

### III. Randall's Final Years 1969-1975<sup>68</sup>

#### MORE VIOLENCE AT HOME AS THE COLD WAR EASES<sup>69</sup>

During Randall Clarke's last years as Headmaster, events in Northern Ireland dominated the headlines of the world's media: Burntollet, C.S.gas, the Provisional I.R.A., the disbandment of the 'B' *Specials* and their replacement by the *Ulster Defence Regiment*, internment, 'Bloody Sunday', 'Bloody Friday' – atrocity followed atrocity as politicians struggled to find a 'peaceful solution'. New political parties sprang up: the *Alliance* party, the *S.D.L.P.*, the *D.U.P.*; the Stormont parliament was suspended and 'direct rule' from Westminster imposed, with William Whitelaw becoming the first Secretary of State for Northern Ireland; the *Sunningdale Agreement* made possible the short-lived power-sharing experiment, brought down by the *Ulster Workers' Council* strike.

Nor was the cosy world of North Down unaffected by 'The Troubles'. Vigilantes in *Kilcooley*, the stoning of police on Main Street during a Loyalist strike, a bomb scare at the Technical College, a petrol bomb at the chapel, bombs outside the *Strand Hotel* and the *Ormeau Arms*, a 200 pound bomb on Main Street, and despite the erection of barriers in an effort to beat the bombers, the gutting of three major stores and several smaller shops on Main Street after a succession of incendiary devices exploded, were among the events to claim the headlines in the *County Down Spectator*. And in Randall's final months as Headmaster, a 26-year-old local woman, Reserve Constable Mildred Harrison became the first policewoman to die in Northern Ireland as the result of terrorism, when yet another bomb exploded outside the *Ormeau Arms* on High Street.

But at the same time, there was progress amidst the chaos. The *North Down Area Plan* was published, promising another golf course, a new road linking Abbey Street with Hamilton Road, a pedestrian precinct and 'the first of the town's multi-storey car parks'; traffic wardens appeared on the streets of Bangor, post codes were introduced, there were plans to make Main Street one-way, and there was talk of a £1 million marina – at Ballyholme. The local infrastructure was also improved with the construction of the Newtownards-Bangor dual carriageway and the Holywood 'through-pass', easing congestion for the increasing number of commuters, and it was announced that the rail link between Bangor and Dublin was to be restored when the new railway station at *Maysfield* was completed.

In education, a male principal, James Hegan, replaced Miss Winifred Greaves at *Glenlola Collegiate School*, and it was proposed that it should amalgamate with *Bangor Girls' Secondary School*. *Trinity* primary school - the 'Hill School' - closed and *Towerview* primary school was built, the opening of *Gransha Boys' High School* was delayed, there was talk of abolishing the 11+, the Ministry of Education moved into *Cyril Lord's* offices at Rathgael, Education and Library Boards replaced the old County Education Committees and Professor Sutherland's report caused shockwaves through the grammar schools when it recommended the introduction of comprehensive education.

On a national level, Edward Heath presided over the *decimalisation* of the currency and took the United Kingdom into the *E.E.C.*, but as oil prices quadrupled and inflation reached 25%, a series of strikes brought a 'three-day week' and the fall of his Conservative government. He was replaced as leader of his party by Margaret Thatcher.

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<sup>68</sup> 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 – 29 October 1970, 28 October 1971, 26 October 1972, 30 October 1973, 24 October 1974 and 30 October 1975; Sports Days – 1 May 1970, 20 May 1971, 18 May 1972, 17 May 1973, 16 May 1974 and 15 May 1975; *Old Boys' Association* Dinners – 6 November 1970, 5 November 1971, 3 November 1972, 9 November 1973, 8 November 1974, and 7 November 1975.

<sup>69</sup> Information gleaned from the files of the *County Down Spectator*; J.E.Doherty & D.J.Hickey, *A Chronology of Irish History since 1500* (1989); P.Waller & J.Rowett, *Chronology of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1995).

Meanwhile, the key word in world affairs was *détente* as Communist China was admitted to the United Nations, and President Nixon not only visited China and the Soviet Union, but he also brought to an end American involvement in the Vietnam War, only to be brought down by the *Watergate* scandal. His fall was a personal disaster, but it paled into insignificance beside the fall of Vietnam to the *Vietcong* and of Cambodia to Pol Pot's *Khmer Rouge*. Unimpressed by an easing of tension between Cold War rivals, Syria and Egypt launched the *Yom Kippur* war against their old enemy, Israel.

These were the years of *Abba*, the *Bay City Rollers*, the *Jackson 5* and 'glam rock', as cinema-goers were watching *Easy Rider*, starring Peter Fonda and Jack Nicholson, *The Godfather* with Marlon Brando, Paul Newman and Robert Redford in *The Sting*, and D.H.Lawrence's *Women in Love*, featuring future Labour M.P., Glenda Jackson, while Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd-Webber had re-invented the musical with *Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Dana won the *Eurovision Song Contest*, the *Beatles* broke up and John Cleese *et al* embarked on *Monty Python's Flying Circus*. Among the literary highlights of these years were Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*, Frederick Forsyth's *The Day of the Jackal*, the novels of Antony Burgess and the work of new Poet Laureate John Betjeman.

In sport, Tony Jacklin won the *Open Golf Championship*, the West Indies were victorious in the first cricket World Cup and Israeli athletes were massacred by 'Black September' terrorists at the Munich Olympics, where Mary Peters won gold for Northern Ireland and Mark Spitz won seven swimming gold medals

The early 1970s saw the deaths of such statesmen as Nasser, de Gaulle, Khrushchev, Allende, Peron, King Faisal, Chiang Kai-shek, Harry S.Truman, L.B.Johnson, and Eamon de Valera, as well as other famous figures, among them J.Edgar Hoover, the Duke of Windsor, W.H.Auden, Noel Coward and Pablo Picasso; the fate of Lord Lucan remains a mystery.

## **FURTHER EXPANSION**

In 1969, *Down County Education Committee* enquired whether the Board of Governors had any 'long-term plans for future expansion'. The Board said that it had no such plans, but was willing to co-operate with the local education authority. A fourth stream had been introduced in September 1968 and, since classroom accommodation would be at a premium, the architect recommended the acquisition of temporary accommodation and the conversion of rooms 63 and 73, in the 1966 building, into additional Physics and Biology laboratories. In the meantime, Sixth Form boys attended the Technical College (or Bangor College of Further Education, as it was now known) for Applied Physics classes, reinforcing Mr.Clarke's assertion that although there was no comprehensive school in Bangor, 'there was a considerable degree of co-operation between the Grammar and Secondary Schools and the Bangor Technical College, to the benefit of pupils'. As well as the School receiving boys from the Secondary School after 'O' Level, he was presumably also thinking of the practical engineering and creative woodwork classes provided in the Further Education College as well as the joint drama productions presented by the School in conjunction with *Glenlola Collegiate School*.

Although the architect believed that the Clifton Road houses were 'not really suitable for heavy traffic', 20 Clifton Road did open as a Sixth Form Centre in the Spring of 1969. It provided a Common Room, a Study Room with private spaces for twenty boys, a small study for six boys, a tutorial room and a Careers' Master's office. The Centre was run by an elected committee and was, said Mr.Clarke, 'an experiment in self government and self discipline . . . intended to give Sixth Formers some preparation for their first year at university'. That committee also conveyed complaints and proposals to the Headmaster, and as a result a coffee vending machine was hired for the Sixth Form Centre and a Sixth Form Assembly was held twice a week, the fourth stream having made whole-school assembly over-crowded; full assemblies were held just once a week, with 'selective assemblies' on the other days. Another innovation

was the introduction of a cafeteria system in the Dining Hall, supervised by ancillary staff and Prefects. This enabled the School to cope with over 600 meals a day.

Mr. Clarke did, however, regard the School as having become *'too big. Every increase in the size of an institution tends to diminish the importance of the individual . . . . Communication becomes more difficult. It annoys and mortifies me to have to admit that there are many boys in the School, whom I do not know'*. (With over 650 pupils in the School, Mr. Clarke considered introducing two more *'houses'* - *Comgall*, colour brown, and *Columbanus*, colour purple - but sports' staff pointed out that it would make the organisation of inter-house competitions more difficult.)

