

D'Arcy Huntriss

1919-2013



A life well lived

The early years

D'Arcy was born in 1919, the eldest son of Harry and Jean Huntriss (nee D'Arcy), then living at 16 Alverstone Road in Wallasey.

Harry was a cotton merchant, and because he was doing quite well for himself, was able to have a house built for him in Sandfield Park, Heswall.

When the house was being built, Harry incorporated conduits for electric cables within the internal walls – even though electricity was not available. Harry's foresight was justified – within a year, mains electricity was provided.

The family moved into the new house in 1925 – the house was called "Nyanza", after a South African town from which Harry purchased raw cotton. One of the reasons for moving to Heswall was for the fresh air – Harry suffered from a bad chest, and had spent two periods at the Sanatorium in Market Drayton, one in 1920, and the other in 1923/24. At the Sanatorium, patients lived in wooden huts, and no fires were allowed except for Christmas Day.

From here, D'Arcy went to the church school in Heswall.



Heswall Church of England School - 5th form -Spring 1929
D'Arcy is standing on the right of the back row.



Wallasey



Lower Heswall



Barnston



Pensby



D'Arcy had his first bike – purchased from a man from near the Plaza cinema in Birkenhead. The bike cost the grand sum of 7/6d – with a racing frame, and straight handlebars. Harry's bike cost 15s.

Public transport was not the same as today - each day Harry used to bicycle to Rock Ferry, where he would catch the Ferry to Liverpool

D'arcy was one of the first pupils of Wirral Grammar School for boys when it opened in 1931. and used to come on his bike from Heswall, accompanied by his father on his way to work

The Wirral Grammar Schools were conceived in response to a political and social need. The site chosen for our school amounted initially to just over five acres and was set aside to be used "for the purpose of Higher Education" and on 23rd March 1925, Cheshire County Council passed a resolution proposing that a new secondary school, to be known as Bebington Secondary School, would indeed be built.

The school was designed by the county's Architect Mr F Anstead Browne, whose bold designs for Cheshire schools stand as memorials to his vision of durable strength and practical purpose. The original buildings featured textured red sandstone brick, capped with a distinctive green slate roof set off by an imposing main entrance of white Portland stone.

By September 1931, the Governing Body, Headmaster and staff had been appointed, and pupils selected and, on Thursday 17th September, the gates of the school were opened to 105 boys. The first Headmaster of the school, Mr J M Moir, addressed the school and tried to capture a sense of the occasion. He felt that it was "the duty of the school to bring Great Britain back to the place she used to occupy".

On Saturday 26th September 1931, the school was declared officially open by the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, Brigadier-General Sir William Bromley-Davenport.

At school, D'Arcy was appointed a house prefect, and a patrol leader in the scout troupe. His second in command at the time was Bob Weighill, who not only captained England at Rugby Union, but went on to achieve the rank of Air Commodore. One of D'Arcy's fellow pupils at the time was Harold Wilson, (whose father had moved to the areas as he was working at Lever Brothers) later to become Prime Minister.

Darcy recalled, with some pleasure, the look of disappointment on Harold Wilson's face when he (D'Arcy) was appointed the school's Scout Patrol leader.

His early attempts at rugby were initially less than successful. The sports master moved him to play at full back when a teammate was injured, "you might as well play there – you're no good anywhere else" was the less than encouraging remark from his sports master – but found he was natural in this new position.



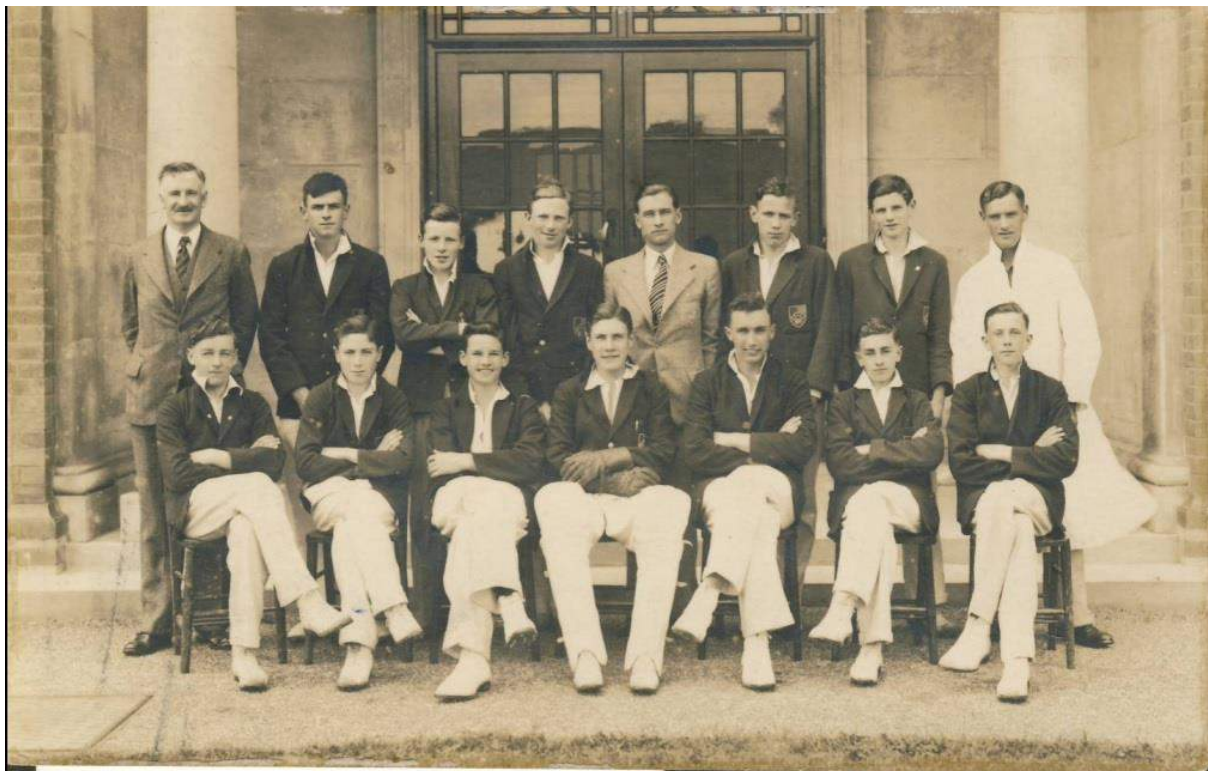
Spring 1935 - Wirral County School - 28th Birkenhead Scout Troup

