



OLD WINBURNIANS NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2021

Dear Fellow Old Winburnians,

Early on New Year's morning 2008, I was strolling along the Marine Parade, Lyme Regis and chanced to get into conversation with an old fellow on his way to collect his morning paper.

'My first job was here on the sands – '41 or '42 it would be. We used to collect up the deck chairs in late afternoon, then roll the barbed wire down on to the beach to deter Jerry'.

It's a conversation that has long stuck in my memory. The old man's words provide a sense of perspective for us all, don't they, in these days of national anguish relating to Covid, fuel shortages, long NHS waiting lists and the like. Yes, we have our challenges, some very real and acute, others infinitely more trivial and inconsequential in the general scheme of things. It is difficult though, isn't it, always to retain a sense of perspective, not least for those too young to appreciate the truly awful challenges faced by earlier generations of our nation. As for the wretched folk living in many countries dotted around our world, a few moments of quiet reflection should make us all truly grateful for our own good fortune in living when and where we do.

So I/we, the Committee of the OWA, send our seasonal greetings and good wishes to all our members wherever you are. Amazingly we are still going strong as you will discover elsewhere in these pages from the splendid contributions from all over the place. Our July reunion may be counted a great success in the circumstances. Old friendships were renewed and it was heartening to see as many members as we did. Let's hope for a similar success story on Saturday, December, 4th, at our usual venue. Do please keep the literary contributions rolling in, not least from our lady members.

John and I are doing our best to inform and entertain. Once again I will express my special thanks to him for his superb assistance and technical ingenuity.

So, Happy Christmas, everyone, wherever you happen to be – and a healthy and fulfilling New Year to you and your loved ones. Do please join us at 2pm (GMT) on Saturday 4th December, raise your glasses aloft and drink a toast to 'Absent Friends' !

With much affection, dear friends,

***Alan R Bennett
On behalf of the Committee***

FORTHCOMING REUNIONS	Christmas Reunion	Saturday 4 th Dec. 2021
	Summer Reunion	Saturday 2 nd July 2022

ATTENDEES AT SUMMER REUNION LUNCH ON 24TH JULY 2021

Mr Alan Bennett	49 - 56	Mr Andrew Jones	53 - 60
Mrs Eunice Carnall	Née Hawes 55 - 62	Mrs Carolyn Kamcke	Née Walkling 56 - 63
Mr Chris Charlton	61 - 68	Mr John Boughton	Guest of Mrs Kamcke
Davina Aldon	Guest of Mr Charlton	Mr Alan Maitland	54 - 59
Mr Graham Whittaker	Guest of Mr Charlton	Mrs June Maitland	Guest of Mr Maitland
Mrs Sarah Whittaker	Guest of Mr Charlton	Mr Ron Mansfield	49 - 54
Mr Robin Christopher	52 - 59	Mrs Maria Martin	Née Limm 55 - 60
Mrs Hazel Christopher	Guest of Mr Christopher	Mr Graham Powell	38 - 47
Mr Peter Clarke	55 - 57	Mrs Hazel Powell	Guest of Mr Powell
Mr Robert Copelin	46 - 51	Mrs Christine Price	Née Richmond 55 - 60
Mr Desmond Cox	47 - 51	Mrs Betty Read	Née White 53 - 58
Mrs Freda Croasdell	Née Millard 61 - 66	Mrs Ann Richmond	Née Mitchell 55 - 60
Mr Arthur Croasdell	Guest of Mrs Croasdell	Miss Elaine Smith	59 - 65
Mr Anthony Elgar	53 - 60	Mr Peter Griffiths	Guest of Miss Smith
Mr Tony Gould	51 - 57	Mr Ken Taylor	51 - 56
Dr John Guy	63 - 71	Prof. Bob White	51 - 57
Mr Alan Hall	51 - 57	Mrs Helen While	Née Filcher 55 - 60
Mr Keith Harvey	51 - 56		
Mr Bill Haskell	52 - 56		
Mr Geoff Hill	58 - 59		
Mr John Pearson	Guest of Mr Hill		

APOLOGIES FOR SUMMER REUNION LUNCH ON 24TH JULY 2021

Richard Anstey	Graham George	Terry Randall
Jennifer Baker	John Harper	Ian Rogers
Linda Berenbrinck	Sue Hatherley	Peter Russell
Nick Bishop	Adrian Hunt	Marion Ryder
Paul Burry	Lynn Hunt	David Singleton
Stuart Dean	Russell Hunter	John Singleton
Dennis Dolman	Rob Hussey	Timothy Spall
Janet Doolaeye	Mike Kerley	Jill Strong
Peter Douch	Tony Leigh	Richard Strong
Nigel Downton	Carolyn Martin	Cynthia Tanner
Lorna Dyter	David Mason	Bill White
Faith Elford	Malcolm McNeill	Roger Whittaker
David Finnemore	Diana Moss	Havilland Willshire
Janet Finnemore	Jenny Moss	David Woodhead
Maurice French	Vic Moss	
Douglas Frewer	Mark Perkins	

FULL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alan Bennett	11 Hawk Close, Pilford Heath, WIMBORNE	BH21 2NW
Tony Gould	1 Manor Cottage, Tolpuddle, DORCHESTER	DT2 7ES
John Guy	"Gateways", Gaunts Common, WIMBORNE	BH21 4JN
Alan Hall	18 Burnbake Road, VERWOOD	BH31 6ET
Bill Haskell	54 Ryan Court, Whitecliffe Mill Street, BLANDFORD	DT11 7DQ
Carolyn Kamcke	4 Pine Close, Ameysford Road, FERNDOWN	BH22 9QX
Alan Maitland	Coles Farm, Milborne St. Andrew, BLANDFORD	DT11 0JL
Ron Mansfield	52 Castle Street, Cranborne, WIMBORNE	BH21 5QA
Rainbow Russell	Orchard Cottage, Waddon, WEYMOUTH	DT3 4ER
Betty Read	29 Pembroke Court, West Street, Wilton, SALISBURY	SP2 0DG
Ann Richmond	4 Three Lions Close, WIMBORNE	BH21 1EP
Ken Taylor	31 Canford View Drive, WIMBORNE	BH21 2UW

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

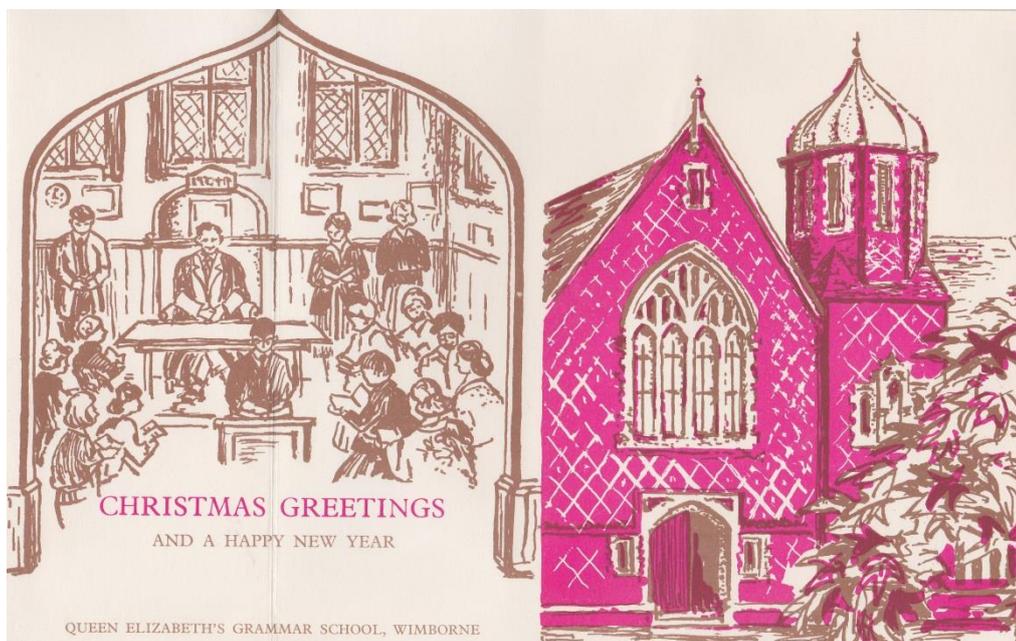
David Finnemore	4 Purbeck Gardens, POOLE	BH14 0QS
Graham Powell	42 St. Peters Court, St. Peters Road, BOURNEMOUTH	BH1 2JU

CHRISTMAS CARDS

There are a lot of folk we know
All written in a book,
And every year at Christmas time
We go and take a look.
And that is when we realise
Those names are just a part,
Not of the book they're written in,
But of our very heart.

For once we've known that someone,
The years cannot erase
The memory of a pleasant word
Or of a friendly face.
So never think our Christmas cards
Are just a mere routine
Of names upon a list,
Forgotten in-between.

And even if we've known you
Many years or just a few,
In some way you have had a part
In shaping things we do.
So every year when Christmas comes,
We realise anew
How nice it is to keep in touch,
With special friends like you.



MORE ON 'WIMBURN STATION' by PETER RUSSELL (61-68)

(Following on from Ron Mansfield's excellent piece on "Wimburn Station" in our last newsletter, we have more on the subject of railways from Peter.

Ed.)

Firstly, what a wonderful surprise it was for me (and fellow OW Colin Divall (68-75)) to read Ron Mansfield's memories of the railway at Wimborne (Spring 2021 issue). Secondly, we noted that Ron wrote 'Wimburn' in Dorset dialect, with the "...burn" pronunciation. We were aware that this still applies to Sherborne and some other Wessex place names ending in "...borne", but we've not heard it used in the case of Wimborne. Are we that bit too young, or is it more about the strength of accent needed?

Ron evokes some long-lost scenes of daily work at the station, dealing with goods handling and the ticket office. He mentions several staff positions, without giving personal names; it would be good to fill in those gaps, as some might also have been OWs (we remember one – the late Mervyn Coombs). Ron refers to a disciplinarian station master - probably George Lillington. George's father had been station master at Daggons Road (Alderholt), and George rose from porter at Verwood and clerk at Wimborne on the way to becoming station master. He preceded the last post-holder and perhaps better-known and milder Ted Henbest. Or did Ron work under both men?

To back-track (pardon the pun), OWs of a certain age (60+) may just remember the days when they could travel by train to or from Wimborne in various directions, including for school. This option vanished on 2nd May 1964 with the final passenger services from Salisbury and Brockenhurst to Bournemouth. WGS pupils could travel in from Daggons Road Station (Alderholt); for some reason this didn't apply to Verwood or West Moors (from where the bus was used), but many Verwood 'train girls' travelled via Wimborne to Parkstone School, both before and after WGS first admitted girls in 1953.

Colin and I can just remember riding the passenger trains shortly before withdrawal, but sadly not to get to school, as we lived in Colehill and Ferndown respectively. Yet we were both fascinated by the local lines then and during the years of the residual goods services from Poole to Ringwood until 1967, to West Moors until Summer 1974, and to Wimborne until final closure on 2nd May 1977. Younger pupils, especially those who came to the area more recently, may not be aware that any railway ever existed here, given the extent that modern development has wiped it from the landscape from the late 1970s onwards.

We have studied the history of the local lines sporadically since those days and are now collaborating in greater depth during our 'retirements'. To present our findings and seek contributions from others in the know, including OWs, we are developing a fresh website – www.eastdorsetrailways.org. This should go live during Summer 2021, possibly before the next issue of the OWA newsletter reaches members. I made a previous call in this newsletter for anyone with railway memories to come forward. The

(then) Priest House Museum also held a drop-in session and staged an exhibition in 2014 to mark the 50th anniversary of the closure to passengers. These events brought out several people with stories to tell and it seems timely to ask again before it's forever too late.

