



## OLD WINBURNIANS NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2017

Dear OWs,

Some years ago I arranged a week long educational visit to London for a group of my Dorset students. We stayed at the Youth Hostel adjacent to the beautiful Holland Park. Aside from the Thames boat trips, museum and theatre visits I accompanied them one morning to Westminster Bridge where one pupil read aloud William Wordsworth's exquisite poem that he wrote in 1802 'Upon Westminster Bridge' -

'Earth has not anything to show more fair:  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty.  
This city now doth, like a garment wear  
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie . . . .

And so on. It was for me and, I hope, for some of them at least, a special and moving moment. I wonder how many of the twenty or so recalled that moment together on March 22nd, 2017, when a fanatical Islamist terrorist drove a car at an estimated 50mph along Westminster bridge killing and injuring so many innocent victims.

Just one week later, our Prime Minister, Theresa May, informed the House of Commons just yards from the bridge that she had invoked Article 50 of the European Union's key treaty, setting in motion the process whereby Britain is set to leave the EU.

Neither of the two dramatic events would have been comprehensible to Wordsworth though we should remember the great poet was living and writing in no less momentous times - 50 years into the Industrial Revolution and Britain about to resume a long and painful war with Post Revolutionary and Napoleonic France.

As OWs we have witnessed innumerable political, military, economic and social changes in our own lifetimes. Many of these happenings would have seemed inexplicable and incomprehensible to the boys and girls we once were in those far-off days at Wimborne Grammar School. Yet two incontrovertible truths remain in our lives - our gratitude to the school and the teachers for the education we received that shaped our futures - and the bonds of friendship that survive between us still. This issue contains many fascinating memories. I hope you enjoy reading them. I hope too that many of you will be with us on July 1. If you cannot make it, dear friends, then raise a glass at 2pm and drink a toast to 'Absent Friends'.

Alan R. Bennett (on behalf of your committee)

### FORTHCOMING REUNIONS

SUMMER REUNION Saturday 1st July 2017

CHRISTMAS REUNION Saturday 2nd December 2017

SUMMER REUNION Saturday 7th July 2018

## WINTER REUNION 2016

Alan Bennett, Jim Brewster, Wendy Bundy nee Baker, Brian Bundy guest of Wendy Bundy, Paul Burry and guest, Eunice Carnall nee Chadd, Roderick Cheese, Robin Christopher and guest Hazel Christopher, Peter Clarke, Mrs A. Cooper nee Hallett, Robert Copelin, Desmond Cox, Peter Cox, Janet Coy nee Dowd, John Dacombe, Norah Dyson nee Henfield, Anthony Elgar, Roy Feltham, Mervyn Frampton and guest Jackie Chubb, Brian Glover, Tony Gould, Francis Hackforth, Alan Hall, Keith Harvey, Bill Haskell, Sue Hatherley, John Hill, Carolyn Kamcke, John Broughton, Alan Maitland and guest June Maitland, Ron Mansfield, Patricia Marshall nee Unsworth, Maria Martin nee Limm, Graham McNeill, Victor Moss, Jennifer Moss nee Day, Diana Moss nee Anderson, James Moss guest of Mrs Moss, K. E. Newman, Ken Nicklen and guest Fay Nicklen, Brian Pearce, Graham Powell and guest Hazel Powell, Christine Price nee Richmond, Terry Randall, Betty Read nee White, Ann Richmond nee Mitchell, Ian Rogers, John Singleton, Derek Stevens, Margaret Stokes nee Budden, Cynthia Tanner nee Streets, Ken Taylor, Prof Bob White, Helen White nee Filcher, Eddie Wood, Jose Wood guest of Mr Wood.

## APOLOGIES RECEIVED FROM

Ken Bernthal, Faith Elford (nee Hawes), Edgar Francis, Dr John Guy, John (David) Harper, Lorna Miles, Christopher Peters, Peter Russell, Ron White, Peter Douch, Sandra Cox, Morgan Antell, Sue Coombes, David & Janet Finnemore, David Park, David Roberts

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## ESSENTIAL ADDRESSES

Chairman	Tony Gould	1 Manor Cottages, Tolpuddle DT2 7ES
Vice Chairman	Ken Taylor	31 Canford View Drive, Wimborne BH21 2OW
Treasurer	Alan Maitland	Coles Farm, Milborne St. Andrews, Blandford DT11 0JL
Membership	John Guy	Gateways, Gaunts Common, Wimborne BH21 4JN
Newsletter	Alan R. Bennett	11 Hawk Close, Pilford Heath, Colehill, Wimborne BH21 2NW
Web Site	David Finnemore	4 Purbeck Gardens, Poole BH14 0QS
Memorabilia Secretary	Derek Stevens	2 Remedy Gate, Woodlands, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 8NG
Publicity Secretary	Betty Read	10 Counter Close, Blandford, Dorset DT11 7XJ

## FULL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alan Bennett	11 Hawk Close, Pilford Heath, Wimborne Dorset BH21 2NW
Tony Bletsoe	6 Belle Vue Walk, West Parley, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 8QB
Tony Gould	1 Manor Cottages, Tolpuddle Dorset DT2 7ES
John Guy	Gateways, Gaunts Common, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 4JN
Bill Haskell	10 Counter Close, Blandford, Dorset DT11 7XJ
Carolyn Kamcke	4 Pine Close, Ameysford Road, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 9QX
Alan Maitland	Coles Farm, Milborne St. Andrew, Blandford, Dorset DT11 0JL
Betty Read	10 Counter Close, Blandford, Dorset DT11 7XJ
Ann Richmond	70 Erica Drive, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3TG
Ken Taylor	31 Canford View Drive, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2UW

## CO-OPTED MEMBERS

David Finnemore	4 Purbeck Gardens, Poole, Dorset BH14 0QS
Graham Powell	42 St. Peters Court, St Peters Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JU
Derek Stevens	2 Remedy Gate, Woodlands, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 8NG

**NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OF THE OLD WINBURNIANS ASSOCIATION -  
MONDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER, 2017**

**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
THE OLD WINBURNIANS ASSOCIATION WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE  
AT COLEHILL CRICKET CLUB**