Harold Wilson - 2nd row, 3rd left
DWH - R3d row, 4th left



Back: Mr J M Moir, D Holmes, DW Huntriss, Saunders, Taylor, Mr Ashworth, Bocoek, O'Lavin, van Dickson, D Cross, Mr J Crawford
Front: Aspinall, Tinewell, Challinor, A Coathup, ?, Bob Weighhill, Keith Nichols

WIRRAL COUNTY SCHOOL RUGBY TEAM 1ST XV 1934



Back: Mr JM Moir, K Dickson, ?, Ostle, A Small, Mr J Allen, H Jones, DW Huntriss, Mr McKeown
Front: ?, Waterhouse, Saunders, Challinor, A Coathup, Annels, Cawson

WIRRAL COUNTY SCHOOL
CRICKET 1st TEAM 1935

In 1935, D'Arcy became the first pupil from the school to join the RAF. He saw this not only as an opportunity to travel and be involved in the rapidly developing aircraft technology, but also as a way of relieving financial pressures at home by making himself independent.

During this time, the family moved from Storeton to a rented property in Cornelius Drive in Pensby

The RAF days

He trained for three years an apprentice fitter/rigger on engines and airframes at Halton in Buckinghamshire, earning the princely sum of 3s per week.

RAF Halton

In 1914, when Lord Kitchener called for his “first hundred thousand” volunteers to augment the professional army, many landowners offered their estates as training grounds. Alfred Rothschild was one of the first and some 20,000 troops descended on Halton, to live in tents through an increasingly muddy winter as they trained for the slaughter of the Western Front.

At the end of the war, Lord Trenchard foresaw the need to produce a pool of skilled aircraft mechanics and Halton was selected as the home for the Aircraft Apprentice Scheme when this was introduced in 1920. The three-year course he initiated was to train 155 Apprentice Entries between 1920 and 1993 and the training they received was to be thorough and broad-based.

There was very little need (or indeed opportunity) to spend his wages whilst way – and D’Arcy clearly remembers coming home on his first leave, with £3/10s in his pocket – feeling like a millionaire! At Halton, he skippered the flight cricket team, and played rugby both for the flight and command teams. He would have played in trials for the RAF side had the war not intervened



**No. 2 Wing
RAF Halton
1937/38**

**Barrington-
Kennedy cup
winners.**

DWH is 3rd from left on the
back row.

Following his training at Halton, D’Arcy was stationed at RAF Cottesmore, in Oakham, which was then in Rutland

RAF Cottesmore

The construction of Royal Air Force Cottesmore began in 1935 in response to heightened tension in Europe and the re-armament of Germany. The airfield opened on 11 March 1938 and soon after 207 and 35 Squadron arrived, equipped with Wellesleys, but soon converted to the Fairey Battle which was used to train aircrew. Some of the first night bombing trials took place from Cottesmore in late 1938. At the outbreak of WWII, ten squadrons of Fairey Battles were immediately despatched to France and both 207 and 35 Squadron moved to Cranfield to act as war reserves.



RAF Cottesmore
Oakham June 1941

Soon after that he bought his first car – indeed he was the first in the family to own a car – an 8hp Morris Minor, purchased for the princely sum of £12/10s. Not having driven before, D’Arcy had to ask the salesman what the various pedals were for! Later that day, on his way back to Oakham, he gave a lift to two other men, and once in the car, had to explain to them that he had never driven before. D’Arcy reported that they complemented him on his driving!

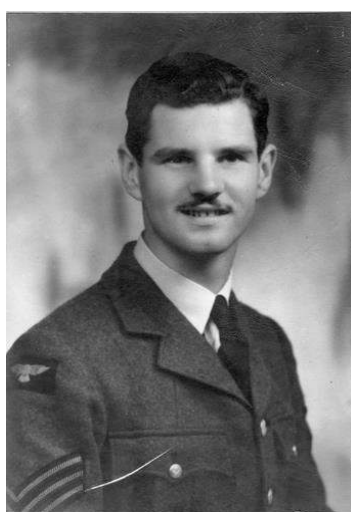
A voluntary driving test was introduced in England in 1935. The test cost 37½ pence and the pass rate was 63%. The first person to pass was called Mr Been. There weren’t any test centres and examiners would meet candidates at a pre-arranged spot, like a park or railway station. The compulsory driving test was introduced on 1st June 1935, for all drivers who started driving on or after 1st of April 1934.

In 1900 the first British woman to pass her driving test was Miss Vera Hedges Butler, and she had to travel to France to take her driving test, since driver testing would not be established in the UK for another 30 years. Drivers and pedestrians in the UK had to wait for the publication of the first edition of The Highway Code in 1931 before road safety began to improve.

The next posting took D’Arcy to Teesside, to RAF Thornaby

RAF Thornaby was a former RAF Station located at the Teesside town of Thornaby-on-Tees, North Yorkshire. The station was created in the mid-1920s and came under the control of No. 18 Group, RAF Coastal Command in 1939, and was used mostly for reconnaissance work, anti-shipping strikes, and attacks on enemy airfields etc. Lockheed Hudson aircraft of No. 220 Squadron from this base located the German prison ship *Altmark* in Norwegian waters on 16 February 1940—an action which led to the subsequent liberation of 299 prisoners by HMS *Cossack* of the Royal Navy.

