

# OLD BUCKWELLIANS NEWS



## Young Bucks on Board

It has been very pleasing to see more interest in our network from the younger Bucks. There is a time in our lives when, for some reason, we begin to wonder what happened to the guys we were at school with.

The next step is to get more of the pupils from the 1970s and 1980s as subscribers, so I hope those of you reading this will take up the challenge of recruiting your contemporaries.

In this edition we conclude the tragic story of how our school closed, and there is a fitting obituary written by **Bryan Rooney**. Thanks as always to those who have provided some excellent features, and special thanks to those who have done much more than just writing an

article. As you will see, significant research has gone into their contributions. The wonderful collaborative effort that led to the next chapter in the drama series (see p16) has also given us a great opportunity. Using our website to add a multimedia dimension to the written word, you can now hear the music from one of the most successful productions on the BHCHS stage.

If you have not yet sent me an update about yourself please don't think I am looking for a large scale feature. Just a few lines will be very welcome!

We are moving to an attractive new venue - Woolston Hall - for our **Annual Dinner** on 7th October and we aim for a record attendance. Make your booking

early to avoid disappointment. You should find the booking form enclosed and it can also be downloaded from our website.

Finally, I was sorry to see that the **Loughton CHS** OGA seems to be moribund after their very successful anniversary lunch a few years ago. Given the close links between BHCHS and Loughton CHS a revival of the girls' association is highly desirable. There is an exciting and very worthwhile project waiting to be started. Many of our members will have wives, sisters, old flames etc. from Loughton. If you know of anyone who may want to be involved in this please ask them to contact me for a no-obligation discussion.

**Graham Frankel**

May 2010  
Number 22



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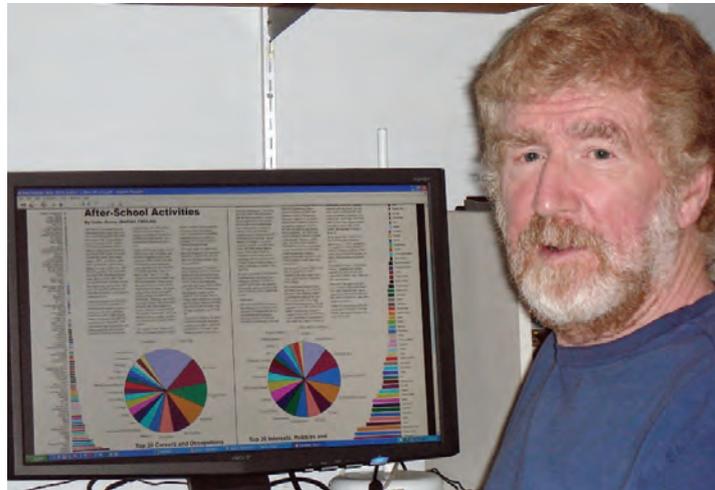
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## Quiz Night - A Resounding Success!



Comper Graham ("the grid") and Quiz Master Phil

Our first ever Quiz Night, held at the Theydon Bois Village Hall in September last year, was a tremendous success. The large and very pleasant hall was packed with eager Old Bucks from a wide range of year groups, plus their families and friends. Maybe there was a hint of trepidation in the air at the start. Did I detect some nervousness about whether our failure to recall those school

requiring participants to have attended the school. We knew exactly the right person to help us here. **Colin West (1962)** is a widely published writer and illustrator of children's books, and he readily agreed to do the honours. Several of Colin's delightful and amusing creations are shown elsewhere in the magazine, and the remainder will be published in due course.

We decided to replace the usual raffle and hold an auction during the interval. More string pulling here, and we found some willing donors of various interesting items. Would it be a bit cheeky, we wondered, to ask **Barry Hearn (1959)** for a couple of tickets for the Os? Not a bit of it – he immediately came back with an offer of four tickets plus a VIP lunch in the Director's

on p 24 - had been carefully mounted in a high quality frame by **Dave Stancer (Woodwork 1965-89)**.

After the interval we were back to the serious business. All the post-interval rounds were music, and here Phil Hughes was able to demonstrate his Radio 2 training – something for everyone! His



Interval refreshments

technical skills were grounded in the stage team of BHCHS and subsequently honed by the BBC, where he is a senior producer, and in his work as a hospital radio presenter. Worthy winners were the impressive *Craft Club* led by **Roger Neville (1957)**. They were followed by *The Sandwich Brigade* who might have won if they had played their joker earlier. Their bevy of brainy Bucks included **Terence Atkins (1958)**, **Bill Allan** and **Martin Westbrook (1961)**, **Colin West**, and **Eddie Barnes (1969)**.

The committee were very grateful to Phil Hughes for agreeing to run the Quiz, and I am also grateful to Dick Battersby and Peter Sharp for their help in making this such a successful evening. We were pleased to have raised £785 for the St Clare Hospice, and the committee felt that a repeat performance should definitely be considered.



Staff Table– Dave Clapton, John Whaler, John Lakeman, Mick Conway and wives

history lessons would result in humiliation or worse? The calm professionalism and good humour of quiz master **Phil Hughes (1965)** immediately put any lingering fears to rest. His well-researched questions were delicately balanced to provide challenge and fun and plenty of debate among the contestants.

In our planning, we had wondered if quiz nights were a bit old hat, so we were looking for some features that would make ours different – and better. So we decided on a few innovations, and given we were raising money not for ourselves but for charity, there were no qualms about pulling a few strings. The first idea was to come up with some creative table names that would somehow bring in a few memories of BHCHS without

Lounge at any home match of the winner's choice. **Roger Mew (1953)** was the winning bidder, who reported after the match that Barry was a delightful host and they were happily swapping BHCHS stories even though they had not been at school at the same time. Other auction items included rounds of golf at some of the best clubs in the area – thanks to **Des Slade (1939)** and **Eric Stevenson (1953)**, a signed copy of the best selling album by David Gray, who happens to be the son-in-law of **Bryan Rooney (English, 1967-85)**, a signed copy of Colin West's most popular publications, a set of Terry Wogan's hilarious Janet & John CDs signed by Sir Terry himself, thanks to Phil Hughes, and an aerial photo of BHCHS taken from a Royal Navy helicopter in 1973. The photo - which appears



OBA Chairman Dick Battersby hands over the cheque for £785 to Michael Chapman, Chairman of the trustees of St Clare Hospice, Hastingwood

## Old Buckwellians News



**Old Buckwellians News** is published twice yearly in May and November by the Old Buckwellians Association. You will need to join the Association to ensure you receive future editions. Contact the Editor (see below) for all subscription enquiries.

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[obsbs@genesishr.co.uk](mailto:obsbs@genesishr.co.uk)

Back issues:

(from November 1999) are available from the Editor for £2 each. *Discount of 25% if you order five or more!* Cheques should be made payable to *Old Buckwellians*. Please send your news items and other articles for publication to the Editor by email if possible. Original photographs will be returned. The Editor reserves the right to shorten or otherwise amend items for publication.

The Editor

Graham Frankel  
46 Mandeville Road  
Hertford  
Herts  
SG13 8JQ

Tel: 01992 422246

Email: [graham@genesishr.co.uk](mailto:graham@genesishr.co.uk)

Web: [www.bhchs.co.uk](http://www.bhchs.co.uk)

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**Vice Presidents:** Malcolm Beard Alan Woods

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**Treasurer:** Peter Sharp

**Secretary:** Graham Frankel

**Committee Member:** Rob Lane

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# BUCKS FIZZ

News and notes about Old Bucks

## Rob's Arctic Challenge



Last November, **Rob Lane (1969)** set out to prove that you need to have an eccentric streak to be on the OBA Committee. Our newest member decided to risk life and limb by travelling to Lapland to take part in an Arctic Biathlon to raise money for his firm's chosen charity *Kid's Company*. Given our own weather conditions in the winter you might think this was taken in his back garden, but it really is Lapland. So how does taking part in dog sledding and

cross-country skiing compare with working in an office?

Fortunately Rob, who is a partner at the London law firm CMS Cameron McKenna, has written a full account of his mission to the Arctic Pole and it will be published in the next edition.

At this stage, I am pleased to report not only that Rob's efforts helped to raise £40,000 for the charity, but also that he has made a welcome start to being part of the OBA team.

## Meeting at the Masters



A meeting of two Old Bucks at the World Masters Games in Sydney last October wasn't a chance encounter. With more than 28,000 participants, it is perhaps not surprising that some of our number would be involved. **Stuart Low (1952)** had volunteered to help out with the massive task of organising the competitors from more than 100 countries, and took the initiative of finding out, via a

notice on our web site, whether any other Old Bucks were participating. Sure enough, **Paul Faithfull (1988)** was also helping, as a referee in the soccer competition. Although they were working in different venues, Paul made a point of coming to visit Stuart during a break in proceedings. At 33, Paul is not quite our youngest member, but was one of the final intake of pupils at BHCHS.

## Snooker Saviour?



The appointment of **Barry Hearn (1959)** as Chairman of the World Professional Billiards & Snooker Association took the snooker world by storm in December. Barry's appointment was widely acclaimed by many of the leading players who have noticed snooker losing its TV appeal in recent years. Barry has even been tipped as the saviour of snooker, and there is an expectation of sweeping changes to revitalise the sport. Barry has been associated with snooker for many years, having become the manager of Steve Davis and several other top players in the 1980s. Barry's company *Matchroom Sport* now has strong interests in the promotion of boxing, bowls, darts, fishing, golf, poker, pool, tenpin bowling - not forgetting Leyton Orient, of course!

## An unusual Ap-peat



**Dr Andrew Salisbury (Maths, 1959-63)** has been a keen bell-ringer since 1948. During his time at BHCHS he was a church bell-ringer at Hornchurch. Andrew wonders if there are any other Old Bucks who are ringers. He would be very happy to ring perhaps a quarter peal at a tower near the school if five or seven more ringers could be persuaded to join in. Are there any takers?

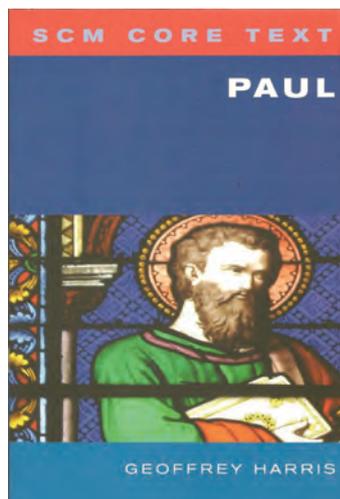
## We Want Sex

We shall look forward to seeing whether the latest film directed by **Nigel Cole (1968)** makes it on general release. His film is a dramatisation of the 1968 strike at the Ford Dagenham car plant, where female workers walked out in protest against sexual discrimination. The producers seem to have had something of a problem with the film's title. In the UK, the working title is *Dagenham Girls* but for other countries the title is expected to be *We Want Sex*. Starring Bob Hoskins, the cast also includes John Sessions as Harold Wilson. Nigel Cole's brother **Ben Cole (1971)** has also been involved in filming this production.

## Student Friendly



Another publication appeared recently from **Geoff Harris (1959)**. This student-friendly textbook, published by SCM press, provides an overview of information about research and writing on St Paul. Geoff Harris is Director of Studies and Senior Methodist Tutor at the East Midlands Ministry Training Course, based in Nottingham.



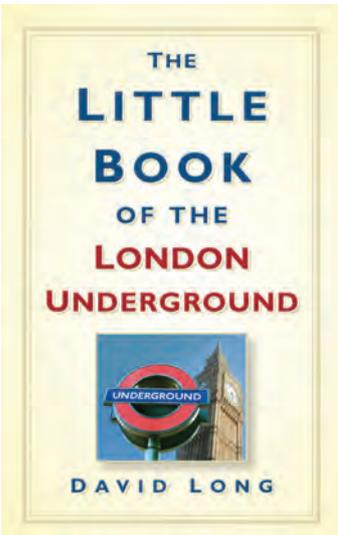
## Mike Joins Media Giant



In January this year, **Mike Moran (1971)** was appointed Managing Director of CBS Outdoor UK, which is the branch of the mass media giant CBS Corporation. Mike has a strong background in media and business development. The early part of his career was with Ford, with positions including General Manager of Fleet Sales and Marketing for Ford in the UK, and MD of Ford in Spain. He then moved to Toyota UK initially as Marketing Director and then

Commercial Director, where he was responsible for all Toyota brand sales, marketing, distribution and retailing in the UK. Most recently, Mike has been running his own consultancy, specialising in advising clients on growth through improved business strategy, market planning and new business development. He has been an active participant on various advertising regulatory bodies including the Society of British Advertisers and the Advertising Standards Association.

## Secrets of the Underground



Old Bucks, particularly those whose journey to school included a few stops on the Central Line, will find plenty to like about the recently published Little Book of the London Underground by author **David Long (1972)**. Containing more than 10,000 wacky facts about the network, and some wonderful illustrations by cartoonist Les Evans, it's expressly targeted more at commuters rather than Tube nerds and will answer all those questions you've never asked

yourself, such as who the Queen sat next to when she first went on the Tube in 1939, what happened to all the mud they dug out to make way for the Piccadilly Line, why Buckhurst Hill is so-called, how much Sir Paul McCartney made when he tried his hand at busking, and why it is that without the common shipworm, *Teredo navalis*, the world's oldest underground train network might never have been built in the first place.

Apparently in 1884 the Circle Line was described in the Times as 'a form of mild torture which no person would undergo if he could conveniently help it' and even now, says one psychologist quoted in the book, commuters can experience greater levels of stress than a police officer facing a rioting mob or even pilots going into a dogfight. Perhaps the answer is to take a copy of the book with you when you travel, especially as the author is offering a prize for the first reader to correctly identify the OB pictured on p.153. The book is available on Amazon, or via his own website [www.davidlong.info](http://www.davidlong.info) if you want a signed copy for £7.50.

## Meeting the Bishop

**Mick Dunlop (1945)**, who lives in Swanage, reports that within days of seeing the report about **Graham Kings' (1971)** appointment as Bishop of Sherborne (*OB News*, May 2009) he received the programme of future events at his local church. This included a visit by the new Bishop to take a confirmation service. Mick and his wife attended the service and reports that it was a very enjoyable service, in which Bishop Kings seemed so relaxed and jovial it seemed he had been in the parish for years. Mick also took the opportunity to chat with Graham after the service, and they jointly resolved to meet again at the Old Bucks Dinner in October.

## Youth Club Reunion

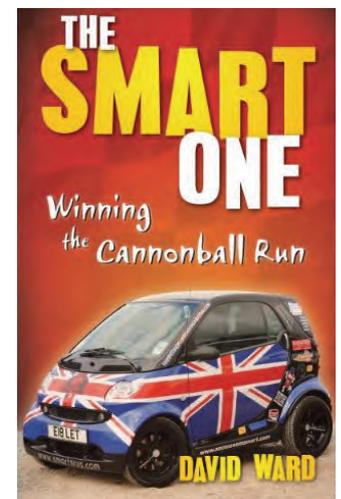
I was interested to see the item below in the *Daily Mail* in September.

I took the opportunity to remind **Ken Depledge (1948)** that the Old Bucks network is likely to have quite a few links with other former members of the Ilford Methodist Youth Club. Can anyone supply some more information about former members for Ken? Contact me and I shall be happy to pass it on to him.

## Spirited Drivers

**Adrian Hull (1973)** tells me that he again entered the 3,000 mile **Cannonball Run** with **Dave Ward (1973)** last year, driving a 1972 purple metaflake VW Beach Buggy. This time the plucky pair won the *Spirit of the Event* award. I trust this did not involve drink-driving, and look forward to learning of further success in this year's event. See the website [www.cannonballrun europe.co.uk](http://www.cannonballrun europe.co.uk) for more details.

Dave has written a book about their triumph of 2008 when they won the event in their Smart Car. Dave's book is available from Amazon now.



### Happy gathering: The Ilford Methodist Youth Club

**TWO** months ago, **Ken Depledge**, 71, from Coalville, Leicestershire, was looking for those who had been trainee nurses at the hospital in the Dr Barnardo's Home at Ilford, Essex, in 1955.

'When their duties allowed, they came to the Ilford Methodist Youth Club, to which I belonged, and made friends there,' says Ken. 'But after they moved on for further training to a hospital in Ealing, we lost touch.'

'Over the past few years, I've found over 100 former members of the club, but I can't find the nurses.'

Ken hoped to invite them to the club's next reunion — in particular **Audrey Harrison**,

from Kendal, who was the first of the Barnardo's nurses to come to the club. Sadly, we heard from her ex-husband **Bryan Townson** that **Audrey** had passed away.

But there's some good news. **Doreen Pharoah**, nee **Hosking**, emailed to say: 'I read about **Ken Depledge** in your column and, while I can't help with the people he is looking for, my three brothers and I went to the Methodist Youth Club that he mentions. As **Ken** is the same age as my eldest brother, I wonder if he remembers him?'

So, four more ex-club members to attend the reunion. Not a bad result.

■ **IF THERE** is someone you would like to trace, write to **Gill Whitley**, 88 Tan-yr-efail, Holyhead, Anglesey LL65 2SD, enclosing an SAE, or send an e-mail to [monica.porter@dailymail.co.uk](mailto:monica.porter@dailymail.co.uk) — including a contact phone number. All communications will be answered as soon as possible. This column is researched with the aid of **TraceSmart** ([www.tracesmart.co.uk](http://www.tracesmart.co.uk)).

## WWWeb Chat



Since the re-launch of our web site last year we have been pleased to see a steady growth in the number of visitors.

We now have the opportunity of creating and amending pages on the site very easily. Eventually, it will become the repository of a vast amount of archive material collected during the past decade. I would be interested in hearing from anyone who would like to help with this project.

A number of members have commented that the database search works in a somewhat different way to the search facility on the old site. You can still download names - either individuals or year lists. If you are having difficulty, you will find answers to many of your questions on the *HELP* page.

