



THE ROOSTER

Roos Village Newsletter

No. 16

November 1986

ROOSTER PROFILE

(Roos is full of interesting people. This is the first of what is intended to be a series of profiles of members of our local community. They will appear from time to time but not every month. Suggestions for future subjects will be very welcome)

Lt. Commander H.V. ('Vince') Howard, R.N.R.



Early Life

Born in West Newton in 1904, Vince was the ninth of ten children, five boys and five girls, of whom Vince and two of his sisters survive. His father, originating from London, had a building business in Hull, employing some fifteen men, and married a Hull girl. All the children were sent away to boarding school - and so also in due course were Vince's own children.

The family left West Newton for Hull in 1909. Vince first attended St. Vincent's School, Beverley Road, before going at the age of nine to Christ's Hospital School (The 'Bluecoat' School) at Horsham, Sussex. He left at sixteen and went to sea.

Life Under Sail

Vince joined the merchant navy as an apprentice in 1919 and served on ships for the next forty-three years. His mother paid 100 guineas for his four-year apprenticeship, during which he received no wages but was given an allowance of half a crown a week.

He sailed with the Marine Navigation Company of Sir William Garthwaite which ran ten sailing ships. He sailed later in both the Garthneill and the Garthpool but it was in the Garthsnaid that he embarked on his first voyage, which lasted 2½ years. It took him from Cardiff to Brazil and the Argentine, round the Horn, to East Africa, round the Horn, back to Western Australia, Chile again, round the Horn for the fourth time and eventually home to Cardiff.

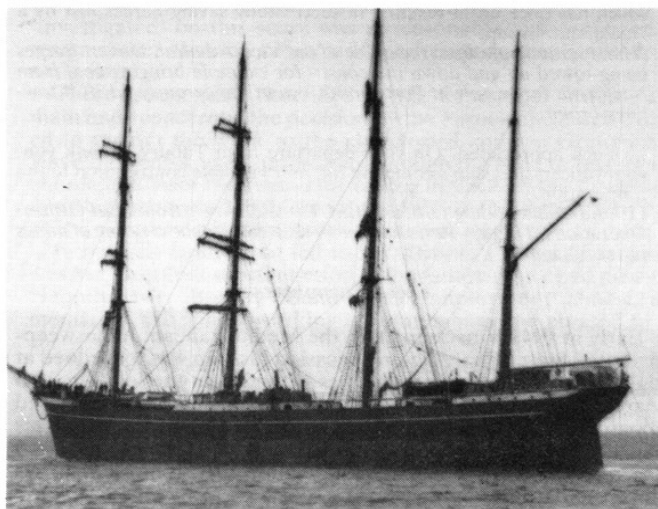
On his first trip he was very seasick within three days. Small for his age, he remembers having to reach up (in both senses) to be sick over the bulwarks. Thereafter he had no further trouble with seasickness. Like other crew members, the eight apprentices were sometimes working in extremely severe conditions - handling wet sails on the yards in icy gales. Life was hard and the food not good.

After the 2½ years of his first voyage, he had the luxury of a fortnight at home before setting off for a further 1½ years sailing back and forth between South America and Australia. This second voyage completed his four-year apprenticeship.

After two months' study at Trinity House in Hull he gained his

Second Mate's ticket in 1923. A further 1½ years at sea was followed by further training and his First Mate's ticket about 1925. He gained his Master's ticket in 1926.

Sail was giving way to steam. Eventually, the Garthwaite company had only one sailing ship left - the Garthpool, the last merchant ship under sail in the United Kingdom - in which Vince served from 1926 to 1928, when he left the company. A year later, eighteen days after leaving King George Dock in Hull, the Garthpool was wrecked off the Cape Verde Islands, north-west Africa.



One Foot Ashore

Vince married in 1929 and bought a house on Holderness Road where he lived until his retirement from the sea. Between 1928 and 1935 he served as Second Mate on three P. & O. steamships, usually from London. Service with P. & O. was more suited to a newly-married man since he was never away for more than two months at a time. His first child, a son, was born in 1930.

During this period, however, work was not always available and about 1930 he had a job to do with ship design at Earls' shipyard in Hull, studying meanwhile for a London B.Sc. degree in Maths and Physics. In 1932 he obtained his Certificate as an Associate of the Institution of Naval Architects.

In 1935 he became a Humber pilot. The job had a double advantage: the remuneration was better than that of Second Mate and he could now be based permanently at home.