At Thornaby, he worked on Hawker Hinds, Fairey Battles, Handley Page Hampdens and Herefords. In 1941 he was posted to Iraq; whilst they were sailing to the Persian Gulf, the ship he was on, the *Windsor Castle*, had swerve to avoid a destroyer and collided with another ship. All the lifeboats on the starboard side were ripped apart but fortunately the ship didn't suffer any other damage and they limped on to port. D'Arcy said that it was frightening - the noise of the impact and the ship keeling over, and then to see the offending ships sailing on, unable to stop and help due to the fear of submarines. D'Arcy remembers thinking to himself "I'm glad I can swim" – even though they were a thousand miles from land!



After 25 June 1940, when *France surrendered* to Germany, Britain and the Dominions became the only Allied nations free to prosecute the war with Germany and Italy, a condition that persisted until Italy decided to provoke conflict with Greece in the autumn of 1940.

In those traumatic days, with the *invasion of Britain* anticipated, and indeed tentatively planned for mid-September 1940, it was an act of considerable faith to despatch from Britain such forces as were then available. The reason for this decision was that Egypt and East Africa had only garrisons which were much reduced from even the pre-war scale, while Libya and Italian East Africa contained considerable enemy forces; indeed British Somaliland was, perforce, evacuated due to lack of British and Indian troops in sufficient numbers to oppose the Italian advance.

As the potential attacks from Libya and East Africa were such as to threaten not only the Suez Canal but also, eventually, the oil resources of Iraq and Persia, it became necessary to reinforce the Egyptian garrison. Despite the possible events at home therefore, troops, as well equipped as could be from the depleted arsenals in Britain, were sent via the Cape of Good Hope to Egypt to form what became known as the Desert Army under General Wavell. This force acquitted itself very well indeed, and stabilised the situation in Egypt and Libya in Britain's favour.

Thereafter, as the fortunes of war swung like a pendulum in the vacuum of the North African desert, greater and greater resources had to be committed, whatever the position at home. Also, war was looming further East with the increasing menace of Japan, and the position in India, Malaya and the Indies generally was of major concern.

Faced with such an obvious threat, and with the possibility of the invasion of Britain rapidly receding (it was apparent as early as 10.1940 that the original plans had been abandoned) reinforcement of Egypt and India became of prime importance. The early ad hoc convoys (designated as AP 1, 2, 3 and 3½) were therefore replaced by a series known as WS. Legend has it that these initials, which oddly bear no relation to origin or destinations as convoy codes usually do, were derived from "Winston's Special" as the first convoy was organised on the explicit orders of the Prime Minister.

The first WS convoy set the scene dramatically both in content and conduct. The sight of three major Cunard liners, QUEEN MARY, AQUITANIA and MAURETANIA steaming at maximum speed in line ahead in the peaceful seas of the Indian Ocean escorted by HMS [KENT](#) must have been magnificent. It certainly appeared so to a young Midshipman onboard, known to the Gunroom as "Phil the Greek", more properly Midshipman Prince Philip of the Hellenes, now HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

The initial convoy - to Ceylon as such large ships could not be risked in the Red Sea with the Italian Regia Marina still based in East Africa - was followed by successive convoys routed through to Suez. After the Italian forces had been eliminated from East Africa, convoy was no longer required in the Red Sea and the WS convoys thereafter dispersed off Perim, proceeding as independent ships to Suez.

With the rising menace in the Far East, which became war in December 1941, troop convoys to sustain India were also required. This need was satisfied by extending the WS series, an arrangement that continued until mid-1943. After that date the opening of the Mediterranean to major vessels following the defeat of the Axis in North Africa shortened the route with the Suez Canal once again accessible from the west. This resulted in the demise of the WS series and its replacement by the KMF convoys which were extended to Port Said from the North African ports, and by the AB convoys from Aden to Bombay.

The most startling fact regarding all troop convoys in World War II is the non-event they were. They proceeded, and almost nothing untoward happened! Given the very large numbers of personnel transported over long distances at a time of extreme danger at sea, it is amazing that not only were losses, in this and other series, minimal, but that even unsuccessful attack was uncommon. Indeed, the most successful strike at a WS convoy occurred as a result of minelaying some time prior to its arrival by an undetected raider! Both the participants personally, and the nation as a whole should be supremely grateful that such large, high risk, ventures with so many young men on board were able "to pass upon the seas on their lawful occasions" without undue hazard or loss.

Military Convoys WS.10

WS.10 Depart Greenock	August 3, 1941
WS.10 Freetown to Capetown/ Durban	
WS.10 Dispersed for Suez	September 23, 1941
WS.10B Detached from WS.10	September 6, 1941
WS.10B Arrive Bombay	September 20, 1941
WS.10X Depart UK	August 16, 1941
WS.10X Depart Freetown	1130 hrs. September 1, 1941
WS.10X Depart Capetown	1330 hrs. September 14, 1941
WS.10X Dispersed for Suez	September 26, 1941

Notes: At 2210 hrs. on August 6 in 51.20N, 28.20W, **WARWICK CASTLE** and **WINDSOR CASTLE** collided in fog. **WARWICK CASTLE** diverted to Halifax, **WINDSOR CASTLE** continued in convoy.

