



40 years of Brown Rigg School

The dormitories weren't only for sleeping in, the pupils used them quite literally as living quarters and spent most of their spare time in them, unless they were out in the open air. They really came into their own in the afternoons after school lessons were finished for the day and were where pupils relaxed or engaged in numerous pastimes. Amongst these was table tennis, with the tables being in almost permanent use, while others would read comics, play cards or darts.

The teachers' accommodation was, to put it mildly, somewhat cramped, the tiny room they inhabited had room for a bed and a wardrobe and not much else. Like the children, they had to march over to the ablution block for toilet and washing facilities and it is no surprise that most teachers left Brown Rigg in a search for more comfortable living accommodation.

Each dormitory had two captains and two vice captains who supervised if a teacher wasn't on duty. They took their duties seriously and were known to dish out summary justice if anyone slacked or didn't pull their weight. One of their duties was to hold a nightly spelling session where pupils would learn off by heart the words which had been set for the weekly spelling test. As this counted towards the dormitory shield competition it was imperative that all involved were word perfect and many hours were spent chanting out the letters of the individual words till they were engraved indelibly in people's memories.



Every Christmas term the dormitories were turned into individual Aladdin's caves when they were decorated with streamers, posters and hanging ornaments to celebrate the festive season. Most of these were home made and much effort went into cutting, pasting and gluing, with sheets of coloured paper, streamers and tinsel turned into elaborate decorations that really brightened up the normally austere and plain dormitories and made the perfect venue for some riotous end of term parties.

Despite the privations and lack of facilities, the Brown Rigg dormitories were places of great happiness, camaraderie and friendship and many many people look back on their time in residence as quite literally, "The happiest days of their lives".

Being in the wilds of Bellingham what could be more attractive than the thoughts of having your own swimming pool. Only in those days a heated pool was not even thought of, so naturally it was unheated, freezing cold and only for the brave-hearted.



Being next to the boys' dorms, it was a handy facility for the teachers to use as an early sauna. You were given a choice of sitting in a freezing bathtub after a hot shower or to run out naked and jump into the pool.