In April 1970 the Board of Governors, under the Chairmanship of J.B. Stark, D.F.C., (who was also Chairman of the *Governing Bodies Association*), launched an appeal for £20,000 to help pay for a planned £300,000 extension. It was felt that it was good to be seen to be *'diligently planning for the future'* at a time of serious political unrest and the extension was regarded as *'probably the final phase in the development of our School'*.<sup>70</sup> Although the fear was expressed that *'government money might be tight'* as a result of the amount of compensation being paid for bomb and riot damage, the Ministry of Education was committed to providing an 80% grant and the remainder would come from the annual Capital Fee charged to all pupils in the Secondary Department - £15 a year from August 1969 - and a £60,000 loan over 50 years from the Ministry of Finance. Lists were drawn up of former pupils, parents, suppliers and *'industrialists and other influential people who may be sympathetic to the appeal'*. In the Appeal Brochure, Mr. Stark explained that the independence of the School could be in jeopardy if the appeal failed to meet its target. Some concern was expressed at this prospect, but the Governors decided that, if the response to the appeal was poor, they would simply finance a curtailed building scheme.

Some months earlier, *'the Headmaster put forward some very ingenious slogans. He also made a couple of good suggestions for "gimmicks" to arouse interest in shop-window displays'*, which were prepared by Miss Addy and her senior Art pupils. Miss Addy was due to retire in 1972, but the Board of Governors stressed *'the importance of having Miss Addy available during the completion of the building contract'* and approached the Ministry of Education, asking that she be allowed to stay for at least one, but preferably two, years. As an inducement to continue working, she was promoted to Scale V of the new salary structure. Miss Addy was eventually allowed to retire in June 1973, when a special luncheon was held to mark her 35 years of service to the School. The tribute in that year's *The Gryphon* commented on how she had always expected high standards of conduct and performance and that she had achieved them *'through her inspiring and enthusiastic approach, through the atmosphere she created and through her unassuming and warm-hearted personality'*. She had a sense of humour too; on one occasion, in morning assembly, she mischievously inquired of John Smyth, *'Are you singing the tune or the words today?'*<sup>71</sup>

The Appeal Brochure outlined the planned extension: a suite of specialist classrooms for History and English, Art Rooms, Staff Rooms, nine Physics and Biology laboratories, an Administration Suite and a Sixth Form Centre on the top floor, along with stores, tutorial rooms and private study spaces for seventy boys. The re-modelling of existing classrooms would provide a large Mathematics Laboratory, a Lecture Theatre and an additional Chemistry Laboratory. In addition, the Dining Hall and Kitchen were to be enlarged and a Sports Hall built, while the old entrance area would become a Careers Suite. It was said that the extension would double the classroom area and provide places for another 100 pupils.

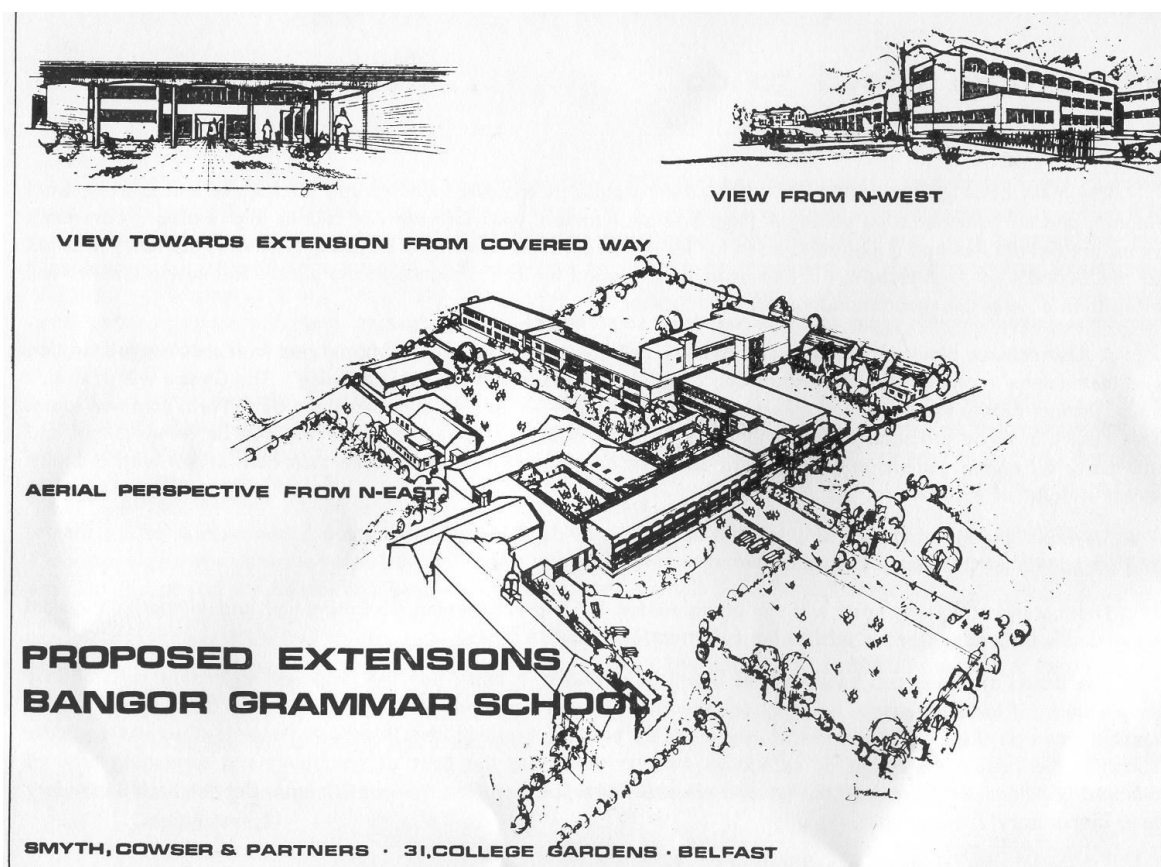
Within five months the Appeal had raised £17,000, and although it had been planned to close the Appeal in October 1970, the fact that building costs were rising at almost 12% per annum necessitated keeping open the Appeal longer. By November 1970 the target had been

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<sup>70</sup> *The Gryphon*, 1970.

<sup>71</sup> Recalled by John Smyth in 2002

exceeded by £7,000 and of the £27,000 raised, almost £10,000 had come from former pupils, while over 50% of parents made contributions. As well as cash gifts, many of the donors completed a Deed of Covenant, enabling the School, regarded as a charity for tax purposes, to reclaim the Income Tax. Those who donated £10 or more automatically became 'Subscribers' and so became eligible to vote at the annual meeting for electing the Governors. Money had been raised in a variety of ways; in 1973 the Board of Governors recorded that *'a small pop group had held a discoteque [sic] concert in the School recently and had presented £13 to the Appeal Fund out of the proceeds'*.



A plan of the 1974 extension, which was printed in the Appeal Brochure

The building plans were finally approved by the Ministry in February 1971, but when it transpired that the lowest tender was £321,000 and since *'the building had been so economically designed that no worthwhile saving could be made'*, it was considered omitting the dining hall and kitchen extension from the contract. In the event, the Ministry approved a contract of £312,000 and work on the extension commenced in November of that year with what the Editor of *The Gryphon* described as *'a savage and inexorable assault on the Back Field'*. It was scheduled to take 21 months, but all did not go smoothly; almost immediately the work fell behind schedule as the repair of bomb damage took precedence. To make matters worse, there was often more than 30% absenteeism, which was largely attributable to the civil unrest. In addition, the builders expected pay rises to add £20,000 to the cost of the work. In September 1973, when the work should have been completed, the canteen, gymnasium and the Science Block were not ready and the conversion of existing rooms had not even been begun.



The building work under way, as viewed from the northeast.  
The Clifton Road houses can be seen in the background.

On the ground floor of the Administration Building, which ran east-west from the 1961 Assembly Hall, were a Board Room, the Headmaster's Study, offices, and staffrooms. Stairs from the Entrance Hall led to first floor classrooms dedicated to the teaching of History and English.

The Science Block, which ran at right-angles to the Administrative Building, through the back gardens of 16, 18 and 20 Clifton Road, linked up with the 1964 extension to the old *Glennola Collegiate 'Orlit'* Block. It consisted of Physics Laboratories on the ground floor, Biology on the first floor, and classrooms, a Prefects' Common Room and new Library accommodation on the second floor.

