

HILLSIDE SCHOOL

*Hillside Avenue, Borehamwood, WD6 1HN
1939-2014*

*A Miscellany of
Old Photos of Hillside:
with some captions and commentary*

*Reproduced for the
Elstree & Borehamwood Museum Exhibition,
to mark the 75th anniversary of the
opening of the School in September, 1939.*

The School in 1939....



1970s....



& in 1986-7



*A copy of this and other Exhibition documents can be found on-line, at:
www.robertnewson.co.uk/hillside*

Welcome back to Hillside School!

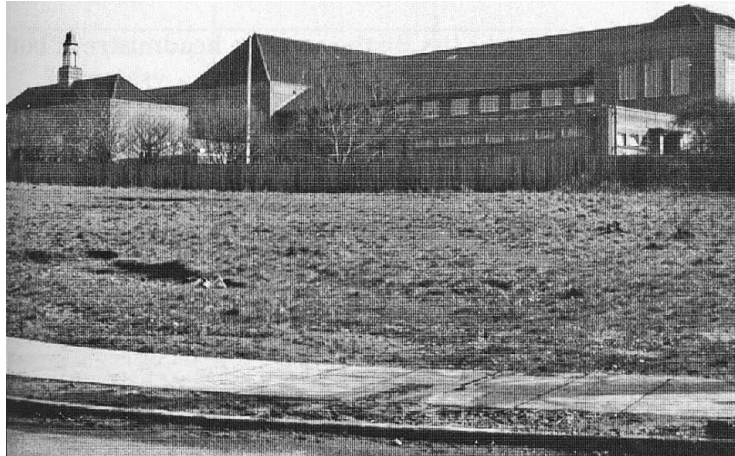


*This document was prepared in October, 2014 by
Keith Newson
(7 Lings Coppice, SE21 8SY; kip.newson@gmail.com)
from material presented, given or lent to him
by ex-colleagues and former pupils,
for the 75th Anniversary of the opening of the School
(in September, 1939).*

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SOME PHOTOS of HILLSIDE, 1939 to the 1990s

These two early black-&-white photos show the school as it was when built in **1939**: the first was taken from Hillside Avenue, and includes what was then the girls' entrance doorway at the western end of the classroom block, where the girls' toilets were, and also the imposing formal front entrance - with a turret above.



The lower photo has a closer view of that entrance and the boys' cycle shed. Both show the high roof of the Assembly hall.



None of the other, later buildings (the science and craft workshop blocks, & - even later - the 'RoSLA Unit' that housed the sixth form) were planned or built in 1939. Then, the main 2-storey classroom blocks included a woodwork room for the boys, a science lab, and a 'flat' for teaching 'domestic sciences' to the girls. The whole building was designed for preparing mainly non-academic children of 11 to 14 years, with what they needed to know before they went out to work (or when the girls settled down as wives and mothers). There was a gymnasium at the far eastern end of the building, and a playing field behind the school building, to the south.

The next photo, taken from the rear playground, may have been taken much later, possibly even after the Upper school had been closed - in the year 2000. The Hall had clearly been re-roofed, and I don't recognise the newest building, part of which is in shot (*far right*). But this picture shows clearly **the post-war "Extension"** behind the Hall, which had its own staircase leading to *two* (no just one) upper floors. It had nine classrooms, though one of these (on the ground floor nearest the camera) was the School Library in the 1960s & 70s. This photo was taken *after* the Library & Lecture Theatre block had been built (in 1972-3), just visible here on the left of the picture.

