

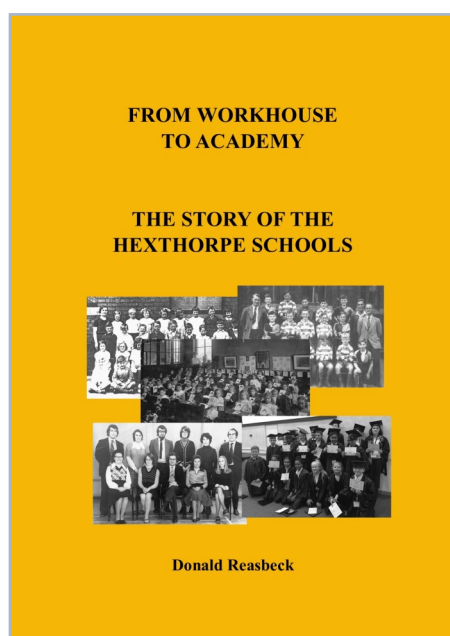
THE HEXPRESS

YOUR FREE HEXTHORPE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

No. 114 January 2022

thehexpress.co.uk

From Workhouse to Academy The story of the Hexthorpe schools



A new book has been published by the Hexpress relating the story of the Hexthorpe schools. In its 189 pages there are descriptions of school life over some 180 years. Also, there are interesting glimpses into the life of the Hexthorpe community over those years.

This is a book that not only can be read in its entirety, but also one that can be dipped into. Already it is being read by a whole variety of people using these approaches.

'I have read the book from cover to cover and found it fascinating - a real tribute'

'I have constantly been picking up the book and reading snippets from different periods. I am learning so much about the school and the life of the early Hexthorpe community.'

A variety of approaches have been used. At times the story is told through extracts from the school log-books. This should help to get a feel of the week-by-week life of the school. In other sections, the material has been put under main headings. On occasions, the memories of former pupils have been the main source of information. In more recent years, material has been used from The Hexpress.

The impetus for the book came from various sources:

- The Hexthorpe Local History Group had been formed a few years before the pandemic. Older residents were keen to talk of their younger days and particularly schooldays.
- Older residents were interviewed about their schooldays. Some were at the school in the early 1900's, but have since died.
- The enforced lockdowns provided the opportunity to contact former pupils and staff from different periods. They were keen to be involved.
- There are numerous sites on social media where memories and photographs are exchanged about Hexthorpe's past; schooldays are particularly mentioned. There are many photographs, too many to include them all in the book. It seemed good to set them into context. It is hoped that this book helps to achieve that.

(Extracts from the book are on pages 11 and 12.)

Continued on page 11

WHO'S WHO

Local Councillors

Sophie Liu Tel. 07981 869 276

Glyn Jones Tel. 01302 816881

Methodist Minister

Rev Jon Bellfield Tel. 07766397708

Parish Priest

Hexthorpe Police Community Support Officer

Emma Langstaff Tel: 01302 385339

Stronger Community Officers

Contact: Tel. 01302 736930

PACT MEETINGS

These are held every four weeks at 2.00pm at St Jude's Parish Hall. All residents are invited to meet and ask questions of the local police officers.

The Junction

The Junction is open on:

- Monday.
- Tuesday 10.00am to 1.45pm and 2.15pm to 4.15 pm,
- Thursday 10.00am to 1.00pm and 1.30pm to 4.00pm.

Members of staff are happy to talk privately with you if you need to talk over something, or need some specific advice or help. There is a computer suite with free broadband access for all. Free computer courses are also available. For further information or help please call in or ring 01302 349341.