In the last decade, we have found and recorded several people who recall the railway in operation – now sadly an ever-decreasing minority. OWs with such connections who have passed on in recent years include the aforementioned Mervyn Coombs (41-47; who worked in Wimborne's booking office), Donald Hibberd (36-43) and Nick Hood (61-68) (both of whom travelled from Daggons



[Two views of Wimborne Station – Outside & In]

Road). Ron's article alerted Colin and me to a new name and that there may still be former staff, travelling pupils, enthusiasts and others among you with memories worth recording and memorabilia such as rare photos, tickets, etc. John Guy has kindly put us in touch with Ron and we hope to record him when circumstances permit. Should any other OWs wish to do this for posterity, or simply offer helpful information, please get in touch initially through John.



P S

Thanks for reproducing the large-scale OS map extracts of Wimborne – a pleasure for this cartophile, who regrettably never took Geography beyond 3rd year! Readers may be interested to know that a large, four-sheet 1888 edition at this scale, covering the town and immediate hinterland, now hangs in the East Dorset Heritage Centre (EDHC) at Allendale House. It was rescued from Kingston Lacy House and given to EDHC. To express my love for old maps and the town, I paid for the conservation and framing, and it was unveiled on 2nd March 2020 (just ahead of the first COVID lockdown !).



[The 1888 OS Map is unveiled at Allendale House by Peter Russell (left) and Shane Bartlett, Mayor of Wimborne]

**MORE ON 'GOING TO SCHOOL IN THE WORKHOUSE'
by PAT TRAYLER (née BROWN) (62-69)**

*(Following on from David Woodhead's excellent piece in our last newsletter,
we have another piece recalling more memories of the Annexe from Pat.
Ed.)*

It was the first day of term and I was dressed in a new uniform in the school colours of chocolate and cerise. The tunic was chocolate and had a cerise sash. The cream blouse had a new smell to it and the seams rubbed my neck. There was a tie with chocolate and cerise stripes, a chocolate woolly and a brown coat. Sewn on the front of the beret was a badge edged with red for my House colour for Derby. All clothing had a label inside with my name on. Fawn socks pulled up and sensible shoes on. I was now a first year pupil in Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School Wimborne.

My older brother Michael ushered me along to join a queue waiting at Moorland Way shops to catch the coach that would take us to school. The coach arrived and was a familiar sight as it had taken Lytchett pupils to the swimming pool in Poole. The coach made stops to pick up more pupils at the Limberlost and Lytchett Matravers. I knew most of the others on the coach which made it a less daunting time and more of an adventure.

There was a buzz when Julian's Bridge appeared and Caps and Berets had to be donned. It was a requirement to wear the headgear in town when in full uniform. In those days the boys had to doff their caps if they happened to meet staff in the town. All pupils got out of the coach in the playground in front of Big School. As a newbie I had been warned about initiation. The boys were thrown over the wall by the new block onto the grass which was out of bounds. The girls had to be de knobbed, i.e., the sticky up bit on top of the beret had to be removed. I cut mine off, but others found they had holes made by overenthusiastic deknobbing. Outside of Wimborne, the wise removed headgear as there always seemed to be a trouble maker who would snatch a cap or beret and throw it over a hedge into a garden.

The bell went and I joined the line of first year girls and we left coats and bags in the left hand corridor of Big School. Into the hall where we sat on forms in the front rows. Much chatter. Suddenly the organ blared out silencing the chatter, this resumed when it was realised that senior music students were knocking out the latest pop tunes. A short while later the hall filled up with pupils, girls at the front and boys at the back. Prefects stood around the edges handing out hymn books and sorting problems out. All Stand as headmaster and teachers filed in, females at the front and males at the back. Head Boy and Head Girl took their place on the stage with the Headmaster. Hymns and prayers, a Bible Reading, welcome, then notices. Before the notices were given, a group of pupils came into the hall. These were not Church of England and so did not take part in the religious side of school. This was the first time I had encountered this as all were C of E at Infants and Primary schools.

The first years sat for a while after the others had filed out. We were organised then into three groups which were alphabetically divided. So being a Brown I was in Form 1.

Familiar faces from the same year at Lytchett joined me: Theresa Crowfoot; Shirley Campbell; Richard Anstey and Donald Campbell appeared.

Now it was time to collect our belongings and form a crocodile. Prefects ushered us down School Lane and then held up the traffic on the main road so we could cross safely. Then the walk began by using the walkway in front of the Minster, down the side of the Minster, cross the next road to walk through the town to turn right then carry on to another right turn that looked like a dead end. There was an opening in the end wall which we had to go through, round what looked like a vegetable plot and out into the playground in front of an imposing building. This was the annexe.

The building looked as if it had an extension. Ignoring the left end part, the building had four sections. There were two entrances which marked the outer quarters. The first years were taken into the right hand corridor, coats were left on the pegs. One classroom was on the right. The other two were upstairs with my form room on the left. The other classroom was directly over the one downstairs. The other entrance and layout mirrored this arrangement. My classroom abutted the upstairs counterpart in the other part of the building. Both classrooms were above the larger room below which was the science room. There were rooms on the left of the science room to house a small staffroom at the front downstairs and a small room for keeping the science equipment at the back. The boys' toilets were squeezed in at the back as well. Upstairs was the medical room over the staff room. The girls' toilets were at the back. The girl's toilets had a step up to go inside suggesting that the pipework ran underneath a false floor and that toilets had been a later addition.

The room for Form 1 was not very spacious. The desks were arranged in twos with very little space in between. A gap in the back corner gave sufficient space to open the large door. The teacher had just enough space for a desk and chair and to walk along by the blackboard. Chaos reigned when a pupil had to write on the blackboard. Books for marking were passed to the teacher rather than being taken. The books were often thrown back. The room felt cosy and never claustrophobic. The large windows ensured plenty of light and gave a view across the playground on one side and trees on the other side. The ceilings were high; the fairly large door needed space for opening which cut down the area for desks. Visiting other classrooms was not allowed so it was not possible to comment on their layout. Members of staff normally wore a black robe and often had a mortar board on the head. A cane was carried into the classroom and ceremonially placed on the desk. It did seem like a threat. Sometimes chalk would be thrown at chatterers at the back of the room. One day I was caught in the crossfire and boy did that chalk hurt.

Many lessons were taken in the form room. A timetable for lessons was issued along with the homework rota. There were slots for three lots of homework each day. Thankfully not many were required to be handed in the next day. The day started with the register being taken, then it was over to the music room for assembly. Back to the form room for lessons a break, more lessons, walk back to the main school for lunch in Big School. The first years were packed into the lower dining room by the serving hatch. Each table had three boys opposite three girls and two 5th formers to serve the food. I think my two monitors were Heidi who was studying music and Harold

Gallop. Grace had to be said before eating. There could be trouble if food was left, usually that was sorted by swapping unwanted items.

Sometimes there was playtime after lunch but if the weather was not good then everyone walked back to the annexe. During the playtime the prefects kept order and could dish out punishments. I remember some boys doing fatigues as Prefect Punishment, running around the playground and doing exercises, others had to stand on a chair reciting poetry whilst being pelted with paper missiles. The girls got off lightly with lunch playtime stopped and lines or homework undertaken in the small room by the library. I suffered the latter but no idea what for. The prefects at this time seemed to have quite a presence and sometimes took classes when staff were not about. Usually order was maintained. The senior girls and boys also were keen on House Activities. The girls were expected to throw netballs at the goalpost from marked positions on the court. Goals counted for House Points. There were regular House Meetings, (boys and girls separate) to arrange Games Captains, Interhouse matches and any other business attached to being in the House.

In the mornings those who were going to the annexe were dropped off from the school bus in Wimborne Square. This saved a bit of time walking there. A habit had been formed to wave to the residents in Allen's Court and it looked as though this contact was appreciated. Some of the older girls visited the elderly residents as part of their Community Service.

As different lessons were taken, text books were handed out. These were taken home and covered with brown parcel paper and the subject written on it and the name and year of the holder. Sometimes these got decorated to make them a little different.

Some lessons were taken in rooms 10 and 11 back on the main site. One memorable occasion there was when we were told to face the front and then had a test about the Minster which we walked around every school day. Those that lived in Wimborne did quite well, but the rest "could do better". Two towers and no spire were the easy ones. After that it was all down hill.

Two teachers had time away. Cowslip Cowling had either a stroke or brain haemorrhage and was not the same when he returned. Inky Stevens was said to have a slipped disc. Swinney Swinnerton took maths and kept us amused with little stories. Art lessons were taken in the Art Room in the "new" block on the main site. Mabel Thorpe encouraged us to paint and draw. The paints had to be mixed and had a distinctive smell. A lot of the paper for painting was rough and a dull grey, but using cartridge paper for flower drawing was much nicer. (Over the following years some of the better art efforts were entered in the Beales Rowney Competition. I had some pictures hung in Beales Departmental Store in Bournemouth, which meant an award of a special Beales Rowney triangular pencil.)

For English Literature lessons, each term we each had copies of a set book, and a page or two was read, sometimes by the teacher, sometimes by pupils and sometimes just by ourselves. Discussion followed. Very often this meant that the book did not make a lot of sense as a story. This was particularly the case with Hiawatha. Many years later

the Two Ronnies did a music sketch which started with the Red Indians doing a war dance to the sound of drums. The Ronnies then sang / talked some of the song of Hiawatha to the rhythm of the drums. It all made sense then. It should have been read as if the old storytellers were sitting round their campfire, passing on knowledge by oral means.

In fine weather in winter the main games were netball and hockey for the girls. Bad weather meant gym, or dancing in Big School. Hockey was either on the pitch in the school field or if the river flooded at the recreation ground. The grass was not always cut at the rec, and hitting a half hidden ball meant it did a bounce in the air and came back where it started. Brown shorts were worn for hockey although they were actually knee length divided skirts. A white polo neck jumper helped to keep the cold out when playing in the very frosty weather. The gym was equipped with a lot of apparatus and provided a good workout even if most of us were inelegant or not very good at things.

In the summer there were athletics and tennis. Young ladies at this time ran the 100 yards and 200 yards. But no further. Other events were OK but many not really encouraged. Tennis might be played on the grass courts on the school field or on the hard courts in the Recreation Ground. The grass courts always felt nicer. The summer uniform for girls was a striped dress and straw hat. The dresses were in a stiff shiny cotton. My two were in candy pink stripes and had a big bow at the back that formed a bulge when worn with a cardi or jumper. The older girls modified their straw hats to look more like a cowboy hat, I tried squashing mine but it always went back to its original state. The brim was wider at the front and if worn tilted back looked like a halo.

There was a very severe winter that year with heavy snow on Boxing Day 1962 and it lay well into the next spring. A foot of snow at the beginning of the school term meant the school buses could not run for several days until the roads had been cleared.

Time pootled on and end of year exams came and went. I managed to get marks in the top third of the whole year so I was placed in 2A at the start of the next school year. The form classroom was in the left hand side of the building, on the ground floor. This room was fairly large and had large windows. However, the windows on the left side faced out on to a high brick wall. This made the room gloomier than our the previous home room. Our desks were placed in the front half of this room. An arch led to another room which was used for sewing classes for the girls. The boys had other lessons such as technical drawing in a similar room over the sewing room. For some reason I was made a junior prefect which meant reading in the assembly in the music room. I chose the shortest possible reading, but others (boys) had to be stopped short as they were intent on reading the whole bible to waste time.

In the first year of sewing Mrs Barnes gave instructions on different types of seams which introduced the use of sewing machines. Embroidery and hand sewing also featured, with instructions to make a PE bag. My name was penned on brown fabric and this was embroidered in chain stitch in red for Derby. The bag was then machine stitched up and a drawstring threaded through the top hem. This served for many years for carrying plimsolls and t-Shirt. In the second year serious embroidery was

started. A gash piece of cotton was issued, lines drawn on and then embroidery began. Backstitch, chain stitch, blanket stitch, stem stitch had to be sewn in straight lines. When this was completed to Mrs Barnes satisfaction, we moved on to simple feather stitch, single, double and treble. Now it was time to complete a sampler of Dorset Feather Stitch. This was lines of embroidery as before, but on better material. There was the addition of double and treble feather stitch and had the "leaf motif" and scrolls that were the mark of Dorset Feather Stitch.

