

Star Lane Class 1- Reunions & Teacher Celebrations.

Background of Star Lane and Class 1

On the 8th January 1964 I walked into Star lane school for the first time, and joined a class in the Infants which had a number of pupils who were to remain in my class through the junior school, where we were joined by new members forming a class which stayed together for several years. Whilst in the infants we were lucky enough to be taught by Ann Hull (Fig 1), and in the junior school after a spell with Mr Davy we were lucky again when we were given Derek Hull as our teacher for our final 2 years. (Fig 2)

Although we didn't realise it at the time Derek and Ann were to have quite an effect on our class and were a guiding influence not only then, but for many of the pupils for a number of years afterwards. Our class is had up to 44 members, a large class by today's standards (Fig 3), but somehow our teachers always had time for us as individuals, and made a lot of effort to encourage us in the things we were interested in, and also to take us out on social occasions, many times as part of their own social life. (Fig 4), some of the girls joined in a church group Derek ran, and for some religion was brought into their lives. We enjoyed trips to the Zoo (Fig 5), and stays at Debden House in Essex (Fig 6), as well the chance to go to the theatre. For many of us these were rare treats, as the area we came from was reasonably poor, and I among many others may not have had these things were it not for this input. I still remember the stays at Debden, and have a pocket knife given to me by Derek for keeping our room tidy. Imagine giving that to a child nowadays!



Fig 1 Star Lane Infants School Female Staff



Fig 2 Star Lane Junior School Staff about 1967



Fig 3 Class 1 about 1967



Fig 4 Some of our Class at an event of Derek's



Fig 5 Outing To The Zoo from West Ham Station, me far left!!



Fig 6 Tug O' War, probably with Derek's Church Group.

The following are some photos of our class, and some of the activities we took part in. Derek has fond memories of us as being great rounder's players, so for his benefit I have included a couple of these (fig's 6 & 7).



Figs 6 & 7 Lynn Goff, Janet Ryan and others Playing Rounder's by the Dinner huts.

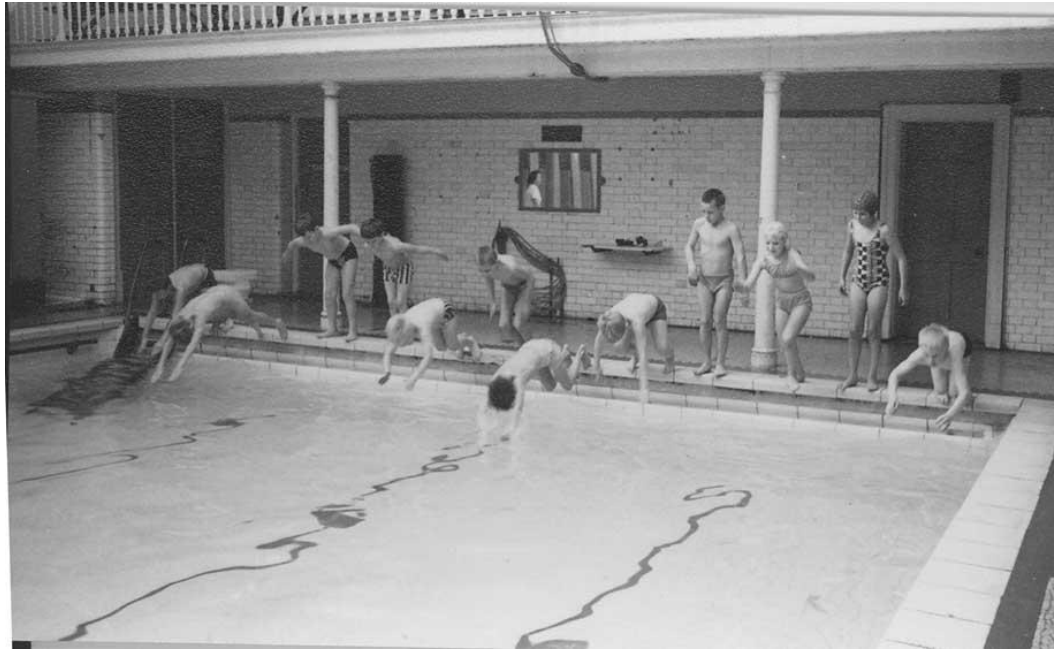


Fig 8 Swimming at Balaam St baths, large pool.