Pdt.	Vessel	Stores/ Passengers	Notes
21	ANDES	2,744	
32	BRITANNIC	2,725	
43	CAMERONIA		
12	DIOMED		
33	HIGHLAND MONARCH	1,200	
13	INDIAN PRINCE		
23	INDRAPOERA (Du)	1,011	
34	MANCHESTER PORT	Explosives	
52	NEA HELLAS	2,268	
63	NIGERSTROOM (Du)	Explosives	
31	ORCADES	2,054	Commodore
11	PHEMIUS	Explosives	
22	RANGITIKI	1,747	
51	REINA DEL PACIFICO	2,500	
53	STIRLING CASTLE	1,474	
41	STRATHALLAN	3,280	Vice Commodore
42	VOLENDAM (Du)	2,350	
62	WARWICK CASTLE	1,382	Damaged - ordered to Halifax
61	WINDSOR CASTLE	1,168	Collision with Warwick Castle



HMT Windsor Castle while being converted into a troopship
Note only 2 funnels and the new raked bow which was installed in the 1937 refit
(Courtesy Maritime Quest)

No. 244 squadron served in the Middle East for the entire Second World War, first as a patrol and army co-operation squadron and later as an anti-submarine squadron. On 21 August 1939 S Squadron was formed at Habbaniya in Iraq, to carry out patrol duties. The squadron moved south to Shaibah in September 1940, and was redesignated as No 244 Squadron on 1 November 1940. It was equipped with aging Vickers Vincents.

The squadron had a quiet war patrolling over Iraq until the Iraqi uprising of May 1941. Although the situation around Shaibah wasn't as critical as at Habbaniya, the squadron was kept busy, bombing troop concentrations and the railway to Baghdad. Things were quiet again after the defeat of the uprising, although the squadron did fly some patrols over Persia in August 1941.

In January 1942 the squadron trained on Oxfords in preparation of the arrival of twin-engined Blenheim's. The squadron went operational with its Blenheim's in May 1942 at Sharjah, from where it flew anti-submarine patrols. The last Vincent went in January 1943, and the first Wellington arrived in February 1944. In March 1944 the squadron moved to Masirah, where it was officially part of South East Asia command, although it remained under the operational control of RAF Middle East. The squadron was fully converted to the Wellington in April and anti-submarine patrols continued until the squadron was disbanded on 1 May 1945. During this period, the squadron was responsible for the sinking of one U-boat, U-244 which was sunk in the Gulf of Oman I 16 October 1943

(From www.historyofwar.org/air/units/RAF/244_wwII.html)

It was during these war years that Dad learned lessons that were to stay with him throughout his life. One was always to appreciate the things that so often we take for granted – water from a tap, the green grass. He knew what life was like without these things. The other was what he called “adaptability” – being able to accept and make the most of your circumstances.

D'Arcy saw many parts of the Middle East - Basra, Shaibah (where he was involved in handing aircraft manufactured by the Americans on to the Russians), Egypt (Caspato), Haifa, Hasbaya (near Baghdad) and on to Sharjah in the Persian Gulf.

D'Arcy always recognised that he was never good with words. It was therefore a surprise to come across the following snippet in the "Kindred Spirits" newsletter

"The evening commenced in the Isherwood Suite (our usual venue). Dinner was our usual repast of roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and all the trimmings, and much commended. As on previous 'do's' wine was most plentiful. The Cabaret (?) now started. Led off by 'Sweet Somershire', and followed by our anthem 'Shaibah Blues', sadly for the last time in public, but our lads joined in with gusto! Bob Norcott gave his party piece 'The Siege of Habbaniya'. His mate Eddy Leicester did not, on this occasion, give us 'She's my little Gyppo Bint', but gave us other choruses. Bob Bolton gave us anecdotes and a homily. D'arcy Huntriss delighted the audience with 'Albert and the Lion in Sharjah'."

(<http://www.rquirk.com/med/244sqn/244news/244newsn35.pdf>) .

Some 60 years later, I mentioned this to Dad. At this stage in his life, his memory, which was not good at the best of times, became increasingly problematic. Dad confirmed that this was no misprint. Imagine my amazement when I visited him a few days later, to find that he had written out in full his poem, hastily written some 60 years earlier.

Albert and the lion in Sharjah

There's an RAF station at Sharjah,
that was noted for sandstorms and sun
Where the Air Force officials at Whitehall
sent Albert Ramsbottom for fun

Now a nice little lad was young Albert
dressed in his stockings and shorts quite a swell
in a topee with a strap tucked under his chin
The best that the NAAFI could sell

He didn't think much of the cookhouse
The sausage was fiddly and small
Nothing to like about rissoles
And no fish in the fishcakes at all

So seeking some sort of amusement,
He ventured across to the MT
Where there were lorries and tractors and trailers,
Some drivers and a flight sergeant, see.

There was a flight sergeant there called
Thomas
Whose slacks were looking like tights
As he lay in a sombulent posture
With his back stuck up against some lights

Now Albert had heard about flight sergeants
As how they were ferocious and wild
And when he saw Taffy just lying there
It didn't seem right to the child

So straightway the brave little airman
Without showing the least bit of fear

Went and borrowed a horn from a three-tonner
And blew it in the flight-sergeants' ear

You can see the flight sergeant didn't like it
He woke up with a sort of a roar
And got hold of young Albert and put him
behind the guard room door.

Now things like that didn't happen every day
As we had a war to get through
But seeing that we'd been victorious
I think we'll excuse him, don't you

D'Arcy Huntriss, December 1942

In 1944 D'Arcy returned from the Middle East, and was stationed at Tern Hill, where he worked mainly on Lancaster bombers.

RAF Tern Hill was one the "12 Group" airfields used for resting units, and as a training airfield and maintenance unit. It was used as a relief landing ground and as a temporary base for night fighters operating against raids on Liverpool and cities in the north midlands.

The Post war years

On leaving the forces D'arcy became an agricultural engineer until three years later when he and his father started H Huntriss & Son Ltd, a firm making canvas products in their front room at home. One popular product was newspaper delivery bags which they sold across the whole country.

The business did have its problems. A major customer of the business ran into difficulties, and was unable to pay the substantial amounts that were owed. In order to keep going, H Huntriss and Son were forced to seek outside assistance, and eventually finance was provided by Thomas Aitken and Son, suppliers to the business. At this Tom Dewhurst joined the board, representing the new owners. although D'Arcy and Harry continued to run the business on a day-to-day basis.