**EVERYONE IS MOST WELCOME AND SO WHY NOT PLAN TO BE IN  
THE WIMBORNE AREA ON THAT DAY!?**

**THE MEETING IS USUALLY QUITE SHORT. ANY ISSUE MAY  
BE RAISED AND WE WOULD WELCOME POINTS FOR DISCUSSION UNDER  
“ANY OTHER BUSINESS”. THE OFFICERS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE UP  
FOR ELECTION OR RE-ELECTION. WHY NOT BECOME INVOLVED BY  
STANDING FOR THE COMMITTEE. YOU MAY NOMINATE ON THE DAY  
OR IN WRITING PRIOR TO THE MEETING.**

**TONY GOULD, CHAIR of the OWA**

**OLD WINBURNIANS COMMITTEE MEETING (13th MARCH 2017)  
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY REPORT  
covering period : 24th OCTOBER 2016 to 12th MARCH 2017**

**NEW MEMBERS**

Michael Coffin (70 - 77) - lives in Fareham, Hants,  
David Evans (51 - 56) - lives in West Wales,  
Maurice French (64 - 72) - re-joined (lives in New Zealand),  
David Reeks (61 - 68) - lives in East Devon.

**DECEASED MEMBERS**

Richard E Curtis (46 - 52) - reported by Christopher Peters,  
Rodney Hurt (40 - 50) - reported by Len Pearce,  
Leonard Stacey (37 - 43) - reported by Len Pearce,  
Brian Webb (42 - 48) - reported by Andy Webb (son),  
John Philpott (42 - 47) - reported by Derek Stevens.

More information elsewhere in the Newsletter.

**JOHN GUY (1963 - 71)**

## **GEORGE LEONARD PEARCE - AN APPRECIATION.**

**(1936 - 41)**

Len retired last year as Secretary of the Old Winburnians Association (OWA). He had been associated with the OWA since its re-establishment in the 1990s and worked very hard to ensure that former pupils of the Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Wimborne were kept in touch with events taking place in the Wimborne area and furthermore that they were able to keep up with old friends. For this we are all very grateful to Len Pearce as well as to others and so herewith a short account of Len's life in appreciation of this work.

Len, as he has always been known has "Wimborne" running through his veins like a lead through a pencil. He was born at the top end of East Borough and his family has lived in the area since anyway, the seventeenth century which is as far back as records go but prior to this date people on lower incomes moved about very little. So it seems his family have lived in the area forever, in the Nineteenth Century his grandfather, George Pearce was Keeper of the Pounds, Town Cryer and Bailiff of the Court Leet in Wimborne, all minor functions of local governance. Apart from his Air Force Service in the Second World War Len has lived within sound of the Minster Bells all his life.

Initially Len attended school in King's Street and then at the age of seven went to Wimborne Boys School just off West Borough. He was awarded a Scholarship to WGS and at that time in the 1930's was obliged to undertake a two-stage exam, part of it at his school and the then further invigilation at the Grammar School. (There was no 11+ in those days). Len is extremely reluctant to say it but he was obviously a bright pupil who at not quite sixteen years of age got a job as a clerk with the Pearl Assurance Society at their office in Wimborne in 1940. The Headmaster "Tipper" Airey was not pleased that Len was leaving earlier than was expected and there was apparently "a bit of a barney" between the Head and Len's mother but as Len says, she got her way.

He worked at the insurance company for two years and then went into the RAF under the Pilot/Navigator/Bomber Scheme and learned to fly at the Perth Flying School in Scotland. He was convinced that the Second World War would end before he qualified and so transferred to a shorter course to train as a Flight Engineer on the "Halifax" Bomber. Len got his Flying Brevet in 1945 but did not fly over Europe. After the War ended, Len like hundreds of aircrew was redundant. He eventually served the most of the rest of his time in a base near Trowbridge. He was demobbed in 1947.

The Pearl Assurance Society were obliged to take him back as an employee but not necessarily in the same job, so he was allocated as an agent in the Boscombe area. After a year or so he got a job at the Ministry of National Insurance in Bournemouth and it was at this time that he met Diana at a dance in the old Woodlands Hall in Parkstone. A year went by and the Ministry proposed to post him to Mansfield in Nottinghamshire but Len wasn't having any of that and so he resigned. He got a job with Bournemouth Corporation as it was then called, in Bournemouth's Town Planning Department. A few years later he became a Town Planning Assistant. Len stayed with the local authority for the rest of his working life from 1949 until 1985 and eventually after promotion rose to be "Number Three" in the Department. Whilst working Len became a student with the Open University and was awarded a BA Degree in 1981.

Len married Diana in 1951 and members of the OWA will know of the wonderful help and support Diana has always given her husband. They have two daughters Jaqueline and Christine who both live in the Wimborne area and four adult grandchildren who are aged between twenty- four and thirty- two. Len and Diana also have two great-grandchildren. Len is rightly proud of the achievements of his family which enjoys very close ties and indeed one daughter popped in to take her mother to the hairdresser when I visited to get the information needed to write this piece. The family photographs in the sitting-room bear witness to the close association within the Pearce family.

In 1949 Len started to work with the Air Training Corps in Wimborne which he did for over twenty- five years and of this work with young people he is justly proud. He was the C.O. from 1958 until 1966 when he moved to command the Poole Squadron until 1975.

Sometime in 1994 Len received a telephone call from Maurice Herridge who said a group of former WGS pupils were thinking of getting the OWA started again and as a consequence an informal meeting took place at Wimborne Rugby Club pavilion. Derek Stevens, Doug Williams and almost certainly Gordon Richards, Tony Bletsoe and Graham Powell were present. In this way the Old Winburnians started up again in a relatively informal way. A hard core of ex-pupils got together and at Christmas decided to have a pub lunch and Len recalls the first being at the Churchill Arms in Leigh.

The 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding by the Lady Margaret Beaufort of a chantry for boys (in honour of her parents the Duke and Duchess of Somerset who lived at Kingston Lacy) in Wimborne was the occasion for a Commemoration Service at the Minster followed by a celebration lunch which took place at the Social Club of Flight Refuelling at Merley. Further functions were suggested and in this way the OWA emerged into the form it takes today with regular committee meetings and a summer and a winter lunch each year as well as other social activities.