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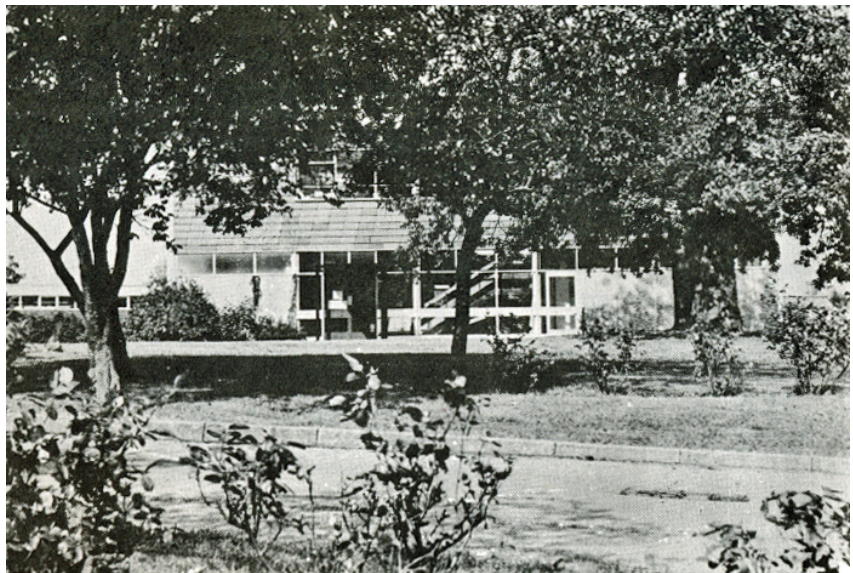


A new glazed corridor linked this new block to the main building, with double doors out to the tarmac area; in the 1980s these doors were the entrance to the Community Theatre. By then the Hall was converted, fully equipped, and had a 'Theatre Foyer'.

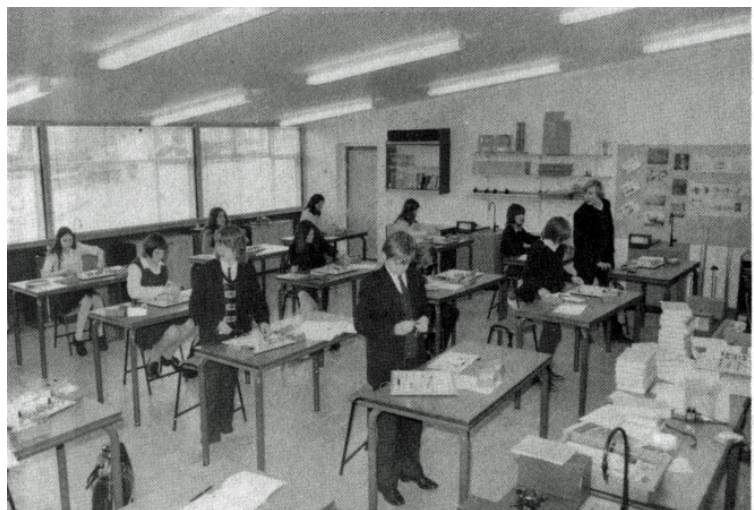
In its early days, this "**Extension**", with its separate staircase and its large windows and views across the playing fields, developed a character of its own, and many of those teaching there, later, were young, and had fresh attitudes to discipline and to the changing curriculum. The names and voices of Julie Crane, Lesley De Meza, Jim Dunne, (*pictured here* in 1984, with 6th form History scholars David Brown, David Norton, Paul Simmonds, Veronica Laurie & Allan Porter), and Geoff Farmer, John Negus, Angela Reid, Allan Stronach, & Tim Van Kroonenburg, echoed then around the building - and still emerge on Facebook, etc, today!



After the Extension, the next, even more 'modern', addition to the "County Secondary School" was an '**RoSLA Unit**', built in **1966** on the front lawns, with the rose bushes and the daffodils alongside the drive up to the School. This was funded by the Education Ministry, a 'pilot' for accommodation for the additional older pupils when the school leaving age was soon to be raised from 15 to 16. But it was equipped & furnished for 6th formers.



