

OLD BUCKWELLIANS NEWS



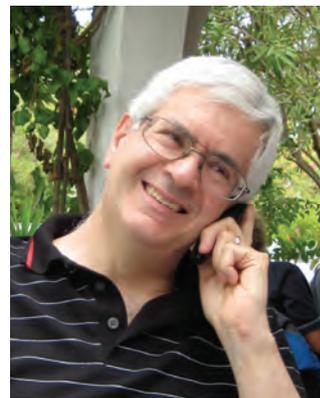
November 2008
Number 19

Significant Milestones

WE HAVE recently reached a couple of key milestones in the development of the network of Old Bucks. Firstly, and thanks to a suggestion from our new Chairman, we finally managed to arrive at the elusive target of 100% of pupils traced from one year group – those starting at BHCHS in 1973. Others are close behind - there are twenty year groups from which more than 90% have been traced. Secondly, we achieved our 2000th subscriber. I am delighted that so many have participated. I was pleased to hear from one of our members who had

come across the web site of another school (not in our area) claiming that “with a membership of around 700 we believe we are the largest society of ex-pupils outside the public school system.” Their subscription, by the way, is greater than ours by 230%. As usual, it has been tricky to include all the news and other items I received. The single page devoted to Arnold Smethurst seems inadequate. The interest taken by former staff of BHCHS has been fundamental to our success and growth, and Arnold Smethurst’s enthusiasm was typical. I had many more communications with him

during recent years than was ever the case while I was in the Art Room. After each edition he would write to me, and I would then phone to thank him for his letter. During these lively and stimulating exchanges it was apparent that his wicked sense of humour was undimmed by age. He would tell me many stories about his time at BHCHS – some would not be publishable. But he always remembered those pupils who showed artistic talent. Personally, I never possessed an ounce of artistic ability, so my recent interactions with him and others he inspired were, for me, a revelation.



Graham Frankel

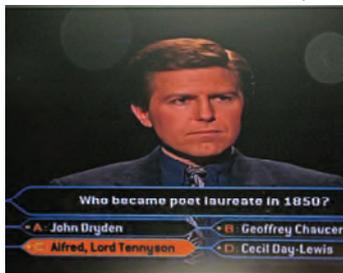


Who is the future meteorologist in this line up?

Answer p21



Major celebrations for Morris See p6



Millionaire Nigel? See p4



Tributes to an Old Master See p3



Still competing at 55 See p12



Can you recognise three Old Bucks here? (clue is YOS 1949)

Answer p18

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Meet the New Chairman



At the AGM in May the OBA moved into a new era with the appointment of **Dick Battersby (1962)** as Chairman. **Alan Woods (1962)** stood down after having served five years in the post. All the committee paid tribute to Alan for his dedication and loyalty to the school and the OBA. There was a proposal, unanimously agreed, to appoint both Alan Woods and **Malcolm Beard (1941)** as Hon. Vice Presidents in recognition of their dedicated and loyal service to the OBA. There was very little other business at the AGM. Reports given by both the treasurer and the secretary were read and unanimously accepted. We were grateful again to Mr Toor for allowing us to hold the meeting at GGSK. Attendance at the AGM was very low indeed, and probably reflects the fact that there was nothing particularly controversial to discuss. But the meeting is a potential opportunity for us to exchange and develop ideas, so we are keen to encourage a larger attendance next year. Distance is, of course, a problem for many, but it did not deter **Colin Overy (1953)** who joined us this year having travelled from Canada. If anyone would like to see a copy of last year's accounts and balance sheet, please contact treasurer **Chris Waghorn** at:

waggers.uk@ntlworld.com

So, what about our new Chairman? Dick Battersby is relatively new in the OBA, and has not previously served on the committee. Dick would not claim to have been among the sporting or academic elite at BHCHS. However, I was delighted when he agreed to stand for this position. Since getting to know him in the early days of the quest to trace former pupils, he has been a regular source of sound advice and ideas. He has demonstrated a very clear understanding and commitment to the principles of what we are trying to achieve and the committee looks forward to working with him.

After leaving BHCHS, Dick Battersby studied Production

Engineering at NELP, and became a Manufacturing Engineer at Roneo Vickers, implementing new products, facilities and systems. In 1983 he joined Chubb Guardall (later absorbed into the Racal group) as Manufacturing Manager. In 1990 he moved to Delta Design as Manufacturing Director, and was then appointed Managing Director and subsequently Chief Executive. Following a take over of the company earlier this year, Dick decided to form his own Business Solutions consultancy. In addition to a Diploma in Management Studies he also has an MSc in Occupational Behaviour from the University of East Anglia.

Dick lives in Epping, and enjoys music, driving, DIY and anything technical.



Dick writes.....

Let me begin by thanking Alan Woods for showing such commitment to the OBA over the last five years. During this time, the OBA has become increasingly active, and with Graham's unstinting help, has continued to grow. Alan will be a difficult act to follow, but I am honoured to be offered the position of Chairman, which I accept with great pride.

In joining the OBA committee, I am reminded that my place is just one quarter of a well-established and hard-working team, whose enthusiasm and commitment has to be admired. It will give me great pleasure to work with the committee in the future. Let me assure the membership that the committee is always receptive to your comments or ideas, and even a little constructive criticism where appropriate. Please feel free to participate in the running of your Association, and write to Graham at the usual address, or send either of us an Email. We will see what can be done.

Spring Edition: Did you get it?

WITHIN a few weeks of publication of the last edition, it became clear that there had been some problems with the mailing.

We had decided to entrust the mailing to our new printer. The first sign of trouble was when various overseas subscribers reported that the edition had failed to arrive. Our printer had sent the overseas editions using TNT (apparently this is not a dynamic mailing service). Soon after, it started to become apparent that many of the overseas editions had gone missing. While starting to mail out replacement copies, I decided to check with a random sample of UK subscribers. I was not pleased with the result of this check - apparently a large number of UK editions (they were sent by Royal Mail) had also failed to reach their destination.

We don't know what caused the problem or how many copies went missing. The Spring edition was sent out early in March and the cover is shown below.

If you failed to receive yours please contact me and I will send a replacement.

Finally, two important points:

1. Please remember to notify me of any data changes - addresses, phone numbers, email addresses. I prefer to receive these notifications by email and will always acknowledge them.
2. If you subscribed for five years you will be reminded (once only) when it is due to expire. Prompt renewal is much appreciated.

Graham Frankel



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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obsubs@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.

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Arnold Smethurst - A Gentle and Inspiring Talent

Tributes to Arnold Smethurst have poured in following the death of the iconic Head of Art at BHCHS. An inspiration to many, he was possibly unique in having taught all the pupils attending the school during more than two decades.

RICHARD ARNOLD SMETHURST was born in Manchester on 14th July 1912. After studying Art at the Manchester School of Art he became a Designer at Calico Printers, a large cotton company in Manchester. A manager there told him bluntly that he would never get anywhere in the cotton trade, and recommended a

Bernard Samways said he bore this responsibility lightly. The characters of the two men were very different. Arnold Smethurst's mischievous sense of humour was well known in the staff room. In class, he had the rare ability to motivate by example and by encouragement in equal measure. He also contributed significantly to the life of BHCHS. Not just by producing an endless supply of posters, signs and other graphic material, but also in a less conspicuous way. For example, he became the unofficial archivist, maintaining photographic records that fortunately survived the closure of the school and have

ing into his early 70s. Arnold Smethurst remained in contact with several of his former colleagues for many years, driving to staff reunions. He exchanged letters on a monthly basis with Bernard Samways until the latter's health deteriorated. His own health remained robust but the gradual failure of his eyesight was a source of great frustration to him. He did not let this hamper him unduly. On one occasion when I called to thank him for one of his many letters, Lily said to me: "you'll have to hang on a minute, he's up a ladder."

Arnold and Lily were pleased to receive visits from several

of his former pupils in recent years.

Arnold Smethurst died peacefully, at the age of 95 on 19th January 2008.

I am grateful for the many tributes. More will appear in the next edition.



Arnold and Lily Smethurst - a recent photograph taken by one of his former pupils from Ilford CHS

career in teaching. So he returned to the School of Art to take a Teaching Diploma. It was while he was there that he met Lily. They were married in 1942. The War delayed his new career, and he worked in the Fire Service. After the War he started applying for teaching posts and was soon appointed to his first position at Ilford CHS where he remained for three years. The Art Department there had two staff, and the attraction of moving to BHCHS, where he was in sole charge of Art, was apparent.

During his early years at BHCHS he was often mistaken for JH Taylor, the Headmaster. His long-standing colleague and friend

since become a valuable source of material.

He had a great interest in cars and driving - many will remember his Austin 7 being one of the earliest cars to appear regularly at school. His encyclopaedic knowledge of cars helped several staff members when they had problems with their vehicles, and he was also often used as a taxi service to help both staff and pupils. He continued driving until the age of 92.

Arnold's early retirement from BHCHS in 1970 was the start of a very happy time for the Smethursts, who moved to Colwyn Bay. He soon started teaching again, on a part time basis, at Llandrillo College. He continued teach-

Inspiring a Delinquent Martin Jordan (1955)

Earlier this year, when my wife told me that Graham Frankel had called me, I think I knew right then that it would be news about Arnold Smethurst. Arnold and Lily were on my mind because we hadn't had a Christmas card and letter from them which was most unusual. Always there was the letter in Arnold's strong and distinctive handwriting which didn't change in 50 years - I know this because with wonder I would compare it to the handwriting in my 1955-59 school reports. And indeed, his were the only words of praise on those incriminating pages.

Graham told me that Arnold had died peacefully and at the great age of 95. His was a kind and friendly presence for me at BHCHS where I had few friends among the staff. It probably didn't help that I got nicked for shoplifting in my second year and came within a whisker of being sent to Borstal. I stole only sweets that I used to share out among my friends. It didn't seem criminal until the day I found myself in court facing a trio of stern magistrates.

I felt a bit isolated after this incident because everybody knew I was a rogue, one of those louts from the Debden housing estate. But not so with Arnold Smethurst who was endlessly kind and encouraging, inspiring me with his skill, pushing me to develop my talents for drawing and painting. On my school reports, scattered among comments like '...he is glib, evasive, work-shy and lazy a bad influence, you must not blame others disruptive, nothing but failure awaits him a

troublemaker He is nothing more than a lazy scamp ... ' (this last one from Spud Taylor) shone remarks from Arnold in that strong distinctive handwriting '..... excellent work Exceptional natural ability ... hard-working and gifted' and so on.

But despite Arnold's best efforts, I was expelled from BHCHS before my fifteenth birthday. I suppose it was inevitable really and I missed none of the staff, I was glad to see the last of them, with the sole exception of Arnold.

Some years ago, when Graham was in the early stages of his extraordinary reuniting endeavour, Tanis and I visited Arnold and Lily at their home in Conwy and an enjoyable and memorable day it was. Here's a funny thing: in the 1950's Arnold was to me an elderly grey haired gentleman (when you're eleven, anybody over the age of 35 is elderly) and then, nearly half a century later, here was Arnold just the same, an elderly grey haired gentleman, exactly as I remembered him. That he remembered me from among the thousands of pupils he'd taught was amazing. That he remembered in detail events and incidents that I had long forgotten seemed near miraculous. After that meeting we maintained a correspondence and I keep and value the many letters he wrote to me.

Yes, I shall miss Arnold. He helped me carve out a successful career in art by inspiring me with confidence in my own ability. That's something only the very best tutors can do and I shall always think of him with warmth and gratitude.

BUCKS FIZZ

News and notes about Old Bucks

Exit to Egypt



After 21 years at Roche Pharmaceuticals, where he was Global Head of Clinical Pharmacology **Graham McClelland (1965)** has now left the company to take up an exciting new venture. He has accepted a position as Professor at the Faculty of Pharmacy at Ain Shams University in Cairo, where he will be setting up postgraduate courses in clinical research, based on the programme he helps run at the University of Surrey. This will be aimed at attracting students from throughout Africa. Graham will be living in Luxor, and thus becomes the first Old Buck (I think) to be based in Egypt, and we wish him success in this challenging project.

Clive Moves On



Clive Sparrow (1962) has joined Grant Thornton as a director in the government and infrastructure advisory team, having previously been director of a team at the Treasury working on staffing efficiencies in the Civil Service. Clive has extensive consultancy and business development experience and previously founded his own consultancy service - Pareto Management.

Wackett Near Million



Nigel Wackett (1975) had an excellent run in *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* a few years ago, and his feat was recently shown on a series of classic performances. Teacher Nigel walked away with a cool £125K. Possibly fearing begging letters from former class mates, teacher Nigel has remained untraced. The £250K question he decided not to attempt: Who became poet laureate in 1850: John Dryden, Geoffrey Chaucer, Alfred Lord Tennyson or Cecil Day-Lewis?

New Start for Mike



Mike Walker (1967) recently took voluntary redundancy from BT under their "Newstart" programme. The photo shows Mike (left) at his leaving celebrations with **John Glasscock (1967)**.

Down Under Branch

Since our report on the highly successful inaugural meeting of Old Bucks in Australia, several more have been traced Down Under. We have now found 94 in Australia - do I sense another target looming? **Stuart Low (1952)** the unofficial ringleader of the Old Bucks in Oz has been organising a further meeting of the group to take place in October or November. At the time of writing the plans are still being finalised - it could be a repeat of the harbour cruise or something equally enjoyable. If you expect to be in the Sydney area, or would like to join the party, please contact Stuart for further details:
slow2929@bigpond.net.au

Staff Reunion

It is several years now since the former staff of BHCHS had a reunion. Following a suggestion from Helen Price and some help kindly offered by Mavis Leach we now hope to organise something during the period February - March next year. Likely venue is Roding Valley High School.