Each line of embroidery had to be inspected before starting on the next. I was very pleased with the progress of my sampler and took it out for appraisal. It was a bit of a surprise to be shouted at and told it was an appalling piece of work and I must unpick it and repeat. I sat looking at the offending stitches and looked around at others who had received praise for what looked like worse efforts. I thought mine a lot better. After sitting where I was for a while, feeling injured and doing nothing, I was again shouted at to bring my "new" effort to the front. This time it was highly praised ???!

After this came The Apron. The main part was a square, then there was a waistband, pocket, and ties. Patterns were transferred to the materials and then the sewing began. Everyone had a white silky thread, but there was a choice of pattern. I think mine was the more complicated one. The pattern gave the impression of an ancient craft linked with peasant smocks and smocking. It had actually been invented in the 1950s. My fabric was red but I cannot remember if this was a house thing or just an option. Every needlework session thereafter was to finish this mammoth task. I did finish the embroidery before an exhibition in the DS room in the main school. However there was not time to finish sewing all parts together. So my effort was carefully pinned together and hung up where it could be seen but not examined closely. Several years later I did a hasty job of sewing the apron together so it was usable. It was nice to use when serving Christmas Food.

Later I found that the sewing took place in what was the schoolroom attached to the workhouse and originally had a separate door, which had been blocked up. The archway dividing off the sewing room had been knocked out later. There must have been a floor added above. The needlework room in the annexe was not well lit but least there were electric lights that could be switched on. I felt sorry for the children who had lessons there in gloomy light in winter.

The 2A classroom was near the staffroom and sometimes staff would go to ring the bell for changing lessons. On one occasion Swinney sent me to ring the bell. I had the honour of what Swinney called tintinabulation.

In the second year I was friendly with Swinney's daughter Jane. She introduced her circle to lychees which were sold in the local greengrocers. Going in the shops was technically a misdemeanour but nobody spotted us. Jane also liked to do a detour on the way to the Annexe, to wave to her brother who worked in the King's Head as a chef. At this time all the girls wore stockings, - or tights as soon as they came in. Somewhere along the line fishnets became popular as did flowery and patterned tights. These were not criticised but when the weather turned colder, brown rib tights became the fashion and there was a ban on these. Nobody could quite understand the logic.

The school rules permitted clear or pink clear nail varnish. This gradually changed to pearl, green and any other colour. Again not a word was uttered by the teachers until one girl couldn't decide on her colour and painted each nail a different colour. This was banned. The older girls wore their berets flat and pinned on the back of their heads and this looked more stylish and was soon adopted by many of the girls.

The classrooms had big solid doors and these seemed to be irresistible to the boys. Various items could be easily balanced on them, ready to drop on the unsuspecting staff. They did not always see this as funny. Memories of Brigsy entering for Latin lessons with a Salvete and all having to reply Salve Magister. Sometimes things would gently fall on his head during this exchange.

Music in the first year was mainly singing which was enjoyable. At Christmas time the school had a carol service in the Minster. Another service was held in the evening for relatives and for towns folk. I was in the junior choir and we had to sing some verses of the carols and to sing descant in others. In the second year there was still a lot of singing lessons, but had added torture of a chord being played on the piano and a finger pointed at one of the hapless pupils and told to sing a particular note from the chord. I went La on my turn and was told that was the top note not the required lower note. Shock I had hit something of the chord. Several of the boys were in the Minster choir and could easily pick out any note. It did put me off music and when the choice came for Art or Music for year 3, there was no hesitation. A group of us had to take turns reading verses in the Carol Service that year. As we were behind a screen it was not too much of an ordeal as we spoke to a wooden wall.

The two years spent in the annexe were mostly happy. It was strange to think of the poor inmates forced to live there. Workhouses took in the elderly who could no longer provide for themselves. The sick could have medical treatment and abandoned wives and widows had a refuge and a place to bring up their children. Single mothers were kept apart from the rest so as not to be a bad influence. Children stayed with their mothers often having to sleep in one bed rather than be separated. The males lived in one side of the building and the women in the other, with separate entrances and stairways. In most workhouses the older children were separated from their parents and lived in the attic. The two entrances and stairways were still there in the 1960s. The doors to the entrances were large and when closed in winter, the hallway and stairs were gloomy and a bit spooky and unwelcoming. Maybe ghosts of the early occupants were still there.

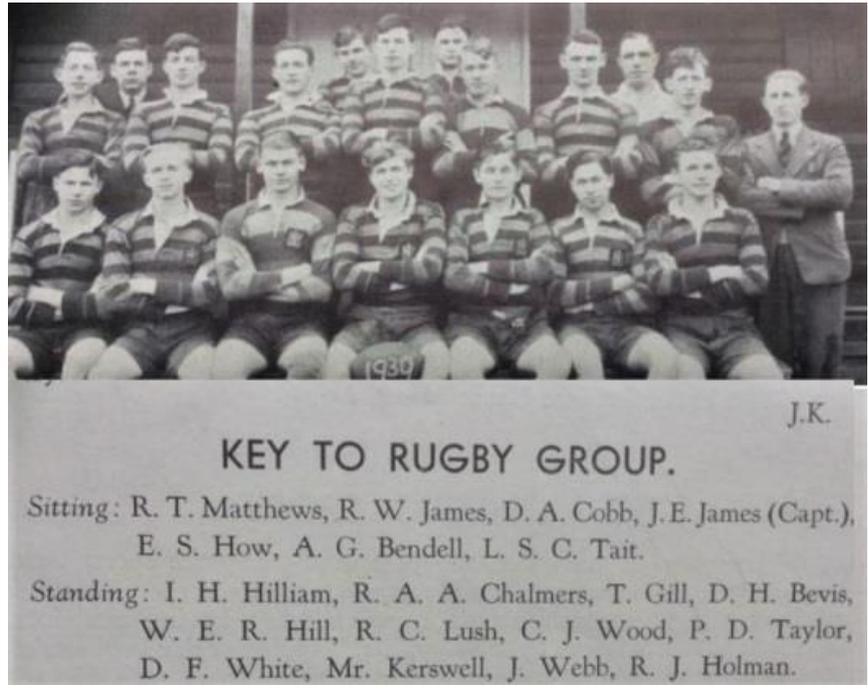
At the end of the two years it was time to move on to year three in the main school. I opted to take science, so my new form room was in the Geography room with Mr Barnaby as form master. No more gymslips - the uniform was now a brown skirt. No more trying to tie the sash into a neat(?) knot. Still got the tie though and that never seemed to be elegant. There was no possibility of my winning the department cup.

QEGS – STAFF, NICKNAMES & OTHER TRIVIA by MARK PERKINS (62-69)

Dear Alan and John,

What a thoroughly great Spring OW magazine you gave us. Many thoughts came to mind as I read the excellent contributions from the members with a few more years under their belt than me.

I loved the comments about nick-names. Clearly those nick-names with which I became accustomed from 1962 to 1969, I now find were created many years earlier, at a time, perhaps, when it was the 'done-thing'. There is one which raises a question in my mind. Gunner Holman, so I was told, gained his moniker for war service (one assumes as an artilleryman). However I have just received a photograph from another OW friend, Pat Trayler. The photograph is a group shot of the 1939 rugby team with two members of staff, the indomitable Joe Kerswell and at the extreme right, Mr. Holman. I can assume 'Gunner' joined up shortly following this time. Does anyone know where he served, and if not, from where the name came ?



Being one of the younger OWs I remember Malcolm McNeil well, since he was held in esteem within the art room at QEGS. I wonder if he can recall his illustrations of The Beatles produced around 1968 (possibly from Sergeant Pepper) – quite amazing talent as can be seen in those superb caricatures of serving staff.

Those pesky nick-names were also used for pupils too. My elder brother, John Perkins, a QE pupil from 1958 to 1965 (and fellow OW) was commonly known as 'Polly'. It has made me consider my own luck that I was not nick-named 'Dorothy' which is not something on which I would dwell.

Am I right in thinking that nick-names were given to the popular (or revered) staff. From this I immediately began to recall lessons by each of them. Entering QE in September of 1962 was a pretty big deal and first contact with Joe Kerswell who was my form tutor for 1 alpha. He was also our Mathematics teacher. Joe is most likely his given name. Both Latin and History were taught to us by the aforementioned 'Gunner'

and for some reason I managed Latin rather well, but History was on the dry side; though Gunner sure knew his history.

Geography fell to the very dominating 'Tarzan' Williams. His reputation went before him though. I do recall him finding 1 alpha rather a pushover and cannot recall the 'ruler' ever seeing daylight. I enjoyed 'Geog.' from that time onwards, partly I think because illustrations of maps and geographical features were required, I so wish that had been the case with Maths ! I do recall a 'stand-in' teacher, Mrs. Lake and she carried on the superb work of Tarzan well into my second year. She, too, encouraged us to use maps and illustrations and she was a very encouraging lady.

French passed me by in a daze simply because the school employed a French 'Mam'selle' to teach us and I wasn't the only boy to fall under her charms. She could have spoken in a foreign language for all I cared ... oh I remember now, she did speak in a foreign language.

I cannot, for the life of me, recall who taught us English. I am sure we read some Shakespeare, but, if so, I have no recollection and William S. never quite pushed my buttons as W E Johns would have done. So I pass on that one. Ah, now I do remember a Miss Hall (no nickname) in the 5th form, and clearly new to the profession. Thankfully our final book for O-level prep was 'My Family and Other Animals' by Gerald Durrell. Back onto home ground again for me, so a bit of a saving grace. It surely was a good choice of 'reading' since I remembered it. Also my parents had bought me all of Gerald Durrell's books previously and I knew them by heart.

Then we move into the arts and crafts. The woodwork shop was for boys only. I never really saw why I was shown how to make a dovetail joint, nor why timber was seasoned in so many ways (but again drawing the diagrams did help me). My brother John had a similar experience in that dilapidated building, and for his masterpiece of timberwork he made a tray. Sadly he fared as badly as I with mallet and chisel and his tray frame made a superb letter 'Z' and no amount of cajoling made it possible for the base to fit. We all had to make watch-stands as our first attempts with the tools we had. What the heck was that about? I never did question why anyone would want a stand to hang a watch on, perhaps if the house was to catch fire, one could grab that vital watch more easily as one made an escape. I didn't keep my watch-stand, but the wooden salad servers are still in my possession and I guarantee my mother thought them wonderful. The photograph shows quite clearly that they were NOT.



I never did mention that we were taught by 'Jack' Woolley. A benign and rather quaint chap whom we all rather liked, his name I only found later came from The Archers. I didn't even take much note of radio programmes either. In fact I took little note of anything much, being too concerned with play and admiring the girls in our class.

Mother (Bless her, are all mothers like John and I had?) made the excuse that I didn't achieve as much as she and father hoped because I suffered from bronchitis annually and missed a lot of schooling, and also hay-fever. Truth is I was a dreamer and fairly idle.

Which takes me rather neatly to my FAVOURITE lesson, Art with the quite awesome 'Mabel' Thorpe, and again I really thought this was her name until in one 'Geog.' lesson I discovered on a map of Great Britain a place with her name . . . and the penny dropped – you see what I mean about dreaming my way through school ? I enjoyed receiving my school report for one reason only, to see my Art mark. I always made a point of showing this to parents first. There was no hiding the sheer awfulness of reading the other staff comments, having been a teacher myself and knowing how only the positive is highlighted now, the contrary was the case back in the late 1960s. I wonder how honest were the comments in the decades preceding that ! This reminds me too of brother John's art lessons as recounted. John was essentially more of a scientist than artist and so art lessons for him bore no similarity to those I witnessed, although we both shared Mabel as our teacher. Mabel, very bravely in my opinion, parked her car (always the latest model) beneath the art room windows (the art room being on the top floor at the extreme right of the new building as viewed from Kings Street). One afternoon as the cleaning operation was in progress at the end of the day, John decided that he could easily send the wet table cloth onto the radiator under the window. Little was he to know that his aim was marginally inaccurate as the cloth flew through the OPEN window and landed on Mabel's pride and joy. He told me that she was somewhat angry; perhaps even more than angry. When hearing of this I did hope very much that when I started my Art lessons I would not be tarred with the Perkins Snr. brush and that my only true hope of school happiness would not be denied me. She never did put two and two together, that I was Perkins's young brother.

