

## Shirley County Middle School Memories

by Phil Grant (1982-1986)

My first memory of what was then Shirley County Middle School is of the huge massive, almost skyscraper like Edwardian building. It appeared to dominate the corner of Wilton and Bellemoor Roads!

September 1982 saw me in Miss Sheila Humby's class (1H). She had a formidable reputation. We children were all terrified of the rumours which spread about, that if you were naughty in Miss Humby's class, she would dangle you out of the window! Yes we believed such rumours to be true!

My first dramatic memory is of me sitting, in silence, with some of my former Wordsworth First School friends, in a huge lime green painted classroom. All us nervous eight year olds could hear was a boy screaming in the playground below us! Apparently he was so terrified of coming up to the Middle School that he refused to leave his mum. I won't reveal his name!!!

My first year at SMS was very happy. I loved Miss Humby's strict but fair approach to teaching; she has had a lasting influence on me, especially as I am a teacher of Year Three children at Bartley CE Junior School. It is ironic that I now teach at the same school that Miss Humby began her teaching career when it was Bartley County Secondary Modern School!

The school trips we had remain a fond memory. Trips to the Weald and Downland museum with classes 1H and 1G (Mrs. Garside's class) gave me a love of old buildings, and returning to the museum, with friends and their children in March 2012, brought the place and our time there with SMS back! The Kennet and Avon Canal via Highclere Castle (ITV's Downton Abbey), Corfe Castle and Maiden Castle were two visits we went on whilst in Class 2N. The residential visit to France when in 3P (Mrs. Parson's class) was amazing, staying in what we thought was a French chateau and visiting the D-Day beaches and seeing the famous Bayeux Tapestry!

I was never very academic, as my reports testify, I hated maths, and I still recall the horror at having to complete a blackboard full of sums! History and geography were my favourite subjects, along with art and craft too! We did many exciting activities, which included baking Milo's Munchies in 1H to cakes in 4H.

In 1985 I entered my final year at SMS with a new teacher, who like Sheila Humby was a real favourite of mine! Tony Hawkins hailed from Birmingham way. I think that we were his first class at Shirley. We loved his Brummy accent and his funny names for trainers, (pumps or was it daps!)

We worshiped him, and for us boys, to have a male teacher was terrific! One event from that year, which still sticks in my mind was being called to see Mrs. Smith (the Deputy Head. Naturally not being a perfect pupil, I thought I was in trouble! However, she quietly praised me for writing a very good story whilst I was in her class for English. Her words of praise prove what massive influence teachers have upon their young charges! It was about this time that the school had the first BBC computers! Wow, we all thought, but today's children wouldn't believe us that it took 10 minutes

for 'Granny's Garden' to load!!! We still have a PC version of 'Granny's Garden' which my class play when they begin Year Three!

I remember vividly our weekly walks up Bellemoor Road to Hill College, now Taunton's College. We would all walk up in twos and depending on the sport to be played, we would carry our sport equipment, whether it was cricket bats or hockey sticks. When at Hill College we were taught by some of the college's students. I am sorry to say I and few other children 'played' them up dreadfully! Banging the soil, with our hockey sticks, to attract the worms was one pastime, and I can still laugh at picking the worms up and lobbing them at some poor unsuspecting girl! By the time I entered Mr. Hawkins class, watching the girls play netball, at the front of the college, became a must for us boys!!!

If the weather was cold or rainy, then an excuse would be to skive off into the vast, once grand labyrinth of Hill College. Bad luck if we were caught! We also used the college for school productions as the hall at SMS was too small! Acting on the stage at Hill College was an event, even though I was only the hind legs of a dragon!!!

Ironically, it was the time that SMS spent at Hill College, which remains one of my happiness memories! My mother had been a pupil at The Southampton Grammar School for Girls, one the predecessors to Hill College, and it was with great pride that I too became a student at what had become Taunton's College in 1990.

In conclusion, I thoroughly enjoyed most of my time at SMS, on the whole the school under Bernard Slatter, gave us a broad education with some excellent and highly dedicated teachers. I made some great friends there too, and many of the girls I met up with again at Taunton's in 1990.

THANK YOU Shirley County Middle School, you are one of the reasons that I am now a junior school teacher! If I could turn back time, and travel in my time machine, which I drew in class 1H, then I would love to return to classes 1H and 4H!