As Secretary, Len was heavily involved in the last Commemoration Service held in the Minster on 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2009, when a Memorial to Lady Margaret Beaufort was dedicated in the Trinity Chapel close to the site of the original Chantry as a reminder of this royal inheritance.

When all is said and done Len's life has been one of commitment to family life and service to the community. What a blessing it has been that we have been the beneficiaries of this hard work in the Old Winburnians Association.

Anthony Gould (1951 - 57)

Len in company with his beloved Diana



## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY GOES “DOWN UNDER” TO RECRUIT!

At the end of 2016, our membership secretary and his wife Avril made a holiday “trip of a lifetime” to New Zealand. Having arrived in Auckland in early November, before their organised tour began, he was able to meet with former QEGS pupil and Old Winburnian, Maurice French (64-72) (seen in the photo below on the right) and his family. They now live on the eastern coast of the North Island about a one hour drive north of Auckland.



They all enjoyed a really great afternoon on the viewing deck of Auckland’s Sky Tower, which is 328 metres (1076 feet) tall. As you can imagine the views are stunning !



Having also enjoyed a very convivial evening in one of the waterfront restaurants, using all his powers of persuasion, our membership secretary managed to re-recruit Maurice to the Old Winburnians – I don’t think it was due to the fact that, as an overseas member, he gets the newsletter for free provided he receives it by e-mail !!

**John Guy (1963-71)**

## WINGS OVER WESSEX

By **BOB WHITE (1951-57)**

The inspiration given by Joe Kerswell and Bill Streets pointed me in the science direction and, as noted in my "Desert Island Discs" article, on leaving school I entered employment at the Royal Aircraft Establishment Farnborough. I was fortunate that my first post there as a Scientific Assistant involved being a Flight Observer, the training for which involved such activities as being subjected to rapid decompression in an altitude chamber and being fired up a structure rather like a jib of a crane in an ejection seat. Ironically, I never flew in an aircraft with an ejection seat, most of my time in the air being in a Lincoln, a development of the Lancaster bomber, sometimes in the rear turret. This gave me an interest in aircraft and flying. Years later at Southampton University I joined the Wessex Flying Group and learned to fly in a Chipmunk. The reasons for my next aeronautical involvement are still not clear to me but I bought a set of drawings and in the garage and workshop in the garden built an aircraft, a Gardan Minicab, which I have been flying for the past twenty two years from an airstrip in a particularly beautiful part of Hampshire.



**Bob landing his homebuilt aeroplane at Compton Abbas**

Flight in a light aircraft involves visits to the smaller airfields, usually with grass runways, and much touring around the countryside to view the beauty of our great land. This is punctuated by occasional investigations of the type which pilots seem compelled to carry out; an example of this was to establish the height limit of the aircraft. It comfortably reached twelve thousand feet (about two and a half miles up) over the Severn estuary contrary to the rules concerning the pilot needing to be on oxygen above ten thousand feet and other regulatory matters.

Typically, between using the archaic method of starting the aircraft by swinging the propeller and arriving back at the home airstrip, an away landing might have been made at an airfield in our region. Compton Abbas, Dunkeswell, Henstridge, Old Sarum and Sandown (IOW) are all worth a visit. However, I suggest that the restaurant at Compton Abbas airfield is also worth going to by road even if you are not overwhelmingly interested in aeroplanes. If the visibility is good, why not drive after lunch to Win Green and with the aid of the plaque at the top see some of your favourite places in Dorset and perhaps Hampshire.

In flight, many memorable moments occur, some of which may be related. In these times of computers in every household, there is no excuse for not having comprehensive pre-flight information concerning unusual activities, such as airshows, in your area of intended flight and this is gleaned from NOTAMS (notices to airmen) issued by the National Air Traffic Agency (NATS).

About forty years ago it was not so easy to get such information and as a recently qualified private pilot on a cross - country flight I was amazed to see the Red Arrows pass beneath me in formation. In conversation with older pilots I have over the years found that this was not a unique experience!

Weather conditions and sunlight are significant in what one sees in the air. Flights on good, clear calm days are usually memorable. For example, on a perfect Summer evening many years ago I was at 4000 ft. over Shaftesbury and in the evening sunshine I could see the Westerly orientated face of chalk pit twenty eight miles away near Romsey which was my landmark for my home airstrip, a signpost in the air. At the other end of a day, during an early morning flight from Goodwood to Compton Abbas, low level fog banks had formed in the hollows of the earth; they are wonderful to see, and silhouetted above a fog bank about a thousand feet below I saw a World War One replica fighter, an SE5A (our best fighter in WWI). I would have been invisible to the fighter pilot because I had the Sun behind me - the old rule "beware of the Hun in the Sun" was brought to mind.

I recently followed a steam engine train on the Watercress Line. Throttled back to about sixty knots at one thousand feet above and behind the engine I could see the glow of the fire when the Fireman opened the firebox door. Notes of events such as these do not need to be written in the Pilot's logbook, although they usually are, as they remain in the memory.

My most privileged flight was in the Chipmunk in June 1984 with a gentleman who had been a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps in the First World War. He had not touched the controls of an aeroplane for over sixty years but his skills were still clear whilst he was flying the aircraft; after about an hour we landed whilst on the controls together. We then stood in the shade of a hedge at the airstrip on that summer day and he told me about some of his flying experiences whilst training and on duty during the war. At my request he signed my pilot's logbook. I treasure the entry. It was a memorable day, which I shall never forget, with a quiet, modest man of historic aviation experience.

I am sometimes accused of living somewhat in the past but the past greatly influences what we are today. It is impossible to learn to fly by reading a book on the subject. One has to be taught and to be allowed by the good instructor to get close to disaster in order to appreciate limits in flying. The skills of today's pilots have come via person to person transmission from the early pioneers of flight who took great risks in order to find out how to fly. Just think about the fact that when people such as Cody and the Wright brothers flew for the first time they had no significant knowledge of how to control an aeroplane. They survived, many did not. I am so pleased to have acquired a few of those skills from a good instructor and have had so much pleasure from time in the air. If your family cannot think of what to give you for Christmas or Birthday a joint effort between them could give you a "trial lesson" at your local airfield. Beware, however, because flying in fight aircraft is addictive but note that there are a few private pilots in the UK who are still flying at the age of ninety years. At the other end of the age scale I took two grandchildren aged twelve and eight flying during the summer holidays. When they returned to school, did their classmates believe what they had been doing in their Grandad's aeroplane? I guess not.

