

II. Further Extensions and a Schools' Cup Win 1961-1969³⁷

FROM THE TONIC TEENAGE SHOW TO 'THE TROUBLES'

During the 1960s Bangor continued to grow – and to change, but her young folk were too busy enjoying themselves to notice. In 1963 *The Tonic Teenage Show* began on Saturday mornings, bringing Bangor into the rock-and-roll age; it featured local groups such as *The Vaqueros*, *The Janitors* and *The Half Twelves* (there were six of them), many of them displaying musical talents possessed by *Bangor Grammar School* boys, about which Tom McVeigh and Gordon Thomson would have preferred not to know. Teenagers gathered in the *Mimba* milk bar or the *Rumblin' Tum* and at the weekend flocked to the dances at *The Fo'c'sle* in the Sea Scout Hall and the *Duck Pond* in the Scout Hall in Ward Park.

In 1965, the *County Down Spectator* asked – somewhat belatedly – 'What is the future of Bangor? Dormitory town for Belfast, Tourist Resort or Industrial Centre?' The answer was, it seemed, 'all three'. More factories were built; Bangor's boundary was extended, adding 5000 acres and so doubling the area of the borough; the Ring Road was begun, the first section running from Newtownards Road to Bloomfield Road; the town's first shopping centre – *Springhill* – opened; the old police barracks on Victoria Road was replaced by a new one in Castle Park; and as traffic increased, the town's first traffic lights were installed. At the same time, probably with the tourist trade in mind, Bangor acquired an Inshore Rescue Boat and an Indoor Swimming Pool, the *Tonic* became the *Odeon* and there was talk of a Marina.

As 'The Borough of North Down' was first mooted, Bangor became a Stormont constituency with Bertie McConnell, a former pupil of the School, as its first M.P. Another distinguished 'old boy', Sir William MacArthur died in 1964, and *Bangor R.F.C.* named its newly acquired grounds 'Uprichard Park', after Joe Uprichard, also a former pupil. Meanwhile, in 1962 Dr. Maurice H.F. Wilkins, a nephew of the School's former Headmaster, had shared the Nobel Prize for Medicine, with Francis Crick and James Watson, for his part in the discovery of 'the key to life', D.N.A.

Two long-established businesses fell victim to fire: *Bangor Laundry*, which had been established in 1890, and which had once had the telephone number 'Bangor 5', was gutted, as was *W. Simon & Co. Ltd* on Upper Main Street. There was talk, too, of replacing that old landmark the Gasworks with a shopping centre, and Bangor's rail link with Dublin was severed as Middlepath Street Bridge in east Belfast was demolished.

Bangor may have been changing, but as the decade neared its end, Northern Ireland was to suffer even more devastating changes – both political and material. The infamous 'Malvern Street Murders' took place in 1966. The *Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association*, formed in 1967, began holding marches the following year demanding, among other things, the fair allocation of housing and 'one man one vote' in local government elections, but despite the promise of reforms violence ensued. As the political temperature rose, even the attendance of an ex-service priest at Bangor cenotaph in 1968 caused controversy. In April 1969, Terence O'Neill, who had succeeded Lord Brookeborough six years earlier and whose meeting with Taoiseach Sean

³⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, the information contained in this section has been taken from the Minutes of the Board of Governors, the Minutes of Meetings of Subscribers, or the *County Down Spectator* reports on Speech Days, Sports Days and *Old Boys' Association* Dinners. For those who may be interested in consulting the *Spectator*, the relevant dates are: Speech Day – 2 November 1962, 8 November 1963, 6 November 1964, 29 October 1965, 4 November 1966, 3 November 1967, 8 November 1968 and 7 November 1969; Sports Days – 18 May 1962, 24 May 1963, 29 May 1964, 28 May 1965, 27 May 1966, 26 May 1967, 24 May 1968 and 30 May 1969; *Old Boys' Association* Dinners – 16 November 1962, 29 November 1963, 30 October 1964, 3 December 1965, 18 November 1966, 24 November 1967, 22 November 1968 and 21 November 1969.

Lemass in 1965 his critics cited as the origin of *'The Troubles'*, was forced to resign as Prime Minister three days after British troops were mobilised on the streets of the Province.³⁸

THE SWINGING SIXTIES?

The 1960s are probably best remembered for pop culture and fashion; in 1964, the editor of *The Gryphon* fulminated against *'a rash of effeminate hairstyles, some of which would have given the "three weird sisters" in Macbeth an inferiority complex. It is our sincere hope that sanity, self respect and hygienic standards may prevail next year'*.³⁹ Don Jamieson was even known to measure the length of the boys' hair as they left Assembly, and several were sent home to have their hair cut.

Despite much talk of *'peace and love'*, it was a far from peaceful decade. France experienced political unrest with student riots at the *Sorbonne* and O.A.S. terrorism in Algeria, while further south in Africa, there was violence in the former Belgian Congo and a civil war in Nigeria, which caused famine in the northern province of Biafra. Other disputes of the 1960s remained unresolved 40 years later; Iraq laid claim to Kuwait, Argentina to the Falklands, Spain blockaded Gibraltar, Greek and Turkish Cypriots came to blows and the Six-Day War perpetuated the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Meanwhile, the process of de-colonisation was under way as Bechuanaland, Gambia, Kenya, Rhodesia, Tanganyika and Uganda were among Britain's former colonies to experience what Harold Macmillan had called *'the wind of change'*.

Many careers came to an end during the 1960s. The world of entertainment lost Vivien Leigh, Marilyn Monroe and Tony Hancock among others, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld was killed in an air crash, to be succeeded by U Thant, King Constantine of Greece was overthrown in a bloodless coup, Enoch Powell dug his own political grave with his *'rivers of blood'* speech, Winston Churchill, Jawaharlal Nehru and Ho Chi Minh died peacefully, while John F.Kennedy, Hendrik Verwoerd, Che Guevara, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy met violent ends. The third Kennedy brother, Edward, effectively saw his political future die along with Mary Jo Kopechne at Chappaquiddick. Other long careers began, as Yassir Arafat became leader of the P.L.O. and Col.Gadaffi came to power in Libya.

Despite disarmament talks, the Cold War intensified: businessman Greville Wynne was arrested in Hungary on bogus spying charges; Kim Philby was unmasked as *'the third man'* in the Burgess-Maclean spy scandal; the world held its breath for two weeks as Khrushchev and Kennedy faced each other down over the Cuban Missile Crisis; and Warsaw Pact forces brought an abrupt end to Dubcek's brief *'Prague Spring'*. As the superpowers vied with each other for supremacy in the arms race and the space race, China joined the nuclear *'club'*, France exploded a hydrogen bomb and Britain acquired her first *Polaris* submarine.

The U.S.A. became even more deeply embroiled in Vietnam, with the *Tonkin Gulf Resolution* approving *'all necessary action'* and the Viet Cong's response, the *Tet Offensive*; atrocities such as the My Lai massacre made the war increasingly unpopular at home, where the Civil Rights campaign also gave rise to outbreaks of violence, such as the riots in the Watts district of Los Angeles which left 35 dead.

Back in Britain, news that Secretary of State for War, John Profumo, was sharing call-girl Christine Keeler with a Soviet naval attaché Eugene Ivanov, brought an end to Harold Macmillan's premiership, the Great Train Robbery took place with two of the perpetrators,

³⁸ Information gleaned from the files of the *County Down Spectator*; J.E.Doherty & D.J.Hickey, *A Chronology of Irish History since 1500* (1989).

³⁹ *The Gryphon*, June 1964.

Ronald Briggs and Buster Edwards, later assuming the role of folk-heroes. Charles de Gaulle said 'Non' to British entry into the *Common Market* and over a decade of Conservative rule ended when Harold Wilson's Labour Party came to power. Meanwhile, Lord Beeching's axe had fallen on the country's railways, the voting age was lowered to 18 and breath tests were introduced in an effort to cut down on drink-driving. The Sexual Offences Act, which legalised homosexual acts between consenting adults, and the availability of the first oral contraceptive, seemed to many to typify the permissive 1960s and the abolition of the death penalty was also greeted with outrage in certain quarters. To crown it all, the country had to cope with the devaluation of sterling and an outbreak of foot and mouth disease.

It has been said that, with the increasing availability of drugs such as cannabis, '*if you can remember the '60s, you weren't there*'; but there was so much to remember: Mao Zedong's '*Cultural Revolution*' in China, the Second Vatican Council, the execution in Israel of Adolf Eichmann for war crimes, the jailing for life of Nelson Mandela, a volcanic eruption on Tristan da Cunha, which led to the evacuation of the island's 262 residents, the '*Moors Murders*' carried out by Ian Brady and Myra Hindley, the loss of 116 children and 28 adults under a slag heap in Aberfan, *Thalidomide*, the first heart transplant, the first steps towards the creation of a '*test-tube*' baby, the end of B.B.C. Radio's *Children's Hour* – and the end of the '*Home Service*' and the '*Light Programme*' – and the arrival of *Ready Steady Go*, *Top of the Pops*, B.B.C.2, colour television, '*Beatlemania*', Radio Caroline, Mods and Rockers, Carnaby Street, the satire of *Beyond the Fringe* and *That Was the Week That Was*, James Bond, *Concorde*, the Dounreay fast breeder reactor, the first commercial communications satellite, the 50 pence piece as a prelude to decimalisation, and Neil Armstrong's '*small step for man*' as he stepped onto the surface of the moon.

In literature, different aspects of the Cold War were illustrated by the pens of Alexander Solzhenitzyn and John le Carré, and other modern classics were published, among them Seamus Heaney's first anthology *Death of a Naturalist*, Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, Joseph Heller's *Catch 22*, Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* and Desmond Morris's *The Naked Ape*. At the same time, *The New English Bible* and *The Sun* newspaper first appeared.