Minesweeping

For five years before the Second World War Vince was in the Royal Naval Reserve and, among other annual training courses, was trained in gunnery. A week before the outbreak of war he was called up for naval service.

In an interview at the Admiralty, shore-based jobs were suggested to him but he said that he preferred to go to sea: he would be happy to do anything except mine-sweeping. Within two days he was posted to the Firth of Forth for a course in mine-sweeping. After 28 days spent recovering and dismantling mines, the 25 course-members were dispersed around the United

Kingdom to start their duties.

Vince reported to Vice-Admiral Ramsay at Dover Castle. In spite of the shortness of his training, Vince was made leading officer in charge of five ships that worked together minesweeping from Ramsgate through the Dover Straits to the Isle of Wight. Initially, they had no minesweeping gear but were required to go out daily so that the enemy might be persuaded that minesweeping was going on.

Sweeps were done at night without lights. In diagonal formation, the five ships together were able to sweep a stretch of sea half a mile wide, clearing a path mainly for merchant ships following behind. The minesweepers suffered great losses, 92 being destroyed in 1940 alone. Vince has a faded document recording the recognition that the crews of the minesweepers received at this time:

The Admiralty have noted the splendid work of the Dover M/S Trawlers in clearing enemy minefields while under repeated attacks from the air and heavy gunfire. Please convey to the Officers and men concerned Their Lordships' appreciation of their sustained and gallant action.

(From the Admiralty to Vice-Admiral, Dover, 3rd November 1940)

Other documentary souvenirs include the following:

The Master of the "SIR CLIVE WINGHAM" has requested that his appreciation of the services rendered to him by H.M.S. "WIGAN" (Vince's ship at the time) on 16th September 1941 be placed on record. On this occasion the "SIR CLIVE WINGHAM'S" engines broke down in the vicinity of the West Goodwin Buoy and assistance was requested: this was given by H.M.S. "WIGAN" and he was particularly impressed by, and is most grateful for, the promptness with which assistance arrived and the seamanlike and capable manner in which it was given. (Forwarded "with pleasure" by Vice-Admiral B.H. Ramsay, Commander, Minesweeper Patrol, Dover, to Commanding Officer H.M.T. "Wigan".)

I should like to congratulate you on the seamanship and pertinacity which has once again resulted in successfully saving barges lost by a Haulabout Group.

(Handwritten note from the office of the Vice-Admiral, Dover. Barges being towed up and down the coast - for example bringing coal from Newcastle for vessels at Portsmouth - went dangerously adrift if towlines broke.)

....much appreciated. On your departure from Tilbury I thank you, your officers and ship's company for your valuable contribution to the ...operation.

(To the Commanding Officer, H.M.T. "WIGAN", from Staff Officer/Operations, Tilbury, 10th October 1942. Refers to the clearing of mines in the Thames.)

Close Encounters

Early in 1941 Vince served in the Mediterranean, minesweeping in the Suez Canal. On one occasion his ship was torpedoed at night near Alexandria and he was wounded in the leg. On 28th March, because of a recent radar course, his new skill was used aboard H.M.S. Orion during the battle of Cape Matapan. This engagement - at the south-west tip of mainland Greece - has been described as, "one of the most sweeping British naval victories since the battle of Trafalgar."

When asked what had scared him most during the war, Vince replied that fog was the most nerve-racking enemy to face, especially when working at night without lights. He was reminded of February 1942 when he reported back to Dover Castle after a night at sea and found himself the butt of endless jokes. Under cover of darkness three German warships - the Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prince Eugen - had escaped up the Channel from Brest where they had been pinned down by the Royal Navy and subjected to R.A.F. attacks. They must have passed very close to Vince's minesweepers. "Why didn't you attack them?" he kept being asked. In fact, of course, he had not been aware of them. He was fortunate that the German ships were more concerned to escape than to blow him out of the water.

Preparations for D-Day

In 1943, in preparation for the invasion of Europe, Vince was posted to the Isle of Wight. The new task was to survey four hundred square miles of sea and land: forty miles of the French coastline between Cherbourg and Le Havre and the ten miles of sea offshore. The R.A.F. were simultaneously adding their own dimension: planes approached sections of the same French coastline at zero height and took a series of photographs that were then pieced together into a continuous panoramic strip.

