84 not out and then took five wickets, enabling us, almost single-handedly, to win this last game by just 8 runs.

REF Moloney's nicknames are legendary. He was 'Spike' (I'm not aware of any source for this) when I started at Drax and within the next year or so he became 'Fred' (presumably a guess as to what 'F' stood for). Actually I have it on good authority that his full name was Richard Edgar Faithful Moloney, though when in later years I was one of a number of the school cricketers who visited him in Salisbury to play for his team, 'The Wiltshire Queries' (which refers, I should perhaps add, to those who, years before, had 'queried' the selections made by Wiltshire's County Cricket Club and had broken away to form their own team) I was surprised to find that he was universally called 'Pat' - only because his father was Irish, I believe.

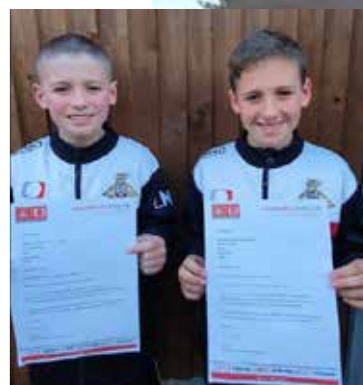
Brian Wain  
1953 - 1961







A Gingko tree was planted during lockdown - no ordinary tree but is an ancient species that is thought to have flourished with the dinosaurs about 180-200 million years ago. Their longevity and ability to weather the world and its changeability is heartening in these unsettled times. Pictured above: Headmistress, Mrs Ainley with key worker children.



Sport remains a key pillar of Read School life. Pictured above former Read School pupil, Sam Pocklington who now plays rugby for Doncaster Knights and Year 7 twins, Harry & Jack Huddleston whose football scholarship contract

with Doncaster Rovers was recently renewed



Year 11 pupils on their last day at Read School, having learned that GCSE examinations would be cancelled this year



## VE Day

Plans to celebrate the 75th commemoration of VE Day in school had to be quickly adapted during lockdown. Read School pupils and parents celebrated with dressing up and enjoying the festivities!

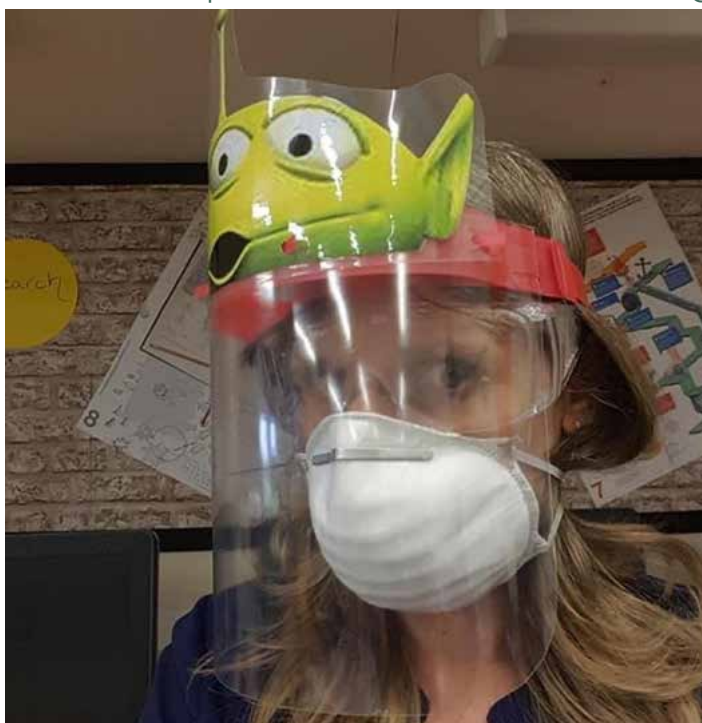




On March 20th, 2020, in line with the Government's COVID-19 lockdown mandate, Read School was forced to move its educational provision on line. The School has now completed an incredible 14 weeks of remote learning including 6370 online lessons and form meetings. The pictures are a testimony to the fantastic way in which the Read School community responded to the crisis, adapting quickly to the new reality, pulling together and working as hard as ever.



The Read School Creative Arts department took the initiative to work collaboratively with two local schools to create over 1000 pieces of child-friendly PPE for key workers in local hospitals, medical centres and nursing homes.