The following are just a few random photos chosen from those I have, and show the interest Derek had in our class, just in the fact he kept so much for so long, and of course a couple like those of Leslie and Janet are a good example of his interest in photography.



Fig 9 Canning Town Library



Fig 10 Class 1 Girls at Break



Fig 11 Janet Ryan



Fig 12 Leslie Quirk

There is of course another special member of the class, and I am amazed the photograph exists; in fact even more amazed I was allowed to take the fellow in it to school and allow him to pose in a cup our class won. I am of course talking about my white mouse (Fig 13).



Fig 13 My White Mouse

Previously I mentioned the fact that some of us had Mr Davy as our teacher for a while. It would seem he was a bit of a strange character (putting it mildly), and certainly from reports he wrote on some of our class that I have seen, he didn't think as much of us as Derek and Ann did. To illustrate this I include a report written on me, which as well as being barbed, illustrates that he most certainly didn't have any understanding of our home life and was inclined to make the most outrageous comments! Thank goodness we had Derek, (Fig 14).

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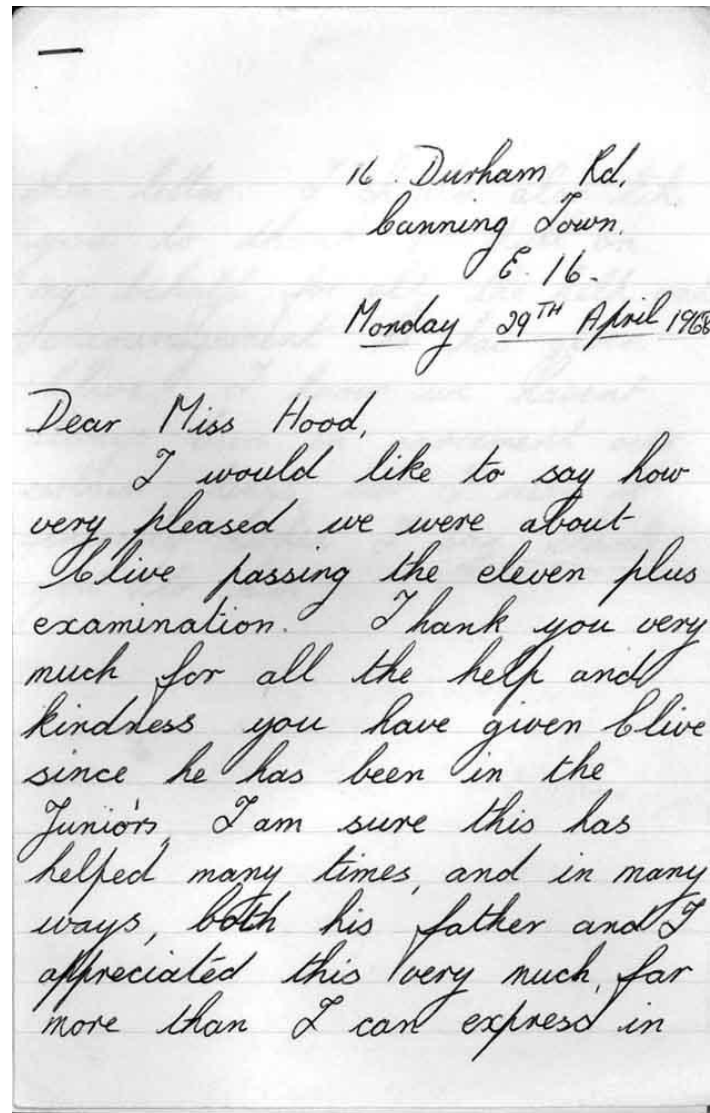
NAME READ William		Date of Birth 1.6.57	Reported 8.1.64
Grade 6	Prof Once Upon a Time	Numbers to 100 to - to 100 using T.N.I Xs using 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10 Knows all coins to - to 5 shillings Can tell time at hour to 1/2 past	Good
Strive have good ideas			
REMARKS: A very naughty boy, spiteful and deceitful.			