The vessels used for this survey work were motor gunboats, 70 feet long, powered by three diesel engines producing together 4500 h.p. They were fast enough to make quick sorties from the Isle of Wight to the French coast ninety miles away. These were single-boat missions, though colleagues in other gunboats were alerted when one of them was to go in. If a German E-Boat

turned up, the other vessels immediately sped away as decoys, hoping to draw the E-Boat away from the one gunboat going in close. Sometimes contacts were made with the French Resistance. Sometimes individuals were taken on board; sometimes agents were left ashore.

At 6.30 a.m. on 6th June 1944 Vince's gunboat was on station, as ordered just offshore of Mont Fleury. Behind was the great invasion fleet. D-Day had begun. Vince Howard from East Yorkshire felt it appropriate that the soldiers going ashore were from the Green Howards and the East Yorkshire Regiment. He remembers that the sea was somewhat busy. In all, 4,000 ships took part in the landings. After his gunboat had been anchored there a month, Vince was ordered back to the United Kingdom and enjoyed a spot of leave.

Westward to the East

After his leave, he was posted to Glasgow and then flew in stages - Iceland, Greenland, Canada - to the United States. From a New York hotel, he was sent to Charleston, South Carolina, where he joined an American battleship as a passenger, and on 22nd August 1944 arrived at Panama to join his new ship, H.M.S. Lamont, as second in command. As they passed through the Canal, the Captain suffered a heart attack and was put ashore. As the ship emerged into the Pacific, it was confirmed that Vince should take command.

H.M.S. Lamont was designated 'L.S.I.' - Landing Ship, Infantry - and was on loan to the Royal Australian Navy. From August 1944 until almost the end of the war in the Far East, Vince Howard was transporting Australian soldiers up and down the Pacific. The ship could carry 1,000 men and had sixteen boats to put them ashore in a whole series of operations against the Japanese. Vince has a list of over twenty voyages he made, taking in Australia itself and the New Hebrides, New Guinea, New Britain, the Admiralty Islands, Hollandia, the Philippines, and Tahiti.

On 13th June 1945 he was at the Panama Canal again and homeward bound. After putting in to Kingston, Jamaica, he crossed the Atlantic and docked in the Clyde on 5th July. The trip still wasn't over. He berthed in London on 11th July but did not leave H.M.S. Lamont until 5th October - after 430 days away from home. Even then the Royal Navy hung on to him. He was not finally released until 12th April 1946, nearly a year after the end of the war in Europe and seven months after the victory over Japan.

Back Home Again

After his war service Vince worked as a Humber Pilot again until his retirement in 1962.

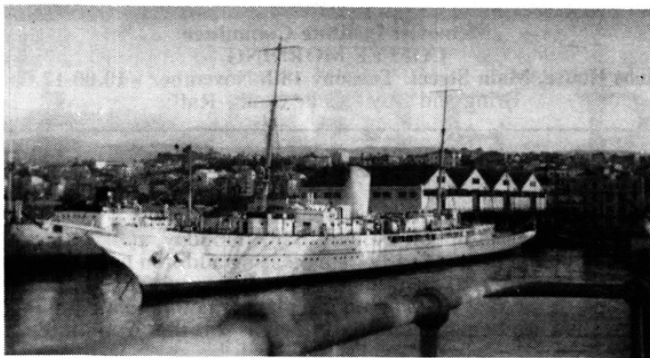
Soon afterwards he and his wife took on the Crown and Anchor pub at Elstronwick. Unfortunately, after two years there, Mrs. Howard developed an illness that, in spite of an operation, later cost her her life. Because of her illness and the lack of additional help, Vince gave up the pub and they came to live in Roos in 1967. Mrs. Howard died in 1971 but Vince still lives in the bungalow they first came to at 13 Pilmar Lane. He keeps up his interest in public houses: as a consumer, he makes a regular check on our two local hosteleries.

Time to Look Back

Though he lives on his own, Vince is surrounded at home not only by souvenirs from his worldwide travels but by reminders of the large family of which he is now the patriarch. His two sons and two daughters all married and have provided both grandchildren and great-grandchildren whose photographs he is justly proud to show you.

One son joined the army and - following an exchange with an Australian soldier - settled and married in Australia, retiring with the rank of Colonel. The other son went to sea, met and married a girl in Finland, and is now a port master at Calais. One daughter, living in Bilton, is herself married to a ship's captain. The other, now in Anglesey, married an R.A.F. officer who was at one time instructor to the Red Arrows display team. He left the R.A.F. as Squadron Leader and is now an airline pilot with British Airways.