In the performing arts, Leonard Bernstein, Benjamin Britten, William Walton, Richard Rodney Bennett and John Tavener were among the leading composers of the decade and theatre audiences were enjoying Frederick Ashton's ballet to Stravinsky's *Persephone* and Lionel Bart's *Oliver*. Cinema was offering something for every taste, from *One Hundred and One Dalmations*, *Mary Poppins* and *Dr.Strangelove*, to *Exodus*, *El Cid*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *A Man for all Seasons*, *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Midnight Cowboy*.

Other names indelibly etched on the 1960s are those of David Hockney, Andy Warhol, Mary Quant, Jean Shrimpton and a host of '*pop*' stars including Frank Ifield, Roy Orbison, Dusty Springfield, *The Beatles*, *The Rolling Stones*, Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, *The Beach Boys*, Simon and Garfunkel, *The Who*, *Pink Floyd* and *The Supremes*, while the exploits of Cassius Clay have become legendary and we will never be allowed to forget England's victory in the 1966 World Cup.

Opportunities for higher education increased greatly during the 1960s as new universities were founded, among them Sussex, Essex, York, East Anglia, Kent, Strathclyde, Lancaster, Stirling, Warwick, Bradford, Aston, Brunel, Heriot-Watt, Dundee, Salford and of course Ulster. But then opportunities for secondary education at *Bangor Grammar School* were also increasing.

THE CONTINUING GROWTH OF B.G.S.

At a Special Meeting of the Board of Governors in June 1961, following Sam Claney's retirement, Norman Handforth was elected Chairman of the Board. In anticipation of a further extension, it was also decided to set up three sub-committees for Finance, School and Buildings.

Since Mr. Clarke's appointment in 1954, when there had been 376 pupils in the secondary department, the School population had grown rapidly. Part of the explanation was that, in 1954 almost 30% had left school after Junior Certificate and there had been only a handful of pupils in Upper VI, whereas very few now left after Junior and there was an Upper VI of around 30 boys. By 1963 the School population had exceeded the 500 mark for the first time. 500 was, said Mr. Clarke, the ideal size. It was:

'large enough to provide numbers for a variety of activities and a variety of subjects in the school curriculum. It is small enough to exist as an integrated family community, where all or most of the members know each other and where the sense of belonging to and being proud of a community can flourish'.⁴⁰

In 1962 a new 'Review' procedure was introduced; if an unqualified pupil could show that he was 'holding his own with qualified boys of his own age in at least six subjects', he was granted a scholarship. Also in 1962, 11 out of the 27 unqualified boys in Lower IV gained scholarships, on the results of their Junior Certificate, an examination which was abolished in 1965.

The 1960s saw a number of additions to the curriculum. From 1961, French *assistants*, among them M. Jean Pierron and M. François Lobet, took conversation classes with senior boys, although German had replaced French as the modern language taught to the Lower Third. Two years later, the boys in the top set of the Upper Third were offered French as a second language, and more than half opted to take it up. In addition, courses in Mechanics, and Russian taught by Bruce Greenfield, were introduced in 1962, and in 1967 *Nuffield Science* and 'New' Mathematics. Although Music had long been a part of School life, most recently under the direction of Ernie Browne and Gordon Thomson, who saw the School Choir win a number of trophies at local Music Festivals including the *Brett Cup* for Boys' Choirs at the *Belfast Festival* in 1969, the report on the 1968 General Inspection criticised the 'lack of adequate Music in the School' and so the School's first full-time music teacher was appointed the following year. Upper IV became a year for broadening the boys' curriculum before embarking on the Senior Certificate courses, with lessons in, among other things, American History and Current Affairs. Mr. Clarke complained that the boys did not always take full advantage of that year. 'Parents', he said, 'could help by encouraging their boys to read, instead of watching television and listening to endless pop music on the radio'. Classes in 'Modern Studies', which included Current Affairs, Logic and Philosophy, and Statistics, and in 'English Essay' were also introduced in the Sixth Form, in an effort to broaden the education of those who were specialising in a narrow range of science or arts subjects.

Commenting on the 'revolutionary changes' which were taking place in teaching methods, Mr. Clarke asserted his belief that:

'no machine, however ingenious, can take the place of the teacher who is interested in his pupils. . . . A computer cannot warn, console or encourage, a tape recorder cannot listen to doubts, nor can a stop watch record the slow growth of a child's self-confidence'.

Despite Mr. Clarke's reference to 'a recent spate of ill-informed enthusiasm for the introduction of the English G.C.E. pattern here – a five year course in subjects chosen by the pupils – little more difficult than Junior Certificate', and his belief that the Senior Certificate, based on group passes, should be retained to prevent 'a levelling down of standards', a G.C.E. class was started in 1961. A 'new type'

⁴⁰ *The Gryphon*, June 1963.

of Senior Certificate was a '*fiat accompli*' by June 1964, provoking the editor of *The Gryphon* to say: '*There is much cause for uneasiness. The new syllabus for English Literature reflects both timidity and superficiality – and this at a time when our language is becoming increasingly ugly and inaccurate*'.⁴¹

That year a government White Paper on the future of education in Northern Ireland floated the idea of a non-selective system of secondary education. The editor of *The Gryphon*, remarked that it would destroy grammar schools as we know them, adding, '*We are a community school, closely knit into the life of the town, run by local people, taking a pride in belonging to the town and, we hope, giving the town cause for pride*'. To the relief of Mr. Clarke and the Governors, a year later the Minister of Education made a statement to the effect that he had no intention of putting Northern Ireland grammar schools out of existence.

In 1963 the names of the forms in the School were changed from the old Lower and Upper Third, Lower IV etc. to Forms 1, 2, 3 etc. and *Connor House* adopted the usual primary school nomenclature, P.1 to P.7 the following year. In a further step to modernise the School, a new flannel scarf replaced the old knitted one in 1967.

North's confectionery shop at the top of High Street where, as well as sweets, the boys could buy single cigarettes for 3^d, had been declared '*out of bounds*' in 1963 and, perhaps in a further effort to dissuade the boys from frequenting that establishment, a school *Tuck Shop* was opened in Room 44 in 1966, only to be closed down two years later due to lack of space.

THE SCHOOL PROSPECTUS (1962)

A Prospectus in the possession of the author can, from a list of the Staff, be dated to 1962. It contains phrases redolent of a bygone age. Ward Park and Castle Park are said to provide *Connor House* boys with '*unrivalled opportunities for Nature Study*'; parents are urged to co-operate with the School by not allowing their sons '*to attend youth organisations or places of amusement except at the week-end*'; '*billiard halls and buildings containing gambling machines are out of bounds*'; and although '*during holidays boys are not expected to wear uniform*', '*the full uniform must be worn on week-days*', and '*two School caps must be available*'. Fees at the time were £52 and £54-10-0 in the grammar department and £42 and £35 per annum in the preparatory department.

CRITERIA FOR ENTRY TO THE SCHOOL

In June 1963, *The Gryphon* carried a note from the Headmaster on the '*method of admission to the School*'. In it he explained that entry to *Connor House* was open to boys who attained their fifth birthday during the course of the academic year, although later entry might be possible if places were available. Qualified boys seeking entry to the secondary department were only accepted after interview and, if transferring from another grammar school, only on receipt of a favourable report. Provided there were places available, unqualified boys would be accepted after an interview and assessments by the primary school which suggested that the boy had the potential to profit from a grammar school education. Interests, hobbies, attitude, behaviour and home background were also taken into account.⁴²

AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME

Two further amendments were made to the Scheme of Management during the 1960s. The number of Representative Governors was increased from nine to twelve in 1966, three retiring and four being elected in each of the following three years; the Scheme was amended accordingly.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² *ibid.*

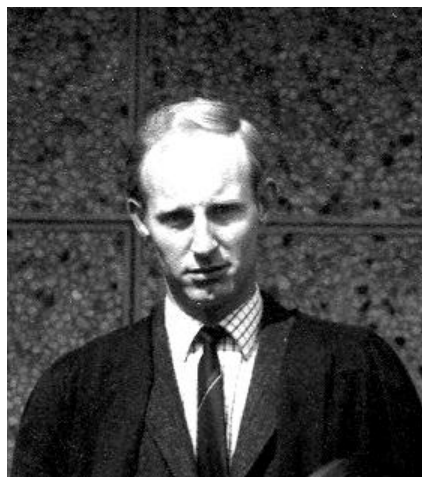
In March 1968, Board of Governors decided to accept the 80% grant towards capital expenditure offered by the Government in the Education (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 1968, and three months later the School became the first voluntary grammar school to complete arrangements with the Ministry of Education, whereby the School had to accept Ministry nominees on a *'four and two'* basis on its Board. This also necessitated an amendment to the Scheme and Messrs. Ablett, Buchanan, Handforth, O'Hara, Simms, Smylie and Wolsey duly joined the Board. It was felt that, as a result, the Board might become *'less introspective'*, although several of the new members were *'old boys'* and former Governors.⁴³

STAFF

The early 1960s saw the arrival of more of Bob McIlroy's *'young and eager'* members of Staff, none younger or more eager than Bob himself. He was educated at the *Masonic School* in Dublin, where he gained a Leinster Schools Cricket cap (which he wore with pride when playing for the Staff XI), and *Methodist College Belfast*, before taking his degree at *Queen's*. After a brief spell teaching in Belfast, he joined the staff of *Bangor Grammar School* in 1962 to teach Chemistry, only latterly transferring his allegiance to the Technology Department. Whether it was as second row forward on the Staff XV (*'in those ancient times before the law on negligence ran totally out of control, to be followed by half a dozen Amazon forests full of Department of Education policies [when] it was . . . possible to put such a team into the field'*, as Chris Harte has put it), rugby coach, cricket coach, housemaster of Crosby, stage manager, Chemistry teacher or Senior Teacher, *'Big Bob'* made a contribution to the lives of thousands of boys and enriched the careers of dozens of colleagues. He made a *'huge contribution to civilising the School'*. Described as adaptable and resourceful, he also appeared to be ageless. Having retired in both 1999 and 2001, he was still frequently to be found filling a gap in the timetable forty years after first crossing the threshold.⁴⁴



