

My name is Dennis Swift. I was at MHGS from 1960/61 to 1966/1967.

Thanks for resurrecting the MHGS website. Stuart "Haggis" McLean, who helped create the previous one, was a personal friend and one of my classmates in the early 60s. Some of my happiest memories are from those days at Moseley Hall G. S.

I played rugby for the School on Saturday mornings during those years. I made the First 15 in my later years, and my older brother, Alan, played full back for them in 1964/65. My claim to fame was achieving a full house (try, conversion, penalty and drop goal) whilst playing for the Second 15 against Sale Grammar in early 1966. MHGS had a good reputation as a successful rugby playing school. Besides playing local schools, we went further afield to get competitive fixtures. On some occasions we stayed overnight with the families of our opposition. George Dixon School (Birmingham), Brecon School (Wales) in 1966, when we played on a snow covered pitch, were ones I fondly remember. On the morbid side, I remember us returning over Saddleworth Moor after a fixture with Huddersfield College to see Police tents as they searched for clues following the Moors Murders.

In February 1967 a coach-load of pupils went down to London, combining study visits with rugby and football fixtures. We left MHGS on a Wednesday morning, bumping into the Archbishop of Canterbury at Newport Pagnell Services on the M1. My own itinerary was:

Wednesday p.m. - rugby fixture at Gunnersbury School.
early evening - F.A Cup replay at Highbury, Arsenal v Bolton.
Thursday a.m. - visit to the London Stock Exchange.
p.m. - free time, visited my brother at Reading University.
Friday am/p.m. - visit to Ford Motor Co. at Dagenham.
evening - meal at Golden Egg restaurant, Oxford Street, with schoolmates.
Saturday a.m. - rugby fixture at a school in North London.
p.m.- rugby international at Twickenham, England v France.
Late evening- return home by coach.

Headmaster/Teachers during my time at MHGS included:

Headmaster, Cyril Armishaw
Deputy Head, Richard "Dickie" Durrant
Derek Bagshaw - Geography
William "Billy" Bowland" - R.E.
Mr. "Weary" Wilson - Latin
Graham Lea - French
Tony Littler - Maths
Mr. Hayhurst - English
Mr. Sunderland - History
Mr. "Dracula" Mather - R.E.
Mr. Nunn - Woodwork
Mr. "Dean" Martin (also known as "Creeping Jesus") - R.E.
Geoff Schofield - German
Mr. Trueblood - Chemistry
Neil Allott - History
Ifor Jones - Music
Dave Turner - P.E./ Games
Madam Nagg - French (oral for O level)
Mr. Dixon - Maths with Statistics
Keith Halstead - Geography
Trevor Gamson - English

Origins of Nicknames for Teachers:-

Mr. Wilson - the nickname "Weary" originated from his teaching of Latin, where he loved to conjugate both nouns and verbs rhythmically, e.g amo, amas, amat, change gear, amamus, amatis, amant, full stop.

In the same way, the noun vir (Latin for man) vir, viri (pronounced "weary") etc.

Hence, his nickname.

For homework Mr. Wilson would usually set us vocabulary. He would then call up six boys at random, facing the class, in what he affectionately called a "beauty competition". They would then be tested on the vocab. The winner won a sweet (usually a glacier mint).

Mr. Martin - the nickname "Dean" is for obvious reasons, but the preferred one "Creeping Jesus" fitted in with his teaching of R.E.

A brain haemorrhage put paid to my educational ambitions in 1967, but I was very, very lucky to survive, having been given only a 5 per cent chance in those pre MRI / CT scanner days. The doctors put that down to fitness, so I have a great deal to thank rugby training for. Both Mr. Armishaw and Mr. Durrant visited me in Manchester Royal Hospital, after the first operation, as did 14 of my rugby friends - in one visit, thereby breaking the rule of two round the bed! Luckily I made an "excellent" recovery and had a successful 36-year career in local government in Manchester, but had to retire in 2005, following further brain surgery. Luckily, MRI and CT scanners had arrived by then and I'm still here to tell the tale.