We have already contacted staff who have email addresses to get an idea of the level of interest, but we need to hear from any others who would like to be informed of the arrangements. If you don't have email, or perhaps didn't receive my earlier message, and would like to register your interest, please call me on 01992 422246.

Bucks Collaborate



A new book has recently been published by **Graham Kings (1965)** who is Vicar of Islington. Offering a complete personal guide to spiritual growth, the book follows the seasons of the Christian year asking "the big questions" that arise at each season. *Signs and Seasons* was published by Canterbury Press. During the publication process Graham discovered that the Production Manager at Canterbury Press was **Stephen Rogers (1966)**. Although these two Old Bucks were not in the same year group, Stephen had remembered that they both sat their Oxbridge entrance examinations in the school library at the same time - which was apparently a year when the school achieved a record for the number of Oxbridge entrants. Stehen (see below) has worked in publishing since graduating in History from Trinity College, Cambridge.



Not our Steve

Headline spotted recently in the *Daily Telegraph*: **Top Head Warns Against Woolly Teaching**. This was merely a reaction to proposed curriculum changes and nothing to do with **Steve Woolley (Physics 1978-89)** who, as far as I am aware, is still teaching successfully at Bancrofts.

Old Boys Still Hockeying



Dick Thomas (1958) writes....Nearly 40 years after the Old Bucks Hockey Club bulled off into the sunset, several stars of the club from the 1950s and 60s were in Ramsgate in April with the touring side The Farmers. Geoff Gosford and wife Josie journeyed back from their home in Spain, and Frank Hardy raced from judging at the Harrogate Flower Show to take part in the first game, a 6-5 thriller against local side Cliftonville. **Bob "Flasher" Harris (1957)** and younger brother **Paul Harris (1961)** also played, while **John Dockett (1955)** umpired. The latest meeting of The Farmers Golf Society was hosted by **Pete Lodge (1953)** at Gosfield Lake Golf Club near Braintree at the end of June. Congratulations to **Frank Hardy (1952)** who has been selected to play for the England over 65 hockey team in the Grand Masters Hockey World Cup in China. All former Old Buck hockey players are welcome at the annual Farmers Christmas Drink, Tuesday 16th December at The Penderel's Oak pub in High Holborn, London, from 1pm onwards. The photo shows some of the players at the Ramsgate event. From left to right: Bob Harris, Francis Hallsworth (not OB), Dick Thomas, Frank Hardy, Paul Harris.

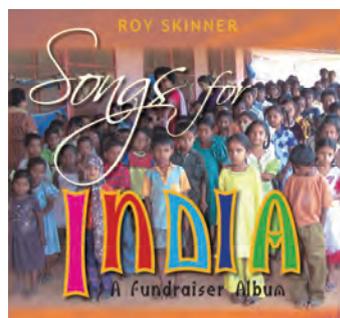
Married at 72½



Martin Westbrook (1961) writes..... I am pleased to report what I guess may be a record. Is **Jeff Blunt (1946)** the oldest Old Buck to get married? At the age of 72½ he married Beryl Turnell in November 2007 at Princes Road Evangelical Church, Buckhurst Hill. The service was conducted by **Duncan Vere (1940)**. Both Beryl and Jeff had lost their previous spouses: Beryl in 1972 (leaving her to raise three young children single-handed) and Jeff in 2005. Jeff was a Youth Group leader at the Church in the 50s and early 60s. I kept in touch with him when he moved to Leicester to continue his career with General Accident as Regional Manager, East Midlands and also to become Pastor at the local Baptist Church. Various of the couple's children (now adults, of course) took part in the service. Also participating was my wife Helen, whose brother is **Mike Ferrante (1979)** and whose brother-in-law is **Brian Routledge (BHCHS 1970)**.

Songs for India

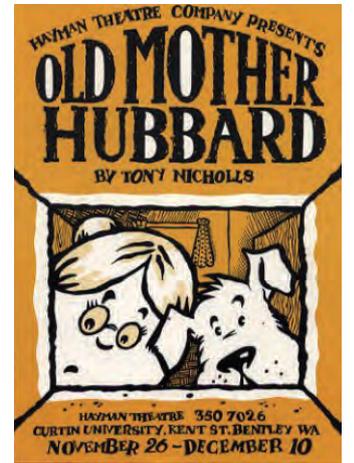
As mentioned in the last edition **Roy Skinner (Physics 1970-78)** has produced a CD in aid of a school in Goa. This CD has now been released. Another Old Buck was also involved in the making of this excellent and worthy CD: **Jamie Dalton (1985)**, member of 9 Eye, features on two of the tracks playing guitar solos. Jamie's father Johnny Dalton also played a major role in the recording and production. Earlier this year, Loyola School in Goa, which benefits from the proceeds of this effort, receives no support from the Indian government because it has lessons in English rather than the local language. Earlier this year Roy and his wife visited the school and presented them with a cheque for \$3,000. Copies of the CD may still be available. Contact Roy at: skinners@smartchat.net.au



Busy in Tasmania



Tony Nicholls (1956) has moved from Perth to Hobart, Tasmania after retiring from Curtin University, where he was Senior Lecturer in Performance Studies. Tony remains very busy in the world of theatre and recently his script of *Old Mother Hubbard* (see below) was published by Samuel French and has received excellent reviews. An earlier version of Tony can be seen in the BHCHS Dining Hall (p6). Tony commented that it was curious to think that he first saw the caption competition photo while sitting on a balcony about as far away as one can get from BHCHS and staring out towards Antarctica.



Brian Harper



I was sorry to hear that as a result of major surgery **Brian Harper (1971)**, who is a celebrated trumpet and cornet player (see *OB News May 2002*) has had to give up playing. Brian now hopes to concentrate on conducting and adjudicating. We wish him well.

BMW Merges with Mercedes!



Congratulations to **Nigel Morris (1977)** on his marriage to Philippa in May 2008 at Felsted Church. The happy couple are both Senior Business Managers: Nigel works for Sytner, the BMW dealership in Harold Wood and Philippa is at Mercedes Benz in Southend. I understand that the rivalry between them is friendly, but it could mean a difficult choice ahead for any future offspring. And in fact Nigel tells me that they are expecting their first to be born in December.

Nigel's brother **Andrew Morris (1978)** travelled over from Baltimore to be at the wedding and is seen on the front page with their father **Brian ("Buzz") Morris (1940)**. Buzz, as many readers will know is a former governor of BHCHS and was also, for many years, treasurer of the OBA. He has not been in good health recently and we wish him all the best.

Fair Exchange

Ron Colvin (1941) recently sent me an account of his National Service adventures in Lubeck and elsewhere. Written for one of his grandchildren this gives a fascinating insight into the economics and social regime of daily life in the RAF. A memento from Ron's experiences was a wooden plaque (see below) which was made for him by a sculptor in Lübeck – in exchange for two packets of cigarettes. If you would like to read the full account I will gladly send or email you a copy (no need to send cigarettes!)



I received another amazing set of memoirs, from a similar era, from **Ron Jones (1940)** who later became a writer and journalist. Ron does not plan to publish them, but is happy to take enquiries.

A Priceless Collection

The first eighteen editions of *Old Buckwellians News* resulted in 412 pages and 438,578 words! I now have the complete collection in a single file which I assembled mainly to help me in various ways. Having a fully searchable file means, for example, that I can easily check those of you who have not yet got round to telling me what you have been doing since BHCHS. If anyone is interested in receiving the entire collection on CD just let me know and I will send it. Emailing it is not an option, by the way, because of the file size.

There is no charge to subscribers, but you are welcome to make a donation or contribution to p&p if you wish. The file is in PDF form – as you may be aware, the software to read this type of file is free and easily available provided you have access to the internet. If you want printed versions of any back numbers these are all still available – see information on page 2.

In referring to this collection I do not mean to imply that the task is complete. I hope we will reach at least a million words before running out of steam.

**Caption Competition
£25 Prize!**



A scene on the playing fields of BHCHS from the 70s provides our challenge for the caption competition this time. This was an overnight camp organised by Nigel Pink, who provided the photo. Send your entries to the Editor by 31st December and you could be the winner of a £25 prize, kindly donated again by Malcolm Beard.

The photo chosen for our last competition again proved to be tough. Not helped, I suppose, by the fact that nobody is obviously saying anything. Thanks anyway to the thirteen brave people who submitted an entry. I can assure readers that there was absolutely no bias from the judges in their unanimous declaration of our new Chairman, **Dick Battersby**, as the worthy winner (the judges do not know the identity of the entrants before making their decision!) Dick's immediate and understandable reaction was to donate his prize to charity. His caption is shown below, and the panel felt that the variations on a famous line from *Oliver Twist* didn't quite match the winning entry.

For the record, the 5th form diners in 1961, clockwise from the left, were: Max Weaver, Gordon Waite, Peter Whitby, Roger Sansom, Richard Mynott, Tony Nicholls, Robin Thomas.



Having confirmed by empirical test that white custard has the expected thixotropic properties of a non-Newtonian fluid, the lower 6th science group cautiously awaits a return volley.....

Many Hands Make Pianos Work



The full line up of talent at Chingford: (l to r) John Rippin, Geoffrey Pratley, Terence Atkins, Don Ray, Tessa Wright, Samuel Bardsley, Nicholas Reading
Photograph Howard Rootkin

The annual piano recital given at Chingford by **Don Ray** and **John Rippin** (between them head of Music at BHCHS from 1951 until 1978) has been a popular local attraction for many years. This year's event was very special and a departure from the norm. The two maestros decided to involve a group of talented pianists to join them, resulting in a delightful evening of virtuosic contortions in which some of the items were being played (still on two pianos) by twelve hands. Many of the pieces were well-loved showpieces that had been painstakingly arranged by John Rippin, who entertained the audience not just by his playing but by his inimitable and amusing insights into the programme.

What made the evening really special for the many Old Bucks in the audience was that John and Don's guests included two of their most talented former pupils at BHCHS, both of whom have gone on to careers as professional musicians and teachers. **Geoffrey Pratley (1951)** has been one of the UK's leading accompanists, working for many years with Dame Janet Baker, Paul Tortelier, and Ralph Holmes. Currently professor of music at Trinity College London he is much in demand as accompanist, adjudicator, teacher and arranger. **Terence Atkins (1958)** has been organist and choirmaster at St John the Baptist Parish Church in Barnet for more than 30 years. He is also regularly performs recitals in other locations

and is a teacher and accompanist at all the leading London music colleges. The other performers were also talented, even if their connections with BHCHS have not been verified.

These recitals are always held in aid of the East Anglia Children's Hospices, a charity that runs hospices in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire. The proceeds from this concert broke all records and the evening raised £1,525.

John Rippin tells me that they are planning that next year's concert will include at least four pianists - and the date is set for Saturday 24th January. Contact the Editor for further details.

Camera for Hire



Film-maker **Ben (Steven) Cole (1971)** is very proud of his new toy: *The Red Camera*, a 12 million pixel Raw 4:4 uncompressed prime lens movie camera. If anyone is interested to borrow it, this can be arranged at £500 per day. Possibly special rates for Old Bucks?

Brilliant Arranger

I am grateful to **Roy Skinner** for the following.....I was in Sydney last week on a visit and whilst there took in the show *Billy Elliott* which has come over to Oz from UK. On thumbing through the programme (see extract below) I noticed that all the music had been arranged by **Martin Koch (1969)**, whom I remembered instantly from BHCHS as a brilliant musical student.

I will never forget Martin's prowess on trombone and the comment from the Royal College of Music adjudicator in John Rippin's perennial musical showcase after he played a very difficult piece. I think it was something like: "How long did it take you to learn that?", then: "I don't think I could play it as well as that"

I think Martin was in the 4th or 5th form at that time.

I also remember Martin Koch's arrangement of a medley of Beatles tunes that he played on piano, which was also brilliant.

Isn't it great to see a student I used to teach doing so well some 30 years later?!

Last Survivor?

I was delighted to receive a lively letter from **Walter May** recently. He would like to know whether, at the age of 98, he is the most senior Old Buck. I think I can reassure him on that score. Many pupils from the 1940s will remember Walter May (seen in the photo below in 1946) as a charismatic but very tough French teacher at BHCHS from 1940 until 1947. See Keith Madgwick's article on p24 for more about Mr May.



MARTIN KOCH

Musical Supervisor and Orchestrations

Martin was a Scholar at the Royal College of Music London.

Musical Director *Chicago* (Cambridge Theatre); *Pirates of Penzance* (Drury Lane Theatre); *Blondel* (Aldwych Theatre); *The Boyfriend* (Albery Theatre); *Follies* (Shaftesbury Theatre); *Les Miserables* (Barbican and Palace Theatres); *Miss Saigon* (Drury Lane Theatre).

Musical Supervisor *Les Miserables* (London and worldwide); *Miss Saigon* (London and worldwide); *Cats* (New London Theatre); *Just So* (Tricycle Theatre); *Moby Dick* (Piccadilly Theatre); *Which Witch* (Piccadilly Theatre); *Oliver!* (Palladium Theatre and UK Tour); *Martin Guerre* (UK Tour); *Mamma Mia!* (London and worldwide) and *Billy Elliot* (London)

Recording Over thirty albums as producer or orchestrator (twenty-one gold, and six platinum) among these are the original recordings of *Les Miserables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Oliver!*, *Les Miserables* - Symphonic Recording, *Hey Mr Producer*, *Mamma Mia!* (Grammy nomination) *Jerry Springer The Opera* and *Billy Elliot The Musical*.