There is, of course, much more to tell, many anecdotes that would give even this eventful life-story more life and colour. There are tales of windjammer days; the organised cockroach races on which the crew placed bets and the tragic occasion when a seaman fell from the yards in a storm and could not be rescued. There is Vince's odd experience in 1947 of piloting Hitler's former yacht up the Humber for fuel and sleeping in Eva Braun's bed for a couple of nights before being able to moor at Saltend.



Hitler's yacht: the "Grille"

Most of all, perhaps, Vince remembers the old sailing ships in which he started his seafaring. He is a member of the Cape Horn Society - the Amicale Internationale des Capitaines Cap Horniers - the exclusive and dwindling worldwide brotherhood of men who ventured round Cape Horn under sail. Both national and international reunions are held annually. Vince is now probably the oldest member of the British section. He remembers with wry regret a long visit he paid to his son in Australia in 1979-8. He arrived back home to face a mountain of accumulated mail - among which was an invitation to the international reunion that, unknown to him, had been held in Australia while he was there.

Tuesday, 9th December : Memorial Institute : 8.00 p.m.

GRAND CHRISTMAS DRAW

with Carols and Entertainment by
THE HEADWAY PLAYERS

Proceeds to the Institute Alteration Fund

ROOS PARISH COUNCIL

All members were present at the Parish Council meeting of 13th October, chaired by Councillor K.G. Grant.

The Minutes were approved. Under 'Matters Arising', Councillor Quarmby said that he would contact the Borough Council to have Roos Beck cleaned out. A niece of the late Mr. Brigham Reed had confirmed that the family wished to provide a village seat in his memory and would like it to be sited near his former home. (Later in the meeting it was suggested that the Parish Council might supply a metal plate to record the gift and its purpose. There was also speculation about the seat on the 'village green'; it was in need of repair or replacement - possibly by a seat provided by another donor). Councillor Priest reported that the Institute Committee had received with gratitude the Parish Council's grant of £250 towards their renovation fund.

Planning Applications

Holderness Borough Technical and Development Committee had refused planning consent for the erection of two semi-detached bungalows on the west side of Main Street, Tunstall (Mr. J. Collinson and Mr. J. Mullins), and for the siting of a holiday caravan to the east of Coastguard Cottages, Tunstall (Mr. & Mrs. C.H. Nixon).

The Committee had approved the following: new vehicular access, the resiting of a petrol pump, and the erection of an illuminated sign at North End Garage, Roos; the reconversion of The Elms, Roos, into two dwellings (Mr. P.R. Smith); the extension and internal restructuring of Roos Memorial Institute; and the change of use of premises at Glebe Farm, Hilston, to serve as a joiner's workshop and builder's yard (an outline application by Mr. R.M. Dennis and Mr. C. Wardle).

There was much discussion of a new application - by James Roberts Developments - for permission to build on land at South Park. It had been assumed that Phase 2 of the development at South Park would include three houses with access from Elm Garth. At first the application had been for five houses; subsequently this application was withdrawn and replaced by one for three but with space left for an amenity area. Parish Councillors were suspicious of the developers' intentions. They were anxious that there should be no road link between Elm Garth and South Park and that only three houses should have access from Elm Garth. They felt that the designated amenity area might at a later time be the subject of a further application, whether for access or for more building. It was decided to request a deferment of any decision until further details and assurances were given and a plan was to be requested showing the boundaries of Phase 2 of the South Park development.

In the public session after the end of the meeting a resident asked about the old school clock; it was explained that the clock

was still awaiting repair and replacement in its former position. Councillor Priest expressed appreciation of the work of Mr. Alan Bowden who had cut the grass on the Parish Council land along Pilmar Lane.

ROOS PARISH COUNCIL

Monday 10th November : Memorial Institute : 7.30 p.m.

Members of the public always welcome

CHURCH RESTORATION : SECOND RESIGNATION

At the end of September the Community Rural Aid scheme to restore Roos Church saw the resignation of the Field Officer, Mr. Brian Brophy. This followed the resignation in June of Mr. Barrie Broom, churchwarden, who until that time had been acting as the Church's liaison officer with CRA. The two persons most committed to fulfilling the original agreement between the Church and CRA have now gone.

Mr. Brophy's resignation was part of a chain of events described in the September newsletter. The article spelt out in some detail the problems that had arisen and it proved unpalatable in some quarters. Someone in the village complained to the Area Manager of CRA, Mr. Puckering. As a result, Mr. Puckering began to investigate the allegation that Mr. Brophy had shown a "confidential" document to "the press".