Any letters, articles, adverts contact:

thehexpress.co.uk or Donald 01302 852521

WEEKLY EVENTS

Under The Crossing @ The King's Cross Church

Monday

3.30-5.00pm Mini Cruz (Key stage 1)

5.30-7.30pm Mega Cruz (Key stage 2)

Tuesday

9.15-11.00am SARA Group for Parents and Kids (0-3)

7.00-9.00pm Youth Group

You are invited on any Sunday to the Worship Services at The King's Cross Church
10.30am and 6.00pm

At Hexthorpe Parish Hall (St Jude's) Laughton Road, Hexthorpe

Monday

1.30-2.30pm Yoga

Wednesday

10.00-11.00am Keep Fit

11.00-11.30am Coffee Morning

Thursday

9.30-10.30am Play/Learn (Mums & Toddlers)

11.45-12.45pm Keep Fit

2.00-3.00pm PACT meeting (see opposite)

Contact: 01302 340346

The Hall is available for hire for parties and other special events.

Sunday Services

10.00am Morning Prayer

11.00am Parish Mass

The above activities are of course subject to the restrictions imposed by the Covid regulations. Some are taking place with perhaps variations of timings. Please make enquiries to the organisers, if in any doubt.

Two more superb photographs taken locally by our resident photographer - William Bell

The heron catching its dinner ►



The swan landing safely on the River Don ▼



Neighbourhood Alert Message - Arrests Made Following Drug Warrant

Normally our policy is to report the good, positive news in our Hexthorpe community. However, on the 7th January 2022, Steve Roberts (Police Sergeant, Doncaster) issued a Community Alert Message that we want to highlight.

At first, this may not seem very positive news, but in a sense the message should give us some encouragement. As Sergeant Robert says, action was taken because of the alertness of Hexthorpe residents and he encourages us all to report any information we have.

Also, the police are proactive in dealing with some of the problems we face, even though by necessity they are not always visible.

This was the message issued on 7th January 2022:

Over the last 3 days, following concerns raised by residents in the Balby and Hexthorpe areas, we have executed a series of drugs warrants.

Working in partnership with Northern PowerGrid, DMBC and CSI Doncaster, we have visited 9 addresses where cannabis was being produced, and electricity meters had been bypassed.

In total 760 cannabis plants have been seized, 13 arrests made, and the electrics made safe at all addresses. The street value of the drugs seized is estimated to be in excess of £500k.

- ***Abbott Street** - 40 plants seized, 1 male arrested, charged and remanded to appear at Doncaster Magistrates Court on 6/1/22.*
- ***Sheardown Street** - 14 plants seized, 1 adult male arrested, and issued an adult conditional caution.*
- ***Abbott Street** - 116 plants seized, 1 male arrested, charged and remanded to appear at Doncaster Magistrates Court on 7/1/22.*
- ***Sheardown Street** - 180 plants seized, no suspect present, enquiries are continuing.*
- ***Ramsden Road** - 109 plants seized, 2 males arrested, released while enquiries are continued following consultation with Crown Prosecution Services.*
- ***Bramworth Road** - 171 plants seized, 1 male arrested, charged and remanded to appear at Doncaster Magistrates Court on 7/1/22.*
- ***Crimpsall Road** - 2 large bags of cannabis bush seized, 2 males and 2 females arrested and remain in custody awaiting interview.*

If you have information about crime in your area please contact CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111

Avice Inman 1920-2021

We have received the following, giving news of the death of a Hexthorpe centurion - Avice Inman (nee Upex). It is a most moving tribute given by Derek Upex, from a brother to his elder sister.

My sister and I were born in Bentick Street and moved to Shirley Road in Hexthorpe. My paternal grandparents lived next door. We moved to Nicholson Road in 1934 and Avie lived there after our parents had died.

'She was more than a sister, she was a valued friend.'

Avice started work aged 14 in a draper's shop opposite Hexthorpe Bridge. The hours were from 9.00 am to 9.00 pm and, Wilsons, the owners, were very strict. She was not allowed to talk, except to the customers.

She left there to work at Bembergs, a German firm, where she was responsible for a machine that had a row of bobbins which were being threaded with silk. Because of the war, Bembergs went back to Germany. She then got a job at Brookes in Doncaster Market Place. The owners were very good to the staff. They themselves appreciated the value provided by the staff.