Music appeared briefly in the first form, but I dropped that as soon as I could. Mr. Emery taught us in the music room of the annexe. Never did I consider that a music lesson would consist of learning about notes and staves, crotchets and clefs, whereas I had hoped we may listen to songs by the Merseyside groups, just prior to the emerging Beatles. I draw the line here except that, again for reasons beyond my grasp, Mr. Emery began choosing members for the Minster Chamber choir, the Senior choir and the Junior choir. I was selected for the Senior choir and rehearsals in the Minster. Yet I consider myself to musically inept, then and now !

Religious Education (RE) was a mystery to me since I only recall the illustrious 'Basher' Goulding teaching me RE in the 5th form. The whole time was spent in studious interpretation of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. 'Basher' brought the book to life for me and I still treasure it, thanks to him. Oh yes and he encouraged his pupils to illustrate everything for homework, so that was OK by me.

I have the painful duty now to recall both Games and PE. I wish I could forget, but time hasn't healed the 'back-of-the-leg-bruises' at the hand of 'Frosty' Hoare. He had a reputation for severity and unless one was 'First eleven or First fifteen' material, one was seemingly punished for being too overweight, too lanky, too lazy, or too short (as in my case back then). Games were the worst though and rugby begged an 'excuse'

letter from the parents; but I never seemed to co-incide illness with games. PE and athletics were rather more in my line; being quite agile and I could even run fairly well too. In fact, I am now beginning to recall that in the cross-country run I was actually rather good. The incident on the games field that gave me a certain pleasure was on one afternoon and the whole class were in action. 'Frosty' was determined to teach us how to kick that damnable oval ball over the cross-bar which was indecently far away and very high. It was Andrew Cherret who was chosen to show us how whilst Frosty held the ball down (those ridiculous oval things always fell over). Andrew took a long run up whilst Frosty had his attention diverted and didn't release the ball in time. We all watched in silent-glee as pieces of Frosty's watch flew into the air, and probably as high as the ball was intended to go. Apoplexy doesn't begin to describe Frosty's reaction.

Leaving the scene of my worst moments reminded me that even in the 6th form we were not excused the ordeal of physical exercise, although in the Upper 6th life took on a new dimension as we were allowed to choose our activity. In due course we found that Ice-skating at the Bournemouth Ice Rink became acceptable. My friend at school, Laurence Price, had the good fortune to have gained a private pilot's licence and somehow persuaded Frosty that flying constituted 'sport'. On occasions then we headed to Hurn Airport for our flying lessons – which could be conjured as sport at 2000 feet I suppose.

Something I find very odd is that Science has been omitted from my list of subjects. I liked Biology a lot. I did not like Chemistry, nor Physics. Biology was about animals and plants, both of which I liked and could engage. Chemistry was about the invisible things like atoms, nuclei, protons and smelly chemicals. Physics was from planet nonsense and I never really understood any of it. Bill Streets took us for Physics and I am sure he knew his stuff, but his delivery of words was through a barely open mouth and was full of meaningless words and an assumption that we were mesmerised by what he was saying. I understand that some of the class understood. I didn't. Again John comes into play and was taught about solids. Bill S. was explaining something which John could not hear and/or understand and asked a friend what he was burbling about – what he had said without even opening his mouth was 'Here we have a spherical sphere ... here'. The reader has to recall, if possible, Bill S. delivering these words. Well that's as maybe, but it sounds a little like tautology to me. Frankly I recall nothing that has been of any use to me although, strangely, I rather like the study now and I find that Art and Physics share a lot of commonalities.

In our third form we were taught by a teacher called Mr. S H Taylor, who I think may have been temporary. He always entered the chemistry laboratory clutching his leather briefcase which bore his initials S H T. It doesn't take much imagination to guess what some bright spark planned. In the next lesson, Mr Taylor strode into the lab, briefcase clasped tightly to him with the briefcase now bearing an additional letter 'I' scrawled very neatly on it. I have said enough about Chemistry except that the laboratory, being sited at ground level in the new building, meant we could enjoy watching other pupils going about their daily business, which was a little more fascinating than finding out that water is made of oxygen and hydrogen. Again I have been conned I think. Water

is wet and the two elements are gases (well you can't pour them or cut them, so they must be) so why is water wet ?

You see how my mind operates on this rather inane plane which I soon found was quite at odds with the teaching at QE.

Now I know I have given this rather too much space and the readers will be anxious to read something worthy of a grammar school education. This isn't ! However, I am basically a dreamer and it is certainly that which meant I only scraped into a 6th form into which I was eventually accepted. Life at this point no longer resembled school from the first to fifth years. The lower 6th common room was sited in the old building somewhere at the top and back and I only know that it was dusty, furnished with junk-shop cast offs and was where everyone who was not studious would congregate to revel in being a 6th former. I suppose I must have gone to some lessons since I did get to the Upper 6th, but for the life of me I recall very little other than some very decent lessons in Biology with 'Ratty' Rastrick who I considered a very decent human being, neither too strict nor too lax. I learned a lot from her, due in the main I am sure because John also took Biology at A-level and was very popular with Ratty. He seemed to succeed until the final grades were given and I think he may have blown it! (as did I). However, in the same way that I was never seen as Perkins Jnr. by Mabel Thorpe, Miss Rastick knew that I was John's younger brother, for which I seemed to win 'brownie points'. There being quite a lot of dissection done at A-level. John would often bring home from school a foetal pig, cow's brain, or some such delight – and these would be bottled in formaldehyde and displayed in my parents' conservatory (did I say that my folk did all they could to encourage us) ? I think I would have drawn a line in the sand at this point, but they saw this as John's engagement with school work. All that I found illegal in terms of school rules that I remember doing was finding that the bottles of alcohol used in the 'Biol.' lab were 100% alcohol. I think I probably did find the school bus at the end of the day since I didn't wake up at school overnight.

I wonder if any of the above rings bells for OWs who may have inadvertently actually read this. I hope so and I will say that I enjoyed my school days at QEGS very much. On a scale of 1 to 10, the first year was a 4 and every subsequent year gained another point until the Upper 6th was a firm 10. One quite amazing outcome of my slide into the dream-world of the 6th Form was that I remained at QEGS long enough to witness Mr Whitmore take over from Neddy Neil in 1968 and I rather hit it off with Dennis Whitmore.

On coming into school in September of 1968, I was asked into the head's office. 'Oh no' ! I was shocked to hear him tell me that I was to be Head Boy. 'Hold on' I thought. 'I'm the idle-dreamy chap who isn't made of such stuff'. Surely that was a mistake, but apparently staff had been consulted too and to this day I wonder how this happened. Mistake or not, I did rise to the occasion and it certainly perfectly capped my dream-days at QEGS.

**SOME PHOTOGRAPHS OF ACTIVITIES TAKING PLACE
AROUND QEGS, WIMBORNE IN 1935 & 1936
from RICHARD ANSTEY (62-67)**

Here are a selection of photographs which feature some of the, mainly sports, activities which took place at the school in the mid-1930s.

THE SCHOOL FETE, 1935



[Part of the obstacle race – getting the potato out of the basin]



['Sam' Bartlett is in the foreground with his head well in the basin containing water and a potato]



[It seems the obstacle race incorporated the sack race !]



[Certainly not a dry subject – Tilting the bucket]

(NOTE : These activities obviously took place at the East Borough playing field. Just visible in the background is part of the land on the other side of the River Allen long before it was covered in housing.

Ed.)

SPORTS DAY, 1936



[Skinner jumping ! He was one of the representatives at the Inter-School Sports in 1936]

(NOTE : Although the long-jump pit is no longer there, the view has changed very little over the past 85 years !

Ed.)



[Ronald Meech, walking away from the prize giver with the Steeplechase Cup]

THE BOXING COMPETITION, 1936

The Winning Team ! Richmond beat School 35 to 30 points on this occasion.



Standing (left to right)

Habbin Vincent Cobb Bendell Miller Butler

Seated on Chairs (left to right)

Haynes Wright Cater

Seated on Ground (left to right)

Motram II Rake Baker

(NOTE : Although not confirmed, it is highly likely that 'Rake' (shown in this photograph) is Derek Rake whose obituary featured in our Spring 2021 newsletter. Ed.)

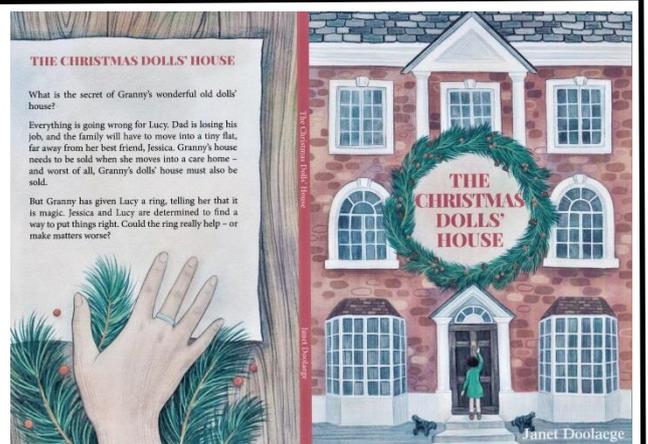
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'AT THE CENTRE OF THINGS ?'
by DAVID WOODHOUSE (59-66)

(Following on from his excellent piece in our last newsletter, David provides some further insight into what it was like living in the centre of Wimborne. Ed.)

"At the centre of things.....?" Well hardly, but growing up just off Wimborne Square had its advantages in terms of places being within reach. My parents ran the Hidden House Café in West Street, and we lived on the three floors above. The café was essentially an olde worlde tearoom, with décor to match. It took its name from the adjacent house, mostly unoccupied and "hidden" in that it was set back from the street and obscured by a mass of vegetation – it seemed rather sinister, and I was not sorry when it was demolished at some point in the sixties. We were within a short walking distance of all my schools: the infants' in King Street, the primary at Redcotts, and both the annex and the main part of the grammar school. I never had to get up before eight in the morning, and the legacy of this indulgence has been a persistent desire not to rise much earlier. As it happens, a line drawn between the four school premises formed a sort of informal boundary to my day-to-day existence, particularly when at primary school. This was neither imposed nor rigid; it was just that virtually everything I needed lay within it. The proximity of shops for sweets (Woolworths and two sweet shops in West Borough) was important when happiness was a Burton's Wagon Wheel. In the holidays, I ran errands to other shops, picking up orders for the café from places that actually smelled of the stuff they sold – not necessarily a sensation I enjoyed at the time, particularly in Mac Fisheries and in grocers, like the tiny one in the Corn Market, with great blocks of cheddar on the counter.

I do not recall my parents being concerned about my wandering around the town on my own, as long as I was careful about crossing roads. I was warned to avoid one particular adult, for reasons that were not spelt out at the time, but I have no idea whether there was any foundation to the suspicions about him. The town seemed safe, although any notion that it was a haven of innocence received something of a knock with a story in the *News of the World (NOTW)* about goings-on in the Oddfellows pub and, shockingly, the Minster porch. Apparently the participants had not been told that sex in this country would not be invented until 1963.