The village [Irwell vale] was owned by the Dewhurst family, who also owned the local cotton mill (Thomas Aitkin & Sons). John Dewhurst – commonly known as J.D., was the owner along with his sons, Geoffrey and Tom. It was common knowledge that J.D. was not a man to be messed with! He had the appearance of the Fat Controller out of Thomas the Tank Engine!

Although the Dewhurst family was known to be quite formidable, the villagers were always looked after. The family used to hold occasional gala days and there was food and drink provided in the mill canteen for everyone (no alcohol was permitted!). This was also used at Christmas as it had a dance floor and a stage. All the village children received a present from Father Christmas. Tom and Geoffrey Dewhurst also ran a Scout group for the village lads.

(From www.francisfrith.com/edenfield/memories/childhood-memories-1950-onwards_53481/)

The business, which had moved to premises in Argyle Street in Birkenhead, eventually relocated again to Moreton, where it employed a total of 20 people.

Sport continued to play a big part on D'Arcy's life

He was playing rugby for the Old Wirralians, cricket for Eastham and District Cricket club, and set up a new Badminton club, based at Wirral Grammar School.



OLD WIRRALIANS RUFC1946/47

DWH - front left

JANUARY 15th, 1947

OLD WIRRALIANS WERE NEVER IN DANGER OF DEFEAT

OLD WIRRALIANS 20 points,
SEFTON 3 points

Old Wirralians made progress from the kick-off, and Williams broke through and passed to Nichol, who scored near the touch-line. The Old Boys made repeated forward rushes and from the Sefton "25" after a grand passing movement among the backs, Huntriss passed to Nichol, who scored near the posts, Teggin converting.

Old Wirralians were well on top, but were, nevertheless, repeatedly penalised for infringements in the scrum. It was after some good work by Cross that Waiting, with a brilliant run, scored under the posts. Play was constantly in the Sefton half, and only strong tackling by the visiting full-back prevented Jones from going over on two occasions. From such a clash the last-named passed to A. Davis, who dived over near the corner flag for another unconverted try.

In the second half, Sefton showed more spirit and came close to scoring, but Huntriss, the Wirral full-back, relieved the situation with sure and deadly tackling. From a loose scrum Nichol broke away and when challenged by the full-back passed to Davis, who again scored far out.

The home side now had several narrow escapes as Sefton did their utmost to open their scoring, but Casson and Corlett broke away, the latter running thirty yards before being pulled down by four Sefton forwards. Nichol, following up his breakaway, crossed for a further try. Huntriss retired with an injury, and in his absence Sefton came near enough to the Wirral line to land a penalty goal, and complete the scoring for the day.

SEFTON 2nd XV. 12 points,
OLD WIRRALIANS 11 points

In a makeshift game of 13 aside after Sefton fielded only 11 men, the visitors allowed an 11-3 half-time lead to slip from their grasp. Rowcroft, Knight and Rowcroft (again) scored tries, with the first named converting.

Eastham are back on the winning trail

Eastham's 2nd XI returned to winning ways on Saturday with an emphatic victory over the Liverpool-based Crofton CC.

Batting first, Eastham opened brightly scoring 24 runs in the first half-hour, despite the loss of both opening batsmen.

However, the arrival at the wicket of D. Huntriss sparked life into the batting and following the fall of the third wicket at 51, Huntriss and partner, Gordon Linnell (27) added 79 for the fourth wicket in 45 minutes. Then three quick wickets fell before skipper John Dray joined Huntriss in a further stand of 42 in only 20 minutes. Dray made 15 not out and declared at 173 for 6 made in 2½ hours. Unfortunately, neither the captain, nor indeed Huntriss realised the latter had reached as many as 96 when the innings closed, and thus a brilliant century was missed by just four runs!

Huntriss batted only 109 minutes and struck 16 fours in his knock.

Chasing such a comparatively large total, Crofton started cautiously but floundered with the score on 19, when Burgwin and Clark removed both opening batsmen. Two more quick wickets fell before D. Swift (30) and G. Hull (28) added 62 in 35 minutes for the fifth wicket. Here, Darcy Huntriss reappeared and his tantalising spinners removed both Swift and Hull in a matter of minutes.

More drama was to come at the close of the innings. Crofton losing their last four wickets for only one run. Chief-tormentor was Robert Burgwin who dismissed Sheriden, Jones and S. Kennaugh with successive deliveries to claim a "hat-trick" and bowling figures of 6 for 31 in 22 overs. Burgwin now has 20 wickets already this season in 2nd XI fixtures alone.

Huntriss completed a fine all-round performance with 3 for 15 in 9 overs, and Eastham raced to victory by a margin of 77 runs.

EASTHAM 2nd XI

E Tyson b Jones	13
I Hammond c D J Kennaugh b Jones	11
D Huntriss not out	96
M Dawson c McCarthy, b D J Kennaugh	9
G Linnell run out	27
P Barrow c Molineux b Jones	0
A Huntriss lbw b Swift	0
J Dray not out	15
Extras	2
Total (6 wks dec)	173
E Dillon, D Clark, R Burgwin did not bat.	

Bowling: R Jones 1-36, D J Kennaugh 1-39, D Swift 1-56.

CROFTON CC

D J Kennaugh b Burgwin	12
I Molineux lbw, b Clark	10
N Burrows b Burgwin	0
D Kennaugh c Hammond b Burgwin	0
D Swift b Huntriss	30
G Hull st Dray, b Huntriss	28
R McCarthy ct Dillon b Huntriss	5
S Welch not out	3
S Sheridan c Dray b Burgwin	1
R Jones lbw b Burgwin	0
S Kennaugh b Burgwin	0
Extras	7
Total	96

Bowling: R Burgwin 6-31, D Clark 1-21, D Huntriss 3-15.