### Life in Lockdown at Read

Aside from the academic challenge of virtual lessons, Read School pupils have engaged in a wide array of activities, including weekly sports challenges, music and drama performances, providing that the 360 degree education that the School has historically provided is as vibrant as ever.

# OBITUARIES

## NEVILLE STONES

My name is Brian Midgley and I now live in New Zealand having emigrated from England in 1969. I was a classmate of Neville's during my time at Read (1949 to 1956) and also was a very good friend. Being a town boy it was amusing to see Neville riding round the sports field bare back on an old nag when we were practicing for rugby or athletics on Wednesday afternoons, which were dedicated to sports. I can't remember Neville playing rugby, cricket or athletics but he must have done something. He was very smart, worked hard but had a very easy, relaxed and somewhat simple view on life whereas we were always tearing about and getting stressed up after being late for the train from Selby in the mornings and then having to cycle to get to school or missing the train home and having to then walk and hitch-hike back to Selby.

He was always smiling and upbeat about everything and I cannot remember Neville ever being

angry or upset. He talked differently to us in a sort of rural language which was rich and easy on the ear although sometimes hard to understand. This I think continued for most of his life.

When at Read, he used to invite me to his parents' farm and we would have treats (certainly for me) collecting free ranged eggs from all over the place, like a treasure hunt and then sitting down to his mother's fresh from the oven apple pie and thick cream.

There has been a 45 year gap in my relationship with Neville but in the last fifteen years or so we have swapped e-mails (his quite hard to understand sometimes as he would switch from talking about the present right in mid-sentence to a topic of history some hundred years back – very confusing but also some of them were extremely funny). His interest and knowledge of history was phenomenal and he took a real interest in politics and farming matters. He hated computers and blamed them for just about

everything that was happening in his life! Being very hard of hearing in his later years he also hated telephones.

Like me he was an only child and as such I think that, especially in early childhood, close friendships take the place of siblings in other families.

I have visited Selby twice in the last ten years to catch up with him and other classmates and we have had a couple of terrific class re-unions.

I heard of one occasion where some French studewnts were on exchange and someone asked Neville what good languages did for him. "Well, it helped me to recognise Latin plant names" he replied.

On one of my visits I had arranged for Neville and I to see Trapper Hudson, my old Physics Master living in Lincolnshire. Neville insisted that we make a detour and visit a sister school also founded by Charles Read. We were already late as Neville had been rounding up some cattle since dawn that had got out of a paddock. He was covered in mud and had to change. I reluctantly agreed to go to the other Read school building, now a community center, and it was very interesting. We did make it on time after all but I had to do some pretty fast driving. I heard from another mate afterwards that Neville thought I was a crazy driver and that he was glad when he could finally get out of the car.

Neville was one in a million, very careful with spending, opinionated, yet funny, loving and fascinated by and an expert on history. He was such a delightful yet eccentric individual all round. We need to be around people like him to make our lives richer.

Cheerio my fine Drax friend, from New Zealand,

Brian  
22/11/19

### THE DRAXONIAN

Form IIIQ—W. F. Wells, J. A. Fowler.  
Form IVQ—G. Longley, J. A. Longfield.  
Form IVQ—R. F. Nugent, G. W. Lloyd.  
Form V—B. Midgley, J. N. Stones.  
Form LVI—P. Jackson (science), R. Winders (arts).

#### SPECIAL PRIZES

Woodwork, P. Hornsey.  
Music—  
Flute, G. W. Lloyd.  
Vocal (senior), P. Palmer.  
Vocal (junior), K. W. Thompson.  
Art, N. Winders.  
Reading—  
(Senior), B. J. Midgley.  
(Junior), K. W. Thompson.  
English, D. A. Williamson.  
History, S. Wilson.  
Economics, A. H. Philpot.  
Chemistry, B. R. Midgley.  
Physics, B. Weaving.  
Thompson Prize, B. Dockels.  
Shipley Turner Prize, I. D. Crossland.  
Hartley Prize, S. Wilson, D. E. Simpkin.  
Special Prizes, B. Weaving, D. A. Williamson.