R.L.G. McIlroy, B.Sc., Dip.Ed. (1962-2000)
in 1962



J.E. Steele, B.A., Dip.Ed. (1962-1999)
in 1968

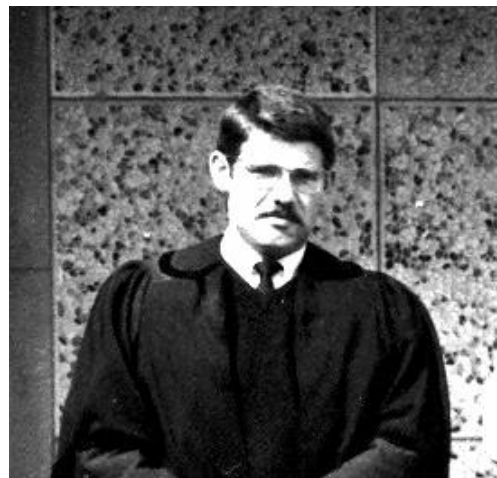
J. Errol Steele, known as *'Jessie'*, also joined the Staff in 1962 and remained for the entirety of his 37-year career. On the retirement of Henry Rea in 1977, he became Head of Modern Languages, a department which doubled in size and expanded its scope to include Russian, Spanish and Japanese during his time at the School. Mr. Steele also played a full part in the wider life of the School, as a leader of the *Student Christian Movement* (the *Christian Education Movement*, as it became in 1966), as one of the first Teacher-Governors in 1985, as wicket-keeper on the staff cricket team and as a leading player on the staff golf team. Along with John Smyth and Billy Mercer, he was responsible for the introduction of hockey as a major winter sport at the School,

⁴³ *County Down Spectator*, 22 March and 21 June 1968

⁴⁴ *The Gryphon*, 2000.

coaching the 2nd XI. However golf was the sport with which he was most associated. Having captained the school team while a pupil at *R.B.A.I.* and having played for *Queen's University*, he became foundation Treasurer of the *Ulster Grammar Schools' Golf Association* in 1962 and served as either Chairman or Treasurer throughout his career. While in charge of golf at the School, the *Ulster Schools' Golf Championship* was won 10 times and the Irish 3 times and he saw two former pupils, Garth McGimpsey and David Feherty selected for *Walker* and *Ryder Cup* teams respectively in the same year, 1991.⁴⁵

Prior to his appointment in 1962, Allen D.Abraham had worked in the Middle East and had taught for two years at *Grosvenor High School*. A native of Belfast, he was educated in Dublin at the *Masonic School* and at *Trinity College*, where he graduated in 1957 in Geography, Geology and Botany. As well as being master-in-charge of Biology, he took on responsibility for Careers, at a time when the careers library contained little more than prospectuses for *Queen's* and *Trinity*, and he did much to develop careers advice in the School. He was also in charge of Modern Studies, a post for which he was ideally suited given his interest in so many spheres, including meteorology, history and politics. His enthusiasm for his subject made him a successful teacher and he was proud when his former pupils went on to distinguish themselves in medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine. An able rugby player and cricketer in his younger days, he refereed and umpired school matches for many years. In common with many in the profession, 'this excellent biologist, fine sportsman and perfect gentleman' found the increasing pressures of the education system of the 1980s less to his liking than 'the halcyon days of the 1960s'. He took premature retirement in 1989 after 27 years on the Staff.⁴⁶



A.D.Abraham, B.A.(Mod.) (1962-1989) B.S.Greenfield, B.A.(Hons.) (1962-65 & 1966-87) in 1962

Bruce Greenfield first joined the Staff in 1962 and after three years he left to go to *R.B.A.I.* Within a year he was back and stayed in Bangor until his early retirement, after a long period of ill-health, in 1987. Although a native of Sussex, with his *Sprachgefühl*, had no difficulty adapting to the local *patois*. A graduate of *Leeds University* in Russian and German, he taught not only those subjects but also French – and Spanish, which he had studied to 'A' Level Grade A standard in just two years. It was he who had introduced Russian to the School and it soon became a strong centre for the language; Bruce served on the Examination Board's Russian Panel. A true polyglot, he also studied various Slavonic and Romance languages, qualifying for membership of the *Institute of Linguists*. Outside the classroom, he played his part on the rugby field and in the swimming pool and, himself a 'brown belt', he set up a *Judo Club* in the School. He also accompanied at least one Continental Tour and the story is told how he and a colleague,

⁴⁵ Dougie Rea in *The Gryphon*, 1999; *Old Boys' Association* Report 1989.

⁴⁶ Errol Steele in *The Gryphon*, 1989.

while out walking with the then Headmaster, Randall Clarke, himself a keen walker, would sprint once out of sight leaving a bemused Mr. Clarke to wonder how they could have got so far ahead of him. Despite his somewhat forbidding manner in the classroom - one boy recalls his 'North Korean-style squat torture' - he had a warm and gentle personality and, following his retirement, every aspect of his presence was greatly missed from the staffroom - except his pipe smoke.⁴⁷ His first wife, Marion, a native-German speaker was appointed to take conversation classes in 1963 and she gave fencing lessons to the combatants in *Henry IV, Part One* the following year.

It was not only members of the teaching staff who stayed at the School throughout their careers. Mary Cheyne was appointed as Laboratory Assistant and School Nurse in 1962. For 29 years, with her soft Scottish accent, she comforted the genuine patient and dispatched the malingerer to the classroom.



Mrs. M. Cheyne (1962-1991)



J. R. Johnston (1963-1985)

Jimmy R. Johnston first came to the School as a temporary member of staff during 1956, while home on furlough from the *Qua Iboe Missionary School* in southern Nigeria. He was appointed to the permanent staff in 1962 and subsequently rose to become Head of the Mathematics Department and a Senior Teacher. Shortly after joining the Staff he, along with Errol Steele, was instrumental in setting up the school branch of the *Student Christian Movement*. A quiet, modest man, he retired in 1985 after 22 years' service.

Although only on the Staff for two years, William John Shaw Teasey will be remembered by all who came into contact with him. An *avant-garde* 'man of the 1960s', he was a stimulating, if unconventional teacher of English, recommending to his young charges novels, which his superiors would not have put on their reading-lists. He was also responsible for the School production of Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part One* in 1964. He had a somewhat liberal attitude to senior boys smoking during rehearsals and, in defiance of the Headmaster, he took a part in a *Queen's University Dramsoc* production under the pseudonym William Shaw; it was said that the Headmaster attended the play, but failed to recognise his young colleague.

⁴⁷ Errol Steele in *The Gryphon*, 1988; Alistair McWhirter in the *Friends Reunited* website.



J.W.S. Teasey, B.A. (1964-1966) in 1964



J.V. Smyth, B.A., Dip.Ed. (1964-1997) in 1967

A native of Belfast, John Smyth was educated at *Campbell College*, where he represented the school at rugby, hockey and cricket. At *Queen's University*, he had the privilege of studying Geography under Professor Estyn Evans and, having also studied History, he did his '*teaching practice*' in the History Department of *Bangor Grammar School* in 1959. Before his appointment to the permanent staff in 1964, he spent several years teaching in King's Lynn, Norfolk. He became Head of the Geography Department in 1973 and Vice-Principal in 1978. As Head of Geography, he organised field work throughout the British Isles and as Vice-Principal, he oversaw the increasingly complex arrangements for public examinations, but his work-load of teaching and administration did not prevent him from coaching cricket throughout his career, opening the batting for the Staff XI, (as a bowler, his deliveries once prompted Jimmy Welch to enquire if he had '*pulled the pin out*'), and taking charge of Hockey from its re-introduction to the School in 1966 until his retirement. Under his guidance, the 1st XI won the *Burney* and *McCullough* cups, and the Irish Schools' Championship in 1989. He delighted in the inter-provincial and international honours bestowed on his players, both at School and subsequently, and he was honoured by being elected President of the Ulster Branch of the *Irish Hockey Union*. With '*his quiet, self-effacing personality [and] his sense of humour, he is a reminder of a richer, more cultural age in schooling, when the education of the young was not limited to thoughts of league tables, coursework deadlines, modular courses and the like*'. He retired as Senior Vice-Principal in 1997.⁴⁸

Jack Murphy joined the Staff in 1966, having taken his degree at *Trinity College Dublin*. He succeeded George Heuston as Head of the English Department and Editor of *The Gryphon* in 1977. Despite a serious illness, which he fought with great courage, he continued to teach for as long as was possible, given debilitating weakness and severe treatment. Following his untimely death in 1986 at the age of 45, the Headmaster paid tribute to him as '*an excellent teacher and a popular colleague*', saying that '*many Old Boys have told me how much they owe to him for their love of English Language and Literature*'. In a moving tribute, his colleagues, Mike Foley and Jack Dalzell referred to his '*unusual ability and understanding . . . the spontaneous enthusiasm that was characteristic of him . . . his reassurance, encouragement and leadership . . . his sense of honour and his consistent loyalty*'.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Errol Steele in *The Gryphon*, 1997; Chris Harte in conversation with the author, August 2004..

⁴⁹ *The Gryphon*, 1986 and 1987; *Old Boys' Association Reports* 1988 and 1989.



