

# BFES SCEA Association

## Journal & Newsletter - Summer 2020

Issue 46

### From the Chair

As we live through these unprecedented times my abiding thought is the hope that all our members, and their extended families, have managed to avoid being infected by the dreadful Corona Virus.

Given the fact that the vast majority of our membership consists of people in their 60s and 70s and some, like myself, in their 80s, the risks associated with this virus are that much more dangerous. This very fact is bound to have an impact on all of us, especially as there is no way of knowing how long the present risk level will be maintained.

One immediate consequence of the lockdown we have all faced was the need to cancel our planned committee meeting, which was due to take place in Bristol, on the 27th of April. Since then we have endeavoured to discuss issues and plan for the future on the basis of emails.

Personally, I place great value on the importance of planning reunion events, which enable us to meet up with each other, as I feel this is vital to ensure a continued interest in the Association. You may be aware that at the end of my Chairman's comments in the last Newsletter I expressed my concern that we did not see an increase in our membership following the closure of the schools in Germany. This fact, plus the constraints placed on us by the COVID-19 pandemic when it comes to the planning of future reunions, does pose real risks in terms of maintaining a sufficient level of interest in the continuation of the Association.

Although the excellent Newsletter produced by Tom Nielsen-Marsh does help to maintain an interest in the Association, this can only be sustained by members contributing articles for inclusion. To continue producing the superb newsletter Tom is increasingly having to delve into the historical archives of Service schools.

When it was announced we had an AGM reunion planned to take place at the Defence Sixth Form College Welbeck, in October, with a dinner on the preceding evening, there was a widespread declaration of interest by many people. It therefore saddens me a great deal that we feel there are far too many risks involved in continuing to plan for this event, which is the reason it was decided to cancel it. If there is a continuing rate of infection in the coming months we feel it is inevitable that members would not be prepared to take the risk of attending such a social function. This could have led to very low attendance and the need to cancel at the last minute.

As a committee we will have to decide whether to plan an alternative gathering at Welbeck, sometime in the summer term 2021, before the college rather sadly closes permanently in July 2021 due to MOD cost cuts. In addition, it is hoped that having had to cancel the curry lunch in Winchester this year, that we can plan to have this event again next year. Further to this, we hope to have an AGM meeting in October 2021 at a venue yet to be decided. Given the stunning success of our last AGM venue in the Military Academy Sandhurst I hope that we can plan for a similarly attractive venue.

It would help a great deal if members of the Association could communicate with either **Sue Adams or myself**, to let us have your thoughts not only about attending possible reunions at Welbeck and Winchester in 2021, but more generally as to whether they value being able to meet up at such reunion events. Such thoughts must of course be based on the assumption that as we move through 2021 that the threat posed to all of us by this dreadful pandemic will have all but disappeared.

Finally, I send my very best wishes to all of you at this difficult time, with the hope that more than anything else you will take care to avoid this awful virus and keep healthy.

Ken Jones - June 2020

### A Brief History of JHQ

In **August 1952** the **Rheindahlener Wald** was chosen as the site for the new British Headquarters west of the Rhine. Work started in October 1952 and by 1954 over 1000 married quarters had been built as well as the large Headquarters' Building that was to be come known as the "Big House". At its peak, JHQ accommodated two cinemas, three churches, a theatre, numerous schools and pre-schools, many accommodation blocks, multiple sporting facilities including an open-air 50 mtr swimming pool and various "Messes" and shops.

This incredible building feat was made somewhat harder due to the prevailing weather at the time. November 1952 was one of the wettest months on record - just as work on the roads and water mains had started. This was followed a year later by the most severe winter for 39 years with a permanent frost for six weeks. Unusual for this part of Germany.

A little know fact is that JHQ has its own water supply. Colonel Grattan, (**HQ SCE once occupied the "Grattan Building"**) the



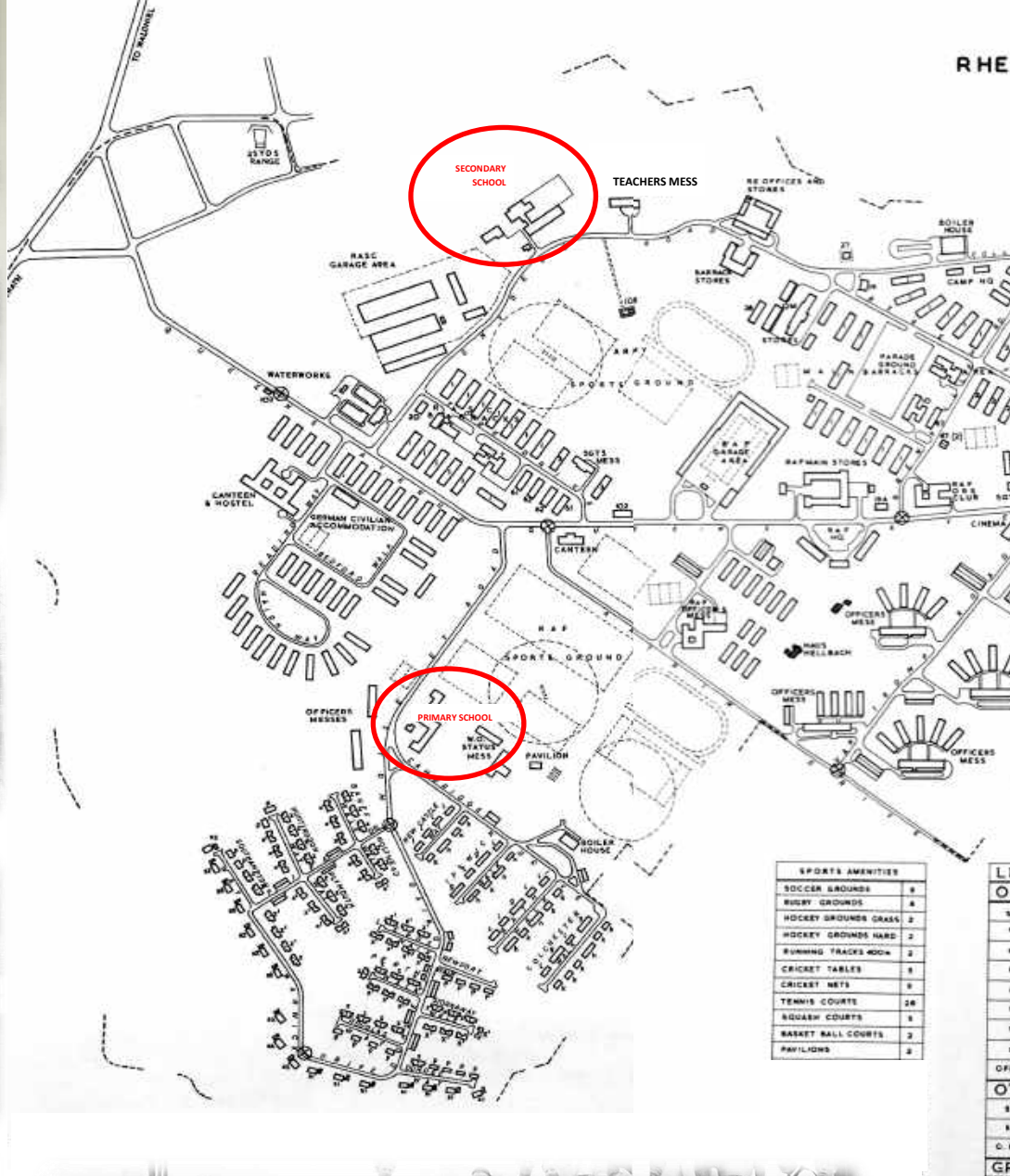
Chief Engineer for the project, was a **water diviner** who found a suitable water source thus avoiding a connection to the municipal supply. This supply - through a series of boreholes has provided JHQ with its water supply ever since.

The one million trees that were planted during the building works help give JHQ a rural feel despite the density of buildings in some areas of the complex.

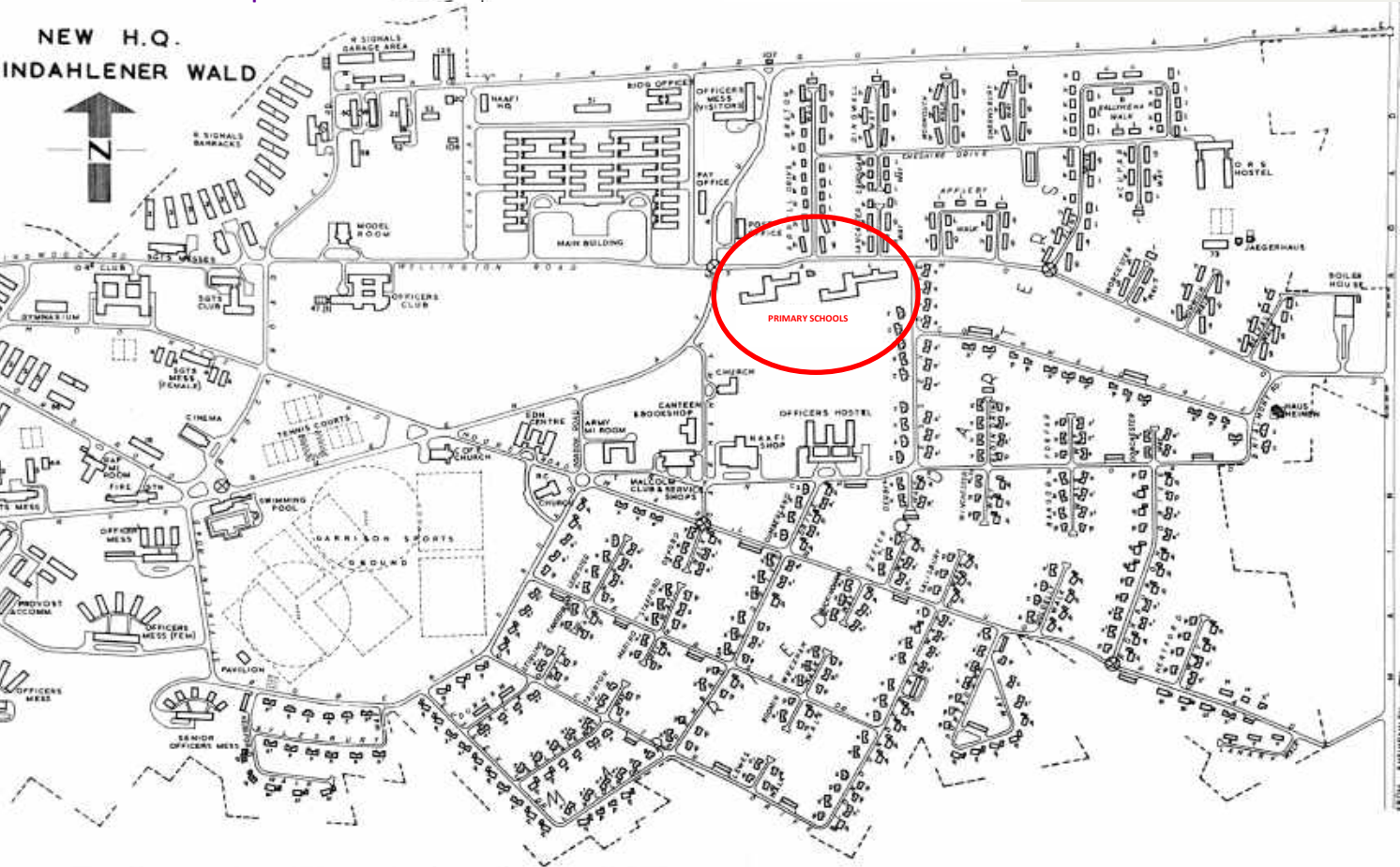
# New Headquarters in Germany



Amenity Buildings - Schools A primary school for 450 infants is provided in two standard BAOR type schools with the minimum of main roads to be crossed. They are sited to catch the maximum of sun, and were designed and incorporated in the south-west extension with the further 244 houses which were approved to be built. The station to serve Army and RAF stations west of the Rhine was at a later stage sited within the new headquarters. This is a non-boarding school, catering not only for the considerable population on site, but also for the Army