Rooms throughout the School were re-numbered. The laboratories in the 1906 building, which now became the preserve of the Chemistry Department, were Rooms 1 to 3. First and Second Floor room numbers had three digits, beginning with '1' and '2' respectively. *Crosby House* rooms lost their numbers, for they were largely abandoned, until taken over by the *C.C.F.* at the end of the decade.



'The New Building', as the Administration block and classrooms are still known,  
viewed from the steps of the *Clarke Hall*

It was not until Speech Day in October 1974 that the buildings were officially opened and dedicated by The Most Reverend A.A.Buchanan, Archbishop of Dublin, a former Rector of

Bangor and Governor of the School. That evening, the buildings were open for inspection and exhibitions were mounted in the new classrooms. A Bazaar (so called, it is said, because there was no circumflex for Fête on the typewriter - the second in seventy years - which yielded a profit of £2,066, was held on the following Saturday. It was advertised as:

*'Fun for all the family. All your weekend's shopping. Cakes, jams, pickles, sweets, flowers, vegetables, toys, books, gifts, bottles, white elephant, kitchen stall, games and sideshows. Morning coffee 10.30-12.30; afternoon tea 2.00-4.00. Admission: 5p Adults; 2p Children.'*<sup>72</sup>

The *Old Boys' Association* ran the plants, toys, ice-cream and crisps stands, other stalls were run by governors, parents, staff and their wives, and *Bangor Dairies* gave ice-cream at 30% below the wholesale price as well as and free yoghurt, cheese and a freezer.

In the end the work had cost almost £450,000, of which the School had provided £90,000. Perhaps for this reason, the Board of Governors did *'not envisage any further building'*, although they did try to buy 24 Clifton Road in 1970 and did eventually buy both it and number 22, whose owner (the author's father) must have been a thorn in their flesh with his complaints about the state of the gardens of numbers 16, 18 and 20, and his worries about damage to the hedge dividing his back garden from the new buildings.<sup>73</sup>

Charles F. Milligan had made a donation to start a fund for a plaque to commemorate his Headmaster, Dr. Conolly, and it was decided that the old basketball square, now enclosed by the new buildings, should be planted with trees and shrubs and be known as the *'Dr. Connolly Memorial Garden'*. Unfortunately Dr. Conolly's name was misspelt.

## THE EDUCATION RE-ORGANISATION DEBATE

In 1972 the Board of Governors met with officials from *Down County Education Committee*, which was exploring the possibility of introducing comprehensive education in the Bangor area. The Board made it clear that it *'wishes the School to retain its status as a selective grammar school, but is not wedded to an intake on the basis of the 11+ procedure'*. The Board was also *'anxious that parents should have the greatest possible freedom of choice and that educational facilities in the town should be second to none in the Province'*. While the local authority could impose comprehensive education for girls, it would require the co-operation of *Bangor Grammar School's* Board of Governors before a boys' school could be established. They assured the Director of Education that they were *'anxious'* to co-operate in any way they could, but they would not *'commit educational suicide'* by allowing the School to be transformed into something other than a grammar school. They would not abandon the principle of selection, although they might accept a different type of selection based, for example on different age groups or on different methods. The publication of the *Burges Report* on *'The Reorganisation of Secondary Education in Northern Ireland'* early the following year, was described by F.H. Ebbitt, Director of Education in County Down, as *'a tremendous disappointment'* for, while it supported the general principle that the selection procedure should be abolished, it gave no guidance as to how to achieve that end. Indeed, one member of *Down County Education Committee* went so far as to say that the Report *'seemed to support Bangor Grammar School's point of view'*.<sup>74</sup> Talks continued with the *South Eastern Education and Library Board*, which replaced the old local education authority in 1973 and which almost immediately asked that *'the Minister of State now make a declaration of intent to eliminate selection at 11+ as soon as possible'*. Meanwhile the government commissioned papers on the educational and financial implications of sixth form colleges and middle schools, a two-tier system, co-education and all-through comprehensives, but in the end nothing was done.

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<sup>72</sup> *County Down Spectator*, 25 October 1974.

<sup>73</sup> *Bangor Grammar School Extension Appeal* (1970); *County Down Spectator*, 17 April 1970, 4 September 1970, 29 October 1971, 5 November 1971, 1 November 1974.

<sup>74</sup> *County Down Spectator*, 16 June 1972, 3 & 10 November 1972, 5 & 22 December 1972, 2 March and 6 April 1973.

## CURRICULUM

Curricular innovations included the introduction of a G.C.E. Ordinary Level Commerce course into the Sixth Form *'for those who did not want to go on to university'* and at the junior end of the School there was *'New Mathematics'*, which eventually *'submerged the whole School'*, teaching boys to think mathematically and making use of practical work, which added to the interest in the subject. The Commerce course, initially introduced partly as a result of the raising of the school-leaving age to 16, proved to be so successful that Business Studies was subsequently introduced as an 'A' Level subject and towards the end of Mr. Clarke's headmastership Computer Studies was added to the curriculum.

While accepting some new ideas, the School did not rush to embrace them all. Mr. Clarke regarded *'with dismay some of the vapourings of the Schools' Council, which if implemented would reduce examinations to a farce'*. He also deplored the

*'egalitarianism which says that because all cannot reach the peaks, there must be a levelling down to the lowest common denominator. School is a training ground for life and it is a poor service to allow boys to believe that, when they reach adult years, they can drift along doing as they please and avoiding the unpleasant and the tedious, and that a happy life will result from this attitude. In a word we reject the hippy culture and all it stands for'.*

On another occasion, reflecting on his years as Headmaster, Mr. Clarke voiced the thoughts of most teachers of his generation when he commented:

*'During the past 20 years the worker in the world of education has been like some traveller crossing a blasted heath, surrounded on all sides by swirling vapours and distracted by strange voices, which now rise in hysteria, and again ululate in gibberish; words like "equality", "self-expression", "rights" and "stream of consciousness" drift past him in the wind and cause him to question his sense of direction and sometimes his own purpose'.*

## STAFF

The School has been lucky to have had loyal, long-serving members of staff. Of those appointed by Randall Clarke in his last five years as Headmaster, thirteen were to stay for more than twenty years and five of those more than thirty years. Indeed, Stephen Blake-Knox, Chris Harte, Peter Moore and Alan Mackie were still on the staff in 2005.

Ian Archibald Fergus Hunter joined the Staff in 1969, as its first full-time music teacher. His music interests were enhanced as a boy chorister in Belfast Cathedral Choir and at *Annadale Grammar School* and *Stranmillis College*, Belfast, where he was educated. Having gained his *L.T.C.L.* and *L.G.S.M.* while training as a teacher, he completed his B.A. at the *Open University* while teaching. On his appointment, he was charged with the responsibility to *'build up Music as a significant part of the curriculum'*. He undoubtedly achieved that because, when he arrived, the Music Department (in as far as it existed) inventory apparently consisted of three piles of songbooks and six L.P. records, and when he retired, his department had become one of the leading Music Departments in the Province – if not in the United Kingdom. Apart from teaching Music throughout the School, he saw many of his protégés reach Grade 8 in the *Associated Board* practical and theory examinations, and even had pupils who left school with diplomas from one of the Music colleges. In both choral and instrumental music, Ian Hunter maintained the highest standards, and despite demanding that those who missed a rehearsal *'produced a death certificate as evidence'* that they had been unable to attend, his pupils developed a love of the man, evinced by the fact that so many continued to join the choir or orchestra at the annual Carol Service – and to join Ian at the late night Christmas Dinner in the *Royal Hotel* afterwards. Described recently, by a pupil from his early years at the School, as *'looking better than he has ever done - sort of like an elderly Phil Mitchell from EastEnders'*, he was a stern disciplinarian, but (unlike Phil Mitchell) *'his integrity, his generosity of spirit and his desire to maintain high standards in life as in music'* meant that he was sorely missed from the School community. He stunned his colleagues when, in his retirement speech, he announced that the Headmasters' under whom he had served were *'CRAP'*; he hurriedly explained: Connolly, Rodgers, Argent and Patton. Shortly before his premature retirement in 2001,



after 32 years' service, he gained an M.Sc. in Educational Technology with distinction from the *University of Ulster* and after leaving the School, when not soaking up the sun in Spain, taught Information Technology part-time in *North Down College*.<sup>75</sup>



I.A.F. Hunter, B.A., M.Sc., Cert.Ed.,  
L.T.C.L., L.G.S.M. (1969-2001)  
in retirement - an elderly Phil Mitchell?