J.J.Murphy, M.A., H.Dip.Ed. (1966-1986)



M.J.Foley, M.A., Dip.Ed. (1967-1987)

Michael Foley taught English at the School for twenty years, from his appointment in 1967 until his retirement in 1987. He became Head of Department on the death of Jack Murphy. Until 1975 he was also responsible for a number of highly acclaimed drama productions. As well as teaching English throughout the School, he also taught some Latin and for some time organised an Irish Studies Course for the Junior School. In a laconic tribute to him in *The Gryphon*, his long-time colleague, Jack Dalzell commented on his *'well-researched and individualistic approach to the craft of teaching'* and praised the contribution he had made to the School, while the Headmaster, Mr.Patton, commented on how *'his infectious enthusiasm for his subject was an inspiration to his colleagues'*. It is said that his *'enthusiasm'* for his subject led him to require his pupils to have five separate exercise books for English. As Guest of Honour at the *Old Boys' Association Dinner* shortly after his retirement, Mike Foley gave *'a fascinating and at times epic account of his experiences and the philosophy of the teaching profession'*; by the time he had finished, the bar had closed.⁵⁰

Jack Dalzell joined the English Department in 1968. In his erudite appreciation of Mr.Dalzell, at the time of his retirement in 1989, Mike Foley described him as the most well-read member of the department. He continued: *'Few of us have not been wearied by encounters with old boys who seek only to express heartfelt appreciation of the inestimable contribution Mr.Dalzell made to the growth of their minds'*. During his 21 years on the Staff, he played a full part in the life of the School. *'Many's the wicket that trembled at his approach in his day, but it was perhaps as the power emanating from the bookstore that he made his formidable presence most felt among his colleagues'*, who would miss him *'as a source of refreshment, comfort and sheer enjoyment'*.⁵¹

Together, those three made up a very intellectual English Department during these years. It is said that they *'used to have high-powered discussions every breaktime about this or that line of poetry. Did I say "line"? Nay, "word" would be better'*.⁵²

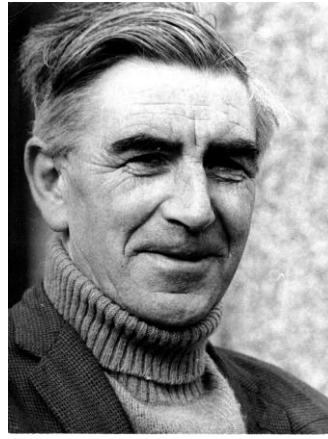
⁵⁰ Jack Dalzell in *The Gryphon*, 1988; memories of Barry Greenaway and the author.

⁵¹ M.ike Foley in *The Gryphon*, 1989.

⁵² Reminiscences of Robert Stevenson, who served with that triumvirate as a junior member of the English Department.



J.Dalzell, M.A. (1968-1989)



Caretaker, Jim Crossan (1962-1973)

Many of the Staff were referred to by the pupils simply by their Christian names, while others had original, often slanderous, nicknames, such as *'Biffo'*, *'Hook'*, *'Morf'*, *'The Vult'* and *'Fink'*.

Two long-serving members of staff retired during the 1960s. One was Fred Conway, the *'genial'* caretaker for almost a quarter of a century, who *'had enjoyed the complete confidence and affection of generations of boys'*.⁵³ He retired in 1962 and died just four years later. His successor was Jim Crossan, a tall, slow-moving Cavan man; many will recall that the first sign of his arrival in a classroom was the appearance of his massive hand over the top of the door as it creaked open.

'THE REMOVAL OF AN ANCIENT LANDMARK' (Mr.Clarke)

The other retirement was that of Mr.Hawtin in June 1966, after forty years on the Staff.



Mr.Hawtin's last Speech Day, October 1965;
the author receiving his 'O' Level Certificate from
Dr.A.J.McConnell, Provost of Trinity College, Dublin

Presenting him with a cheque *'as a token of esteem and affection from the staff and boys'*, Mr.Clarke said that Mr.Hawtin had taught Old Boys, sons of Old Boys and in some cases the grandsons of Old Boys. James O'Fee, Honorary Secretary of the *Debating Society*, which he had founded in February 1927, presented him with a silver tankard. Calling him *'a kindly benevolent man'*, the *Spectator* ended its report with the words, *'A wise old bird indeed'*. As Guest of Honour at Speech Day, when he and Mrs.Hawtin were presented with a large cut glass vase by the Board of Governors at a pre-function dinner in the *Royal Ulster Yacht Club*, his words of wisdom were so interspersed with humorous stories, that *'seldom has there been so much laughter at a prize-giving'*. Principal Guest at the *Old Boys' Association Dinner* a fortnight later, when he was presented with

⁵³ *The Gryphon*, June 1962.

an oil painting, he told his former pupils, *'I have had an interesting and enjoyable life here, during the course of which I have had to break in three Headmasters; at least I have broken two and severely bent the other'*. He returned to chair a meeting of his beloved *Debating Society* in the autumn of both 1967 and 1968. Sadly, having devoted forty years of his life to the School, he did not enjoy a long retirement; he died on 8th September 1970 aged only 68. The Editor of *The Gryphon*, which Mr.Hawtin had founded over twenty years earlier, recalled that as well as his self-evident devotion to the School - he probably never missed an *Old Boys' Association* dinner, and he had been at Ravenhill to see the 1st XV lift the Schools' Cup the previous year - he had also been a family man, a fine bridge player and a Trustee and member of the Select Vestry of *Groomspoint Parish Church*.⁵⁴

The Board of Governors decided that Mr.Hawtin's replacement as Vice-Principal was to be an internal appointment. Messrs.Eadie, Heuston, Johnston, Mercer, McKeown, Rea and Styles all applied and Mr.Styles was the unanimous choice. At the same time, Mr.McKeown was promoted to the new post of Senior Master *'in recognition of the great and valuable service which you have rendered to the School over a long number of years'*. Mr.McKeown had been praised by the Senior Physics Inspector in 1963 as *'outstanding among Physics masters'* and in 1968, on the recommendation of the Ministry, the School was one of only four in Northern Ireland to be invited to take part in an Advanced Level Physics project by the *Nuffield Foundation*, into which he threw himself enthusiastically

A month after Mr.Styles' promotion, Mr.Clarke was able to tell the Board that *'the appointment had given great satisfaction to the majority of the Staff. The Senior Staff had been upset, but had come round'*.

PUPIL SUCCESSES

Two new prizes were presented to the School in 1963. Former Headmaster, Maurice Wilkins presented a prize for English Prose Composition. Unfortunately Mr.Wilkins was not able to be present at Speech Day that year to see K.N.Hambly become the first recipient of the prize. He was the son of one of Mr.Wilkins' old pupils, George, who was appointed head of *Bangor Secondary School* four years later. Also in 1963 R.Mervyn MacDonald presented the *Robin MacDonald Prize* for junior mathematics in memory of his son who had drowned four years earlier. Mathematics results continued to be outstanding, with full marks being gained by W.J.H.McKee in Senior Applied Mathematics and by D.S.S.McAuley in Junior Algebra in 1964.

In 1962, M.Kerry Garrett became the first recipient of the prestigious *Royal Zoological Society Prince Philip Award* for original work on the ecology of a marine rock pool. Mr.Clarke accompanied him to London to receive the award, a sculpture by Henry Moore, and the Minister of Education wrote to congratulate him. That year, David J.Rogers gained a State Exhibition in Mathematics, in the final year of the award and Dennis G.Curry was selected out of over 2,000 applicants for *Unilever* management training. Mr.Clarke also delighted in the admission of R.H.Greaves, who had come to the School as an unqualified pupil, to the *Royal Military Academy* at Sandhurst.

Two Entrance Scholarships to *Trinity College Dublin* were won in 1963, by Graham Hancock and by David C.Johnston, both of whom subsequently qualified for election as Scholars of the College in 1965 and 1966 respectively, as had James Nixon in 1964. (David Johnston came first in both his first and second year engineering examinations and was awarded the *Francis Spring Prize* in 1965; in 1966 he attended a dinner for Trinity Scholars, also attended by Maurice Wilkins, who had been a Scholar sixty years earlier).⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *County Down Spectator*, 1 July 1966, 4 November 1966, 18 November 1966, 11 November 1967 and 8 November 1968; *The Gryphon*, 1970.

⁵⁵ *Irish Times*, 7 June 1966; a list of those who won scholarships can be found in the Appendices.

In 1967 a number of former pupils were reported to have distinguished themselves. Terence Ingold became Deputy Vice-Chancellor of *London University*, Ronnie Townsend, James Graham, John T.McMullan and Chris Knipe gained their Ph.D. degrees, and Kerry Garrett, Alan Patterson and Colin Gray were awarded First Class honours degrees. Paul Erskine became the fourth Scholar of Trinity College Dublin in as many years.

The following year, Ian Hamilton was awarded a *Royal Humane Society* testimonial in recognition of his bravery, when he rescued a four-year-old girl from the sea off Queen's Parade. He jumped fully clothed into the water and swam to the sea wall with the girl who had sunk twice.⁵⁶

A FURTHER EXTENSION AND A NEW PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

At the beginning of 1962, it was agreed in principle to add two 800 square foot and six 500 square foot classrooms to the *Orlit* block, which itself was to be extensively modernised and, on the proposal of the Ministry of Education, convert the old Rooms 41 ('G' Room) and 42 ('K' Room) into a Library, which only that year had moved from the tiny Room 43 to the larger, but still inadequate, Room 45, had been reorganised and catalogued on the *Dewey* system by Irwin Bonar. The new Preparatory School building was to comprise one 800 square foot, one 500 square foot and five 400 square foot classrooms, along with an office, bookstore and '*ancillary accommodation*' and heating plant capable of heating the *Orlit* block and its extension. Mr.Thomson was keen to start a P.1 class and so favoured a seven-classroom building. It was felt that an increase of around £3 in the Capital Fee and around £5 in the *Connor House* fees, along with a Ministry of Finance loan of £37,500 would make the project financially viable. With these plans in mind, Harry Patton was again appointed as architect; he estimated the total cost of the work around £80,000.