ool buildings, so placed as to be within children's walking distance of most of the housing estate, with  
 ned with the classroom outlook almost entirely of glass. A third infant school of the same type was in-  
 the secondary school, which was not originally part of this project, but which had been under construc-  
 rters perimeter. Though it was started only in June 1954 it was opened for the *September* term 1955. It  
 and RAF units within transport distance.



LEGEND FOR MARRIED QUARTERS				
OFFICERS				
1	TYPE III WITH GARAGE	18	4	20
2	TYPE III (MODIFIED) WITH GARAGE	2		2
3	TYPE III WITH GARAGE	25	30	65
4	TYPE III	51	35	87
5	TYPE IV	186	30	216
6	TYPE IV	12		12
7	TYPE V	24	44	68
8	TYPE V	75	32	107
OFFICER TOTALS		424	229	653
OTHER RANKS				
9	TYPE B (BLOCKS OF 4)	213	87	300
10	TYPE C (PAIRS - 2 BLOCKS OF 4)	134	42	176
TOTALS		347	129	476
GRAND TOTALS		771	358	1129

REFERENCE TO TYPES	
1	RE HUT-80 TO MALE
2	RE HUT 32 FEMALE
3	RE HUT-40 (BARBETS) (MALE)
4	RE HUT 14 SGT (FEMALE)
4A	RE HUT-12 SGT (FEMALE)
5	DINING HALL & COOKHOUSE
6	INST ROOM
7	MAIN GUARD ROOM & PAC
7A	RAF GUARD & ET ROOM
8	UNIT GUARD ROOM
9	MESSE DIN & CANTEREN
10	GAS CHAMBER
11	MINIATURE RANGE
12	SQUASH COURTS
13	TELEPHONE EXCHANGE
14	MESSE SUPER MESS & Q TR
15	MESSE OFFICE & STORES
16	R SIGS SGN OFFICE
17	R SIGS SGN TROOP STORES
18	R SIGS SGN WRAC
19	RALC OFFICER
20	RALC STORES
21	RAF RATION STORE
22	R WRAC BN OFFICES
23	SITE OFFICE BLOCK
24	MESSE SSG M ROOM
25	R A F LINK TRAINER
26	POLICE MGO POSTS
27	ARMY AMM STORE
28	BIOG GARAGES

TOTALS	
MARRIED QUARTERS	1126
BARRACK HUTS	136
MESSES	19
CLUBS	4
SCHOOLS	4
SPORTS GROUNDS	17
CINEMAS	2
GYMS	2
BUS STOPS SHOWN THIS	2

COLONEL  
 C. E. MORRIS NEW H.Q.  
 DATE 3 JUNE 1954



A misappreciation of the fecundity of the forces has thrown out the calculations which governed the provision of school places. In 1952 when the project was planned, the figure for children of primary school age was .55 per family. It has now proved to be .76 per family. Schools are overcrowded. Another primary school has just had its foundations laid on the site to meet the unforeseen demand.

Written by Col H Grattan CBE in his publication "New Headquarters in Germany".

## Why Here?

The British set up their Headquarters roughly in the centre of their zone in the Westphalian Spa towns of **Bad Oeynhausen** (Army) and **Bad Eilsen** (RAF).

Fences were thrown up around these towns and the occupants evicted except for those who were needed to provide the services in the Headquarters.

The British Naval Headquarters was established in **Minden**.

In the early 1950s, the development of the **Cold War** necessitated the establishment of a peacetime Headquarters for the **British Occupation Forces** west of the Rhine and which fitted into the NATO scheme for the defence of Western Europe. This concept was also prompted by financial considerations. The ratification of the Bonn Convention would restore full sovereignty to the new **Federal Republic of West Germany** which would mean that the full cost of occupied requisitioned properties would fall on the British taxpayer instead of on the German Occupation Budget.

The site finally chosen was near the main road to Holland through **Roermond** and was within easy reach of the electricity grid, gas and an established water works at nearby **Rheindahlen** - and - since the land was owned solely by a local textile magnate - acquisition was easy.



**After the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany in May 1945, the main task of the allied forces was to organize the zones of occupation which had been laid down in the Yalta Conference.**

*"Five sites were examined in August 1952 when it was decided to move the main Allied Headquarters in Northern Germany to the Western side of the Rhine. The criteria used in the selection of a suitable site were of a non-military nature apart from the requirement to be 'behind' the Rhine. Of the five sites, four were in the Aachen area, at that time under Belgian control, and were without independent access to utility services or communications. Furthermore it seems the Belgians were not keen to have the new headquarters on their doorstep. The final site offered was in the Hardter Wald some seven kilometers from the medium-sized German town of Mönchengladbach. This site was in thick woodland, was sufficient in area and was within reach of the electric grid, gas, and established water supplies. The Hardter Wald and the Rheindahlener Wald immediately to the south of it, were solely owned by a local textile magnate. Single ownership made acquisition, even in the more favourable conditions of the immediate post-war decade, much easier. At the last moment the Germans changed their minds. Wishing to retain the Hardter Wald as a 'lung' for Mönchengladbach they offered the less heavily forested Rheindahlener Wald plus some adjoining woodland strips as an alternative. The planners considered the new site to be reasonable and since time was a factor, it was accepted and the requisition went ahead. This is why most servicemen and their families know the Headquarters Camp as 'Rheindahlen' although a real town of Rheindahlen has existed for many centuries only a few miles away to the south."* **Ten British Military Towns** Edited by Peter Dietz



As with so many military camps and settlements, the **Romans** had been here before. A Roman causeway borders the area to the south and at the western exit the remains of a Roman castle were found. The officers' messes were built in the area of a burial ground (dating from the second and third centuries AD) and the inhabitants of **Londonderry Drive** lived over a Roman villa. British soldiers were billeted here as early as 1703 when the Duke of Marlborough led his troops on the famous march to the Danube which ended in victory at Blenheim.

Some of the artifacts found, together with maps showing the locations of the Roman remains, were exhibited in the Army Education Centre at Cambridge House, so named after the first Earl of Cambridge. King Edward III gave this title to his brother-in-law Marquess William of Juliers when he visited Cologne in 1340. It was this nobleman who raised the status of the village of Rheindahlen to a town.

The **headquarters building** was constructed on the highest part of the site. Because of many changes in plan during the course of the construction, apart from the hollow, concrete block structural shell of the building, most internal partitions were designed to be factory-made interlocking wall plates not bound onto the floors and walls. These could be easily removed or have doors sawn into them. They also saved many square meters of map boarding since they can hold drawing pins but, for those of us who came to work in the building sound proofing could be a problem. The other notable feat was the fact that the camp has its own water supply. This was due to Colonel Grattan's skill in **water divining** which he had learnt while serving in India before the Second World War.

Work started on the first quarters in early November 1952 because of the difficulty of finding accommodation in devastated Mönchengladbach. On JHQ itself there were only two German occupied houses. Haus Helbach lived in by the owner of the site and Haus Heinen.

Despite the coldest winter for 50 years, during which the workforce of 7,000 fell to 56, and a wet summer during which three inches of rain fell in one evening causing severe damage, JHQ was ready for occupation in October 1954, only three months later than originally planned. The **determination and endurance** of the German labour force was an important reason why the project was completed so rapidly despite weather conditions likened by the German workers to the that at the Russian front.

Researched from "**New Headquarters in Germany**" by Colonel H Grattan, "**Ten British Military Towns**" Edited by Peter Dietz, and various **Rheindahlen and Elmpf Bulletins**.

## 60 Years 1947 - 2007

The planners of JHQ planned the roads in accordance with the standards laid down in the English Town & Country Planning rules. JHQ thus looked little like any other part of Germany - but would make an ideal design for a new town in the UK.

*"Sixty years is a lifetime of education.*  
Within SCE the past 60 years have touched many thousands of lives. Here at **Windsor**

**School**, a School born out of two older schools, **Queens** and **Kent**, we look back over the years through the lives of our students, some of our parents who were here as children, staff, of whom some were here as children and military colleagues. Queen's School log book opens on **6 September 1955** with the arrival of ten teachers from the UK. First day for children was 14 September with the dining hall stretched to breaking point serving 235 meals at lunchtime. Reading through the entries is not too far removed from some of the issues we still



Photo credit TNM - 30 April 2013



School House - Queen's School Rheindahlen (JHQ) in 1964 - later to be known as Windsor School  
ETower Copyright

deal with on a day-to-day basis - although the dining hall is much bigger now. Many young people, teaching and support staff have come and gone. They go off to the four corners of the globe, each contributing to our school and taking a little bit of the school away with them. It will remain with them as memories for many, many years.

**Father Bill Boyd**, long time padre and friend of the school, reminds us about people and places as though they were yesterday. He reminds us that Queens, Kent and Windsor Schools help make a difference in the lives, past present and future, of all who pass through our doors. We care for these young people for such a short time, the students of today are the leaders of tomorrow.

As we look back over 60 years we remember many names and faces. We also look forward and plan for the future. It is our responsibility, just as it was in 1947 for those early pioneers of service children's education, to provide a first class education in order to equip youngsters for the demands of the future. On behalf of current staff and students thank you to all who have journeyed through our school and good luck to those yet to arrive."