(Written on an airfield somewhere in England)

## MEMORIES

## EUNICE CARNALL (nee CHADD) 1955 - 62)

A year or so ago, I was asked to make a contribution to the Wimburnian Newsletter. Three articles in the Autumn 2016 issue have spurred me on to do so, as they have brought memories to my mind.

I was born in 1943, the second child of my parents who rented rooms in a doctor's house in Avenue Road. When I was a toddler we moved down the road to a house which had been part of a school and then had been used by the military during the war. Mrs Large, who lived three doors away had attended this school many years earlier. Miss Beale, a teacher at St Johns School lived two doors away and Mr Lovell, the head teacher at the Council School, lived opposite. Mr Williams (Tarzan) resided across the road and Thomas Hardy's home was nearby (though that was before my time!)

My first school, St Johns, was just down the road, and it was here that I met Cynthia Streets (Tanner) whose article in the WNL is the first of my three connections. Our birthdays are a week apart and we are still friends after 68 years!

Cynthia and I were part of the change around of schools and from St Johns we spent a year at the Minster School. Then we attended the Council School for a year before going to QES. After leaving school in 1962, I spent a year pupil teaching at Red House School in Salisbury prior to a three-year Teacher Training course at the College of Sarum St Michael in the Cathedral Close.

I attended the Gospel Hall at Eastbrook, Wimborne with my family. It was situated opposite the cricket pitch (which leads me to the second connection with the Autumn issue article.) The earlier hall (before my time) was in what is now the bed department of Tappers and the windows there are indicative of such a building. After the First World War an army hut was acquired from Blandford Camp and placed nearer the road. Often during the evening service on a Sunday, the Cricket Club would be playing a match and we would hear the crack of leather on willow and then a cheer would go up followed closely by clapping. It was at the Hall in the 50s that I met my future husband who visited his grandparents who also attended.

On leaving college I married Reg who by then was practising dentistry in Shaftesbury, where we still live. We have three children, Elspeth, Priscilla and Garfield, who has taken over the practice, and six grandchildren. This year we celebrated our Golden Wedding Anniversary. Attached is a photo of me with my father with a glimpse of the cricket field in the background; it just seems so poignant.



Reg and Eunice Carnall



Eunice and her father arriving - with the old cricket pitch in the background

For some years we have enjoyed long-distance walking. This year we did the Hardy Way, a 200-odd mile walk through and around the Dorset countryside. This brings me to the third memory that came from the article in the autumn issue. I have always been intrigued with the old road leading into Pye Corner. Apparently it was the old road into Wimborne prior to Julian's Bridge and Julian's Road. Part of our walk started at the old White Mill Bridge at Sturminster Marshall; we wound round to Pamphill and eventually to the Old Vine, across the fields,(the cross-country route!) and came into the derelict Cuthbury Allotments. Yes, we approached the Old Road; I am so glad we experienced this before another building project materialises and obliterates the site as has happened with the cricket pitch. After this we walked up to Redcotts Lane and had our picnic lunch in the recreation ground; what memories of playing hockey on chilly days! It is no wonder Hardy loved this county of ours as much as we do. Although so much has changed in the meanwhile, a great deal of the countryside is surely unchanged.

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### **A NOTE ON THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH in 1952**

I well remember 6th February 1952. I was a pupil at the Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Wimborne and it was a normal day until an announcement of great significance was made. It came about in the following way. The lesson before mid-morning break was just about to end and the teacher referred to the fact that we may have noticed that the flag on the flagpole situated in the playground was flying at "half- mast". Mr Holman went on to advise that this was because "the King had died". It was then explained that we had a new monarch who we soon found out was to be known as Queen Elizabeth II. Little did I realise that she would still be the Monarch sixty-five years later when I would be in the second half of my seventies and not only a father and a grandfather but a great-grandfather as well!! I recall saying in the playground to one of my classmates that we had now lived in two reigns. Such was my sense of history even at that age we in our class all having been born in the reign of George VI!

The new reign and monarch were of enormous significance which was given great emphasis because of the name of our school. The school had been founded in 1485 by Lady Margaret Beaufort (the mother of Henry VII) but as we are all aware named after her great- granddaughter Queen Elizabeth in a rash of educational expansion and re-designation later on in the Tudor period. The Governors and staff at the Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School appeared to bask in the reflected glory of having a name which was shared by this new monarch and the Headmaster Mr Neil most certainly referred to the fact a number of times.

So how do we feel all these years later? We can I believe, rejoice in the amazingly long period of time in which the Queen has been on the throne and go on to wish Her Majesty all best wishes for the future.

Anthony Gould (1951 - 57)

### **ANY SPELLING ERRORS IN THIS ISSUE**

A number of the articles, submitted to me have, of necessity, been 'scanned' - hence different print styles. 'Scanning ' also makes it difficult to correct any spelling errors that creep in to the text - so, apologies, for those you spot.

**Paul Burry  
(1952 - 57)**

The first time I walked up School Lane was in the Spring of 1952 when I came to Wimborne to sit my Eleven Plus. In September that year I joined Class 1A. Hitherto I had been at a small mixed preparatory school where girls outnumbered the boys by about two to one. QE was different. Perhaps the first lasting impression was that the 6th formers standing in front at Morning Assembly were all adults.

There followed five busy years. What do I still remember? Cold winter days when the free milk froze in the crates stacked up in the playground. Long summer afternoons on the top floor of the 'new' building when the time dragged on and on. The appeal of the English, History and Geography lessons. The struggle with Maths and Science. 'Pirates' sessions in the gym. Word by word repetition of the Goon Show broadcast of the night before. Trying to get out of having a shower after Games up at the sports ground. The after lunch gathering in the main playground where, as well as 'Fives'; other 'games' took place. Does anyone else remember the electrical generator? If my memory is correct, a hand held device was cranked to produce an electric current. Those taking part in the 'game' formed a circle with hands joined and at each end the terminals on the device were firmly held. The current passed right around the circle until someone let go of the hand of their neighbour. As a result, the current then earthed giving the last person in the interrupted line a surprisingly hefty jolt! In winter, there was the chance for sliding competitions on long stretches of ice. At one time there were also contests to see how far a Dinky Toy car could travel. Sounds simple but a good deal of wheel balancing and weighting was necessary to get optimum results. Practical jokes were another diversion. A favourite was to take the satchel of someone in class and then pass the contents back to them item by item; the satchel last of course. In woodwork classes, a G clamp could be attached to a blazer or better still, an overall could be nailed to the workbench whilst the wearer was distracted.