Orchestration *Just So*; *Moby Dick*; *Tutankhamun*; *Which Witch*; *Mamma Mia!* (Tony Award nomination); *Jerry Springer The Opera* (winner of the Olivier, Evening Standard, Critic's Circle and What's On Stage awards for Best Musical); *Billy Elliot The Musical* (winner of the Olivier, Evening Standard, Critic's Circle and What's On Stage awards for Best Musical) and *Desperately Seeking Susan*. Martin has orchestrated for many international Orchestras and a wide variety of solo artists ranging from Shirley Bassey to Damon Albarn and has just finished orchestrating five Operas by Richard Thomas commissioned by the BBC.

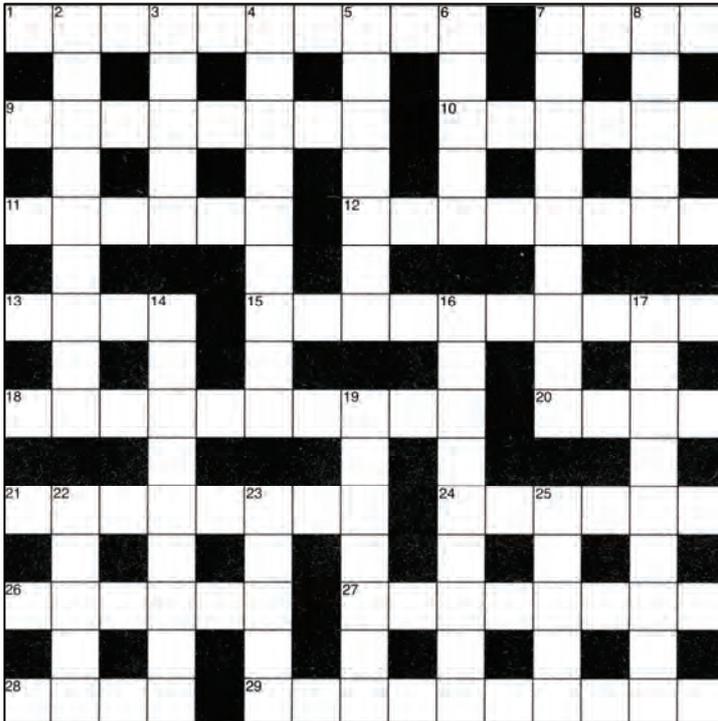
Martin runs a music production company and recording studio which has undertaken numerous television, album and DVD projects. www.kochandgilpin.co.uk



OB NEWS CROSSWORD

No.12 "The "F" Word" By Mike Ling

The answers to each asterisked clue are connected, and relate to the title



ACROSS

DOWN

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Principled (10) | 2 Complicity (9) |
| 7* Singing F? (4) | 3 Customary (5) |
| 9* F to have difficulties? (8) | 4 Sabotage (9) |
| 10 Has net capital arrangement (6) | 5 Rower (7) |
| 11 May play Reveille or the Last Post (6) | 6 Hindu teacher (5) |
| 12 Repast at the Captain's table? (4,4) | 7 Monstrous creatures (9) |
| 13* Compiler F? (4) | 8 The cassia tree (5) |
| 15 Original or inventive (10) | 14 Dynamo (9) |
| 18 Not planned (10) | 16 Indispensable guide (4,5) |
| 20* Unaccompanied F (4) | 17 They help servers achieve net results! (9) |
| 21 Can be treated with a trip to the theatre! (8) | 19 Chinatown? (7) |
| 24* Bad hair F? (6) | 22* Settle F? (5) |
| 26 Her wit makes one squirm (6) | 23* Guitarist F? (5) |
| 27 Figure out what he priced (8) | 25 Feature of a coat or jacket (5) |
| 28* Cleaner F?(4) | |
| 29 Simplistic artist (10) | |

Solution on page 27

Photo ID

The 1959 OBA Football photo (see right) published in the last edition caused some interesting email exchanges in our attempts to put names to some of the subjects not previously identified by **Alan Webb (1947)** who sent me the photo. I think we have concluded that the Woody Allen character at the back is **Dickie Barham (1938)**. In the middle row the person at the left is **Terry Bowden (1942)**.



Gym'll Fix It

In these photos of BHCHS gymnastics teams it is interesting to see the variations in how the agile subjects were arranged. Many readers will recognise Ted Moore (1954) in the 1957 photo - second row from top on the right. Ted, of course, went on to become Head of PE at BHCHS from 1965-71. Chris Pipkin (1970), who sent me the 1971 photo (and is seated at the right), commented that he did not think David Beckham's various modelling contracts were under immediate threat. The contortionist in 1977 is Paul Stevens (1976). Paul confirms that he can't quite manage the splits these days.....

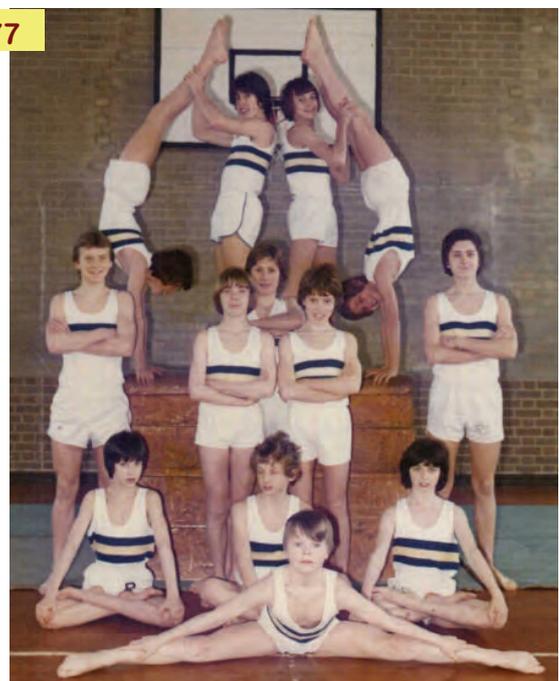
1957



1971



1977



Motoring to Success

By Julian Bowen (BHCHS 1957-64)



MY school years were not the happiest ones of my life. Although I ended up with a reasonable number of O Levels and one A Level in French, I entered the big wide world ill equipped to forge my way into a meaningful career. Not the fault of the school, you understand, but simply that my rebelliousness and laziness had failed to mature into anything more worthwhile. My companions at that time were Michael Johnson and his brother Paul, together with John Dunne, Doug Baker and a few others whose names now escape me.

With the intention of attempting to reach University I then spent a year at the Walthamstow Tech to re-sit the A Levels that I had failed. I passed a further one, but, by then being heartily sick of education in general, decided that University was not for me. Having some sort of aptitude for French, I decided to further improve my languages by seeking work in Germany. I eventually found a job as a mechanic in Frankfurt, living in a very old, cold caravan in the yard. The majority of the other mechanics were Italian, which meant that I learnt passable Italian during the day and interesting German at night with a succession of Frauleins. The Hauptbahnhof in Frankfurt was the rendezvous on Sunday afternoons to buy the latest British newspapers and shoot the breeze with friends. I was still unsure of the direction my life should take, and I seemed to be inexorably heading towards the teaching profession, the career of both my father and my sister. Then, among the supplements at the back of the Observer I came across a life changing advertisement for an Export Marketing course in High Wycombe, inviting applications from linguistic post graduates. Nothing ventured, nothing gained – I applied. Although I had never been near a university in my life, the fact that I made my application from Germany and that I impressed with my oral French at

interview, led to them offering me a place; I was on my way! It was a three year full time course split between languages and commerce with study tours at overseas universities including Vienna, Fontainebleau, Helsinki and Bremen. I was in my element, eventually receiving the top award for my year.

During my time at High Wycombe College, I did various projects for local furniture companies, which led eventually to my career in the furniture industry. At the end of the course one of these companies, Evans of High Wycombe, offered me the position as Export Manager. Salary £1000 pa, and, most important, a company Escort estate, in which I quickly set off round Europe, sample in the back. The job came to an untimely end, after only 14 months, when the factory burnt down in a disastrous fire. Not before I had opened up sales in Scandinavia, France, Germany, Italy and, of all places, Russia. This last achievement led to lots of publicity – I had become the first person to sell upholstery to Russia from the West and I developed friendships in Moscow that exist to this day. The back page of the Telegraph, the front page of the local rag, complete with photograph and caption headed “22 year old globe trotter Mr Julian Bowen” each ran reports of my success. Which led to the ultimate accolade – being interviewed by Jack De Manio for the *Today* programme. Fame at last?

I was then lucky enough immediately to be offered another job as Export Manager, this time for Chippy Heath Furniture Limited, also in High Wycombe, with a company Maxi and £1500 pa. By now married to Roz with serious big time responsibilities like mortgages and savings, this job lasted 9 years during which I built exports to about 60% of sales, opening markets in 34 countries including Japan, Iceland and Saudi Arabia. These were my formative years. I was working for an extremely paternalistic couple who owned the business and insisted on supervising and paying for the purchase of my suits and provided me later with an MGB GT as my company car. Providing, of course, that I coached their kids in French when time permitted. I was continually travelling the world, both by car (Europe) and aeroplane. I achieved fame yet again in the national press when three of us, on our way back from Japan after an ex-

hausting six weeks promoting our respective company's products, did a streak on a Jumbo Jet directly over the North Pole. It was British Airways' inaugural flight over the pole from Tokyo to London and we were the first to perform this fashionable antic. The Captain was so delighted he sent us each a further bottle of champagne and alerted the press to meet us at Heathrow. Photographs and stories then appeared in the following day's newspapers. Try explaining that to your newly wedded wife!

After 9 years with Chippy I found myself getting fidgety again. They had made me a Director at 27 years of age and there was really nowhere further to go in that organisation. I was headhunted by a much larger furniture producer – Rest Assured, makers of beds and mattresses – to become their Export & Contract Sales Manager. Lots more money and a Lancia, but they required me to move to Nottingham, where I remain today. By now my son, Jonathan Paul was 3 years old and my wife, a teacher, quickly found a new job in the Nottingham area. In some respects it was a good move – property was cheaper and we finally indulged our fantasy to live in an old 17th Century inn. Travelling slowed down - Rest Assured's products were only suitable for export to Anglophile countries and they were unprepared to change product ranges to meet differing tastes. So I concentrated on the Contract aspects of the job. Veneered car fascias and wooden door cappings were fascinating for me and I was involved in the 'top secret' development of wooden interiors for the Rover SD1, the Maxi, the Cortina and various other models of European and British origin. Five years on I was very proud to negotiate and clinch the biggest order the Company had ever received when I won the contract to refurbish all 6000 rooms in the Crest Hotel chain. I felt confident enough to request a meeting with the Chairman of the Group and ask for a Directorship. I knew my days were numbered when he replied that the company did not appoint Directors under the age of 40, so I resigned on the spot! Over the following weekend I was offered an Export Directorship of another furniture company, Grosvenor International in Grantham, the birthplace of Margaret Thatcher. A Daimler Sovereign this time – going up in the world! It was only a brief stay of 12

months however – my father suffered a severe stroke, and I wanted to find a job near Buckhurst Hill so that I could live with him Monday to Friday, returning to my family at weekends.

I soon found a job as Sales Director for Abbeycraft Furniture at Waltham Abbey, which was near enough to my father to be practicable. For obvious reasons however, my heart wasn't in it, and as soon as Dad died, about 12 months later, I sought alternative employment nearer Nottingham. I needed to curtail my overseas travel and catch up with my son's childhood. I sought a position that was allied to the Furniture Industry but did not involve so much travelling. I responded to an anonymous advertisement in the Telegraph, was interviewed by the headhunters and was appointed Buyer of Kitchens, Bedrooms and Furniture at Texas Homecare based at Eaton Socon on the A1 just south of Peterborough. A long daily drive, but manageable.

I started travelling again more than ever. At that time in the early eighties pine was becoming popular again and I picked up old contacts in Russia, Denmark, and Rumania from my exporting days. Dining suites were coming from northern Italy, desks from Gdansk, chests and robes from Denmark and Poland. A retail company the size of Texas was a big mouth to feed – my spend was £50M per annum, which is an awful lot of pine chests! It was fun for a while, but when they wanted me to move to Head Office in London the travelling became very tedious – 240 miles a day! I could not contemplate moving the family again – my son was well established at Nottingham High School and my wife was doing well in her own career. So when I returned from a trip to Poland late one evening and saw a circular on the notice board announcing that the company was being sold to Ladbroke's, and that any requests for redundancy would be dealt with generously because Ladbroke's felt that Head Office was top heavy. I put my hand up and volunteered. My resignation was accepted and I was bundled off the premises in a matter of two hours with a cheque for £6000 and free use of the company Cavalier for six months. It felt strange going home without a job. The wife was not pleased.