In fact, the document in question was the contract between the Church and CRA. It had already been made public by Mr. Broom when, as churchwarden, he displayed it on the church noticeboard. Mr. Broom had explained its main terms to 'The Rooster'. All that Mr. Brophy did was to provide sight of the CRA copy as confirmation of Mr. Broom's account of information that had already been made public.

The charge against Mr. Brophy that he revealed a secret document can, therefore, scarcely be sustained. He felt that to be 'investigated' on this score was unreasonable and preferred to resign rather than be subjected to an enquiry that ignored the main issues.

Those issues were described in the September article. The main issue concerned the decision by the Parochial Church Council to restrict the work to the churchyard and the Oratory and leave the church itself untouched - though the need to restore the church had been the reason for calling in CRA in the first place. Another point was the failure of the PCC to fulfill their own part of the contract in a number of significant respects.

It was this failure that led to Mr. Broom's resignation and it was Mr. Brophy's substantiation of the failure that led to his own. Happily, Mr. Brophy found other employment almost immediately. He is now working at Immingham and pleased to be so.

This present article is the fourth since August to deal with the subject of the Church and CRA. Perceptive readers may have noticed that information included has been attributed mainly to two people who have now resigned but there has been nothing authoritative from either the Church or the Area Manager of Community Rural Aid. In fact, every effort has been made to obtain clarification from these sources.

A draft of the first article was submitted to the Rector on 11th July and he was invited to correct any errors and comment in any way he liked. He wrote back to decline the invitation, with the comment:

"Such articles, in my experience, lead to so much confusion and misunderstanding that they can, in fact, become the source of creating soured situations."

When he was advised that the article would still go ahead, he paid a visit on 14th July. Everything he said was to be regarded as confidential. This was awkward but the request has been honoured: nothing that the Rector said has been printed unless the information came independently from another source.

After the first article appeared, the Rector paid another visit on 20th August. A document was shown - again in confidence - concerning the Church's financial arrangements. Of course, it could not be made public. The Rector reiterated his distaste for publicity. He thought a village newsletter could be dangerous: too much information disseminated in a small community could cause trouble.

Similarly, when Mr. Puckering, CRA Area Manager, was investigating Mr. Brophy after the September article, he rang "The Rooster" for information. Every opportunity was given him to correct or supplement the article. A copy was sent to him and two attempts were made to contact him by phone so that he could give the CRA view in the October newsletter. He was never available, never rang back, and did not acknowledge receipt of the copy.

In these circumstances, one can only say that the accounts given in "The Rooster" have been as true and as complete as confidentiality and lack of official comment would permit. There are questions still not answered. Perhaps one day the whole truth will make us free.

GRAND CHRISTMAS FAYRE

in aid of Roos School P.T.A.
28th November at 7.30 p.m. in the School Hall
Toy & Book Stalls - Teddy Bear Tombola - Cake Raffle
SEE FATHER CHRISTMAS!
Admission: Adults 25p - Children 10p

ROOS VILLAGE APPRAISAL

As reported in the press, the Roos Village Appraisal received an award of £25.00 in Village Ventures 1986, the competition run by the Community Council of Humberside with sponsorship from Shell UK and Hull and Grimsby Newspapers. The presentation ceremony at Tickton on 17th October was very fully attended and the range of quality of the competition entries were most impressive.

Members of the Appraisal Group met later to discuss how to use the cash prize. Although a number of possibilities were considered, there was general agreement that the Memorial Institute's Renovation Fund was the local cause most urgently in need of support. Since the Group already had a balance of £10.00 left, the Treasurer, Mr. Alan Bowden, will shortly be passing to the Institute Committee a donation of £35.00.

L.H.

ROOS YOUTH CLUB

DISCO

Friday, 28th November : 7.30-10.00 Memorial Institute
Admission 60p. Under 21 all welcome. Refreshments available

WANTED!

6' Snooker and/or Pool Table. Any Electronic Games
Offers welcome - as gifts or purchases

ROOS MEMORIAL INSTITUTE

The Safari Supper rescheduled for 24th October unfortunately had to be cancelled owing to lack of support. Those who had bought tickets had to be disappointed because total numbers were too few to make the venture viable.

However, money-raising for the Renovation Fund continues - see the advertisements in this newsletter. At present the Fund stands at just over £1,900, thanks to much hard work and some generous donations (a recent one for £100). By Christmas we should have raised well over £2,000 towards the target of £3,500.