Even now at the age of 75 there are a few days that go by without QE crossing my mind in some way. Due partly to the re-unions and Newsletters, but not exclusively. Mr Woolley still quietly gives guidance such as “let the tool do the work” or “measure twice, cut once” when I am engaged in some



DIY task, and the spirit of Mr Maiden hovers when I am re-reading one of the classics that he introduced us all that time ago. I smile at the memory of Mr Pursey who persevered patiently, at the time with little success, to get me to grasp “I wouldn’t believe you!” Towards Mr Kerswell I retain a sense of guilt at never having responded to his opening up of the art of maths. To me they were, and remain, good people doing their best to teach, share and encourage. The occasional retribution;

“Tarzan” Williams “Down on your knees boy” before he struck one across the back with the sharp edge of a ruler, was just part of the deal. I can’t claim that they were entirely the “Best Years of My Life” but they were certainly some of them.

Paul and his sister Susan at a recent reunion

## **MICK WALLIS (1945 - 51) - Life after QE Grammar School at Wimborne**

My name is Mick (Michael) Wallis and I was a native of Alderholt and got a scholarship to QE in 1945. At this time my elder cousin Richard Wallis was in the 6th Form and his youngest brother, Peter was in 3b just one year ahead of me.

In 1951 I took the first year of GCE exams that replaced the School Cert. (Achieved seven passes) during the holiday the father of Richard and Peter was taken ill and I did not go back to school, but helped Peter run the Milk round in the village. Uncle got better some months later and so I took a job in Fordingbridge at a joinery company. I went out on site and learned about roofing and first and second fittings (which in later life was very useful).

In February 1953 I joined the RAF and did my basic training at Hednesford. On being interviewed by the training department, it was decided to send me to the RAF Police training unit at Netheravon, Wiltshire. After this training I was posted to 99MU (with Bruce Falconer) at Foulsham in Norfolk, our parent unit was Horsesham St Faiths Norwich (now Norwich civilian airport) Foulsham was famous for being one of the first airfields to install FIDO (Fog investigation dispersal operation) this allowed returning aircraft to use the incoming runway as it was lit on both edges by petrol controlled flare paths.

I was posted with a man from Kirkintilloch (Bruce). He had a strong "Jock" accent and we took a while to understand each other. I remember once he said "you talk funny" I guess he had never met a man from Dorset!!! The two of us stayed with 99MU until the whole camp was transferred to Lichfield in Staffordshire, taking all the vehicles with us.

Lichfield was HCMSU . . . the servicing unit for all the Lincolns and older aircraft still used by the RAF. My mate Bruce then got a compassionate posting to West Freugh which is near Stranraer; I later got an exchange posting to West Freugh as a man there was a Brummie and liked the sound Lichfield. Whilst at West Freugh we had a new boy posted in the police section. His name was Chris HEAD (More on him later).

I was demobbed in Jan 1956 and came home, saw the local village policeman, and was weighed measured and given an educational test. I was accepted and in February on termination of my demob leave I was sworn in at County Hall Dorchester and was sent to Chantmarle, the training depot near Cattistock.

My first posting was to Poole. As single man we lived in monk like rooms at the top of Poole Central Police station.... now a block of flats.

Next it was Dorchester again in single quarters. There I met my wife and the force agreed we could get married (after all her family had been vetted!!!) I was then posted to Swanage in "digs with a lovely local family, until our banns had been read at Swanage and Piddlehinton and then we got married on 28th March 1958, I then had to arrange our own accommodation until in 1960 we were posted to Wareham and given our first police owned house at Encombe Road.

Wareham was a nice place to live. Every Christmas all the kids gathered outside The Red Lion Hotel and saw Father Xmas arrive on the roof and the go down the chimney and appear at the front door with presents.

In 1966 I was moved back to Poole and went on to motor patrol. We lived in a flat over Ashley Road Police Station (now flats and houses rented out as the station was sold off).

It was at this time that I heard the name Chris HEAD again . . . he too had become a policeman in the Metropolitan Police and had been shot dead by Roberts as well as his two mates. There was a huge article in the Daily Mail.

Having now got 10 years of service behind me I knew most of my comrades about 375 in all and I found that several ex QE boys were listed. Dave Gibbs, Michael Cornick, Arthur Bishop (their uncle) Cecil Budden, Geoff Bartlett, Barrie Vaudin, Brian Walker, Brian Carter. So QE had produced quite a lot of policemen.

During the period from 66 - 68 until I had various roles, including Tutorial sergeant, Traffic Sgt and finally station sergeant dealing with all prisoners. The good news is that I have now been on pension as long as I have served. So I feel the decision to be copper was quite a good one.

Mick Wallis (1945 - 51)

## FERNDOWN BEFORE THE BULLDOZERS CAME ALONG

(Reproduced by kind permission of Echo)

This week as councillors discuss the future of Ferndown, it is good to look back on the town, decades earlier in a fascinating book by former Ferndown resident, Brian Davis, entitled, 'Ferndown Before the Bulldozers and Builders Moved In'. "Less than 60 years ago Ferndown was just a village with gravel road and a scattering of shops. Then the bulldozers arrived and ripped out much of its history. Developers carved new roads, new estates and a shopping area. And within two or three decades Ferndown grew into the town that we know today. The other Ferndown became just a memory", said Brian, a retired journalist who now lives in Essex.

Born in Ferndown in 1934 Brian who attended Ferndown Council School at Church Road before transferring to Wimborne Grammar School, recalls in his book the beginnings of the transformation and reveals many changes that have taken place over the years.

He writes about the everyday memories of ordinary Ferndown folk as well as famous residents such as the three families, the Stewarts, Trehanes and Hydes who put Ferndown on the horticultural map of the world.