Family life

He had also joined Heswall Tennis club, and it was here that he met Eileen, who had served on the WRNS during the war years



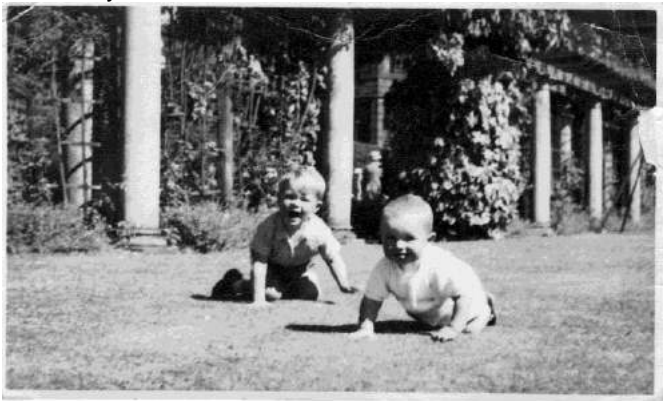
The couple were married in 1948 at Heswall Methodist Church. Their first house was in Eastham Rake



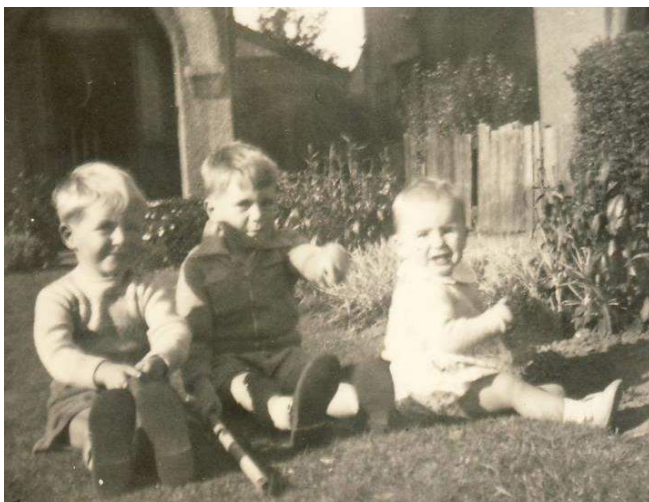
, and within a few years their family began to grow.



. Geoffrey arrived on 1951,



followed by Donald in 1952



And finally Alec in 1954

During this period, D'Arcy had health problems to contend with. He had been invalided out of the RAF, and had to undergo a brain operation for which his chances of survival were rated at no better than 50:50. The operation was performed under local anaesthetic.

Thankfully, the operation was successful. It is to his credit that during the final years of his life, when he has beset by memory problems, that he took the trouble to write to the hospital on London at which the operation was performed to thank them for all that they had done.

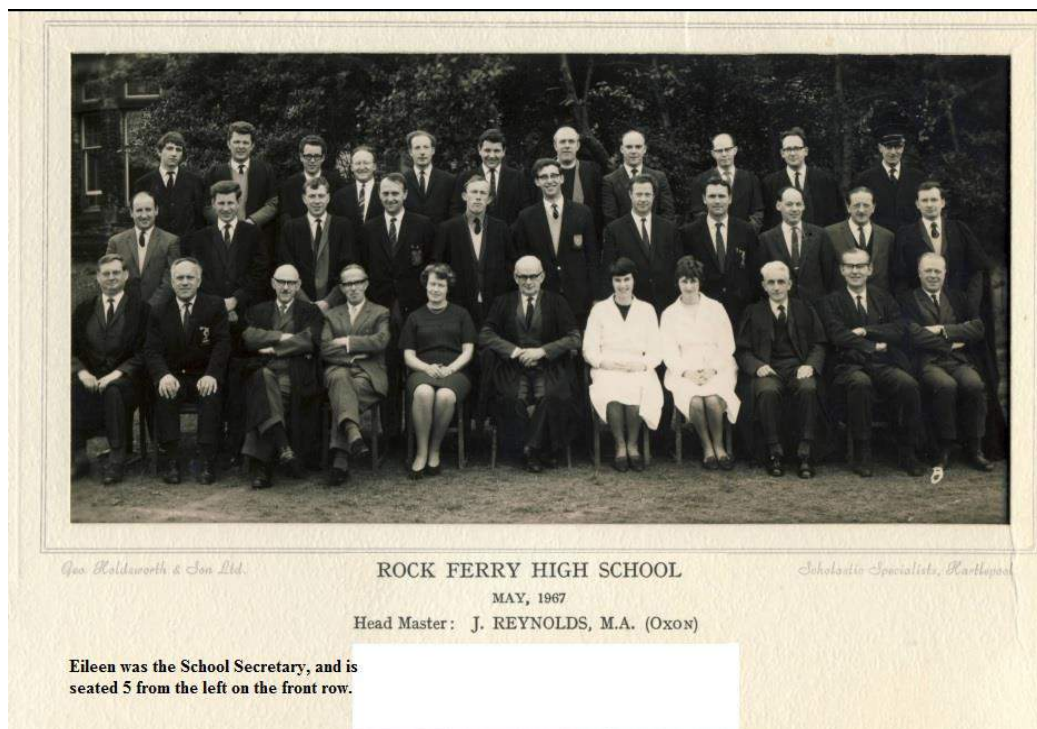
By this stage, he had retired from playing rugby, although he continued to be associated the club for many years. He continued to play cricket, and successfully captained the cricket club.



Standing:?, Leadbetter,?, Ted Tyson, Harold Cumpstey,?,?
Seated: Bob Barber, ? DW Huntriss, Tom Pool,?,?,?

EASTHAM & DISTRICT CC
Competition winners 1958
Captain D W Huntriss

With the family rapidly growing up, the family had moved to Heswall, and Eileen was now working as the secretary at Rock Ferry High school, and was running the Girl Guides at Hassall Methodist church. Another house move followed – this time just a couple of hundred yards down the road. At last, everything thing seemed to going well.