A.S. Ragg, B.Sc. (1969-2002)  
at the time of his retirement

Tony Ragg taught at the School for 33 years from 1969 until 2002. Having attended *Campbell College*, where his father was Senior Classics Master and Housemaster, he had graduated from *Queen's University* in Civil Engineering, working for some years for *Newtownabbey District Council* and the Ministry of Finance. Teaching Mathematics throughout his time at the School, 'he helped many gifted boys on the road to intellectual distinction [although] not everyone he taught shared his delight' in his subject. Outside the classroom, he took charge of the School's audio-visual equipment when Barry Greenaway became Librarian, and led the lighting and sound crews in the school plays. He also ran the tuck shop and set up a *Model Railway Society*, reflecting his own passion for railways. Something of a philosopher as well as a mathematician, in the Staffroom he was known to speculate about the answer to questions such as the speed at which a bat might emerge from hell!<sup>76</sup>



P.M. Lagrue, B.A.(Hons.) (1970-1994)

Peter Lagrue was appointed to the Staff in 1970 and taught at the School for 24 years until his early retirement in 1994. He was educated at *Sullivan Upper School* in Hollywood, and at *Queen's University*, where he took a joint honours degree in English and Modern History. In his time he taught English, History and Drama and was co-ordinator of the General Studies programme. He instilled a love of literature in the boys he taught, putting heart and soul into all that he did. Although his classes' results were second to none, it is as director of the School Play - 19 successive productions - that he is likely to be most remembered. 'Under his tutelage, many were privileged to inherit a life-long love of drama.' Looking back on his school career, one former pupil remembered the 'shabbily smart' Mr. Lagrue as 'one of the few teachers that seemed "normal"'. In the Staffroom, his gift for repartee, satire and impersonations was greatly enjoyed by his colleagues.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Ian Hunter's recollections; Jonathan Rea in *The Gryphon*, 2001; Ian Hunter repeated his 'CRAP' remark to *Grammarians* at their Annual Dinner in November 2002, when a musical combo, *Archie's Magic Fergus* provided the entertainment.

<sup>76</sup> Stephen Connolly in *The Gryphon*, 2002.

<sup>77</sup> Robert Stevenson in *The Gryphon*, 1994.



Educated at *Portora Royal School* and *Queen's University*, Ray Mowat ('Remote', or 'Urbano' from *Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band's* 1968 hit *I'm the Urban Spaceman*, to the boys) taught at *Royal School Dungannon* before joining the Staff of *Bangor Grammar School* in 1971, as a teacher of Geography. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of his subject 'which it will be difficult for the younger generation to reach', and an apparently bottomless black holdall from which he could extract almost any item of geographical paperwork. A tall man, he had been the Northern Ireland javelin champion and he passed on his expertise to generations of pupils, as well as taking charge of the 3<sup>rd</sup> XV and commanding the school *C.C.F.* for some years. Guest of honour at the 1997 *Grammarians'* London Dinner, he recalled the occasion when his ill-directed javelin wrecked an electricity sub-station, an incident for which, he said, the *I.R.A.* received the blame. While on the staff of the School, he completed his M.Sc. at the *New University of Ulster*. When he retired in 2000 after 29 years at the School, one colleague in the Geography department described having had him as a Head of Department as 'an unforgettable and unmissable experience'.<sup>78</sup>



Captain R.B.Mowat, B.A., B.Sc., Dip.Ed. and Captain D.B.Greenaway, B.A., Cert.Ed. in *T.A.* uniform, flanking the Headmaster in 1975.

An alumnus of *Campbell College*, *Trinity College Dublin* and *Magdalene College Cambridge*, Barry Greenaway, joined the Staff in 1973 as a teacher of History and English, following six years at *Armagh Royal School*. For some years he was Assistant Careers Master and Assistant Librarian and he was in charge of the School's audio-visual equipment – initially consisting of two reel-to-reel tape recorders and a large valve radio set, which were kept in his classroom on a desk specially constructed by the caretaker, Alec Lightbody. He was very enthusiastic about his responsibilities and on Open Days was in his element showing off his AV Room to all interested visitors. On one occasion some ingenious wit hung a notice on the door which read 'Barry's Amusements'. In 1979 he became Senior Housemaster of Crosby House, a position he held until 1992, when he took over responsibility for the Library from Irwin Bonar. In December 1979, he succeeded Ray Mowat as Contingent Commander of the *C.C.F.*, a post to which he brought 'extraordinary energy'. He had risen to the rank of cadet sergeant in the *Campbell College Contingent* and subsequently served in the *Territorial Army* and the *Ulster Defence Regiment*. Donald Cairnduff, writing in *The Gryphon* referred to the 'military precision' with which his classes were run, and how 'malingerers sometimes quailed under the shellfire of his vocal displeasure', but at the same time highlighting his kindness to, and encouragement of, pupils. His vocal attributes were also put to good use when he acted as announcer at bazaars, sports days and swimming galas, occasions on which he 'maintained a tireless patter'. Like so many of his generation, he was not greatly impressed by the late twentieth century developments in teaching and assessment, and so his early retirement in 1997 was easier for him to cope with than it might otherwise have been. His 'technophobe and latter-day Luddite' colleagues in the English department missed his 'proficiency with all things electronic', but were able to call on his expertise for a further six years as he continued to work as part-time Librarian. When he finally retired at the end of 2003, the Headmaster

<sup>78</sup> Chris Harte in *The Gryphon*, 2000; *Grammarians'* Annual Report, 1997. Nicknames from 1972 onwards have been supplied by Chris Harte.

remarked that *'his feelings of affection for the School ran deep and he was, in a way, a guardian and finest exemplar of its ethos'*.<sup>79</sup>

Miss Addy's successor as Head of the Art Department was Derek Morrison. During his 22 years on the Staff, the Art Department moved house twice; shortly after his arrival the new Art Rooms opened in what would later become the Library, and in 1989 the purpose-built *Wilkins Centre* was completed. In common with his illustrious predecessor, he demanded good manners. It is said that some boys referred to the Art rooms as *'concentration camps'*; he certainly expected the boys to concentrate on their Art. Some of the top designers and architects in the Province have him to thank for the interest and encouragement they received from him. On his retirement in 1995, after 22 years at the School, Joe Gildea, who had taught with him all his working life and was therefore in a position to experience, more than others, his *'warmth and humour'*, wrote that *'he was a man committed to seeing people realise their full potential and would go out of his way to help them do so. He set high standards for himself too, and his department'*.<sup>80</sup>



D.Morrison, D.A., N.D.D., A.T.D.  
(1973-1995)



J.A.Gildea, D.A., N.D.D., A.T.C.  
(1973-1999)

Renowned for his *'one-liner repartee'*, Joe Gildea joined the Art Department at the same time as Derek Morrison, 1973. Where his colleague was a strict disciplinarian, he was a *'trendy teacher with a natty line in ties and nicknames'*, although he too refused to accept less than the highest standards of manners and behaviour. Perhaps not always *'politically correct'*, he was greatly admired by his pupils, and he appeared to make light work of set designs for the school plays and of certificates for prize days. He was missed not only from his department, but also from the staff Bible Studies when he retired in 1999 after 26 years on the Staff. Following a period of illness, he is said to have finally decided it was time to retire when one day *'he crossed the playground and absentmindedly addressed a boy by his real name'*.<sup>81</sup>

When Ivan Wilson came to the School in 1973, he had already a wealth of teaching experience in Ethiopia, Scotland, in County Tyrone and in *Bangor Secondary School*. A highly regarded teacher of Physics, his pupils consistently achieved excellent examination results. During his 27 years on the Staff, he served as the School as Housemaster of Dufferin House, a member of the Careers Department, Director of Studies, chairman of the Curriculum Committee and in 1997 he was appointed Vice-Principal with responsibility for the academic side of the School. Outside the classroom he re-established the school Tuck Shop, founded the *Community Service Group* and, in his earlier days, had coached Junior Rugby as well as playing hooker on the Staff Rugby Team, on which the other members of the front row were Roger Clegg and Harry Williams. In retirement, he went to work for *Voluntary Service Overseas* in Cameroon.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Donald Cairnduff in *The Gryphon*, 1997; *The Gryphon*, 1998; Kenny Brown, in a letter to the author, July 2004; Stephen Connolly at Speech Day, October 2004.