A small new **laboratory block**, and some new art and craft accommodation were built at much the same time as that 'Unit', in the mid-1960s. Soon more laboratories (to offer separate sciences to A Level) as well as further workshops and a technical drawing office, together with the new **Library block**, were designed and built; and finally the **Sports Hall** and a **Music suite** were added by **1974**. The rest of the 1939 school, including the toilets, and the kitchen and dining facilities, were also adapted and refurnished and redecorated, as befitted an Upper School for pupils of all abilities, boys and girls from 13 up to 18-plus. The next two photos show the Sports Hall (outside and within).



In *this* photo (*right*), the exterior of the 1974-5 Library Block and the Sports Hall (with a 'climbing wall' on one side) can both just be seen. In the foreground are Fiona Howson, John Barcock and Jonesta Forgham (the team who had just then won the 'Parkinson Cup' for the inter-house Public Speaking competition). In this 2nd photo (*right*), taken inside the new Sports Hall, a basketball is in the air (but we are not sure who the basketball players were; nor of the date of either of these photos).



At the end of the planning stage, the Music Suite was built at the far end of the Sports Hall, out of sight in the exterior photos. We have just one photo of the interior, with the then Head of Music, Margaret Coolen, at the piano (Kathy Goad, her predecessor, may have moved the Music Dept from the HoRSA hut to this room).



Eventually, this whole 'block' (Sports Hall, changing Rooms & Music suite) had to be demolished and replaced with another Sports Hall, in the 1990s!

One of the four nissen-type HoRSA huts, at the western end of the school campus (the four that had been erected at the end of World War Two, as accommodation for the raising of the school leaving age from 14 to 15 in the 1940s) remained in use as the School kitchen and dining room until the old gymnasium was converted. The last hut was finally demolished (and then only after it was set on fire!) in 1982.



The interiors of the Library and the Lecture Theatre are shown in two photographs on the next page. The first is a 1980s picture of a class of 13/14-year-olds, working in the new Library. Through the deep windows at the corners of the Library, there are glimpses of the courtyard garden, which had paved areas and seats. This replaced the tarmac play-

ground area, formerly just for the girls, which had included some tennis courts. Other tennis courts (beside what had originally been the boys' playground) did remain in use.

The Library was open to all at lunch-times; but the Lecture Room was reserved for organized showings of films and TV recordings, and for many smaller meetings and talks by visiting speakers, etc.



The Library was occasionally used for construction - as well as reading and research!

The next photo is a good view from the playing field towards the Library and the Sports Hall blocks, in **1981-2**, when Neil Dekker was over from the USA, on "exchange" for Head of PE, Dave Wilson for one school year. Neil is still remembered for his role as 'Tarzan' to Miss Mancus's 'Jane' in the Staff Pantomime that Christmas! Soon after that memorable year, Neil became Dave Wilson's brother-in-law.



Also featured in 1981's pantomime were Brian Cluett's "Morris Men"! Brian's Environmental Studies department got their new greenhouse the following summer, courtesy of

the Parents' Association and the proceeds of an insurance claim (after the demolition of the last of the old 'HoRSA huts', burnt-out in a fire, in May 1982).

Somewhere near this greenhouse and the Environmental Studies' garden, there was a high brick wall, and the 2 photos *below*, were taken there, back in 1973 or 1974, when Barry Smallwood was steering the School's Brass and Wind band, to County-wide fame.

This time, we *do* know the pupils in the photos. In the *left-hand* one, *l. to r.*: Andrew Judge, David Ross, Robert Dale, and Tony Jarvis (the 'Trumpet Section'). *And* in the *right-hand* photo, *l. to r.*: Jane Stokes, Cheryl Batchelor, Mr Smallwood, Valerie Chaney, & (again) Andrew Judge, Robert Dale & David Ross.



The on-site playing fields and tennis courts to the rear of the school buildings were important in encouraging a whole range of sports and games and outdoor activities that were regarded as an integral part of the education of 13 to 18-year-olds: boys & girls, young men and women. The photos below illustrate the athletic sports in the summer and remind us that the school offered rugby as well as soccer in winter, and that the staff sometimes beat the students at cricket, if not soccer, and that we had a series of school minibuses to help with travel to fixtures and educational excursions, for which the flourishing Parents' Association, and pupils' sponsored walks or runs, raised the funds.