Things moved slowly and it was a year later before Mr.Patton told the Board that he hoped the contract would be completed by early 1965. As time passed, the estimated cost of the new buildings rose, reaching £95,000 by the middle of 1963. It was April 1964 before the contractor, A.Edgar and Son, had started work; he expressed the hope that the work would be completed in August 1965. Despite constant pressure from both the architect and the Board of Governors, progress was slow; it was 1966 before the School gained occupation of its new premises.

On 16 September 1966, the official opening was performed by the Northern Ireland Minister of Education, Rt.Hon.W.K.Fitzsimmons, J.P., M.P., after he had presented the Preparatory Department prizes. There then followed an Open Day, with departmental exhibitions in the twelve rooms of the *Orlit* block and the new buildings.



Part of the 1966 extension

⁵⁶ *County Down Spectator*, 2 February 1968.

LANGUAGE LABORATORY

Bangor Grammar School was among the first schools in the Province to install one of the 1960s' new educational aids, the Language Laboratory. Messrs.Rea and Mercer accompanied Mr.Clarke to London to inspect various models and Mr.Clarke reported to the Board that they were 'convinced of the value of these laboratories'. The largest of the new rooms had originally been planned as a woodwork room, but Mr.Clarke told the Governors that he believed a Language Laboratory should have priority over both a woodwork room and a full-scale pavilion on the new playing fields, as 'it would be in more constant use and would benefit every boy in the School'. And so a Cybervox laboratory was installed at a cost of £4,443. The following year a console and three booths were installed in a small room in the main building for Sixth Form classes. Mr.Toon of Cybernetic Developments Ltd. came from England to be present at the opening of the new buildings, 'presumably to lobby the Minister in the hope of making a national killing by cosying up to him', surmised Mr.Mercer. He had a 'look of scorn and disdain' on his face when he was told that the Minister was not the 'real' Westminster minister, but merely his Stormont counterpart.

Whatever his hopes at the time, 35 years later Mr.Mercer's memories of the Language Laboratory were that:

*'The idea was . . . better than the operation, for the thing had a mind of its own and teething troubles which went well beyond its infancy. There were constant breakdowns requiring the services of an engineer; in addition tape cassettes became entangled and ended up as the usual bird's nest of yards and yards of uncontrollable tape.'*⁵⁷



FORWARD PLANNING

In late 1966, the Board of Governors met with Mr.Benn, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education, to ascertain the attitude of the Ministry to introducing a fourth stream in the Secondary Department and making the Preparatory Department a two-stream entry. The

⁵⁷ Reminiscences of Billy Mercer, December 2002.

Ministry refused to countenance a second stream in the Preparatory Department and even suggested closing it to make use of the building for a fourth secondary school stream. The Board refused to consider this, saying (prophetically) that *'if all else failed, it would be necessary to consider seriously using part of the back field for building space or to provide playground space by giving it a hard surface'*. A week later, a similar meeting took place with F.H.Ebbitt, the Director of Education for County Down. He said that he expected the school-age population of Bangor to have doubled by 1980, with a corresponding increase in the demand for places at the School. With this in mind, the Governors decided that the *'should operate on the assumption that they might have to provide a fourth stream, even though they might regret the necessity to do so'*, believing that they could finance a £100,000 expansion if numbers increased by 180 and the Capital Fee to the maximum permitted, £15. Quite how they would provide the accommodation was unclear. Mr. Clarke suggested either building on pillars at the southern end of the site, with a covered play area underneath, or demolishing *Crosby House* and *'putting a stroke on the "T"'*. In 1967, with a view to accommodating a fourth stream, the Governors spent £5,000 acquiring number 16 Clifton Road, immediately to the north of the new Preparatory Department; number 20 was purchased six months later, and after over £5,000 of alterations, it became a Sixth Form Centre in April 1969.

In 1968, plans were drawn up for the construction of a three-storey building, including an administration block, on the gardens of 16, 18 and 20 Clifton Road, even though at the time the Board of Governors did not yet own number 18. This block, along with an extension to the Dining Hall and Kitchen, was initially expected to cost around £250,000, but by the beginning of 1969 that estimate had risen to £305,000, £35,000 more than the available funds. Despite Ministry of Finance loans and the new 80% grant towards capital expenditure, the cost of the extensions, along with staff salary increases, made it necessary to increase School fees; by the end of the decade, secondary department fees had risen to £78 p.a. and Preparatory Department fees to £50 and £60. In addition, the Board of Governors set up an Extension Appeal Organising Committee, which applied for charitable status and planned a high quality appeal brochure. Representatives of the *Old Boys' Association* and the *Parents' Association* were co-opted on to the Committee.

NEW PLAYING FIELDS

Following the 1961 General Inspection criticism of the sports facilities at Bloomfield, where the pitches were often waterlogged, the Board of Governors began to look for an alternative site later that year. It was hoped that the sale of Bloomfield, the purchase of which had not been grant-aided, might more than cover the cost of buying 20-25 acres elsewhere. In the event, the Ministry would only agree to make a grant on the cost of the new site minus the income from the sale of Bloomfield. Sites at Bloomfield Road, Crawfordsburn Road, Ballywooley, the Primacy, Ballycrochan, Springhill and on the Clandeboye Estate were considered. In the end, an appeal in the local press resulted in the purchase, in 1964, of 23 acres from Mr. Kinghan and Mr. Gelston at Ballymacormick at £600 an acre, which would allow for seven rugby pitches, both senior and junior cricket squares and an all-weather hockey pitch. In addition to the purchase price, it was necessary to spend a further £35,000 developing the site.

In 1964 Mrs. Corry, widow of Arthur W. Corry, a former pupil and founder member and past chairman of the *Old Boys' Association*, who had been disabled in the First World War, presented £250 to the Association, which was passed on to the Board of Governors with the suggestion that a tea-room be included in the pavilion at Ballymacormick. The pavilion was initially expected to cost over £24,000, but the rather ambitious design was subsequently scaled down.

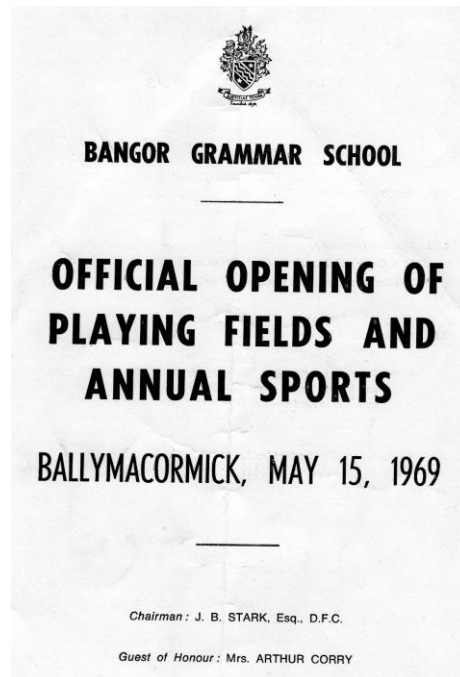
Meanwhile, both *Bangor Rugby Club* and *County Down Education Committee* expressed an interest in buying Bloomfield. In the end the local education authority's offer of £15,500 was accepted.



Ballymacormick Pavilion, photographed in 2003

The all-weather hockey pitch came into service during the 1966-67 season and the rugby pitches the following year, but Mr.Eadie was very dissatisfied with the cricket square, believing that it *'could be dangerous'* and needed to be raked and rolled. In addition, as well as defects in the pavilion, including peeling paint and *'insufficient coat hooks for 200 boys'*, the all-weather hockey pitch was 10 yards short and a 6-lane 440 yard track was not possible, due to a change in the original plan.

Eventually, at Sports Day, 15 May 1969 Mrs.Corry performed the official opening.



Willie Evans, who was promoted to Head Groundsman, following the appointment of an assistant, had taken no holidays during 1967 and 1968 because of the amount of work associated with the new playing fields; he was told that in future he must take his holidays. However, three years later he still failed to take his full allocation of summer holidays, and when the maintenance of Ballymacormick was criticised, Mr.Clarke told the Board of Governors that, *'Evans has exercised the same care and attention which has characterised him for the past 20 years. . . . The School has no more loyal and devoted servant'*.

SPORT

Sport continued to play a major part in the life of the School during these years. Throughout the 1960s, the standard of rugby at the School improved rapidly. Mr. Welch took charge of rugby at the start of the 1959-1960 season and he was to coach the 1st XV for over twenty years, with only one three year break in the early 1970s. By the start of the decade the School was fielding a 3rd XV and, while matches against *Dublin High School* continued, in 1962 the Board of Governors approved a 1st XV Tour to Scotland, which became an annual event with fixtures against some of the strongest Scottish rugby schools, such as *Hillhead High School*, *Dollar Academy*, *Hutcheson's Grammar School Glasgow* and *Royal High School Edinburgh*, among other schools. (*Hutcheson's* used the ploy of putting both scrum-half and out-half into the back row of a scrum close to the line, to add weight for a pushover try. The Bangor boys adopted the idea and continued to use the 'Hutchie' with some success for several years.) In 1962, a new 1st XV strip was introduced and that year several bus loads of supporters, many wearing small (and now politically incorrect) golliwog badges made out of blue and yellow wool by, among others, Betty Sangster, watched in horror as the team was cheated of victory in the quarter-final of the Cup, beaten 8-9 by *Rainey Endowed*, when a Brian McClements' penalty hit the less-than-upright upright in a field near Magherafelt. Two members of that team, Noel Walker and Graham McCauley were selected to play for Ulster Schools against Connaught in 1964, but the match was cancelled.



The author's 'golly' mascot



The new 1st XV strip, 1962-63, first worn in a match against *Dublin High School*.
 Mr. J.H. Welch, T.V. Neill, D.W. Savage, T.A. Johnston, the Headmaster, W.D. Anderson,
 R.B. McClements, Mr. B.A. Styles
 J.R.C. Lightbody, J.G. McCauley, W.A. Patterson, J.C. Boyle, H.N. Walker, P.S. Gay, R.J. McComb
 J. Kennedy, J.A. Nixon, J.H. Hitchens, R.E. Jones.