As it happened, the Minster was a major focus of my life, albeit without the sort of diversions to which the *NOTW* had alluded. I was in the choir and later also a server, so the church took up a lot of time, with choir practices during the week and services at the weekends including, as a server, the communion on Saturday mornings. This involved tolling the West Tower bell 15 times just before eight o'clock, possibly disrupting the plans that others had for the lie-in that I was forgoing, but failing to increase the congregation beyond the customary one or two. I was not devout in the way that all this church attendance might imply. I imagine that most of us joined the choir because we enjoyed singing, having survived the primary school's merciless weeding out of "growlers". There were financial incentives, too, including half a crown for singing at weddings and funerals, but my initial apprehension about attending a

funeral almost had me preferring to go without the money. Inevitably, mercenary considerations prevailed.

In my own time, I gravitated to the recreation ground at Redcotts, which compensated for the lack of a garden at the café. The rec' seemed to be a vast underused space, lending itself to informal cricket sessions, which was how we spent much of the summer. More often than not, these involved just two or three of us, using a tree along the path by the grass courts as the stumps and the courts' fencing as a passive wicketkeeper. Cricket was linked with the Minster in one special weekend, late in the fifties, when the Reverend David Sheppard came to the town with a group of boys from the Mayflower Centre in London's East End. On the Saturday, they played a team from the recently-established boys' club, at the old town cricket ground, and the following day he preached at the Minster. David Sheppard's career playing for England was not yet over, although his recall for the tour to Australia in 1962/3 is unfortunately best remembered for dropped catches. I believe the boys' club was the brainchild of Mr McNeill, the father of Malcolm, a contemporary of mine. It provided a great opportunity to play organised sport at the weekends. The club also arranged a coach trip to Portsmouth in 1958, where we visited Victory and HMS Victorious (the aircraft carrier), followed by attending the First Division match between Portsmouth and Chelsea – quite an outing at the time. Cricket was the only sport where I had a chance of representing the School, and a photo of the 1962 under-14 team proves that I actually did so, although my position alongside the captain leaves the false impression that I was a mainstay of the side. I bowled leg breaks and I could turn the ball quite sharply, but consistency in line and length was sadly missing, so that the only performance I can remember from playing for the school – best forgotten – probably also marked my swansong.

UNDER 14 CRICKET XI 1962



P. Smith (Scorer)

Mr. C. Powell

<i>J. Lawes</i>	<i>B. Eveleigh</i>	<i>D. Wood</i>	<i>N. Parrott</i>	<i>G. Dean</i>	<i>J. Dacombe</i>	<i>T. Mitchell</i>	<i>R. Tubbs</i>
	<i>W. Dester</i>	<i>D. Woodhead</i>	<i>M. McNeill (Capt.)</i>	<i>I. Spearing (V. Capt.)</i>	<i>P. Mounthey</i>		

The school itself had of course by then become pretty central to me, and a few events and developments there from the mid-sixties come to mind. One change that seems bizarre now was the decision to allow sixth-formers to smoke in their common rooms. Although it is true that for many of us smoking seemed to be an integral part of growing up (a continued craving for Wagon Wheels would have done little for one's street cred), I have no idea what prompted this "reform". Possibly there was a misguided perception that it would satisfy some barely-articulated feeling that the School should reflect times that were a-changing.

I suppose some of us could have expressed demands for change when we laid siege to the headmaster's house on St John's Hill late-ish one evening. This might have been remembered as a pioneering (for East Dorset, at least) piece of direct action, a foretaste of '68, but as we probably limited ourselves to feebly chorusing "Ned!" when he came out to investigate what was going on, it was more of a jape, and quite a benign one at that. This was reflected in the reaction on the next school day, when we were simply required to troop into Mr Neil's study to apologise to him and his wife. However, tolerance of lese-majesty only went so far, and not very far at all when there were vital traditions to defend, even when the transgressor was a teacher, such as the new music master, Harvey Easton. When he was leading the school in rehearsing the school song in preparation for speech day, he expressed the view that the song was lacking in musical quality. This prompted the senior master present, almost certainly Mr Kerswell, to order Easton out of the room forthwith, and out he went, in front of all of us, as if he was the most wretched third-form miscreant. This disabused some of us of the naïve notion that the staff room was any more harmonious than elsewhere in the school.

The mid-60s saw the opening of a coffee bar round the corner from the school and, being neither olde worlde nor greasy spoon, this was an indication that the town was moving with the times. Although the Courtyard had a cross-generational appeal, it became a convenient place for sixth formers to gather after school. I am sure that we were not the most lavish spenders and, for me, it was almost an extravagance to have enough spare cash to put in the juke box – probably to hear something I still enjoy today.

The Hidden House Café kept going until the end of the decade, without benefit of a juke box. Shortly afterwards, I watched it being demolished, crumbling to dust with disconcerting alacrity. It has been outlived by its miniature version in the Model Town, which I suspect is better built and might offer more resistance to the wreckers' ball.

**FROM 'TIPPER' J.C. AIREY (1930-51)
TO 'COCHI'/'NEDDIE' J.D. NEIL (1951-68)
by
ALAN R. BENNETT**

When I arrived at WGS in September, 1949, our headmaster was Mr J.C. Airey, nicknamed for reasons obvious even to those who knew little of the geography of the Emerald Isle as 'Tipper'. Mr Airey was a strictly no-nonsense, old-fashioned, stern and rather fearsome individual, certainly to the junior ranks of the school. In 2A he was our Scripture master which proved to be a very earnest, serious educational experience. I have no recollection of seeing him smile, or hearing him crack a joke.

In the autumn of 1951 (a mere 70 years ago !) Mr J.D. Neil arrived following Mr Airey's retirement after 21 years of dedicated service to the school. Whether our new headmaster arrived with the nickname 'Cochi' (neal) or whether some wags, most probably in the Sixth or Fifth form, 'christened' him with the name I simply do not know, but Mr Neil duly became 'Cochi' for the next few years to every student. How he was addressed in the staffroom is anyone's guess – perhaps someone in our company will be able to enlighten us. I imagine Mr Neil or 'Sir'.

It is at this point I will appear to digress, but there is method in my madness as I will try to explain. Most of you will distantly remember The Goon Show, an enormously popular BBC radio comedy programme of the early 1950s, starring Harry Secombe, Peter Sellers, Spike Milligan and Michael Bentine. It was full of silly schoolboy humour and catchphrases. I enjoyed it like everyone else though I did prefer 'anchock's half-hour' starring the inimitable Tony Hancock and Sid James. One of the principal characters in The Goon Show was 'Neddie' Seagoon played by Harry Secombe. It is at this juncture I return to my original theme. I had already acquired something of a reputation at WGS for giving my pals nicknames such as 'Toad' Hatchard, 'Knacker' Pryor and the now very politically incorrect 'Hong Kong Charlie' to a dear, late friend who shall remain nameless – among many others.

Let us stay in the mid-1950s and concentrate on a location you will all remember – the school library in the new block. It is an otherwise utterly inconsequential Friday afternoon and seated at the tables arranged around the room are 20 or so pupils engaged in reading or writing in an earnest silence. Yours Truly is seated with my back to the window which overlooks the playground with 2 or 3 bookcases between me and the library door. It is quite impossible for me to see anyone leaving or entering the room. I am supposedly engaged in 'private study' but clearly, from what follows, my thoughts are not concentrated on academic topics. Indeed, I have no clear recollection of what was going on in my head – only what happened next. I imagine I was idly thinking of the Goon Show and one particular character. It must have been the alliteration of the words – I have always loved words and juggling with them for suddenly I was shouting 'Neddie' Neil very, very loudly ! It is what happened next that is so extraordinary. I recall it with total clarity after all these years.

Silence ! There was absolute silence and then, around the nearest bookcase, there appeared a figure – have you guessed ? It was, it really was, our headmaster, Mr J.D.

Neil. He had acquired a reputation for stealthy movement, suddenly appearing in corridors always on the look-out for miscreants. And now his gaze was fixed upon Yours Truly. He spoke not a word. So, you are asking, did our headmaster grasp hold of this appallingly rude pupil's hair and march him down to his study, and give him 'six of the best' ? No, he simply stood as if rooted to the spot, glaring at me from around the bookcase. There was not a peep from anyone in the room. Everyone was waiting to see what happened next. What was going on in his mind ? If he chose to seize hold of me and shout at me as, no doubt, 'Joe' Kerswell would have done (and did on another occasion when dragging me from the prefects' lunch table across Big School by my hair after I continued to eat at the table after being suspended as a prefect – but that is another story !), he would have been acknowledging he had heard exactly what I had so rudely shouted. On the other hand, if he pretended not to have heard my precise words, he could escape with less embarrassment. It was a bizarre moment. Then, as suddenly as he had appeared, he was gone. For 20-30 seconds, who knows, there was silence. Then a roar of disbelief and laughter erupted.

In the days that followed the story obviously circulated widely – the bizarre happenings in the library and the renaming of the headmaster – no longer 'Cochi', but 'Neddie'.

(I have always thought that dear old A.R. 'Fishy' Maiden would have approved of my use of alliteration, though I never thought to ask him. Actually, Mr J.D. Neil did duly cane me twice in the Sixth for other offences, so he did gain some revenge – and heaven knows what reference he gave me when I applied for a County Major scholarship to RADA or the Bristol Old Vic, and failed to receive one; though, fortunately, 3 years later I did gain a London County Council scholarship to the LSE.

A R B)



J. D. NEIL, E.R.D., M.A.

DESERT ISLAND DISCS by ANN RICHMOND (55-60)

When I was first asked to give this selection I readily agreed thinking it would be an interesting, thought provoking and an EASY exercise. Well thought provoking and interesting it has been, but far from easy. Having been in the World approaching 80 years, how difficult it is to re-track on all the genres of music and song. So I thought of family times close to my heart and base my selection on these.

I'll start at the beginning. I was the youngest of 4 children born at the end of the war and am told times were hard. My mother had learnt to play the piano in her youth, but, of course, it was quite out of the question for us to have our own. However, as time went on, my parents bought a small record player and we had 2 records.

My first choice is the **Warsaw Concereto played by Richard Addinsel**. Of these first two records we had, this was the one my mother and I played the most and we loved it. Never tired of it (just as well really).

Next is **O Mio Babbino Caro (Oh My Beloved Father) by Puccini**. Just beautiful and moving, and tells a good story.

Number 3 is **Bamboleo played by the Gypsy Kings**. This brings memories of first holidays in the sun – dancing, new places, new foods. All such fun.



Next is **Evergreen sung by Barbra Streisand**; a long-term favourite. A voice that is quite different – I love it. Love most of Streisand's. My two daughters love it also.

Number five; **Ladies in Lavender played by Nicola Benedetti**. My lovely sister Gillian and I saw this film together and greatly enjoyed both music and film.



Number six is **My Jesus, My Saviour by Darlene Zschech**. Some years ago, after driving by the doors of St. Nicholas church in Corfe Mullen on a regular basis, I decided one Sunday morning to go in. (Having thought I was 'an alright Christian', I soon realised I was rather like a car in the garage that never went anywhere). This step had a profound impact on my life (and I have a church family as well).

Number seven; **The Circle of Life by Elton John**. This would remind me of my amazing theatre loving grandchildren. The Lion King is quite a family favourite, along with Mamma Mia, etc., etc., etc.



Lastly, number eight is **Thank You for the Years sung by Shirley Bassey**. This choice is for my many wonderful friends who have shared countless joys, and one or two sorrows, have been loyal and uplifting and, above all, non-judgemental. May the years continue.

Perhaps I should have saved The Allelujah Chorus for my last choice, but I'll sing this out loud if I'm ever rescued !!

We usually assume a desert island has soft sand, an azure sea and sunshine from morning till night, but I have to say I am not a sun worshipper and would so miss the wonders of nature that I love. So whilst I enjoy a good novel be it mystery, biography or romance I would have to take with me some reminders of our green and pleasant land. My choice, therefore, is **Poems on Nature by William Wordsworth**. He believed in the education of man by nature and I am sure these verses would uplift my spirits.

