

*Balshaw's*  
*Church of England High School*



**THE OLD BALSHAVIAN – Autumn 2016**



Well, what a couple of months we have had. What with the Rugby, Cricket, Brexit, back stabbing, resignations and new Prime Minister it has been a very interesting time. Whilst all that was going on I decided to look at the Balshaw's web site. There, as well as a new type logo as above, I found an advert for an evening of Imagination, Drama and Shakespeare by the years 7,8, & 9 students. Shakespeare fired my imagination so I went to see what was going on.

The evening started with Balshaw's Street Dancers whose moves were crisp and clean and a pleasure to watch. There was no indication of who directed them - but well done. Then we had year 7 Drama Club who presented a comedy called 'Ernie's incredible 'Illucinations'' by Alan Ayckbourn with 21 parts in it. Everyone acted their part without any anxious moments and had the audience chuckling throughout. After the play came three vocal soloists who sang 'Yours', 'Good Morning Baltimore' and 'Part of your World' respectively. They performed with confidence and had lovely voices. Then came the Shakespeare - 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' with a cast of 25 pupils. The cast gave a very enjoyable performance and the prompt really had nothing to do. Congratulations to all those who took part and thank you to all those back stage workers without whom the show would not take place.

Well done Mrs Whittam who directed the plays and also Mrs Rawson who was the musical director.

On the back of the programme was an advert for the school production of 'Oklahoma' which is to be performed in March 2017. Keep looking on the web site for more details.



A photograph taken from Balshaw's web site showing a scene from the Shakespeare play. The costumes were very good (as you can see)



## **LONG SERVICE**

On March 12<sup>th</sup> 2016, Old Balshavian Ernest Wrennall attended the Spring Synod in Altrincham for the churches of the North West Province of the United Reformed Church. He, together with the local church minister represented the Leyland U.R.C. At the gathering Ernest was presented with a certificate celebrating completion of over fifty years as a Nationally Accredited Lay Preacher - one of only three to receive this honour. Ernie has been in constant demand and averaged 42 services every year in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and travelling in total over 42000 miles to churches in various parts of the country.

Ernie was well supported by his wife - Marjorie- another old Balshavian.

Congratulations Ernie on your wonderful achievement and Marjorie for supporting Ernie.

## **OLD BALSHAVIAN HISTORY**

In 1982 Mr George Birtill (the then editor of the Leyland Guardian) published a book on the History of Balshaw's School to coincide with the Bi-Centenary of the Balshaw's Foundation which were available for purchase at the celebration. Then in 2014 a further very comprehensive booklet was compiled and edited by Keith and Ollie Woodcock covering the period between 1982 and 2014 after a request by the then Head Teacher Miss Venn and was made available for sale to anyone who was interested. The Booklet covered the whole spectrum of life at Balshaw's and made extremely interesting reading. There may be a few copies available for purchase which could be obtained through negotiation with the school office.

Whilst writing the above I thought that Old Balshavians might appreciate the story from the beginning so I found the following on line.

*Leyland's Tudor Grammar School, South Ribble Museum*

Posted on September 5, 2015 by Lancashirepast.com 2.

In 1524 Sir Henry Farington gave money for a chantry to Leyland Parish Church. This was a form of trust fund to pay a priest to say regular prayers for Farington after his death. The endowment also set up a school within the church, which was the only one in Leyland at the time. Just over twenty years later chantry masses and prayers were abolished, but money was secured to carry on paying Thurston Taylor the school master, although at a reduced rate. The Tudor building that subsequently housed the school was built sometime between 1580 and 1620 in the corner of the churchyard. The hand made red brick exterior is a familiar sight today in Leyland town centre, but the interior is probably from an earlier timber framed and wooden building.

One of the most famous pupils was Dr Richard Kuerden, who went on to be educated at both Oxford and Cambridge. Kuerden was a medical doctor but also a collector of wills, deeds and family papers. He used all this material to create his manuscripts (now held at Chetham's Library, Manchester) with the hope of publishing a huge five volume history of Lancashire. In his adult years he had an ongoing connection with the school and is recorded as a governor in 1673. Seven years later he described the school as "***newly re-edified ... fairly built with brick and handsomly adorned with wyndows***".

Some of the school masters were very long serving. Thomas Moon taught for 60 years and Edward Marsden for 56. Many of the masters are buried in the churchyard and some of their graves can still be seen there today. The quality of the teaching remained high for most of the life of the school, but by the end of the 1700s there began to be some competition from other establishments. In 1770 Samuel Crook opened Moss Side school and local business man Richard



Balshaw opened a school in 1782, which continues as Balshaw's Church of England. High School today.