Text adapted from "60 Years - 1947 - 2007"  
edited by Paul A Macardle MA



School House - preparing for handover  
13 August 2013 TNM



Windsor School - preparing for handover  
13 August 2013 TNM



Windsor School, Main Entrance - preparing for handover 13 August 2013 TNM

## Going, Going, Almost Gone

**Steve Wallace**, who joined SCE in 2001, reflects on his role in the drawdown of schools in Germany.

I took early retirement from the Ministry of Defence in 2013, now live in Munich with my wife, and have found time to write three 'whodunit' crime mystery novels, as well improving my golf game.

I started working for SCE in 2001 as ICT Manager, responsible for the development and implementation of a new ICT Strategy for the organisation and took over the role of Facilities Manager in 2007. After a short spell as Acting Deputy Chief, in 2009 I became triple-hatted, when appointed SCE's Drawdown Manager, responsible for establishing and implementing a plan for the closure of schools and other SCE HQ locations. This in accordance with the Army 2020 rebasing programme, alongside Tom Nielsen-Marsh, who provided expertise and guidance from an educational perspective.

Now that the last of the troops and their families have left British Forces Germany (BFG), apart from those in Paderborn, perhaps now is a good time to reflect on the actual process of closing our schools in Germany.

In simplistic terms, it would seem to be a quite straightforward procedure to close a school, hand it over to the Authorities and simply walk away, but in practice, there was substantially more to it than that, especially when you have some twenty schools to close in such a short timeframe.

Early engagement with the Consortium School Business Manager (CSBM), the Headteacher and the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT), together with careful planning in conjunction with the relevant HQ BFG, Garrison and Defence Estates personnel, were key aspects in achieving the successful closure of each school; however, everyone had to 'buy-in' to the closure plan in order to achieve success.

Inevitably, there were issues, some of which can be categorised into three key areas:

### The 'Human' side

This issue was by far the most sensitive and difficult to address.

Within the SLT there had to be a realisation and understanding of the sensitivity when asking staff to assist with the closure process, at a time when they would be losing their job.

Photo Media & Comms BFG  
Crown Copyright



Photo TNM

**Above** - Editor on patrol - **top right** Steve Wallace guarding the skip, **right** Steve with RH Man Nigel Groom and **centre below** handover of the Rheindahlen Child Care Centre with Colonel Peter Davies (on the right-hand side of the photo) ...



Photo TNM



Photos TNM

## 60 Years 1947 - 2007

In recognising the achievements of Service Children's Education over the past sixty years, the children at **St. Patrick's School Rheindahlen** focused on the issues likely to face them over the next 60 years.

A themed 'ECO-WEEK' took place between May 21 and May 25 2007.

Classes researched into many areas seeking why their world is changing and what things they could do or influence in the future to make the world a better place.

Recycling, energy conservation, "Bags for Life", composting, healthy living, water, growing one's own vegetables, endangered animals, global warming and rainforests, were the topics researched across the school.

Input from outside specialists, visits and an end of term assembly contributed to the success of the week and left the children in no doubt that the next sixty years will be very exciting and that they would all have a chance to make a significant impact in the world they live in.

As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of SCE at **St Andrew's School Rheindahlen** we have been aiming to prepare our children to be creative learners for the next 60 years and beyond. Children have been developing their thinking and problem-solving skills by using the TASC wheel (Thinking Actively in a Social Context). Working together in groups, children have carried out a variety of problem-solving activities including:

Designing the perfect birthday party for Barnaby Bear (FS2);

Designing and making moving pictures (Y1 );

Persuading parents to lead a healthy lifestyle (Y3);

Solving problems as Romans on their quest across the waters (Y3);

Designing and making seasonal hats (Y4);

Designing and making the perfect biscuits to sell at the Xmas fayre, through the exploration of biscuit companies (Y5); and

Bringing the Victorian era to life by designing and experiencing at first hand, a typical Victorian school day (Y6).

Through using the TASC wheel, children explore and solve problems in a structured way, using their own ideas. In other words, they are empowered to learn and are preparing for life-long learning.

On June 27, 2007 **St George's School Rheindahlen**, began its celebrations of the 60 Years of Service Children's Education

with an afternoon during which the children were able to watch film clips from Children's TV through the ages and visiting guests read their favourite children's stories from the past 60 years.

The next day the parents joined the fun of a Street Party with slide shows, stalls and events organised by year Five and Six children. Sandwiches, cakes, jellies, and drinks were provided, with visitors having to use the 50's style ration cards provided by the children.

For the last event, all children were invited to submit an entry for a competition based on fashion, artwork, a famous person or an event from the era they had studied. FS - 21 st Century, KSI - the 80s and 90s, Y3/4 - the 60's and 70's and Year 5/6 the 40's and 50's - the entries can be viewed in the school hall.

**Photo top right** - March 2009 - Jorg Albert visits St Georges to carry out football training with years 4 and 5. **Photo bottom right** - March 2011 - children arriving at school during closure year .



## Going, Going, Almost Gone

The school had to manage the closure, whilst continuing to teach the curriculum until the last day.

The school also had to deal with:

- staff wanting to 'jump ship' early, when a job opportunity arose;
- falling pupil numbers, as families started to return to the UK;
- trying to safeguard the continuation of lessons, especially those affecting pupils working towards examinations (GCSE and A Level), to ensure that they were able to complete their course at the same school, where possible.

### The Resources

A reluctance to replace old resources (including ICT) when a school was about to close, meant that some resources had to be kept in use beyond their natural shelf life.

The actual disposal of equipment, including hazardous etc., meant that asset registers had to be drawn up to identify those items that could be utilised by other schools and other MoD establishments, those that could be disposed of in a controlled manner, and those that could be simply be 'skipped'.

### The actual Closure and Handover

This involved considerable co-ordination with the local Garrison to ensure that a school closed in a timely manner, to align with a natural break in the academic year, and the movement of families back to UK.

In addition, ensuring that sufficient time was allotted to clear the school of assets and resources, before being formally handed to the Garrison for ultimate return to the Federal German Government.

### Observations

The formation of a school drawdown team in conjunction with HQ SCE staff was pivotal in ensuring that each school bought into the process of closing their school.

Regular checkpoint meetings with schools were vital to ensure that the closure plan was adhered to; otherwise, there could have been the possibility of a school not being in a position to be handed back within the agreed timeframe.

It was important that all parties continually liaised with each other to ensure the smooth closure of a school. It was also important that all parties attended the relevant garrison co-ordination meetings to ensure that everyone heard the same messages first hand.



## Queens + Kent = Windsor

The founding headteacher, Mr George Wright, opened the school in January 1955 and then again on the Queens site in September 1955. His first entry in the school log reads as follows: *Sept. 14th 1955 - To-day Queen's School assembled in its permanent home.*

Historical Note . The building was scheduled to open in January 1955, and certain staff were appointed to commence duty in that month.

As the **twenty-fifth anniversary** approached the then headteacher, Mr Jim Lovegrove, wrote in his introduction to the Queen's Courier:

*'As I sit in the pleasant surroundings of a Queen's School approaching its Silver Jubilee it is salutary to trace in outline how it has developed in the 25 years.*

In March 1987 the IRA planted and detonated a bomb close to the officers' mess on JHQ. A number of windows in Chatham House were blown out as a result of the blast. Due to the heavy curtains being closed no-one was injured.

As a result of falling numbers Queens and Kent School (Hostert) closed and were retitled Windsor School. It took its name following the closure of the original SCE Windsor School in Hamm in 1983. Windsor School, Hamm was itself formed from the amalgamation of Windsor Boys School and Windsor Girls School both of which had existed in Hamm since the early 1950's.

The Queen's Courier ran for many years and featured the life of the school through the fifties and sixties. Reports of school visits, sports matches, house reports, academic achievement, speech day, notes of staff and student work all featured as the publication rapidly became part of Queens School tradition.

The Queens Courier contained a number of photographs. These give us an insight into the school in its earlier years. Many past copies of the 'Courier' are stored in the BFES SCEA Association's archives



## Extract from the Queen's Courier school magazine Christmas 1958

By Mr JV Taylor, Headmaster

One of the results of splitting up a school year into three terms is that the year seems to pass with a most unusual rapidity. There are always examinations or holidays just a few weeks ahead, and in the anxiety to fill each week with its due quota of work the passage of the months tends to be overlooked. It seems a very short time since Queen's Courier first appeared, and yet these notes are now being written for the third edition of a magazine that has already established itself as a worthy companion to the publications of the other BFES schools.

The year began with 453 pupils on our roll, but it was not long before it became evident that accommodation would have to be found for some of the children of secondary school age who had come into our catchment area and for whom, under our existing arrangements, we did not have room. Re-arrangement, compression and adaptation were the order of the day, and by the month's end we had 468 pupils and a new 1st Form. That represented high water mark for the remainder of the 1957 academic year, and the tide gradually ebbed until by July only 392 remained. The start of the new School year in September however saw it return in full spate. At the time of writing these notes our numbers are 554, a number we would almost have been prepared to swear we could not deal with - until we tried it and found we could. This has not been entirely possible within our existing buildings. We have been given the use of two rooms in the Army Instructional Centre and these are used by some of our 1st Year Forms: but since these children join the main body for Assembly, Games, Music, Clubs and practical subjects there can arise no feeling that they are with Queen's School but not of it. The numbers of Staff too have increased and during the year our new recruits have included Mrs Joslin, Mrs Davey, Miss Baxter, Miss Smith, Miss Hudson, Miss Worton, Mr Stephens and Mr Weatherhead. On the debit side we have lost the services of Miss Hardy, Miss Harner and Miss Knight. An old member of Staff also appeared in new guise, since Mr Chignell was appointed Deputy Headmaster.

Though not occurring in 1958 mention must be made here (since it occurred too late for inclusion in the last Log) of the Christmas play which was produced by the School in the Garrison Theatre. This was an outstanding performance, both for the beauty of the staging and costumes, and the singing. According to some, the Angels were particularly to be congratulated on a fine piece of acting, since their stage performance was so quite out of keeping with their character as known in school!

During the Spring Term we had our usual sporting fixture with Windsor School. On this occasion the venue was Hamm and the weather was shocking, with ice and a heavy and steady fall of snow. There was a feeling of considerable relief when the journey back by bus was safely completed. The weather was kinder when a party of boys taking the Technical course visited the Mannesmannrohren Steel Works in Dusseldorf, where they were received with great kindness and hospitality. This term too a school party organised an expedition to the Van Gogh Museum at Arnhem, while another went to Wuppertal Zoo. The Summer Term, as always, was a busy one. We had our usual Swimming Gala and Sports Day and once again entertained Windsor School for games. For the first time this was made a two-day fixture and this precedent was so popular and successful that it seems likely to become established.