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NEWS OF SOME OLD WINBURNIANS

FIVE OF THE BEST !

CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

By Karen Wyatt-Epapara

Exactly 70 years after they started at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, five friends met up to celebrate the anniversary

Bob White, Ken Taylor, Alan Hall, Tony Gould and Keith Harvey joined the school as 11-year-olds in 1951, where they shared many experiences over those formative years.

They spoke with much fondness of their time at the school, agreeing that they were good times indeed. Their reminiscences highlighted the differences between education then and now. They laughed as they remembered the school swimming sports, which took place in the river, and when girls were allowed to join the school in 1953, giving them 'other interests'.

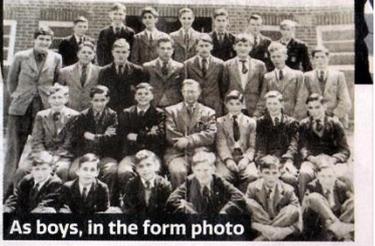
Their teachers clearly made a strong impression – many were 'real characters', and they all had nicknames

too. Albert 'Fishy' Maiden, their old English teacher was held in particular regard. Apparently, the nickname was acquired as he "swam like a fish" in his youth, and not for more unkind reasons.

Adult life took them in different directions: Ken spent most of his life working in the civil service; Alan ended his career as chief chemist at Wellworthy Ltd; Bob went through the technical college system to become a professor of engineering at Southampton University; Tony served an apprenticeship before becoming a union officer for the Transport and General Workers' Union and Keith was a draughtsman at Hamworthy Engineering.



From L-R: Bob White, Ken Taylor, Alan Hall, Tony Gould, Keith Harvey



As boys, in the form photo

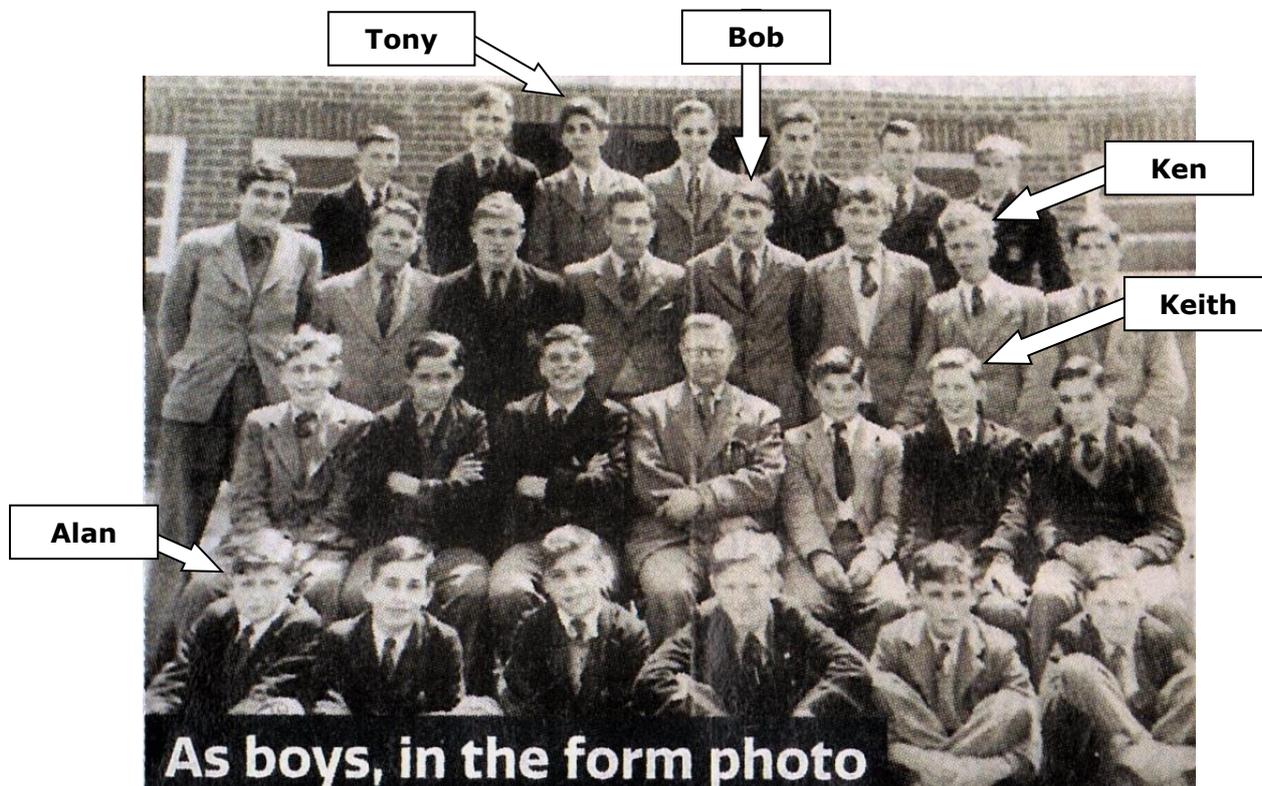
Even so, they kept in touch over the years, but meeting up at an Old Winburnians reunion 20 years ago rekindled their friendship and they've been regularly meeting up ever since.

The five wanted to acknowledge friends who couldn't make the get together, or are no longer with us. Chris Peters lives in Windermere, and was unable to attend, while a number of boys pictured in the form photo have

sadly passed away.

Bob spoke for the group when he said: "Looking back, we realise that we were taught by real scholars, teachers who had a genuine interest in their subjects. It was an era gone by, but a good one, and gave us experiences that bound us together in our formative years."

[This article was published in an edition of "Dorset View" magazine, Vol.19, Issue 3, dated October 2021]



FORM 3A of YEAR 1953-1954
The Form Master is Mr C.H. Barnaby

DOUGLAS FREWER (40-49)

Dear Alan

I was a contemporary of Derek Stevens and very sad to learn of his death, but I have not been able to join any of the reunions for some years now.

I came to QEGS in January 1940 at the age of 9.5yrs. My mother was introduced to the headmaster, 'Tipper' Airey, by her mother and I recall that he interviewed my younger brother and myself in his study and then announced that I could come as a dayboy, but that my younger brother would have to wait a year. My parents paid the dayboy fees until I passed the 11 plus exam. I always found 'Tipper' Airey to be strict but fair. Perhaps my memory is coloured by him making me Head Boy in my last year (1949).

I think I can still recite the school song and remember how much we enjoyed stamping at the King's refusal to grant the good lady Meg's request ! Other memories are of the annual swimming competitions in the river, in which I was successful in the underwater distance competition !; playing 'fives' in the two open air courts, without gloves; 0.22 rifle shooting on the range at the side of the playground and playing marbles against the low wall in the front of the New Building. I also remember how much we were left to study on our own in the sixth form. Then the various store rooms in the cottages in King Street came in very useful if you felt like losing yourself !

For a year we were marched into town to the British Restaurant, a wartime innovation, where a 2-course hot meal was provided very cheaply. But we had to be in and out in 30 mins. and then the school took over and we ate in Big School. That was when it paid to be a prefect, because they divided up the food into portions and served them, with the result that they always had more than enough !

As it was wartime when I came to the school I joined the Cadet Corps and ended up as one of three sergeants. Our big problem came with the visit of an NCO from a Scottish regiment to check on our drill, etc. He was a Glaswegian and we could not understand a word he said !

I was not a good athlete. I remember cheating on the annual cross-country runs by hitching a lift on the milkman's electric delivery vehicle, not to win but simply to save my legs, but I enthusiastically entered most events at the annual competition because I was captain of my House (Richmond). I also failed at cricket and early on was given the scorer's job; rugby was my game. I captained the school team for several years and also played for the newly formed Wimborne Town club whilst still at school.

Three members of the staff stand out in my memory. 'Motty' Mottram who taught me Geography and Art, and told us the most fascinating stories; Mr Kerswell who spent years believing I was not coping with his teaching of Mathematics, particularly when it came to the higher forms and thereby caused me to persevere with it; and Bill Tapping who gave me a love and understanding of History, and was instrumental in encouraging me to try for entry to Oxford University.

Just a few of my memories. I am afraid that I lost contact with my contemporaries by joining Shell International after graduating from Oxford, where incidentally I founded the Old QEGS Society with the Pugh brothers who followed me there.

DAVID PARK (48-55)

I started singing when I was 8 years old, joining the Wimborne Minster choir in 1946 at the same time as David Roberts (QEGS). The wartime habit of switching off all the lights in church, except the one in the pulpit during sermons, continued. You can imagine what went on in the choir stalls ! It was quite a commitment being a choirboy then. Besides singing at 3 services on Sunday, we practised after school on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays with a full practice on Friday evenings and singing Evensong on Wednesdays to no-one except the verger. During my time at Wimborne I sang under 5 choirmasters ending with Barry Ferguson, later of Rochester cathedral. My first treble solo was the short opening line of "Wash Me Thoroughly, which has a really awkward interval right at the beginning - it was for me anyway. I had the privilege of singing with the renowned baritone Owen Brannigan. I sang The Child "Behold a Little Cloud Ariseth Now" from Mendelssohn's Elijah. Not much to sing but quite an experience.

My treble voice did not break until I was 15 or so. I was in the 5th form and sang from the balcony in Big School during one of the school plays. Even during National Service I would sing in the Minster on a Sunday morning if I was at home. Dr Reginald Johnson was, I recall, the musical director for schools in Dorset. He had arranged a concert at Pamphill school. I sang the baritone solos with 2 countertenors from Salisbury Cathedral in Henry Purcell's "Come Ye Sons of Art". The highlight for me was that, just as I stood up to sing, the school cat came in at the back and started walking up towards the stage.



I enjoyed singing Vaughan Williams' "Fantasia on Christmas Carols" and the 3 Kings carol, but a favourite of mine was "Libera Me" from Faure's Requiem. I first sang this with the combined choirs of the school and the Minster in 1961 and then again in 1985 at Christchurch with a choir under Roger Overend, a former choirboy at the Minster and then the organist/choirmaster at the Priory. At the 1961 concert a quartet of Elaine Hooker, Jennifer and Michael Bartlett and myself, sang a couple of Purcell's Verse Anthems. The school music master at the time was John Emery. Michael Bartlett, an old boy of QEGS, invited me to join a choir in Southampton. It was a long way to go to rehearse. While there, we recorded some of Benjamin Britten's Songs. I first met my wife (to be) after an Easter service in the Minster when I had sung "Rise Heart", one of Ralph Vaughan Williams' 5 Mystical Songs.

We moved to Bradford Abbas in 1974 and I immediately joined the Sherborne Abbey choir under choirmaster Julian Dams. My son Tim was for a while a treble in the Abbey choir and it was a pleasure to sing in the same choir together. My most frightening experience there was when I was asked to sing "The Trumpet Shall Sound" from Handel's Messiah at the memorial service for the Colonel of the Dorset regiment. The trumpeter played with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. When I asked when would we rehearse, I was told – you won't. On the day he stood in the Digby chapel and I stood by the pulpit and off we went ! I remember we did a couple of Songs of Praise for TV at the Abbey. On a lighter note, 4 of us formed a barbershop quartet singing for charities. We all wore wigs and I knelt in cut-out shoes. We called ourselves The Short and Curlies. It was fun but didn't last long because our countertenor moved to become a lay clerk at Ely cathedral.

When I retired from the Abbey choir in the nineties I sang for a number of years with the Yeovil Chamber choir before joining the Sherborne Chamber choir where we sang a wide range of music and gave some superb concerts with orchestras and professional singers.

I stopped singing seriously some 3 years ago, having sung almost continuously in choirs for over 70 years but I do still sing occasionally with local choirs in churches at Christmas. Where did I find the time to play cricket !