In the reign of King George III a school master's house was built onto the existing Tudor building. This extension was similar in plan to a weavers cottage. The building looks distinctly different from the Tudor one, and today it's through here that you enter the modern day museum and exhibition centre.

Above the door is inscribed "Gentlemen of this Parish and others in the Year 1790" giving us a clear indication of its funding and date of build. 3.

By the early 1800s pupil numbers had dwindled and in 1865 a critical report from the Enquiry Commission stated amongst other things "reading and spelling were not very good...Geography and English grammar were poor ". The writing was on the wall and eleven years later the school closed. The building was bought by John Stanning, a local bleacher, for use as a church hall by St Andrews Parish Church. It continued in this function into the early 1900s. The school master's house was rented out as living accommodation, and this was occupied up to the 1950s.

After this date the building was no longer used. A building must have a purpose or soon it will deteriorate, becoming a victim of neglect and vandalism. True to form, this was the fate of the Grammar School. Photographs from the 1970s show a the building in poor repair, with bricked up windows and a sagging roof. There was a very real possibility that it would be demolished and a car park built in its place ! Leyland does not exactly have a surplus of historic buildings from the Tudor period, and local voices raised their concerns. These concerns turned into real action and the Job Creation Scheme renovated, reroofed and restored the Grammar School to its former glory. It was reopened in 1977 as the South Ribble Museum and Exhibition Centre.

Today the museum has regular temporary exhibitions in the what was the downstairs school room. A programme of historical talks on South Ribble take place in this room, the museum's largest space. There is a large inglenook



fireplace and chimney at one end. Grooves can still be seen on the stone fireplace, from years of sharpening slate pencils. Pupils have also left their initials in the oak beams on the ceiling. In the upstairs three rooms are the permanent museum displays, which have a wealth of artefacts from the area including lots from the first world war. Of particular interest are finds from Roman Walton le Dale (to see the blog post on this intriguing site click [here](#)). The museum's curator is Dr. David Hunt, who gives regular talks and leads historical walks in the South Ribble area. The information on this blog post is taken in the main part from his excellent book

### **SCHOOL PROM SUMMER 2016**

At the end of this Summer term the girls and boys got dressed up and went for a night out.

Here they are, young Men and Ladies who during their time at school have blossomed into adults.



When they get dressed up the transformation is magic. Who would have thought that those little dots that arrived for their first year would have changed so much.

## 'UN FAIR' TUG OF WAR IN SUPPORT OF FAIRTRADE

On Wednesday 20th July the Fairtrade group held an 'Un Fair' tug of war, to help promote the global meaning of Fairtrade to everyone in school and the local community.

The group were supported by [Fun Leisure UK](#), who ran an inflatable obstacle course, local Fairtrader Cath Greenlees and the schools street dance troop, who performed their own dance based on an 'Un Fair' tug of war.

There were Fairtrade refreshments served by the group, Fairtrade gifts, a Fairtrade tombola, Eco t-shirts and other recycled items made by students in their technology lessons.

The day started with a Fairtrade prayer based on sport and fairness and continued with quizzes being given out during the day.

The senior prefects joined the evening after their reward pizza night to support the Fairtrade message.

The 'Un Fair' tug of war teams were made up from students from each House in school pulling against the Fairtrade group. A few helpers were added to the group to show you need to be fair in your support to make Fairtrade work.



Some pictures taken from the many on Balshaw's Web site. Pupils really had a good time playing the many games that were to be found on the lawn at the front of school.





*Old Balshavian Jade Eccleston Plays Rounders for the England U19 Team (Back row fourth from the right)*

18 July 2016

On a sunny Sunday in St. Helen's, Mrs Lupton found herself at Pilkington Sports Ground where 3 rounders matches were taking place. All matches were international rounders games - England Vs Wales! Our former student, ex Sports Captain Jade Eccleston was representing her country, playing in the U19 team for England.

The match was amazing to watch. England were very strong batting - hitting balls for miles! Wales' fielding was strong but England seemed to be able to pick out the gaps in the field.

When Wales came in to bat and England took to the field, Jade made a couple of really vital throws into 3rd and 4th base from out over 1st. England were just too strong for Wales and won the game!

I am immensely proud of Jade for all of her hard work and for making it into the England team. I look forward to following her success in the future!



Ed: Congratulations Jade on joining the list of many from Balshaw's who have gone on to represent England in sport.