Our aim is to keep the site updated with new material regularly. The *Photo of the Week* page is proving very popular. There is also a *Notice Board* - you are welcome to post notices there (via email to me).

There are now BHCHS groups on two popular networking sites. The group in *Facebook* was started by **Lloyd Bettell-Higgins (1985)**. it would be a useful place for general chat, but so far the forum has not been particularly active. Why not try it? There is no charge for joining. We also have an Old Buckwellians group on *Linked In* which is more of a business-focussed networking site. Thanks to **Nick McEwen (1976)** for starting this.

I am always keen to hear your comments and suggestions for further website developments.

[www.bhchs.co.uk](http://www.bhchs.co.uk)

## Subscriptions to Increase from 2011

At the AGM in February an increase in subscriptions was approved, to the following rates, **effective from 1st January 2011: UK members £4 per year Overseas members £6 per year**

### Why the increase?

Subscriptions have not increased since 1986. We have now reached the point where the subs barely cover the cost of the newsletter, but not the additional expenditure required to run the association. We are therefore now in deficit every year.

The OBA constitution states that the level of subscriptions should cover the expenses of running the association, tracing former pupils, maintaining the website, and publishing the newsletter. The committee has concluded that an increase in the annual subscription is now essential. This should enable us to break-even within five years.

Past committees have done well to hold the subs down for this long, but we have really been on borrowed time for several years. We need to do this now in order to stabilise the finances. The decision was made after considerable deliberation, and was not taken lightly.

### Why is this not effective until 2011?

Many members have already paid their 2010 subscriptions, and this change cannot be implemented retroactively.

### Why no concessions?

The five year discount has played its part in helping to build up the membership, but is no longer affordable without raising the overall subscriptions still further. We believe it is now fairest for all members to pay the same annual subscription. Existing five year subscriptions will of course be honoured in full.

### Why not use up the funds that the members have built up?

Fortunately we do have substantial funds behind us. These actu-

ally emanate mostly from the sale of the former clubhouse at Woodford Green in 1975, and the accumulated interest on the proceeds. But we need to retain funds for working capital, developing the website, interest income, and as a contingency against future cost inflation and unexpected outlay.

### Will we lose members?

We hope not. £1 extra is not a lot to ask, and it's still very good value for a full colour, professionally printed, biannual newsletter.

### What happens if anyone does not pay the new subscription?

Anyone who does not pay the new subscription in 2011 will receive the usual reminder, plus one further newsletter. After that we would assume that they no longer wished to remain a paid-up member.

### Should we not cut costs instead of raising subs?

We have looked carefully at all costs, and taken actions. For example the annual dinner is being moved to a venue providing better value for money, and the print run quantity of the newsletter has been reduced. These measures are helping to keep the increase down to £1.

### What does the subs money get spent on?

*Old Buckwellians News* is by far the biggest cost. Beyond that there are the expenses of running the association, such as postage, stationery, and maintaining the website. Full details are in the annual financial report, which can be obtained from the Treasurer.

### Why don't you publish OBN on the internet to save costs?

There are several reasons why we would not want to do it at this stage: firstly, there are many

members who do not regularly use the internet, and secondly we strongly believe that the majority of members prefer to receive the printed magazine. Even if we were to publish an online version, the reduction in print costs would be marginal given that the numbers receiving this would be very low. We shall, of course, continue to keep this under review.

### What happens when OBA winds up? Will there be too much money left?

The demographics of the members indicates that OBA could be viable for another thirty years or more. This is why it is too early to consider running down the funds. The constitution requires that any residual funds are donated to charity. By then it might be a much smaller amount.

### Can we still pay five years in advance?

Yes, but there is no longer any discount. So this will mean a payment of £20 (£30 overseas). Alternatively there is Standing Order (which is the method we would recommend).

For further information about the subscription increase, OBA finances in general, or to obtain a copy of the full 2009 Financial Report & Accounts, contact:

**Peter Sharp, Treasurer**  
e-mail:

[ps.public@btinternet.com](mailto:ps.public@btinternet.com)

32 Connaught Way  
Billericay, Essex CM12 0UN

The full Financial Report is also available on our website. For queries about your personal subscription, contact **Graham Frankel**

### Summary of 2009 Financial Results (£000)

<u>Income Statement</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Revenue & Income	<b>7.8</b>	7.8
Costs & Expenses	<b>10.0</b>	9.4
Deficit for the Year	<b>(2.2)</b>	(1.6)
<u>Balance Sheet</u>		
Assets	<b>30.6</b>	34.7
Liabilities	<b>4.4</b>	6.3
Net Worth	<b>26.2</b>	28.4

### What Members Need To Do

*For 2010 subscriptions remain unchanged.*

*From 2011 all members will need to pay the new subscription rates, except those whose existing five year subscription expires after 2011.*

*A sheet will be provided with the Autumn 2010 edition of Old Buckwellians News providing full details of payment methods, and including a bank Standing Order form. We recommend paying by Standing Order — it's easier for you, and easier for us.*

# Exclusive Interview with Jeff Powell

His face will be familiar to many readers but most will be unaware that he is a former pupil of BHCHS. During his 44-year career with the Daily Mail, Jeff Powell (BHCHS 1953-59) has many accolades have included being voted Sports Journalist of the Year and Sports Feature Writer of the Year.

Always ahead of the game, he famously scooped his rivals with the revelation England manager Don Revie was quitting for the Middle East in the 1970s. More recently he was the first in Fleet Street to report the news about Sir Clive Woodward's resignation as England rugby coach in 2004. We are now proud to publish this exclusive interview with the journalist who has been at the top of his profession for many years.

## How did you rate BHCHS as a school?

It was excellent. In all I attended about twelve different schools because my father was a scaffolder and we were always moving around. BHCHS was the best of all the schools I went to.

## Did you suffer from having had such a disrupted education?

Yes, I didn't leave school with many qualifications.

## Which teacher had the strongest influence on you?

John Ingram (English 1956-62) was really my salvation. He recognised I had ability and interest in writing and gave me plenty of encouragement to make that my career.

## How did you make your start in journalism?

John Ingram advised me to apply to local newspapers, and also got me to try for a County Minor scholarship with a short course in journalism at Regent Street Poly. Soon after that I got my first job - as a cub reporter at the Walthamstow Guardian.

## How did you then get into national press?

I worked my way up quite quickly at Walthamstow, eventually becoming Sports Editor. Quite a few others from there had gone on to the Daily Mail, and I managed to get casual employment there working at nights on the sports desk while keeping my job at the local paper.

## Wasn't that tough, having two jobs?

Yes, but I liked the work and especially having two incomes. Eventually, in 1966, I was offered a permanent job at the Daily Mail as a sub-editor. In 1969 I became a football writer and then Chief Football Writer when the Mail merged with the Daily Sketch. In 1989 I became Chief Sports Writer and have now completed 44 years at the Mail, which I think is a record in Fleet Street.

## What are some of the highlights of your time at the Mail?

There have been many. I was the only journalist from the Mail at the Heysel Stadium disaster. Immediately afterwards I ad-libbed 8 pages of



Front l to r: Ken Airs(?), Ted Moore, John Hurn, Jeff Powell  
Back l to r: John Hudd, ???, Eric Stevenson



copy back to the paper. Another memorable occasion was getting the first interview with boxer Mike Tyson on his release from prison. I had breakfast with Tyson and Muhammed Ali afterwards. I have managed many exclusive stories, for example when Don Revie quit as England coach and when Clive Woodward left rugby to switch to football. I have enjoyed reporting on major sports events all over the world. On one occasion I was covering the World Series when not a ball was bowled because of the San Francisco earthquake.

## Are you thinking about retiring?

Not an option for me - I couldn't imagine it. Nowadays I tend to cherry pick events that I want to cover. I'm doing some broadcasting on radio and TV, more in the USA than here - mainly on ESPN. But I don't plan to give up writing.

## Have you been an active sportsman yourself?

My main interests while at BHCHS were racket sports - I played badminton for England (as well as representing both Essex and Herts - because we moved around) and have also played tennis, squash and golf.

## Do you have any amusing memories from school?

I remember that we had to line up in the playground for injections. In those days, they could only spare two needles for the whole class, and I always seemed to be the last person who had the first needle - by which time it was blunt.

## What predictions do you make for journalism over the next ten years?

It's a difficult time for the printed media. I feel sorry for youngsters trying to get into journalism now.

## Are you a family man?

I have been married twice and have two daughters from my first marriage. Natasha is an actress, and Natalie works in the City. I also have a son from my second marriage - JJ is 20 and is studying Modern Languages at Oxford University.

# Writing Made Funny

By Dave Smith (BHCHS 1975-82)



WHEN I think of my days at Buckhurst Hill, I have a positive memory of it. Not for the great academic opportunities it offered, or the excellent teachers giving their all. Nope. What I remember, is laughing and making people laugh. Though I only scraped a handful of 'O' levels, and then went on to fail my 'A's' in some style, I left with the bulletproof confidence of youth (or an 'indolent cavalier approach' as Bryan Rooney wrote in my sixth form report) and a feeling that somehow, everything would be OK.

I immediately moved to Germany to see just how OK everything would be, and had the time of my life, living in a small town, learning Plattdeutsch (indecipherable North German dialect), and generally careening around as any eighteen year old should.

After retaking A levels and a discreet amount of studying German at Kingston Poly, I launched myself at the workplace of Britain.

After plenty of trial and error, I thought I'd found my calling in legal recruitment for a couple of years, which I loved, helping legal secretaries find work in London. Then, with the economic downturn in the early nineties, I was made redundant.

This gave me plenty of breathing space to have a bit of a think about what I'd really like to do, as opposed to just doing something that had just presented itself.

So, six months later, I'm in Montreal on my own (which I'm sure happens to all of us at some time or another) and I look in the paper to find something to do that night. I notice that a comedy

club called the ComedyWorks is having a try-out night that very evening. Something got a hold of me and I thought, 'I'll give it a go. I'm a funny guy. After all, how bad could it be?'

It wasn't brilliant, but, more importantly, it wasn't a disaster. Laughter occurred. This incident led to twelve years as a stand-up comedian.

I played many times at the Comedy Store, Jongleurs, and just about every comedy club in the country. I supported Rich Hall on his nationwide tour, and along the way worked with and got to know, some of the most talented comedians in the country – Lee Evans, Peter Kay, Harry Hill, Al Murray, Ross Noble, Bill Bailey and all the rest. Most weekends would find three of four of us driving up or down a motorway to wherever the gig was that night. I got to perform in Ireland, Holland, Hong Kong. Even Maidstone. Yeah, you read that right...Maidstone! I was living the dream!

By getting myself noticed (admittedly, by showing off on stage) I began to get work on telly and radio.

I became quite a regular on BBC Radio 4, appearing on *You and Yours*, and *In Touch*, before getting a regular spot writing and narrating my own five-minute columns on *Home Truths* with John Peel. If I never do anything else in my career, I still have a tape of his unique voice intoning, 'And now, the lovely Dave Smith.' Unbeatable.

At the same time I was writing humorous articles and columns for magazines and newspapers – *GQ*, *The Sunday Times*, and *The Boston Herald* are some of the ones you may have heard of. *Pregnancy and Birth*, *Home Buyer*, *FQ – Fathers' Quarterly* (no really!) are just a handful of the others, to whom I've peddled humour for money.

I stopped doing live stand-up about five years ago as I was getting a bit tired of it, and enjoying the written word more. Besides, I also had a young family (two little girls) who I didn't want to be away from.

About four years ago, I innocently offered my services as a visiting writer in schools, think-

ing pupils might be interested in hearing from someone who's been 'at the coal face' for a while, earning money from writing funny.

Now I've created something of a monster. Not a staple-browed, ham-fisted, bolty-necked 'friend' you understand. Oh no, happily we're talking metaphors here. I've actually created a job for myself which has now completely run me over and is snowballing downhill with my arms and legs protruding from within. Hugely exhilarating, yet seemingly beyond my control.

Many pupils have a picture of a writer as a fusty, dusty, grey-haired bore, hunched over an ancient, cobwebby typewriter, ploughing through a *worthy*, heavyweight novel. Not me. OK, I hardly go marlin-fishing like Hemingway, or live the louche roué existence of Noel Coward, but I do ride a Triumph and go to the pub sometimes.

When I tell them that Peter Kay routines are as good as they are because of the meticulous writing process, and that *The Simpsons* and *Friends* work so brilliantly because of the attention to detail in every script, they realise that the words 'writing' and 'cool' can appear in the same sentence.

My workshops have now developed into ninety minute sessions. My enthusiasm for my job is genuine and I think it rubs off on the pupils - they can see someone (and the boys particularly get to see a *man*) who writes, and enjoys writing, partly for the kind of lifestyle it has led to – in my case, travel, variety, independence, and fun, and partly for the sheer love of language.

We discuss the numerous tricks they can employ to make their writing less...pedestrian.

I'm keen to point out to them that I'm not a trained writer. I've only got to the point where I can earn a decent living through practice, and I'm definitely not 'the finished article.'

I tell them the methods I use to get over 'the fear of the blank page' the most empowering of which seems to be merely 'don't panic.'

I've now visited over two hundred schools from both ends of

the spectrum; from unbelievably posh sixth form 'gals' at a school which appeared on the horizon like a stately home, to large groups of tough year tens in huge razor-wired, estate-fed comprehensives. Nearly everyone can write.

Teachers tell me that their pupils often write more with me than they do all term, so I guess I must be doing something right.

If nothing else it encourages them to 'have a go'. After all, how bad could it be?

Whenever I visit schools in Essex or the Buckhurst Hill area, I feel as if I'm 'among my own' – they sound the same, and just remind me of some of the funny lads in our year.

As a mark of respect, my family and I always salute in the car, when I point out the green cupola of the school peeking over the fence when driving by on the M11. Mind you, we do the same when driving past the Triumph dealership in Aston Clinton.

I still see Joe Nyman a fair bit (someone who can still reduce me to tears, laughing), and meet Craig Anderson in Germany for our annual Kohlfahrt (Google it. I did).

From time to time there's a flurry of friendly emails from others, suggesting all sorts of ambitious reunions, which tend to peter out. I'd really like one to work out one day.

Other stuff. Lived in north London most of the time. Met Leigh twenty years ago (both punters in a comedy club, would you believe?). We have two beautiful, sparky daughters, who are proving to be the *really* funny ones. Moved to Tring when number one was born, ten years ago. Have been a 'work-from-home Dad' ever since, and can't imagine it any other way.

Running, swimming, Karate and now cycling, are fighting a futile, rearguard action to hold back the paunch. I do however, have a full head of hair.

Now, if I could just extricate myself from this comedy snowball, I might actually be able to get some writing done.

Dave can be contacted at [www.wordsmith-features.com](http://www.wordsmith-features.com)

Tony Jolly's.....  
**Gin CORNER**



With all that's going on in the world today I do hope that you all did end up having a really enjoyable Christmas and, added to it, a similarly enjoyable New Year celebration. There is no doubt that we will all notice that life in 2010 will be a little different from that which we have been used to for many years - thanks to the "credit crunch" and other happenings. However, as my father used to quote "good things come out of bad ones" and indeed, "very good things come out of very bad ones!" I sincerely hope we will see, in 2010 and onwards, many examples that substantiate this perception.

All those who lived through the 2nd World War were used to circumstances that meant you couldn't have what you wanted every time and not just because the money wasn't there but for instance, if one wanted a possession that, say, had to be made of metal (plastics had not developed

as far as we know them today) that was a no-goer as metal objects (including classy railings) was taken to be melted down for the war effort. Today the "I want" means "now". I was listening to a pensioner speaker just recently who said that, as a child, he kept all his 2d comics (*The Rover, The Eagle* and suchlike) when he was young and sold them to pupils of a local "comics-barred" school for 1d each and then saved it all up to buy, in due course, something he really wanted.

"Saving up - what's that?" many would say! This will come back!

It would be great to see respect for others coming back also. I always remember seeing a young middle-aged TV reporter, at the time of the terrorist bombings in London being incredibly amazed about seeing everyone, including sole lady drivers, helping anyone injured and taking them to the nearest hospital. This was not new to me as an "oldie" but we should see it again! The army casualties in Afghanistan certainly put increased emotion and drive into the Remembrance events this year - good things coming out!

Let us look forward, and not have to look backwards, to have a better quality of attitude and to the death of the "me, myself and I" mindset - let's hope we see the good things coming out of the bad things! Cheers!

**Tony Jolly (1943-49)**

**Roding Mags**

**David Faulkner (1959)** has discovered that he has several copies of the *Roding* magazine predating his time at BHCHS. He is prepared to offer these to a good home. I occasionally get requests for back editions but I am unable to keep a supply, so I'm grateful to David for agreeing to send his spares directly. First come, first served!

These are the editions on offer:

- July 1942            July 1955
- July 1946            July 1957
- July 1950            July 1958
- July 1951            July 1959
- July 1954

Contact David at:

[ddfaukner@hotmail.com](mailto:ddfaukner@hotmail.com)

**Polo Shirts: Final Offer**

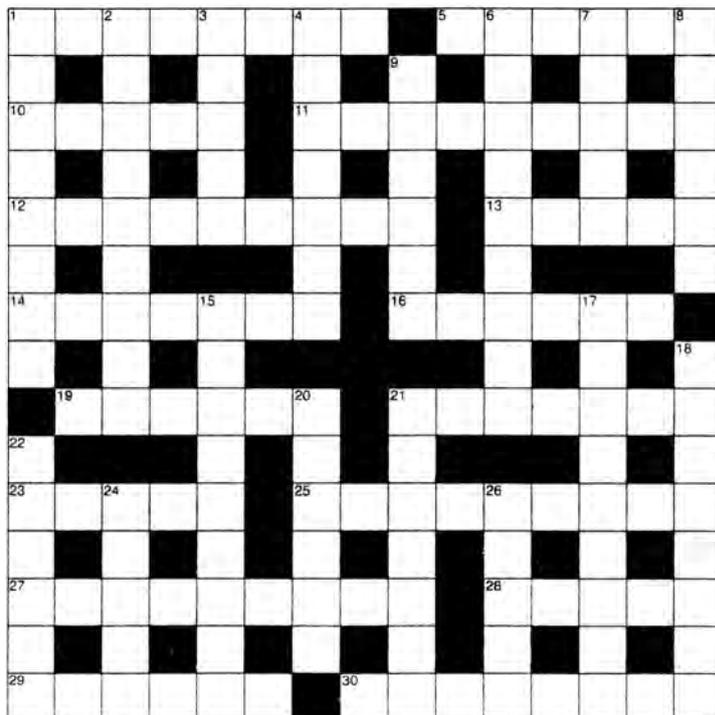


We have just a few BHCHS polo shirts (mint condition) remaining. If you would like to buy one please contact me to make sure we still have the size you need. Price is £13 plus p&p. We currently have the following sizes left: XXXL, XXL, XL, M, and S.