PETER RUSSELL (61-68)

I was born in Winchester but my family moved to Ferndown in 1958, my father's aircraft engineering job with Vickers Armstrong (later BAC) bringing him to Hurn Airport via spells at Hursley Park (near Eastleigh) and South Marston (Swindon). Thus, Ferndown Primary was my third school in three years, but I still did well in my 11-plus, taken partly at Pamphill. Other Ferndown kids who came up to WGS in 1961 included Linda Dunning, Anita Maine, Denise Platt, Sheila Randall, Robert Shearing, Richard Taylor and Patsy Wills.



[A rare view of 'The Annexe' in early to mid-1960s with a teacher & form group; details & names unknown.

Photo courtesy of the Museum of East Dorset]

Entering 1-Alpha in September 1961, I initially found WGS's size (about 450 pupils then) a bit intimidating, but the first two years spent mainly in 'The Annexe' in East Borough eased me into 'Big School'. Random Annexe memories include: playground hopscotch, daily walks to Big School and the bus (Nos. 13/22), music lessons with Mr. Emery in the stand-alone room (still there), and being beside the lovely, crystal-clear River Allen (or Win/Wim, as I now prefer). A hole in the metal railings (still there) let us crawl through onto the bank. Occasionally a 'thrasher' boat mechanically cleared excess weed, leaving a smell of rotting fish ! I also recall two ways in/out of the Annexe – one via doors in walled gardens in the old workhouse area (partly redeveloped as Allen Court), the other, more usual one from nearer the playing fields end. It never seemed odd that the classes were held in a terrace of brick cottages.



[The old music room, looking westwards in WW2 when a hospital occupied the Annexe. The building looks new, so what was it intended for originally? The foreground became the playground after the war. Photo courtesy of the Museum of East Dorset]

Like many OWs (most?), I had both good and bad school experiences. Among the best was Joe Kerswell having us in stitches in Maths; among the worst, exam anxiety and seemingly impossible gym exercises. As for "best days of your life", I was never really

happy there ... well, apart from falling in unrequited love at first sight in 1962 with a gorgeous Wimborne girl two years older (name withheld). Sadly, she left in 1964, never to be seen by me again ... not that I knew her beyond longing gazes. Previously, I was smitten by our French teacher in 1961-62 – Nora Garrard – petite, comely and strongly perfumed. She didn't stay long; end of pre-pubescent romantic fantasies !

While academically inclined, I missed much through continual flare-ups of a life-long gut disease and also had to overcome what I recognised much later as autism. I struggled to catch up, but was still one of 20+ pupils 'elevated' through Form 4R, fast-tracking several 'O' levels. 'R' stood for 'Removed' – more redolent of being sent down to Guy's Marsh Borstal than joining an academic elite! In retrospect, I'm ambivalent about 4R; I felt that some odd subject choices were forced on us too early (e.g. Geography or Latin) and a sense of cramming pervaded. I liked English Language but loathed English Literature, above all Shakespeare; I've read little fiction since but love TV's *Upstart Crow*, irreverently bringing WS down to earth! 4R names recalled from 1964-65 include: Pat Birch (Three Legged Cross), Nick Hood (Alderholt), John Humphry (Canford Bottom), Bernice Duncan, David Reeks and Fiona Thorne (all Verwood), Jim Moore (Lower Row), Terry Selby (Colehill), Richard Tong (Lytchett).

Four contemporaries formed a loosely-constituted railway enthusiasts' group – Nick Hood, Kevin Hood (no relation), Rob Shearing and myself. We train-spotted around Bournemouth and made trips to Salisbury, London, Bristol, Cardiff and the great steam scrapyard at Barry Docks. There was no school railway club, but I suspect there were more enthusiasts present who perhaps declined to admit it. I've since gone on to study railway history with some academic gravitas.

I enjoyed rugby, playing regularly for the 1st XV as a tall, skinny, fast left wing and scoring 17 tries in the 1967 season (including inter-house matches for Richmond). 'Frosty' Hoare once told me I'd play better if I understood the rules properly! Fellow 1st XV players included Roger Baldry, Graham Bates, Richard Bathurst, Ivor Jenkins, Johnny Powell. Despite no known family links to Wales, my admiration for the great Welsh national teams of the 1960s (miners and steel workers versus England's public school types!) made me a long-term supporter. In soccer, I was also 1st X1 goalkeeper for one game – suffering an ignominious 0-7 home defeat (not all my fault)! Do any OWs recall fishing balls out of the river with a net on a long rod, or still playing even when the pitch was partly flooded, or cross-country running to Pamphill through wintry, flooded Stour meadows? Aah, Tom Hoare – ever the sadist on field and in the gym. I recall a table tennis bat being wielded on bums until you got gym exercises right.

In 1966 my family moved to Pilford and cycling to school became regular. I had completed Lower 6th by then, studying Maths, Physics and Chemistry, but realising too late that I had made the wrong choices. My main interests were increasingly in environment and transport, and an appropriate career beckoned, much to the surprise of careers adviser 'Gunner' Holman, who thought it a waste of a science background. Despite not studying Geography beyond 3rd Year, yet being a map lover, I toyed with a career in Ordnance Survey at Southampton, but Gunner reckoned I wouldn't need a degree (how things have changed). I then shifted towards Town Planning, which disturbed him even more!

My 'A' level results looked unpromising, but in 1967-68 I applied for university town and country planning courses via UCCA (remember that?) and had a few interviews but no offers. Meanwhile, a bit of serendipity: another would-be planner at WGS, Roger Baldry, showed me a prospectus for the planning school at Edinburgh College of Art/Heriot-Watt University (not in the UCCA system). The 'Art' tag indicates how planning was dominated by architects then, but it was going through a revolutionary paradigm-shift towards geography, social science and politics. I applied, got an interview and an offer. I had found my true path, securing a 1st and a doctoral scholarship award to read planning theory, but by 27 I ran out of steam, had more health problems and sensed I wasn't cut out for long-term academic tenure. I switched to local government in Worcester, moving to an organic smallholding just over the border in glorious rural Herefordshire, where my wife Kay and I remain after 42 years.

Yet, for most of my adult life exiled from Wessex, I've been drawn back constantly by my spiritual connection. In 1976 my parents down-sized to West Moors for the rest of their lives, giving me a continued base for visits. I only sold the house in 2021 after my mother's death at 97 in 2018. I now feel seriously disconnected from Dorset after 63 years, but I shall keep returning as a visitor and may eventually move back.

More random memories of 1960s WGS life: exploring the out-of-bounds upper floors and finding a spare quarterjack in one of the towers; rushing out at break-time to get a

place in the fives courts; public canings (not me!) by Ned, visible through his study window; the infamous weekend break-in by disaffected ex-pupils circa 1967, who turned on upstairs taps to flood the rooms and painted obscenities on outside walls; a 1967 weekend repainting the prefects' room in psychedelic colours to the sound of the Sergeant Pepper LP on repeat (thanks, Mike Flame, but not my taste) - the staff were horrified. Ned once called me into his study (creepy) to admonish me for growing sideburns, advising that I shave them off before attending university interviews. He was clearly out of touch; this was the Summer of Love, when beards and long hair were widespread on campus. Once I was free from mother's pressure for crew cuts, mine grew free and wild after 18, spoilt only by creeping baldness after 30!



[The Courtyard Coffee Lounge in King Street – another illicit location to spend break-time, or a free period drinking coffee & listening to the jukebox.

Photo courtesy of the Museum of East Dorset]

After a gap of 50+ years since leaving school and losing contacts, I've attended a few OW reunions, but not seen anyone there from the same year group. I've separately met two exact contemporaries – Kevin Hood (who emigrated to Canada) and David

Reeks (now living in East Devon). I've contacted another – Kelvin Tutt, who joined the army but has retired to Andover. I've also hooked up with David Forster, a bit older and who, extraordinarily, now lives only a mile away from me. I wonder if others who may remember me will come out of the woodwork! I still have the panoramic school photos for 1962, 1964, 1966 and 1968, the latter the only one to show both my younger brother Stewart (1966-73) and me. I pore over them regularly, trying to put names to faces.

RUSSELL HUNTER (57-64)

Dear Alan

I very much enjoyed the article on our well-loved English teacher. I regret my ignorance of some of his many extra-curricular achievements, but will always remember him fondly for the appreciation of language and literature that he patiently instilled in me; something of course I failed to fully realise until several years later.

I was especially surprised to hear of his swimming prowess that was attributed to being the origin of his nickname. I have never forgotten his mischievous demonstration on the blackboard of the vagaries of English pronunciation and had always assumed that he must have been using it for many years, thus giving rise to "Fishy". It seems that after all, this was not the whole story, but perhaps a bit of fun related to his apparent love of swimming ? Does anyone else remember this spelling trick ?

g h o c h

Question) Using examples of English pronunciation, what word could these letters spell?

Answer) **Fish** = Enough **w**omen **ch**ampagne

I regret I am unable to get to the reunion events. Nevertheless, I remain an enthusiastic member. I always enjoy reading the newsletter and thinking back to my time at the school. I spent many years in the music business and I've always liked the fact that for five of those years (1957-1964) three of us who later made our way in that sphere sat closely together - (Bob) Fripp, (Gordon) Haskell and me, Hunter (although I must own up that the other two had far more stellar careers than I) !

BETTY READ (née WHITE) (53-58)

The first school I attended was Lockyers at Corfe Mullen. I did well there and fellow pupil Andrew Jones and I fought for first place in our exams. We both went to the Grammar school. I was one of the first girls to attend Queen Elizabeth's. I found things very intimidating and was not happy. I didn't know any girls until I made friends. it was a big change for me as I knew everyone at Corfe Mullen.

On my first day I had to catch a coach which came from Upton and Lytchett. There were a couple of girls, Margaret Randall and Lorraine Thomas who I became friends with. Also, our newsletter editor Alan Bennett was one of the boys. The Prefects at the school were of course all boys. To me they seemed like men. I was rather nervous of them, also some of the teachers, particularly Mr Hoare, who I was quite scared of. Years after this, when he was teaching my children at St Michael's, I spoke to him on parents evening and told him. He appeared very surprised and said he had not been at all like that ! Two teachers who I found were very kind were Mr Stephens and Mr Williams. Miss Hallett, our Domestic science teacher, was lovely and I passed GCE in cookery.

Academically, I was not very good, but was quite good at sports. I was in the school hockey team and scored goals in our first match away at Parkstone Grammar School which we won ! I also enjoyed athletics and I shared the intermediate girls cup with Sue Hatherley (then Bush).



[Sue (left) & Betty with the cup !]

Drama was another thing I liked. I was a princess in a class play "The Swineherd" with Ann Wall, Marian Stephens, Pat Unsworth and Norman Waterman, and enjoyed being in the chorus in 'Iolanthe', especially as I was paired with Ian Gosling on whom I had a bit of a crush !



[Betty as The Princess (third from the left) & her Maids of Honour]

The best friends I made were Diane Shearing and Pat Parker. I kept up with Pat after leaving school and went to her wedding. She moved to South Africa and then Australia. I then lost track of Pat who was married to a Polish chap.

When I was 14 I bought a pony which I had saved up for since I was born. Unfortunately, this took a lot of my time and homework suffered ! I was a member of the Portman Pony club. Our ex-Chairman, Anthony Gould, was also involved in this activity.

When I left school in 1958 I worked in the Midland Bank. I joined Holt and Wimborne Young Farmers Club and made lots of friends, including Alan Maitland and June. I have been a member of OWA for many years, also on the committee and as treasurer. I enjoy meeting everyone at the reunions.

(Betty mentions playing The Princess in "The Swineherd". The following gives the Programme of the full Christmas Concert of 1954 in which the short play appeared.

Ed.)

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL, WIMBORNE

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

In Big School, Sat. Dec. 19th, at 6 p.m.