But in 1967, all this came to an abrupt end. Eileen had suffered a major stroke on the way home from school. D'Arcy's world had just fallen apart. It was touch and go as to whether she would survive.

After two months in hospital, she finally came home from hospital, but life would be never the same again. For the next 22 years until her death in 1989, D'Arcy devoted his life to looking after her, with help from the extended family.

To help with her recuperation, Eileen was encouraged to join the Wallasey disabled swimming club,

This club shows the world

A Wirral club which leads the world in teaching disabled people to swim celebrated its silver jubilee with a dinner on Tuesday evening, writes Don Shand.

Wallasey Disabled Persons Swimming Club, attracts members from all over Wirral, and more than 100 instructors and disabled people who have been taught to swim over the past 25 years, joined to celebrate the jubilee at the Hotel Victoria, New Brighton.

As is usual for club meetings, the transport rota of helpers operated to take the more severely disabled people to the dinner.

Founder members Mr. Alex McLellan, of Wallasey, chairman, Dr. Noel Bleasdale, of Meols, president, and Mr. Alistair Shaw, of Heswall, vice-chairman, who have all been swimming instructors throughout the 25 years, were all present.

Dr. Bleasdale was club medical advisor before becoming club president, succeeding another instructor, the late Mr. Ernest Warrington.

Through him, medical



The Mayor of Wirral, Coun. Mrs. Dorothy Goodfellow, joins officials and members at the Wallasey Disabled Persons Swimming Club jubilee celebration. C58381

papers on the club's activities and the methods it uses to help disabled people to swim have gone all over the world.

Mr. McLellan is a Wirral physiotherapist.

It all started when a Wallasey woman, Neil Newton, suffering from polio, was refused admission to swim in Wallasey baths unless she was accompanied by two helpers. It aroused considerable public feeling and Mr. McLellan and his colleagues, who knew the great value of swimming

for the disabled, formed the club.

The meetings take place at the Guinea Gap baths between 10.45 am and 11.45 am on Sunday mornings between April and October and up to 100 disabled people attend every week.

This Year—The Year of the Disabled—has been a particularly good year for gaining new helpers and at Tuesday's dinner Mr. McLellan expressed the strong hope that this happy situation would continue once the special year finished.

In addition, the club

organises an annual holiday abroad for its members so that they can enjoy swimming in sea water in warmer climates. To raise funds to help pay for this holiday, Mr. McLellan organises and produces a pantomime each year at the Floral Pavilion helped by local artistes. This year's pantomime in December will be "The Old Woman Who Lived In A Shoe."

Mr. McLellan tells me any disabled person or willing helper is welcome at the club. He can be contacted on 638 5724.

Eileen is seated, on the front right of the photograph.

Once the three boys had left home, D'Arcy and Eileen moved to a bungalow near Holywell in North Wales – with a magnificent view over the Dee estuary.

At this stage, D'Arcy will still working, but retired in 1982. Within a few years, they moved again to a new in bungalow, in Caerwys, with views over the Clwyds, and backing on to the Golf course





A rare photograph of all the grandchildren outside the bungalow at Caerwys. Don and Carole (who live abroad) are on the left, with Emma and Sara-Kate; Alec and Geraldine are in the centre; with their children Janine and Danielle being held by D'Arcy and Eileen, whilst Margaret is with Alicia and Fiona. Geoff is behind the camera!

After a few years at Caerwys, Eileen health deteriorated, but not before she and D'Arcy were able to have a once in a lifetime holiday in New Zealand. Many years before, they had seriously discussed emigrating to New Zealand, and so it was very fitting that they were able to make the trip

Sadly, Eileen passed away in 1989.

D'Arcy was to continue to live at the bungalow for the next twenty years, making it the longest time he had lived in one place. The support of his neighbours and the local community, and his friendship with Glenys were all contributory factors.

Even at this stage of his life, D'Arcy was not one to let the grass grow under his feet. He went on holiday to Canada on his own, re-visited the sites of his war-time service in the Middle East, and visited Don, who was living in South Africa at the time.



Vice-Presidents

P. F. Anderson, Esq.	T. L. Hughes, Esq.
R. Axon, Esq.	C. King, Esq.
A. D. Barrington, Esq.	P. Murphy, Esq.
C. J. Davies, Esq.	P. Redfern, Esq.
E. Hampson, Esq.	J. White, Esq.

Life Member: D. BEEL, Esq.

OFFICERS

Chairman: D. N. WEATHERSTON
051 334 9077

Hon. Secretary: E. TYSON 051 334 1932
181 Allport Lane, Bromborough.

Hon. Asst. Secretary: M. GRIFFITHS
157 Allport Lane, Bromborough.
051 334 4625

Hon. Treasurer: H. G. JOHN 051 356 0265
7 Wellington Close, Ellesmere Port.

Captain 1st XI: RUSSELL WILLIAMS
051 334 2773

Vice Captain 1st XI: M. GRIFFITHS
051 334 4625

Captain 2nd XI: R. DAVIS 051 327 6623

Vice-Captain 2nd XI: M. ADAMSON
051 645 4064

Team Secretary: S. RICHARDS 051 327 2190
48 Grampian Way, Eastham.

General Committee:
The OFFICERS and

J. BRIGGS	A. SCOTT
V. RUSSELL	A. SMALL

*Good luck for 1991
Hope you are well
T. L.*

Eastham and District CRICKET CLUB

Season 1991

President: D. W. HUNTRISS, Esq.

