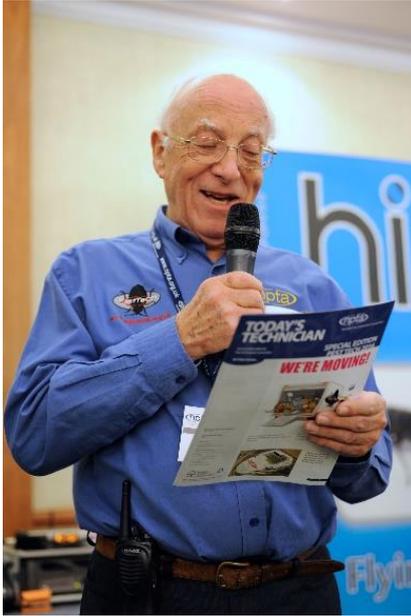


## J. Barrie Sheard FCIEH, October 18<sup>th</sup> 1934 – January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2020

Barrie Sheard has written a number of articles for this magazine about the history of Derby Grammar School in the times when it was at St. Helen's House in King Street, Derby. Since September 2010 he had been Archivist for the Old Derbyian Society (ODS), which was set up in 1911, so that Derby School Alumni could keep in



touch. He was incentivised, by what he'd discovered about Derby School, to pass on that knowledge in an interesting way. He also wrote articles for the Bygones pages of the Derby Telegraph in the hopes that former pupils would be inspired to contact him with memorabilia and personal memories and in some cases identify people in the many photographs accumulated in his time as Archivist. As a result, we have over 50 memoirs of old boys of their time at Derby School

Barrie passed away suddenly on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 after a very short illness at the Royal Derby Hospital. His daughter Barbara writes: "Barrie, our dad loved life, was always positive and in for an adventure. He certainly wasn't one for morbid chatter, propaganda or any hanging onto the negative aspects of life. Life was to explore and enjoy, to move forward making a difference to improve life... until it's our time to leave. He wasn't one for attention and wasn't really bothered about any farewell celebration. He had, years before, arranged for his body to go to scientific research/study at Nottingham University not wanting any fuss, any funeral or to be any bother! My sister and I thought otherwise and wanted to throw

a farewell celebration in his honour. To be with our Dad and best mate for one last time with as many of his friends and family that could make it. We wanted to share memories with his family and friends, to remember him in all his glory and give him a good send off! At quite short notice, we arranged a beautiful space in our local pub, The Broadway, Derby and threw a beautiful party for him."

Barrie was born John Barrie Sheard on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1934 in Derby and lived on Shardlow Road, Alvaston with his parents George and Marjorie. He attended Alvaston and Boulton Infants and Junior School, after a mix up, where the Council incorrectly allocated him a place at Wyndham Street School. This was rectified many weeks later.

Barrie was at school during World War II, carrying his gas mask at all times, and he had to practice diving under the desk should a bomb drop nearby. In 1942 his father was conscripted into the Royal Marines, so his mother used to knit jumpers to earn some extra money. In his memories of this time Barrie recalled the time they built an Anderson Shelter at the bottom of the garden. In Barrie's words, "The idea was to dig a deep hole 4 feet or more deep and place the corrugated iron into the hole. And then cover the top of the shelter with 2 feet or more of soil. You stepped down into this and were supposed to sit in there whenever the sirens went. Taking with you warm clothing, torches, flasks of drinks etc. The problem with this was that within weeks the shelter soon filled up with water from the surrounding ground. A complete waste of time and effort and it was soon abandoned. The next thing was that a huge brick wall was built by the Council as a blast wall right outside the French window at the rear of the house. This was soon followed by the delivery of a huge heavy metal shelter, called the Morrison Shelter, which had wire fencing clipped on, and a family of 3 or 4 could sleep in that whenever there was an all-night raid on. This shelter also doubled as a dining table as it took up much of the back-living room. However, when night bombing started all of us would go next door and go into their rear outhouse which they had fitted up as a shelter with extra reinforcement below the flat concrete roof. I can recall lying above where the adults were sitting on a sort of large shelf covered with blankets. Hearing the German bombers coming over with their out of synch engines must have been awful for the adults, but as a lad of 6, 7 or 8 it was exciting time. Hearing bombs drop over Elvaston and Spondon was awful but for a lad a memory I have never forgotten."

In the spring of 1945, Barrie, along with his classmates, took a bus to Bemrose School on Utttoxeter Road to sit the 11+ examination. In his own words Barrie says he was fortunate to pass the 11+ examination and had a choice of going to Bemrose School, where two of his uncles had attended, or Derby Grammar School in King

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Street, Derby, which his dad thought was better because it had “a far longer and better history”. So, Barrie started at Derby Grammar School in September 1945 and remained there until October 1950. Barrie recalled, “The School was very strict with its uniform policy and school caps with a larger than usual peak had to be worn travelling to and from school. In the more senior forms, during my time at school, some of the boys wore straw boaters.”

Barrie was impressed with the School’s sports facility at Parker’s Piece on City Road. Not being much into ball sports at the time, due to him having to wear spectacles, Barrie found a love for rowing at which he excelled.