As with so many things at the outbreak of war, Avice had to register for War Work and was sent to Briggs Motor Bodies, down Carr Hill. She had to cycle there and back and worked 12 hours shifts, operating a drilling machine. This entailed lifting a heavy jig with aircraft components. It was heavy work and she had to endure the many tricks that the men, unused to young women, played on her. She was often exhausted, and once came home, went to bed and half an hour later came down fully dressed ready to go back to work.

After the war, Brookes took her back and Avis worked there for over 30 years. They had dinners for the staff, at the Danum and in Tickhill. They always kept in touch, especially at Christmas.

She married late in life, to George Inman, but he sadly died about 4 years later. Since he worked at the Plant, he had privilege tickets, which enabled Avis to have many outings and holidays. She once got on the wrong train - it went to London instead of Sheffield. At the time this cost 50 pence, a very cheap day trip! Avis and George had first met while walking their dogs.

She was very independent and never wanted to bother people. She was so grateful for any help and very self-effacing. Due to Covid, she relied on neighbours to bring groceries. She had always gone to town and missed that. Geff Kendall in Windle Road has been a guardian angel! My wife and I always included her in our activities, and I visited her regularly. We enjoyed visits to the theatre, which she loved. Every Christmas she spent with us.

She had a busy week before her death. She was extremely deaf and we went to have her hearing aids adjusted. Also, we went to Tickhill Road for her Covid injection. The staff were marvellous with her and gathered round taking photographs. They intended to use them to publicise the vaccination programme.

We last heard from Avice on Saturday, when she rang to wish my wife 'Happy Birthday'. We invited her to come on the Sunday and we were looking forward to her visit. Avice died at her home, following an accident.

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

Although she became almost blind, she never allowed alluded to the fact, always grateful for everything. She never ever discussed her age. Indeed, she hated anyone referring to it! She always enjoyed the lunches at the chapel and missed them immensely when they had to be suspended because of Covid. As children we all went to Sunday School and took part in the Anniversaries and outings. She was more than a sister, she was a valued friend.

The following has been used by the NHS to encourage people to have the booster jab.

A Doncaster brother and sister with the remarkable combined age of 193 have praised staff at the NHS vaccination centre where they had their Covid booster jab.

Derek Upex, 92, from Balby, and his sister Avice Inman, 101, from Hexthorpe, were both vaccinated at the Almond Tree Court centre, alongside Tickhill Road Hospital.

Derek said:

“The service was marvellous, we were really well looked after by the NHS staff, I can thoroughly recommend it. We are so lucky to live in the UK where the vaccine is so readily available.”

Charlotte Almond, from Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH), Operational Lead at the centre, said:
“It was wonderful to meet Derek and Avice and to be able to give them their all-important Covid booster jabs.”



Derek and Avice at Almond Tree Court, with Trish Lee and Charlotte Almond from the Trust.

Anyone who is eligible can book a vaccination at Almond Tree Court by visiting [Book or manage your coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination](https://www.nhs.uk/booking/coronavirus) on the NHS website: www.nhs.uk

JEAN TAIT 1932 - 2021

This is part of the wonderful tribute paid to Jean by her family, at the service celebrating her life.

Jean was born in Hexthorpe on the 8th June 1932, in Scarll Road, above the cobbler's shop, to Agnes and Robert Richardson. She was the eldest of 3 children, big sister to Shirley and Barbara. Jean had many happy childhood memories growing up as part of a loving family.

As an adult, Shirley moved away and raised her family in the Lake District, but Barbara lived just a few hundred yards from Jean. At one stage there were 4 generations of the family living on the same road - Ramsden Road. Sadly, both sisters passed away in their 60's. Jean missed them both terribly. However, Jean and her family remained close to her sisters' families; she was a much-loved aunty to their children.

Continued on page 7

Jean was an intelligent young lady, she passed her 11 plus and gained a place at Doncaster High School for Girls, but she didn't like it there feeling that she didn't fit in. On leaving school, she went to work at the offices in Pegler's, alongside her parents.