By next morning I had it all sorted! I would become a self employed

Julian Bowen Limited



Keeler Chair, Maple £9.95
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Naked ambition? Julian Bowen models one of his products, based on the iconic Christine Keeler (see below for the original version)



agent selling for overseas furniture manufacturers into the British retail furniture trade. I spent the weekend phoning all my contacts in Italy, Denmark and Russia. By Monday morning I was on the road with six agencies under my belt! Luckily they all wanted to support me. I quickly became a specialist in supplying the 'sheds' directly from overseas by full trailer load. Commission was duly paid by the overseas manufacturer and I began to supply some of the biggest names on the out of town retail parks, which were springing up like daffodils in spring time. I built up sales of £25M very quickly – I had found a new métier, and the money came tumbling in! So much so that we spent Christmases in the Carib-

bean and bought a new house with a ground floor Grannie flat that would serve as my office. Life was rosy. Too good to be true, it turned out.

Roz left me. My continual long absences overseas had taken their toll on our relationship I'm afraid and, over the years, we had drifted apart, she becoming, if anything, more devoted to academia, and me, more commercially orientated than ever. The split was amicable – we purchased a flat for her by selling our house in the South of France, and Jonathan, now 16, elected to remain with me. I learned to cook, sew, wash and iron remarkably quickly and Jonathan went on to gain a place at Pembroke College Cambridge.

The country was now entering the recession of 1992 and my major customers were waking up to the fact that, now times were harder, they were locking up a lot of their working capital in warehouse stock. They no longer wanted trailer loads of furniture into their central depots; they wanted deliveries round each store like a bus service.

I signed over my house to the bank, and bought two 7.5 ton trucks and leased a 7500 sq ft warehouse to enable me to import furniture in my own name then sell and distribute it to the furniture retailers. I set up

Julian Bowen Limited, going out in the mornings, getting the orders, and loading the trucks in the afternoons. Often I drove the trucks as well in the early days. The company was an immediate success – our first year's sales were £1M and we even made a small profit. Another chapter in both my business career and my private life was about to start.

Despite numerous offers to sell off some of the shares to outside investors, I resolutely refused them all, preferring to run the business as an owner manager. However, a couple of years later, when I decided to start designing and purchasing furniture from Brazil, who wanted paying by Letter of Credit, I was in need of financial assistance. The bank agreed, but with the proviso that I would pay for and co-operate with, an audit undertaken by a large firm of Accountants of their choice to make sure that there were no 'porky pies' in my version of the company's projected needs.

The accountant arrived and spent a whole week going through my business plan with me in great detail. I quite enjoyed it. She was extraordinarily pretty and was a fully qualified Chartered Accountant with a degree in Finance from Nottingham University. She wrote her report and I got the extension to the overdraft that I was seeking. She joined the business a couple of years later. Ann and I are still together after 15 years. She is now Financial Director of the company and a 50% shareholder. She is now suggesting making an honest man of me at last. How can I resist after such a long courtship?

The business became fantastically successful, beyond our wildest dreams. The turnover shot from £1M then to £20M today, becoming major

other bedroom and dining ranges. We are now purchasing 100 40' containers a month from sources as diverse as Brazil, Lithuania, Croatia, Ukraine, Vietnam, China and Malaysia, each source being a specialist in the production of individual furniture products. We have recently opened our own Offices in Ningbo, China, and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, staffed by our own employees whose chief responsibility is to progress chase and operate effective quality control disciplines.

Despite the current downturn Julian Bowen Limited is experiencing unprecedented increases in demand – sales are up 30% so far in 2008. We will be making decisions shortly about increasing the size of our current 100,000sq ft warehouse to cope with a predicted huge increase in sales. Any interested Old Buckwellians passing by Junction 28 on the M1 are welcome to pop in for a coffee and a chat!

Life has not been all hard work however. I tried golf, but was a dismal failure – I seldom hit the ball. So, these days, I indulge myself in classic cars, the resumption of a childhood interest that I was financially unable to satisfy in earlier years. The collection at the moment, in date of production order, is as follows: 1931 Wolseley Hornet Special, 1932 MG Magna F Type with Q Type Brooklands body, 1953 Jaguar XK 120 Fixed Head Coupe, 1957 Austin Healey 100/6, much modified for endurance rallying, and a further 1959 Austin Healey Mk 1 3000, a light weight aluminium bodied version for hill climbing during the coming season. I managed to win the XK Hill Climb Challenge in the XK a couple of years ago and the endurance Healey has accompanied me



One of Julian's Austin Healeys at the start of the Ocean City rally

suppliers to Marks and Spencer, Bensons, Dreams, Sleepmasters, House of Fraser and Next, with more than 2000 customers from John O'Groats to Penzance, from Spain and Portugal to Eire and the Shetland Islands. The UK and Eire is serviced by a fleet of 18 of our own liveried trucks, and we distribute 15,000 beds a month alongside our

on a return trip across the States and then, another year, across Patagonia and the Straights of Magellan to Tierra del Fuego, returning via the Pacific coast of Chile and Paraguay into Brazil, returning via Uruguay to Argentina and the boat home!

I've led a very busy and fulfilled life to now and I can't wait to see what's going to happen next!

Heirs to the Thrown

OUR REVIEW OF athletics at BHCHS now moves from track to field. Establishing a perspective of throwing events is more challenging than reviewing the track races. It is difficult to ascertain how much consistency existed in the items being thrown. Certainly there were some changes over the years both in weights and in material, particularly

the Southern Junior Champion in 1945 with a throw of 178ft 3in. Brian's best throw at sports day was in 1943 when he set a record of 149ft 5in. This was beaten, three years later, by **John Read (1941)** with a throw of 158ft 9in. Another three years went by before **Roy Penny (1942)** added almost 20 feet to the record with an impressive 177ft 10in. Roy Penny's 1949 record



Brian Tarlton

in the junior events. I shall concentrate my attention, therefore, on the senior level, and mainly during the period 1946 – 1970. During this time, I believe the equipment used was reasonably standard, and also - just as important - I have fairly complete records of the results.

Javelin

Surprisingly there were only three record holders in the senior event. In the early days of BHCHS **Brian Tarlton (1938)** was the outstanding javelin thrower. Brian's best performances - partly because of injury - were not at the school sports days. He was Essex Junior Champion in 1942, 1943, and 1945 and became

remained unsurpassed in the rest of the school's history. Most of the winners of the senior javelin failed to get within 30 feet of Roy's distance. **Colin Holst (1955)** deserves a mention - he came closest to the record in 1962 with a throw of 173ft 6in. Colin also had the distinction of winning the O15 event three years in succession.

Shot

By complete contrast to the javelin, records in the senior shot put tumbled much more frequently. **Sid Bryett (1938)**, whose feats we covered in earlier chapters, was the early champion. But the first time a 12lb shot was used in the senior event was when **Derek Boone**



Athletics Team 1948-49. Roy Penny is 4th from the left, front row. Michael Cooper is at the far right of the back row.

(1941) won the event in 1946 with a throw of 33ft 3in. Four of the following five years saw new records set, finishing in 1951 when **Michael Cooper (1944)** threw 38ft 7½in. This record survived until 1958 when **John Drage (1952)** achieved 40ft 3in only to beat his own record in the following year by throwing 40ft 10in. This was followed by a further record in 1965 when **Ian Sylvester (1959)** achieved 43ft 5½in. Finally, one year later, the supreme shot putter of BHCHS emerged when **John Smallbone (1959)** threw 46ft 11½in, a record that remained undefeated. In subsequent years, nobody managed a throw of more than 40ft.

Discus

The discus event also saw some early records by Sid Bryett, but the starting point for our perspective is 1945 when a new, heavier, discus was used for the first time. **William Taylor (1938)** threw 104ft 0in and his record remained intact until 1953, when **Geoff Gosford (1947)** achieved 110ft 3in. Just two years later **Alan Wilson (1949)** pushed the record up to 113ft 10in. Then followed a sequence of records in the subsequent four years. **Michael Alcott (1950)** won the event in two successive years finishing with 119ft 8½in, and then, in 1958, the outstanding athlete **David Morris (1951)** achieved a distance of 126ft 11in. In 1959, **Ian Terry (1952)** threw 130ft 0½in which stood unbeaten as far as I can tell.

It seems that the athletic

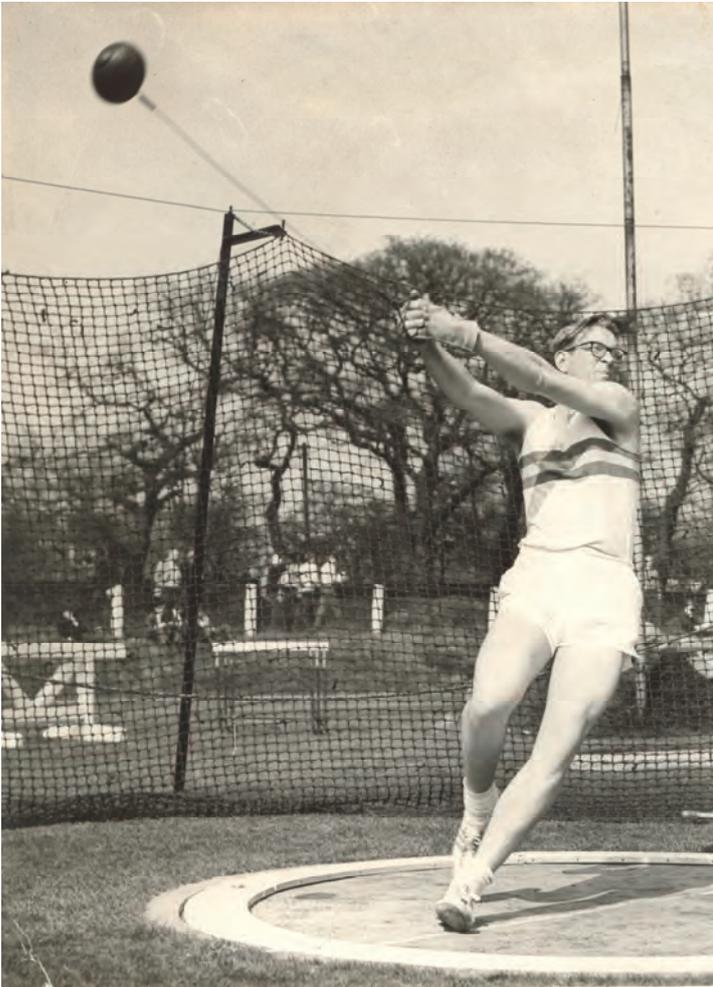
achievements of BHCHS in its first twenty years were stronger in track than in field events. Apart from the exceptional javelin throwing of Brian Tarlton there seemed to be little success in throwing events at inter-school and in the representative arena. In 1959, Chris Chapman, athletics captain commented: "The main weakness proved to be in the throwing events and it is hoped that an improvement will be forthcoming." Sadly, Chris died in 1998 and he may not have known that his words turned out to be curiously prophetic.

Hammer

Despite having been an Olympic event since 1900, hammer throwing was not, at the time of Chris Chapman's comment, in the range of events offered at BHCHS. Roger Webb, head of PE, was well aware that adding hammer to the repertoire would improve the chances of BHCHS being successful in external competitions. Was it a lucky chance, or was it a cunning prescience that caused him to remark to Peter Aston in 1960: "Why not try hammer throw-



Don Hines putting the shot at the 1945 Sports Day



Peter Aston in 1963: first 200ft throw by a Junior at the AAA Championships

ing? We have got no-one to represent Forest Division at the County Championships, and if you can tell me you can throw the qualifying distance of 114 ft, I will put you in the team." Could he have possibly predicted that Peter would eventually achieve a hammer throw of more than 204 ft?!

Peter Aston did not have an auspicious start to his athletics career at BHCHS. He recalls that in his first school cross country run in 1956 he had finished 127th out of 140. But Peter showed the dogged persistence that would later lead him to success. Two years later his position had improved to 19th and in the following year he was chosen to represent the school in middle distance events. Another key development for Peter was that he joined Woodford Green AC, where he was coached by two Old Bucks – **Derek Hayward (1947)** and **Ron Bowden (1940)**. After just one week's guidance from Ron, he had made the qualifying distance. At the County Championships, three weeks later, Peter threw a record 139ft 11½. Only four weeks later, he came 5th in the National Schools Championships with a throw of 144 ft 6in.

At this point, the hammer had still

not made it into the School Sports Day events, and it is curious to note that Peter Aston had won a national title before winning an event at Sports Day. At the 1963 Sports Day it was agreed that he would demonstrate his prowess in an exhibition event. This was also the year when Peter's father – Ken Aston, celebrated as a World Cup football referee and inventor of the red and yellow cards, – was presenting the prizes.



Athletics Team 1964-65. John Smallbone is 4th from the left, middle row and Graham Greenaway is 5th from the left, back row.



John Smallbone at the 1966 Sports Day when he set the all time shot put record

In the following year, the hammer was finally established as a competitive event at BHCHS. Although Peter had left school his legacy remained. The first winner was **Adrian Reynolds (1957)** with a very respectable 134ft 4in. But in 1965 **Graham Greenaway (1959)** added more than 30 feet setting a new record of 164ft 10in. Even more impressive performances were to follow. **Alan Woods (1962)** took up the hammer in his third year, and by the time he left BHCHS he had a new sports day records of 187ft 4in which remained unbeaten. Both Alan Woods and **Phil Robinson (1964)** who succeeded him as the hammer champion represented Essex at National Championships. The hammer throwing careers of Peter Aston and Alan Woods continued well into their 50s, achieving success in international competitions. The photo on page one is of Alan Woods competing in 2007.