(Ross Jones recalls another example of Mr. Clarke's obsession with rugby success; Davy Anderson was made a Prefect, mid-year, on the strength of an outstanding performance in the following year's match against *Dublin High School*.)

It was the Medallion XV that brought home the first silverware of the 1960s when, coached by Mr.Don Jamieson, the boys won the *Hospitals' Cup 'Sevens'* trophy in 1964.



Winners of the Medallion 'Sevens' 1964
Mr.D.R.Jamieson, B.A., W.G.McCready, R.J.Clegg, The Headmaster,
W.H.Davidson, J.R.Kirk, T.L.McCormick, J.H.O'Fee, D.E.K.Carson

That feat was repeated two years later, but 1966 also saw the Medallion XV, now under the guidance of Messrs.Victor Christie and Derek Wilkins, bring the *Shield* to the School for the first time since 1936; members of that team sent messages of encouragement. Team captain Dick Milliken converted his own try to beat *Rainey Endowed* 5-3 in the final at Pirrie Park. *'A tragic shadow was cast on the School's triumph'* when Dick's 49 year old father, Alex, collapsed and died within minutes of the end of the match. An anonymous donor presented medals to the team members, who were treated to a meal in Belfast by a delighted Board of Governors.



The Medallion Shield-winning XV, 1965-66
The Headmaster, R.Forsythe, V.S.Swain, A.G.Irwin, M.G.Swenarton, W.S.Kirk, R.J.Craig, K.A.Platts,
Mr.W.V.Christie, Mr.D.Wilkins
S.R.Youl, W.A.Topping, T.H.M.Wells, R.A.Milliken, D.G.Wakeford, R.A.Young, J.J.Conn
C.Quinn, P.R.W.Ringrow, G.L.S.MacCallum, J.R.Whiteford

The *Schools' Cup* remained elusive, however. In 1964, the *Spectator* predicted that David Savage's team was *'well on its way to victory now that it appears that the days of apathy have gone. . . . If the team had the support it deserves, then it would be even further along the road to victory'*. But it was not to be; nor was it to be for the next few years, despite a number of excellent teams. In 1965-66, Jimmy Kirk, who scored 16 tries during the season, J.B.Martin and David Carson all played for on the Ulster Schools' XV and that year Dougie Rea improved on his previous season's points scoring record with 134 points. The record of that team - a team which included

future *British Lion* Dick Milliken and fellow International Roger Clegg - made it 'the best ever to represent the School' (so far!): Played 26, Won 24, Drew 1, Lost 1, Points for 393, Points against 41. By 1967 the School was fielding 10 rugby teams.



D.E.K. Carson J.R. Kirk J.B. Martin
Ulster Schools' Rugby Inter-provincials 1966

Two years later, however, things were to change. Having defeated *Coleraine Inst* in the Schools' first semi-final since the days of Hugh Greer before the War, the Bangor boys beat 18-times winners, *Campbell College* by 6 points to 3 in their first final; a try by Billy Kirk – 'not a classically elegant score' – and a penalty by Robert Forsythe, whose boot had taken the side into the final, prompted the *Spectator* to carry the headline 'Schools' Cup Win – a great day for Bangor'. On the way to that final, they had also beaten *Annadale*, *Orangefield*, and *Rainey Endowed* - so often the insurmountable hurdle. The School also won the 'Sevens' competition. The cup-winning team contained 10 of the Medallion-winning side of three years earlier and seven, Conn, Forsythe, Kirk, McClenaghan, Milliken, Neill, Swain were selected for the Ulster Schools' trials, Conn and McClenaghan making the provincial side which was captained by Milliken. Dick Milliken and Hayden McClenaghan had played for Ulster Schools the previous season, the latter having had his spleen removed after a crunching tackle during the match against Munster.⁵⁸

IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION
(Ulster Branch)

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

THE 93rd SCHOOLS' CUP FINAL

CAMPBELL COLLEGE v. BANGOR GRAMMAR SCHOOL

AT RAVENHILL

MONDAY, 17th MARCH, 1969, at 3 p.m.

PRICE: 6^{D.}

F. C. HUMPHREYS,
Secretary

BANGOR GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Colour—Blue

15. R. FORSYTHE	Full Back
14. D. R. A. LIGHTBODY	Right Wing
13. R. J. CRAIG	Right Centre
12. J. D. NEILL	Left Centre
11. A. H. McCLENAHAN	Left Wing
10. R. A. MILLIKEN (Captain)	Out Half
9. G. L. S. MacCALLUM	Scrum Half
1. M. G. SWENARTON	Forward
2. D. G. WAKEFORD	"
3. J. R. WHITEFORD	"
4. W. J. STEPHENSON	"
5. W. S. KIRK	"
6. V. S. SWAIN	"
8. W. G. McCREADY	"
7. J. J. CONN	"

CAMPBELL COLLEGE

Colour—Black

15. L. M. McCLURE
14. H. A. ALGEO
13. A. I. THOMSON (Captain)
12. D. G. MEGAW
11. D. T. REID
10. M. H. ROSSER
9. J. G. BOYD
1. M. E. CALVERT
2. M. C. MOSS
3. D. O. J. COLE
4. P. A. HART
5. J. N. S. STEPHENS
6. B. S. PATTERSON
8. G. A. BLAIR
7. W. H. B. McKEE

Referee: J. PAGE (Instonians R.F.C.)

Touch Judges:

R. McGARVEY (Coleraine R.F.C.) D. T. McKIBBIN (Donaghadee)

Extracts from the *Schools' Cup* final Programme, 17 March 1969

The general consensus is that, if Randall Clarke would have wished to be remembered for anything, it would have been for winning the Cup. The morning after the victory the hymn in Assembly was *Now thank we all our God*.⁵⁹ At Speech Day almost eight months later, Mr. Clarke,

⁵⁸ Ross Jones, in an email to the author, September 2004; Brian Kelly, *The Story so far* (1986); *County Down Spectator*,

13 November 1964, 1 April 1966, 29 March 1968 and 21 March 1969.

⁵⁹ Billy Mercer, loc.cit.

clearly still elated by the victory, described the *Schools' Cup* as '*probably the most famous and honoured schools' trophy in the English speaking world*'. The *Old Boys' Association* presented each team member with a plaque bearing the 1st XV rugby jersey badge along with the name of the player, and the Captain and the two coaches were invited to the *Association's* dinner later that year.



Seven-a-Side rugby team, 1969

Mr.J.H.Welch, A.H.McClenaghan, J.D.Neill, the Headmaster, W.S.Kirk, V.S.Swain, Mr.M.Gillan
G.L.S.MacCallum, R.A.Milliken, J.J.Conn



Schools' Cup Winners 1969

Mr.J.H.Welch, D.R.A.Lightbody, M.G.Swenarton, W.J.Stevenson, the Headmaster,
T.H.M.Wells, J.B.McDowell, V.S.Swain, R.Forsythe, Mr.M.Gillan
J.D.Neill, G.L.S.MacCallum, W.G.McCready, R.A.Milliken, J.J.Conn,
W.S.Kirk, D.G.Wakeford, J.R.Whiteford, A.H.McClenaghan
(Missing from the photograph is R.J.Craig, who was to die only four years later.)

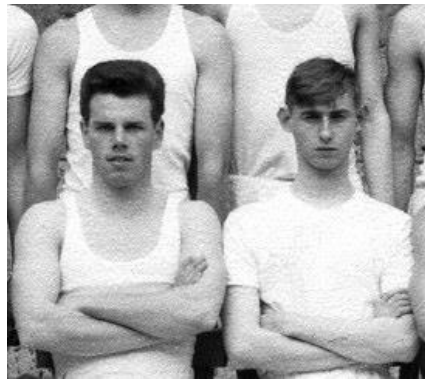
Although the cricket teams did not win any silverware during the 1960s, two of the school's cricketers gained representative honours. Terry Neill was chosen to represent Ulster Schools in 1962 and Ulster and Irish Schools in 1963 and 1964, the first to do so for over a decade. John Elder played for Ulster Schools in 1968 and he went on to represent Ireland at Senior level in 1973.



T.V.Neill
Ulster Schools' XI 1962
Ulster and Irish Schools' XI 1963 and 1964



J.W.G.Elder
Ulster Schools' XI 1968



P.S.Gay and R.G.Donald
on the School Athletics Team, 1964

At the 1962 *Irish Amateur Athletics Championships*, Bobby Donald won the 100 and the 220 Yards races and at the *Northern Ireland A.A.A. Youth Championships* the following year, he won the 220 Yards. That year Peter Gay took part in the first *Home Nations Schools Athletics Championships* in Edinburgh, representing Northern Ireland in the Long Jump, an event in which he held the School record for over 20 years.

The *Swimming Club* continued to function in the freezing waters of *Pickie Pool*, with teams entering various invitation galas and boys gaining *Royal Life Saving Society* Certificates. In 1963, Bertie Styles presented a Cup for Swimming, and in 1967 the first ever inter-school gala was held, involving the town's five secondary schools, with the School winning both the junior and senior boys' events. The following year, when seven schools took part, the School again won the Senior Boys' Cup.⁶⁰ Ever conscious of the lack of swimming facilities, in 1967 consideration was given to purchasing a small outdoor learner pool for the Preparatory Department, but in the end Mr.Thomson was asked to work out a scheme for swimming instruction perhaps using the *Templemore Baths* in east Belfast. Mr.Clarke even considered asking for the use of the indoor heated pool at *Rathgael Approved School*, but discounted the idea because he '*could foresee objections from some parents*'.