#### OPERATION TALENT

The object of this year's exercise is almost explained in its title. Those taking part were each given a talent—actually £5—which they had to increase by any means possible (they could even put it on horses or dogs). Money could not be earned in either Yorkshire, Lancashire or Lincolnshire. The exercise lasted from the morning of Monday, 4th July, until the following Saturday at 12 noon. There were eight competitors: L. V. Appleyard, S. I. Dennis, P. Hornsey, C. H. Manock, D. E. Simpkin, P. M. Smith, R. Winders and myself.

Appleyard hitch-hiked to Cambridgeshire, where he picked fruit for a jam firm and later worked in a garage. He arrived very hot on Saturday morning after running from Haverhill.

Dennis complained of having to walk for 30 miles on the first day but he was employed by a rich Jew and worked for him all the week. He returned on the Friday night to play cricket on the Saturday despite his sore feet.

### THE DRAXONIAN

Hornsey enjoyed himself riding round the country, sight-seeing. He covered the most mileage but did very little work. In spite of this he returned with his whole talent and a little more (1/- extra, I believe).

Manock cycled to Wisbech, where he obtained a job on a market-gardening estate. Here he nearly cut a finger off while cutting cabbages. He cycled back during Friday night.

Simpkin, who was awarded the plaque this year, travelled as far South as Brighton. He earned his money by several methods including fruit-picking, but was unlucky at the Royal Show where, although he was offered a job washing-up, he could not find the stand.

Smith went to the Fenlands where he was employed picking strawberries. He evidently earned quite a lot of money because he had sufficient to return by rail.

Winders had his ideas carefully planned out. He cycled straight to Nottingham for the Royal Show, where he worked as a car-park attendant and had the pleasure of seeing the Queen arrive. He returned with the most money—£5 10s. 0d. above his talent.

We set off walking briskly on a warm Monday morning. As soon as we were out of sight of the school we opened our envelopes to ensure that we had not been given too little. I travelled as far as Doncaster with Appleyard and Dennis. We then parted and I travelled to London "thumbing my way" with drivers, some of whom were, to put it politely, more careful than others.

Since my destination was Kent, I caught a tube train as far south as possible and then started to walk in a south-easterly direction. After walking miles I decided it would be better to catch a train. I caught the last train to Kent and got off at Orpington. There seemed to be no suitable place to sleep here and it was past midnight so I bedded down in a hedge bottom where I caught a cold which lasted for the week.

On Tuesday morning after no sleep, a lift found me in Sevenoaks. Here I worked all morning and part of the afternoon—cleaning windows. There were nearly a hundred to be cleaned, both inside and outside. My reward was seven shillings and an excellent meal. Brighton was my next destination, for here I was sure there would be plenty of jobs such as amusement-park attendant. A naval officer



## RON FARLEY

Mr Farley who was a Read School pupil 1942 -1946. He was a very impressive athlete in his day and is featured in the photo attached holding the house shield. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr Farley personally a few times as translated various pieces of German communication for him and he was a gifted pianist, with a great ability to sight read. He was full of life and an inspirational gentleman.

Ron who was a great athlete and joined the air force, training at RAF Cranwell after leaving Read School, was a real character and could play piano beautifully from sight.

Ron still lived locally, in Camblesforth, where Mrs Ainley visited him in residence. Ron was at school during what must have been one of the most austere times in the School's history. His headmasters were Rev Grant and Mr Adamson. A wonderful gentleman who never lost his joie de vivre and fondness for the school until the very end. RIP Mr Farley, who was one of our longest serving Old Draxonians.



## Tributes paid to 'a true Selebian'

by PATRICK GOULDSBROUGH - patrick.gouldsbrough@selbytimes.co.uk

Tributes have been paid to "a true Selebian" after he sadly passed away at the end of April.

Ronald Farley, who was 91-years of age when he died on April 25, has been described as "the perfect gentleman" and a "jovial, Yorkshireman" by his family and those who knew him.

Born in Selby in 1929 as one of nine children, Ronald grew up in the town until he joined the Royal Air Force in his formative years, unlike his siblings who joined the Royal Green Howards.

Ronald's job in the RAF took him around the world. However, it was his love of Selby people and the town that kept bringing him back each time.

