

80th REUNION

On April 9th BRGS held its 80th reunion which was attended by 600 people. Past students and teachers were invited to look around the school; see the changes as well as meeting up with old friends, some who had lost touch for over fifty years.

The reunion was opened with a speech from Mr. Morris who welcomed people from as far away as Canada, U.S.A. and Switzerland. Many people also travelled long distances within the U.K. from places like Glasgow and Kent. Many local people came too.

In his speech Mr. Morris commented on the improvements to BRGS and stressed that even though BRGS was to obtain Technology College Status, it would still continue to hold the title BACUP AND RAWTENSTALL GRAMMAR SCHOOL, but would also have extra financing to provide the school with better equipment and resources to improve the departments and give the students many more facilities than ever before.

It was nice to see many people looking back on years gone by and the phrase "I remember when....." was used extensively throughout the day with people saying "what happened to Mr.Collinge, Mrs Richmond and Mr. Philips?"

In the evening a buffet and concert in which past students performed, was held for the guests.

The youngest performer was Rebecca White, who attended BRGS until 1989 and who is now in her final year at Lancaster University. She plays the clarinet and performed "Saint Seins Sonata".

Alwyn Mellor who was a sixth form student from 1986 to 1988 and who is lead Soprano with the Welsh National Opera, sang three songs, one from 'Tosca'. Whilst at BRGS she took the lead role in the musical 'South Pacific' and has now won a place at an Italian training school.

Paul Shead, who also had a role in 'South Pacific', was compere for the evening. He attended BRGS from 1981 - 1988. He also performed during the evening, together with Simon Sebright, some of their own compositions on the guitar.

A local businessman, Brian Frankland, who attended BRGS during the 1950's and who was once a member of the 'George Mitchell Singers' sang two numbers, one from 'Phantom of the Opera'.

The concert continued with a piano duet by James Howarth of Newchurch, who accompanied the other performers, and Ernest Tomlinson, a member of the Sixth form in the 1940's, who went on to become a well known composer and arranger. They performed three pieces, all of which were composed by Mr. Tomlinson.

The guests thoroughly enjoyed the concert and said it was the best which had ever been held at BRGS.

After the concert Mr.Clark gave an entertaining and humorous speech and stressed that he always felt a strong sense of 'homecoming' when he returned to BRGS and felt that the whole day had been a splendid occasion. He said that both he and Mrs Clark had talked non-stop and thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many familiar faces - even if some looked a little more wizened than when he knew them.

Mr. Clark also proposed a vote of thanks to the participants in the concert, to the caterers and to the reunion committee for organising such a splendid event.

On Sunday the 10th a reunion service was held in the school hall which was led by Rev. Keith Butterworth, the vicar of St. Michael and All Angels, Lawton Moor. Miss Pretty and Mr. Morris gave readings and Mr.D. Heap, Chairman of the Governors, led the visitors in prayer. The service was then concluded with the School Hymn.