Ron Bowden, who coached not only Peter Aston but also Graham Greenaway, Alan Woods and Phil Robinson, deserves a special men-

tion. While the focus of this series has been achievements on the school playing field, we should not forget that there are some individuals whose talents blossomed after leaving school. Ron's athletic achievements at school were negligible. This may have been partly because of the inevitable interruptions of the war years (Ron was a pupil from 1940-45). But he went on to become a highly respected athletics coach. In a career spanning more than 60 years he trained many Olympic athletes.

I have remarked before that the records of athletics at BHCHS after 1971 have so far remained mainly undiscovered. I do have a programme for the 1983 Sports Day, and it appears that the field events took a rather different format in those days, with sixth formers being required to pick a set number from a range of track and field events. However, the results of this appear to be lost.

Next time we will turn our attention to the activity that so many of us loved to hate: cross country.

League Tables in the Sixties

By **Graham Smith (BHCHS 1963-70)**



OCCASIONALLY, as Chair of Governors of a School, I talk with younger teachers about continual assessment and league tables. They talk about these things as if they have just been invented they didn't know John Robins!

Sometimes I struggle to remember what happened yesterday (know the feeling?). However, I can cast my mind back with absolute clarity about 43 years to the French lessons of John Robins in Form 3A and his immortal 'Running Totals'.



The famous tape recorder in action

Chapman 12, 124; Curnow 17, 162; Doughty 16, 147; Ekblom 20, 197.....How many? Ekblom's done it again. He's still on the hot pipe!

What's this all about? Well, John was just the most amazingly committed and enthusiastic teacher. He arrived in 3A in September 1965 like a whirlwind with

this gigantic machine under his arm. Yes, it was a tape recorder, about two feet cubed. It was absolutely central to his lessons. He lugged it along the corridors at breakneck speed so the next class didn't miss a second of its words of recorded wisdom. It seemed like it was connected to him by an umbilical chord – I swear I saw him several times balancing it on his racing bike crossbars cycling along Roding Lane!

Almost every lesson meant a tape recording and that always meant a test - comprehension, spelling, translation, anything. Some recordings were crackly broadcasts from the Home Service (remember that?) but most were all his own work.

Normally 20 questions were asked in quick succession early in the lesson and then we swapped papers for marking. As we marked he went through the questions and answers explaining, coaching, cajoling, encouraging or simply

expressing disgust at somebody dropping their standards.

The moment of truth was when your fellow pupil handed back your exercise book.

How have I done today? Did I make a silly spelling error on Question 14? Would Paisley turn a blind eye to the 'acute' I missed off because I'd bought him toast at the

station café yesterday? Your performance on each and every day was there for all to see - you had to add your mark to recent ones to get a 'Running Total' and declare both to everyone.

I was chuffed my parents weren't called Allerton, Barton or Beak. We called out alphabetically. By the time it got to me I knew how I'd done compared to the rest. This impacted how I announced my marks. My voice was confident and a bit smug on a 'good day', or somewhat quiet and subdued on a bad one. I said the obligatory words - "Smith, 14, Running Total, 127, Sir".

Today I was subdued! How would John react to that admission? Six marks dropped. Would it be extra homework or a word about getting more sleep? Sorry, but I just couldn't stop myself listening to 'My Word' under the bedclothes! (Oh, the innocence of 13 year olds then). There was nowhere to hide in French!

Five lessons a week plus homework (done similarly) meant we typically got to the magic 200 marks within a fortnight. Apart from meaning that you could never 'sleep' in French, did it matter? Absolutely, because once we got to 200, everybody (apart from Ekblom who invariably was top!) moved seats at the start of the next lesson. Top scorers across the back and lowest across the front, right under John's nose. And it really, really mattered in the winter because the only heating pipe ran across the back of the room...talk about an incentive!

There were six seats across the back. It was a bit like the Premier League now. One or two would always be top – the rest were fighting for the other Champions League or UEFA Cup spots. There was no relegation but it was no fun if you slipped down the table. The season only lasted two weeks so you couldn't afford a bad game.



John Robins

But that wasn't all – overnight John would analyse the numbers and announce the biggest climber, biggest faller, most consistent improver etc. Some of these awards had cups which you kept and displayed in lessons until the next 200. All the awards were designed to give a fair balance between stick and carrot. Don't misunderstand me - there was a fair bit of laughter too.

This all happened decades before teachers could download lessons from the internet and display them on Interactive White Boards. I recently enjoyed such a French lesson for 11 year olds when doing a Governor class observation. It made me realise even more how hard John must have worked. That tape recorder was the modern technology of the Sixties and he really used it to educate us.

To me the legacy of Running Totals is a fair smattering of Franglais (which helped me in Montreal last year) and the memory of a totally committed teacher who just wanted everybody who just wanted everybody to improve. He succeeded. Every child mattered. He should be a performance consultant to Local Authorities and Government now...but he didn't produce any numbers for numbers sake or to make himself look good!

Thank you, John.

Warts n' All

By Peter Acland (BHCHS 1960-65)



I ENJOY reading *Old Buckwellians News*, it is one of the joys of increasing old age that we can reminisce, chew over the past so to speak and relive a little of those memories. But we all know that our memory is selective, we look back through 'rose coloured' glasses and block out the unsavoury parts of our history. I am writing this piece as a bit of a balance, perhaps a personal catharsis. I know I will upset many people and I write out of true fondness for our old school, not malice.

I was there from 1960-1965, having moved a few months before from a good primary school in Bristol. I remember being very excited and of course a little nervous attending school for the first time. My father was very proud and took some (early) colour photos of myself in uniform. The first year went well, and I was even elected form captain. I revelled in French (Mr Irving's "How do say...") and began my enduring love of science especially at the time, chemistry.

Well then things started to go a little off track. My father died, which probably had more effect on me than I realised at the time, and perhaps the dreaded puberty and of course the sixties....

In the second year I started to fall into bad ways. I remember one dubious friend in my class, notorious for getting most 'Saturday morning detentions' who was accused of dumping all the English homework books in the dustbin to avoid the fact that he had not completed his own homework. I defended him in class against the accusations of the English teacher (who incidentally I liked and respected). This did me no favours whatsoever and we were linked as partners in crime. I got to know two senior boys; one was a

keep fit fanatic, who could also punch and broke my nose in a later drunken incident. The other introduced me to the world of 'Rockers' and 'Teddy boys' and coffee bars. He later ended up serving a prison sentence for some piece of idiocy. Yes under age drinking is nothing new and I frequented many public houses in the East End of London most weekends, as well as the *Calypso* coffee bar which was next door to the *Horse and Wells* pub also frequented (curiously opposite a police station!) So I moved in the world of the 'Rockers' though never (fortunately) took part in any of the seaside battles. But something else was going on, perhaps more sinister, many of my classmates, who were formerly well behaved sons of the middle class became involved with the 'Mod' scene and that included drugs and all night sessions at two night clubs in the West End. I remember these poor boys, weary and exhausted, coming in late on the Monday morning, proudly showing off their 'purple hearts' and 'black bombers' behind the bike sheds. Thank god I did not get involved with that but my school career was not angelic and I steadily gave up doing any homework before gradually not bothering to attend lessons I didn't like such as maths (Old Duffy Clayton- I gave him that nickname incidentally, it came from an episode of *Dixon of Dock Green*). Gradually it extended to longer and longer periods of truancy. Yes I can remember the ice cold swimming pool we had to use all weathers, which was eventually sabotaged with paint (nothing to do with me but I have a strong suspicion of who might have done it, similarly the attempted break in of the cricket pavilion.

What of the pupils? Yes I made some close friends, some honourable like Paul Armstrong and David Withnall but I also mixed in bad company perhaps I was the bad company. I think we generally got on. There was a hierarchy of course but no real bullying as such. I remember the daily tube journey from South Woodford to Buckhurst Hill and the long walk down to the school, and the character building cross country runs, and fishing for sticklebacks in the Roding.

As for the teachers, well they were a mixed bunch, they had difficulties, they must have realised that something very strange and possibly dangerous was happening in youth culture at the time and understanda-



School Choir c 1960. Peter Acland is front row centre

bly they didn't know how to cope with it (do they now?) Johnny Johnson the chemistry master I put as number one, perhaps because it was my favourite lesson (or maybe the other way round). Dear Arnold Smethurst, who always held up my pathetic artworks to the rest of the class as 'examples of imagination' rather than some accident in a paint factory, he gave me pride in trying! Old 'Spud' Taylor had great respect and seemed to form the 'nice man' half of the nice/nasty duo with 'Fas' the deputy who was much stricter. I do remember that 'Spud' did have a habit of putting his arm round the younger boys and 'tickling their sides'. A habit which would be totally misconstrued these days and even then raised a few eyebrows but was certainly an indication of devotion to his pupils. His kindness, wisdom, intellect and fortunately his forgiveness were always an inspiration. Other teachers were a mixed batch, ranging from the eccentric (Mr Tasker, lasted two terms?) to the benign but ineffectual (I won't name) to the outright bully, whose unjust cuff round the ear I will never forgive

(I think my friend hit him back once!)

So perhaps not the usual 'old boy' contribution to the magazine, but I have to say that I survived this period and I don't blame the school, it was me and it was society. The school did its best. I remember they did away with selected prefects and made all the sixth form prefects. They gave the sixth form a private room where they could even smoke, and many more innovations. Whereas, when my mother moved to Ipswich, in an attempt to get me away from bad influences, not necessarily at the school, I went to a traditional grammar school, where everything was much more disciplined and regimented...and I hated it and left at the first opportunity after my O Levels. Much to everyone's surprise I managed to get 5, later 6 such exam passes which I owe entirely to Buckhurst Hill, so something must have worn off on me because I was then able to carry on and achieve a medical degree and higher qualifications. So don't despair of your kids of today, they will probably come through ok.

Taking Eau Roding at Speed

By Ian Macdonald (BHCHS 1962-69)

Dr Ian Macdonald is Research Director, Louis Le Prince Centre for Cinema, Photography and Television at Leeds University. On leaving BHCHS he began work for Waltham Forest Public Libraries but too much book-stamping at the BBC Reference Library, the Independent Broadcasting Authority and the British Film Institute got on his wick, and he landed a job finding crap TV for Clive James and Chris Tarrant at London Weekend TV. So far his finest work has been introducing the British people to Japanese TV's 'Endurance', which says a lot about the rest of his career. TV work gave way to teaching people about it, and he spent 9 years running the Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University. He moved to Leeds University in 2006, where he continues to research and teach screenwriting, film and broadcasting. He has a wonderful wife and (at going to press) two fine children.



DESPITE subscribing to this rag I'm not in favour of being overly nostalgic about our schooldays, but it strikes me that important accounts of social history might be lost if we don't remind people of what things were really like. The Moto GP nature of travel to school in the 1960s, for example.

Back in the days when the British car industry shed its ill-produced parts across the highways of our kingdom and us lads celebrated by collecting the hubcaps that fetched up at the kerbside, every sixth former that could balance on two wheels went to school by motorbike.

In 1968 the 62ers were dedicated petrolheads, a bike substituting for the Jaguar E-type that we knew would be our next purchase. Like *The Who*, we looked pretty tall on our scooters but substituted the horizontal for the vertical more often than we wished, and sick notes protesting 'gravel rash' became an officially accepted reason for absence from General Studies. OBN No.17's picture of Mick Read at the wheel of his excellent V8 Jensen put me in mind of the same fondly remembered M. Read at the handlebars of his Lambretta, along with several other L-platers who sincerely believed their speedometers underestimated their true speed by around 70%. For example, virtually every morning Eric Faulkner and I regularly topped 87 mph on our Lambrettas Li and LD respectively chasing up the hill to the Knighton Café, a few minutes after the register was taken to

the School Office.

Bill Adams, on the other hand, had a genuine car (a Ford Prefect square type) and refused to drive it at more than 27 mph on the magnificently stupid grounds that to go over 30 mph was illegal. We felt it necessary to remind him of other statutory requirements, such as his legal obligation to offer a lift to any schoolboy who required one.

But a car was rare, and the line of bikes outside the gym was many and varied. Pete Blackman's fishtail-exhaust 500cc Velocette leaned precariously next to Roof's 600cc Norton Dominator (clip-ons, rear-sets, fibre-glass tank, illegal lights and a huge pool of vegetable oil underneath), parked beside Pete Brewster's totally standard (but probably faster) Dominator, next to Pete Murch's Lambretta Li, Steve White's Vespa, various Triumph Tigers, Ariel Arrows ('Sparrows'), an Ariel Leader ('Bleeder'), and Tony Skuse's Puch. The last-named was a tiny little bike that Tony refused to believe was incapable of more than 34 mph, even two-up going up Palmerston Road. All roads were taken by Tony at full throttle straight down the middle. Tony believed that the law was only interested in an average 30 mph over the journey home, so to stop at traffic lights would bring his speed down unacceptably – making up time was a civic duty. The brakes were still brand new when he traded it in for a BSA B31 350cc, a relic of a bygone age whose poor acceleration was no barrier to hitting the full 63 mph by the time he got it home 4 miles later. Tony went on, as we know from recent editions of OBN, to carry many thousands of passengers safely across the world as a senior Captain for British Airways. I like to think I was the first to make him aware of passenger safety. Bawling



Ruth Stallybrass, with Pete Brewster, Ed Hooper (centre) Dave Cutts (inside helmet) and Mick Gasper wondering where Chris Kay had fallen off this time.
Photo Eric Faulkner

down his ear to STOP YOU C*** did, after all, sometimes work.