Jean was always sporty and athletic in her youth, she attended athletics clubs at school and at the Plant Works. She later took up cycling with friends from Hexthorpe Youth club.

Jean married Bill at St James's Church in Hexthorpe on the 28th August 1954. They soon started a family of their own when they welcomed Robert, quickly followed by Ian and then 4 years later Joanne. As her children got older Jean was determined to return to work, for a bit of financial independence. She needed a job that would fit around her young family, so she became a home help, a role she enjoyed and continued for many years. All the old people she visited loved her. Jean finished her working life at Marshalls Care Home, where she became senior carer and remained for 15 years before she finally retired at 60.

Jean was always a devoted wife and mother; she was very proud of her family and their academic achievements and their successful careers. As long as she was spending time with her grandchildren and later great grandchildren, as they were growing up, she didn't need anything else in her life to be happy.

Sadly, Bill passed away in 1999 and although she missed him terribly, she was keen to remain independent. So rather than simply spend more time with her family, she embarked whole heartedly on a new chapter of her life. She had a stint with the WRVS at the hospital taking the sweet and paper trolley around the wards. She became a friend of Hexthorpe Junior School, organising fetes and fund-raising activities and listening to children read. Jean would always give freely of her time; she was loving and patient and would happily sacrifice herself for others.

Once a month she attended a luncheon group at the local Methodist Church. She enjoyed socialising and made many new friends there. For many years she was also a member of the U3A - university of the 3rd age. She enjoyed being involved in their activities and was their quiz master. She was very knowledgeable and had many books of question and answers to choose from when putting the quizzes together.

Jean continued to be an active member and attendee of the Hexthorpe Working Men's Club. She was also a member of the Travis Garden Community Centre and attended their weekly craft group.

She loved going into town on the bus, as she loved chatting to the people she knew, which was most of the people in Hexthorpe. Jean would chat to anyone of any age and from any walk of life.

She was a member of the Local History Group. Having lived and worked in the Hexthorpe community for so long she was a great contributor, as she knew all sorts of things about the people who lived there and places they lived. She had a great memory. She was a familiar sight in the area and well known across the generations. When news of her death was placed on the Hexthorpe community forum there were 166 comments from people

Continued from page 7

who knew her, all saying what a lovely person she was and how much she will be missed.

Jean was also an annual member at the racecourse, along with Alan and Joanne, for almost 20 years. She always used to sit with her friends Carol and Audrey in the same place in the members bar, they were referred to by the other regulars as the 'ladies'. People who knew her openly cried at the last race weekend on hearing of her death. Later in life she went abroad with Bill every year, visiting America, Canada, Spain and the Greek Islands amongst other places. After Bill passed away, Jean discovered a love of cruises and often went with Joanne and her friends, but also went with other members of her family, including her grandchildren. To celebrate her 80th birthday, Robert and Ros, Ian and Ann, Joanne and Alan all went on a cruise to the Norwegian Fiords, which she really enjoyed.

Chatty and outgoing, Jean made the most of her life and the simple pleasures it held. Jean spread her special brand of kindness and happiness wherever she went. With a twinkle in her eyes, her cheeky wink and beaming smile she possessed a natural charm and a great sense of humour.

Local News

The Plant Hotel

This has looked sorry for itself ever since the fire that did so much damage. It doesn't present a very good picture of Hexthorpe as it stands prominently on the entrance road. However, a planning application has been submitted for the renewal of the building. Here is an outline of the proposed work:

'Conversion of derelict building to create 7 apartments at upper floor level, 3 retail units and ground floor level and associated works.'

There has been an objection to this application. It states that the proposal is unsuitable for the area. Parking is highlighted as a problem, in that already the space and road around the premises are already busy with residents' cars and HGV lorries using the Unirail site. The objector says that the development will compound the existing pressures and cause problems locally. He adds that there have been fairly frequent occasions when traffic has been brought to a standstill on Hexthorpe Road and the bridge which leads into town. The Planning Committee are expected to give their reply very soon. At the time of going to press, this has not yet happened.