<sup>80</sup> Joe Gildea in *The Gryphon*, 1995.

<sup>81</sup> Mrs.K.Payne in *The Gryphon*, 2000 and 2003..

<sup>82</sup> Peter Moore in *The Gryphon*, 2000.



I.A. Wilson, B.Sc., Dip.Ed. (1973-2000)    A.J. Fitzgerald, B.Sc., Dip.Ed. (1974-1993)

Universally known as '*Fitzy*', Alan Fitzgerald taught at the School for 19 years, from his appointment in 1974 until ill-health forced him into early retirement in 1993. A specialist in electronics, he taught Physics and Technology, coached Cricket and Rugby, and for the Staff was a golfer, a useful medium-pace bowler and a wing three-quarter. He also ran the *Scientific Hobbies Club* and the *Great Egg Race*. As the first Officer Commanding the Royal Navy section of the *C.C.F.*, he never missed an opportunity to describe the Army Section as '*Pongos*'. Peter Moore described him as '*scientist, pedagogue, true gentleman*'.<sup>83</sup>

Among the support staff, Mrs. Russell retired after many years in charge of the Canteen, to be succeeded by Mrs. Walker, and Caretaker Jim Crossan was succeeded by Fred Neill.



The Staff when Mr. Clarke retired in 1975

Back Row: Mrs. R. Walker, Messrs. Gildea, Mackie, Harte, Williams, Brown, Greenaway, Cameron ('*Spock*'), Eadie, Mowat, Steele, McIlroy, Dalzell, Mohan ('*Bwana*'), Foley, Hughes, Sutter  
 Third Row: Mrs. E. Sybald, Messrs. Fitzgerald, Bonar, Blake-Knox, Hopkins, Bradley, ? , Murphy, Abraham, Moore, Harbinson ('*Charles Atlas*'), Greenfield, Weir  
 Second Row: Mrs. S. Williams, Mrs. P. McWilliam, ? , ? , Mrs. E. Ross, Miss I. Comyns, Miss M. Fethersonhaugh, Mrs. B. Sangster-Nash, Messrs. Lagrue, J. L. Johnston, ? , Ragg, Wilson, Anderson, Mrs. J. Burns, Mrs. M. Cheyne, Mrs. D. McMullan, Miss M. Hamilton  
 Front Row: Messrs. Morrison, Welch, McCord, Rea, McKeown, Styles, J. E. Barbour (Vice-Chairman of the Board of Governors), Mr. Clarke, W. H. Langtry (Chairman of the Staff Common Room Committee), Mrs. Clarke, Miss Addy (who must have been invited back for the occasion), Messrs. Thomson, J. R. Johnston, Heuston, Driscoll, Smyth, Hunter.

## PUPIL SUCCESSES

The flow of boys to *Oxford* and *Cambridge* continued during these years. At the *Oxford University Senior Tutors' Conference* in 1975, Mr. Clarke was given '*glowing reports*' on his former pupils and he received assurances that '*more of the same type would be very welcome*'. P. J. Millar, who went up to *Magdalen College, Oxford*, read French and Russian, before becoming a journalist. While the East Europe correspondent for the *Sunday Times*, he won *Foreign Correspondent of the Year* for his coverage of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. He also has the distinction of having his description of the Prague *Velvet Revolution* quoted by Martin Gilbert in his *History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. More recently Peter Millar has turned his hand to fiction, with his *Stealing Thunder* and *Bleak Midwinter*.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Peter Moore in *The Gryphon*, 1993; recollections of Barry Greenaway, 2004.

<sup>84</sup> A list of those who won scholarships can be found in the Appendices; Peter Millar, in an email to the author, February 2005

Two Old Boys who graduated with 1<sup>st</sup> Class Honours were to go on to gain renown in their spheres of work - W.D.Trimble became known throughout the world of politics, and D.H.Rea, who also gained his rugby 'blue' at *Queen's*, became well known to pupils of his old school. Others crowned distinguished academic careers by gaining Doctor of Philosophy degrees, including M.T.Affolter, A.D.Booth, R.J.Boyd, D.C.Johnston (having gone to *Cambridge* on a *Robert Gardiner Memorial Scholarship*), W.A.Patterson, J.L.Davidson and J.B.Ferguson, while I.W.Carson was awarded his M.D. and J.R.Nixon was elected F.R.C.S.

Further up the academic ladder, others became professors: D.M.Roulston became Professor of Electrical Engineering at the *University of Waterloo*, Ontario, D.B.Archer was appointed to the new Chair of Ophthalmology and A.H.G.Love to the personal chair in Gastroenterology, both at *Queen's University*, Belfast. C.T.Ingold, Professor of Biology and Deputy Vice-Chancellor at *London University* was awarded the *C.M.G.* and became President of the *British Mycological Association*.

Outside academia, Brian Faulkner, became Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, F.C.Tughan became a Freeman of Bangor, Rev.G.F.H.Wynne was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (although he died suddenly only months into his year of office), John Elder became the first Old Boy to play cricket for Ireland (at the same time as a member of staff, C.C.J.Harte), while R.A.Milliken won 14, and R.J.Clegg 5, international rugby caps between 1973 and 1975, Dick Milliken going on to represent the *British Lions* in South Africa in 1974. In sailing T.W.Whisker became the GP14 World Champion. Three years earlier, in 1971 a former pupil and member of the Board of Governors, John Curry, had died in a yachting accident.

## DISCIPLINE

Although the vast majority of boys were a credit to the School, there was, as in every generation, a handful of miscreants. At the end of 1969, there was what the Headmaster called '*an epidemic of shoplifting by boys in High Street*'. The parents of one boy were asked to withdraw him from school. A year later, minor vandalism in the Sixth Form Centre led to the boys being asked for '*caution money*' to pay for any damage; unspent money was to be returned at the end of the year. This did not solve the problem, for in May 1971 Middle VI were sent home on study leave three days early due to a '*recrudescence of vandalism*' and a warning that there was likely to be more damage before the end of the week. Some boys were understandably upset at what one Governor called '*the abrupt termination of their school careers*'. Later that week, a number of Lower VI boys locked themselves in the VI Form Centre and threw eggs at members of staff. It was decided that they should not be allowed back to school the following year and that in future there would need to be constant supervision as '*senior boys were not capable of running the centre on their own*'. This, however, would not have prevented the digging up of the cricket square and the painting of '*various slogans*' - '*Caproni's Ices*' on the copper roof of the '*red corridor*' being one of them - on the School buildings that happened the following day. Mr.Clarke, with the full support of the Board of Governors, declared that '*a new disciplinary machinery*' was to be set up and boys whose work was consistently unsatisfactory would be reported to the local education authority and would probably lose their scholarships. Perhaps in an attempt to prevent any recurrence of bad behaviour, a Coffee Party was arranged for the boys the following year before their final exams. Whether or not pupils were responsible for a malicious fire in the Chemistry laboratory in the Spring of 1972 was never determined, but it led to members of Staff acting as watchmen three nights a week '*at Securicor rates*', £1 an hour! Nor had approaching retirement diminished Mr.Clarke's ability to mete out physical punishment; in early 1973 he had '*beaten a boy publicly for beating up a Prefect and boasting about it*'.

Misbehaviour at the end of May 1973 resulted in a Prefect suffering a fractured skull; the guilty boy was expelled. Five boys who drove cars round the grounds of *Glenlola Collegiate* were given the choice of immediate expulsion or a public flogging and a refusal to accept them back into Middle VI. As a result '*a new standard of discipline*' was enforced and the

length of boys' hair was the first issue to be affected. In September 1973 a regulation was introduced saying that hair had to be *'above the collar'*. When the School reopened, many boys were ordered to have their hair cut by the following Monday. According to the local press, who had obtained their information from some of the boys, most conformed, but many were sent home, including some who had already been to the barber – one of whom claimed to have had his hair cut twice. At one stage, it was reported, there were only between twenty and thirty left in the Sixth Form.<sup>85</sup> The Board of Governors reacted angrily to these *'grossly exaggerated'* reports, when Mr. Clarke assured them that there had been no *'mass absenteeism'* and that *'the boys had taken the School's orders good humouredly'*. Several Board members had received congratulations on the School's action. Not all parents supported Mr. Clarke's attempts to improve the image of the School, however; at least one parent objected to his regulation forbidding duffle coats. More worrying had been an incident two years earlier when a boy had attempted to sell drugs in the School; he was suspended and transferred to another school.