Compere : G.D. Mason

Stage Manager : D.M. Ellis

Lighting : C. Lucas, R. Banford, A Tesson

Production Supervised by Mr M.S. McCroric

••• oOo •••

PROGRAMME

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--------------------|
| 1. Overture | ••• | P. Coole |
| 2. <u>The Rowland Ruby</u> | | |
| Butler | ••• | J. Ashfield Salter |
| Visitor | ••• | D. Singleton |
| Joe | ••• | M. Drew |
| John Rowland | ••• | G. Wood |
| Prof. Jasper | ••• | D. Scrase |
| 3. <u>Roger Ireland</u> | ••• | Piano-accordion |
| 4. <u>The Swineherd</u> | | |
| Princess | ••• | Elizabeth White |
| Prince | ••• | Norman Waterman |
| Emperor | ••• | Julius Kearon |
| Maids of Honour | ••• | Ann Wall |
| | | Marian Stephens |
| | | Pat Unsworth |
| Pages | ••• | Richard Read |
| | | Anthony Littlewood |
| | | Douglas Jones |
| | | Diana Shearing |

- | | | | |
|-----|--|---------------|--------------------------|
| 5. | <u>Piano Solo</u> | ... | D Broomfield |
| 6. | <u>The Famous Psychic Act</u> | | |
| | Maros | ... | P. Coole |
| | Farina | ... | P. Warner |
| | | | produced by A.T. Domoney |
| 7. | <u>Roger Ireland</u> | ... | Piano-accordion |
| 8. | <u>Scarlet Thread</u> | | |
| | Butters | ... | A. Bennett |
| | Migsworth | ... | D. Park |
| | Smith | ... | P. Eyres |
| | Landlord | ... | C. Webb |
| | Traveller | ... | H. Elson |
| | Breen | ... | B. Glover |
| 9. | <u>Piano Selection</u> | ... | P. Coole |
| 10. | <u>Excerpt from "A Midsummer Night's Dream"</u> | | |
| | Thisbe | ... | P. Cox |
| | Pyramus | ... | A. Smith |
| | Wall | ... | R. Christopher |
| | Moonshine | ... | G. Tesson |
| | Prologue | ... | D. Lee |
| | Theseus | ... | D. Cowden |
| | Hippolyta | ... | C. Surgeoner |
| | Demetrius | ... | P. Charman |
| | Lysander | ... | S. Coley |
| | Philostrate | ... | P. Manners |
| 11. | <u>Roger Ireland</u> | ... | Piano-accordion |
| 12. | <u>Trial by Judge</u> | A Comic Opera | |
| | Judge | ... | P. Forshaw |
| | Usher | ... | M. Williams |
| | 1 st Suitor | ... | M. Bartlett |
| | 2 nd Suitor | ... | G. Mason |
| | The Girl | ... | P. Kettle |
| | | | and Members of the Jury |

LEN PEARCE (36-41)

(Len, our oldest member. Many congratulations to you and Diana for this great achievement !

Ed.)



Platinum partners started with a kiss

A popular Wimborne couple have celebrated 70 years of marriage. Len and Diana Pearce were married in 1951 and have just celebrated their platinum anniversary.

Len has lived in Wimborne all his life and is now 96. He was born in East Borough in a small cottage and went to Wimborne Grammar school, having attended the primary school in School Lane. Diana was born in Parkstone, and they met at a New Year's Eve dance at the Woodlands Hall in Parkstone. Diana noted in her diary: 'I could not get to the Woodlands until late, and though, strange as it may seem, I did not see or know Len until about 11.45 or just before. "I was dancing with Len and, as the Old Year went out and the New Year came in, he kissed me – such a gentle kiss..." and that was the start of their life together!

They started their married life with Len's parents in the cottage in East Borough and then moved into 'digs' at Oakfield, a house on Cranborne Road, just outside Wimborne. Just before their first daughter was born, they moved into Merley Ways, where they have lived ever since. Len volunteered for the RAF before being called up, and went on to become a Flight Engineer. His father was a gardener and also a retained fireman. Whilst dealing with a flood at Critchel House, during a thunderstorm, his father was struck by lightning and survived! After being demobbed, he returned to his job in the insurance industry, but soon moved to the Town Planning office in Bournemouth, where he stayed until he retired. Len commanded the ATC squadron in Wimborne and

then moved to command Poole ATC Squadron. He was the secretary of the old Wimburnians, and even at 90 became a guide in the Minster. Len also researched and published the service details of the men and women listed on the War Memorials in the Minster, the Grammar School, the United Reform Church and in some of the surrounding villages. He still has a wry sense of humour and is very interesting to chat to, if sometimes controversial! Diana worked as a playground monitor when the children were at school and was a Tawny Owl,

(Brownies). She was heavily involved in amateur dramatics, both in Wimborne and Poole. She appeared naked, (apart from a body stocking) on the Pavilion stage in *Charlie Girl!* Later, Diana and her daughter Christine, played the wicked witch and the good fairy respectively with the Allendale Pantomime Society. When Diana retired from being on the stage, she worked backstage doing make-up for many of the local shows. Len and Diane have two daughters, seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

[This article was published in an edition of "The New Stour & Avon" magazine, dated 27th August 2021]

OBITUARIES

HEATHER BREWER (née CHANDLER) (54-59)

Having coped very well during the recent pandemic, sadly Heather's health deteriorated and she passed away quite unexpectedly on July 1st this year after a long illness.

Heather and her to be husband Brian were in different years at the Grammar School. They only really became aware of one another when they attended the ballroom dancing lessons run by Miss Thorpe the art teacher;



Heather and Brian were paired together. They started going out together after they left school and got married in 1965.



Initially, Heather worked in banking until she and Brian had two children, both sons. Having raised the children, she returned to work and made a career in the insurance industry.

The ballroom dancing which began at school established a lifetime hobby together and Heather later qualified as a dance teacher. Heather and Brian spent many years as dance leaders only stopping when her parents reached their late eighties and came to live with them.

Kindly sent to us by her husband, Brian Brewer (52-59)

SIMON COLEY (52-59)

(Although we do not have an "official" obituary for Simon, David Scrase has put together some wonderful memories of him throughout their friendship. Ed.)

The sad news of Simon Coley's death moves me to write a few words of appreciation. The years of friendship at QEGS and in the years after were meaningful, satisfying, enjoyable, and deeply influential. There was sport, music, and growing and maturing together; there was painting houses (mainly for teachers), hiking and boating adventures, and social events. And then there were the student years when we roomed together in Bristol. Over this period, he was quietly but firmly a major presence for me. Reliable, conscientious in everything he did, he was a model, mature beyond his years, someone to emulate – or at least to make an attempt to do so.

His reliability was reflected in sport. He was a rugby fullback, always there, cleaning up with a minimum of fuss, getting us out of trouble. In football, he played in goal. There he was, keeping the ball out of the net, clearing up field, there for the rest of us. In cricket, too, he batted with quiet resolve and effective results. He fielded at silly-mid-

on/off. In all three sports he was placed to observe, analyse, and make quiet suggestions whenever needed. At tennis he excelled. In the bus to away games he was foremost among the singers with a fine tenor voice and a repertoire of old favourites, including many songs from Gilbert and Sullivan's Iolanthe, in the school production of which he sang in the chorus.

There was fun, too. Amateur performances in the locality. Hiking. Swimming. Trips to every corner of Poole Harbour in our small rowing-boat. Many of these adventures continued in and around Bristol, where there was often an emphasis on seeking out girls. There was the time we drove to Bath for a dance, where we hoped to fall in love.... We arrived a little early – or perhaps the organisers were a little late. Needing to fortify ourselves with a beer, but finding no one to serve us, we tapped the barrel, served ourselves and then others who were as thirsty as we were. Not knowing any better, we dispensed beer freely – in both senses of the word. When the people manning the bar eventually arrived and expressed their horror that so many students were drinking their beer but not paying for it, we melted wordlessly into the crowd. All very enjoyable – although we still did not find the girls we wanted.

On another occasion, we had gone off somewhere for a rugby game in Simon's car – a pre-war Austin Seven. Suddenly, way out in the wilds, one of the leaf springs broke and we limped over to the side of the road to assess the damage. Simon, studying at what was in those days the Bristol College of Advanced Technology, assessed the situation with his engineering eye, and thought we could repair it somehow, since only one layer of the spring was actually broken. We removed the laces from our rugby boots and wrapped them tightly round the spring. Soon we were on our way back to Bristol, slowly, gingerly even, but the old Austin Seven was not known for its speed. The next day he found the spare part at a breakers' yard and repaired it. The singing continued. In our room we almost wore out a record of The Merry Widow.

On occasion, Simon would be a guest at one of the social functions in the German Department of Bristol University – "chercher la femme" very much at the centre, of course. We had high hopes on one such occasion. Bristol's twin city in Germany (Hannover) had sent a complement of students who were thus able to spend a summer perfecting their English. One of these students, Gertraut, proved to be the one, and they married a year or so later.

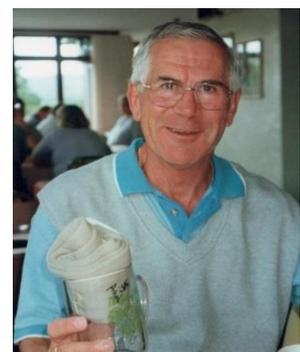
Simon will be very much missed by her and their two children. I will miss him sorely.

Kindly sent to us by David Scrase (51-59)

GRAHAM ARTHUR ALBERT PENN

Born 14th March 1941 : Died 9th April 2021

Graham was a former OWA member. He attended QEGS from 1952 to 1957 and remained local to Wimborne during his life. Unfortunately, we do not have an obituary for him, but here is a poem taken from his funeral service sheet.



Poem entitled 'When I Am Gone....'

When I am gone, release me, let me go.
I have so many things to see and do,
You mustn't tie yourself to me with too many tears,
But be thankful we had so many good years.

I gave you my love, and you can only guess
How much you've given me in happiness.
I thank you for the love that you have shown,
But now it is time I travelled on alone.

So grieve for me a while, if grieve you must,
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It is only for a while that we must part,
So treasure the memories within your heart.

I won't be far away for life goes on.
And if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me, I will be near.
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear
All my love around you soft and clear.
And then, when you come this way alone,
I'll greet you with a smile and a 'Welcome Home'.

Kindly sent to us by Robin Christopher (52-59)

JOHN RALPH DACOMBE

Born 17th December 1948 : Died 5th July 2021

Although not a current OWA member, John, who was a prominent pupil at QEGS from 1959-1966, sadly died in South Africa, where he had lived for many years, after a long battle with prostate cancer; aged 73.

Son of Ralph Dacombe, who was also an old pupil, and brother of Ann and David making up quite a family connection with the school. Ralph owned E T Dacombe in Wimborne's Corn Market which many pupils will remember as a seller and repairer of radios, TVs, cycles and motor cycles.

John joined Wimborne Minster choir, aged 7; music and choral singing remained a love for the rest of his life. Stamp collecting also remained a life-long passion. Academically and with cricket his main sport, he excelled. After getting A-levels in English, German and Latin, he studied Greek and Latin at Cardiff University. He captained Dorset under-15s and under-19s cricket teams and also Dorset Colts (under-19s, which included



non-schoolboys). He later played a few games for Glamorgan Second XI whilst in Cardiff.

Armed with his degree, he decided to qualify as an Accountant, following his cousin Peter and to be later followed by his brother David and daughter Caroline. Staying in Cardiff he was articled and qualified with Mann Judd.

Wanting to follow his cousin Peter to the warmth and plenty of cricket in the West Indies, he was disappointed to find no vacancies and tried South Africa instead. He settled in Johannesburg working his way up the commercial ladder to become the much respected finance director of a large LLP, dealing with all matters insurance. John married a South African and they had two lovely daughters Katherine, a doctor who married a doctor, is living in England and Caroline, the accountant. Until the birth of his first daughter, John played cricket every Saturday and Sunday for the famous Wanderers Cricket Club of Johannesburg.

John led a life of fulfilment and remained close to his roots, still supporting Bournemouth, Southampton and Hampshire, plus enjoying news of developments in Wimborne and surrounds.

Kindly sent to us by Peter Douch (58-63)

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