Latest on the Crimpsall

The last issue of the Hexpress highlighted the Crimpsall. This created much interest. We asked two questions - 'Has it a future?' and 'Can all interested parties, those who have a stake in its development - including the developers of Pullman Fields - get together to discuss the matter? In the first week of November we wrote to Mayor Jones asking,

'Is there an appropriate representative of the Council who could facilitate such a meeting? We are sure that there is enough energy and interest in the community to support such an initiative.'

We had a positive response in that Ross Jones asked the Assistant Director of Development to move the matter forward. He contacted us to arrange a site meeting, but we have heard nothing more so far. We await developments. Watch this space.

Continued on page 9

Continued from page 8

News from the Junction

Thankfully, "business as usual" has continued at The Junction despite the rise in the Omicron variant, and the atmosphere pre-Christmas had regained some of its former vibrancy, with more people attending, either for a time of socialising over a cup of coffee or a game of pool, or for help with specific issues. Everyone is welcome, including a surprise visit from two penguins and an ice maiden on stilts!

Our premises are now being used more by DMBC staff. The two Stronger Community Officers are using it as their base, and their Community Led Support sessions have now moved to Tuesdays from 12.30 - 2.30pm. The premises are closed to the general public on Wednesdays, as a midwife takes up residence on that day, and the Councillors, Glyn Jones and Sophie Liu (see last issue to learn more about them) have resumed their monthly surgeries on the fourth Friday of the month between 11.30am and 12 noon.

Migrant Action continue to visit on alternate Thursday mornings, and we cook on the opposite Thursday - mostly from things we have grown ourselves, although we cheated before Christmas and treated ourselves to baking our own mince pies. The greenhouse is awaiting repair following its encounter with Storm Arwen, but I was thrilled this morning to see some garlic poking its shoots through the soil, and we still have plenty of onions left as well as other vegetables in the freezer, so should be able to resume cooking shortly. We were delighted to be able to hold another outdoor Christmas celebration in the Junction garden, with carols, a Christmas message from Revd Jon Bellfield, hot drinks, mince pies and Christmas cake.

If you would like to come in for a chat, play board games, do a jigsaw or some craft, or for more specific assistance, please do drop in to see us at 28 Hexthorpe Road on Mondays and Tuesdays (10.00am - 1.45pm, then 2.15 - 4.15pm) or Thursdays (10.00am - 1.00pm, 1.30 - 4.00pm). Or if you want to get in touch, please ring 01302 349341 or email thejunction20@yahoo.com

Lynn Petersen

Update From Friends of Hexthorpe Flatts Park

The November fireworks event in the Park was a great success with around 3,000 people attending. The fireworks were superb and families from all parts of the Hexthorpe and Balby community attended. Thank you to all of our volunteers and the Council Communities Team who made it happen.



We held a consultation in December 2021 about what people would like to see in the Park. Despite terrible weather, it was well attended with over 100 feedback forms completed. These will now be reviewed and the best and most popular ideas will be implemented as part of the Future Parks Programme.

The Group was successful in a recent grant application with £12,500 awarded by the Community Investment Fund. This will be used to improve footways, damaged walls and to provide new plants in The Dell, one of only four registered Parks and Gardens of Special Interest in Doncaster.

The Friends group are now meeting again. We hold regular one hour meetings every second Tuesday of each month at Travis Gardens Community Hall. All are welcome. You can also contact us online @hexthorpepark or at hexthorpepark@gmail.com with any ideas or suggestions.

From the Hexpress Archives

A boy's look at Hexthorpe before the First World War

I was born in Hexthorpe in the early part of the 20th century. To me it was the centre of the world. Perhaps my whole life was shaped by its character and characters. We had a distinctive identity because of the geographical nature of the place, bounded by two bridges and a river. In my early years we were linked to Balby. I well remember going to a little office in Low Road (now a public house) to collect a jar of cod liver oil and malt for weak bones and a bottle of disinfectant to use on the house drains - an early social welfare!