**OB NEWS CROSSWORD**

No.15 "ORGANISED LOAFING?" By Mike Ling

The answers to the asterisked clues have a link to this sporting quote.



ACROSS

DOWN

- 1\* Delivery from Mr. Meissen? (8)
- 5\* .....who might wear such a hat (6)
- 10 Opera included in the last Oscar nominations? (5)
- 11\* Resist stubbornly, like Jackson? (9)
- 12 Otherwise known as the monkey puzzle tree (5,4)
- 13\* Trials conducted on pitch (5)
- 14 Brings about by supernatural means (7)
- 16\* Zimbabwean flash? (6)
- 19 Trips round the world? (6)
- 21\* Agricultural flail? (7)
- 23\* A place for sharp fielders? (5)
- 25 Two, or maybe eleven? (3,3,3)
- 27 Makes untidy with she-devil's help? (9)
- 28 Arranged triage with one less female (5)
- 29\* Exhaust supply (3,3)
- 30 Alienate - is French distance the answer? (8)
- 1 Underground resting place? (8)
- 2\* Doubly trendy delivery? (9)
- 3 Quickstep? (5)
- 4 Descends by rope (7)
- 6\* One to the score for not backing up! (9)
- 7 Advances, with an expectation of return (5)
- 8 Greatly enjoy the sauce (6)
- 9\* Conceals off-side area (6)
- 15 Drink for actor in EU wrangle? (9)
- 17 A manhole's relocated in Oxford (9)
- 18 Cheapest way to sail? (8)
- 20\* One who makes his mark in the game? (6)
- 21\* Folds, at both ends of the strip? (7)
- 22 Eight legs can provide a welcome rest! (6)
- 24 Writer of *The Wild Duck* and *Hedda Gabler* (5)
- 26 African river and country (5)

**Solution on page 15**

# The Story of *The Loughton Review*

I WAS pleased to receive from **Tony Harvey (1944)** recently a full account of a remarkable enterprise he established in 1968. Many Old Bucks will remember *The Loughton Review* without realizing the association with BHCHS. Launched at a time when free newspapers were a relatively unknown concept, Tony's publication was unique by being totally independent from the publishers of its larger competitors, and in that it was

launched in Australia by Rupert Murdoch, and the first titles were being launched in the UK.

Tony's undertaking was a brave step for an unemployed 35 year old with a young family. Six months before founding the newspaper he had been made redundant as a transport and plant hire manager with an Essex company of sports ground contractors. He set out on his new venture with no journalistic experience, no knowledge of print-

great changes in technology. He had to overcome opposition in the form of potential blacklisting by print unions as well as approaches from the established and much larger local newspapers to buy into TLR. These publishers realised that Tony was the key to the paper's success and without exception their offers were subject to Tony joining them. Having done it his way for some years, Tony couldn't face the uncertain situation of someone else controlling the venture he had nurtured since birth and rejected all offers.

There were many other challenges, including the need, later in his career, to get to grips with computers. Despite all these problems, Tony kept the paper running - by the end of its 35 year life, only two editions had been missed which were both as a result of industrial action on the part of print unions

At the outset the paper was an 8-page publication with a print run of 10,000 copies. By its peak in the late 1970s the distribution had extended to Theydon Bois and Buckhurst Hill. The paper was by then often 16-pages or

was no longer in control.

Eventually, when he neared retirement age, he was persuaded to sell the paper, but continued operating in exactly the same way - doing the key jobs of editing and selling space himself. By the time he retired in 1999 he had published more than 360 editions.

Shortly after retirement, Tony Harvey was presented with a Civic Award by Epping Forest District Council for his achievement in establishing and running *The Loughton Review*.

Not a man to put his feet up in retirement, Tony has continued his involvement with the Rotary Club of Loughton, where he was the first member to serve two consecutive years as President. He is currently Secretary. He was a member of the management committee of the Loughton and District Citizens' Advice Bureau from 1988 until the Bureau was restructured in 2008. Also since retirement, he has become parish archivist and fabric committee secretary at St. John the Baptist Church, Epping.

Married to Ann, he has two daughters, Louise and Rebecca,



Tony Harvey (far right) cuts the 100th issue celebratory cake watched by his wife Ann (centre) and staff of the company that printed *The Loughton Review*

successful throughout the remainder of Tony's working life, eventually ceasing publication in 2003, four years after his retirement.

The idea for publishing *The Loughton Review* actually came from Tony's older brother **John Harvey (1942)**, who had seen copies of other free papers on business trips to other parts of the country. The concept of commercial free papers had been

ing or selling advertising space or even selling anything at all.

In a fascinating history, Tony explains how he overcame huge obstacles in launching the newspaper, and making it viable. He showed remarkable persistence in setting up an office, organising printing and distribution and gaining the confidence of local advertisers. He managed to keep the monthly paper running successfully throughout times of



Retirement day - 29th January 1999. Picture by Newsquest (North London)

even more.

What I found particularly impressive was not just the length of time he managed to continue, but also that he was always on the lookout for ways to develop and improve the paper, making it better serve the local area. He did not do this entirely single-handedly, because he received excellent support from his wife Ann, brother John, and other family members, but he managed to resist allowing the organisation to grow to a size where he

and six grandchildren. Known as a purveyor of useless information, he is a keen walker, ardent "weather watcher", researches local history and makes a reasonable job of growing his own vegetables!

Copies of Tony's history of *The Loughton Review* are held at the Loughton Central Library, at the Epping Forest District Museum in Waltham Abbey, and at the Essex Records Office, Chelmsford.



On Air! Tony Harvey being interviewed by the BBC Essex reporter, Lucy Longhurst in December 1987

# Cross-Country at BHCHS Part Three 1960-71

TOWARDS the end of the 1950s there had been something of a decline in the fortunes of the BHCHS cross country teams. During the period 1960-63 there were few signs of any return to greatness. **Chris Chapman (1954)**, cross country captain from 1959-61, realised what the problem was. The opposition were simply trying too hard:

*Cross-country is a pastime for only the very hardy, and this year there was a very marked increase in the standard throughout Essex. It was not infrequent to encounter individuals, and even school teams which trained four or five days a week, covering distances of 25 miles and in at least one case 40 miles. Boys at this school must realise that they cannot hope to do well in a race nowadays by training a week before the event.*

Chapman's words seemed to fall on deaf ears. During the following two years, there was a distinct lack of success in the inter-school trophies, and in one year BHCHS even failed to turn out a team for the *Smeed Cup*.

The first sign of some change for the better was in 1964 under the captaincy of **John Coppin (1957)**. He spoke encouragingly of some outstanding individual performances by **Dick Thomas (1958)** who frequently led the school's senior team to victory in matches against individual schools, and also performed creditably representing Forest Division in the Essex Divisional Race. Dick's namesake, **Dave Thomas (1959)** was also a rising star, running in the senior team while not yet 15. There was also a promising influx of keenness among the juniors, with the U-13 team being successfully led by



Stewart Mills running at the Essex Championships 1967

to run for Essex in the National Championships.

In his final report, Dick Thomas predicted a bright future for the team, and in the following year it became clear that his confidence was well founded. Led by Mike Fitchett, the senior team swept aside almost all the opposition, with victories in the *Walthamstow Shield*, the *Smeed Cup*, the *Orion Harriers Trophy* as well as all ten private matches held against local schools. The one trophy that eluded BHCHS that year was the *Burn Cup*, in which the team finished second again. But there was plenty of evidence that the enthusiasm engendered in the senior team was still permeating down the school. Intermediate teams also achieved success in various inter-school trophies.

**Brian Jones and John Moss (1962).**

In the following season, with Dick Thomas as captain, there was a dramatic change for the better. With regular training the school teams grew in confidence again, and the result was that

In the following season, the momentum of 1965/66 was largely maintained under the new captain Stewart Mills. Although there were fewer outright wins, BHCHS finally managed to regain the elusive *Burn Cup* for the



Senior cross country team 1964-65. Front l to r: Dave Thomas, Mike Fitchett, Dick Thomas, Mike Spinks, Andy Hughes, John Hannah. Back: Brian Sly, David Turnbull, Vivian Banfield, Malcolm Taylor, David Millard, Barry Hearn, Stewart Mills



Senior cross country team 1965-66. Front l to r: John Moss, Mike Spinks, Mike Fitchett, Stewart Mills, Brian Sly. Back: David Turnbull, Dave Thomas, Vivian Banfield, Martin Pippard



The winning Burn Cup team in 1967: Front (l to r) Vivian Banfield, Stewart Mills, John Moss, David Pippard. Back row: Carey Harborne, David Turnbull, Colin Golding, Malcolm Taylor

BHCHS finished second in the *Burn Cup*, an improvement of thirteen places from the previous year. Three runners gained honours in representative teams, with Dick Thomas and **Mike Fitchett (1959)** included in the Forest Divisional team which won the Essex Divisional Race, and Dave Thomas being selected

first time since 1955, beating Colchester GS, who were the previous year's winner. Several of the school's leading runners again represented the Division, and the outstanding individual performance was that of John Moss who not only represented Essex in the National Championships but was the leading runner



Junior cross country team 1964-65. Front l to r: Robert McGregor, Robert Littlewood, Steve Sutherland, Bob Normington, Mick Wetton. Back: Adrian Finney, Phil Naldrett, Phil Robinson, Chris Morgan, Steve SurrIDGE

for Essex, finishing in 49<sup>th</sup> place. He was duly appointed captain in the following year, and under his leadership the team again achieved a string of successes including several races in which most of the opposing teams were running clubs rather than schools. BHCHS retained the *Smeed Cup* and the *Wadham Shield* but lost the *Burn Cup* to Southend GS.

During the 1960s it was apparent that the inevitable departure of talented individual runners could be counterbalanced by the development of talented athletes from lower down the school. But the loss of the main driving force behind cross country during the decade was a much more serious blow. **Jon Palethorpe** was a former pupil of George Monoux, and had joined the PE Department from Loughborough College in 1963, and within two years was promoted to Head of the Department. It was good to be reminded of his boundless energy and enthusiasm in several snatches of film captured for posterity on DVD by John Robins.

The decline in cross country, following Jon Palethorpe's departure in 1969, was rapid. By 1971, the sport merited only a few lines in the *Roding* magazine, and the final two editions contain no mention of cross country.

It would be interesting to know if there was ever a subsequent revival, but it seems likely that the glory days of inter-school victories were a fading memory.

One member of one of the successful junior teams in the mid-1960s (see photo above) was **Phil Robinson (1964)**. Phil ultimately achieved far greater success for his prowess in hammer throwing. But I'm grateful to him for capturing some of the atmosphere, and his poetic reminiscence will make a suitable conclusion in the absence of any later archive material.....



Jon Palethorpe - the driving force behind the revival of cross country at BHCHS in the 1960s



Phil Robinson

*I was walking with my 18 year old son on his 'bored drummer seeks band' year off, shaking off the ennui of a lethargic winter's day with a walk through the Roding Valley Reserve. We walked, as men do, fairly silently...*

*'this was the old RAF base during the war'*

*'huh?'*

*We stopped to spin a few chunks of ice on the semi-frozen water, delighting in the resonance, Rippin like.*

*'this is the bridge we would run over, Cross Country, down there, by the fence, across here, and left along to*

*the road bridge then back up to the School, two laps. Fourteen minutes.' 'huh?'*

*And following a man and woman with three kids, women and daughter bonding verbally and man and boys a bit quiet, through the car park of Camp Fitness*

*they discourse, in one of those slightly absent conversations*

*Wasn't that Buckhurst Hill High School?*

*long pause*

*'Sikh School now'*

*And I am either seconds ahead or behind in my head with exactly what they are saying*

*except*

*'there were the concrete strips we threw hammers from and that's where the masters parked their cars... got close sometimes...*

*And my son said*

*'It looks quite incongruous'*

*'what?'*

*'the tower thing'*

*'the green?'*

*'um'*

*and it all seemed so Past Tense*

*or Past Serious*

*or just Past.*



FOLLOWING Robin Boram's letter (*OB News, November 2009*) I received a number of possible answers to the question he raised: who had the longest journey to school?

When I challenged readers to answer this question I failed to give any thought to the rather obvious fact that "longest" could be defined in various ways! The availability, accessibility and reliability of public transport are all factors that mean distance alone is only part of the answer. However, in an attempt to keep

this simple, I have used google-maps to calculate the distance by road.

I am grateful for the various suggestions that have been submitted so far. It was interesting to hear about some of the tortuous journeys, especially in the days before the trusty (?) 167 bus and when rail journeys were made by steam train. I won't declare the competition closed just yet, because I feel sure that someone reading this will be prompted to write and an claim the prize. But here are the leaders so far:

NAME	HOME	Miles
Tony (1944) & John (1942) Harvey	Shelley (nr Ongar)	14.5
Tom Fogg (1940)	Fyfield	14.2
Robin Boram (1943)	Stondon Massey	13.6
Malcolm Glass (1964)	Doddinghurst	13.0

# Death By a Thousand Cuts

## The demise of BHCHS - Part Two: 1976-89 The Last Rites

In part one we saw how it took ten years for BHCHS to begin its transformation to a comprehensive school. A victim of both national and local politics, the school suffered the trauma of seeing a section of its traditional intake suddenly removed. A series of plans for the switch to comprehensive were deliberated and rejected by the governors. The most promising proposal, to merge with Loughton CHS failed on economic grounds. By 1976, the decision had been taken to create a bilateral system with half of the intake being "selective" and the other half "non-selective" for several years. Meanwhile the sixth forms of Loughton CHS and BHCHS were merged, but instead of operating at a single location, were scattered over a wide area.

IT MUST have been a bitter disappointment to Hugh Colgate that the earlier plan to combine BHCHS and Loughton CHS on the Roding Lane site was eventually rejected as being too expensive. Outwardly, he managed to maintain a brave optimism, and there is nothing suggestive of a doomed school in the public statements made at the time. His report to parents in 1976 gave a clear sense of a pioneering spirit and high morale amongst both staff and pupils. He proudly reported academic and sporting success, maybe with even more fervour than is normal for such occasions.....

*.....we have successfully extended our standards of work, conduct and dress to the newcomers. Life blood has flowed in. We are now big enough to exist as an individual educational unit, maintaining our standards of academic excellence and at the same time providing for the needs of the less able.*

### The Annexe

By now, however, a new dimension had been added to the complexities of combined sixth forms. It was apparent that BHCHS, in its new comprehensive existence, would need to incorporate The Brook School in Loughton, which until then had been a Secondary Modern. The Brook School closed in 1976,



*The first three headmasters of BHCHS. L to r: Hugh Colgate (1966-1985), Jack Taylor (1938-1966), and Ian Nicholson (1985-1988). This photograph was taken by Ken Bray at the school's 50th anniversary celebration in 1988.*

and all those pupils who would have then been fourth or fifth form were "adopted" by BHCHS. The former Brook School in Roding Road then became known as *The Annexe*. All the definitions I can find of the word annexe refer to something being joined to a main body. The problem with the Brook was that it was two miles away. Running this remote facility gave a further challenge for Hugh Colgate and his hard-pressed staff. It is very unlikely that those who were setting the new standards for pupil/teacher ratios would have taken account of the complications of time-tabling and spreading the staff and pupils over the different sites.

There is a cruel irony in this. We can assume that part of the justification for preventing the school from taking pupils from Redbridge was to reduce the amount of travel. And yet, less than two years after this decision, the education authority split the school into multiple sites necessitating a vast amount of commuting between the far flung buildings –

for both pupils and staff.

Whatever Hugh Colgate and his staff felt privately about these challenges, they were presented to the parents with commendable optimism.....

*We are now confidently poised for the next stage in our development - the absorption next September of the fourth and fifth form boys now at the Brook School. The great majority of these boys will be taught at the Brook by their own teachers, supplemented by staff from here and Loughton County High School. All our clubs, societies and teams will be open to them as will our arrangements for individual and vocational guidance. To make all this possible, it will be essential to establish a co-ordinated time table with the Brook and Loughton County High School. Every Wednesday morning, Mr. Franklin meets his opposite numbers at these schools and step by step, a co-ordinated fourth and fifth form programme is being worked out. All things are possible when there is good will, determination*

*and hard work. We shall ensure that no one at the Brook suffers and that no one here is interrupted in their course, by all these changes. We have come a long way very quickly in all this. I teach at the Brook two periods every Friday afternoon and follow this by half an hour's consultation with the headmaster and then go on for an hour's discussion with the acting headmistress of Loughton County High.....*

This outward display of confidence was maintained during Hugh Colgate's following two reports. But the organisational turbulence was set to continue. By 1978, further major adjustments were needed – as a direct consequence of the earlier changes. Firstly there was the final switch to an all-comprehensive intake, but there was a second, and perhaps more damaging change. The pupils of the former Brook School had completed their fifth form after spending two years at BHCHS. This precipitated a reduction in staffing and the decision by the Education Committee to change the Annexe into a Sixth Form Centre accommodating sixth formers from both BHCHS and Loughton CHS.