## GOVERNORS' BUSINESS

As the work of the Board of Governors became more onerous, several additional sub-committees were set up; over the next few years there were committees to deal with Finance and General Purposes, Buildings, Connor House, Education and Ballymacormick. Meetings of the Board of Governors tended to be routine, not to say dull, but they were usually amicable. However, on two occasions in the early 1970s there was controversy.

Martin Gray recalls *'The Morning of the Flying Proxy Votes'* - the annual Meeting of Subscribers to elect representative Governors in April 1973, at which 24 subscribers were present: *'When the meeting was called to order, it transpired that Maurice Butler had handed in ninety proxy voting papers. The Chairman, Edgar McNeilly, suggested that, if Mr. Butler would tell him which four he wanted elected, we could all have a cup of tea and go home. Maurice insisted that the full procedure must be followed. In due course those put forward by the proxy group were elected'*.<sup>86</sup> They were Hal Blair, Maurice Butler, Jack Cairns and Walter Dowdall, who replaced Brian Cummings, Martin Gray, Eric Morrow and Frank Reid. Subsequently, Mr. Clarke was accused of influencing Subscribers' proxy votes and, speaking as *'someone who has devoted nearly half his professional life to Bangor Grammar School'*, the Headmaster made a lengthy and emotional statement denying any involvement, adding that:

*'over the last two decades, much of the success of the School has been due to the harmonious partnership between Governors, Headmaster and Staff and I believe that this relationship still exists in respect of the great majority of the Board. During the past eighteen months the Governors/Headmaster element has been put under increasing strain by frequent ill-informed attacks on me by a very small minority of the Board. . . . This is an effective school because it is a happy school. I ask for the Governors' co-operation in keeping it so.'*

A motion of complete confidence in the Headmaster was passed unanimously.

Relations between Governors and Staff certainly seemed to be good, for a sherry party or *conversazione* was held almost every September. (Relations between Staff and Boys must also have been good, for they survived a series of soccer matches, which the boys won with ease.)

Eighteen months later *'a grave and distressing matter'* was brought to the attention of Board members by the Chairman, Edgar McNeilly. Mr. Clarke's successor had just been appointed and it had been agreed that the Staff were to be informed before a public announcement was made. However, the name of the new Headmaster had apparently been divulged *'within a few hours of the finish of the meeting'* with the result that the Staff already knew when they were officially told several days later. The Governors were reminded of the importance of preserving the confidentiality of Board meetings.

<sup>85</sup> *County Down Spectator*, 14 September 1973.

<sup>86</sup> Martin Gray, in a letter to the author, November 2004.

## FINANCE

The early 1970s were years of high inflation and the inadequate salary award in 1969 led to discontent among the teaching staff. Although they were said to be *'pursuing increased remuneration while showing restraint and loyalty'*, several one-day strikes by members of the *National Association of Schoolmasters* did take place in December and January, in solidarity with colleagues in England and Wales. Although twenty-one teachers took part and three quarters of the pupils had to be sent home, there were those on the Staff who felt that such action was doing nothing but damage to the School.<sup>87</sup> Some teachers also proved less willing to undertake lunchtime supervision and so several *'supervisory assistants'* were appointed. In late 1971, the old *'graded allowances'* were replaced by a 5-scale salary structure. Schools were allocated a number of promotion *'points'*, based on the number of pupils, senior boys bringing more points to the school. Promotion from the basic scale (Scale I) to Scale II was one point, to Scale III two points and so on; the School had 80 points at its disposal, 70 of which were already committed to those already on a graded allowance. A number of members of Staff were promoted, including the appointment of Mr.Langtry and Mr.J.R.Johnston to the post of Deputy Senior Master, using up the extra 10 points. However, it was not until the implementation of the *Houghton Report* in 1975, which gave a substantial pay rise, backdated to April 1974, that unrest among teachers subsided.

Inflation, rising salaries and building costs made it necessary to introduce a charge for books in 1971, when the Bookstore made a £900 loss due to a 20% rise in the price of books. Fees too rose rapidly during these years; between 1969 and 1974, fees in the grammar school more than doubled to £160, while preparatory department fees rose from £50 and £60 to £81 and £90.

## THE IMPACT OF THE TROUBLES

The Editor of *The Gryphon*, George Heuston, never one to mince his words, spoke for many when he wrote in 1972:

*'If schools fail to produce men of culture and character with the capacity to rise above petty factions and narrow sectarian interest, inevitably the man in the street must resign himself to the perpetuation of the appalling political ineptitude so apparent in Ulster today'*

Despite *'a certain amount of reaction inside the School against'* it, the *Schools' Action Committee* continued to do all it could to build bridges in the divided society that was Northern Ireland, including various fund-raising events such as a *'most excellent Jumble Sale'*, a sponsored walk which raised over £2000, quizzes and dances, as well as visits to *Crawfordsburn Hospital*. In 1974 it received the *Graham Larmour Award* of the *Irish Association* for helping to improve community relations in Bangor during the previous school year.<sup>88</sup>

The suspension of the Stormont parliament and the imposition of Direct Rule in Northern Ireland in 1972 came at an unfortunate time for the School; the *Governing Bodies Association* had been about to approach the Ministry of Education to ask for an increase in the maximum allowed Capital Fee, something which would have eased *Bangor Grammar School's* financial situation.

The following year, Mr.Clarke was among those who signed a statement issued by the Policy and Information Committee of the *Ulster Headmasters' Association*. The statement read:

*'We deplore all forms of political demonstration and action that directly or indirectly cause further disruption to the commercial, industrial and educational life of the Province, from whatever quarter these are proposed. We condemn in particular the exploitation of school pupils for political purposes, the encouragement of vandalism and violence, and the exposure of children by parents or others to any form of confrontation with the security forces.'*<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> *County Down Spectator*, 19 December 1969.

<sup>88</sup> *County Down Spectator*, 11 October 1974.

<sup>89</sup> *County Down Spectator*, 16 February 1973.

In 1972 and 1973 what might be termed political strikes caused the closure of the School due to lack of heat, and in March 1974 the *Ulster Workers' Council* strike prevented 6 members of staff from getting to work despite having '*made a considerable effort*'. The possibility of a bomb scare led to tight security during examination periods and no Badminton teams were entered in the league or cup competitions, '*due to the situation in Belfast*'.

### **CONNOR HOUSE**

Almost unnoticed, the original *Connor House* building, which had lain derelict since the preparatory department had decamped to Clifton Road, was demolished in 1970.<sup>90</sup>

Meanwhile, applications for admission to the preparatory department had fallen. Mr. Thomson proposed offering '*something extra*', such as a Modern Language, but it was not deemed to be practical. However, '*a distinctive cap*' was designed, with '*CH*' rather than '*BGS*' on the front. In 1971 the decision was taken to keep the P.3 pupils in School for the whole day instead of allowing them to finish at 12.45. As demand for places in the secondary department increased, the future of *Connor House* became an issue. At the end of 1974, the Headmaster told the Board of Governors that:

*'he would not be in favour of phasing out Connor House, as the Preparatory Department made a most valuable contribution to the School. He would be prepared to refuse some qualified boys from elsewhere in order to accommodate unqualified Connor House boys, if he and Mr. Thomson were satisfied that these boys were capable of benefiting from a grammar school education'.*

However, it was made clear that, to survive, *Connor House* must be academically successful and financially profitable.

Gone were the days when *Connor House* boys walked or cycled to School. Such was the congestion caused by parents' cars that a voluntary one-way system on Clifton Road was introduced. Facilities continued to improve, in part due to the efforts of the *Mums' Committee*, whose '*Mid-summer Buffet*' in 1972 raised £400 towards the cost of a 16 mm projector and speakers.

Tragedy hit *Connor House* in 1974 with the deaths of two boys, Tony Palmer and Steven Davies, within 10 days of each other, both after lengthy illnesses.

