

## CLASS OF '66 - THE REUNION

by Amy Hodson(daughter of Martin)

It took an unmeasurable amount of hard work and dedication, but the blood sweat and tears shed for the reunion of Saturday April 29th 1995 paid off to produce a huge success which was thoroughly enjoyed by all concerned.

It all began over twelve months ago when Martin Hodson hit on the idea of organising a dual birthday party/reunion for his school year, the 1966 intake, who will all be forty this year. This meant a year of mammoth-sized telephone bills for Mr. Hodson and his partners in crime Anthony Black and Maureen Harrison (née McLaughlin) as the search began for the 113 former pupils. Their effort was rewarded, for when the night arrived they had found 107 of the year group - that's everyone except for six people!

When the day finally arrived it was met with feelings of trepidation by the organisers, but these were unfounded as 80 former pupils of BRGS arrived *en masse* at Bacup Leisure Hall. The majority of these were from the 1966 intake, although eleven of them were actually a year younger than Mr. Hodson and his peers and had been a part of the "X" Form who went into the fourth year a year early to allow them an extra year in the Sixth Form. This meant that they were educated with the 1966 intake and were therefore invited to the reunion. Eight past teachers attended the event as did one current teacher, Miss Hazel Pretty, who taught maths to the forty-year-olds and is still teaching it to today's eleven-year-olds at BRGS! Add to this total 34 spouses/partners of the past pupils who refused to miss out on the fun, and you reach the phenomenal number of 123 people who were at the Leisure Hall on Saturday April 29th of this year.

Many of these people do still live near to the school - indeed many of them have children there themselves now, but there were several people who travelled back to their Rossendalian roots from the south of England and even further away - Graham Foster flew back to his home town from his new life in Tennessee, America!

Many of the people who couldn't attend the evening sent their best wishes verbally, and written messages were sent in the form of letters from past Headteacher Mr. Philip Clark and French teacher Mr. Collinge, and a telegram from Mr. Clark's predecessor, Mr. William Copley.

The evening began at 6:30pm and continued until midnight. I believe that the best way to summarise the event is to resort to an old cliché: "A good time was had by all". As one guest said afterwards, "I can't remember when I last had so much fun repeating the same questions and answers time and time again!" Mr. Hodson himself is thrilled with the success which the evening proved to be and says, "I'm really pleased with the way the event came off. Everyone enjoyed it and it gave us all the chance to renew old friendships and peel back the mists of time!"

And that was it. Saturday 29th April 1995 was the result of one tiny idea which snowballed into a party of such magnitude that people are asking for another one next year because they didn't get the chance to speak to everyone who they wanted to speak to! Mr. Hodson's comment on that? "Well I don't know about next year; it seems a bit soon. I think that five years is a reasonable time span to the next one." And does *he* think that all the work was worthwhile? "Definitely. From my experience I'd say that if you're thinking of organising a reunion then go for it. People are generally very enthusiastic, and the end result is extremely satisfying. I felt very proud on the night when everyone arrived and I knew, that along with Tony and Maureen, I had made the whole thing happen."

The night will be remembered by many as "the best night out I've had in ages", and that, I think is the highest accolade any event can receive.



Left to Right

Martin Hodson  
Lesley Badham  
Roger Fulton  
Gillian Sanderson  
Wendy Myers  
Susan Turner  
David Barker  
Peter Barnes