### Disaster strikes

In addition to the organisational turmoil, the school was also faced with the prospect of extending its buildings to cope with the increased numbers that had arrived since 1976. Just as all this was starting, there was another tragic and unwelcome interruption to normality. An arson attack in November 1978 seriously damaged the Assembly Hall, and it was out of action for almost a year. For the duration of the restoration work, the school was effectively divided in two as the entrance hall and central staircase were also out of action. This could hardly have come at a worse time. The school was now well under way with its slow conversion to comprehensive, and had taken in four first-year streams which was putting pressure on the facilities available at the main school.

Maintaining morale was one of Hugh Colgate's greatest assets. In his 1980 report to parents he paid tribute to the way in which



Smiling in the face of closure. This is probably the final group photo from BHCHS, showing the combined 6th forms of BHCHS and Loughton CHS in 1989. Centre front row are acting heads John Whaler and Yvonne Harbinson. Other BHCHS staff are Mavis Leach (6th from left), John Lakeman and Steve Woolley (on the left and 2nd left of John Whaler).

everyone coped with the inconvenience of a building site in the midst of the school....

*The determination to carry on in the face of adversity was reminiscent of the days of the war-time blitz and brought out the best in everyone.*

He then went on to confirm that there would be plenty more building work ahead. The increase in numbers meant that a major building programme was needed to extend the school.

Against the backdrop of all this disruption was the urgent need for BHCHS to develop its new identity as a comprehensive. This required, on the one hand, developing a broader curriculum, and on the other hand trying to maintain the school's earlier academic standards. Hugh Colgate was well aware that the academic reputation of BHCHS was a valuable asset in the face of the competition. Rival schools included not just the traditional near-neighbours from the private sector – Chigwell, Bancrofts and Forest which were thriving from their immunity to the political upheavals that had adversely affected BHCHS. A relatively recent competitor – Davenant – which had been transplanted into Loughton from East London in 1966, had expanded into a five-form entry comprehensive in 1980.

#### Slow expansion

By 1981 the building programme to extend the main school buildings at Roding Lane was under way. Plans had been approved for a new sports hall, to replace the existing gym which would be converted into workshops and technical room, a set of new classrooms to be built at the rear of the school, and the conversion of the "Divisional Rooms" into a new language laboratory and art

suite. The stubborn optimism about the future of BHCHS was maintained by HAC, who in his report to the parents stated:

*....survival is assured and that we shall have room in which to move.*

By the time the work was completed, however, the school had taken in its seventh year of four-form entries. In his next report to parents, there is more than a hint of frustration with the slow progress:

*When I was appointed here in 1966 one of the books of fairy stories I inherited was one called the 'Essex Development Plan' in which new workshops and a new laboratory were proposed for Buckhurst Hill County High School. Now sixteen years and four sets of building plans later, the fairy story has become a reality. Building plan number one is not so very different from that now being implemented.*

In 1983 Hugh Colgate was able to proudly report on the official opening of the various extensions.....

*The extensions to the buildings were formally declared open. When we planned this in the Spring we did not envisage the temperature being in the nineties. It was a tribute to every-one's stamina that they all kept going and I did like the local paper's headline "Buckhurst Hill moves into the nineties".*

Looking back, we now see the cruel irony of this headline.

In the same review, HAC gave his regular summary of staff changes, prefacing it with the remark:

*It is a sign of a healthy staff when its younger members move on for promotion to senior posts.*

He then went on to list eight staff who had left, or were leaving

during that year. Possibly this was a sign of an underlying problem that would clearly not have been advertised to parents.

#### Under siege

We have now reached the point at which the future of BHCHS must have been under critical review. It seems likely that the ultimate closure decision will have been taken at County Hall in Chelmsford. We are fortunate to have a useful insight from Terry Bayford, an Old Buck who was working for Essex County Council in the Divisional Education Office at Buckhurst Hill between 1966 and 1974. Terry tells me that until 1974 the various education divisions in the county each had a Divisional Executive body, whose membership included local councillors. These Divisional Executives enjoyed certain delegated authorities and a lot of influence. These bodies were abolished in 1974. They were replaced by an advisory body with no executive powers. Terry Bayford believes that Hugh Bliss, who was the Area Education Officer during the critical period for BHCHS, would have had no real authority over the ultimate outcome even though he would have acted as liaison officer between the school governors and the distant power base in Chelmsford.

Just one year after the completion of the various extensions to the school buildings, we see the first signs of major issues ahead for BHCHS. In his opening statement of the 1984 review, Hugh Colgate stated:

*Not many of you sitting in the hall this evening heard King George VI's Christmas broadcast in 1939, when he quoted from a then unknown writer those lines which were repeated so often on war-time Christmas cards:*

*"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year 'Give me a light that I may tread safely in the unknown'"*.

*Much more recently, one of my colleagues, at the celebration of his school's silver jubilee, said "The only thing that is certain about the future is its uncertainty". The "unknown" and "uncertainty" are spine-chilling words. We must not educate the young in such conditions. The debate on the future of secondary education in the Epping Forest area must not be allowed to blight the present for the boys now in the school. There cannot be any standing still, waiting to see what happens. The only way ahead is forwards.*

A further eleven staff left the school that year. Staff turnover had now reached about 20%. This in itself must surely have created a lot of extra pressure if the general morale was becoming a problem. Hugh Colgate and the other senior staff must have spent an enormous amount of time interviewing potential replacements. These figures do not include the replacement of ancillary staff (of whom four left during 1983/4 year).

HAC closed his report by mentioning his planned retirement at the end of 1985. He added the following comment, which may be viewed as ambiguous....

*This is a good school; it always has been, is now and will be in the future, whatever that future has in store.*

By the following year, 1985, it seems that the future of the school was in serious doubt, even if this had not been formally confirmed. Again, Hugh Colgate's opening words in his annual review to parents give a clear hint that the forthcoming

*(Continued on page 14)*

(Continued from page 13)

Jubilee celebrations would not be such a happy event...

In 1988, a little more than two years hence, we shall celebrate our Golden Jubilee, marking fifty years of excellence and caring. About 5,700 boys will have sat in this Hall. It says something for the continuity of the school that for 48 of those 50 years it will have had only two head-masters. I hope we shall both be present at the Golden Jubilee celebra-

True courage comes in doing your best when it is tough. That is what we must all do in the coming years. Teachers who stick to a school when it needs them must never go unrewarded. My message to the Education Committee is: "Remember those who stood by you in your hour of need"

#### Birth rate fiasco

We know that the official reason for closing BHCHS was that the County education authority believed the birth rate in the area was falling. Whoever did those

took office in September 1985 it was common knowledge that the school was destined to close, and the final decision was subject only to formal consultation. Ian Nicholson remained for three years, just long enough for the school to reach its Golden Jubilee, and then moved to Sandon School, Chelmsford. The last rites of closing BHCHS were left to John Whaler, who had the unenviable task of managing the final year. It must have been a painful process for someone who

was even speculation that BHCHS could be reopened (see press report below).

The site was sold after lying empty for four years. We can take some comfort from the fact that the school was not subsequently turned into a housing estate – although there were restrictive covenants in place that would have made this impossible. But the buildings have remained an active and academically very successful school. Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College is a private school that offers a broad-based education from nursery to university entrance. Despite the obvious cultural and other differences, GGSK has been very supportive and helpful to us. They have kept some of the core features from our school by retaining the honours boards in the former assembly hall. They have also been consistently welcoming to us when former BHCHS pupils have visited, either in groups or individually. Those Old Bucks who value the nostalgia opportunities offered by revisiting their former classrooms may even be grateful that the site was not held and re-developed by Essex Education Authority.

As a result of the realisation that the birth rate in the area was rising, and not falling a new secondary school was built to serve the Loughton and Debden areas. Debden Park High School was opened in 1999.

The final years of BHCHS must have been a painful time for the staff, especially those long serving staff who remembered the relatively settled times of the 1960s. We should not underestimate the harm inflicted on the careers of these staff, as well as the pupils who were passing through the school during its final twenty three years.

Hugh Colgate is sadly no longer around to make further comment, but my conclusion from reviewing the available evidence is that he was fighting against impossible odds. He was no stranger to conflict, having risen from ordinary seaman to commander in the Royal Navy. But in the fight to save BHCHS, the various opposing forces, whether economic, political, sociological, parochial, or even mathematical, were in the end too many and too strong.

*I would like to thank all those who provided helpful information during my research.*

# SCHOOL WINS

**THE former Buckhurst Hill County High School in Roding Lane, which has lain empty since 1989, is being withdrawn from sale.**

Made redundant by its amalgamation with Loughton and Epping Forest High Schools to form the new

11-16 co-educational comprehensive Roding Valley High, the impressive 1930s building has been boarded up for some time.

But fears that increasing school rolls will bring a demand for new premises have prompted its withdrawal from the open market.

Speaking at Epping Forest Council's development committee meeting on Tuesday, and following a meeting with Essex County Council the

## Report by Pam Giblett

previous day, Tory leader Councillor John Fairbanks said: "Buckhurst Hill High is going to be kept in mothballs, just in case."

### Site

The announcement was made during a discussion on the development of Loughton's former Brook School site, Roding Road.

Members had suggested that a proportion of the site, which has now been cleared of all buildings, should be "reserved to accommodate future school expansion expected when the current fall in school rolls is reversed."

Part of the large site is

already earmarked for Roding Valley High's playing fields, but 1.6 hectares close to St Michael's Church have been declared surplus to school requirements.

A planning and design brief for the latter area, including 4.8 hectares of the adjacent former British Rail sports ground, was agreed by members for residential development, with access from Roding Road.

The need to make provision for future increased demand for school places, and its possible effect on the Brook School site development, will now go forward for discussion by a full meeting of Epping Forest Council.

# REPRIEVE

## Buckhurst Hill County High put on stand-by for influx of new students



Last minute reprieve predicted by the local paper in January 1992.

tions; we both have every intention of being here. The third headmaster will, I know, continue in the same tradition.

Now as I speak, all of you must have had nasty, nagging doubt that there might not be another 50 years.

This was followed by yet more brave comments about how the staff at BHCHS had become accustomed to living with uncertainty. Despite the higher level of staff turnover in recent years, there was still a core of teaching staff who had remained at BHCHS since before the turmoil began. Although Hugh Colgate was himself on the point of retiring, he was clearly concerned about the future prospects of his younger colleagues:

calculations had not been taught by Eric Franklin or the other fine mathematics teachers we remember. At some point after the decision was taken to close the school, the learned boffins at County Hall discovered that they had actually got their sums wrong. The birth rate was actually rising, not falling. We can only speculate as to how such a fundamental mistake could have been made. The first year intake had remained at around 120 up until 1985 when there was a significant drop to 105. However, we must assume that this may have been as a result of doubts about the school's future.

Hugh Colgate's confident prediction that the third headmaster of BHCHS would continue the school's traditions was not realised. By the time Ian Nicholson

had taught at the school for 30 years, witnessing BHCHS in its heyday and then through the traumatic times that followed.

#### Impossible odds

There was surely nothing very golden about the fiftieth anniversary celebrations. The once proud school was in its death throes, and it must have been a particularly painful occasion for the first two headmasters who both attended the event (see photo p12).

The realisation of the demographic error was too late to save BHCHS from closure. By the time the mothballed buildings had been empty for two years there are clear signs that Roding Valley High and Davenant would be unable to cope with future demands for school places. There

# BHCHS - A Personal Tribute

By Bryan Rooney (Head of English/Head of Sixth Form 1967-85)

The following obituary to BHCHS was written in 1989 and previously published in OBA News (predecessor of OB News) in 1994.



FROM my allotment near the river, I can just make out the green cupola with weathercock atop, marking the position of the High School. As I wield my hoe among the lettuces, I reflect on the short happy life of that institution, due to be put down in a few weeks' time. It's strange how it often turns out that the grim reaper calls shortly after a birthday; it was only last autumn that the High School celebrated its fiftieth anniversary - in full awareness, it must be said, of its lingering terminal illness.

The death of any school diminishes the community it serves, and new life in the form of reorganised comprehensives or tertiary colleges never adequately consoles. As they say at funerals, educational life must go on, and the last three days have been graciously deemed a "special closure" period for the removal of stock, pupil records and the like to the new precincts. I wonder what will happen to the twisted bicycle racks, long obsolete since the jump-suited mums in Japanese jeeps began picking up their sons at half-past three? Who will give houseroom to 56 musty copies of "Absalom and Achitophel"? And what museum of educational archaeology can give a resting place to 143 shields, each bearing the arms of a different university or college, donated to the school by the first proud pupil to go there?

I pause in my meditation to pluck a few weeds from among the young carrots. It has been a hot, dry summer here in the Essex clay; the whitefly are

swarming and my roots need rain. Traffic on the M11, thundering by the High School, reaches my ears as a distant drone, drowned now by the whirring of the police helicopter spotting traffic on the motorway or the seasonal flashers in Epping Forest. When the High School was opened in the thirties, the sweet uneventful countryside of the Roding Valley must have looked very much as it did a hundred years before. Then it lay between the village dubbed by Dickens "the most delightful place in the world" when he was researching Barnaby Rudge, and in the west, old Bucket Hill, which poor mad John Clare saw as "a place of furze and clouds./ Which evening in a golden haze enshrouds". The School Song "By Roding's Stream" gave thanks for its pleasant situation, and along with Honours Board, Houses and Latin motto (trans, "Joyfully give back what you have been given") provided itself with instant tradition. Now the High School is giving back - not very joyfully - what it has been given, but to whom is not quite clear, for the site, now in the Green Belt, is of no interest to developers. Hitler might have levelled the site free in 1944 if the doodlebug had scored a direct hit instead of merely demolishing the caretaker's house and blowing out the windows of the dining-hall. The bomb arrived during the lunch-hour, but through some miraculous prescience the Headmaster had asked the authority to close the school a few days early at the end of term.

With the end of the war came the hey-day of the High School, when through the meritocratic Fifties and the long-haired Sixties it sent its products into the post-war world. They came, via the eleven-plus, from ordinary backgrounds - from the humbler City clerk families of those pre- yuppie days and from the huge LCC overspill estate to the north of the school. Their academic, artistic and sporting achievements were celebrated with civic pride in the local paper, and they went on to become doctors and lawyers, dons and politicians

(mostly Labour), engineers and scientists -with the occasional drop-out, millionaire, actor or snooker impresario for variety. There was, of course, the much-maligned Selection, at 11 and 13; but in the affluent Eighties there is still selection, as market forces divide children, not by Moray House IQ tests but by the size of their parents' bank-balances. The independent schools in the area never had it so good when MacMillan coined that phrase.

Back in the allotment I ponder whether the final solution to the whitefly problem calls for the drastic use of Tumblebug, or whether I should opt for a kinder, Greener alternative. We try to be as organic as possible here in what is now called the "Leisure Gardens". Education too, can benefit from the organic approach, but the High School as a species is now withdrawn from the catalogue. Its local rivals, two public schools founded by a 17th century Archbishop and a 19th century Livery Company, flourish independently, as does the Church Foundation School, transplanted from London during the "Bulge" years. Time was when the High School more than matched them in sport, music, drama and academic results. But intervention under successive governments in the form of changed catchment areas, com-



prehensive circulars, and ump-teen reorganisation plans have contributed to the final solution. Organic growth, in education as in the garden, takes time, trouble and expense, and the bottom line of the political and economic balance-sheet decrees the death of the High School.

Death is no stranger here on the allotments. I have just cremated a pile of once-promising broccoli, struck down in their prime by aphid attack, while the next plot to mine has suddenly and significantly become overgrown, as so often happens when one of our pensioner leisure- gardeners is taken into hospital for the last time. As I look across the flood-plain to the High School, a silvery jet crosses the sky on its way north across the M25 to Stansted. Where does the soul of a school go when it dies?

## Crossword solution

C	H	I	N	A	M	A	N	B	O	W	L	E	R	
A	N	P	A	C	V	O	E							
T	O	S	C	A	S	T	O	N	E	W	A	L	L	
A	N	G	E	V	R	N	I							
C	H	I	L	E	P	I	N	E	S	T	S			
O	N	L	A	R	H									
M	A	G	I	C	K	S		S	T	R	E	A	K	
B	E	O						O	S					
S	T	R	B	I	T	S		C	O	U	S	H	O	
P	O	I	N	T	O	N	E	A	N	D	O	N	E	
I	B	R	A					I	L	L				
D	I	S	H	E	V	E	L	S		G	R	E	T	
E	E	A	R	E				E	A	G				
R	U	N	O	U	T			E	S	T	R	A	N	G

A quote attributed to William Temple (1881-1944), prominent English

theologian and Archbishop of Canterbury from 1942 until his death. Personally, I have always looked on cricket as organised loafing. So, not a fan of our national summer game!

Ref. 11 across - Stonewall was the nickname given to Thomas Jackson, Confederate general in the American Civil War. It is an epithet applied to batsmen for their ability to occupy the crease without necessarily keeping the scorers too busy!

Ref. 16 across - the Zimbabwean all-rounder Heath Streak.

# All the World's a Stage

## Drama through the decades at BHCHS: Part ten 1974-1976

**JEREMY HAYES** and **NICK ALLUM** present a 'conversation' about drama at the school during the mid-70s, synthesized from the recollections of former staff and pupils. Hugh Colgate's words are taken from his *At Home* reports made during the period. The others come from anecdotes contributed recently.

### DRAMATIS PERSONAE

#### THE STAFF

HUGH COLGATE  
PETE DOWNEY  
DAVID PATTRICK  
RUTH PRIOR

#### THE BOYS

NICK ALLUM (1973)  
JEREMY HAYES (1974)  
NEIL TODD (1972)  
ROB ORANGE (1973)  
SIMON THORPE (1973)  
JONATHAN HUNN (1974)  
PHIL JAMES (1972)



*Zigger Zagger*

**NICK ALLUM:** The senior play at Easter 1974 was Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. I went to see it and watched some rehearsals. I was so inspired by the performance that I bought the script and tried to write a Stoppard-inspired play for one of my French assignments. I soon gave up of course.