After meeting his late wife Margot while playing the piano at a Red Cross leaving party, they later married and had four children. While Ronald continued his career in the RAF, Margot raised the children back at home in Selby.

Having left the RAF after a career spanning many locations, Ronald settled back into Selby and embarked on a second successful career as an executive officer for the Labour Exchange in the Civil Service. While doing this job, Ronald was remembered for giving job opportunities at Drax Power Station to the people of Selby.

Aside from career and family, Ronald loved playing the piano, leading to his allotment, playing and watching sport and never missed an episode of his beloved Countdown.

It was also typical of Ronald to be found doing the crossword at the end of the bar at the Unicorn and Gypsy Moth pubs in Selby and getting banned from pub quizzes because he won too often.

In later life, Ronald's talents went beyond sport and music and he penned several poems. His love of walking and travelling on his bike and later on, mobility scooter, was also noted: having never passed his driving test.

Paying tribute to her father, Ronald's daughter, Melanie, said: "Family always meant a lot to dad. He never expressed it too much and was a private person, but you always knew you could count on

him and he was watching out for you. In his own quiet way, he was proud of the family.

"He was well known in the Selby area, especially with his job at the civil service. He always tried his best to get local people jobs during that time and if he wasn't there, he'd be doing a crossword in the pub. He could also never walk, past a piano without playing it. It was always something he had to do.

"Something that people don't know about him is that he exchanged a lot of personal letters with TV chef Rick Stein and has a lot of signed books from him. I still have all the letters that he sent."

Melanie remembers her dad as "a severely doused gentleman who had to be waited a bootie everywhere he went".

She added: "He always had to be dressed properly and had to be a proper gentleman. He also loved a laugh and a joke, but he taught his family how to behave and the correct way to be."

"He was a man that was happy with his own company and he was a contrast in character. He would like to show off somewhat in sport and when playing the piano, but he could also be reserved. He didn't like to go to family gatherings or occasions or parties and sometimes we had to slightly lie to him to get him to celebrate his anniversary and birthdays.

"I just think it's nice that when he was part of the RAF, he and my mum could have settled anywhere, but they chose Selby. He loved the place and I strongly believe the place loved him back."

Ronald was a well-known member of the community in both Selby and Camblesforth, where he lived for many years.

The Cosmos Inn remembered him playing the piano with a large gin and tonic. The pub paid tribute to him by saying: "It was lovely when we were closing listening to him play the 'boogie woogie'. He said he never read music but his relative taught him it all."

His old school, Read School Drax, have also paid



tribute to Ronald. He attended the school from 1942-1946 and in that time, had great athletic prowess. The current headteacher of the school, Ruth Ainley, remembers Ronald as "an inspirational gentleman" who was gifted at the piano.

She said: "I had the pleasure of meeting Mr Farley personally a few times and translated various pieces of German communication for him. He was full of life and an inspirational gentleman."

"Ron, who was a great athlete and joined the air force at RAF Cranwell after leaving Read School, was a real character and could play the piano beautifully."

"Ron still lived locally, in Camblesforth, where I visited him in residence. Ron was at school during what must have been one of the most austere times in the school's history. His headmasters were Rev Grant and Mr Adamson. He was a wonderful gentleman who never lost his joie de vivre and fondness for the school until the very end. Rest in peace Ronald Farley."

### 'Camblesforth by Drax'

by Ronald Farley

Long vapour trails map out the sky  
Drax Power towers not near so high

'Englen Village Nurseries' gloaming panes;  
Highbright Camblesforth's leafy lanes.

The 'Hall's three slownys timbered grounds;  
Old farm buildings walled surrounds;  
Cottages old, bungalows new,  
Together meld, don't mar the view.

The pub's The Cosmos ( God of Mirth);

Betty's food a threat to girls;  
Steve's quiz night questions foil;  
Will the winner "open the box?"  
Groceries, papers, a perm from Joanne,

fresh veg from 'Merv' in his mobile van.

Fish & chips, or pie, piping hot,  
Postage, pensions, can all be got.

There's even an 'office' - open all hours,  
For beer, wine and spirits - sorry, no flowers;

A tiny chapel and village hall;  
Nursery and primary schools for all.

The village elder is eighty-nine,  
The newest babe is doing fine.