He joined the Derby School Rowing Club and after leaving school joined Derby Rowing Club. His proudest moment was in 1953 when he rowed in the “Novice Fours” for the McGowran Cup, which they won. In his last two years at Derby School his father, who was a keen cricketer, took on the voluntary role of coaching the Derby School 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI, such was the success of his coaching he received many mentions of thanks in the School Magazine.

Barrie enjoyed his time as an Army Cadet in the Junior Training Corps (J.T.C.) something that, in one guise or another, had existed at Derby Grammar School since 1862. It later became the Combined Cadet Force (C.C.F.) but this was unfortunately disbanded in 1973 because the move out to Moorway Lane made after school activities problematic due to transport difficulties for cadets living at a distance from the school. He obtained Cert ‘A’ Part I and II whilst in the J.T.C. This was to stand him in good stead when, like all men of that time he had to do his National Service. His interest in keeping the C.C.F. memory alive was such that he organised annual reunions for Derby School Old Boys who were in the C.C.F. He displayed old photos, some going back to the days before World War I and into the 1970s. This was always changing as new photographs came to light. A silent film of the 1962 Centenary Celebration of the C.C.F and its predecessors, held at Parker’s Piece, came into Barrie’s possession, which he had digitised, and this formed a centre piece of reunions. Sound, of some rousing marching band music, was eventually added to this give the film a bit of a lift.

When he took his School Certificate in 1950, he only achieved passes in English Language and Literature, Chemistry, Physics, Geography (a Credit), Maths and Art. He failed in French, which was his worst subject, having already, in 1949, decided to drop Latin. The Headmaster, Les Bradley, came to him when the results came through and said he was not good enough for the Sixth Form and he recommended he take the Lower Fifth year again. This he did in September 1950 and found it a most awful time, having to repeat lessons already taken the previous year, He therefore stuck it for a while but by November 1950 he was fully and completely bored and left.

Having left school with that modest set of qualifications in November 1950 Barrie took a job as a Junior Clerk at The Grove Hospital and Part III Accommodation, Shardlow, formerly the Shardlow Parish Workhouse. Barrie wrote, “As the summer of 1951 arrived, Mr Vinecome, the Superintendent, knowing of my ability at the Kelmoors Tennis Club in Alvaston asked me if I could reinstate the tennis court which was just in front of the Nurses’ Home? The grass had been kept short and the wire fencing was in good condition. So I bought a Tennis Association book on tennis court sizes and with the help of the engineer of the boiler house at The Grove (I recall his name as a Mr Lewis) we marked out the sizes, refixed the net and Mr Vinecome announced to all staff, both residential and those that lived out we would run a Men’s and Ladies’ separate Singles competition, a Men’s and also a Ladies’ separate Doubles competition and also a Mixed Double competition. I must say my two summers at The Grove were so memorable.” A Mr Snelling, an ex-Guards Soldier, joined the staff at The Grove, and at the Christmas celebration in September 1951 he introduced Barrie to alcohol. Barrie’s love for a pint of beer never diminished from that day until his last.

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Barrie left The Grove to work at Ashbourne RDC as a Pupil Sanitary Inspector. Here Barrie's life career was being established. He obtained an H.N.C. in Building Construction on day release. He became proficient at drawing maps and preparing tender documents which saw him involved in the construction of Hulland Reservoir and associated pipework. He took a course in Surveying which put him in good stead for his work on the Osmaston and Yeldersley Lane End and Hognaston Sewerage Schemes.



Barrie was called up for National Service and joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and served from 1<sup>st</sup> March 1956 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 1958 and rose from the ranks to become a Sergeant. It was usual to be called up at the age of 18 for National Service but Barrie was undergoing training to be a Sanitary Inspector, so he was allowed to defer his call up. He became a qualified Sanitary Inspector in the November of 1955 and then he subsequently received his call up papers. Barrie served as a Hygiene Assistant acting Sergeant at Western Command covering Western Lancashire.

This time of his life became quite memorable for him and in 2009 he presented a book on the National Services Reminiscences Project to the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health (CIEH) at Chadwick Court. The work was also presented to the Imperial War Museum and the RAF Museum at Hendon and contained 60 first-hand accounts of the work of Environmental Health Technicians on National Service in the post second world war period up to 1960.

A second part to this project was also presented to the CIEH with an account of the work carried out by five ex-National Service Environmental Health Personnel to improve health in countries in conflict or civil transition.



Back in civilian life and in 1958 he married Gill and they had two daughters, Barbara in 1962 and Angela in 1964 “the Twinkles in his eyes”

When Barrie was demobbed in 1958, he became a Public Health Inspector with Derby City Council focussing on Abattoirs.

Barrie joined Belper Rural District Council in April 1964 until March 1974 and in 1972 became Chief Environmental Health Officer. At the newly formed Amber Valley District Council in 1974 he became Deputy Director of Environmental Health until December 1993 when he took early retirement.