**PETE DOWNEY:** The lead parts were played beautifully by Nigel Cole and Stuart Hutchinson. The Player King was Neil Simister and Hamlet's Uncle was surprisingly well played by Tony Kaye.

**DAVID PATTRICK:** The two leads were brilliantly played – I believe Nigel and Stuart worked together for months and knew their parts so well that they could slip each into the other's rôle and back without realising. They were perhaps the greatest individual performances that the BHCHS stage ever held. As for Tony Kaye, the sinister combination of obsequiousness and aggression he projected was just right for Claudius. One of the

things Pete did which turned into a constant boon was the creation of a stage crew. They grew in expertise with each show, and newcomers were inducted into their arcane arts so that it grew over the years into something like a Freemasons' Lodge. Ordinary members of staff were not welcome in the lighting box without coughing loudly at some distance (presumably) to enable the illicit products consumed there to be stashed away. They were brilliant.

**NICK:** At Christmas 1974 Pete Downey introduced yet more innovative drama to an unsuspecting Roding Lane public. *The Shape of Things to Come* was an original play (although based on the HG Wells book) that offered a dystopian view of a future where 'Computes' and 'Plutes' were oppressors and proletariat in a struggle for ascendancy. What was innovative about the

production was that, although the story was fixed, there was no script. The actors had only key points or 'stepping stones' that had to be reached in each scene. Between these points, the dialogue was improvised. I played one of the lead Computes and Neil Todd played the chief protagonist amongst the Plutes.

**NEIL TODD:** I recall

more doing lighting and behind the scenes things than acting. I did a summer school with the Essex Youth theatre on technical aspects of the theatre and then did theatre lighting as a side line when I went to university. It nearly took my career in that direction as I got offered a job at Bristol University theatre - but sense prevailed and I didn't accept it.

**HUGH COLGATE:** Mr. Downey's brilliant production of *Zigger Zagger* at Easter in 1975 brought home the hopelessness of a lad caught up in the violence of football hooliganism. It is a comment of the times that the National Youth Theatre's production of *Zigger Zagger* this summer drew packed houses. It was a production in which Nigel Cole of last year's Upper Sixth was chosen out of 4,000 applicants to play a leading role.

**DAVID:** I suspect Hugh Colgate was profoundly uneasy about *Zigger Zagger*, which did not project the kind of image of the school he wanted to put over. Boys smoking on stage, bad language, and the creation of an atmosphere of football hooliganism was all too real for his taste.

**HUGH:** At Christmas 1975, Mr. Patrick and Mrs. Prior produced the junior play *Before Your Very Eyes*.

**JEREMY HAYES:** This was a weird mix of comedy and melodrama that had been written for

another school, and we needed to change a lot of the references to local places, events etc. We had a read-through and audition one lunchtime with Ruth Prior. The characters were all male, apart from one, called Mildred, who was the only girl in a gang of schoolchildren. For some reason, during the audition, I suddenly decided I wanted to play Mildred, as she was one of the main characters and had all the funny lines. Adam Zvikler also wanted to play her, and we had a kind of 'act-off', which I won. I took the part, but only on the condition that I wouldn't have to wear a dress! Ruth Prior assured me that I could easily play a girl in trousers, and I was horrified when, a few days before the dress rehearsal, she professed never to have promised anything of the sort, and that of course I would have to wear a skirt. By then it was too late to turn back, so my first appearance on the stage at BHCHS was in drag!

**ROB ORANGE:** I played The Villain, and Viraf Captain was The Chairman, old time music hall style. I had to tie Jerry to some railway tracks at one point. I was meant to have a top hat, but the budget didn't stretch that far, so I had to make do with a centre parting. I was allowed a moustache though, essential for villainous twirling. As Viraf put it, the show was a "scintillating, sardonic, supremely satisfying extravaganza".

**JEREMY:** Other cast members I remember were Paul Storrie and Jurg Hobbs (who played Phil), Tony Wallington (Lux), and Mark Kieve.

**NICK:** I remember being annoyed at not getting a starring role, after my 'rave reviews' from the previous year, and complaining to the casting directors. You can imagine the response I received to what I now realise was absurdly pompous and self-important behaviour!

**HUGH:** At Easter 1976 Mr. Downey produced the senior play *The Long and the Short and the Tall*.

**DAVID:** This production boasted two fine performances – from



*Rosencrantz & Guildenstern stage team: Left to right: Nigel Taylor, Tony Dale (rear), Graham Beard, Nick Buckley*



Smike

Paul Miller as Bamforth, the barrack room lawyer, and Steve Marchant as the sadistic sergeant. A couple of the smaller parts were a bit undercast. Although as a play it has lasted much better than *Zigger Zagger*, which now feels like a period piece, it doesn't have the same kind of dramatic energy and perhaps for Hugh Colgate represented a safer choice!

RUTH PRIOR: I had just joined the school and was asked to collect the props - rifles, ammunition and grenades - from the theatrical costumiers in London. This involved driving through Kilburn just when the troubles in Northern Ireland were in the news. Hugh Colgate thought it would be wise to give me a letter on headed paper confirming that the contents of my boot were dummies!

HUGH: In 1976, one of the most ambitious junior stage productions we have ever mounted was the pop-musical *Smike* which played to packed houses and was enjoyed by 1,400 people. The first night was attended by the writers, Simon May and Roger Holman. The production was directed by Mr. Downey, Mr. Patrick and Mrs. Prior.

SIMON THORPE: The band included Grant 'Scotty' Keir on drums, Roy Skinner on bass, Dave Patrick and John Rippin on piano (I heard them jamming on Dotheboys Rock at a rehearsal, which impressed me greatly.) Also Brian Harper directed the music and played trumpet. I had always been terrified of him but rehearsing with him totally changed my opinion!

RUTH: We had asked Brian to take one rehearsal for *Smike* and

we were so impressed we immediately appointed him musical director.

NICK: Simon and I were on the stage crew for *Smike*. There was one scene that opened with a classroom that had to look as if it had been trashed, books thrown all over the place, by the boys. On the last night the stage crew went a bit hysterical and not only threw the books over the stage, but tore them all up as well. They may even have been Bibles. The character that opened the scene, Mr Squeers, in surprise at the mess really was genuinely agog at the mayhem that confronted him as the lights came up.

DAVID: The books torn up on stage were Shakespeare. Bryan Rooney was not amused.

PHIL JAMES: I played trumpet, and I turned up to rehearsals and saw Graham Prentice with a very interesting looking Harmony semi-acoustic guitar. The strings, however, looked as if they hadn't been changed for years and were rusty. I asked when the last time was that Graham had played this guitar to which he replied that it was when he was on the road with Joe Brown and the Bruvvers in the 1960s!

JEREMY: I took the title role in *Smike*, but initial rehearsals went quite badly. Then, some weeks into the rehearsal schedule, there was a shuffling of cast members, which revitalised the production. Dave Patrick, initially involved on the production site, took over the role of Mrs Squeers. Dave Patrick played Mrs Squeers with great comic gusto, almost like a pantomime dame. And there was a fine Brian Blessed style performance by Jon Broxholme as Mr Squeers. "There's a wind

blows through that door fit to knock a man off his legs!" So peculiar how these lines stay in your memory. The play was set in two time frames - modern day and Dickensian times, with every character having a role in each.

*Smike* was a huge success, and I particularly remember the dress rehearsal, which we performed in front of a hall full of local primary school children. They were packed into the hall - I have never seen so many people in there, sitting in the aisles, standing at the back and hanging off the rafters in the gallery. They went wild, as if they were at a rock concert, and we felt like pop stars. For weeks afterwards I had little girls staring and pointing at me on my way to Buckhurst Hill station, and once even got asked for my autograph!

A seminal moment: on the last night, in the penultimate scene, I had to sing a reprise of a song called *Don't Let Life Get You Down*. When we started rehearsing I could hit all the high notes, but when it came to my big moment, on the final performance, in front of our biggest audience, my voice just went and I couldn't get anywhere near it. Just like Al Jolson in *The Jazz Singer*.

Other cast members were David Elsom as Fanny - another boy in drag! He had to sing a romantic duet with Paul Davey *We'll Find Our Day* (a minor hit for Lynsey de Paul, pop trivia fans!) Paul Storrie was Bolder, the boy who sang Dotheboys Rock, a highlight of the show. Ray Shoulder played Wackford Squeers (Jr), and Ray Johnson played Ralph Nickleby.

DAVID: David Elsom playing Fanny, although young, was as

tough as nails and all Ruth's guidance never got him to walk like a girl or to sound anything other than a rugby-playing boy treble!

JONATHAN HUNN: I'd just joined the school and Jerry's quite right when he talks about the 'popstar' bit. *King Lear* was about as modern as we'd ever got at Forest, so it was a real (nice) shock to watch this performance.

HUGH: At Easter in 1976, the senior dramatic society presented *The Merchant of Venice* under the direction of Mr. Rooney and with a cast which included girls from Loughton CHS and the Brook. The verse speaking festival in July brought the usual high standard of entries. One of the cast of *Smike*, Thomas Hill, was later chosen to play the title role in the Harlow Playhouse production of *Oliver*

NICK: I had a minor part, as a messenger, wearing tights and cricket box! Si played a similar role. Also with tights. Dave Beard was Bassanio and Arnie Verrall was Lorenzo.

DAVID: I wasn't involved in this production but I remember the powerful performance of Steve Marchant as Shylock. I don't know if Bryan had chosen this play because he foresaw the success Steve would make of it, but he certainly seized his opportunities and acted everyone else off the stage.

See our web site for more photos from *Zigger Zagger* and some remarkable recordings from *Smike*. We are grateful to David Patrick for having provided most of the photos. Nick and Jeremy will reconstruct some more groundbreaking drama in the next edition.

## A Fantasy Career - Interview with Joe Dever (BHCHS 1967-74)



JOE DEVER is one of the most prolific published authors to have emerged from BHCHS. Anyone who has ventured into the world of computer role-playing games is likely to have encountered the *Lone Wolf* adventure gamebooks which have sold over 10.2 million copies worldwide since 1984. His output has been prodigious – 65 books published to date, and he has just finished the newest in the *Lone Wolf* series which is to be published later this year.

When I spoke to Joe recently he had no hesitation in revealing the origin of his success. The biggest influence was the enlightened teaching of Pete Downey and Pete Sillis. Being introduced to *The Hobbit* and subsequently *The Lord of the Rings* at the age of 14, Joe began to form his own

ideas for a fantasy world he called *Magnamund*. Joe tells me he owes a huge debt of gratitude to Pete Downey in particular for inspiring him and encouraging him to develop his dramatic writing style.

After leaving school Joe went into music publishing, initially for Pye Records and subsequently as a Recording Engineer for a small start-up West London record company called Virgin Records (whatever did become of them I wonder?) All the while his passion continued for developing *Magnamund* into a very detailed world creation, with thousands of years of myths and mythos. The depth of this detail is what, he feels, keeps his readers coming back for more. Joe credits Pete Sillis for inspiring him in this regard.

“History was my favourite subject. It was full of interesting stories. I think Mr Sillis had a gift for mixing anecdote and analysis in the right proportion which, for me at least, made his lessons memorable”.

In 1981, he decided to leave Virgin and join Games Workshop as part of its editorial team. It was a bold career change, but Joe said he felt certain that the time was right for him to get into games

professionally. Role-playing games like *Dungeons & Dragons* were becoming hugely popular, and with their success came a wave of new interest in fantasy fiction, particularly the works of Michael Moorcock and JRR Tolkien. In the summer of 1982 he established his games credentials by becoming the first British winner of the Advanced *Dungeons & Dragons* World Championship, which was staged in Baltimore.

Joe left Games Workshop in 1983 to write his first *Lone Wolf* gamebook *Flight from the Dark*. It is set in the world of *Magnamund* and puts the reader in the lead role of a gifted young hero called Lone Wolf, a Sommlending Kai Lord. On its release, the book became a bestseller worldwide and created a demand for the rest of the books that were to follow regularly over the next 12 years.

From 1996 onwards, Joe shifted his creative focus away from gamebooks and novels and more towards designing computer games. He told me that he was lucky to be in at the start of the tremendously successful Sony Playstation 1, writing games that sold millions of copies worldwide. The results far exceeded Sony’s most optimistic of expectations.

In 2005, Joe underwent extensive surgery for kidney cancer. It was successful and he made a good and rapid recovery and was soon back at work. Although the market for adventure gamebooks faded in the late 1990’s, there has since been a strong resurgence of interest in several European countries – France and Italy in particular. So he continues to be busy both as a writer and a games designer.

Joe has two children – his son Ben was born in 1981 and his daughter Sophie in 1987. Ben teaches English in London, and Sophie works for a fine arts company in Dublin. These days Joe divides his time between the UK, Belgium and Italy. He says he likes to spend his winters in England because of the weather. “Cold and damp. It’s the perfect weather for staying indoors and writing!”

For more information and a complete list of his publications, see Joe Dever’s entry on [Wikipedia](#).



## Beckoned by Burgundy By Peter Downey (English, 1967-85)

AFTER leaving BHCHS I moved to Wales with my wife, Glynn, who is a retired nurse and social worker. I rejigged my life as a smallholder, archaeologist, IT trainer and FE lecturer. I have two sons, John (b 1975), a book-binder in London, living in London with his wife and daughter, and Sam (b 1978) who graduated in Wildlife Conservation and lives in Yorkshire. I was recently made a granddad for the fourth time and happy with life after a brush with the 'Hereafter' in 1998. I was once told by a fortune teller that I would ‘die across the water’ - not sure if this meant the Severn or the Channel.

I left teaching as a result of quite severe depression brought on by feelings of professional inadequacy, total disillusionment with the educational system and the

school as I saw it at the time (and continue so to do) and raging fury at Essex Educational Authority for totally thwarting my plans to further my professional development by refusing me a year’s secondment (previously glibly promised at a General Inspection by one of the inspectors) after I secured one of 12 places at the Central School of Speech and Drama from more than 1000 candidates. My one regret is that this obviously had a major effect on my teaching towards the end and I am very sorry if any boy or colleague suffered as a result.

At the time of writing I am about to retire to Burgundy where we bought a second house to renovate, and thereby escape the rat alley Britain seems to have become. How many other grumpy old men are there out there?



Peter and Glynn with family in 2009

# Old Bucks FC: Into the Next Generation

By Simon Burnage (BHCHS 1971-78)



Simon and Nathan (who has signed up for OBFC 2029)

TURNING out one wintry Saturday in 1978 at the behest of Nigel Whaler, who was desperate for just about anyone to fill a depleted OBFC team, I got the bug to play again after five years of sporting malaise, smoking behind the bike sheds and an unerring harassment of school-girls from Loughton, West Hatch and Woodford (not to mention Braeside when I fancied being the archetypal 'bit of rough!') My life was changing now that I had found a nice girl from North Chingford, a 'proper job', a resurgence of my interest in playing tennis and too much time on my hands on winter weekends. So OBFC seemed to provide another part of the jigsaw.

The post-match clubhouse greeting of one of my scholastic nemeses Lionel Marsh along the lines of "what the hell are you doing here? We don't need your sort to spoil our club!" almost saw an end to my OBFC involvement but for the fact that I had gotten into the habit of doing whatever I could to wind up BHCHS masters for the previous seven years, so why stop then? Lionel's greeting stayed with me for many years as I finally started to grow up and saw that rebellion and antagonism weren't always the best means -fun? yes, but not always most productive and here I am still playing 31 years later at the ripe old age of 49!

When I joined we consisted of four teams made up almost entirely of ex-BHCHS pupils and I found my niche in the fantastic

fours alongside Greg Sharp, Tim Megnin, Dave Dawson, Trevor Lebentz, Chas Brown and many oldies but goodies who became not only team-mates but also good friends.

Various captaincy posts followed over the years, recruitment of many school-leavers through 'kids' that are now high rollers in the city and participation in club committee meetings were suffered. The club fluctuated between three and six teams and we started a veterans (over 35s) team in 1980 at the instigation of Trevor Lebentz who had had enough of young kids running past him at will by then. The gradual demise of the School until closure in 1990 effectively eliminated the source of new blood and direct links to any of the local schools gradually ceased. Whilst the club had not maintained a strict Old Boys only stance, we had tried to ensure that Old Bucks received priority to new member application acceptances. But the demise of BHCHS provided justification for a relaxation of restriction that has enabled the club to continue to exist to the current day.

As the years flew by my pace needed to be replaced by a more refined approach to the reading of the game, I can still launch a better throw than Delap, have the dead ball abilities of Beckham (alright maybe this one is debatable!), but unfortunately the susceptibility to injury of Ledley King and the overall fitness of Sam Allardyce! Work in the City ceased when they found me out and realised I earned far too much and did far too little, but it was great while it lasted! Shoulders and elbows were shot to pieces by tennis so golf has taken over in summer months.

2005 evidenced my acceptance that I was old enough to stay with one girl for my remaining years and manage to avoid a costly divorce, so got married (for the first and hopefully only time!) in August to my Mancunian 'girlfriend' of 18 years, Keely and two years later we had our wonderful little boy Nathan who continues to take up all my excess time and energies and I am told will do so for the rest of my life!!



Simon Burnage (back row, second left) in the junior cross-country team 1971-72. Others shown are (back row) Tony Maslen, David Murray, Mike Stephenson, (front row) Stephen Murray, Martin Smith.

Then 2008 saw a rush of blood to the head at an OBFC AGM and I took over as Chairman of a club beset by financial management issues, dwindling membership, poor training attendance and an ailing facilities relationship with the current incumbents of the old BHCHS. Financially unviable relationships with GGSK College for pitches and Buckhurst Hill Cricket and Lacrosse Club for post-match facilities were terminated. We returned to Avondale Road for pitches (which now receive the tender loving care of EFDC and are in excellent condition) and *The Three Colts* for post-match facilities. We also implemented a concept that hadn't been applied for many years of 'no pay no play' which enabled us to achieve a healthy tally of 79 fully paid-up members to fulfil our four teams and better than financial self-sufficiency for two seasons running.