He is care about as for William
a bad boy who likes other's stuff
He took an interest in him. I went out of my way to
tell him interesting things & just talk with him
He has been when he is bad behaviour now good.
Lately he was still naughty

He is a very high standard. He is quick
like all the other boys.
He has no bad school interests to have spare time
passed & I don't have him long enough to
puff him a little interest in something for him
He would be possible if
Don't want to provide help.

Fig 15 Report by Mr Davy

To finish this section I include a letter written to by one of class's mother, which I think says it for all of us, (Figs 16 & 17).

A handwritten letter on lined paper. The address is written in the top right corner, followed by the date. The letter is addressed to Miss Hood and expresses gratitude for help and kindness received from her since the writer's son, Oliver, has been in the Juniors. The handwriting is in cursive and somewhat slanted.

16 Durham Rd.
Canning Town.
E.C. 16.
Monday 29TH April 1968

Dear Miss Hood,

I would like to say how very pleased we were about Oliver passing the eleven plus examination. I thank you very much for all the help and kindness you have given Oliver since he has been in the Juniors. I am sure this has helped many times, and in many ways, both his father and I appreciated this very much, far more than I can express in

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this letter. I should also like
you to thank Mr Hull on
my behalf for all the help and
encouragement he has given
me. I know we haven't
always been in agreement over
certain things, but I mean it
sincerely when I say thank
you to him.

Yours sincerely
Mrs. E. Spanton

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Reunions

After we left Star Lane many of us kept in touch with Derek and Ann. I know some of the girls joined in with activities within his church group. Others of us just turned up occasionally, as did a group of us at our first proper reunion at their house in Chingford when we were about 18. Over the years we have had other meetings, several of which have taken place in the last decade. Photos of two of these are shown in Figs 18 & 19.



Fig 18 Class Reunion 2004



Fig 19 Class Reunion 2007

This again is I think indicative of how fond Derek and Ann are of our class, and of course we are of them.

I must say that for my part I am extremely glad to have had Derek and Ann as my teachers. Especially in the fact that I remember how much encouragement and help I received in the class, like the time Derek Prior and I built a small radio and Derek brought in an amplifier to enable it to be heard. I am glad to have been a part of this class.

Party Time

This year, 2010 has been a special year for Derek and Ann and members of our class were lucky, along with many of their other friends, to receive an invitation to share in the celebration of both their 50th wedding anniversary and Derek's 80th birthday, (Fig 20).



Fig 20 Invitation



Fig 21 Derek and Ann's Marriage

For the past years 4 years or so Derek and Ann have lived in the Dordogne region of France, in a pretty house, (Fig 22) in St Antoine Cumond, a small village approached via a beautiful avenue of trees from the neighbouring town of Aubeterre, (Fig 23).



Fig 21 Derek and Ann's House

Quite a move for people of their age, and especially as Derek will not learn French. But they have made many friends locally, both English and French, so what with a large party of visitors who flew out from England their celebrations were a resounding success! Among these were family, friends and another pupil from Star Lane, Lynda Dowling, who wasn't in our class, but who seems to also think as much of Derek and Ann as everyone else.



Fig 22 Avenue of Trees

The following Photos are a small selection of those taken at this event, which serve to give a good idea of the fun had by all.



Fig 23 Party Time



Fig 24 Derek and Ann



Fig 25 Derek and His Rum Baba!

I should say that it now a well known fact that Derek has a soft spot for a Rum Baba. The caterers knowing this brought, especially for him, his own Rum Baba, never mind the fact there was no end of cake!



Fig 26 Birthday Cake



Fig 27 Wedding & Birthday Cakes



Fig 28 Ann Dancing

There is a small video of the party, at present this is on You tube and can be viewed by clicking the following link.

<https://readhistory.co.uk/starlane-video/>

No party is ever complete without the après party fun. Derek and Ann were great hosts, and those of us who stayed over were made to feel extremely welcome. We enjoyed their home, their food, and their swimming pool, AND we even got invited back! All I can say is that it's a shame some people couldn't make it, they missed out on a very special event.



Fig 29 Lynda Dowling and others enjoy the Pool

Which of course was extremely pleasant as the weather was very warm.



Fig 30 Restaurant Treat



Fig 30 Goodbyes

And many thanks; I look forward to the next Party
Bill Read