Mick Gasper's 'racing' BSA C15 was an Alf Hagon high-lift cam jobbie, Alf Hagon being a drag-racing champion based in Leytonstone who sold people huge camshafts on the dubious claim that it would make a bike go faster. Faster, no - noisier, yes. Most bikes then had 'straight-through exhausts', or silencers with nothing inside, but on Mick's bike the exhaust was drowned out by mechanical clatter. Mick lived half a mile away in Chigwell, but his legen-

dary drag-times in getting to School had nothing to do with speed. When you heard the sound of a hundred spanners being dropped, you could put him in the Register in the full knowledge he'd be there in person three minutes later.

Similarly Roof (Gordon Rootkin), one of the few who went home for lunch, could always be heard returning at full revs down the hill heading for certain disaster in the Roding. The bridge was the point of honour where – like Eau Rouge at the Belgian Grand Prix – to throttle back



Chris Kay knows he is safe on his own motorbike, as long as he keeps it in neutral and never starts the engine



Ian Macdonald in 1968

made you a sissy, and Roof wasn't interested in that. With Jerry Whaler mumbling Russian to himself somewhere at the front of the class, every lad heard Roof's bike getting closer and held their collective breath waiting for that moment when the back wheel hit fresh air and the revs hiccupped up another 1000, while Roof tried to inch that little bit to the right whilst airborne. This was a serious matter. The bridge points nastily straight ahead while the road turns right, so even if you didn't pile straight over the railings into some first-years learning cricket skills, the best you could hope for was a tank slapper while you zig-zagged to the school gates in a cloud of blue smoke and brake dust. Somehow Roof always managed it. He was certainly better at driving fast than slow, as a certain tarmac furrow in Theydon Bois can testify.

Accidents happened, but mercifully not seriously to our year. Pete Murch got run over by Mick Gasper, but only because he was daft enough to fall off his scooter in front of him. I

think Rob Wright fell off his moped once, possibly in Clacton. The law was more of a problem for us L-platers, as the police unjustifiably suspected we didn't know what we were doing. Clacton was also the scene of one minor victory, however, when two policemen had to admit that Pete Brewster's horn, though miniscule in size, was indeed legal, despite its pitiful squeak.

My bike, by then a BSA C15 in fetching Hammerite blue with a Honda badge (for no particular reason) and a rear mudguard held on by nothing more than an elastic luggage strap, occasionally sported no horn at all, usually because (being a British bike) things fell off regularly. Christmas morning 1968 was in fact spent under a hedge in Wanstead retrieving bits of clutch, whence they had been spat by a petulant bike annoyed by a lack of oil. Being a British bike, they all fitted back on within the half-hour with no other tools than a bent screwdriver and a grubby handkerchief. We continued on our way, despite the lack of oil, or indeed chaincase to hold said oil. No further problems arose.

As more of us somehow passed the driving test and began turning up on ever larger and filthier bikes, overcoming the then 250cc limit for learners became a status symbol. Chris Kay, the youngest in the year, didn't bother with waiting for the test and suddenly turned up perched on an impossibly large BSA 650cc A10 with L-plates and a huge aluminium marrow attached, which he announced was a sidecar. Not illegal, he said, being officially a tricycle and thus exempt from the engine size regulations. The ability to give double the usual number of lifts immediately wiped from our thoughts the idea of reminding him that he had spent some minutes the previous term sitting on his arras in the middle



Mac always refused to let anyone else have a go, even if it meant sitting on his scooter all day.

of the road. Pete Brewster had forgotten he was carrying little Chris on the pillion and powered his Norton off from the lights in pursuit of some insulting Mini, leaving Chris momentarily in mid-air, and moments later painting more than the usual skid mark down his central reservation. Ouch.

There was a brief sub-culture of three-wheelers as well. For a few months Heinkel and BMW Isetta bubblecars pootled around Loughton at 30 or so, their drivers frightened to hit the brakes too hard in case the whole thing tipped forward and started bouncing eccentrically down the street like a demented rugby ball. Their fear was misplaced - for Roof's car the problem was going backwards loaded with four schoolboys. This resulted in a sideways roll that tipped the lads straight out of the sunroof (sunroof?), and led directly to the brief popularity in School of

the song 'Roll Over Beethoven', only with the words 'Roll Over Isetta'... Roof gave up and started borrowing his Mum's Mini.

As far as I know - please prove me wrong - there are only a few of us idiot bikers left; Eric Faulkner (brand new Triumph Bonneville), Pete Murch (BMW), Pete Brewster (Honda Gold Wing), and me (Vincent Comet). Over the years we've all learned a lot about looking after our bikes - Eric's finally realised the newer bikes pump their oil round the engine instead of the garage floor, and the two Petes have sensibly gone for those foreign marques where technical knowledge is not needed if you still have £45,000 to spare for a service. Mine, however, is a genuine British model which requires only a pipe wrench and a colourful vocabulary to keep it going. Even though my bike is a year older than I am, I often hit 150 miles an hour going down to the gym (see picture), although going to the gym is perhaps a bit of an exaggeration. I'd be interested to know if others recall these events as accurately as I clearly do, or indeed could add to them. It was very important to us at the time; even our social lives were spent grouped around our wretched bikes discussing the merits of replacing the carburettor float for the 6th time, in the absence of any other knowledge about how to make the bastard go. Was it just our year? Or do other years have equally sad memories about their transport to school, like a sudden craze for Sinclair C5s, or for sitting in a different seat on the 167 every day of the term? Postcards to the Editor please...



Mac hits turbulence (or is it flatulence?) on his way to the gym...

“Yes Miss”: Mary’s Year with the Boys



Class 1C 1946-47. Clive Margesson has identified some of the names. Back row (l to r): William Webster (camera shy!), Clive Margesson, John Taylor, Peter Dalton (?), Alan Colby, ???, Keith Guiver (?), Alan Day. Front row (l to r) Bill Gore, ???, Richard Gould, Sidney Alford, Edward Sayer, Alan Mitchell, Ken Driver. There is also a short boy with glasses behind the back row towards the right.

PROMPTED by a photograph (above) sent in by **Clive Margesson (1946)** I decided to investigate to see what the archives could tell us about a year long visit to BHCHS by Mary Herbert. The photograph was taken by Mrs Herbert of class 1C. The shot is rather blurred, but the lack of clarity is compensated by the way it captures the atmosphere of the occasion.

In the *Roding* magazine of 1946 it was announced that **Vera Crook**, who had taught English at BHCHS since 1942, was going to the USA for one year under the Exchange of Teachers Scheme sponsored by the English Speaking Union. In exchange the school would welcome Mrs Mary Herbert, MA, Ph.B., of Pennsylvania. The end of the 45-46 school year also saw the departure of the only two other female members of staff, so during her year at BHCHS Mary Herbert was the only female on the teaching staff. This fact alone might have explained why the year made a lasting impression not only on the boys of 1C. Mr Wigley, in the following year’s *Roding*, commented that “her wisdom, wide experience and gracious acceptance of our ways have made her presence here a privilege we shall miss when she has gone.

Clive Margesson tells me he has many memories of the year. She was determined to play her part in establishing links between the two countries by taking back with her all the names and addresses of “her boys” and setting up pen pal arrangements. Clive tells me that he corresponded with an American for several years and on one occasion a large food parcel arrived containing all manner of luxury goodies that had not been seen for many years due to rationing.

Mary Herbert’s account of her year at BHCHS provides an illuminating insight into some of the cultural differences she noticed. And this is made even more fascinating when read after the passing of fifty years.....

Impressions of England

To teach for a year in an English school has been an enlightening and interesting experience. Contrary to popular ideas there really is very little fundamental difference between teaching in America and in England, and the superficial differences have made the year a most interesting one.

I was told that English boys were so different from Americans. They do wear uniforms which look very nice and

nouncement of the winning of a musical award was greeted with as much applause as the winning of a football match.

Early in the year Miss Ford, Chairman of the Exchange Committee in England, was concerned about my being the only woman in a boys’ school. She said that English school-masters were so shy that I would probably feel ill at ease with a men’s staff. That seemed true for a week or two, but it didn’t last long. The men were most helpful in assisting me to get into the routine of an English school. The admirable English institution of the Staff Room helped me a lot. How I have enjoyed tea and biscuits or buns at 11 o’clock, coffee after the noon meal, and tea after school! Those intervals with their lively conversation did much to compensate for the rather monotonous school dinners. Even the dinners evidently were healthful; at least they seem to keep me in good health.

I was a bit apprehensive about teaching English to English boys, and I am sure they must have thought my accent odd. I have always loved a good English accent when it is authentic, but I have tried not to imitate it, for mine would be only a spurious copy. However, I was rather surprised to find such diversity of accent



The only woman in a boy’s school: Mary Herbert in the 1947 school photograph

among pupils in an English school.

I was very much interested in school athletics. I like the method of having every boy in the school participate in games, and I think we in America could learn much of the benefits of the English system, for often we become over-enthusiastic and tend to commercialise ours rather more than is good. Certainly English boys seem a pretty healthy and rugged group under their system.

The well-planned curriculum of the school, the definite syllabus and the adequate book supply were great helps in teaching. I found the subject matter quite familiar, and needed only to be careful of differences in nomenclature and spelling. I found, too, that I knew just as much about English literature as English masters do. Perhaps the allure of distance has made me even more aware of the romance of the English literary heritage than some English people are.

Besides my school experiences my other activities have been most enjoyable. I can hardly express my deep gratitude to the masters who made my year so pleasant by entertaining me at their homes, where I enjoyed their hospitality and meeting their families so very much.

This has been a year of superlatives in many ways. I experienced the worst winter for many years. It was sometimes pretty grim. It was a new experience to teach in such cold rooms because of the unusual weather and the fuel shortage. Then there were the floods, and not long after them came the usual heat wave. When people speak to me of being in England I shall say, "Ah, but you don't know what we went through in 1947!"

Besides the superlatives of nature there were others that were more personal. Certainly I have never seen so many distinguished members of society in one year before - King, Queen, Princess Elizabeth, Prime Minister, and the inimitable Winston Churchill! I have been near

enough to London to go to the theatre more often than I ever did in one year. I have seen uncounted cathedrals, historic churches, historic castles and palaces, art museums, and examples of the "stately homes of England," so many of which are now enjoyed by the common people instead of by great families only.

Perhaps the most unforgettable feature of the year has been the kindness, the courtesy, and the helpfulness of the English people wherever I met them. I understand much more fully now than ever before just why England is a great nation, for it is due to the great qualities of the English people. I only hope that in the future I can hand on to English visitors to America some measure of the kindness that has been accorded to me.

MARY E. HERBERT

Some readers who were at BHCHS in this period will no doubt wish to remind me that Vera Crook wrote a similarly interesting *Letter from America* about her experiences while staying in Allentown, Pennsylvania. I will hope to publish this in a future edition.

It would be interesting to know whether Mrs Herbert was still alive. We assume she would now be in her late 80s at least. A search in the USA phone directory didn't yield anything obvious, and it seems likely that someone who had developed a taste for travel may well have retired to another part of the USA or even overseas.

49ers Quiz: Answers

I was grateful to **Dick Mugridge (1949)** for sending the charming nativity scene on page 1. This was taken in 1948 at Staples Road Primary School, Loughton. The photo contains three boys who subsequently continued their education at BHCHS.

Dick Mugridge writes...I'm the guy having a bad hair day on the extreme right, propping up the hieroglyphics (it meant the same then as my French lessons at BHCHS later on). Mick Jackson - standing next to me, to the left (other side of the backdrop hieroglyphics). Barry Moore - sitting just in front of me with the white toga, sandals and thin head-sweatband.

Nicknames

By Hugh ("Harry") Smith (BHCHS 1958-66)



Hugh Smith with son Simon and wife Sundra

I THINK it was probably Richard (Toj) Thomas who had the best idea about school days. On his very first day, he took one look and said to himself, "right, that's enough of that, I'm off" and, off he went, back home. I never showed such initiative and like the rest just got on with life as it was to be for the next few years. It couldn't have been worse than those poor chaps incarcerated in POW camps around Europe during the war just a few years previously, so it was a question knuckling down for the duration. I suppose tunnelling out might have been a pretty cool thing to have done, but there we are - we endured, including Toj when presumably he was marched back by his mum with a finger around his collar. Mind you, with Toms, Dick and Harry of the Remove, we could well have mimicked the exploits of the escapees from Stalag Luft III. - *Great Escape II - The Sequel*.

I never questioned, or even thought about, how Richard got the name 'Toj'. Surely not after Tojo the war-monger of Japan. Not only was our Toj lacking in the slitty-eye department, his mop of red hair and total lack of an aggressive streak stood him apart from the land of the Rising Sun - the country that is, not the pub of the same name.

Talking of nicknames, it was that whirling dervish, Stormin' Norman of the Beer clan that saddled me with the sobriquet 'Harry'. For 13 years I had been Hugh to all and sundry, and I can only think that it was my attempt to plagiarise Tennyson's most famous of poems *The Eagle* handing it in as my own for homework - even sliding my exercise book between all the others in the

vain attempt it would go unnoticed. Maybe if I'd added a credit at the bottom of the page, but that's all history.

"Well, Harry Smith, I must admire your Tennysonian style" smirked Norman, to which I beamed with pride up to the second that it sank in that I'd been rumbled. As usual in these sort of situations, half the class looked on in admiration and the rest just sniggered - rotten lot!