Other characters included Arthur Wareham, owner of the fish and chip shop in Victoria Road, who lost both of his legs in an accident at Creekmoor Pottery in 1927. His daughter Joyce joined the Fire Service as a telephonist in 1941 and wanted to be a firefighter but women were never permitted to ride on the appliances. After the war she was allowed to remain in the brigade but without pay. Eventually after a battle she was allowed to take her place on the fire engine and became the first female firefighter in Dorset.

"Above Lloyds's was a flat occupied by Ferndown's two district nurses, Doris Maybury and Mollie Rowlands. Their duties included antenatal and postnatal care and they delivered hundreds of Ferndown's newcomers in the days when the population was increased by new births rather than arrivals from other areas," said Brian.

"Ferndown Golf Club was formed in 1912, and in 1938 Percy Alliss was appointed golf pro there, remaining in the post for nearly 30 years. Percy's son Peter became a commentator on the game and attended Wimborne Grammar School. Mrs Alliss taught ballet and tap dancing, as well as giving singing lessons, and produced shows at the village hall. During the war she ran The Black Domino concert party, whose entertainers included a young comedian Tony Hancock".

In 1946 the parish council discussed borrowing money to develop an area for facilities for tennis, bowls and a children's playground and the British Legion Sports Club asked if it could also be used for football. Goalposts were erected and Ferndown FC moved to the ground from St Mary's Hall. One of its members included Len Hawker, the mayor of Ferndown in 1994.

"For nearly 40 years Douglas Gabe ran the 1st Hampreston scout troop, teaching boys good citizenship and patriotism.

"During the war he was a member of the Ferndown Auxiliary Unit, the volunteer Resistance group, an elite group of local men who would 'disappear' in a secret underground bunker at Belle Vue if Britain had been invaded," said Brian who was one of a gang of boys from Ferndown who later discovered the underground "den" and made it their own secret hiding place.

When war was declared Ferndown was deemed to be safe from German bombs and thus became the home for a large number of evacuee children from Southampton. Some lived in requisitioned houses but most were placed with households in the Ferndown area. Children attended Ferndown School for half a day each day because the school could not accommodate the village children plus evacuees.

On VE Day there was a small fair in the school playground to celebrate and they had a street party in Clayford Avenue.

The artist Augustus John was a frequent visitor to Ferndown where he would live with Gerald and Nora Summers, talented and prolific artists, who had a studio at Green Worlds on Wimborne Road near Tricketts Cross. Other friends to visit the studio included artists Stanley Spencer, Henry Lamb and Adrian Daintrey as well as writer Dylan Thomas and his future wife Caitlin Macnamara.

Penny's Hill crossroads was frequently on the council agenda due to concerns with the increasing amount of traffic. For many years an RAC man had the job of standing in the middle of the junction to direct motorists. It was with great relief when traffic lights were installed in 1956.



### From Brian Davis himself

The book is available from me at 31 Whinhams Way, Billericay CM12 0HD - please amend price to £13.99 plus £2 p&p not £12.99 as the Echo incorrectly stated. Two other mistakes they made (can't get the staff, you know!!). Column one on the second page should read "Health Farm in Ringwood Road," not St. Mary's hall. And in column two the "small fair in the school playground" is a complete figment of their imagination.

(BRIAN DAVIS 1945 - 51)

(We wish Brian every good fortune with his book. A number of our readers must have lived in Ferndown and district as pupils of the school. Do contact, Brian, for your inscribed copy. Isn't it intriguing that Dylan Thomas spent time in the locality. There are many splendid and evocative photos accompanying the text. Alas, there is not space to include more. A.B.)



#### SECRETARY REQUIRED

A Secretary IS required by OWA. Since Ken Moody's sad passing we lack a secretary. If anyone relishes the role, please let us know. Lady volunteers may be tempted by the possibility of sitting on our Chairman's knee. No male volunteer, I must regretfully add, will be offered the same privilege.

John Dacombe (1956 - 62) Captured recently by a local artist outside the King's Head, The Square, Wimborne. Somewhat rotund and unsteady, I feel. I wonder what dear Mary thinks.

John Philpott sadly passed away recently.

We pay tribute to John by reproducing a piece he wrote for us several years ago

### **MEMORIES 1942-47**

*John Philpott, MBE, FRPS*

Eleven years old arriving at WGS, Big School, assembly, early morning prayers. Prefects as big as masters reading lessons, walls covered in boards bearing names of ex-pupils who have gone on to "Unies", the smell of food coming from the boarders' quarters, did they really live in dormitories with names like Hades and Monkey-hole? Blackboards that were green and rolled right-over, masters who wore black gowns adorned with coloured emblems, having nicknames like Tarzan, Fishy, Tich, Woofer, and the one to be avoided at all costs, Tipper! Learning that Bob Douch was not only Head Boy but captain of rugby, cricket and football. Austin was the heavyweight boxing champion; Lionel Jeffries, whose voice could be heard all over Wimborne on Friday afternoons as Sergeant-Major of the Cadet Force on parade. What wonders were in store for him! What heroes they were to look up to and as and when they left others were there to take their place. "Emmer" Hames who demonstrated how to kick a football with the instep and not the toe. Later, sharing a place in the cricket first XI with Peter Beckett and seeing him score a hundred against Blandford. For that he got a special cap, with a chocolate stripe against cerise, rather than the usual first eleven cap of a cerise stripe against chocolate. Oh what joy!

However, before all that, early days revealed that trouble lay ahead, scholastically speaking. How to keep the BCs below 3 on the fortnightly report? Wednesday afternoons double Latin period, how was anyone supposed to learn that!?! Not to mention double maths with Tipper, never in all my years since, in the Army, in the TA (12 years), or work have I been so frightened of anyone or anything as I was of him.

There were good times, of course, classes with Motty, the most beloved of all the staff, even the memory of a slap round the face from Tarzan Williams that nearly knocked you into next week brings a smile and a feeling of sadness for his passing. Would he fit in, in today's scheme of things in education?

