Reminiscences by Terry Walker (joined 1947)

I lived in Stan Road from 1955 so I was fascinated to find that the Shoot attached to the Pub's Hall & Welfare Club was called Comrades Hall. Has anyone got any info about its layout, please?

The last time I was in Germany, of course I took the Hyundai during the great freeze of 1947-48 and the only place we had to go to was Flying Bull Lane School. You were put into forms at SGS but the boys were moved around every month, 1948 Dick Pitt and I went up to 2A. You were given a mark in each subject but also an overall position. Each year, that is.

Hill Nicholson for Latin was a very Victorian character who would say "Sit down, Mister" and we would reply, "Sit down, Sir". (Good morning sir / Good morning boys) This was a contrast to Richard (as Latin) Fox, the head of History who would say "Right, get your jotters out, A single line of (e.g.) the Battle of Hastings."

Has anyone got a recording of Mills's radio play, "Mutiny at Spithead" circa 1950, or of Mrs Aileen Mills in the radio serial "At the Luscombs" in which she played Dot? "Lor, lumme Charlie …. 'Arry, you know I won't 'ave that language…"

Mills beat me for talking in the lines after break. My fault, 3A lined up right under his window, so I was asking for it!

It's a curious thing but, even though the war had only been over 3 years, I can't recall any master or boy talking about what had happened, but we knew that Saxon Walker (English) had been in Intelligence and Richard Fox (History) had been on the (Zeebrugge) raid on the submarine pens.

In 1961, we moved over to the SSS for Girls for a few years and there was Xavier Vilatte as the French master. Mrs Mills was a great character and a relation.

Quite a number of boys would have stayed for 4 years to get to the Sixth form as prefects. Term 1 was year 5 for us, doing O-levels only. Those who got to the Sixth went to the Remove, then Upper Remove, then Lower Middle 4 and Upper 4 levels to try for a Scholarship. They took only one O-level at university entrance requirements. In my case, English Language and Mrs Ashford were good, I can remember that. Dad's war taught me from an early age.

The CCF was compulsory. At that time, only Saxon Walker took university cadets in the overall TSI form within a number of 30 cadets. The rest were pressured to join and I remember how it was that the majority of masters had seen enough fighting just as the majority of boys, especially those in Poppy during the war. They made it fun playing on the Hill behind Road.

The school plays were performed at the Tabor Training College at Milton Dolb (now turned into a professional Southampton Landlord's mansion of modern design and demolished a year, I think, but it was usually Saxon Walker who played Julius Caesar in 1952? and Dad's friend Henry Vibart was a mainstay of the Hobson's Choice play, in addition, usually only Yellow Hobs, which was staged in the parish hall. At least two workshops ran in the early 50's. Outside and Dodge, which Dodge was Dan? (Dad?) Kingdom? I have forgotten. Later on, prolific Sunday programmes for BBC Radio, also a feature of Sunday.

By the late 1950's, the Hill behind Road was a building site, which took in the middle of the Poppy and the boys sent to collect the dog were taken in Sept 1949, leaving it "for pit" in the name. What was used for?... How many toys?

The subject of the Sea Scouts / Sea Cadets is a story with many twists and turns, which could take place over a few days (less) but I don't know enough to do it, so I'll leave it to someone else to get a feel for it. Perhaps to talk to Dad, that night, I'm guilty and pick it the following week and Mills had to run it.

And that's not Rillo, sorry Dennis, I've been hit!

Terry Walker