Our major issues now are that the vets are getting older (this should position us well for the over-45s and possibly over-50s cups but causes problems for the over-35s friendlies which are the bread and butter of our season), our teams are struggling in league matches due to a lack of ability (probably) and the 'noughties' culture of a complete lack of responsibility to others that seems to enable players to just not turn up on Saturdays without notice or due reason! But with our healthy membership numbers the threat of future exclusion is now a realistic concept.

Our membership list still con-

tains a number of ex-BHCHS scholars amongst whom are Dave Felton (1985) Lee Pollock (1977) Tony Maslen (1971) Dave Maddox (1971) and Andy Richards (1964) and most of them are to be found propping up the bar at *The Three Colts* post-match Saturdays during the season. If you fancy catching up and buying the beers please do come along. Not a long one for me though – still teetotal and off the weed so home to put Nathan to bed by 7.00!

As well as the above I still maintain contact with a few Old Boys although not necessarily through an active pursuit of BHCHS reminiscences but rather through coincidence. There is still a network that runs close to the surface and a recent event (John Pyefinch's 60<sup>th</sup> testimonial) saw a few of the old lags meet up and quaff a few but this is far from a regular occurrence. Unfortunately it coincided with the OBA Quiz Night otherwise we might have made the effort. But having been told that the OBA Dinner has moved to Woolston Manor we might make a determined effort to attend mob-handed, catch up with the part-time old boys and try to convince those shy of wheelchairs and hip-replacements that playing football should be reintroduced to their lives!!

The easiest method to contact me is via [oldbucks@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:oldbucks@hotmail.co.uk) which I try to check three times each week and if any of you have relations who are interested in playing as well as, or instead of you, please do drop me a line.

# After-School Activities

By Colin Overy (BHCHS 1953-60)

- Academic management
- Actuary
- Airline industry
- Aviation industry
- Brewing industry
- British Rail
- Clothing industry
- Computer engineering
- Driving instruction
- Education management
- Film industry
- Food industry
- Glass industry
- GPO
- Interior design
- Landscape gardening
- Management services
- Medicine
- Metallurgy
- Plastics industry
- Project management
- Property management
- Recruitment consultant
- Security industry
- Sound technician
- Statistics
- Taxi driver
- Urban transport
- Water industry
- Arist
- Atomic energy industry
- Building industry
- Chemical industry
- Farming
- Management
- Meteorology
- Railways
- Research
- Schools administration
- Town planning
- Training
- Travel industry
- Dentistry
- Entertainment
- Graphic arts
- National Politics
- Newspapers
- Photography
- Public service
- Publican
- Publishing
- Stockbroking
- Chemistry
- Construction
- Management
- Medical technology
- Pilot
- Real estate
- Sales & marketing
- Shipping
- Transportation
- Human resources
- NHS
- Pharmaceutical industry
- Property development
- Retail business
- Social service
- Theater (tech)
- Computers
- Finance
- Merchant navy
- Telecommunications
- Architect
- Automotive industry
- Advertising
- Marketing
- Acting
- Musician
- Printing
- Broadcasting
- Local government
- Computing
- Surveying
- Civil service
- Software
- Writing
- Police
- Journalism
- Medical practitioner
- Oil industry
- Consulting
- Clergy
- Sales
- Law
- Information technology
- Military
- Insurance
- Accounting
- Banking
- Engineering
- Business
- Teaching

OB NEWS is a treasure trove of information describing the activities of Old Bucks after they have left school. The 21 newsletters (543,025 words on 497 pages) record the professions and careers by which many Old Bucks have made their mark on society around the world. How many judges, CEOs, professors, engineers, politicians, professional athletes, social workers etc., did BHCHS produce? In what areas of society do Old Buckwellians make their presence felt? The non-professional activities are no less interesting, and in their own way, are valuable indicators of the school's impact on its pupils' subsequent lives.

After mentioning these thoughts to our Editor, (big mistake!) I found myself mining the newsletters for raw data, and then rendering it into a form that attempts to illustrate the BHCHS contribution to humanity. The spreadsheet that resulted lists the professional and recreational activities of all the Old Bucks

contributing such information. What you see on these two pages, are graphical illustrations of their principal careers, occupations and recreational activities.

Of the 5000 former pupils, about 2000 receive the newsletter and 824 have supplied useful information on after-school activities. 249 distinct career categories were identified, but the majority of Old Bucks (648), were covered by the Top-20. 122 individuals have had two careers and 40 have had three. Many secondary and tertiary careers are entrepreneurial in nature. No doubt a sign of the times, but significantly perhaps, an indicator of Old Bucks' versatility and ability to accept change. One reason for retaining the large number of career categories was to record the unique and unusual. So if you need to talk to a cooper, a potter or a bus driver, we know who to contact.

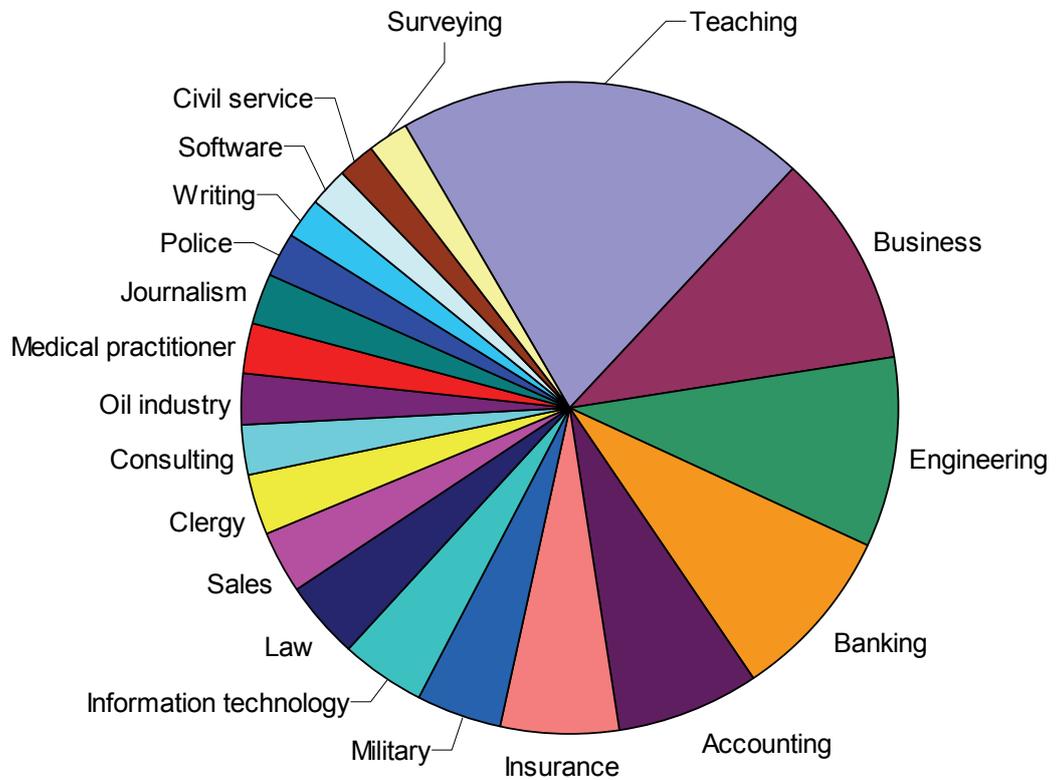
The largest career category by far, is Teaching, purposely kept

broad, to collect participants at all levels of the educational chain. This indicates something, hopefully positive, about the example set by school staff regarding this profession.

The wide range of careers supports the frequently documented newsletter reports that you can meet an Old Buckwellian, literally, anywhere.

280 writers listed 53 categories of recreational activity. The categories are very broad and range from the sedentary to the highly active. This is not surprising since the age range of the writers is similarly wide. Considering the frequent comments in *OB News* about loathed cross-country runs, who would have thought that Marathon running and Running would both be in the Top-20, and combined, would rank 6th?

One writer claimed to be active in nine recreational activities – would anyone like to guess his profession? I'm trying to persuade our editor to provide a



Top 20 Careers and Occupations

prize for the first correct answer. Now for a disclaimer. The writer and your editor are well aware that the data discussed, is from a skewed population and would not pass the most fundamental tests with regard to statistical validity. Also, all activities would not have been practised by everyone all of the time. Nevertheless, we think it's a useful analysis, and tells an interesting story. We both lament that so many writers have failed to enlighten us with more details regarding after-school activities. I suspect that our editor plans to issue a challenge to remedy this shortfall.

In future newsletters, information regarding post-secondary establishments attended will be presented. If you have any requests for specific information from the data collected, please contact the editor.

About me: After leaving BHCHS I went to The National Gas Turbine Establishment at Farnborough for six years testing and sometimes breaking expensive hardware. Attended Farnborough Tech and studied Mechanical and

Aeronautical Engineering. Immigrated to Canada in 1966 and worked at Pratt & Whitney in Montreal, initially as an experimental stress engineer and then as a project engineer. In 1974, because of political and labour strife in Quebec, left P&W and went to Black & Decker, Canada in Brockville, Ontario, as Manager of Product Development. Left B&D in 1995 to concentrate on my own design and development engineering business, (special machines and tools), that I had started as a part time activity in 1985.

For the past 15 years, I have been able to spend two or three months of the year doing what I really prefer which is anything but working.

My recreational pursuits have included running, (over 60,000 kms now and suffering from it), 21 marathons back in the early 80's, (a few sub 2:45s), high altitude mountaineering, (20-plus summits over 6,700 on five continents, several epics which I somehow survived), two 600 km arctic expeditions crossing Baffin Island, first north to south on snowshoes, (first ever, stupidly

difficult and very hard), second time south to north on skis, numerous southern Canadian river whitewater canoe trips and a few long 500 km trips along northern Canadian rivers to the Arctic ocean, and machine rowing to keep fit.

In my spare time, I make wine, am restoring three Berkeley sports cars, (c. 1956), attempting to complete a scratch model of H.M.S. Victory (started in 1984) and making numerous models of ship's guns and ancient artillery pieces.

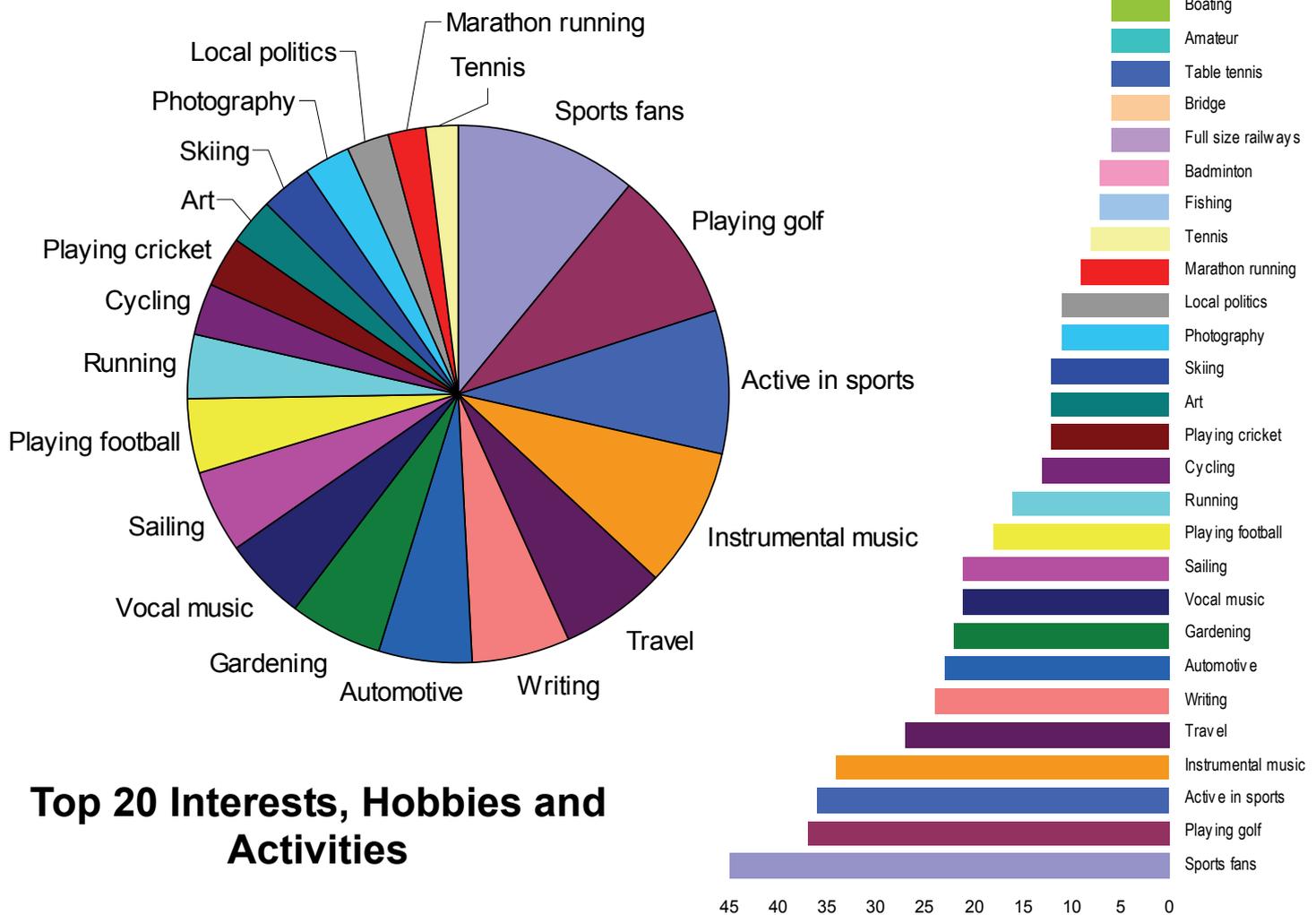
From BHCHS days, I still loathe history, Shakespeare, bullies, and the UK class system that supposedly defines one's place in life, and boredom.

However, I do appreciate that most of what I enjoy and what I have done with my life, can often be traced back to a few select experiences, and a few staff at the school.

I spent 40 years hating and ignoring the place, but now I've mellowed, and learned to appreciate a few of its gifts.

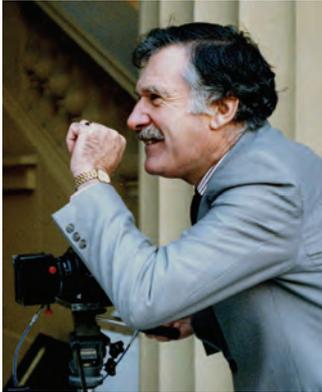
[colino@ripnet.com](mailto:colino@ripnet.com)

- Magic
- Amateur radio
- Fencing
- Caravanning
- Judo
- Hunting
- Rambling
- Aviation
- Diving
- Broadcasting
- Archery
- School administration
- Rock climbing
- Mountain walking
- Magisterial practice
- Chess
- Target shooting
- Model railways
- Mountaineering
- Natural history
- Swimming
- Squash
- Ornithology
- Private flying
- Wood working
- Bowls
- Boating
- Amateur
- Table tennis
- Bridge
- Full size railways
- Badminton
- Fishing
- Tennis
- Marathon running
- Local politics
- Photography
- Skiing
- Art
- Playing cricket
- Cycling
- Running
- Playing football
- Sailing
- Vocal music
- Gardening
- Automotive
- Writing
- Travel
- Instrumental music
- Active in sports
- Playing golf
- Sports fans



# Where are they now?

## Ken Bray 1940



Since retiring from his studio in 1995 Ken Bray's camera operating fingers have not been idle though very few pictures have actually earned any hard cash.

First and foremost he is regularly photographing the activities of Woodford Green AC with Essex Ladies as he has for the past 60 years.

These illustrate the club website of which he is the webmaster as well as gracing the pages of the local press. Get onto [wgel.org.uk](http://wgel.org.uk) to view the results and keep in touch with the club which has had many OBs as members.

The local NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts) use his hard earned skills in recording local churches. This is not just snaps of the exteriors but include pictures of every item in the church-windows, woodwork, brass and copper ware, metalwork and so on. But climbing up ladders to photograph items high on the church walls is becoming a bit of a trial at 80 and St Mary's Chigwell may be his last.

Out and about with his camera means that photos appear in the newsletter of the Friends of Epping Forest, and greetings cards produced by The Woodford Green Amenity Group. His pictures are also used by the London Branch of CPRE where he is Chairman of the NE London District Group.

All family holidays and activities are recorded. What will happen to the dozens of albums and slide trays when the inevitable happens?

Ken will be giving an illustrated lecture on his life in photography at the Woodford Historical Society at Trinity School on April 19th. at 7.30pm.

## Ken Grimwood 1940



On leaving school I graduated with BSc in Metallurgy (London) and then spent two years National Service as an ammunition examiner in the army. I subsequently continued my metallurgical career and mainly concerned with high temperature metals finally specialising with tungsten and its alloys and compounds. In industry, went through the stages of R&D, plant management and then marketing in Europe before early retirement. I married Sheila in 1957. Sheila passed away after a short illness in 2002. I have lived at the same address in Brentwood since marriage. I have two daughters and four grandchildren.

I have varied leisure interests. Foremost entomology, but also gardening, painting, woodwork,



cricket and digital photography.

I have strong memories of the war years "by Roding stream". I used to travel to school using the LNER steam train from Newbury Park to Chigwell station and then the considerable walk up Chigwell Rise. My usual travelling companion with similar liking for "bug hunting" was Arnold T. Sawyer. One day I even walked to school from Newbury Park when the line was bombed, such was the enthusiasm for BHCHS.