Although probably the biggest dunce in the school, sport gave me the chance to shine. Places in the football, cricket and rugby teams helped. I was beaten in the junior fives final by Sims, and in the senior final by Dunford (or was it the other way round?). In the first three in the steeplechase all the way through my years at school, and with other successes on the sports field, in the high jump, the long jump and the mile, and once coming second to Beckett in the diving, these are the things one remembers with pride. Seeing out the last two years in Remove was quite shameful.

What other memories are there? Oh yes, the peacocks, Dave Vincent playing the organ, marching to the Minster from School Lane, the school plays, cock-a- iorum, seeing the boarders in the front row of the Tivoli once a month, and the pride of being a member of Richmond House.

At this end of one's life I can look back and be glad I went to Wimborne Grammar School. I am glad to have kept in touch with so many school friends. I hope they have as fond memories of me as I have of them.

*John Philpott left in 1947 to join the Ordnance Survey to pursue a lifelong career there. For the last 11 years he was staff photographer. During this time he also served in the TA, in 135 Field Survey Squadron, Royal Engineers. In 1988 he was admitted Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society, and is currently a member of the Licentiate selection panel. In 1991 he was awarded the MBE for his services to the Ordnance Survey. John is author of the book of photographic portraits FACE THE CAMERA, published by Creative Monochrome.*

## CORRESPONDENCE

(A fascinating letter from PAT TRAYLER (nee Brown 1962- 69) plus other items arrived in late October alas too late for the Winter Newsletter. I have contrived to extract from Pat's letter certain particularly interesting sections - plus reproducing a Christmas card she originally created in 1962. Readers may feel it is late to print it now. I prefer to think of it as an early arrival for Christmas, 2017! A.B.)

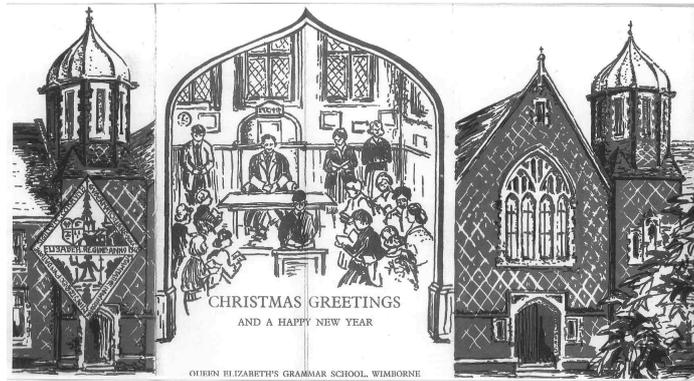
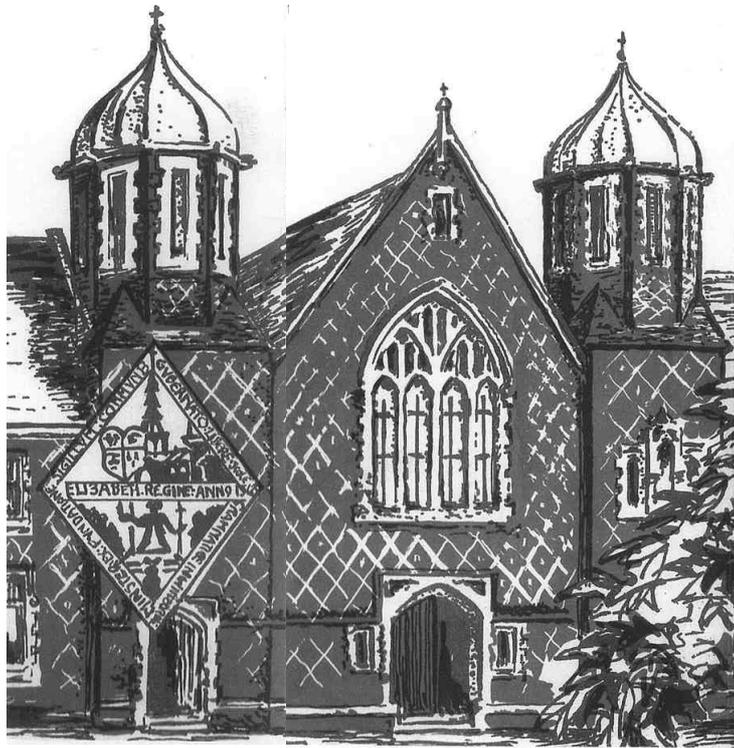
Pat reflects on various topics and classes she attended at our school.

Needlework classes were taken in the annex in the connected room behind the area occupied by 2a. This was probably the schoolroom when the building was the Union Workhouse. I can imagine the girls learning to sew in there, as the light was not good even when electric lights were used. At least for me it was not a long session.

While on the subject of domestic things I used to make Christmas puddings with approximately the same recipe as learnt in DS under the watchful eye of "Niss Hellett" Sadly the rapidly reducing number of relatives and expanding waistlines of those of us left to gather for Christmas festivities, means buying a small pudding to give much smaller portions. I still make a Christmas cake and always regret not having made one at school and learning how to decorate it properly.

Whilst on holiday in Nottinghamshire recently, I visited Southwell Minster. The Bishop's Palace had a very nice glass window in the meeting room with coats - of - arms of the many Dukes associated with the area in the past, there being an area now called the Dukeries. John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset etc was there. The family pop up all over the place.

I was a little disappointed that no Dacombs came forward to sort the postcard that was printed in a previous newsletter. I had a squint at the writing and thought the greeting was to F E. This is Florence Eliza Dacombe who was born somewhere in the Tuckton area where there is Carberry Road, which is likely to be named for a hamlet, house or farm. Florence's father was Charles Dacomb(e) who was born in the Wimborne area (always vague). His father Thomas a dairyman, was also from the area and was a wanderer, ending up on the Isle of Wight. Charles claimed to be either from Wimborne or Holt. He was a gardener turned nursery man and became foreman, and had several different addresses around Christchurch. The house he had in the 1911 census had 7 rooms, which was a good size in those days. Looking briefly at the family history of Charles this Dacomb(e) family go back a long way in the Wimborne area, and the few I looked at mixed with other family names such as Burton, Besant and Hapgood. It was a bit of a surprise that Charles's parents left wills. Thomas left £96 in 1908. Sarah left £850 in 1919 (probate granted to Charles, nurseryman). Meanwhile Florence was out to work as a servant in Southbourne. Later she married Walter Vivian, a carpenter and in 1911 lived in Jumpers Common. Walter lived near the Dacombe family in one of their moves, and by coincidence had a sister Ellen who could well be the Nell on the postcard. Some servants had more free time than others, so Nell may have been able to take advantage of trams and trains to visit areas such as Wimborne and buy postcards for writing notes to friends and relatives. Florence may not have found it so easy to travel. I haven't looked for Nell's history, but am sure she found a better man after having been let down by whoever was hinted at.