Phil Grant (1983 - 1986)

**HAMPSHIRE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**SHIRLEY COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Annual Report 19 82..... to 19 83.....

Name Phillip Grant..... Class 1H..... Age 9 yrs 9 mths..... Average of Class 9 yrs 3 mths

Grading:— A—Very Good; B—Good; C—Average; D—Poor; E—Very Poor  
Effort:— 1—Maximum; 2—Consistent; 3—Variable; 4—Occasional; 5—Little  
Number of days absent 4.....

SUBJECT	GRADE		EFFORT	REMARKS
	WORK	TESTS		
English	C	C+	2	Phillip's oral work is very good indeed. He has a wide vocabulary and his reading has improved. He has a good imagination but written work is often marred by inaccuracies. He must concentrate on trying to improve sentence construction and spelling. His handwriting sometimes lacks control. Maths is a subject Phillip finds difficult. Although he has a fairly sound grasp of his tables and the basic rules of number he does not find it easy to apply these and written results are erratic—he needs to concentrate all the time to produce accurate results. Phillip enjoys a wide general knowledge and has worked with interest and enthusiasm during the year. He has used reference material intelligently but his work is sometimes spoiled by careless spelling and handwriting. Phillip enjoys Art work—his drawings show a certain flamboyance of style. He has participated well in singing and worked satisfactorily in PE and Games.....
Mathematics	C-	C-	2	
General Subjects	C+	/	1	
Arts/Crafts	C+	/	2	
Music	C	/	2	
Physical Education	C	/	2	

**Attitude and Behaviour**

A happy friendly boy who has settled in well.  
A polite and willing member of the class.

S. Humby  
.....  
Class Teacher

*Tutor Co-ordinator.*

I am sure that as long as Phillip is willing to persevere with his written work, it will soon match his excellent background knowledge.  
.....  
Head Teacher.



**HAMPSHIRE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**SHIRLEY COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Annual Report 19 85 to 19 86

Name PHILIP GRANT Class 4H Age 12.8 Average of Class 12.2

Gradings: — A—Very Good; B—Good; C—Average; D—Poor; E—Very Poor  
Effort: — 1—Maximum; 2—Consistent; 3—Variable; 4—Occasional; 5—Little  
Number of days absent 14

SUBJECT	GRADE		EFFORT	REMARKS
	WORK	TESTS		
English	C+	C	2	<p>Phillip has worked hard to improve his standard of spelling. His vocabulary and grammar are good, but his presentation needs attention. His reading is very fluent.</p> <p>In Maths, Phillip's work is inconsistent and still needs to be driven. He must realise the value of self-discipline rather than imposed discipline.</p> <p>In Science Phillip has carried out experiments adequately with satisfactory recording. When prompted, he is capable of making predictions.</p> <p>Phillip's interest in topic work is encouraging as he is very willing to bring in reference materials, but his recording of information needs to be improved.</p> <p>Phillip does not take French seriously enough to make any worthwhile progress.</p> <p>Phillip is very good at drawing especially architecture. More interest is needed in P.E and Games so as to improve his co-ordination.</p>
Mathematics	C-	C-	3	
General Subjects	C+		2	
Arts/Crafts	B-		2	
Music				
French	C-		4	
Physical Education	C-		3	

**Attitude and Behaviour**

Phillip is a friendly and cooperative boy, whose attitude to schoolwork has changed for the better. His behaviour is very satisfactory. A more positive approach would be welcomed at secondary level.

*H. Hawkins*

**Tutor Co-ordinator**

A pleasant boy who sometimes acts as if it is sufficient for him just to be there. Unfortunately more is required.

# Hampshire

SHIRLEY COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL.  
Headmaster: B. S. SLATTER, B.Ed.  
Telephone: Southampton 771434.



BELLEMOOR ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON, SO9 4UG.

30th June 1987

Mrs. Grant,  
Watercress Line,  
26 Warren Crescent,  
Shirley,  
Southampton.

Dear Mrs. Grant,

I am writing to thank you most sincerely for the free tickets for the Watercress Line donated for our recent Summer Fair.

As you may have seen from the press, the event was extremely successful in helping us to celebrate the 75th birthday of the school, as well as raising the sum of approximately £1,500, which will be spent on new playground equipment and books.

Your support was most appreciated in making our fair such a happy and successful occasion.

Yours sincerely,



Shirley Middle School P.T.A.