Well, my nickname saw me through Uni gradually dying out as I re-invented myself in my professional capacity of purveyor of pills, potions and poisons, until more recently as it reared its ugly head again when eBay became a shining light, a beacon of opportunity and as much as I tried, every combination of user name including the name 'hugh' was rejected - so now I'm 'harryuk123*' - and I bet Norman's got something to do with it!

Hugh (Harry) Smith (1066-1966) - well, it seemed like it anyway.

*seller of Chinese machine tools to the model making fraternity and small industry.

(Just don't ask - it's a long, long story)

I am grateful to Hugh for raising the topic of nicknames. In a school where surnames were normally used, and first names rarely, it is not surprising that nicknames became so common. Many of us, I am sure, are happy that their school nicknames have been consigned to history, but the subject could be worthy of further discussion. "Toj" still has his red hair, by the way - see p.5 - Ed.

Old Bucks with Altitude

By Bill Martin (BHCHS 1957-64)

Old Bucks meet up in the strangest places. Here's how a couple of high flyers from 1957 had an unplanned aerial meeting.



Captain Hammond, but are you an Old Buck?" If so, I'm Bill Martin (1957-64). I remember you well. If not, sorry to trouble you." Ping. I press the overhead button and the stewardess accepts to give the message to Capitaine 'Ammon (it is a Belgian flight).

The stewardess is back in seconds with a reply "Come to the cockpit, Owen"

So 36 years later, at 24,000 feet, over Lower Saxony, Owen and Bill get together again.

It was great chatting about old times and masters-Taffy Harris, Tommy Leek and of course, Spud and Fas -- as the plane soared over the plains of Germany and the Benelux. Soon Zaventem was in sight and Owen brought the craft down with a perfect landing.

Any other unusual reunions readers would like to share with us?

Bill Martin works for the European Commission in Brussels. After graduating from LSE, he worked in advertising in New York, Paris and Geneva, joining the Commission in 1974. In 2000, he was the EU's Deputy Commissioner General for the Hanover World Fair, EXPO2000.

I only managed to trace Owen Hammond this year, and hope to hear more from him soon.

IT IS HANOVER. The year 2000, I'm booked on the early evening flight to Brussels. I sink into my seat and switch off. The day of meetings about Germany's World Expo is put to the back of my mind. In an hour, I'll be home in Belgium. I look at the runway, look at the luggage being loaded on, wait for the flight to get in the air.

The captain comes on with that reassuring voice and introduces the cabin crew, gives the estimated flying time and did he say he was Captain Owen Hammond?

Owen Hammond? Surely not? I must have misheard.

My thoughts go back to a friendly Buck who was mad keen on the RAF and wanted to be a pilot. Well let's check. On a handy piece of paper I scribble a note - "Excuse me,

DOWN MEMORY LANE



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



Well meaning but non-pavement-standing intellectuals haven't helped by supporting a badly written UK Human Rights Act which prevents parents and teachers etc from guiding (if one avoids the now emotive word 'disciplining') youngsters into a socially conscious awareness. My daughter, who now has been many years in senior Human Rights positions in the O.S.C.E. and UN, goes spare when hearing examples of UK incidents such as a good teacher being brought to Court by a teenager for 'Visual Assault' and says that Human Rights is all about the right to live safely, speak freely and act as a good citizen etc. It isn't the 'hoodies', yobs and binge-drinkers' sole fault but their lack of training from parents, teachers and the community in general who would carry out the necessary grooming as in days gone by IF given firm backing from the Government. We shouldn't need a war or terrorism for people to help each other.

I WAS so glad that so many enjoyed the puzzle I set out in the last edition. I will produce another at a later date. Meanwhile here is a typical meditation over a libation in Gin Corner - not a 'grumpy old man's musings'!

One doesn't have to be 'old' to feel rather sad, even depressed, over the way things in general seem to be moving, in the majority of cases, downwards. For me, amongst the many facets, it is in the total lack of respect for other people with the establishment of the 'Me! Myself! and I!' mindset, giving way to statements such as 'Me, Tom and Sid went to...' as opposed to the traditional way where we were told to put ourselves last.

Many aspects of today however provide optimism - just three of many are the improved health of the nation, despite NHS deficiencies, 'ordinary' people such as 'pop idols' (not the drug, alcohol and sex addicted ones) using their influence to support world charities in a very significant way and then the decline in race and sex prejudice. in a very significant way and many more.

Space considerations restrict further writing but there is so much more!

Tony Jolly (1943-49)

I am grateful to Terence Atkins (1958) for providing this fine example from his vast collection of local post cards. The rider in this photograph - taken around 1960 - appears to be cruising down Roding Lane a little more sedately than Ian Macdonald and his mates (see p15). I hope to publish some even earlier scenes in the next edition.

Where are they now?

Roland Buggey (1942)



I first entered the hallowed portals of BHCHS in 1942, thus helping to complete the first five years in the life of the school. I was in 1A with Mr Watson who taught history as form master. After the end of year exams I went into the 'B' stream where I learned German – far more useful than Latin would have been. I left in 1950 after three years in the sixth form. I had failed my medical for National Service due to a damaged heart valve following Rheumatic Fever so I went straight into S. Mark and S. John Teacher Training College where I joined two other Old Bucks – Tony Flower (1938) and Peter Aldridge (1941). Tony had been Head Boy at school and was President of the Students Union at College.

For the next twenty years I taught at various schools in Newham. During part of that time I attended LSE part time and graduated with a BSc (Hons Geography) in 1958. Two of my tutors there were Old Bucks, one being John Davis (1944). In that year I married – another product of what has been described in this magazine as the McCollin Marriage Bureau. I had met Edna before on one of Eric McCollin's school trips which he so ably organised. Four children followed in the next five years (two were twins). The two girls ended up at Woodford CHS, the boys Andrew (1970) and Simon (1975) came to BHCHS. Edna had been a teacher but changed direction in 1982 and became a Methodist Minister. When the school where I was Head of Geography went Comprehensive in 1972 I left and obtained a lecturing post at the Metropolitan Police Cadet School, Hendon teaching O and A Level geography plus London studies to cadets as part of their further education. It was an enjoyable and interesting part of my career. I accepted early retirement in 1989 and worked part time for a music pub-

lisher until 65. I served in the Special Constabulary with the City of London Police for 33 years, retiring in 1990. I was made a Freeman of the City and attended a Buckingham Palace garden party in 1989.

We moved to Diss, Norfolk twelve years ago and, like many retired people, wonder how we found the time to work! A 200 year old house and a large garden keep us busy, in addition to the numerous activities in the town and beyond. Two years ago I had a spell in Papworth Hospital where the faulty heart valve mentioned above was replaced, giving me a new lease of life. My surgeon said I should be good enough to reach 100 – I hope he is right!

Colin Budgey (1946)

I left teaching many years ago, and did a variety of jobs, mainly practical, until it was time to get my pension. I married in 1964, had two children, divorced and re-married. Apart from pastimes and hobbies and taking part in village life, my main energy has been in politics, working for the Green Party (and the survival of the planet) I was a local councillor for some years but forced to give it up due to a collapsing spine which caused excruciating pain. Have had treatment and it is now much better but decided not to contest any more local elections at my age (72) and now act as local election agent and press officer for the Chelmsford Green party. Went on the great anti-war march and look forward to February 2009, when Bush goes.

I have not had much contact (knowingly) with other OB's, but am interested to hear of my contemporaries from Dennis Carney.

Richard Gould (1946)

In 1990 I retired from my work as an HR manager with Wiggins Teape. Since then I have trained as a psychodynamic counsellor and continued working with local agencies in Southampton and Winchester. My current boss was in my church youth group in Woodford Green nearly 60 years ago. Incidentally Peter Langley (1946) with whom I still exchange Xmas cards was in the same group. My main sporting activity for the past 25 years has been road running. One of my early mentors was Jeff Meddings (1949) who lives locally. I have now stopped running and the garden is beginning to benefit. To keep fit I go to the gym regularly but I do not think Messrs Dofort and Grover would be too impressed.

Derek Warren (1948)

I now reside in Brisbane, having been in Oz for 30 years, since retiring from the Royal Army Medical Corps after 23 years. My service took me to Germany, Singapore, Malaysia and West Africa. My entire working career was in Medical Sciences/Medical Pathology, initially in hospitals and later in the commercial supply business. I retired in 2000 and enjoy an extremely active life, especially competitive table-tennis, fishing, photography and travel. I was saddened to see old friends have 'fallen off the twig', regrettably a fact of life as we get older. It would be good to hear of former classmates now in Oz.

Glyn Jefferies (1955)

I am currently working for a South African company specialising in mining process plants which are much in demand on the back of the Chinese need for raw materials. For the first time in decades Engineers are wanted in numbers although I see that the pay in the UK is still lousy.

We moved to SA in 1981 because of lack of work in the UK and have never seriously considered returning until now. The wonderful vision of Nelson Mandela has been forgotten in the ANC scramble to be first at the trough. The corruption and incompetence have reached such proportions as to actually damage the mining industry and crime, especially violent crime has reached a level not surpassed anywhere. The 2010 World Cup could be a disaster.

Despite the mayhem SA remains a beautiful and wealthy (coal, gold, diamonds, platinum) country with a glorious climate but the switch from white to black government and inverted apartheid has improved nothing especially the welfare of black people.

My son has returned to the UK and sells houses in Fulham but his three sisters are still here and all studying at Wits University with at least the rest of the year to go to obtain Masters, second degree and first degree respectively. I am sure that they will all leave once suitably qualified.

I have not been in touch with any of my classmates for decades and my only contact with Old Bucks is through Steve Hyam.

School seems so remote as to be almost part of a separate life although some things must have stuck. I am regularly taken aback at

the poor level of knowledge of people that I meet regardless of the topic of conversation.

Schools here try to maintain standards of dress (full and distinctive school uniforms) and behaviour which are reminiscent of a past age judging by the yahoos I have encountered on my occasional visits to the UK. Sadly the education system here is also in rapid decline.

Roger Street (1955)



During my fifth year at the school (1959-60) I became a Christian and an enthusiastic student of Religious Education. At times Norman Walmsley gave me a hard time, his acerbic approach to conservative theology was demanding but it made me think seriously about my faith and stood me in good stead for future years. I opted for Religious Studies at A level but by this time Norman had left and Derek Pembleton took over the teaching of A level. We were a small group, all I remember of the others is Dick Fenton and Stuart Cox, Stuart became deputy head boy to Martin Frizzell, (1961-62). Being taught by Derek was a real privilege. His laid back style and droll sense of humour made his classes thoroughly enjoyable. He gave us the freedom to develop our own styles of study and it was during my two years in the Sixth Form that I really developed a love of learning. I met him in later years when he was teaching sailing and canoeing in West Essex.

I subsequently read theology at London Bible College, graduating

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with a BD in 1965. After teaching RE in a boy's secondary modern in Hackney for nine years I became deputy head and then head teacher of Stewards Comprehensive in Harlow, Essex. I was there for fifteen years and then for nine years head teacher of the Helena Romanes School in Dunmow, taking early retirement at the end of 1998 a month before my 55th birthday. At the same time the school was recognised by the Department of Education as one of the fifty most improved schools in the country. Like a lot of heads I became highly critical of the utilitarian and functionalist approach to schooling which was driven by the initiatives introduced by Margaret Thatcher and Kenneth Baker, and subsequently adopted by Tony Blair's government. Politicians have failed to appreciate that education is so much more than the imparting of mere technical competence in a specific subject which can be measured summatively and statistically without regard for the process.

For a few years I lectured independently and worked in schools which were facing 'challenging circumstances'. One day I took a phone call from Heather, my wife, along the lines of, 'When you were a head I never saw you, but I knew where you were. Now you are a consultant I never see you and never know where you are!' She had found an advert in the Times Educational Supplement; King's College, London was recruiting for a postgrad student to study RE in church schools. I applied and got the 'job'. This now meant I had a student card and could get two concessions at the cinema, one for Heather as an OAP and one for me as a student! At an initial meeting of the new postgrads they went around the room getting each one to articulate the main challenge in their work. Mine was 'not dying before I finish!'

I completed the PhD last year at the age of 64. The main thrust of my thesis is a critique of contemporary educational philosophy which neglects the development of wisdom, Aristotle's *phronesis*, in young people. We teach them the technicalities of Geography, Maths, French, etc. etc. but fail to equip them to meet the demands of an increasingly superficial consumerist society which lacks any firm philosophical or religious *raison d'être*. The Church has failed to develop an alternative vision for its schools and has in effect assimilated current educational principles and practice. I challenge the Church to provide a genuine alternative to current schooling by building on their success in inculcat-

ing technical ability by developing an holistic approach to schooling which teaches students to live full, productive, honest and fulfilling lives whilst making a positive and creative contribution to society. Schools which have a religious foundation and work to that foundation with integrity are able to provide their students with a strong sense of personal identity; a prerequisite for sustaining high levels of achievement is school. This is reflected in faith schools achieving higher standards on a range of factors than comparable secular state schools.

Currently I am giving the occasional lecture to church school head teachers and administrators and producing the occasional article for learned journals which I suspect few read!

Dave Williams (1966)

I am still in the RAF, based at Brize Norton in Oxfordshire, where I am responsible for the planning and controlling of all the RAF's airlift and air-to-air repelling missions. Needless to say, every waking moment is focussed on activities in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Philip Ridealgh (1968)

For the last 11 years I have been in the electronic security industry, an industry that just doesn't let go. After leaving school with my disappointing A levels, a spell of gardening for Kate Coulson, I ended up at the Co-op Bank in Stratford E15 working for Ron Doble, whose son was in the year above me. From there I went to work for AFA Minerva for five years before escaping to Bournemouth. Three years ago I set up my own company.