During his long public service as Health Officer in 1981, his love for detail and writing brought him together with two fellow health officers Maurice White & Peter Scott, and together they created and published an illustrated guide to meat inspection. Barrie achieved the fellowship honour in recognition of being a leading professional in Environment Health. He proudly wore the letters FCIEH after his name.

Barrie took early retirement in 1993 and set up his own business called JB Hygiene,Enterprises. He became an Environmental Health Consultant and teacher of both Food Hygiene and Food Safety Courses and Health and Safety Courses to intermediate level in the whole of Southern Derbyshire. In 2010 he was told by Derbyshire County Council to leave as they found out he was over 65!

In 1994 Barrie was invited to join the National Pest Technician's Association newly formed National Organisation as a Director. And was then appointed Chairman in 2002 until 2009. He took on the role of Promotion's Officer from 1998 to 2005, which, knowing Barrie, he would have carried out with gusto. He

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became Assistant Editor to John Davison around 2000 to 2014 (or thereabouts) with ‘Today’s Technician’ He was appointed as an Honorary Member when he finally retired properly in 2016.

When Barrie retired from the board John Davison, Vice Chair, said the following:

“Barrie is an exceptional gentleman who has always been willing to participate in any job given to him on the board no matter how trivial or comprehensive. His skills at communication and literacy will be sorely missed. Barrie attended PestTech 2019 and carried out the PA announcements which he was particularly good at.”

I say retired properly with a bit of tongue in cheek because he continued to work tirelessly organising reunions for the many groups with which he was involved. From November 2000 he lived with his daughter, Angela, at Holden House B&B, Shardlow, where he worked and gave her support with the running of the business until she sold up in February 2018. He attended ODS activities, including Amber Valley reunions, the reunions of various classes from both St. Helen’s House and Moorway Lane, and with Andrew Polkey set up the first reunion of the school Cadet Corps in 2015.

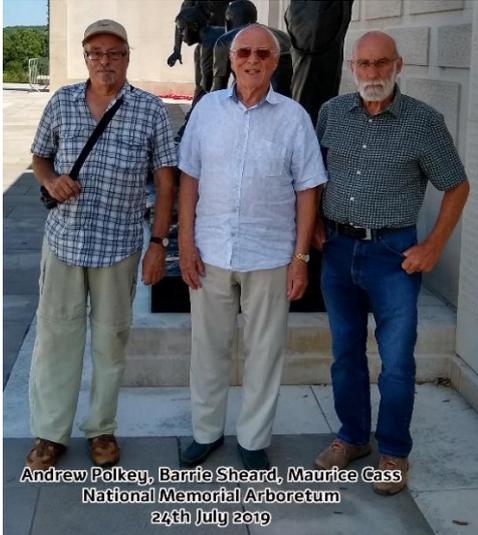


Unbelievably Barrie had time for hobbies. Most boys of Barrie’s era would have shown some sort of interest in railway steam engines. In Barrie’s case this started in 1948 until his death. He was interested in anything about railways and in the early 1960s he came across the Tallylyn Railway Preservation Society, Tywyn, Merionethshire, whilst on holiday in Wales. It was a 2’ 3” narrow gauge railway line with which he became “obsessed”. He became a life member of the Society and valued the comradeship so much so that he visited at least twice per year.

In September 2010 he took on the Archivists job for the Old Derbyian Society which he joined when he left school.

Andrew Polkey joined him as his Assistant to help share the workload and Maurice Cass joined him a little later. The first time I, Maurice Cass, met Barrie, it was if I’d known him all my life, he was such an easy character to become friends with. He had a lively mind and was always plotting the next project. He was an indefatigable communicator and although he was gradually embracing modern computer technology and the web, he wasn’t afraid to put pen to paper and use good old-fashioned letter writing. Researching the history of Derby School became a passion, and he was always on the lookout for anything new that would add to our knowledge. I worked with Barrie for the past 9 years or so which was easy because his enthusiasm became my enthusiasm, it was so infectious.

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As the first ever archivist of the Old Derbeian Society, Barrie had already catalogued the physical artefacts held in cabinets, and we as a team then began a study of more than a dozen storage boxes also held by the new Derby Grammar School on behalf of the Old Derbeian Society.

There were articles written on Percy H Currey OD, the locally famous arts and crafts architect (1864-1942), Helen H Taylor (1850-1929 ) the only girl pupil at the St. Helen's House school, with others planned for Durdant House (a former school boarding house of 1882 on Kedleston Road), an account of the career of the Rev. Thomas Leary, headmaster from (1859-65) and an exploration of the World War One careers of some of the boys pictured in a schoolboy scrapbook dating from 1912. However, perhaps his most important achievement in terms of preserving the records of Derby School was to secure the necessary funding to enable Maurice Cass to acquire

the software for digitizing the entire run of the school magazine – The Derbeian – from 1889 to 1979.

Alas, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020 our friend and colleague was no more, and Derby School's first pioneering archivist was gone. However, his legacy remains in the form of a fervent wish to graft together the memories of the old Derby School with the forward progression of the new Grammar School. We salute his memory and look forward to the future that he worked so hard to shape.