## Colin Wood 1952

Although known as Colin, or 'RC' while at school, my first name is Robert. I am married to Valerie and we have two sons. The elder is a Wing Commander in the RAF, currently serving in Afghanistan, and the younger is the infrastructure manager for Save the Children UK.

I retired some time ago after running my own IT consultancy, mainly advising retailers. My time is now filled with walking the dog, acting as unpaid undergardener to Valerie, playing badminton, researching our family tree, and keeping up to date on the PC.

## Peter Morden 1954

Life in Norfolk around Yarmouth continues as before. I am fully retired from teaching German and Spanish, but my wife Chris and I travel a lot in Europe and have visited most of the former Warsaw Pact countries. We are about to become grandparents.

I am still a Governor of the local Primary School, have joined an Angling Club, garden, and am Treasurer of the local Historical Society. We don't get to visit Essex much these days, but visit London. Finally, I have just become a member of Norwich City FC, seeking promotion back into the Championship.

We love life here and are enjoying our retirement.

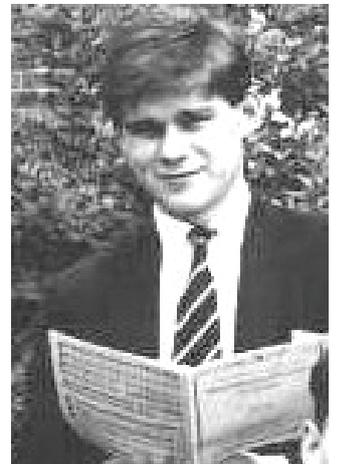
## Brian Mountford 1956



Way back in 1968 I started out as a curate in Westminster and then Bayswater, in central London, in the days when the Church of England was less divided, religion didn't feel so much under fire from secularism, and I could walk comfortably down Queensway in a cassock. Then I spent six years as Fellow and Chaplain of Sidney

Sussex College, Cambridge, newly married, and at the point when we admitted women to the college for the first time. After that I was appointed Vicar of Southgate in North London, just across the Lee valley, not really very far from home. This was classic suburbia, ever so slightly soulless, difficult to learn the names of streets that all looked the same, and curiously different from Loughton, also part of the commuter belt, but redeemed by the Forest.

In 1986 I was interviewed by the Fellows of Oriel College, Oxford for the post of Vicar of The University Church, which has the dreamiest of all the 'Dreaming Spires' and was the principal public building of the medieval University. Today it's the most visited parish church in England and a centre for public theology, having recently hosted conversations with such people as George Soros, Philip Pullman, Rowan Williams, Mark Thompson (Director General of the BBC), Richard Dawkins, Frank Field MP and John Sentamu (Archbishop of York). I'm trying to



raise £5m for development and so far have £1.7m. So if any of you have made a mint and want to spend it wisely, just let me know.

Since being in Oxford I've published several books, three of which are published by O Books, *Perfect Freedom*, *Christianity in Ten Minutes* and *Happiness in Ten Minutes*. Currently I'm writing *Christian Atheism* for the same publisher, in which I explore the growing phenomenon of people who value Christianity for its community, moral compass and aesthetics, but cannot sign up to the metaphysical claims.

**Denis Grey 1958**



I was prompted to write as a result of Gordon Lacey's excellent article in the last edition of OBN. Memories of 3R have long faded but would be rekindled with a reunion which is being organised as I write.

I recall that Dave Millard and Paul Dukes were stepbrothers. Dave of the curly brown/ blond hair must have developed into a tower of a man. I recall having a pre-arranged fight with Paul (possibly during a field trip) which ended in an honourable draw. This was a



good result for me because I was expecting to be thrashed. Dave and Paul both used to walk several miles to school from the Woodford area and they wore black commando boots. Gordon Lacey reminds me that they also wore US combat jackets. Greg Page was a cool customer who lived some way from Buckhurst Hill. Phil Ricketts was always jolly. I was also pally with Chris Rowsell (RIP), Colin Vose, who I also remember was an ace at Chemistry, Graham Hannah and Martin Featherstonehaugh. Influential teachers for me included John Whaler, who was our form master in 3R and 4R, Tommy Leek and of course Spud.

I joined 3R at BHCHS from Luc-ton's School in Loughton where I lived. I was a Boy Scout with the

30th Epping Forest Group. Bill Hardwick (a year or two older than me) was the only other BHCHS pupil in the troop that I can recall. Bill (if you are out there) will also remember Barry Nichol(is?) and Chris Evans – we all lived in Wellfields and knocked around together in our pre and early teens. The 30th met in the Scout Hut at St John's Church and I was delighted to see during a visit a couple of years ago that the hut is still standing and is now called the Houchin Memorial Hall after our Skipper.

I left BHCHS (Lower Sixth) at 17 to



become a pilot in the RAF. During my countless home moves over the next 30 years or so my collection of photos and memorabilia (including school reports) was gradually whittled away. I flew mostly single-seat day fighters (Hunter, Jaguar etc) and did a range of staff jobs. In 1985 I joined BAE Systems, marketing military aircraft overseas and for the last 4 years I have run a consultancy advising small businesses. We have 3 children and 2 grandchildren.

**John Webster 1959**

Has taken early retirement from his job in day care, and is now turning his attention to complete all the domestic jobs he never got round to. He has discovered the chaos equation proves that once you start on it your attention is drawn to an increasingly infinite number of repairs and home improvements hitherto unknown.

**Andrew Lincoln 1960**

Is a Reader in English at Queen Mary College, London University. His research interests include enlightenment social theory, the culture of romanticism, comparative mythology and modern fiction. He has recently completed a



book, Walter Scott and Modernity, which shows how current issues of debate - from relations between Western and Islamic cultures, to the political significance of the private conscience in a liberal society - are anticipated in the Romantic era. Andrew has edited Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* in the Blake Trust series (1991), and has published *Spiritual History* (OUP 1995), which explored the relationship between biblical tradition and enlightenment social theory in Blake's visionary epic, *The Four Zoas*. His continuing research on William Blake focuses in particular on Blake's relationship with enlightenment culture. He is currently working on an AHRC funded project exploring the justification of war in British culture from the late-seventeenth century to the Napoleonic period.

**Peter Beaumont 1976**

I am now living in Much Hadham in Herts with my wife Sam and our three beautiful girls.

I am currently running a property fund which is proving to be great fun. I would love to hear from any past classmates.

**Graham Riddall 1977**

Has recently moved to the Home Office as Head of Technology Solutions & Assurance in the IT Shared Services function. Previously he was a Consultant IT Architect at TUI UK.

**David Felton 1985**

It's fast approaching 20 years since I was part of the final ever year to leave the old school. At the time I was glad to be leaving, as I believe most kids are at 16, however looking back now I only seem to remember the good times I had there.

My memories of my time at school mainly consist of playing football at every given opportunity and having fun and subse-

quently enjoying Geography lessons with Mr Graves. My earliest memories were of quite a disciplined school with Mrs Leach keeping us all in check, however by the time I had reached the 5th year, what with the relocation of all other pupil years plus most of the teachers the remaining 80 or so of us 'enjoyed' having the whole building to ourselves with mainly supply teachers trying to keep us focused. I did manage to obtain 10 GCSE's with half of these at C grade but I know with better focus I could have done better!

I'm currently living in High Beach with my beautiful wife of 3½ years Caroline. We met at work, started dating and were engaged and then married within little over a year. We no longer work in the same office but both continue our careers in the field of reinsurance. I left Aon at the end of 2009 after 12 years to start a new career as an Operations Manager with the Ace Group.

I've recently resumed playing football for the Old Buckwellians having had a five-year break from playing after joining the club at 17. Through the OBFC I have forged some great friendships and have even won the odd trophy!



I'm currently turning out for the Vets team having recently reached the age requirement although I've qualified on looks for years!

I still remain close friends with a few ex pupils and even had a mini reunion with six others from the same year back at the start of 2009. I've also recently joined Facebook and have already tracked down a few mates from our school days. Please look me up if you remember me!

Caroline and I are just starting to pack for our latest trip, as we love our holidays abroad. This time we're off for 3 weeks in South Africa to escape the terrible weather here.

# Flying Visit: with a surprising outcome

**Roy Skinner (Physics 1970-78) remembers the arrival of the Navy in 1973**



THERE WAS an air of expectancy that morning amongst the assembled boys of Buckhurst Hill County High School. It was palpable as they gazed skywards at the small, almost imperceptible dot emerging slowly from below the clouds. As it came closer, rotors whirred noisily as the object hovered above the football pitch: The Royal Navy helicopter took on the appearance of some gigantic eagle that was about to zoom earthwards towards an unsuspecting prey.

Boys' mouths opened in astonishment as dark shapes emerged from the bowels of the great bird. A rope was lowered far above the heads of the Lower Sixth, previously preoccupied with the finer points of dribbling and trapping on the pitch below. Oh what amazement – sleek, uniformed figures hurtled with aplomb earthwards down vertical ropes, smoke streaming from protective asbestos gloves, James Bond style.

The Navy had arrived at BHCHS in this grandiose and spectacular way at the request of HAC, the Headmaster, who had decided the boys in his charge might be interested in discovering all there was to know about careers in today's modern Navy. He, having assumed command of his own ship at only 21 years of age, was keen to display the advantages and intricacies of naval life in the 1970s.

They stood, the group of 10 commandos, hands on hips, bedecked in flying gear, basking in the adulation of the dotting 5th and 6th-formers. When the sole female member of the crew took off her helmet, to reveal her

flowing brown hair interest grew even more - an unrestrained sigh was heard from the members of the fraternity who were old enough to appreciate such womanly characteristics through the concealment of an aviator's jumpsuit.

The whole school ambled to the hall under the watchful gaze of the teachers who quickly dispelled any ambitions by the boys of gathering bits of helicopter undercarriage for souvenirs. They all followed the naval officers who had arrived from the clouds, angel-fashion, onto an earthly Chigwell deck. In the Hall the latest in audio-visual apparatus of the day had been assembled in the form of cine projectors, screens, microphones, spotlights and amplifiers. Captain Smith casually emerged on stage to an attentive crowd, moving into the brilliant cone of light which illuminated his cap badge and medals won in service. He informed the captivated audience of his latest exploits in Sudan where he had rescued villagers from the dangers of a flooded river. Photos were projected onto the screen of his men constructing make-shift bridges and ferrying injured villagers out of the area where random gunfire from terrorists was common.

The spotlight then clicked off and immediately a moving image of another officer appeared - Colonel Jones, in action fixing a radar installation in Iceland, soldering iron and complex test equipment in hand.

"Hi, everyone, I am Colonel John Jones of the Electronics Division" came the voice over the sound system, as a tall rug-



ged-jawed naval officer stepped confidently into another beam of spotlight.

"I enjoy water ski-ing, paragliding and mountain climbing" he informed everyone.

"In this cine film you can see me parachuting onto the top of Mont Blanc last year to ski down and rescue a trapped climber near the peak.

Audience jaws dropped and eyes glistened in admiration. Wistful smiles exploded onto the faces of the assembled students as, one-by-one, these giants of Britain's military machine described each of their roles in defending the country and helping others in need in the far reaches of the Globe. Scuba diving, submarine reconnaissance, weapons training and jungle slashing were all in a day's work for the fittest and toughest naval men on the face of the Earth!

Eventually the dimmed lights of the Assembly Hall regained their brightness once more as the ten splendid, salutary sailors who had given such a dramatic presentation sat on the edge of the stage, soaking up the adoring, adolescent adulation. Hands-on-hips, Captain Smith stood upright, and, straightening his beret, approached the microphone. "OK boys, now, do we have any questions?"

Minds were churning below him but, before any other member of the audience could find time to frame an enquiry, one tall boy at the back of the hall stood very promptly and, with a loud and confident voice, enquired:

"Captain, I wonder if you could

comment on the rumour that cannibalism and homosexuality are rife in the Royal Navy"

The look on the Captain's face was astonishing to behold. The audience, of course, was too stunned with the question to react with so much as a giggle. Not losing his self control totally – except maybe for a slight tell-tale quiver of lower mouth muscles - the stunned officer managed a certain composure in the face of what must have been a shock to the system – somewhat akin to being shelled by mortars! His immediate knee-jerk reaction was to turn dazedly to HAC at the edge of the stage, and faintly mouth the words:

"Er, I have never heard of it – have you Headmaster?"

Oh what an amazing memorable moment in the history of the School that I shall always remember – how the best of the British military had been shot down in pieces by a solitary, spotty teenager of the Upper Sixth. Apparently the boy in question had recently been accepted into the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts and had developed the confidence in speaking that only comes through years of playing lead roles in school plays and musicals. Rumour had it that he only did it for a bet, but others swear he was a pacifist and communist sympathiser. However, I am certain that this incident would have persuaded the Navy at the time to think twice about ever giving careers talks again in schools!

I seem also to recall that, after this talk one of the BHCHS staff actually resigned and joined the Navy.

# A Sort of French Cricket

By John Gray (BHCHS 1941-48)\*

Do you remember playing various unofficial games at school: makeshift adaptations of one or more recognised sports? John Gray has supplied not only his recollections of one such game but some remarkable authentic photos taken more than sixty years ago.....



Reg Chapman caught at silly mid on

DURING the summer term of the Lower Sixth, we were to be found after lunch, engaged in a form of cricket of our own devising, on the bank separating the school playing field from the Balloon Station, and located behind the nets. This was much to the disgust of Mr Taylor, who referred to our game, dismissively, as “a sort of French cricket”.

How the game came about, I cannot recall, but it was prompted by the availability of a practice bat of whose provenance I am unaware. The face of this bat was about the width of the handle, and there was no spring-

ing; obviously, it was designed for the kind of use to which we put it.

The game was played in one of the nets, using the concrete surface as the pitch, and a tennis ball, bowled underhand, and, as we became more practiced the bowlers developed faster deliveries with vicious spin-giving off and leg breaks which were difficult to play with such a narrow bat. The wicket was a plank, propped up at one end of the concrete surface.

Scoring was by points, and not runs, and the points were allocated according to the destination of the ball. After sixty years, the

details are somewhat hazy, but the system was something like this: one point for contact between bat and ball; two points for hitting the ball past the bowler; four points for a lofted shot out

of the immediate playing area.

The bank made a fine grandstand and pavilion, and the non-active players had a good view of the game. I cannot recall whether we had teams, and competition (beyond normal rivalry) does not figure heavily in my memory.

The activity did not continue into our move to the Upper Sixth, when the prefectorial duties of some of us would have reduced the availability of players.

It is to all the practice in this game that I attribute my elevation from wicketkeeper (a rather poor one) and number eleven bat in the second eleven in 1947 to opening bat for the 1st XI in my final year.

\* With contributions by Alex Raworth (1941).

## The Cul de Sac of Life

By John Perring (BHCHS 1952-57)

I WONDER if this subject is suitable for open debate in your pages. I do, however, harbour a strong feeling that many may have been here before me.

How many Old Bucks, now retired, are doing the things that they planned and looked forward to for years? So many of my contemporaries from the workplace tell me that they do not know how they ever found time

to go home.

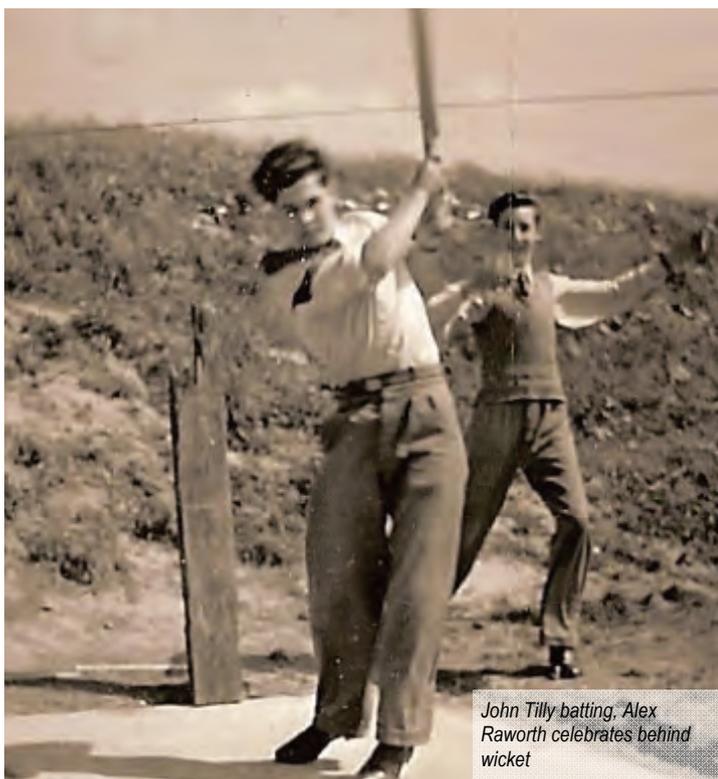
Just cast a line into the Waveney any day and it is time for dinner. The hours fill up, the days shrink and the Spanish virus causes the manana syndrome to infect the psyche.

Perhaps if I could get a full time job again I would have weekends off, you know, those days that you planned ahead for and then enjoyed. I have two other interests, I am treasurer of the Lowestoft and Yarmouth Regional Astronomers, (LYRA), and a watchkeeper with Pakefield Coastwatch at Pakefield Lighthouse [[www.seasafetygroup.org/pcw](http://www.seasafetygroup.org/pcw)]

With one astronomy meeting a month and Thursday afternoons in the lighthouse I do not feel that my “working life” could be described as heavy. Where does the rest come from? It creeps upon you like the sea mist.

But I am married. Women never retire. To lay abed with a paper, sit, play or remain idle for a second is to “waste a lovely day”. Is this familiar to anyone?

They say that the path to Hell is paved with good intentions. Well, the path to retirement is a cul de sac, albeit a very nice one.



