

David Edwards (Cllr)

Attended 1947-1952.

1. What did you enjoy most about the School?

Most enjoyed the ambience of the school, the marvellous sports field, the upper gallery above the Assembly Hall. Every pupil was treated as important. Teaching staff cared about their charges.

2. Were there any memorable incidents that you can remember?

I remember well the PE teacher 'Vince' Hawkins (I think!) who could not wait to emigrate to Canada. He drove along the New Birmingham Road from Wolverhampton every day and had never seen what lay beneath the fog of smoke & dirt. I remember a boy named Bevan being expelled, it was quite dramatic. I remember Alec Marshall scoring 75 not out against Silhill, at Edgbaston in the Docker Shield. I remember most being a 'New Bug', having the ritual in the cage, going home and crying silently having to return. I remember the tears of sadness having to leave after the examinations in 1952. Those tears are still there, all bottled up.

3. Which teachers do you remember?

Mr Levett, 1A form teacher, day 1. 'The Beek', 'Piggy' Hindle, 'Froggy' Flloyd (French), 'Daddy', 'Pop', 'Ron', 'Herr', Mr Cauldwell. Mr 'Gee Gee' Gallop, took us for History and I still remember waking to the '1815 Corn Laws', when he belted me over the head, which thundered against the desk top, with the thick text book, after I had fallen asleep; I know more about the 'Corn Laws', now, than he ever did. 'Vince' Hawkins (I think, PE), Mr Rowe (RE), Mr Love (Music) and of course, everyone's favourite 'Killer' Cole.

4. What do you think the School gave you?

Those teachers were probably back from the war and they certainly knew more about life than the 'namby pamby' gels of today, who have only known school and University and probably 'Dope'. You must smile, it is not meant that seriously. Thank Goodness there was not too much P.C. in those days. A fiercesome blow of chalk from 20 feet was good discipline.

5. Did you take part in any School production, competitive sports or club visits?

KNGS Football, Cricket and Athletics were excellent in that era and the late 1940's and 1950's and produced some star players. I might not have achieved the recognition then, because the class of competitor was very high.

6. What was the Headmaster like at the time?

We hardly ever heard, or met 'The Beek', other than at Assembly, or Speech Day, except at very occasional lessons. He used the cane adeptly, even though rarely. I received 6 of the best, for smoking on a tram, and not wearing my cap on a trip to Ward's in Selly Oak, for a career day. Tug Stevens was on the same tram. Dave Manton, Reg Boddington, Laurie Grey and I tossed up outside of his office, for who went in next. Waste of time really, he called us in by name.

7. What was discipline like?

Discipline was not too severe really...the bang on the head was deserved, the detentions and lines were bearable, the stick was used by 'The Beek' when needed, but the worst discipline was given out by 'Piggy' Hindle...Standing for what seemed hours looking at a blank wall, all that was needed was a dunce's cap. It hurt physically and mentally and was dreadfully humiliating. It worked...Bring back the birch, I say.

8. How did national and world events affect your time at the school?

In a political debate (1950/51) I was the only member of the school I think, who supported Labour. I spoke for twenty minutes on the benefits of the 'Ground Nut scheme'. Oh, was I ever embarrassed? I was harangued from every quarter, including the teaching staff. However, I stood my ground. In later life from 1989-to date I represent my Council constituency as a Conservative, in a locality that would and do vote for Carrots if they have a Labour tag on them. Kings Norton Grammar School for Boys was a wonderful and so memorable experience. I am so proud that my election tells everyone, which school I attended for a magical 5 years, in an interesting life.