

Who remembers *Pegasus*?

Old Cestrefeldians who were at school between the mid-1950s and (probably) late 1960s may remember taking part in a competition named *Pegasus*. This was set up in 1955 by the borough education department for the 'promotion and encouragement of education' in all the secondary schools in Chesterfield, with funding provided by a gift of £1,900 by Violet Markham CH (1872-1959) as one of the last of her many services to education in the town. Each year a subject was set, on which pupils could write an essay or produce a piece of art or craft work. It was not an inter-school competition: each school awarded a prize for the best work done in that school, but the winning entries were exhibited at an event for the borough as a whole, opened by a distinguished visitor. The first exhibition was held at St James's Hall in 1956, the second at St Helena School, and the third at Newbold Green School.

A folder of Miss Markham's papers, now in the Derbyshire Record Office but previously in Chesterfield Library, includes a photograph of Mr Arthur Greenough, the Borough Education Officer and some William Rhodes School pupils, taken by Sheffield Newspapers at the 1958 exhibition, which was opened by Sir George Barnes, the Principal of the University College of North Staffordshire (now Keele University).

Does anyone remember when the last *Pegasus* competition was held (it was still going in the mid-1960s but may not have lasted much longer)?

One final point: although the *Pegasus* competitions may have lasted only a decade or so, the charity which held the funds given by Miss Markham was not wound up. It still exists, in the hands of the county council as trustee, and the funds now amount to over £65,000, none of which has been spent for many years. A small group of concerned OCs are pursuing this matter, in the hope of ensuring that that this money is applied to a charitable object related to that for which Miss Markham entrusted it to the Borough Council over half a century ago. Miss Markham also gave £250 each to the Technical College and Art College as part of her *Pegasus* scheme, and these two funds (also untouched for many years) now total over £15,000. Arguably, this money should be transferred to Chesterfield College.

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