ROOS ARMS A.R.L.F.C.

21st September - Beverley 42 : Roos 12
Tries: Dent 2; Goals: Jumps 2
Man of the match: Andy Dent

5th October - Charlston 21 : Roos 18
Tries: West 2, Jumps 1; Goals: Jumps 3
Man of the match: Ian Fenton

12th October - Beverley 36 : Roos 16
Tries: West 2, Fenton 1; Goals: Jumps 2
Man of the match: Dennis Gale

19th October - Roos 10 : Charlston 10
Tries: Gale 1, Palfaman 1; Goals: Jumps 1
Man of the match: Kenny Knaggs

Despite three defeats and a draw, the Roos team can take comfort from the fact that they are gradually showing improved form. The two matches against Charlston were the pick of the latest fixtures. Roos can count themselves unlucky not to have won both of them. The away encounter was a tremendous spectacle with Roos producing several memorable back movements. Centres Ian Fenton and Steve West were always dangerous when in possession. However, the outstanding memory was some marvellous goal-kicking by Steve Jumps.

The home match against Charlston was equally exciting. It was easily the best Roos performance of the season with the whole team playing their part.

Players to take the eye so far this season are: Dennis Gale, Kenny Knaggs, Andy Dent, Steve Jumps and Steve Karsera.

EASTFIELD TUESDAY CLUB

On behalf of the Tuesday Club I wish to express thanks to Mrs. Margaret Hoe for all the work and help she has given over several years. Thank you, Margaret.

Thanks also go to Mrs. Rose Hodgson for her kind support.
V. Pepper

Memorial Institute Committee COFFEE MORNING

Roos House, Main Street. Tuesday 18th November - 10.00-12.00
Bring and Buy - Cake Stall - Raffle

PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE

The Treasurer, Mr. Gordon Green, reports that, in spite of the discouraging weather on August Bank Holiday, net proceeds from the Fun Day totalled £745, a pleasing addition to the Committee's funds. At a recent meeting plans were discussed for the erection of the first building on the playing field and a planning application is being submitted. Details of the Committee's scheme for development of the field will be given in the next newsletter.

ROOS GUIDES

The Guides will be holding a Barry Bullamore Gift Party on Monday 10th November at 7.30 p.m. in the School Hall. The wide selection of gifts on show will include basketware, macrame, pot-pourri, pottery, caneware, leatherware, toys and many more. All gifts will be competitively priced. Admission is free and tea and biscuits will be available. There will be a raffle. Please support our fund-raising event.

J. Jackson

COMING EVENTS

November

- 5 Bonfire Night (Institute Committee). Black Horse car park, 6.30
- 10 Parish Council Meeting. Memorial Institute, 7.30
- Roos Guides Gift Party. School Hall, 7.30
- 12 Roos W.I. Annual Meeting. Memorial Institute, 7.15
- 18 Institute Committee Coffee Morning. Roos House, 10.00-12.00
- 28 PTA Christmas Fayre. Roos School, 7.30
- Youth Club Disco. Memorial Institute, 7.30-10.00

December

- 3 Roos W.I. Memorial Institute. 7.15. Christmas Entertainment - Mr. K. Osborne
- 9 Christmas Draw. The Headway Players. Memorial Institute, 8.00 p.m.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

In September no fewer than seven different classes opened at Roos School, a larger number than ever before. The increase was owing to evidence of demand in the village - shown, for example, in the results of the Village Appraisal - that were passed to the F.E. Organiser at Withernsea, Mr. Alan Scott.

Some classes are doing quite well. There are eight registered students for French and ten each for German and Aerobics. However, Mrs. Wallis's course in Flower Arranging (requested by the W.I.) has been struggling with only five students.

Unfortunately some classes were badly supported and have had to close. Two were closed on the very first evening: Mr. Helliwell's course "A Good Read" and Mrs. Blashill's Mixed Crafts course. Later, Miss Kirkwood's Embroidery and Needlework class also failed to attract sufficient numbers. Mr. Scott is naturally disappointed that some additional classes at Roos have attracted so little interest, especially since other villages have been asking why Roos should be so favoured.

Some residents, after the event, have expressed disappointment at the class closures - they had considered attending them. Early registration is the only way to ensure that a class proves viable. And if there are questions to be asked about courses, ask them before the classes begin not after they have folded.