### **SPORT**

By the early 1970s, there were 250 boys playing rugby and 150 playing hockey for the School. There were both hockey and cricket tours to England, the traditional Dublin cricket tour being deemed unwise on account of the unrest. Each sport had its successes during these years and as the School grew in size, so the number of boys gaining inter-provincial and international honours rose.

In rugby the School retained the rugby Seven-a-side Trophy in 1970 and Robert Hamilton and John Thompson played for Ulster Schools, the former as Captain.

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<sup>90</sup> I. Wilson, *Bangor: Historic Photographs of the County Down Town 1870-1914* (1992)





The 1970 'Sevens' Winners

Mr. Welch D.R.A.Lightbody T.H.M.Wells The Headmaster S.B.E..Johnston D.F.R.Hamilton Mr.Gillan  
B.McI.O'Fee G.L.S.MacCallum E.A.W.Kyle



D.F.R.Hamilton and John Thompson in 1970

In what was only its fourth season the 1<sup>st</sup> XI Hockey team reached the final of the *Burney Cup*, and over the next few years Chris McQuaid, Raymond Parker, Gerald Dunn and Brian Rogerson represented Ulster Schools, while Nicholas Langley played for Irish Schoolboys and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI won *Dowdall Cup* in 1975.



C.D.McQuaid (1970)



R.J.Parker (1970)



G.T.Dunn (1972)



N.P.Langley (1972)



B.K.Rogerson (1975)



*The Dowdall Cup winning 2<sup>nd</sup> XI 1975*

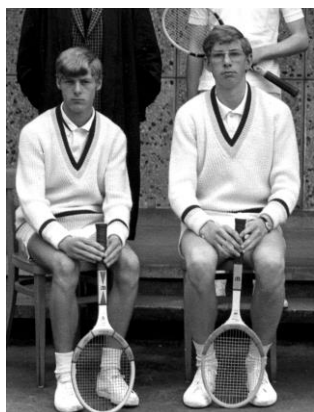
Mr.Smyth, R.Elborn, M.Egglestone, J.Richardson, The Headmaster, M.Dornan,  
D.Henderson, S.Timol, Mr.Harte  
R.L.Archer, T.Campbell, C.N.Christie, G.D.Hamill, J.R.Glenfield

In Cricket, Howard Bingham represented both Ulster and Irish Schools (the first to do so since Terry Neill a decade before) and David Morrow played for Ulster Schools.



F.H.Bingham and R.D.Morrow in 1974

Oliver Swain and Derek Jarvis became the first pupils for over a decade to represent Ulster at Tennis. Derek Jarvis went on to play for Irish Schools, while Ian Ferguson, Glenn Thompson and David Cunningham also gained inter-provincial caps.



B.D.Jarvis and J.O.Swain (1970)

C.I.Ferguson and G.D.Thompson (1973)



D.J.Cunningham (1975)

Gary McCausland and Michael Ferguson represented Ulster Schoolboys in Table Tennis, Ferguson also representing Irish Schools, and those two were on the School team that won the *Erne Cup* for the Ulster Senior Boys' League in 1971.



The Headmaster J.A.Tate Mr.Bonar  
I.W.McConaghie G.McCausland M.H.Ferguson  
with the *Erne Cup* in 1971

The following year, the School retained the *Erne Cup* and also won the *Lagan Rose Bowl* for the Ulster Boys Championship, the team consisting of Ferguson, ranked number 3 in Junior Ireland, Tate, A.Fraser and C.Boyd. They retained the *Lagan Rose Bowl* in 1973.



The Headmaster A.Fraser Mr.Bonar  
J.A.Tate M.H.Ferguson S.Boyd  
with the *Erne Cup* and the *Lagan Rose Bowl* in 1972

Garth McGimpsey continued to make a name for himself in golfing circles, playing for the Irish Boys Under 18 team. Thirty years later, after a distinguished amateur career, he captained the *Walker Cup* team to success and was appointed *M.B.E.* in the 2004 New Years Honours.



G.M. McGimpsey in 1972



W.A.Y. Pope in 1973

Billy Pope, who played on the School team that won the Ulster Boys' Championships in 1972 and who won the Ulster Schoolboys' Open Championship in 1973, was joined on the School Team, which won the Irish Championship the following year, by future professional golfer, David Feherty. In 1975, a team containing four from the previous year, but now including Mark Robson, who was to go on to present sports programmes on television, won the Ulster Championships for the fourth time in nine years.



The Headmaster and Mr. Steele with the Winners of the Ulster Boys' Golf Championships in 1972



1975

S.Hinds R.S.Irvine W.A.Y.Pope H.W.Bruce D.Robinson M.S.Robson  
G.M.McGimpsey S.H.Graham B.M.Stewart S.A.Martin J.P.Martin D.W.Feherty C.J.Crozier



Irish Schools' Champions 1974  
The Headmaster C.J.Crozier J.P.Martin Mr.Steele  
S.A.Martin W.A.Y.Pope D.W.Feherty



Swimming benefited from the opening of the indoor swimming pool, where the first indoor gala was held in 1972, the year in which distances were measured in metres for the first time. The following year 6 boys took part in the Irish Swimming Championships and two years later Ross Carter won the Ulster Grammar Schools 50 metre butterfly, Mitchell Colville the Ulster Boys 200 metre breaststroke and Terence Dillon was in the Great Britain Team in *Captain Matthew Webb Centenary Cross-Channel Swim*. A team was also entered in the Ulster Schools' Water Polo League.



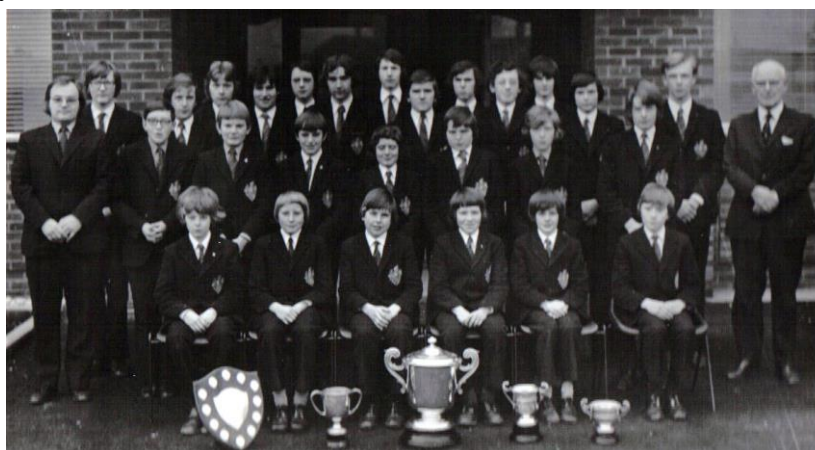
M.J.Colville      R.K.Carter      T.J.Dillon

In 1970, P.M.A.Bryans was on the Irish Junior Sailing Team but later that year, the school yacht sank in a storm. Although it was repaired, the difficulty in obtaining insurance cover led to it being sold for £230 in 1972.

For the non-athletic, but still competitive, there was the *Chess Club*, which first entered teams in Ulster Schools' League in 1972. The following year a team won Ulster Schools' Division V and in 1974 Mark Orr played on the Ulster Senior Schoolboys Chess team.

## MUSIC

The appointment of Ian Hunter as the first fulltime Head of Music, or Director of Music as he was known, in 1969, was to be a significant step for, over the next thirty years, *Bangor Grammar School* was to become established as one of the leading training grounds for musicians in Northern Ireland. Mr.Hunter soon showed himself to have '*remarkable gifts as a choirmaster*'; in his first year on the Staff, he fronted no less than six public performances and following his first Annual Concert in the Spring of 1970, he was congratulated by the Governors for having '*brought credit to the School*'. Orchestral instruments were bought and private peripatetic music instructors began brass and woodwind tuition in 18 Clifton Road, with remarkably quick results: Pat Duignan won a cup at *Bangor Music Festival* after only two years tuition, and by 1972 boys were sitting A.B.Theory examinations up to Grade 6 and Practical exams on nine instruments. Winning cups at the local music festivals became an almost annual occurrence, indeed the Music Department won five 1<sup>st</sup> prizes at *Bangor Festival* in 1974 and the School Choir came first out of 16 entries in the *Down County Music Festival* the following year.



Mr.Hunter and Mr.Clarke with the School Madrigal Group and their impressive array of silverware.