Old and new, east, west, south or north,  
All's well that ends in Camblesforth.

Kindly re-printed from The Selby Times

## PETER BOWLES

Sadly Peter Branson Bowles passed away on 8th December 2019 at the age of 98. Born 6th December 1921. He attended the school with his twin brother, Terence.

## JACK BRIERS

Jack Briers of Whitley Bridge. Don Bramley tells us he was the best cricketer ever to come out of Read and he also kindly donated the Yellow Blazer and Cap that we have.



## PAUL KENDAL

A pupil of Drax GS 1953-58, Paul was quite clever yet at the same time was something of an historian with details of a Drax student in the Napoleonic wars. More recently he was a regular attendee at the Draxonians 'get togethers' at the George Hotel (formerly the Londesborough Hotel) always contributing to the meetings with many documents and photographs relating to the School.

He collated lots of documents relating to the early history of the School and I seem to remember that he did lots of research on the past Headmasters at Drax as well

as delving into the history of the founders of the School – Charles Read etc. I often gave him a lift to the School on Summer and Winter re-unions and always found him to be humorous, well mannered and very genuine.

I think we all saw him around Selby on many occasions looking very smart with his striped green and black blazer as, presumably because he lived alone, he came into Selby on most days to have lunch at Morrisons, Selby Hospi-

tal or Wetherspoons. Paul will be very much missed, not just by me and other Draxonians but by many people who were used to seeing him around Selby.



## SIR LEONARD APPELYARD

Kindly re-printed from The Telegraph

### Sir Leonard Appleyard

Diplomat in China during the Cultural Revolution who later assisted in the Hong Kong handover

**S**IR LEONARD APPELYARD, who has died aged 81, was one of the Foreign Office's leading China hands: in Peking for Mao's Cultural Revolution, private secretary to the Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe as the handover of Hong Kong was negotiated, and retiring as Ambassador in Beijing once it was accomplished; the Chinese thanked him for its smoothness.

A small, tough, dark, balding Yorkshireman keen on classical music and football, Appleyard was adept at letting the politicians take the credit for his diplomatic spadework. He was much liked by his staff despite a justified reputation for wanting everything done at the double.

Arriving in Peking as a second secretary in 1966, Appleyard showed calm and courage as the Cultural Revolution erupted into anti-British violence.

In June 1967 Red Guards smashed their way into the Mission and kicked and jostled two diplomats, Anthony Blishen and the future Foreign Office minister Ray Whitney.

Appleyard and Blishen's wife, who had left the compound before the crowd broke in, were punched and harried for several minutes. The police stood by as Embassy windows and flower pots were smashed, a portrait of the Queen defaced and a Union Jack ripped to shreds.

Weeks later, Appleyard was one of two diplomats pelted with tomatoes by a 1,000-strong mob. In the Commons the Labour Foreign Office minister Bill Rodgers, asked if he was satisfied that Britain had protested strongly enough, said he was, but remarked: "I greatly regret that we have not had satisfactory replies."

That August a mob protesting at the arrest of three Communist journalists in Hong Kong, led by Red Guards, sacked the Legation, seizing the chargé d'affaires, who refused to kowtow. The squeeze was maintained, with the authorities stalling over exit visas for embassy staff; Appleyard and his young family were kept waiting five months before being allowed to leave in September 1968.

In August 1994 Appleyard returned to the Chinese capital, by then known as Beijing, as Ambassador, having been knighted to



Was once pelted with tomatoes by a Beijing mob

par with Washington and Paris. His task was to keep relations with China on an even keel as the handover approached.

Outstanding issues at times put him at odds with Chris Patten, Hong Kong's final colonial governor, who was trying to embed a degree of democracy which China, and the Foreign Office, found unhelpful.

One contentious issue was the composition and powers of Hong Kong's Court of Final Appeal; Appleyard and Michael Heseltine raised objections to Patten's proposals, but the Prime Minister John Major gave the governor the final say on Britain's negotiating strategy.

Leonard Vincent Appleyard was born at Cawood, near Selby, on September 2 1938. From the Read School, Drax, he read Classical Chinese at Queens' College, Cambridge, then joined the Foreign Office in 1962.