Ed. I received a very rewarding letter the other day from Gordon & Eileen Sharples referring to the Balshaw's song which appeared in the spring issue this year. It went as follows :-

"When I saw the "Balshaw's Song" in your Spring issue I was absolutely amazed. I turned to Eileen and said "I wrote this song some 65 years ago". It seems that it is still referred to although maybe not sung! Your verse in the Spring News Letter is not quite right since the composition was as follows:

*Now this school of Balshaw's is a very fine place*

*But the organisation's a bl.....disgrace*

*There's Brownny Boy, Benny and Slats Morgan too*

*With their hands in their pockets and nothing to do.*

*They stand at the table, they rave and they shout*

*They talk about things they know nothing about*

*And for all the good they are they might as well be*

*In the Eagle and Child with a pint on their knee.*





Gordon has another claim to fame on the poetry front which was the homework composition completed for Miss Rahill in his early years at Balshaw's which went as follows :-

### **Prefect Humour**

*Dodging round the corner, peeping by the walls*

*This was prefects' humour, confiscating balls*

*Spying through the keyholes when nothing else to do*

*Handing out their prefects marks to their appointed few*

*Those who were unlucky on Friday would attend*

*In 4a on detention, their willful ways to mend.*

The poem must have had some merit because "The Cheeky Young Devil's work" was published in the school magazine. Perhaps the seed for the above poem was planted in Gordon's mind in his very first week at Balshaw's when he received FOUR marks from "Fats Riding" for kicking a marble about in the girls first team hockey goal mouth - 4a On Detention! Gordon was left scratching his head and wondering how on earth he was going to get home to Walton-Le-Dale when all the school buses had gone. He must have made it because he did not remember spending all weekend in Leyland. In his years as a prefect he never gave anyone a "Mark" preferring to keep order by "Don't do this, Don't do that" etc. He remembers well a girl prefect (name not disclosed) giving a poor little beggar FOUR marks for eating a bun in the bus stop by Bent Bridge. Detention for eating a bun! Gordon did not feel like a typical member of the ruling Gestapo.

Here are two more personal reminiscences from Gordon. "We were the last of the forms taking the Oxford School Certificate and I got a distinction in Latin, not realising that this got you into Downers school play, like it or not! After one, and only one, rehearsal trying to act as a Chinese man speaking broken English, I asked Judith Bradley (leading lady) to tell Mr Downer that this was not for me. Later he came to me in a friendly manner and said that he would find someone more suited to the part - end of story"



The other tale could be listed under “non social justice”. Gordon’s serious sports were Football, Tennis and Table Tennis which were not those practiced at Balshaw’s. When, in the sixth form, I was playing as an amateur in semi professional football, Slats Morgan turned a blind eye to the fact that I did not wish to play rugby for the school. Bill Seed from Longridge felt similarly but, since he only played football in the Preston league, Oldland hauled him into his study and told him that he would not receive a reference if he did not play rugby for the school.

Ed. Thank you Gordon for your interesting memories. If this article stirs up your memories please write them down and let me have a copy for the next issue.

### **NEW POLICY - REPORTS**

27 June–9 September 2016

There is a new policy being implemented at school regarding correspondence / reports etc. being sent home electronically (there will be no more paper reports sent home). If school do not have your correct email address (or no email address at all) then you will not receive a copy of the report or relevant correspondence.

We are running an exercise to check that the email addresses we have on file are correct, if they are incorrect you will be contacted by phone. If we have no email address on file you will not receive vital communications; therefore, you will need to contact school and provide an email address to be added to your child's record.

You can find out more information about the new reports On Line



**OLD BALSHAVIAN REUNION**

The Old Balshavian re-union evening at Balshaw’s school is on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30pm with the meal starting at 7.00pm. This re-union is open for everyone to come and enjoy so fill in the form below and send it off to

BARBARA WRIGHT at 3 Kings Drive, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 3HN. Tel 01772 421965 enclosing a cheque for £15.00.

Barbara is the kingpin of the organisation and deals with all the Money. Hazel (nee Harvey) McDade, together with Barbara Hamer, Valery Kite and myself are organising the event with the help of the head, Mr Haycocks. We would appreciate any help organising the event next year and new ideas that anyone might have. If you are interested please contact Hazel McDade of 10 Worcester Avenue, Leyland. Tel 01772 421965 or myself on email - [roberthaydock@btinternet.com](mailto:roberthaydock@btinternet.com) or phone 01772 431979.

Do not forget - if you have had your News Letter delivered through the door - Please send Barbara Wright stamps to cover postage.

Also If you have a recent email address please let me have it . Thanks. Robert Haydock.

**Balshaw’s Re-union Meal on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2016 costing £15.00 PP.**

**Name .....** **Maiden Name.....**

**Address.....**

**Telephone no .....** **Starting school 19.....Leaving school 19.....**

**Email Address.....**

**Include a cheque for £15 pp for the meal and send to Barbara at above address.**