Accommodation for our visitors for the night was kindly provided by the parents of our teams. Another event of note was the visit of almost 200 of our pupils to the Brussels Exhibition. This was our most ambitious expedition so far, but the results were well worth the effort though it did mean some tired heads and lighter pockets. The Summer Term of course also means public examinations, and while not content to rest on our oars we have every reason to be satisfied with our GCE results. In particular the two Distinctions which were gained at A Level by our Head Girl and Head Boy, Christine Parkinson and WHL Williams were a source of pride and pleasure. In this Term too we had our Speech Day which, unfortunately, because of

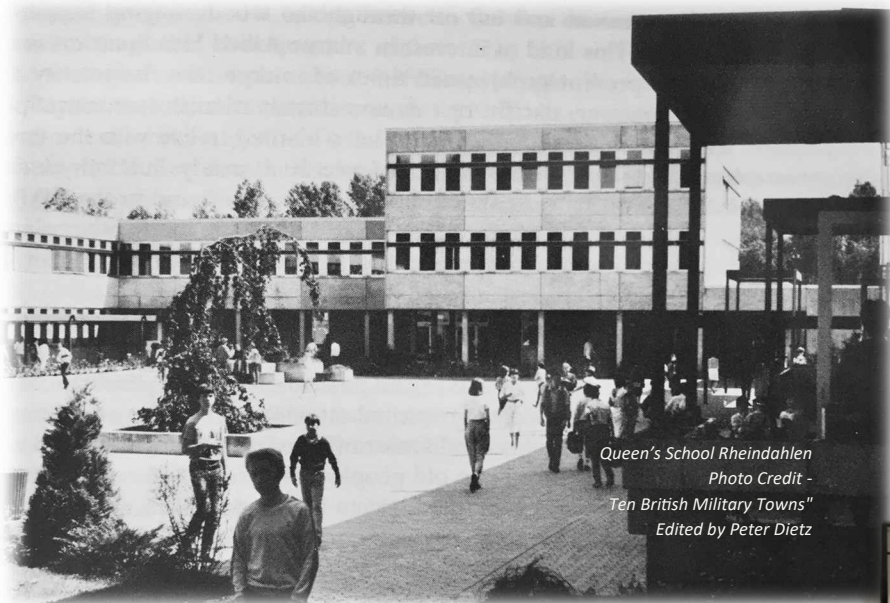


wet weather, had to be held indoors - unfortunately, because of the size of our Assembly Hall is such that seats could not be provided for other than the guests, some parents and prize-winners. The Guests of Honour were Air Marshall Sir Humphrey and Lady Edward-Jones and the Address was well up to the high standard which we have learned to expect on these occasions.

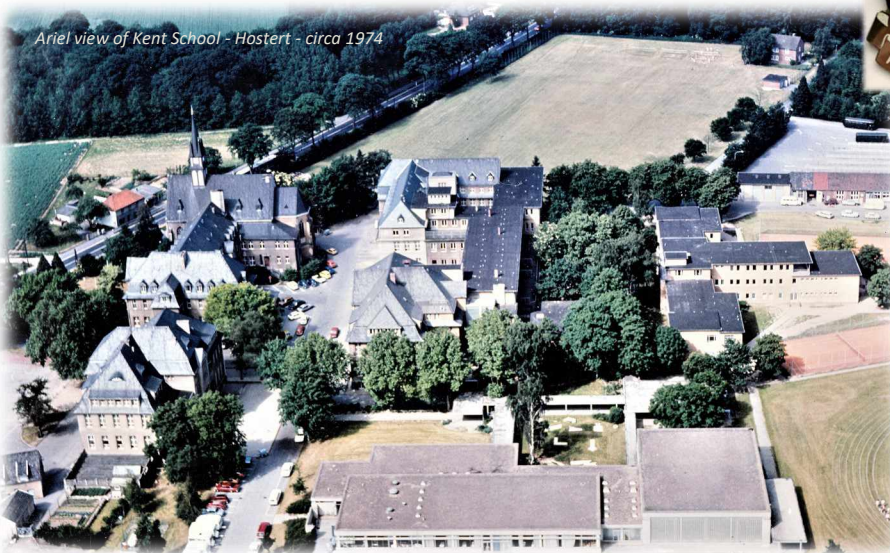
During the year we have been honoured to receive visits from a number of distinguished guests. These have included General Sir Charles Loewen, the Adjutant-General, Major General Brocklehurst, GOC Rhine District, Major General Moore-Coulson, Director of Army Education, Air Vice-Marshall Kermode, Director of Educational Services of the RAF, Mr Howard, a member of the Grigg Committee, and Sir Ifor Evans, Chairman of the Army Education Advisory Board.

Last, but by no means least, in this Log of the year's events one must chronicle a very happy and significant increase in the intellectual life of the school. Extra-curricular activities and clubs have increased rapidly. All these now take place outside school time and the keenness and enthusiasm shown have surprised everyone. There is particular pleasure too to be found in the efficient functioning of our CCF - now one year old and in the process of forming a new RAF section; and in the institution of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award which, though still preparing for the first award, will shortly be moving on to the second. It is hoped soon that we will be able to start the Award too for our girls. All these signs of the vitality one can feel in the school and give tangible proof of it. And they are also signs that though Queen's may be the most junior of the BFES schools it is maturing and growing up - fast.

*This article Published by Brian Davies in the JHQ Bulletin Commemorative Issue 2013.*



*Queen's School Rheindahlen  
Photo Credit -  
"Ten British Military Towns"  
Edited by Peter Dietz*



*Ariel view of Kent School - Hostert - circa 1974*



Although the new Windsor School opened in September 1987 both sites were retained with Years 7, 8 and 9 on the Queens site and Years 10, 11 and Sixth Form on the Kent site. Many staff and students had to travel in order to meet their timetable requirements. Windsor School remained in the same grounds and building as the former Queens School but received upgrades to its building, such as an expansion of its West wing.

Options for Change (1991-1995) resulted in a reduction of Service personnel in BFG from 66,000 to 29,000, reducing the pupil population to approximately 10,000 of whom 80% were primary.

In January 1993, after lengthy consultation, 'Schools for the Future 2' was published, providing four secondary schools to cater for BFG. Gloucester, King's, PRS and Windsor. The reduction in secondary provision and the closure of schools in Berlin, Dortmund and Munster resulted in significant changes of staffing throughout the remaining secondary schools.

At its height Windsor School catered for over 1100 students from military and MOD civilian personnel. However, due to reductions in the British Army of the Rhine and related military drawdowns since, Windsor now caters for an average of 550 students. Students are a mix of daily pupils from the JHQ garrison, pupils bussed in from nearby MOD garrisons and weekly and termly boarders from AFNORTH, SHAPE, Ramstein plus a number of ISODETS being accommodated within the boarding houses. Initially three houses - Windsor, School and Chatham. Chatham House closed its doors to boarders in July 2006 due to falling rolls. The Chatham building was handed back to RSU in 2007.

## Queens + Kent = Windsor

In 1992 West Block was completed, adding two floors of classrooms and a Sixth Form Centre. It also became the highest part of the school. As a result of this build Kent School site at Hostert closed and was handed back to the German authorities in 1993. The new building was opened by HRH The Duchess of Gloucester, Colonel-in-Chief RAMC on 25th March 1992.

HRH The Princess Royal included a visit to Windsor School on 19th September 2006 as part of her JHQ programme. Whilst in the school she watched a group of sixth form students, under the direction of Head of Drama John Grant, perform a thought provoking play based on the impact of deployment on families and met representatives of the Afghan Appeal.

Chatham House, one of three boarding houses, was closed early in 2007. School House now catered for the juniors, Years 7, 8 & 9, and Windsor House for the seniors, Years 10, 11 and the Sixth Form.

Windsor School achieved a Silver Artsmark Award in May 2008 in recognition of the provision and opportunities available throughout the arts at the school. As a result of this increased focus on the arts a number of students were introduced to the Arts Awards Scheme. It developed rapidly in school with many successes, including one teacher who received SCE's first Gold Award.

Father Bill Boyd, padre to Queens and Windsor School for 36 years, retired in November 2008 at the age of 91. After celebrating his 90th birthday on JHQ with colleagues and friends from over the years, he started to think about retirement. His bishop finally persuaded him to take up an offer of a place at his order's retirement home back in the UK. Father Bill was a great supporter and friend of the school for many years. He always knew when someone needed a quiet word, a little time or words of advice.

## ARK School Rheindahlen



Ark School opened in September 2010 and served the children of JHQ during the final three years of the camp. Since St George's closure in 2011, Ark had been the only primary school there.

Ark was created from the facilities of St Andrews and St Patrick's, which meant we were blessed with some of the best school grounds and equipment in BFG as well as a lot of useful internal space. We had two halls, for example, as well as rooms for art, music, extended day care and so on.

The school inherited talented staff from its founder primary schools, as well as experienced early-years workers from Stepping Stones and Ladybirds. The name 'Ark' caused a little discussion at first, but we had wanted something that could incorporate aspects of the previous schools' identities and could serve as a metaphor for a vibrant and creative environment, while JHQ was pared away around us.

The school was blessed with delightful children and supportive families, in a garrison context of encouragement and problem-solving. The three years had seen the school roll range from over 250 (through 2010 and 2011) to 136 in the summer of



Photos above courtesy of Mike Chislett

2013. However, over 500 children attended Ark School at some time or other during its three-year life.

The staff and governing committee set out to make sure that these children received the best that SCE could offer and to ensure that memorable experiences would be enjoyed by all as lasting memories. These were far too numerous to list, but the school's web-site contained well over 100 memorable photo-galleries.

During our final term we worked hard with an artist-in-residence. All the children were involved in designing and making a sculpture with Melissa Cole, from UK. A stunning creation - all in metal - featured in our closing celebration on Thursday 11th July 2013. Everyone with a connection to a JHQ primary school was welcome, past and present.



Photos - TNM

## Queens + Kent = Windsor

Windsor School achieved the Healthy Schools Award and the Green Flag Eco Award in July 2009. Staff and students were involved in both awards. The healthy dimension of the school was praised in the assessors report for the way in which health is very much part of the ethos of the school.

Windsor School closed in July 2013 with the closure of the Rheindahlen Military Complex.

### Headteachers of Windsor School Rheindahlen

1955 Mr G Wright (Founding headteacher)

1956 Mr T G Benyon (Acting)

1956 – 1959 Mr J V Taylor

1960 - 1972 Mr W B P Aspinall OBE

1972 - 1976 Mr R P Gaskell

1976 - 1987 Mr J Lovegrove (became headteacher at PRS, Rinteln)

1987 - 1996 Mr T Kilbride (transferred from headteacher role at Kent School)

1996 - 1997 Mr G Jones (Acting)

1997 – 2005 Mrs A Farell

2005 Mrs K Clark (Acting)

2005 - 2013 Mr B Davies

Father Bill Boyd, a self-effacing, humble, wise and spiritual priest, was the longest-serving military chaplain in the British Forces when he retired in 2008; 38 years of continuous service to the community at Rheindahlen. He died aged 98 in 2016.