Our access to town was over the Nine Arch Bridge that brought the trams to Hexthorpe. The surface was mostly of hard stone setts. Once a week sheep and cattle were driven into Hexthorpe to the slaughter- house, belonging to the Co-op in Mutual Street.

Once I was asked to do some relief work for the regular boy at the Co-op butchers; I was only a young boy, neither very big nor strong. On that Saturday morning I was handed a huge two wheeled hand cart and dispatched with a load of labelled joints of meat of various sizes and various people. Windle Road was just being constructed and the road surface was uneven. My cart tipped up, depositing my load on the grit and the wheels became detached from the cart. I did my best to wipe off the grime and dirt from the meat, but some people received joints they had never expected. I wasn't asked to relieve that post again!

Coming over the bridge from town, there was a walk-way and flight of steps to the rear of Bridge Street and Abbot Street, with a short access to Mr Brook's business. He was the local 'clog sole maker'. One of my Saturday morning jobs was to take my barrow (everyone had a barrow) and for a few coppers get it filled with the chippings that Mr Brook created, as he deftly turned a block of beechwood into a clog sole.

There seemed to be a shop on every corner- 2 Co-ops, 3 fish merchants and who could forget old Monty Wells in the little shop opposite Mutual Street. As a boy, our neighbour used to send me once a week to Monty for a 'bloater' for 'master's' tea - a small one for a penny and large one for three halfpence. Oh, and one more shop - Parkinson's cake shop! To me it was like going into some place of worship. Its classic lay-out and quality of cakes made you speak in whispers, though it was only rarely that I entered its portals.

Louis Webster

Hexpress Comment

The new houses on the Pullman Green development are rapidly appearing. We give a warm welcome to all of you who have come to live in them. They are being built on land which will always be remembered, whenever the story of Hexthorpe is told. It was there where the famous railway works - The Plant - was situated. Who knows, your home might be right on the site where one of the iconic steam engines was built - the Mallard, the Flying Scotsman or one of many others. Hexthorpe has a proud history and we want you to feel at home.

It would be great if there was some feature on the estate that recognized the significance of its history. Has any reader any ideas what that could be? We would love to hear from you.

(continued from page 96)

physical fitness than your parents had. Your teachers and I are always keen to help you obtain physical fitness but of course we need your co-operation.

I am looking forward to seeing a great deal of you in the future both in the gymnasium and on the playing fields. Meanwhile, I know that you will treasure this souvenir of Doncaster Rovers in their record breaking season and I hope next season you will be meeting many of your favourites in person on the Town Playing Fields.

Mr. Thatcher kept to his promise. Rovers' players came to visit the school in the late 40's and helped in football coaching on the school's playing field. The school's playing field was at the bottom of Bramworth Road, where there are allotments now. Before the war this was the cricket field of the Hexthorpe Wesleyans. There was an old wooden pavilion where a coconut matting was kept for use as a cricket pitch and of course there was a football pitch complete with goalposts. Rounders and netball were usually played in the school playground.

After the war, all the pupils were put into four houses named after aeroplanes from the war, Later they were named after colours. There were inter-house tournaments. For example, in May 1949 inter-house football and netball matches were held. All the school watched. The Spitfire (Red) House won them both.

Inter-school matches were played in rounders, netball, football and cricket. Home football and cricket matches were played on the school's games field and away matches usually on the Town Fields.

Successes were recorded with pride. Here are a few:

In **July 1947** A Love won the Doncaster Schools Junior Breaststroke Championship Cup. In the same month the School Rounders Team won the Doncaster Schools Tournament on the Town Fields.

In **July 1949** Ken Jordan won the Free Style Doncaster Championship.

In **July 1955** the school entered a girls' rounders team in the Doncaster Schools Competition. They won every game!

In **1956** 2 boys from the fourth year R. Whaley and N Yates represented the school at a lecture given by Len Hutton, the famous Yorkshire cricketer at the Grammar School.

Parents were encouraged to take an interest in their children's fitness. On several occasions in the 1940's and 50's large numbers of parents visited the school for P.E. and Dancing Displays.