In school, an Inter-House music competition was inaugurated in 1972, adjudicated by Havelock Nelson; the Houses competed for the *Roberts Cup*, presented by Mrs.P.Roberts in memory of her son Brian, who had been a talented treble a dozen years earlier.

From 1969 the *Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* also became an annual event, held for many years in Bangor Parish Church, where Mr.Hunter was Organist and Choirmaster 1972-1989; generations of boys were to sing *Torches*, *O Men from the Fields*, and *Personent Hodie*. Within a few years the Music department could boast, among other activities, a brass ensemble, a wind ensemble and a madrigal group, and a number of boys in the Ulster Junior Orchestra.

As the School's musical reputation grew, radio and television appearances began, one of the earliest being the Choir's appearance in 1970 on *Songs of Praise* from *Trinity Presbyterian Church*, which brought 'a flood of congratulations'.<sup>91</sup> Regular broadcasts followed, including the School's defeat of the Welsh entry in the B.B.C.'s *Let the People Sing* in 1975.

### **THE ARMY CADET FORCE**

The onset of Northern Ireland's 'Troubles' led to restrictions being imposed on *Cadet Force* units throughout the Province; no uniforms were to be worn and no weapons were to be held by units. Nevertheless, the unit continued to flourish and the call-sign '69A' was still to be heard on the National Schools Radio network. In 1970 a team won the *Gordon Trophy* for .22 shooting, and the following year membership was opened to Form 2 boys. That year Mr.Mowat became a second officer, taking over from Captain Langtry in 1974.<sup>92</sup>

### **OTHER EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Drama continued to flourish. 1969 saw the first joint production with *Glenlola Collegiate*, in which future television presenter, Paul McDowell, played the title role as *King Lear*. The *Debating Society* embarked on a new venture when a team was entered for the *Junior Chamber of Commerce Cup* for the first time in 1970

Other well established societies continued to function, and to expand their activities. The *Geographical Society* went on a trip to Heswall Camp near Liverpool and Mr.Clarke was keen to acquire a cottage for Geography and Botany expeditions and for *Adventure Club* camps; he suggested that a certain disused primary school in north Londonderry might be available, but the Director of Education 'held out little hope of a grant'. (At different times over the next few years, the School had the use of two cottages, one on the corner of the road to Trassey Bridge on the Hilltown Road, and another off the Kilkeel Road, above the Shimna River). The *Continental Tour*, described in 1971 as 'a popular innovation', took boys to Greece that year.

New societies were established, including the *Bridge Club*, the *Science Society*, the *Music Society*, the *Listener's Club*, at which everything from Bach to Dylan could be heard, and the *Junior C.E.M.* D.N.Gray, this author's brother, was credited in *The Gryphon* with founding the *Junior Discussion Group*, which was to transmogrify into the *Junior Debating Society*. (However, Mr.Clarke balked at Rodney Connor's suggestion that he set up a Boxing Club).

The *Community Service Group*, set up just a year before Mr.Clarke's retirement, drew up a report on the need for pre-school play groups for *Project Bangor*, which was so impressive that it was submitted to the Ministry of Education. That group also took part in a sponsored clean-up of Strangford Lough and organised a collection of waste paper.<sup>93</sup>

### **THE OLD BOYS' AND PARENTS' ASSOCIATIONS**

The two associations worked closely together on fund-raising for the building appeal. Both were represented on the Appeal Committee and a number of joint functions were held, including a series of dances. The Board of Governors expressed delight at the success of these ventures and, in 1970, recorded that 'no damage had been done to school property'. Other

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<sup>91</sup> *The Gryphon*, 1970.

<sup>92</sup> I am indebted to Barry Greenaway for the information in this section.

<sup>93</sup> *The Gryphon*, 1974.

functions included a *Parents' Association 'Chicken and Wine' Party* and a Fashion Show. These functions usually enabled a donation of several hundred pounds to be made to the School. In 1973, the *Parents' Association* considered buying a minibus for the School, but they were asked instead to contribute to the new '*Activities Fund*' to cover team travel and tour costs.

In 1971 at the traditional Boxing Day fixtures, the *Old Boys' Association* fielded three rugby teams and two hockey teams, which Mr. Clarke said '*illustrated the strong ties that bound Old Boys to the School*'. The following year, the annual debate with the School was restarted, and Table Tennis and Golf fixtures were arranged. That year, as a tribute to their work with the victorious Table Tennis and Golf teams, Messrs. Bonar and Steele, the teachers in charge, were invited to attend the annual dinner. It was subsequently decided that all male members of staff should be invited to the dinner.

As the membership of the *Old Boys' Association* rose, a Membership Secretary was appointed for the first time. It was also decided that R.E. Russell should become an Honorary Vice-President of the Association, more than thirty years after leaving the Staff. Other members of staff were honoured too. On their retirements, Miss Addy was presented with a set of stainless steel dishes, and Mr. Clarke with a cheque. On his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday Mr. Wilkins received a book on Irish houses and an *Old Boys' Association* plaque. In 1970 the *Association* presented a new prize of 5 guineas, to be given to a boy, selected by the Headmaster, who had recorded an outstanding achievement in one sport or who had a high all round standard in several.

In the light of the threat posed by the proposed re-organisation of secondary education in the Province, a *Federation of Past Pupil Associations of Voluntary Grammar Schools* was formed, and Walter Dowdall was elected to the committee.

As the cost of printing rose, it became necessary for the *Association* to make savings. Those who lived in the Bangor area were asked to request a copy of *The Gryphon*, and the following year, the family of the Membership Secretary, Randal Christie, hand-delivered the magazine to save on postage. It was also decided to revert to the earlier style of tie, black with blue and gold stripes, as the current design of tie was proving unpopular.<sup>94</sup>

### MR. CLARKE'S RETIREMENT

In March 1974, Randall Clarke intimated to the Board of Governors that he wished to retire in 1975, having been Headmaster for 21 years, making him the School's second-longest serving Head. Among the retirement gifts he received was a six piece hi-fi unit finished in solid wood, presented to him by the Staff.



Head Boy, Charles Gray and his deputies, Martin Quiery and David Chambers making a presentation to Mr. Clarke.

<sup>94</sup> Minutes of the *Old Boys' Association*.



During Mr. Clarke's years in Bangor, he had presided over a huge growth in the School, both in terms of population and facilities; pupil numbers had risen from 428 pupils (including *Connor House*) to 1,002, and Staff from 15 to 50, while building extensions in 1961, 1966 and 1974 had made the School barely recognisable to those who had attended it prior to Mr. Clarke's arrival, when, as Edgar McNeilly, Chairman of the Board of Governors reminded his audience at Speech Day 1974, *'the old Barn was still there and seagulls swam contentedly on the cricket square'*. It was, continued Mr. McNeilly, Mr. Clarke's *'imagination, drive and enthusiasm which has made Bangor Grammar School a place of which this ancient Celtic seat of learning can be justly proud'*. In 1973 he had been elected to the *Headmasters' Conference*, which entitled the School to be regarded as one of the seven public schools in Northern Ireland, he had seen the School acquire one of Ulster's first Language Laboratories and an increasingly well-equipped Music Department, under its first fulltime Music specialist, while scholarships to *'Oxbridge'* had become an almost annual occurrence. These years also saw a burgeoning of extra-curricular activities as new societies joined the long-established *Debating* and *Dramatic Societies* to cater for the less athletic, while badminton, squash and hockey were added to the School's range of sports. Yet it was almost certainly the Schools' Cup win in 1969 that gave Randall the greatest satisfaction and he must have delighted in the International *'caps'* for Roger Clegg, and Dick Milliken who went on to play for the triumphant 1974 *British Lions* side in South Africa; the captain of that team, Willie John McBride, announced his retirement from international rugby in the same month as Randall finally laid down the reins, a month which also saw the death of Miss Lewis - *'Ma Lew'* – who had retired thirty years earlier.

Randall Clarke had been, as the Editor of *The Gryphon* remarked, *'a stern disciplinarian; he had little time for the delinquent and the slacker and he did not hesitate to leave his mark on their posteriors if he thought it would help'*. However, he could also be *'sympathetic and understanding'*. Such a dignified figure in his prime, sweeping down the *'blue corridor'* on his way to take Assembly with Prefect acolyte in tow, it was sad to see him degenerate into a shambling shadow of his former self in his last years. Randall Clarke died in 1989 at the age of 79.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> *The Gryphon*, 1989.