In 1964, the *School Sailing Club*, under the Presidency of Bill Langtry since 1962, again won the *Clark Cup* at the *Public Schools' Yachting Championships*; on this occasion the crew comprised Brian Thompson, John Nixon and Keith Rawlings. Ever since the School's first victory in 1958, it had always been in the top six, out of an average entry of 45. On this occasion, the Mayor

⁶⁰ *County Down Spectator*, 15 September 1967 and 13 September 1968.

accorded the winning crew a reception in the Town Hall. Two years later at the *Schools' Sailing Championships* for keel boats at the Isle of Wight, Patrick Taylor and Robin Gray finished ninth out of 24 entries, including Eton and Harrow. Taylor won a race on the second day, winning the Commodore's Prize. Former school yachtsmen continued to distinguish themselves, with Anthony Butler serving as Commodore of the *Cambridge University* club, Brian Thompson as helmsman for *Edinburgh University* and John Nixon steering the *Dublin University* boat to victory in the *University Yachting Championships*.



The School Sailing Team, with the *Clark Cup*, 1964
The Headmaster, K.N.Rawlings, B.Thompson, J.A.Nixon, W.H.Langtry, B.Sc.

In 1966, the *Sailing Club* sent a crew to the Isle of Wight for the first time, to compete in the *Sir Terence Langrishe* sailing competition.



R.P.Davis, J.D.Thompson and P.Bryans
with the School's 'Swallow' class yacht, *Lucida*, bought in 1969.

In 1965, the *Ulster Schools' Badminton Association* was formed and the School entered teams for the Junior and Senior Cups and the following year John McClean, with his Annadale partner, won the Ulster Junior Boys' Doubles tournament and the Ulster Juvenile Team Doubles against Leinster.

Despite the fact that Irwin Bonar believed that it was a discriminatory sport, since it could not be played left-handed, Hockey was introduced - or revived - as a school sport in September 1966. The first matches were played on the grass in front of the Bloomfield pavilion, but the new all-weather pitch at Ballymacormick came into use a month later and so, almost two years before the pavilion was built and the '*less hardy sports*' braved the icy winds, hockey teams were changing for matches in the grain-drying shed on site. By the following year over 100 boys had taken up the sport and the School was fielding 5 teams.⁶¹ The sport soon made its mark, winning their section of the *Milk Marketing Board Championships* at the beginning of the 1968 season and the *Dowdall Cup* at the *Bangor Hockey Festival* the following year.



The first Hockey XI 1966-67

The Headmaster, N.Hamilton, N.J.E.Reynolds, R.G.Kitson, I.D.Hamilton, G.Cameron, Mr.J.V.Smyth
J.B.Ferguson, R.McCartney, I.McCullough, D.J.Hunter, N.J.Graham

The Tennis Team won the *Lawn Tennis Championship Cup* in 1969 for the first time, beating *Coleraine Inst* in the final.



Senior Tennis Team, 1969, Winners of the *Senior Schools' Cup*

The Headmaster, J.O.Swain, G.Williamson, Mr.Mercer
R.Forsythe, K.Platts, B.D.Jarvis

Table Tennis, under the guidance of Mr.Bonar also enjoyed some success during these years, when D.A.Eadie represented Ulster Schools and Ulster Juniors in 1967 and Gary McCausland played for Ulster Schoolboys two years later.

⁶¹ John Smyth, *B.G.S. Hockey since its 1966 Revival*, in *The Gryphon*, 1983; Chris Harte in a speech to the *Grammarians*,
November 2004.

The School enjoyed its first golfing success in 1968. In that year's *Ulster Schools' Golf Championships*, the School team defeated *Campbell College* in the semi-final and *Regent House* in the final and went on to represent Ulster in the *Irish Schools' Championships*. The team, consisting of Dick Milliken, Richard Young, Paddy Buckler, Billy Kirk and Gordon Williamson beat *Rockwell College* of Munster, but lost out to the Leinster representatives, *St. Joseph's C.B.S., Drogheda* in the final.⁶²



Runners-up in the 1968 *Irish Schools' Golf Championship*
The Headmaster, (K.McGimpsey, B.Stewart), G.Williamson, Mr.Steele
R.Milliken, R.Young, P.Buckler, W.Kirk

OTHER EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The range of non-athletic extra-curricular activities continued to increase as the years passed. The 1962-63 season saw the *Debating Society* hold its 500th meeting; on that occasion, many parents and old boys attended and the Hon.Sec., R.B.Longmore, presented Mr.Hawtin with a silver salver. That year the joint debate with the Old Boys did not take place on account of snow – the first time that a debate had been cancelled since 1952.



Changed times:
Elliott Reynolds, the author and Alan McConnell
tobogganing in *Castle Park* in January 1961- in full school uniform!
(Elliott Reynolds continued to wear uniform as a member of the Royal Naval Reserve,
retiring as Commodore N.J.E.Reynolds, R.D., A.D.C., R.N.R. in 2005.)

⁶² Errol Steele in *Bangor Grammarians' Annual Report*, 2000.

When Mr. McCord succeeded Mr. Hawtin as President of the *Society* in 1966, the Hon. Secretary expressed the hope that he would 'remain in office for the same number of years, if not more'!⁶³

The *Dramatic Society* also remained strong, staging a number of acclaimed Shakespearean productions, including *Richard III* and *Julius Caesar* produced by W.M. 'Yogi' Hawthorne, *Macbeth* produced by Don Jamieson, who went on to stage Molière's *The Miser* and Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. John Teasey was responsible for *Henry IV, Part One*, but it was Mike Foley's *The Merchant of Venice*, which won the Drama Trophy for the Best School Production in 1968. In 1965, Geoffrey McNab had become the first boy from the School to gain entrance to the *Royal Academy of Dramatic Art* to study stage management.

During the decade other societies which flourished, at least for a while, included Don Jamieson's *Film Society*, the *Chess Club*, and the *Modern Languages Society* (all set up in 1962), the *Student Christian Movement* (established in 1964), the *Geographical Society*, the *Natural History Society*, the *Tape Recording Society*, the *33¹/₃ Society* (a reference to the speed of long-playing gramophone records), the *61 Society*, with its wide range of activities including a judo exhibition and talks on esoteric subjects such as cryptology, and the *Hobbies Club* with its annual Exhibition featuring unusual hobbies such as puppet theatres and a collection of matchboxes. The *Adventure Club* (formed in 1962 by Mr. Welch and Mr. Wilkins) gave the boys the opportunity to take part in outdoor activities such as camping, rock climbing and mountain walking. Nor was charity work neglected; each Christmas the boys provided toys for the *Cripples' Institute* and *Glencraig Curative School*, where one of Mr. Clarke's sons was a pupil; during the decade money was also raised for *Muscular Dystrophy*, *The Save the Children Fund* and *Middle East Relief*.

THE ARMY CADET FORCE

The arrival of W.H. Langtry as Officer Commanding saw a rapid development in A.C.F. training and facilities. In 1964, Peter Gay became the first boy to win a Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award from a Northern Ireland *Army Cadet Force* unit and by 1965 several cadets were on the verge of Gold Awards. That year a new hut was erected, comprising a store, a signals room and a large lecture room, replacing the limited accommodation of over twenty years and Lt. Langtry's enthusiasm for amateur radio saw a rapid expansion in signals training. Thirteen cadets attended a camp at Holne in Germany as guests of 25 *Medium Regiment Royal Artillery* where, among other things, the cadets got a chance to fire the new self-loading rifle. Two cadets who took ill were left behind to return home later on. (Over the years there were numerous occasions when cadets were taken ill at a camp; never again was a cadet left behind). This was the first of several visits to B.A.O.R. as both the A.C.F. and later as the *Combined Cadet Force*. Among other developments was the building of a canoe in 1963. In 1966, Peter Jarvis became the unit's first Regimental Sergeant Major and Sergeant-Instructor. Two years later the .303 Shooting Team won a newly awarded *Ligoniel Cup* at the *Ulster Rifle Association's* schools' meeting and the following year the Detachment visited the anti-submarine frigate *H.M.S. Ulster* during a courtesy visit by the warship to Bangor. The cadets were taken on a short cruise to the Ailsa Craig firing range where the ship fired her principal weapons.⁶⁴

CONNOR HOUSE

In 1965 the old 'Qualifying' examination was replaced by a new system of verbal reasoning tests and teachers' estimates – the '11+'. Mr. Thomson was not enthusiastic and would have preferred the extension of the old examination to include English, arithmetic, history and geography as well as verbal reasoning:

⁶³ D.E.K. Carson in *The Gryphon*, 1967.

⁶⁴ I am indebted to Barry Greenaway for much of the information contained in this section

'It will be interesting to see how soon it will be before we are asked to teach "intelligence" and to see how soon these tests will be built up into the same sort of bogey that the old English and Arithmetic papers became. . . . No doubt we will be present at its murder in a few years time.'

That year, when the new building was eagerly awaited, extra-curricular activities included football, cricket, chess and a *Model Club*, which produced a balsa wood model of the new school under the guidance of Mr. Hopkins who, Mr. Thomson recalls, *'had a good pair of hands'* and who had introduced woodwork classes in 1963. At the same time, Mr. Thomson experimented with P.7 having two afternoons a week when *'prep'* was done in school, and a remedial reading class was introduced.

The acquisition of the *Orlit* block made available classroom accommodation in the main building for P.5, so freeing a room in the old *Connor House* building for Mr. Thomson's long-hoped-for P.1, which started in September 1963.

However, probably the high point of Gordon Thomson's time at *Connor House* was the building of the new school on Clifton Road. He recalls:

'Great was the excitement when we heard that we were to have a new building on Clifton Road. I must say I was just as excited as the rest until the Headmaster called me for a meeting when I was given two sheets of white paper on which were a series of squares and rectangles and was told that this was the new school and was then told that it was my job to completely furnish it for the classes who were going to use it. . . .'