He was posted as a third secretary to Hong Kong in 1964, then after two years' China-watching was sent to Peking. After his return to the FCO in 1968, postings followed to New Delhi in 1971, then in 1975 to Moscow. Each capital was a window on China.

After a brief spell with the Treasury,

counsellor. In August 1980, with colleagues on holiday, he found himself taking up the plight of hundreds of British yachtsmen stranded in French ports by a fishermen's blockade.

He returned to the FCO in 1982 as head of economic relations, then early in 1984 was appointed principal private secretary to Howe; almost his first duty was to accompany him to Hong Kong, Korea and Japan.

Appleyard was well-placed as Howe concluded the agreement to hand Hong Kong over to China when Britain's lease on the New Territories expired. But he was also involved in every other aspect of his work.

One of particular sensitivity concerned Howe's efforts to have Scotland Yard ban demonstrations by British Sikhs following the Indian military's raid on the Golden Temple in Amritsar in 1984 to flush out militants demanding an independent Sikh state, which killed about 1,000 people.

Howe believed that such demonstrations would carry very serious risks, both for Indo-British relations and for law and order. Appleyard minuted the Home Office that the protests would "also further intensify the Indian government's resentment against the UK" and force India to impose a costly trade boycott. Britain was then trying to sell Westland helicopters to Delhi.

In 1986 Appleyard was appointed Ambassador to Hungary. Among his junior staff was Lord St Andrews, elder son of the Duke of Kent, the only member of the royal family to serve as a diplomat behind the Iron Curtain.

Leaving Budapest in 1989, months before Hungary breached that curtain by opening its border with Austria, he was seconded to be deputy Cabinet Secretary for foreign policy and defence.

Margaret Thatcher was in full voice over Europe, and Appleyard's vivid account of one stormy Cabinet in 1990 prompted Douglas Hurd to remark that there were now three items on every Cabinet agenda: "parliamentary affairs, home affairs and xenophobia".

Appleyard sat in on John Major's Gulf "War Cabinet", and in February 1991 was at

mortar bomb at No 10 which landed 50ft away and blew in the windows.

Later that year he returned to the FCO as political director. In December 1991 Major dispatched him from the Maastricht summit to assess conditions in the disintegrating Soviet Union on a whistle-stop tour to Moscow, Kiev and Minsk. Appleyard told the leaders of the new Commonwealth of Independent States that the West would judge them on their control of nuclear weapons, the rights of minorities, and the Soviet Union's £40 billion of foreign debt.

He was able to reassure Major that Soviet nuclear weapons would remain under central control and command. He also reported that Boris Yeltsin had signalled for the first time that Russia might accept Western help in dismantling parts of that arsenal. Appleyard also met President Gorbachev, whose star was on the wane, and in Kiev signed a joint communiqué establishing consular relations with Ukraine.

His final appointment, to Beijing in 1994, began in personally turbulent circumstances. Just before he left he divorced his wife Elizabeth and married Joan Jefferson, who resigned as head of St Swithun's School in Winchester to join him. A flurry of tabloid coverage involved an FCO secretary who had also been expecting to marry him when the divorce came through.

Once the couple got to Beijing, the posting proved a success; one highlight was a visit in 1995 by Margaret Thatcher.

Retiring in November 1997, Appleyard was vice-chairman of Barclays Capital until 2003. He went on to serve as pro-chancellor of Bournemouth University, and a senior fellow and visiting professor at the University of Southampton. He chaired the council of Winchester Cathedral from 2007.

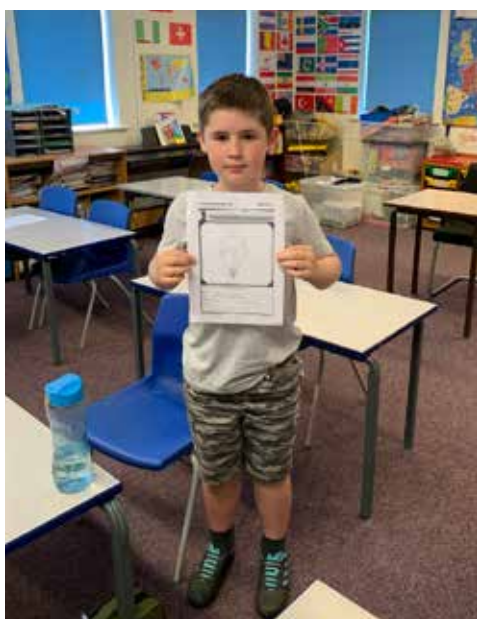
He was appointed CMG in 1984, and KCMG in 1994.