## JHQ VIPs



1987 The Duchess of Kent, GCVO visits JHQ



2006 - Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal visits the Headquarters of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corp (HQ ARRC) in Rheindahlen  
Photo Army PR



2010 Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal bids farewell to the Allied Rapid Reaction Corp at Rheindahlen - (Photo TNM)

### Obituaries

**Judith Richardson (nee Parker).** Judith who lived in Preston, Lancashire joined the Association in 1998. She taught in QE2 Coronation School, Libya in 1967-68, Wavell School, Hohne 1968-70 and in 1970-74 in Limassol, Cyprus.

**Peter Carmichael,** sadly died in hospital on Sunday 28th June after being unwell for some time .

Peter was a grand character; he started teaching in Zambia, along with Charlie Lewis, and then Cheshire Middle School, RAF Bruggen before becoming head of Tower Primary School in Dulmen. He returned to Wales where he was headteacher in the Rhondda valley and lived in Pentre with Lyn, his wife of 56 years. They have two sons Huw and Richard. Peter was one of a relatively large number of SCEA/BFES teachers who had trained in the 60s at the now defunct Teachers' Training College in Barry, South Wales. They included Charlie & Liz Lewis, Richard Whitehouse, Bill Batten, Phil Nash, Pete Jones and Wally Lewis.



## Teaching at King's School



## Teaching at King's School, January 1973 to December

### 1978 - Rob Crow

In June 2018, we returned to King's School as part of the excellent visit to Gutersloh organized by Ken Jones – see reports in *BFES/SCEA Newsletter* 40, August 2018. For us, it was forty years since we had left in December 1978. We were concerned that the little legends we had created about the school, the Mess and the Patch might not withstand the sharp light of reality. In fact, as a result of the visit, our memories have become even more golden.

In *BFES/SCEA Newsletter* 43, Summer 2019, Ken has explored the extraordinary world of being a secondary Head within BFES including the challenges he faced mixing with Generals and Prime Ministers. I have a rather different landscape to survey.

## Teaching at King's School, January 1973 to December 1978 contd ...

Taking the title “Teaching at King's School” literally, I first want to explore what it was like being in a classroom as a young(ish) English teacher working with the children of Service personnel and UK based civilians. I joined the staff at King's in January 1973 and had already been teaching English in Sussex, firstly at the Grammar School in Haywards Heath and then at a large Comprehensive School in Crawley. I was ambitious and keen to explore so, when the time came, a move to Germany as Head of English made a lot of sense.

It is all too easy to look back to the “good old days” and claim this was the time when teachers were valued and education really mattered. I do genuinely believe that as teachers we felt that we could make a real difference. By and large we were encouraged to map out our own paths towards agreed targets. Through our own enthusiasms and the commitment of like-minded colleagues, we could see the youngsters grow through their own learning from year to year.

That same belief in the crucial importance of the needs of the youngsters was also at the heart of our teaching at Kings. However there was one crucial difference. In UK we might expect to see the students develop over an extended period, within BFES this would be an exception. Frequent moves from school to school could do enormous damage to a student's progress. As teachers we developed schemes to value and make full use of their previous experience while at the same time ensuring that we got them on the correct track for A or O-levels, City & Guilds qualifications or the newly introduced CSE and post-16 examinations.. Although the downside of the frequent moves might be missing important sections of the syllabus or switching exam boards, the upside was the huge range of experience the students themselves brought to their learning.

Class sizes were not a problem for English lessons and the rooms along the rather gloomy tiled corridor of Block 15 were functional. We tried to make them more exciting with imaginative displays. Forty years later I was delighted to see many really excellent displays. I also noticed that the rifle racks had at last disappeared. Discipline, in the main, was good. It is difficult to tell how far this was a result of the oft-quoted belief that a badly behaved pupil might actually damage his/her father's career if the school chose to report the matter to the man's CO.

Support for teachers in developing their own learning and broader education was available through the Teachers' Centre and by visits to the Mess of a number of authors and education experts. Equally we were encouraged to keep up to date with new developments in our subjects such as the introduction of the new Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) to meet the needs of ROSLA and a new post-16 Certificate for those not going on to A levels.

Visits to the exam board in Southampton and attendance at an HMI course in Llandrindod Wells were a real bonus. English teaching was profoundly changed by the findings of the 1975 Bullock Report – *A Language for Life*, which stressed the need for developing multiple styles of English each appropriate to the circumstances involved – a bit like choosing the right clothes for a particular activity. Such innovations seem an age ago and like the removal of much creative education from the current Secondary curriculum, their disappearance is much to be regretted. But in the 1970s teaching English was exciting.

Unlike Ken's wide-ranging contacts with the Military and others, my school contact with them was rather more limited. However, as a Head of Department, I was responsible for the annual audit of our block. I was assigned a stores clerk to identify items on the strict understanding that I was responsible for counting them. We marched into a classroom. “Teacher's desk – one. Sorry sir, I counted it”.

Beyond the class-room, our lives were, of course, almost totally involved with the Military. Ken rightly stresses the paramount importance of the attitude of the CO to the presence of an overwhelming number of civilians – and female to boot – in his Mess and mixing with his Officers and Men. Our time in Gutersloh overlapped the command of the first two COs that Ken mentions. I can vouch for the “I am the Colonel's Lady” story. I can also vouch for the deep interest in education of the second CO Ken recalls. His knowledge of and interest in all that we were doing at the school and beyond made us feel genuinely welcome. Officers, not unreasonably perhaps, responded to the views and attitudes of their CO and in a benign regime, relations between military and civilians flourished in many ways.

The Mess played a very large part in our lives in Gutersloh. The formality and the strict dress rules were a small price to pay for the many benefits we enjoyed. However it was quite clear that although it was the Station Mess it was even more definitely the Regimental Mess of 40<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment. The Curry Lunch after Remembrance Day service in the Army Gym and the formal dinners remain lasting memories.

When I first arrived in a cold and snowy January 1973, I had two or three interesting weeks living in the Mess before my wife, Kate and our one year old daughter Frances arrived. We settled into a hiring in Westfalen Weg across the Park from Mansergh Barracks and quickly began to learn the ropes. That we had moved to an entirely new world soon became evident. A revaluation of the Deutsche Mark against Sterling from something over 8 DM to just above 4 DM to the pound was a shock particularly as the compensatory upward adjustment of our

allowances was somewhat delayed! We did however very quickly learn that our new life had major advantages including “Indulging” flights to Decimomannu for an Easter week in Sardinia, courtesy of the RAF.



### King's School Staff 1977 (?)

With its easy access to the network of autobahns, Gutersloh was well placed for exploring Europe and this we duly did with trips to Lego in Denmark and the Vienna State Opera amongst many others. Regular caravan breaks in Gieselwerder on the river Weser or skiing in the Harz gave us welcome relief from the intensity of life in Gutersloh.

Highlights of our hectic social life in Gutersloh included our annual trips to Paris for the Rugby. One year, I played hookey from the match and went to see Rudolph Nureyev in the ballet *Romeo & Juliet*. Amongst many “cultural” events, we enjoyed a production at the Stadttheater Gutersloh of *Hamlet* given by a touring British company led by Derek Jacobi. At the local Gymnasium we were delighted by the performance of Teddy Wilson, the renowned jazz pianist. Bob Dylan in Dortmund was another matter altogether.

We were lucky to have on the staff a most skilled theatre director, John Welshman, under whose lead we performed a host of great shows including *The Bartered Bride*, *Oliver*, *O What a Lovely War* and *Maria Martin and the Red Barn*. More informally we held several Cabaret evenings in the Mess where unknown talents were revealed to amazed friends and colleagues. The weekly Monday Night Club in the upstairs snooker room became something of an institution noted more for its lively conversation than the quality of the snooker or the darts.

After a couple of years in our hiring we had moved onto the Patch within walking distance of the Barracks. The houses were spacious, and the gardens were laid to grass for simple maintenance. The Patch was safe for the children and was also ideal for our New Year's Eve perambulatory parties. Even though the house had been converted to gas-fired central heating before we moved in, we still had some coke in the cellar. The SSO's staff had carefully painted round the pile of fuel to make sure that we could not trade any of it on the black market. On March-out we were happy to confirm that the coke was still in place. We also enjoyed laying out the movables for checking – forks – dessert, forks – dining, forks – fish, forks – garden – all in good order, thank you.

Even though Mansergh was a relatively small station compared to RAF Gütersloh up the road, we had the benefit of our own medical and dental provision. We were very well looked after! BMH Rinteln, for our more serious medical needs, was an easy hour's drive away. Our second daughter, Julia was however born in the local Krankenhaus because the autobahn was closed through snow. A couple of years later, our third daughter, Elspeth, did get to Rinteln. Their christening parties are still remembered by friends after these many years!

We appreciated a different kind of support when my wife had to make an emergency return to UK because of her mother's near fatal heart attack. No questions asked, the system took over smoothly and we thoroughly appreciated the way in which everything was managed.

“Teaching at King's School” has always meant more than what happened in the classroom – crucial though that was. It meant that one had a recognized part to play within school and beyond. Such an all encompassing and controlling environment was not to everybody's liking. For us as a family and for me as a teacher it seemed to work and we enjoyed ourselves enormously. So why, with a new 3 year tour already agreed, did we come back to UK after only six years?

In part we felt the need to be nearer our parents and in part we were hearing of difficulties in returning to UK with promotion. In retrospect it may also have been a recognition that we needed to get back to the “real” world. We were quite relaxed about sending off a couple of applications. If nothing happened – no problem.

But something did happen. Very rapidly we were packing to move back to UK in the snows of January 1979. My first job as the new Deputy Head of Headlands Senior High School, Swindon was to re-write the time-table because, for three weeks, the school could only operate for two hours each day – the heating system had collapsed trying to cope with the frost and snow. I said nothing to my new colleagues about how we had coped with “real winters.”

## Teaching at King's School

Shortly after my arrival, plans for the Reorganization of Secondary education in the town were announced and the Head decided to seek pastures new. This certainly worked to my advantage! In January 1981, two years after our return to UK, I was appointed Head of the soon-to-be-reorganized school. I know that my experience at King's helped to inform my belief that every child matters and deserves the very best we can offer. The sense that we were all involved in a joint enterprise helped us to survive Reorganization and to create a flourishing school of 1702 students on three sites.

I am glad we went back to Gutersloh in 2018. We have fond memories of the school, the Patch, the Mess, the Barracks and the town itself. The return has also encouraged me to reflect more deeply on what we gained from our six years at King's. Perhaps only in retrospect have we recognized what extraordinary friendships and support we enjoyed during our time in Gutersloh.