These pictures were probably taken in the mid 1980s, at the same sports day, but with different camera angles. Staff members Adelheid Smith, Brian Cluett and myself were there. Can anyone name anyone else? It is possible that some of the other 'action shots'

on this page, were taken on the same afternoon, but again we have no names; (we hope that no-one will be at all embarrassed by these pictures!):



This steeplechaser has the tennis courts behind him, and the relay runner is on the other side of the field, by the cricket net frames.

Below the sprinters and throwers show their paces



These athletics were inter-House competitions; the field was also used for many games fixtures with other schools, and various inter-school athletics competitions. (For swimming galas we relied on the municipal Pool in the town). Other (physically less strenuous) inter-House Competitions took place in the School Hall, or (in this General Knowledge Quiz) on the stage. The Hall was also used for public examinations - before and after it became the Community Theatre. With the balcony, it could seat the whole school for Assemblies; but it was always vital for drama, dance performances, Saturday night dances, musical concerts, parents' evenings – all central to the whole life of the School!



Inter-House Public Speaking winners here, below, were:

Penny Proctor, Jason Bright & Michelle Conway (1985); and: Robert Stilwell, Chris Baker & Karina Samuels (? Date?)





Mrs Irving with Julie Hoare, Julie Packer and Michael King (? Date or year?)

the new internal stairs up to the balcony, flanked by the 2 'boxes' for the spotlights.

The existing circulation area (on the ground floor, beneath the balcony) doubled up as the Foyer for the Theatre. Members of the public could park their cars at the rear of the school, and enter by the doors in the Library corridor.

The development of the Drama Dept. at Hillside by Allan Stronach was a continuous process, and many of the young actors were involved whether they were at the school or had left, and whether the production was on the old school stage or in this new Theatre. Allan's own 'Elstree Youth Theatre', and the local adult group, the Elstree Players, had many successful productions in this Hall/Theatre. The carpeted Foyer was an important finishing touch to this public Theatre for the local Community.

Every good school seeks the best buildings, facilities and equipment, but in practice it is the staff and the pupils that create a lively, diverse and outward-looking school community, and that make for the success of all the pupils, at school and in the world outside. I finish with an arbitrary selection from the albums I have, and hope that this "Hillside 75 Exhibition" will produce yet more archival material - and more information about pictures we already have.



Whose class was this (& when?), bent over their work, in what subject?

Top Right: U6th former Jon Bryan, and

Bottom Right: Caroline (?) and Stewart (who?), also 6th formers at study, but not in "the Unit", so was this in a class-room in the "Extension"?



School journeys, at home and abroad, and educational or recreational trips in the minibus.



David Hughes, Martin Fisher, Geoff Farmer and Barbara Jarret (& the back of Brian Cluett) are recognisable; and Trevor Cole & Paul Bagnell were the 2 learning sailing on Barton Broad (in 1972).

6th formers Rob Phillips, Sue Wise, Stewart Rosenthal, Jon Bryan & Mark Jackson



Above, left: Bridget Everett's 6th Form biologists. (? Who? and what year?)

Above, right: A 1980s U6th group photo – what year? Can we identify any - or all 20?

Below, right: A L6th group photo – was this the same year, if not, then which year? Robert Stilwell & Chris Baker are in the back row; there were 42 others; can we have some more names?

3 last photos below: These are 6th formers relaxing, but we are not sure which year. Below: are Alison Theobald and another girl, with teacher Mary Hobbs, in a Barnet restaurant.....



This photo (right) was taken at a 6th Form Christmas Party, in the "Unit" (the 6th form block). What year?



... celebrating the end of their courses. Right: are two others celebrating in that restaurant, who are they? What year was it?



Why can't we remember the names of these cheerful young people we thought we knew so well? Where are they now?