(Are the pictures not splendid? Congratulations, Pat!)

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A charming photo of 'Nobby' Clark, music master (and other subjects) for many years, together with Mrs Clark and son Peter, now a member of the OWs and a welcome visitor at Reunions.

## OBITUARIES



### **Richard Edward Curtis (1946 - 52) (1936 - 2016)**

After WGS Richard attended Poole Art College after doing his National Service in the RAF. In 1960 Richard joined Quintin Grammar School as an Art Master. He soon became Head of Department. The school later merged with Knyaston Technical School, eventually evolving into an Academy. Richard taught there until his retirement in 1997. As a teacher and an artist Richard displayed remarkable gifts and inspired innumerable students.

Aside from his teaching he was a passionate traveller, making for himself a one-man tent and exploring countries across the world. He also organised tasks for the Globetrotters, a club of unorthodox travellers. Another passion was the Wasps rugby club, attending their matches, even designing shirts and hats for club members.

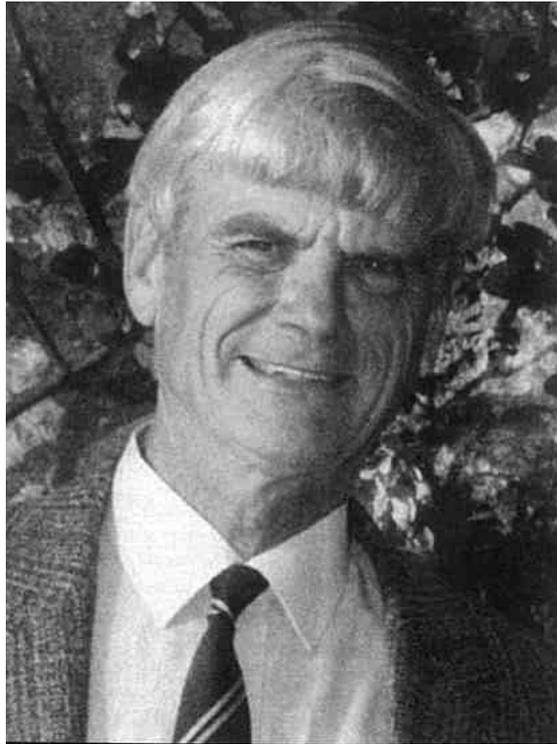
Alas, these brief words do not do justice to a remarkable and much loved man. He will be sorely missed by his family and friends. A.B.

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#### **A NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR**

Do remember, please, I am dependent upon you, our members, for obituaries celebrating the lives of fellow OWs who pass away. I am always pleased to include such contributions, preferably not of excessive length for obvious reasons.

St Johns' Church  
Wimborne



In loving Memory  
and to celebrate the life of  
**Rodney John WilliamHurt**  
22nd July 1930 - 4th March 2017

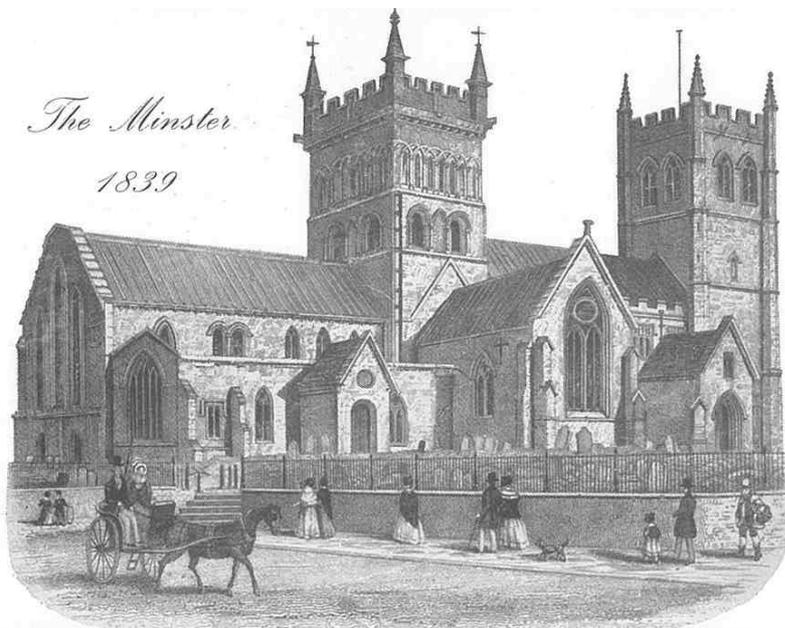
(from TONY GOULD) Rodney had worked in the prison service for all his working life. He had been a very keen supporter of Southampton FC and all other sports all his life. His other principal interest was the Old Winburnians and his coffin was dressed with an old school tie (the chocolate and cerise). He had been a member of the Committee for as long as anyone could remember and was a popular and respected figure. We will miss his cheerful presence. Naturally we send our condolences to the Hurt family.

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(From The Editor.) Rodney was a splendid fellow. I would judge he was a very fine prison officer. On the one hand, no nonsense, on the other hand, compassionate, kindly with, no doubt, many a wise word in the ear of a prisoner trying to turn his life around. He regularly made his way up from Weymouth to our meetings and his contributions were unfailingly constructive. A genuine individual and someone who will be greatly missed.



The Midland / HSBC bank recently closed is set to become a branch of White Stuff (a clothing store)



**SCENES OF  
OLD  
WIMBORNE**

(Postcards from your Editor's collection)



The solitary figure could be Ray Scott according to Len Pearce. Confirmation Ray?

*(As ever I express my enormous gratitude to jenni and Bryan at Wimborne Print Centre for their forbearance and skills. Put very simply, without jenni's assistance in particular, there would be no Newsletter. A.B.)*