**Rob Crow - September 2019.**

### Contributor Profile

**Paul Cunningham**



Paul is currently English Principal of Concord Academy & Executive Head of Changning Campus - Changning District, Shanghai in China. Paul arrived in **British Forces School Naples** at the end of end of December 1984 where he worked for 3 years. Paul moved to Hong **Kong Stanley Fort** in January 1988 and in August 1992 he moved to **Seria SCS Brunei** as Headteacher. Paul stayed in Brunei for 7 years before moving to **St Christopher's Gibraltar** in 1999 where he was headteacher until 2004.

**Read about Paul's Lockdown Experience on pages 18 & 19.**

## LOCKDOWN

During the course of the lockdown in our lovely old Georgian farmhouse, where there are three adjacent barns with three young families, there have been two amusing incidents which I am happy to share with you. In the nearest barn there are three young boys, 11 year old twins and a 12 year old brother. Their mother had told them the regulations which applied to people of my age that they must be



prepared to help but must keep their distance.

The first incident occurred when I needed to drive down to the nearby village to post a letter in the post office. When I got back the first thing Brenda said to me was "you are in big trouble!" William, the 12 year old had said to his mother "Ken has just driven out in his car, that is not allowed, as he is so old he must stay in the house!" I then rang up apologised and thanked William for his concern and promised in future to get his permission to go out in my car!

The other amusing incident occurred on my birthday when late in the afternoon Brenda said to me I had to step outside the house. I heard a lot of giggling going on behind the hedge and then I saw a drone hover up from behind the hedge with a ribbon trailing underneath holding a birthday card which the boys had made for me. I shouted my thanks and said goodbye. They said, "no you must wait we have another surprise for you."

More whirring of the drone and then I saw it come back up from behind the hedge with a bottle of gin tied up underneath it and it was gently lowered down to land near my feet!!

It was a most wonderful and memorable way to help me celebrate my 82nd birthday.

**Ken Jones - Association Chairman**

## Living in Rural South West France after many years in Germany

Over twenty years ago and after twenty eight years teaching in King's School Gütersloh I took early retirement and along with my wife Sheila we moved to live in France, a country where we had enjoyed many a happy holiday. We met in Germany (Sheila had been teaching in King's two years before my arrival) and consequently we had never lived as a married couple in the U.K.

The contrast in living styles between France and Germany could not have been greater. Having been used to living in married quarters with all the benefits that entailed, plus the support and services of the School Bursar for all administration matters, we were now well and truly on our own and such things as LOA, FSA, FFR etc; were now things of the past. Unlike today there were very few "Brits" living in our area and hardly any of the locals spoke English.

With my extremely rusty "O" level French I called on our village Mayor to introduce myself and to ask how to go about applying for our "Carte de Sejour", getting access to their excellent Health Care, changing driving licenses, changing car number plates etc; etc; The first request for a residency permit was met with Monsieur Le Mayor shrugging and looking enquiringly at his secretary. She too looked somewhat puzzled but eventually she remembered that they had once had a foreigner in the village, a Portuguese, who had applied for one some years previously. She went into a cupboard and dug out an old file and having blown away clouds of dust proceeded to tell me what documentation I would need and where to go next. For this and subsequent changes there followed many months of photocopying, form filling and visits all around the "Departement", to The Prefecture, Sous Prefecture, Social Security Office, Tax Offices etc; before finally getting all the necessary documents. The "administration" in France is not only complex but far from standardized and often differs from one area to the next.

Our first run up to Christmas here was also quite a shock. After spending so many wonderful atmospheric Christmases in Germany with their fabulous Christmas markets, here it was virtually impossible to tell that Christmas was approaching, There was nothing festive in any of the shops, no Christmas lights or decorations in the towns, villages, gardens or on houses, with the rare exception of the odd shoe box covered in silver paper hanging by a piece of string from the occasional window. On Christmas morning we had a long walk with the dogs and saw no-one apart from being passed by one car! Things have changed over the years and now the end of November sees decorations in the shops and most towns and villages have street decorations. You can even find a small collection of Christmas cards for sale in some shops.

Again, in total contrast to Germany, time means very little here and we quickly realised that if you were expecting a workman or delivery, whatever time you were given was not to be relied upon, in fact not even the day was certain! In our village and its Commune there are two main social events when virtually everyone, from babes in arms to our oldest inhabitants, meet for a communal meal. One being to celebrate the 14th July (Bastille Day though the French never seem to call it that!) the other to mark the end of the Hunting Season which begins in September and ends in March. A period when dog walking can be seriously hazardous, particularly in the afternoon when the hunters have had their Pastis and wine during their lunchtime break in the hunting cabin! Both events state on the invitation that the meal will begin at "20.00 hrs Precise." Naturally after all those years in Germany we ensured that we arrived on time, as indeed did most of the other villagers. However, we were somewhat surprised when for the next two hours everybody stood about talking and it was nearer ten o' clock when we took our seats, not for the meal, but for aperitifs. At around 02.30 next morning coffee and cognac were being served! I should add that in between courses people did have the opportunity to dance as a disco was provided (Boney M's "Rivers of Babylon" the only recognizable tune and probably the most up to date!).

For all the early frustrations we have loved our time out here. Driving or cycling is such a pleasure as for most of the year the roads are so quiet. The people are so polite wherever you go and sitting out in one of the many cafes or bars is always an interesting, enjoyable and relaxing experience, particularly so on market days. Good restaurants are never far away so eating out is always a joy. The countryside is full of wildlife and there is something really special about the light here. To walk through the vines and sunflower fields in the mornings with the dogs is an experience that always fills me with wonder and the vast and often deserted Atlantic beaches are always worth a visit at any time of the year.

I believe working here would have been an experience that I would not have enjoyed but it is a wonderful country to retire to and the slow pace of life is very much part of the charm in this area of France. Getting my French to a reasonable standard at this later stage of my life has been a challenge but was greatly helped by integrating into the local tennis club, especially since the only two British members of the club left not long after my arrival! The veteran team plays against clubs right across the region and matches always end with both teams enjoying a meal that often takes much longer than the matches themselves!

Will we stay here? As I write there are still Brexit issues to be resolved that will influence our decision. We also find that our grandchildren are growing up so quickly and despite their regular visits they and other members of our family are missed.

**Dai Roberts**



**Christopher Spencer - Senior Inspector and then Assistant Director of Education (Standards and Assessment) and Chief Inspector. 2003-2013.**

I joined SCE in June 2003 from the London Borough of Ealing where I was Senior Inspector and National Literacy Strategy Manager. My background was headship in schools causing concern and I had taken on a number of failing schools for the local authority following adverse inspection findings on an interim basis. I was

posted to JHQ and housed in a lovely two bedroomed flat in Düsseldorf. Coming from a local authority background, I found it challenging at first to adapt to the MOD and Civil Service way of getting things done. As one of my colleagues put it "Hurry up and wait..." From the start, I resolved to spend most of my time working in schools. I can remember the first visit I made to an SCE school during that long hot summer of 2003 to Robert Browning School in Paderborn where Jim Tague welcomed me warmly. It was there that I learnt the skill of eating fried egg sandwiches, fresh from the NAAFI at morning break, without the need for a clean shirt and tie...

Initially, I worked for Judith Morris and it was she who introduced me to all the headteachers. I didn't know it at the time but Judith recognised me from a previous life in the London Borough of Harrow where we were both head and deputy respectively. Judith made sure I soon acclimatised to SCE. What I noticed right from the beginning was that all the schools operated just like any school in England. The heads were very successful in ensuring that all their pupils were not disadvantaged by their time in an SCE school. It is to their credit that most schools were judged either good or outstanding.

My first overseas trip came when my colleague, Norman Barton, asked me to go to Cyprus to assess the curriculum support offer for the secondary schools. I can remember standing outside King Richard School during break in the sunshine admiring the view and thinking I could have been arguing with some recalcitrant headteacher in Southall who was inappropriately allocating National Literacy Strategy funds to the refurbishment of the girls' toilets (I kid you not...)

I took a decision early on to travel around Germany using the very efficient train service. I only got caught out a couple of times when I inadvertently got on the wrong train. Coming back from Hamm, I got on the wrong end of the ICE train and ended up in Köln instead of Düsseldorf on a Friday evening rush hour not knowing what to do. It was on a long distance train that I began to construct the first part of the *Dagmar Johnson Trilogy*.

I lived in Düsseldorf until it was closed and then, during one of the restructurings that seem to plague education departments, was posted up to Bielefeld. I was there barely two years before my good friend and colleague Kathryn Forsyth arranged for me to be brought back to JHQ. I was housed in a little two-bedroomed house near to the football stadium and then, finally, when that closed, moved on to JHQ where I lived in what was affectionately called "The Projects;" a block of flats on the south-west extension.

Working at JHQ, I met some fantastic civil servants who guided me through the bureaucracy and were always there to assist; Lisa Horseford, Sue Philips, Les Berryman, David Howard and Steve Wallace to name but a few. My close colleagues, Janina Heyward, Mike Chislett, Graham Marshall and Brenda Titley were all very supportive. There was always a fabulous group of consultants who kept me on my toes and gave me informative briefings on the latest government directives. The SCE family was something of which I had the privilege to be a part.

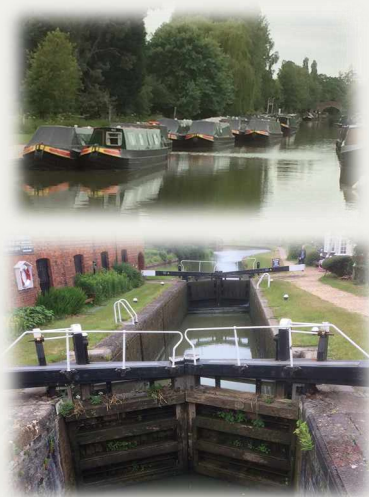
I left SCE in 2013 just as JHQ was closing and took a two-year contract with the Cayman Islands Government in their Education Department. I live in *Hérault in the south of France* among the vineyards about one hour from the Spanish border and twenty minutes from the Mediterranean where I spend my time fighting with an unruly garden and *writing novels in London Crime Genre* as an independent author. I have just finished my sixth novel. They are all available on Amazon as downloads. I am hoping that they will soon be available as audio books. Occasionally, I do book readings in France where my ability to speak French is certainly tested.