When the building was completed,

'We found a room which was not accounted for . . . and the "lost" room became what was known as "the Black Hole", for it hadn't any windows. On one wall was a steel ladder up to the "forbidden zone" where all the pipes were placed. That pipe room became a very happy home for the Friendly Ghost', [which had resided in the original Connor House].

As the Preparatory Department prepared to move to its new home on Clifton Road, Mr. Clarke expressed his opinion that it should no longer be known as *Connor House*, suggesting instead *Wilkins House*. At the beginning of 1966, the Board of Governors took the perhaps surprising decision that it should be known simply as *Bangor Grammar School Preparatory Block* and that the name *Connor House*, by which it had been known for over thirty years, *'should not be used'*. In the end sanity prevailed and that decision was reversed in 1970.



*Bangor Grammar School Preparatory Block,
before the name Connor House had been reinstated*

When completed, the new building had a number of what were referred to as 'novel features': a fireproof staircase, an open-plan library, 'a covered area which will be invaluable to the younger children as a play space during wet weather' and an 'open balcony which has access from two of the five south-facing classrooms'.

Mr.Thomson and Mr.Hopkins felt that 16 Clifton Road would have made:

'a very fine section for girls, if I could get permission to bring them into Connor House. The idea of girls came from a number of requests I got from parents with boys at the School and whose sisters wanted to join them. We planned the whole layout, but the idea of girls in Connor House was not thought to be a good one.'

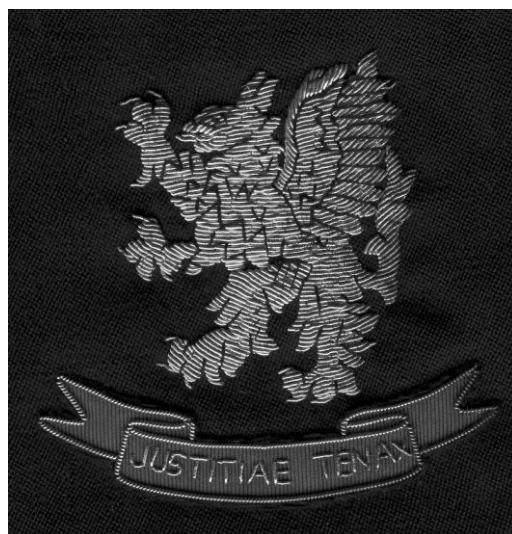
And so, in 1969, several rooms in 16 Clifton Road were converted into changing rooms, showers and a science laboratory.⁶⁵

THE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

The *Old Boys' Association* continued to go from strength to strength, with badminton, hockey and yachting being added to the 'Old Boys versus the School' activities; Walter R.T.Dowdall presented a Shield for the yachting competition, on the first running of which 'a slight mishap' necessitated repairs costing £5. However another long-running activity, the Annual Debate, was discontinued due to lack of support.

The Old Boys' team won the *Ulster Public Schools' Golfing Society* Scratch Cup in 1964 for the second successive year. That year the team consisted of Hugh Greer and Billy McGimpsey, who was elected captain of *Ulster Public Schools' Golfing Society* in 1966. That year, a golf competition against a Staff team was started.

Other innovations were the designing in 1965, by Miss Addy, of a blazer badge - a *griffin segreant* - described by H.Malcolm McKee in the *Spectator* as, 'correct heraldically', and a new, more modern tie featuring a single silver Gryphon in 1968.



The Old Boys' Association blazer badge

In 1961, permission was given to hold the Annual Dinner in the new School Canteen for the first time – 'provided it was cleared by midnight'. Over the next few years, guests included Messrs.Rawlings, Johnson and Hawtin, and Patrick Riddell, who in 1964 wrote and presented an *Ulster Television* programme in the *I Remember, I Remember* series, featuring the School during his

⁶⁵ *County Down Spectator*, 1 June, 1962, 28 June 1963, 5 June 1964, 11 June 1965 and 23 September 1966; reminiscences of Gordon Thomson, Autumn 2002.

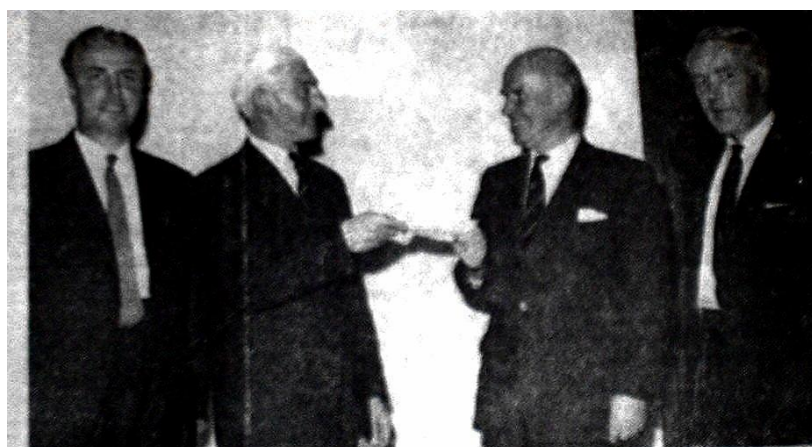
time as a pupil during the First World War. It was Mr.Rawlings who suggested the collection and publication of Mr.Wilkins' pen portraits of Old Boys killed during the Second World War, and this was duly done in 1965, with a Foreword by Mr.Wilkins. Mr.Johnson recalled the occasion almost 30 years earlier when he had had to excuse the behaviour of the boys on a rugby trip to Dublin by explaining that all *Bangor Grammar School* boys suffered from insomnia. Recently retired caretaker, Fred Conway was invited to attend the Dinner in 1962 and the Headboy and his Deputy were first invited in 1968, but were '*to sit at an ordinary table next year*'.

The *Association* displayed a generosity of spirit by making interest-free loans to the Board of Governors, amounting to £900 during the 1960s, and Miss Lewis, who had retired 20 years earlier, was sent flowers at Christmas on several occasions.

In 1963, it was decided to erect an Honour Board displaying the names of former Chairmen and to add 5 guineas to the *E.V.Agnew Prize*, to be awarded annually. The following year a Badge of Office for the Chairman, designed by Miss Addy, was worn for the first time at the Annual Dinner; past Chairmen were asked to contribute £1. The Rules of the *Association* were also revised; the word '*Endowed*' was deleted and the annual subscription was increased to 10/- and then to £1 in 1969, when Life Membership doubled to £10. With the decision to publish *The Gryphon* only once a year in 1965 (when advertisements appeared for the first time) the *Old Boys' Association* introduced a '*Spring Bulletin*', which became an annual feature.

THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The *Parents' Association* continued to perform an invaluable service to the School, whether through fundraising - £300 by 1963 - events such as wine and cheese parties and concerts enabling parents to meet socially, or by providing a forum in which Headmaster and parents could voice their opinions on matters of mutual interest, such as the inadvisability of pupils taking part-time jobs and a voluntary one-way system to ease traffic congestion on College Avenue. In 1969, the *Association* made its usual donation to the Headmaster, and for the first time included a sum of £5 to be awarded to '*boys who work hard, but who do not reach the high spots*'.



The Chairman of the *Parents' Association*, John M.Gray,
accompanied by incoming Chairman Mr.W.C.Morgan and Hon.Sec. Mr.W.J.Reynolds,
handing over a cheque for £50 to the Headmaster in October 1963.
(Photograph taken from the *County Down Spectator*)

THE IMPACT OF THE EARLY YEARS OF THE TROUBLES

As '*The Troubles*' began, in December 1968 Prime Minister Terence O'Neill made what the *Spectator* called a '*Churchillian call to the people of Northern Ireland*' in his now famous '*Ulster at the crossroads*' broadcast. He was severely criticised by William Craig, Minister of Home

Affairs, whom he dismissed two days later. Among the 150,000 letters of support the Prime Minister received was one signed by 36 members of Staff at the School. Their letter admitted that it was *'usually undesirable that teachers should play an active part in politics in their professional capacity'*, but went on to say:

*'We know that the ablest of our pupils are increasingly impatient and contemptuous of sectarian bitterness and of those who foment it on either side. We believe that anything that increases this bitterness makes our Province less desirable to live in and will inevitably tend to drive our best boys to live elsewhere. We support the Prime Minister's policy of reconciliation and reform. We believe it is the only policy which will ensure that our Province will be a good and happy place for our pupils to live in as adults.'*⁶⁶

Almost a year later, as the situation deteriorated, the five local secondary schools formed the *Schools' Action Committee - S.A.C.* - with the aim of encouraging good community relations by making opportunities for pupils and staff to meet and work together. Within months of its formation, it had organised a Jumble Sale and fundraising for various charities, and members had visited the sick and elderly and helped to restore derelict property. The newly appointed Minister of Community Relations, Dr. Robert Simpson, visited the schools involved and applauded the efforts of the group. At Speech Day that year, Mr. Clarke referred to the work of the S.A.C. as *'a constructive and intelligent attempt by young people to do something to increase understanding and trust and to prevent the spread of hate and fear which were born out of misunderstanding and distrust'*. Nevertheless, he commented on the number of boys who had expressed their intention to leave the Province permanently *'to escape from the poisonous atmosphere of bigotry, intolerance and hate which has spread over our country'*. Although school life continued as normally as possible, a debate on the motion *'that this House considers Westminster should take over control of Northern Ireland'*, showed how heated opinion had become, with one speaker referring to *'the damnable wrongs'* of the Unionist government, *'the repression of an underprivileged Catholic population'* and *'the merciless exploitation for political ends of the Protestant working class'*, while another speaker advocated *'strong, utterly ruthless government led by William Craig'*.⁶⁷ The increasingly polarised opinions in the community at large over the next decades were to make the preservation of normality in schools a priority.

⁶⁶ *County Down Spectator*, 13 December 1968.

⁶⁷ *County Down Spectator*, 3 October, 31 October and 21 November 1969.