Music

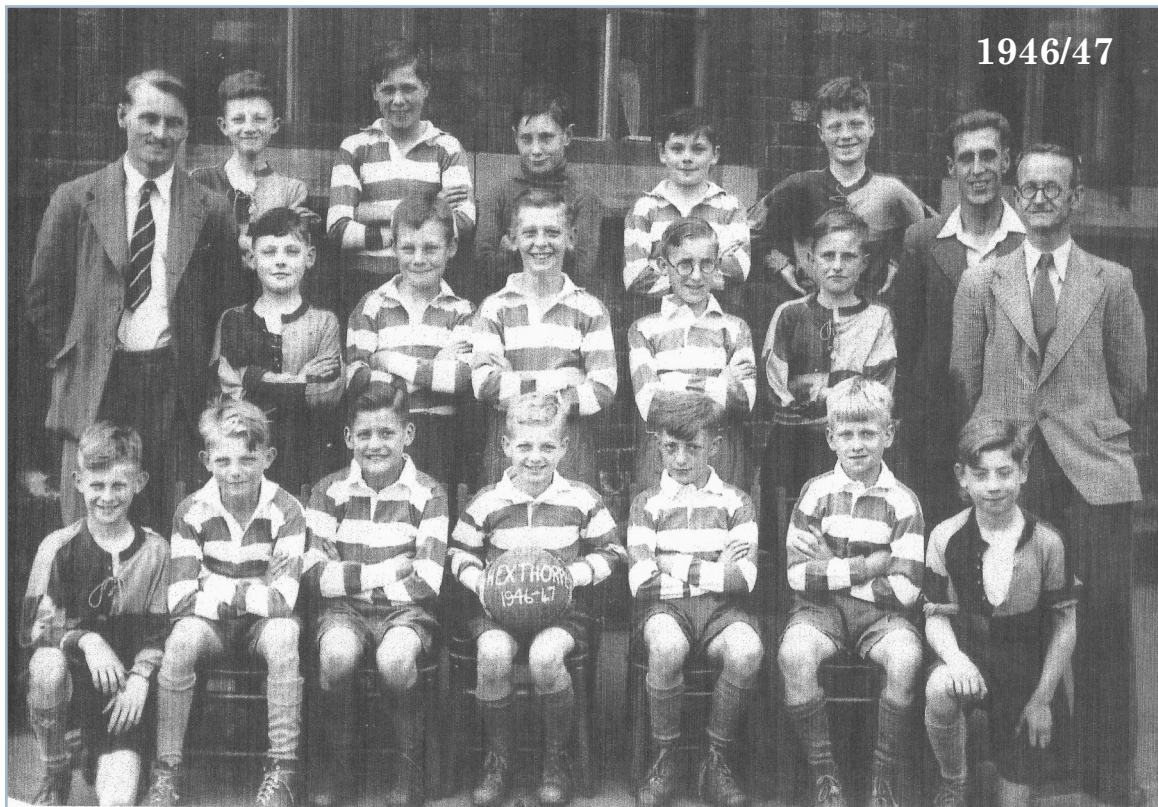
The school gained an excellent reputation for the quality of its music. This was mainly due to the drive and expertise of Mrs. Wilcock. Mr. Appleby - organiser of music for Doncaster schools and of the BBC Singing Together fame - was a constant visitor. He brought other teachers to show what schools could achieve. The school's orchestra was recorded at the request of the Ministry of Education. It also was recorded to play on a radio network.

The school took part in the annual Doncaster Schools Music Festival. This was held in the Corn Exchange. School choirs sang prescribed music during the day. A concert was given in the evening, when in the programme was a 'massed choir' of all the Junior School choirs.

There are many entries in the log book. It seems that its music heydays were in the 1950's.

(continued on page 104)

Can you name anyone?



**Copies of the book can be obtained from:
The Dell Café, The Junction, Donald 07935326626
or via the Hexpress website: thehexpress.co.uk**