***My time in SCE was certainly frenetic but immensely enjoyable and rewarding.***

## LOCKDOWN

**Janet Bradley - Association Treasurer** reports from lockdown at the Locks. The canals and locks have been closed to traffic since the lockdown, the locks in particular looking very forlorn with no movement of water. They opened for home boaters at the weekend and I watched 3 boats go through Bottom Lock this morning (now that shielded guidelines have changed). Other boat owners can still only go out for a day and have to return to permanent mooring at night, and then go home! There is a limit to how far you can go in a day!

Braunston is at the heart of the UK canal system where the Grand Union and Oxford canals meet, with a large marina, services, wet & dry docks, boat builders etc. When the normally busy waterways went into lockdown in March the canals and locks were closed. Boat owners not in marinas had to moor up where they were and only home boaters (liveboarders) were allowed to make short essential journeys for water etc. The canals and locks, took on a rather forlorn, neglected air for weeks with no movement of traffic. As, eventually, the lockdown began to ease the restrictions on home boaters were lifted at the beginning of June and some moved on at the earliest opportunity, perhaps trapped where they didn't want to be. Two weeks on, other boat owners can still only go out for a day and have to return to their permanent mooring at night, and then go home! The fleets of hire boats are still moored up waiting for the restrictions on the hospitality/tourist industry to be lifted. So the canal retains its rather neglected air, where hardly anything moves.



## Routes or roots of retirement?

*I expect that many members, when they retired, had some plans of what they would like to do given the free time ahead of them.* I had plans of travel, societies I would like to join and enjoyment of being back in England on a more permanent basis. Things went very much to plan initially but it was through one of the societies I joined (a family history group – The Braund Society) that the retirement path changed route. I also was learning more about my family roots.

I was at a Braund Society reunion when I met a lady in her late 80s who told me some of her life story. It included starting a youth club in Battersea and buying a farm on Dartmoor for children to visit from London. All that she talked about really intrigued me because it sounded as if she had no training in youth or social work but had established a very effective outdoor learning programme over many years. **Her name was Elizabeth Braund and we were distant cousins.**

In the old style of telling stories, if you are sitting comfortably, I shall begin.....



*The Seeds of Youth*  
The Early Life of Elizabeth Braund MBE By Sue Adams

Elizabeth was born in 1921 in London where her father was a High Court Judge. She had a privileged upbringing and attended a Froebel School before going to St. Felix School in Suffolk as a boarder “where girls were treated like sensible creatures”. She excelled at

school, particularly enjoying history. It was anticipated that she would go to Oxford University (as her father had done) but this coincided with two major factors that would alter the course of her life. One was that her parents had moved to Burma, where her father had assumed an appointment as a judge in the Rangoon Government and the other being the outbreak of WW2. Her parents were concerned for her safety and so Elizabeth moved from the enclosed environment of a girls’ boarding school in England to the other side of the world to a social life that was very different.

Initially this was an exciting existence – a busy social life, tennis, riding, Government House balls and as a young very eligible lady, plenty of invitations from keen suitors. Above all of course, she was experiencing a stable family life again but that apart she had no official employment or indeed any qualifications apart from her school matriculation exam.

In 1939 her parents moved to Allahabad in India. Elizabeth became increasingly frustrated at not having a particular job and so applied for a post in Delhi with MI9. This was successful and for her a sense of achievement in having a specific job and being independent. The social life was similar to Burma and again as an eligible young lady was not short of admirers. However the pursuit of many lovelorn subalterns did not really meet her expectations intellectually and she quickly became tired of the social round and chit-chat. It was unfortunate that during her time in India that she caught a very painful gastric bug which despite various treatments did not improve. This ultimately led to her returning to England by herself where she was to receive homeopathic treatment from a doctor who was a family friend. This was Doctor Marjorie Blackie, homeopathic adviser to the King and Queen.

Being back in London, receiving treatment, gave Elizabeth much time to reflect on her life so far – no qualifications, no employment and no real sense of direction. However, through a contact from her former employment in MI9, she eventually secured a post with the BBC Home Service. This was to carry out research and present in a light hearted manner plays for broadcasting. This was a huge success and the index of listening appreciation apparently soared. Although Elizabeth was enjoying the satisfaction of this work enormously she still felt that something was missing in her life. To outsiders it might appear that she had a very happy existence – her health had improved and she had a successful role in the BBC and again a busy social life.

Whilst receiving treatment and staying with Doctor Blackie she was invited to attend Westminster Chapel with her. Attending church had not been a habit of Elizabeth but out of politeness, she went along. The preacher was Doctor Martin Lloyd-Jones who some have described as the greatest Christian preacher. Whilst listening to his sermons with some indifference, Elizabeth gradually started to enjoy the intellectual explanations given. This coincided with a new project set by the BBC which was to research the history of the Bible.

Fast forward a few years and Elizabeth became more involved with Westminster Chapel and became a Christian and also editor of the Evangelical Magazine. She also wrote for programmes such as “Sunday Thoughts”.

Elizabeth needed more space to store her pieces of research and also to hold editorial meetings – it was suggested that she could use a disused chapel in Battersea as a possible venue. This she did and it was one evening, during a meeting, that a football came flying through the door. Following the course of the ball brought her face to face with a local youth gang who had no real space in which to amuse themselves due to the mass reorganisation of housing – tower blocks replacing old housing. Not daunted by the fact that some would be carrying knives, she invited them in and suggested they might like to come again and join in some activities.

And so they did. Rather on an instinctive reaction, instead of holding a Sunday school type meeting she informed the gang that they would be building a desert and a mountain in the chapel and explained this was about a story in the Bible. The construction received much enthusiasm and boxes, sand, sacks, paint arrived to help the project. They then heard the story of the 10 commandments and Moses and acted out the story. Overlooking the fact that the sand had probably been stolen from the local council building site, the project was enthusiastically supported by the gang – so much so that they asked if they could have a club there – just for them. Elizabeth had no knowledge of how to run a youth club but challenged herself as a Christian – what





Robert Musgrove with a group on Dartmoor



could or should she do? With help from the Youth Office with a small grant and helpers in the local community, the interest of this club grew and grew. Although this was a dilapidated building the affection for the place was strong and so when the council decided that the chapel should be demolished for more housing there was despair. Not daunted, Elizabeth using her many personal skills and contacts, successfully negotiated that a new purpose built youth club should be provided. This youth club "Providence House" is on the Falcon Road in Battersea and still functions today. It is right next door to Clapham Junction station.

Activities at Providence House continued and were extended in many directions – football, netball tournaments were organised with ILEA, camping

trips in Wales to name a few. But what emerged from working with these youth activities was the realisation that many did not have any idea of what living in the countryside might be like or indeed any environment outside of Battersea. So Elizabeth decided that she would buy a farm on Dartmoor. The intention was to bring down groups from Providence House and let the group sleep in the farm house, help with preparing meals, eat round a dining table and help with looking after animals on the farm. This she described as "a lung for the city".

So started the first "city to farm" scheme at East Shallowford Farm near Widecombe in the Moor.

This still continues today and it has been my privilege as a trustee to work with some of these groups and their families when they come to stay. Some of the groups represent 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of families linked to Providence House. For many who come, they are experiencing silence for the first time, seeing stars, eating home cooked food, seeing vegetables grow – yes, carrots grow in the ground! The excitement of seeing lambs born, climbing hills, going for night walks, hearing bird song, helping with baling or going swimming at the real sea-side are all experiences never to be forgotten.

Elizabeth died a few years ago and bequeathed East Shallowford farm to the board of trustees who are committed to carrying on the provision at the farm. It should be mentioned that Elizabeth paid for most of this provision herself. Although she left a legacy to the trust, legislation and new Health and Safety measures have meant that improvements have had to be made. Much fund raising has taken place and I am pleased to say that we have a new outdoor education classroom and one of the barns is being converted to provide a new dining room and accommodation.

I can only say that I love going down to the farm – as a retired teacher I have a quiet smile at the provision laid on here by a person who had no formal training in youth work but used her common sense by listening to those she worked with and being motivated by what she believed in. Forest School? She was already doing it in the 60s! Hands on learning – the same! PHSE? Of course!

Please visit [www.shallowfordfarm.co.uk](http://www.shallowfordfarm.co.uk) to find out more about what we are doing.

**Sue Adams - Association Events' Coordinator**

**Copies of the book "Seeds of Life" can be obtained from Sue - contact information on page 20**

## PROTEST

"At one time it was possible to dismiss protesters as amiable eccentrics.

In 1956 a determined attempt was made by the German owners of thirty-six requisitioned buildings in the *Mönchengladbach* area to regain possession of their property.

Many of the owners were quite elderly, and their spirited attempt to re-occupy the houses, then being used as messes, troop billets and senior officers' quarters was treated with weary but good humoured tolerance.

Two old people advancing on the town in their invalid carriages collided with each other and had to be rescued from a ditch by the military police.

The most extraordinary feat however, occurred at dawn on the 6th May 1956. An elderly lady dropped by parachute from a light aircraft on to the roof of the Garrison Officers' Mess.

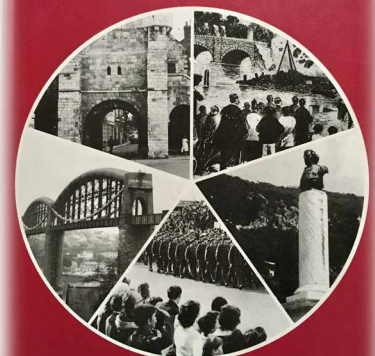
Unfortunately for her, her attempts to gain access through a skylight were heard in time, living-in members were alerted, and she was driven off with fire extinguishers.

One is tempted to say 'they don't make them like that anymore , and to raise a subscription for a memorial. What would happen in a modern re-run of the incident is dreadful to contemplate."

"Ten British Military Towns" Edited by Peter Dietz ISBN 0-08-31192-X

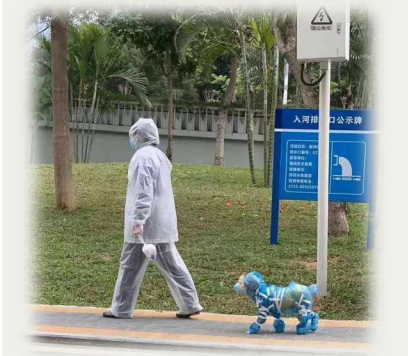
## GARRISON Ten British Military Towns

Edited by Peter Dietz



Brassey's

## LOCKDOWN



"If you've 'eard the East a-callin', you won't never 'eed naught else."

My last action in work on 19 January 2020, the day we closed for **Chinese New Year**, was to proof read a letter going to all parents via our official WeChat account. The message would be sent out to all schools in the group and would bring attention to a new virus that had broken out in **Wuhan, Hubei Province**. We were to give out simple messages at this stage, "avoid taking children to crowded public places, follow our advice for prevention and control, wear a mask and don't forget to regularly wash your hands". **Job done I foolishly thought.** Many health directives would go out like this in a school year. No big deal. Parents were used to it. A contagious disease in a Chinese school where 2 pupils were infected, would bring an immediate 10-day quarantine period for the whole class. **COVID 19** at that stage was receiving low level coverage. I think we were all aware there had been an outbreak of a contagious disease in Hubei but not aware at this point of the enormity of the situation.