John Tilly batting, Alex Raworth celebrates behind wicket



to go to work. It has become a well worn cliché. I planned to retire to a world inhabited by fishermen and rough shooters, to spend my days on the banks of the Waveney hauling out fat pike, or walking with the gun across the Waveney marshes. It is close on a year since I did either, partly due to a slipped disc but mainly due to the fact there are now a lot less than twenty four hours in a day. When I was at work it was never time

# From the Editor's Postbag.....

## BHCHS Closure (1)

David Patrick (English, 1973-88)

I found the article in the last issue about the school's closure fascinating. However, I do not think you will find the whole truth simply by trawling back through past public records – or, probably, from this distance in time, at all. The simple fact is that the whole process was never about the best provision for education in West Essex. It was a fight in which there were winners and losers – and not a very clean fight at that.

As a junior member of staff then, I was not privy to a lot of the discussions about reorganisation. I do remember vividly though a meeting where Hugh Bliss from the local authority came into school and made a series of promises about the effects of the process. He gave an undertaking that because BHCHS was co-operating fully with the reorganisation, we would get “the best deal” and that Davenant in particular which was fighting tooth and nail against it would pick up the leftovers when the scheme was implemented. He must have known that Davenant's constitution meant that he could not coerce it into doing anything; how-

ever, a number of staff who might otherwise have fought against the change were won over by his promises. In fact, BHCHS consistently lost out in the procedure. I remember, for example, Hugh Colgate emotionally drained after a bitter meeting when he was told the catchment area of the school would include the streets where the council housed all the local problem families. The poor quality of some of the intake and lack of parental support became then factors behind the school's eventual closure. You only have to look at the situation today to see that Davenant won out completely and is today the state school of choice in the area, whereas BHCHS is a fading memory. Of all the players, some ended up with handsome redundancy packages, some with plum jobs in FE, and Colgate was rewarded with an OBE; at the other end of the scale a tough life at Roding Valley (“Rodent Alley”) comprehensive, or visits to the Job Centre beckoned. The greatest losers though were and are all those in the area who could and should have benefited from the education that Buckhurst Hill and Loughton were able to offer.

## Thrice Removed

Clive Greenwood (1952-59)

An item in Ted Cocking's article (*OB News*, November 2009) prompts me to sing the praises of Eddie Dolman, the finest teacher I ever had, not excepting Mr Samways and Mr Sillis, and to put a small black mark against Mr Taylor. Why? Ted tells us his ‘Remove’ form was created so that they could take the then equivalent of GCSE in four years. But when Mr Dolman requested entering our class for ‘O’ level Maths at the end of the fourth year - he himself was moving on to his headmastership - this was refused. After I had floundered in Maths in the first year, taught by a charming but ineffectual teacher - my father and my elder brother kept me afloat - Eddie Dolman fired me with his inspirational teaching to such an extent that I finished 3rd in the year that second year. (I was amazed to see this in my long-buried report book.) I was so keen that I voluntarily com-

pleted supplementary geometry exercises at the back of the textbook in my holidays, my teenage mind so enjoyed the utter logic. In my fifth year, Mr Tilley, knowing that we had completed the ‘O’ level syllabus, quite reasonably took us into the minefields of pure and applied Maths, where I was uncomfortable; I finished only with a Grade 3. Ironically, I believe I am correct in saying that, the following year, Spud changed his policy; members of the 1953 year group, including the late entrants - see below - might confirm this.

Gordon Lacey tells us (*OB News*, November 2009) how he joined Mr Whaler's 3R at 13+. This, surely, was the second time that an intake joined the School at 13+? In 1955 there was a group of, I think, 24 boys, for I remember in particular Alan Wiltshire for his cricket. Am I right? And was there a third time, when the 11+ still existed?

*Clive is correct - there was an earlier “remove” intake in 1955 - Ed.*

## Full Circle

Keith Self (1945-52)

The article by Ted Cocking in the last edition, and my imminent meeting with my long time friend RJ ‘Dickie’ Doe, started me thinking. Not that I had set the world on fire, or had a distinguished academic career, but that perhaps a friendship that had persisted for nearly 70 years was notable. There have been many long gaps in it (for example Military Service, whilst enabling many close relationships, made long term existing friendships difficult). Particularly given the propensity for the male of the species finding it hard to put pen to paper. However the friendship between Dick and I did not succumb but flourished - each knowing that the other was always there despite the fact that we might not have heard nor seen the other for some time.

The association started circa 1940 at Ray Lodge School in Snakes Lane Woodford Bridge, being taught by Miss Ward (whose favourite sanction was delivered by two rulers back to back, the noise so generated more effective than the smack), Mrs Ridley, Mrs Tong Mrs Nicholas under the Headship of Mr Moss. A formidable gentleman, I think without the soft centre of Spud - or perhaps the insight of Spud. We both made prefect, but that didn't stop us getting the cane for scrumping and running across the Girl's playground. I went for speed, whilst Dick relied on endurance. Come the Scholarship (taken at Wanstead High School) and we both passed. Traditionally kids from Woodford Bridge went to Wanstead C.H.S. but Dick had plumped for BHCHS and since I didn't want to play that rough game Rugby I changed to go and play Football (we didn't call it Soccer) at BHCHS.

In those days the 167 wasn't invented, so it was quite a performance to get to School. If we were flush we could get the 10 from W.B. to Chigwell tube station for a penny and then walk or run down Roding Lane. Of course if the bicycle was serviceable that also was a possibility but the hills were a disincentive. Still we got there. One incident, I think sums up the School ethos.

One winter, probably 1947, a bad one, and as I was passing the shops opposite the station at Chigwell, I slipped base over apex and my knee locked. The cartilage had a tendency to slip out and did so then. In later years I was able to push it back, but not at this time. However two older boys came along and without hesitation made a seat by clamping their hands together and started to carry me schoolwards. To my shame I don't know who they were and I have no recollection of them. Luckily however Spud caught up with us just over the hill in Roding Lane and I was transferred to his car. Similarly I have no recollection of thanking my two benefactors. Clearly the ethos of BHCHS recognised a problem and sorted it because that was the thing to do. Dreadfully late but I do thank them if they should read this.

Dick and I progressed and Dick became Head Boy, with me as a trusted assistant (prefect). However I avoided getting the cane, whereas Dick collected it again (despite being H.B.) for an excursion onto the roof. What a wimp I must have been. Anyway he became head of Hainault House and poor old Chigwell had to put up with me.

National Service was in full swing by the time we left school. We both ended up in the Air Force, Dick a Regular and a Navigator, and me a three year Policeman. Dick of course went to various countries and I went to West Ruislip (almost a foreign country in those days). But I did get picked to represent the RAF Police in the Coronation Parade. Dick - long distance, me just doing the march round the West End of London and back to Earls Court. I was indeed proud! We did marry (wives) and had three children (two boys and a girl) Our two elder boys went to University: Stephen (Dick's) went to Oxford, Guy (mine) to Edinburgh. The tentacles of BHCHS do stretch a long way. My son's “viva” for his botany degree at Edinburgh was conducted by none other than one Ted Cocking.

You can't legislate for that, or for the fact that that interviewer issued me with my first and perhaps only Prefect's Detention! C'est la vie!

**Old friends, new hobbies***Eddie Cook (1946-52)*

Thanks to *OB News* I met up again with an old school friend Les Hawkes. After a few hours in a local pub going through all our yesterdays, we tried to work out what we could do together. Les said he played golf. I didn't, so I decided to take lessons with our local professional, and after a while he said he would let me loose on the golf course. Since then, we have played on average twice a week. Les is without doubt a better player than me, but when it comes to cheating he is not in my class. I have also devised our own handicap system which sometimes leaves Les a bit puzzled. However well he plays he never seems to win.

Also, we have taken on a shared allotment. You will be pleased to know that our small shed is aptly named *OLD BUCKS*. Our regards to all who remember us.

**BHCHS Closure (2)***Don Gillard (Chemistry, 1958-60)*

What a stupid decision to close the old school, but then I know of others that were either closed or ruined by the ridiculous decision of the 60's to introduce comprehensive education. What a disaster that has been.

**Hiking Hell***Peter May (1960-67)*

Many thanks to Ian Hammond for bringing back those awful memories of the 1964 hiking 'holiday', and for the equally awful photo of me looking like some sort of zombie! I guess the photo kind of sums up how most of us felt at the time...exhausted, hungry and with badly blistered feet. I guess the photo was taken at the time we seemed to be hopelessly lost somewhere in the Black Forest. I honestly think that Messrs Clayton, Clapton and Franklin were genuinely worried but we, of course, maintained our faith in their ability to motivate us to soldier on and eventually find the next elusive hovel (sorry, hostel). Can anyone put names to the others in the pics? I have to admit that, apart from Ian Hammond and John LeVoi, I don't recognise any, although I think the mop-haired lad at the right of that photo may also have been called Hammond. A few things I do remember:-

- The aforementioned dunkel bier, a rather sweet brown stuff

**More Chemistry pranks***Graham Pearce (1952-59)*

The letter from Paul Rattenbury (*OB News* November 2009) concerning nitrogen tri-iodide reminded me of similar incidents during my time. We were studying science in the 6th form and were trusted in the chemistry laboratories. We used to make nitrogen tri-iodide (by adding iodine crystals to strong aqueous ammonia). We were never so bold as to use it at Speech Day, but used to spread it thinly along the corridors during lunch and morning breaks. The crackles and bangs as staff and pupils walked on it was well worth the effort. However, we had a salutary lesson in the hazards of chemicals. One of my pals had made a small amount of nitrogen tri-iodide and wrapped it wet in some foil and put it in his pocket to take home. That day we stayed after school to Chess Club and he without thinking perched on a bench next to a radiator. The nitrogen tri-iodide dried out and caught fire. He was quite badly burnt and off school for some considerable time. There must have been some sort of official enquiry into this incident, but I don't recall the outcome. Probably more restrictions were placed on the use of chemicals.

(but alcoholic, so who cared!).

- The hostel breakfasts, some rather stale brown stuff.
- The hostel bunk beds with blankets made of rough and rather smelly brown stuff which Mr Clapton pointed out (for those of us who were not studying German) were printed at one end with the word 'FUSSENDE' for a very good reason.

Some of the names of my old muckers that I do remember on the trip were Paul Vinson, Dave Withnall, Keith Taylor and possibly Peter Acland. The others, I admit, have probably escaped my memory for ever. Unfortunately I didn't take a camera on the trip (why add to the already ridiculously heavy rucksack with all the important stuff that dear mother insisted would be necessary).

Does anyone remember a much more relaxed school trip to Venice which I think was the previous year? I am sure I have some slides of that trip somewhere. I'll see if I can dig them out.

**ECHOES FROM THE PAST**

Thanks to all who sent further examples of things teachers said that stuck in the memory. There must be more gems waiting to be published, so please keep them coming.....

**Sidney Alford (1946)** writes....I recall that **FAS Scott**, who taught physics, like most teachers of the sciences, would occasionally get slightly stuck over the theory behind a Rule of This or a Theorem of That. To avoid having to risk struggling with an explanation which temporarily eluded him, he would substitute for the explanation which we needed to hear something more like "Quite clearly, A is necessarily larger than B". "Quite clearly" warned us that a rather tricky bit was coming up. I can hear him now, sixty years later.



Same teacher, but from a different generation. **Paul Rochester (1963)** remembers an announcement by FAS in assembly: "A left-hand football boot has been found in the locker room."

And I can't leave FAS without including his classic announcement that the sixth form were going to hold a discotheque. I have always wondered whether anyone explained the school's amusement with his pronunciation - "discotheek."



**John Batchelor (1952)** writes....For only one lesson I was in a class taught by **Harold Whiting**, deputising I think in my second or third year for Clem Barnett. As it was a one-off lesson he chose simply to discuss a poem - The Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens, about which I knew nothing then and little more now. As I began to doze off I vaguely heard Mr Whiting saying "...and Sir Patrick Spens had a premonition..." - followed very quickly to my great alarm:

"Batchelor, have you ever had a premonition? You should get one you know! Feed it on lettuce!"

**Steve Laird (1966)** remembers this comment from **Dave Stancer** on capturing Steve and a few of his friends smoking behind the bike sheds: "Gather round lads, we're having a party!"



Finally, two from **Simon Leefe (1971)**....



**John Loveridge** (on the cold current up the South American Pacific coast): "So that's Chillsville-on-Sea" and his mythical abode was always referred to as "Loverington Towers"

**John Barber:**

"Harper! Get

outside! And see me after school for slide rule practice."

**Coming Soon - A Significant Birthday**

The OBA is nearing 65 years of age, and as part of the celebrations our treasurer **Peter Sharp (1960)** has kindly offered to pull together all the archive material relating to the history of the Association. The first part will appear in the next edition. If you have anything which you feel should be included, please contact Peter at [ps.public@btinternet.com](mailto:ps.public@btinternet.com)

# Obituary

## Roy Webb

ROY WEBB (BHCHS 1940-45) was one of the early eminent athletes at BHCHS, setting several sprint records and playing a key part in relays races to help Roding House win the championship in 1943. He was also a competent footballer, playing for two consecutive seasons in the 1st XI. Like so many others of his generation, his schooling was interrupted by war, and after national service he entered employment with a shipping agency and spent most of his working life in various parts of West Africa as a Shipping Manager. Before leaving for Africa he played football for the Old Bucks, and kept in contact with the OBA throughout his time in Africa.

I had been particularly pleased to trace Roy, because he had lived next door to us in Meadway, Woodford Green when I was less than five. My parents had kept in contact with Roy, his wife Rose, and his mother when we subsequently moved away, and I re-



member him sending me stamps for my collection from exotic sounding countries.

I heard from Rose that he died in November 2009, after contracting leukaemia earlier in the year. Rose told me he had died very peacefully, surrounded by his family – two daughters and six grandchildren.

Graham Frankel

## Vivian Derwent



VIVIAN DERWENT (BHCHS 1946-51) passed away in March 2009 after an eighteen month battle with cancer. He was stoical to the end and his final concerns as ever revolved around his wife, Shelagh, and daughter, Vanessa and her family. Viv was an active member of the Old Bucks and the *Farmers* hockey club and was a good friend to the team members. For many years he lived in the North of England, first Yorkshire, then Derbyshire before finally settling in Lancashire where he supported Shelagh in her local council and county council political roles,

even though in his mind she represented the wrong party! Shelagh was Mayor of Pendle when he died and he would not let his condition impinge on her responsibilities. Viv was an active Samaritan for many years and his friends and colleagues in the service will miss him. With his dry wit he would have smiled when, at the start of his funeral service, his coffin clipped a low hung chandelier which swayed gently throughout the proceedings.

In his professional life Viv trained as a process engineer and became an expert in the paper making industry working for Honeywell, British Tissues and Smurfits before joining an engineering firm in Burnley where he used his expertise to help export British made machinery to the USA. In his latter years he was engaged by a USA paper making firm as a consultant.

Peter Lodge

## Ted Battershall

TED BATTERSHALL (BHCHS 1946-51) was a very good friend of ours and was my next door neighbour (living in Wansford Road, Woodford Green) all through my childhood. He had lived there since 1935 with his parents - my parents having moved in next door in 1938.

Ted attended Churchfields School (1939-46) as a child, moving on to Buckhurst Hill CHS after 11+ - with a brief interlude of evacuation during the War. His working life was spent in Shipping (apart from two years in National Service, 1953 -55) - with a firm called Alltransport from 1951 until 1982, then UPS from 1984 until

1995, when he took early retirement.

His great passion in life was Jazz and Big Bands - particularly Stan Kenton. He had a massive collection of records and CDs, which he has left to the Jazz Archive.

Ted had no immediate family - just several cousins -being unmarried and an only child. He was a quiet, unassuming man and sadly he had been in poor health for several years, and died of pneumonia on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009 aged 74.

Kathy Nixon

*Kathy is a former classmate of mine at Churchfields. I am grateful to her for this contribution - Ed.*

### Ken Simmonds - a postscript

I MISSED the announcement of Ken Simmonds' death (*OB News, May 2009*). I was so pleased to see that Ken Rimmer had picked it up and responded (*OB News, Nov 2009*). I can't add anything to his description of "Beaver" and his antics in school. My contact with him in school was on the cricket field and, out of school, through my brother Michael. He and Beaver were great friends and my main recol-

lection is of us going to Beaver's house to watch - on the Simmonds' TV (black and white) - the athletics battles between Vladimir Kuts of the USSR and Chris Chataway of Great Britain in the 1950s. Beaver was indeed an excellent wicket keeper and a great guy to have in the team, but not beyond reducing a bowler in mid run-up to a state of helpless laughter.

John Drake

### We have also learned of the following deaths...

**Peter Hodder (1938)** died in January 2010. A full obituary will appear in the next edition.

**John Denton (1939)** died in October 2009. He had suffered from MS since the age of 19 but had an active life until just a few weeks before his death. He lived in Christchurch and had been a member since 2006.

**Ivan Worth (1940)** died in May 2009. He lived in High Wycombe.

**Chris Gray (1942)** died in December 2009. He lived in Sheffield. Information from his brother John Gray (1941). An obituary will be published in the next edition.

**Frederick Perry (1942)** left BHCHS at 16 and served for two years National Service in the R.E.M.E. He was in Nairobi when he died as a result of a Rugby accident in 1960. Information from his cousin Dave Perry (1952).

**Michael Hollingsworth (1943)** Dr Michael Hollingsworth died in

August 2009 from cancer. He lived in Clevedon, Somerset. His older brother Geoffrey Hollingsworth (1939) died in about 1997.

**Canon Stuart King (1944)** died in December 2007. He lived in SE Cornwall and had spent most of his ministry in the Plymouth area following his ordination in 1960.

**Arthur Western (1947)** died in December 2009 from pneumonia. An obituary will appear in the next edition.

**Keith Bourne (1952)**. I had previously heard that Keith had emigrated to Norway and died some years ago. Dave Perry (1952) writes... it is believed that he went to Scandinavia somewhere and worked in the Logging Industry. It is also believed that he died many years ago.

**Graham Brown (1961)**. Dr Graham Brown died in November 2009. He had been suffering from colonic cancer. Information from Dr Bevis Miller (1961).