Member of the Wirral Cricket League

Member of the Cheshire Association of
Cricket Clubs

Club Colours: Royal Blue and Gold

Ground: Torr Park, Eastham



Your Monthly Newspaper

£1

Closure of Post Office ? - Page 5



Promotion for Ex-Mayor - page 8



September

Medi

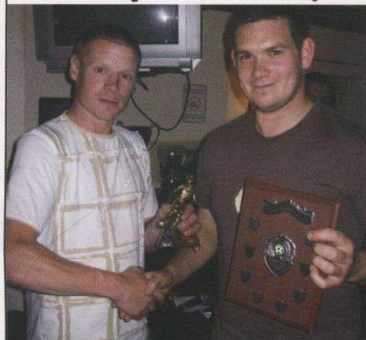
2008

Issue no. 165

What's on in September

Fri 5th - The Version - Royal Oak
Sat 6th - Irish Music Festival at the Black Lion
Sun 7th - Family Service at St. Michael's Church 11.am
Fri 12th - Welsh Night - Royal Oak
Mon 15th - Open Mic Night - PG
Fri 19th & Sat 20th - The Married Class at the Town Hall
Fri 19th - Karaoke at the Royal Oak
Mon 22nd - Open Mic Night—PG
Wed 24th - Paddy & Friends at the Black Lion
Fri 26th - Coffee Morning at Llŷs y Goron 11am-1pm in aid of MacMillan Cancer Support
Fri 26th - Live Band t.b.a.Royal Oak
Mon 29th—Open Mic Night - PG

Summer League Presentations - Page 24



Sarah's Orchids - Page 4



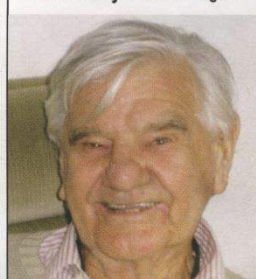
Serious Campers R.O.A.T.S. - Page 12



D.M.F.C. - Page 4



Personality Profile - Page 13



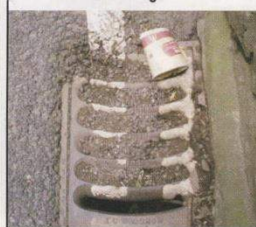
Caerwys in Bloom Late Entry



Party in the Park - Page 21



More Complaints of Caerwys Hill - Page 14



PERSONALITY PROFILE

Mr Darcy Huntriss of Ffordd Angharad celebrated his 89th birthday on the 20th September this year. Born in Liscard on the Wirral into a happy close family and he was educated at Wirral Grammar School. Another pupil at the same school was the now, Sir Harold Wilson who was three years older, and Darcy recalls, with some pleasure the disappointment on Harold Wilson's face when he – Darcy – was appointed the schools Scout Patrol Leader.

Darcy was a very active sportsman and at the age of sixteen he was attracted to the Royal Air Force by the sporting possibilities, the travel and an apprenticeship. He entered the RAF as an apprentice engineer in 1935 and was over the moon when he was given a trial to play rugby for the RAF. Unfortunately the outbreak of war put an end to his sporting career, and he was shipped overseas to Iraq.

Whilst they were sailing to the Persian Gulf the ship he was on, the Windsor Castle, had to swerve to avoid a racing destroyer and collided with another ship. All the lifeboats on the starboard side were ripped apart but fortunately the ship didn't suffer any other damage and they limped on to port. He said it was frightening, the noise of the impact and the ship keeling over and then to see the offending ships sailing on, unable to stop and help due to the fear of submarines.

On arrival in Iraq, Darcy was then put in charge of an aircraft maintenance depot where he stayed until the end of the war ensuring that the Hurricanes, Spitfires and various other fighting craft were serviced and maintained to the highest degree.

On leaving the forces Darcy became an agricultural engineer until three years later he and his father started a firm making canvas products, in their front room at home. One popular product was newspaper delivery bags, which they sold across the whole country. Eventually they had to move to premises in Morton where they employed over twenty people.

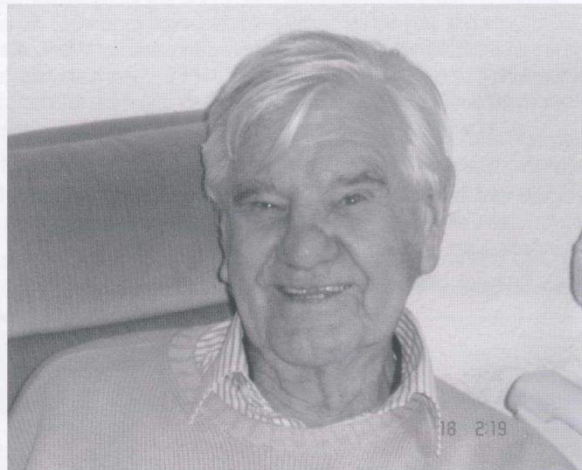
During this period Darcy continued his love of sports and became the Chairman of Eastham Cricket Club and he recalls his disappointment when at one game he was on his 96 run when the skipper declared, denying him his century.

Darcy and his wife Eileen, to whom he had three sons moved to North Wales eighteen years ago, first to Holywell and then to his present address. Sadly Eileen died some years ago after a long illness.

He has stopped driving his car, but can still be seen beating up the highway on his scooter, whizzing around to the Royal Oak for a swift half on his way to Llys y Goron where he is a serious bridge player.

Darcy is a role model for people unfortunate enough to be left on their own, his parting words to me was, 'enjoy what you've got'.

Well let's hope Darcy achieves his Century and is able to enjoy it. And I like to wish this lovely gentleman a very happy birthday. **George Gallagher**



Advancing years began to take their toll. The twelve month period in which he was advised not to drive proved very difficult; to his great credit, D'Arcy voluntarily submitted himself to a driving test, which he passed. He came to rely on the splendid support of the local Social Services, eventually the time came that even with this assistance, living at home on his own was no longer practical. He made his final move to Llys Eleanor.

Even in this final phase of his life, D'Arcy remained true to his principles, and threw himself wholeheartedly into life at his new home, proving a popular figure with staff and fellow residents alike.



He took part in every activity that he could, including an Art project and also a film project in conjunction with the local school.

The end, when it came, was unexpected. He died peacefully in his sleep, and is missed by all who came into contact with him.

His was indeed a life well lived.