Leonard Appleyard married, first, in 1964, Elizabeth West; they had two daughters. The marriage was dissolved in 1994, in which year he married, secondly, Joan Jefferson.

Leonard Appleyard, born September 2



## READ SCHOOL RETURNS



From June 1st Read School was able to welcome back pupils in Junior School, Year 10 and 12. The smiles on the children's faces testified to their joy at being reunited with classmates and teachers. Roll on September!





# OPEN MORNING

3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER  
9.30 am - 1.00 pm



READ SCHOOL  
DRAX

Independent Day & Boarding School  
for Boys & Girls 3 - 18

For more information contact: [headspa@readschool.co.uk](mailto:headspa@readschool.co.uk)  
or call 01757 618248 - [www.readschool.co.uk](http://www.readschool.co.uk)





## READ SCHOOL

DRAX

# The Best Possible Start at Read School, Drax

Dear Draxonian,

**Please consider our exceptional Lower Junior School (Reception – Year 2) for the first exciting stage of learning for your child or grandchild.**

At Read School, Drax, we would love to welcome your little one into our Lower Junior School (LJS) and give them further opportunities for laughter and learning in our family ethos. We work closely with parents to nurture children as highly-valued individuals to reach their full potential. We know children are never too young to enjoy subject-specialist teaching.

Some local primary schools will struggle with the challenges of the pandemic due to large class sizes and small classrooms. Read is lucky to have small class sizes and spacious areas for play and learning. Should lockdown be enforced, we already wowed parents before the Summer term with our live remote learning sessions, which parents fed back they were delighted with.

You may not be aware that you can use your 15 - 30 hours of childcare up to and including the term your child turns 5.

**Pop in soon for a tour. I would love to share what we're so proud of and introduce you to our talented team.**

Best wishes,

*Ruth Ainley*

Mrs Ruth Ainley, Headteacher



**At Read, to set pupils on a creative path, alongside Maths and Literacy, we're delighted to offer:**

- Brand new free weekly 25-minute music lessons including piano, other classical instruments and ukulele, throughout LJS.
- PE with our Upper Junior School (UJS) pupils led by Head of Sport, Mrs Sue Prosser and Mr John Matthews, with football, rounders and rugby skills, to name a few, on our acres of sports fields and large sports hall.
- French with our talented EYFS specialist Mrs Lisa Fairhurst and occasional pop-up language workshops with senior language staff.
- Choir and fabulous, curriculum-enriching, educational trips with our popular and nurturing Head of Department KSI & 2 & Music Specialist, Mrs Caroline Wynne.
- Individual learning packages to spot any areas where your child might struggle in the future and gently intervene to solve any issues early.
- Small class sizes so social distancing is easy in our lovely learning spaces.
- Before and afterschool care; we plan to partnership with the Kids' Corner right next door to share this provision. More details to follow. Other Read afterschool clubs including Chess and Cookery are also available.
- Fun, wonderment and second-to-none care; our pastoral care has been highly praised by school inspectors.

**Founded 1667**

Drax, Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 8NL, UK • 01757 618248 • [enquiries@readschool.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@readschool.co.uk)

[www.readschool.co.uk](http://www.readschool.co.uk)

Head: Ruth A Ainley, MA (Oxon), PGCE (York) • A Registered Charity No. 529675, administered by The Read School, Drax, Trustee Limited, Company No. 7236884



Website: [www.readschool.co.uk](http://www.readschool.co.uk)  
Email: [mooney@readschool.co.uk](mailto:mooney@readschool.co.uk)  
[info@readschool.co.uk](mailto:info@readschool.co.uk)

Please let us know if you would like to receive  
a copy of the weekly school newsletter or our  
Draxonian Publications for Junior, Senior School  
& Sixth Form

Read School  
Drax, Selby,  
North Yorkshire YO8 8NL  
Tel: 01757 618248