Proof reading is certainly not something I am particular good at but it invariably falls to me to run that final check after Chinese bilingual admin staff have done their best to translate. Some words in Mandarin don't quite translate or are subject to the occasional typo. I'd earlier in the year changed a sign outside a school which stated 'irrelevant people should not enter the campus'. I fortunately caught sight of this before it was sent for publication. An agenda item on a recent Board Meeting 'Pubic Health Scare' was changed last minute! Once the proof read was completed it was a quick dash home on the crowded metro for dinner followed by a visit to a local cinema to watch the new Star Wars movie featuring one of BFG's past pupils. Acting skills homed in the classrooms of Munster!

Next day my wife Samantha and I headed for **Harbin a province in North West China**, a three-hour flight from Shanghai, known for its very cold winters, (temperatures dropping below -25) and its annual ice festival. We had looked forward to; the ice sculptures, frozen Songhua river, and Russian food. Alas by the time we landed in Harbin, the ice festival had been cancelled, we were greeted at the hotel by thermal body scanners, strict regulations and a bowl of chicken broth, always good to rid the body of colds and fever! The executive lounge was closed! The virus was now full-blown national news, Wuhan was going into lock down and some domestic and international travel arrangements were now being restricted. Although we enjoyed our walk on the frozen river and met ex Chinese Colleagues from Harrow we cancelled the rest of the week and headed back to Shanghai.

Harbin Airport in 24 hours had changed and now resembled a nuclear war zone with police, security and health officials all dressed in full protective clothing. We wore the masks that we had queued for two hours to buy. We were able to buy five each the day before as rationing had quickly been installed. They were to become part of our daily attire. Even now in June we are still required to wear them here in China. Failure to do so means you could be reported to the police, not allowed to enter public places, shops, bars and restaurants. Interesting that once the situation got better here, the majority of reported cases of virus were said to be 'imported', foreigners found many locals anxious about getting too close. People resisted taking that empty seat next to you on the bus or metro. Many taxis said no to a fare when they saw the face of a foreigner. It seemed like role reversal in comparison to how some Chinese residents in Europe were being treated.

On return to Shanghai from Harbin we saw a different place, closed shops and deserted streets. On our first Metro journey back in Shanghai we were the only passengers on board. People were now indoors, this would be the same for the next two months. It was always going to be quiet because it was still Chinese New Year and many people were on holiday or back with their family in a different province but this was different. Even at the quietest of times China usually keeps business going but now all was closed. No dithering here in China- we moved quickly into lock down measures.

Entrances to apartment blocks were now very different, health and security officials manned the doors. Visitors were not allowed, (a system that stayed in place until mid-May). If you left the compound you were given a short term 'pass'. Our time out was restricted to an occasional trip to the local 'Family Mart' grocery shop for essential items. For a short time, water delivery was suspended and there were long delays for the grocery shopping online options. One of the scariest things was the knock on the door by the Community Management accompanied usually by a tall person in a scary plastic suit checking on when you last left Shanghai or China. The obligatory temperature check happened. We showed our passport and our boarding pass from

the Harbin flight and our visitors moved to the next apartment to continue their checks. Within a couple of weeks, we were asked (told) to sign up to a phone app which tracked your health and movements. We had our 'Green Code'. We stayed in and strictly observed lock down rules. In the shops and malls there was zero panic buying, masks were worn from the beginning and borders became increasingly controlled. Anyone who showed any symptoms was asked to self-isolate with a virus test soon to follow.

Work went on from home, teachers foreign and Chinese kept in regular dialogue with our families, daily tasks were sent home on the school app. A programme of online lessons was organised. Teachers were given deadlines on when they should be back in Shanghai and we kept up to speed with the changing situation at the borders. Faces dropped when flights were suspended to and from the country and the British Government's announcement of 'essential travel only' served to make expats in Shanghai anxious. A number of families decided to pack up and leave China before travel became even harder.

When the Virus broke out most of our teachers were overseas enjoying a generous holiday. Getting them back wasn't easy, most were somewhere in South East Asia others headed back to UK, most wanted reassurance that the situation in China was not worsening. From February to March the arrivals back in China from overseas went into the expected self-isolation, which later moved to 14 days in a government run hotel. In these cases, people were health checked three times per day and unable to leave the room. A security seal was placed around the external door to make sure nobody strayed! Entry to China was closed to foreigners from mid-March. We still await news of its reopening. For teachers still sitting in their home country the future remains uncertain. They still have apartments in Shanghai, rent to pay but no clear indication of when the border will open. From a school perspective our parents expect a foreign teacher in the classroom teaching their child. Our recruitment plan has changed!

The television became the focus of our entertainment and a way of staying in touch with news outside of China. We followed UK and World news on our satellite box. When things got overly sensitive on the BBC, we stared at a blank screen for a few minutes before going back to a rerun of Dads Army, Cold Case or Rick Stein in Mexico. We even watched a full series of "Place in the Sun" or any other old Channel 4 series that reminded us of being back in Spain. By mid-March things began to reopen slowly and we began to meet friends and colleagues. A visit to a reopened restaurant needed a passport, Green Code, temperature check and mask but we were not allowed to reenter any school or campus until early May. New families and teachers were recruited online. Essential school business, requiring a face to face meeting, would take place on the deserted streets off campus.

Similar to other countries in the world, China has seen a phased return to Schools. Those taking the key Chinese examinations; Zhongkao (Grade 9) and Gaokao (Grade 12) went back first followed by the rest of the middle and high schools. In late May news came through of the proposed reopening of the Early Years and Primary schools. Government inspections took place where Education and Health officials visited on mass. They inspected the markers outside the school for social distancing purposes and ensured all staff would show their "Green Code" before entry. Classrooms were given table dividers allowing only two children at any one desk. Carpets were taken away, isolation areas established and regular temperature checks from nurses were to be implemented. Parents were informed children would be sent to a designated hospital (with or without parents) if a temperature was found to be above 37.3. Senior leaders in the school met with Parent Ambassadors to inform of an extension by 4 weeks to the current academic year. Staff were filmed performing expected daily drills which were viewed by parents during a two-hour bi-lingual online information session. On June 2 our Primary and Early years centres resumed operations.

In China, such is the way of the country everyone has done as they have been told. The Government had a plan, they were not swayed by public opinion or dissenting voices from within. For the moment the control and prevention seem to have worked. As children return to the classroom we all realise nothing will be the same as when we walked out of school on January 19. Teachers are easing students gently back into their routines, they know they will not pick up the curriculum at exactly the same point at which they left it on that day in January. Too much has happened. To use the words of my old SCE friend and colleague John Healey 'compassionate leadership' will be needed across all the schools and classrooms.

**'No! you won't 'eed nothin' else. But them spicy garlic smells, An' the sunshine an' the palm-trees an' the tinkly temple-bells;'**

**Paul Cunningham - English Principal of Concord Academy - Shanghai - China**



## Letters to the Editor

Dear Tom,

Thank you for the newsletter. I really enjoyed the focus on Berlin. It certainly took me back a few years as my brother in law Austin Monaghan was a teacher at RAF Gatow in the mid 70's to early 80's. I managed to spot him on the staff photograph. Excellent.

I think it was visiting Berlin during the 70's and talking with Austin that gave me the idea to one day join SCEA. They were wonderful times for a visitor; Checkpoint Charlie, going into the East, using BF currency, taking the train through the corridor to Braunschweig, and 'Joe's Beerhouse' opposite the NAAFI. They were indeed 'happy days'. Shame I never got to live there but when I went to Manchester University, Didsbury College had a student exchange programme with the 'Free University of Berlin' so I managed to get back to the city for a few more visits.

Thanks again for the Newsletter. Keep on with the great work. A great read, much needed as we come to the end of what seems like a lifetime of self-isolation/quarantine in China. Hope all goes as well as it possibly can do, in the UK, over the coming weeks and months. Keep well and stay safe.

Best Wishes

Paul (Cunningham)

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Many thanks Tom. A great effort and much appreciated. A good read!

I trust that you are well as we need your contribution to an excellent publication. Your work is much appreciated!

Glorious sunshine today and a reminder that spring will happen after all.

Warm best wishes to you and the family.  
Oswin (Hall)

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Dear Tom,

Thank you very much for the latest Newsletter, which contains a great deal of news and history about our times in Berlin. It was very interesting to read about the challenging and enjoyable episodes of our previous lives.

Thank you for all your work in compiling such a relevant magazine.

I hope that you are all keeping safe and well.

With very best wishes and many thanks.

Regards

Derek (Ebbage)



I am sure that many of our members will be very disappointed to learn of the cancelled reunions for this year due to the outbreak of the Corona virus. The committee considered the current situation very carefully and following the government's current advice decided that the membership's safety was of course of paramount importance. Whilst the future recommendations for personal and public safety are still not known, it is anticipated that hopefully the easing of lockdown may continue and allow for

easier socialising. Based on this assumption, the committee are hoping that 2021 will be more promising and that the hospitality industry will be well prepared for social gatherings. The committee at this stage are discussing what might be possible for next year....

Please read your newsletters carefully for future announcements, stay safe in your bubble, and look forward to meeting up again.

**"We will meet again" - Sue Adams**

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#### We're on the Web!

<http://www.bfes-scea-association.org/>

### Association Membership

Membership of the Association currently costs £15 per year. Membership is open to anyone who has served with BFES, SCEA, SCS(NWE), SCE or latterly is serving with the remaining MOD Schools. The membership year runs from 1st January to 31st December and payment can be made by Standing Order or cheque.

Further information and a membership application form is available from the

**Membership Secretaries - 94 Headcorn Drive - Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7TX**

### Late breaking news

It was with great sadness that the Association learnt that **Sue Nicholls** passed away in June this year after a brave battle with cancer aged 66 years. Sue joined the Advisory Service based in Minden in 1986 as a Special Needs Advisory teacher. This was followed by teaching in Akrotiri School Cyprus.

New regulations following the National Curriculum necessitated a reception class to be set up for British families at BATUS in Alberta, Canada and Sue became the first British teacher for a reception class in the school. Having successfully set this up she then returned to Germany and taught in Blankenhagen School, Gütersloh.

On returning to England, she joined the Advisory service in Birmingham and subsequently also in Bournemouth where she eventually retired to be near her family.

Many will remember Sue for her energy and enthusiasm not just in school but also in her personal life. She was a great colleague, a tremendous friend and will be very sadly missed by the many who knew her.