Kids left home a couple of years ago. We sold our house to a developer, and with the proceeds we moved to Landford, in the New Forest, to walk dogs. Hope to take a slow boat to South Africa next year via St Helena, Ascension Islands etc and look forward to paying off my mortgage in 2014.

Matthew (BHCHS 1972) moved to Nice from Paris about a year ago with the intention of setting up home with an Australian girl, however it didn't last so he moved to Antibes. His flat is about 50 metres from the marina, and 100 metres from five bars. He works for a software company that supplies tracking systems for vehicles such as Porsche, Lexus etc. He commutes every three weeks back to UK for the weekend to see his son in Brighton and must be Easyjet's most regular customer. Is back in training for the next Paris marathon, although how he runs in that heat I'll never know.

Nick McEwen (1976)



I left Lloyds TSB after 18 years due to redundancy in January and immediately started a new position with Insight Investment, part of HBOS (www.insightinvestment.com)

This is a specialist asset management company with about 460 staff, all working at Old Broad Street, London. I am an IT Project manager specialising in Infrastructure projects (those involving Networks, computer hardware or telephony). I also recently achieved Chartered IT Professional status with the British Computer Society and a Level 5 Diploma in Management from the Chartered Institute of Management. This is an OU accredited post-graduate course. On the personal front my older son Nick (15) is 6'2" and has recently taken his GCSE's, my younger son Chris (12) now spends every evening when he is not on a trampoline in front of TWO computers ("I need one for messaging and one for gaming"). My daughter Annabelle (3½) is already beginning to read and write, she attends the local nursery that is run by Lesley (my wife).

Steve Dorling (1978)



Dr Steve Dorling is a Senior Lecturer in Atmospheric Sciences at the University of East Anglia. He became fascinated by meteorology while at BHCHS and is now a leading authority on air pollution and climate change. Steve is also Sales and Research Director at Weatherquest, which is based at UEA and provides weather-related services to a wide range of industrial, legal and other private clients. Before moving to Norwich, Steve worked for the Met Office and Environment Canada.

Thanks to Nigel Henshaw (1978) for spotting Steve in a photo of the 1st XI soccer team in 1984 (see p1). It was this that led me to find Steve at UEA. Steve is third from the left in the back row).

Many readers will remember that Nick was the originator of the BHCHS website, and we remain grateful to him for the initiative - Ed.

Daran Smith (1978)

I have lived just outside Hartlepool for nearly five years. My wife Vicky is from the area. We have four children, the eldest is fifteen, the youngest two and they are all a handful. We both work - Vicky works for Cleveland Police and I work in the construction industry. We have been married eight years now: the eldest two boys are from my first marriage, and we have a boy and girl together. We try to get down south as often as we can - I get homesick sometimes.

Jim Forbes (1979)



I am now back in Brisbane for another 10 months working on the Papua New Guinea Liquid Natural Gas project as part of the Intec Engineering Joint Venture Project Team, our client being ExxonMobil. Julie, I and the kids love this city and the added bonus is that the coldest it gets in winter is around 15deg C during the evenings. Most days are around 24deg C at the moment. The photo was taken at Rainbow Valley and I am holding a Thorny Devil which are only found here.

Giles Hemmings (1984)

I am working as a Coal Geologist for Kier Mining up in the Ayrshire coalfields. I guess that is unusual for someone from Essex. I did a degree in Geology at the Camborne School of Mines in Cornwall and then a Masters in Mineral Exploration at Imperial College (at what was once the Royal School of Mines but which had been rebranded as a very long winded Faculty name by the time I went there).

Dixon Docks Around the World

By Phil Dixon (BHCHS 1961-68)



AT THE end of 2005, I read my first OB news – and was struck by the impressive range of achievements that my fellow OB's had accomplished. I was also struck by the number of my contemporaries who had taken 'early retirement' – and started to wonder what was wrong with me in that I am still working. Two years later, it still feels like, once more, I am lacking in some way; that sense of being the junior, and, therefore, one of the last members to line up to join, a highly exclusive and esteemed club. Wow! 1961 all over again!

With the arrival of the next edition of the OB News, I decided that it really was time to respond to Graham's request, and write up a few notes on my own history and thoughts. They had been percolating in my head ever since Graham "Super Sleuth" Frankel had tracked me down.

Imagine my dismay, therefore, when I read, in that same issue, the letter or article, I don't remember now entitled - 'Normal? Or Genius?' decrying all of the reports that were being written about; so, while I started writing these notes two years ago, almost to the day, I had, and still have, no intent, in that person's words, of 'bragging about whatever achievements that I might find interesting.' I hope that some of the friends and classmates that I recall, have some small degree of interest in my own story.

I was not naturally gifted when I was at BHCHS – in anything as far as I can remember. In re-reading my report book, it seems that this opinion was shared pretty much by everyone, although Mr. Epps was bold enough to write "He will do well if he does so in time" – one of the more cryptic and ponderable of the wide range of comments that the résumé

of my school record contains. As I grow older the epithet seems to gain more urgency. Maybe now he would write, "He will retire well, if he does so in time."

My only talent seemed to come out somewhat in Chemistry; somehow it is amazing to think that "Please Send Charlie McClean A Zebra If The Lean Horse Can't Munch Sweet Pea Grass" would have such an impact on my future life, as, surprising many people, myself included, I received an "A" in chemistry (I would love to have seen John Lakeman's face!) – and headed off to study Molecular Sciences at Warwick University.

I had chosen Warwick, after much careful analysis, as having the best female to male ratio of any University that I could find. At the time it seemed like as good a criterion as any, and better than most.

So, OK. At this point you're saying to yourself, and calculating – he's 18 and off to University – holy crap, at this rate, this letter is going to be 57 pages long. Never fear. I've skipped all the gruesome bits. Hang in there. Some of you are probably saying, "He's lost his writing touch, and has an excessive use of hyphens and commas – probably become American." What writing touch? Mr. Ingram pointed that out clearly when he marked my 'play' – which had eight scenes and twenty lines of dialogue, and he called it "impractical" – or some such comment. It doesn't matter that, both in retrospect and at the time, he was right, somehow it hurt – I had, after all, done what was asked, and "done my best." That single comment stopped any serious writing attempts for the next twenty years.

All of life's transitions offer challenges. Going from school to university was wonderful (other than receiving the obligatory 'Dear John' letter, three weeks after my arrival) and I thoroughly enjoyed the widening opportunities. Somewhere in the early part of my second year, (or maybe the late part of my first year) the naked truth dawned on me. I was bored to tears with Chemistry! Fortunately, the universe has a way of stepping in, just when we need it, and I attended a class entitled "Group Theory and Molecular Structure." (What do you mean, you haven't a clue, and no interest, in what that's about?) Seriously, it was a life saver, as, eventually, it introduced

me to both the use of computers, and the use of computers to solve real problems – like the "Theoretical Calculation of the Madelung Constant for the Rubidium Azide Ion." (once again, your surprise surprises me – you mean you're not interested? – I bet Mr. Scott would be fascinated.) Yes, I'm amazed to say – there is a paper with my name on it with that title!

And so, I transferred to Computer Science. I might say this was against the advice of every 'grown up' (tutors, uncles, other chemists) that I conferred with, but was one of the better life decisions that I made. Some time after the transfer, I was asked to come back to our school and talk to the sixth form about the transition to University. When I mentioned my transfer of subject, I remember Mr. Colgate, with a leading question, asking "But didn't I suggest that, in general, boys should carefully pick the subject that they were going to study – and stick with?" By the look on his face, my simple "No!" response didn't go over well, and I was never asked back!

So as to introduce some brevity – graduated in Computer Science and Molecular Science, hated my first job (they had hired me for my Computer Science degree but had no idea of what to do with it, and no intention of leveraging anyone with such a qualification) hated my second job (why is it that everybody else found their career passion straight away but not me?) and finally landed a job I liked, with a weird start-up called Computer Technology Limited. It was a sort of early version of a Silicon Valley start-up, but in the somewhat less exotic location of Hemel Hempstead.

OK. Not particularly brief. Let me try again. Got married, got separated, moved to Holland, got divorced, disagreed with the fundamental philosophy of the company that had portrayed what I was going to be working on as ooops, there I go again – too much detail. Resigned, found another job, and stayed in Holland for a further nine months before moving to Belgium, with an opportunity to open my own consulting practice. Consulted, and loved Belgium as a place to eat and drink – but hated the weather! Mr. Leek taught us much about OS maps, isobars, and terminal moraine, but I don't recall covering the miserable climate of Belgium. 49 days of rain

during the latter part of 1980 convinced me that Bruxelles was not the place for me.

The universe presents us with many 'sliding door' moments. Those are the moments when a small and apparently unimportant decision, word, or action has an immense impact on subsequent life outcomes. My girl friend and I were in our last days in Belgium, when such a moment arose. I was asked to consult with Apple Computer as it was starting up in Europe. I responded by saying that I was heading for Phoenix, Arizona. Great – was the reply – we want someone to act as liaison between us (Europe) and California.

Brevity: Joined Apple (unfortunately post IPO, hence why I am still working) had a blast for nine years, ran I.T. worldwide, fell out of favor with Steve Jobs, got married, got separated, moved out of I.T. and transferred into Human Resources where I ran Apple University's Leadership Development practice for 3 years, got divorced, and finally left in 1989 to, once again, set up my own consulting practice. During this time, I was lucky enough to get to Hong Kong and meet up with John Spinks. John, I hope you are doing well and are having a wonderful time.

The following twelve years are a blur – consulted, got married twice, got separated twice, did executive coaching, got divorced twice, strategic planned, and helped to upsize, downsize and rightsize. En route, I carried out consulting assignments in various parts of the U.S., Alaska, Philippines, and Aberdeen – the only place where I have seen snow blow sideways – and, finally, ran a worldwide commercial real estate firm.

More recently I have, finally, found the love of my life. We then moved to Las Vegas, where I ran an executive coaching and consulting practice, and moved back to California a few years later – we hated the corruption that we found in Las Vegas. (3 out of 7 County Commissioners in Clark county under indictment or in or going to jail – and a fourth under strong suspicion when we left)

En route, I have been asked many times whether I would become an American citizen, and for much of my time I replied in the negative based on the principles that I did not wish to run for public office, and was happy to be deported if I committed

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a felony. I knew that I would be able to vote if I became a citizen, but hadn't seen anyone worth voting for. In 2003 that changed and I found someone worth voting against, so became a citizen the following year just in time for the Presidential election.

I am now doing what I love doing, having co-founded a consulting, strategic planning and executive coaching practice just south of Silicon Valley. Recently, I have had my first assignments in sub-Saharan Africa – and they have turned out to have had some of the greatest impact of any projects of my career.

So I wish I could end this missive with a pithy statement about school, classmates and/or teachers. I can't. The impact that BHCHS had on all of my life is impossible to estimate. When I read the reports about the masters that we had, and reflect back, one by one, on the influence that they had, it is immense but truly incalculable. People tell me that one of the signature characteristics in my consulting, is my ability to listen, understand translate and facilitate tough conversations. My first exposure to the Socratic process was at school – I still remember the UDI debate in the school library - and my first clear recollection of someone actively facilitating open discussions was Hugh Colgate, in some of our sixth form forums (sorry, fora!)

The beginnings of my own belief that I could actually actively participate in these discussions was brought out when a new, youthful English master (whose name is escaping me as I write this) brought a record player and a Bob Dylan album into English class and asked what we all thought that Dylan was trying to say?

In 1967, Rob Terwey, John Spinks and I took a car trip to go camping in Devon – and ended up in Torquay, outside of a Palais de Dance. The band that was playing (I think we called them groups in those days) was a strange one with a strange name – Pink Floyd. The entry ticket was six shillings – and we thought that was way too much money. Rob, ever the enthusiastic negotiator, asked two girls to join us and bartered with the bouncer to get us all in for one pound. It seemed like a bargain at the time, until the girls later disappeared. I bring this band up so that I can end with some of their great words – “Thought I'd something more to say.”

Happy to be in touch with anyone – phildixon1@mac.com

An Ounce of Prevention

By David Woollard (BHCHS 1952-59)



David Woollard with wife Sara at their home in California

HAVING survived prostate cancer surgery since 1998 at age 57, I was saddened to read of more Old Boys succumbing to the disease. I want to pass on what I learned from my own experience.

I first became aware of prostate cancer about 30 years ago when my father in law was diagnosed. This gave me a heads up to have my first PSA test in my late 40's and I then had a base line reading for future reference. All was fine in annual tests until about 2 years before diagnosis, when the PSA score accelerated from 3.2 to 5.3. Overall PSA readings may increase with age, but a rapid acceleration usually means a change is occurring (not always cancer, can be an infection). Like

some other cancers, prostate cancer may have no obvious symptoms, sometimes until it is too late.

Based on the school closing in 1989 most of us are old enough to need to know what our individual PSA score is. Even in your 40's it's important to know your actual PSA score. Don't let anyone discourage you from being tested. One friend had surgery at 47. The earlier you are diagnosed and treated, the better the long term results are thought to be.

Your PSA score is important because it's generally believed it may signal cancer development. A base-line PSA score will be invaluable for your doctor to determine what might

be happening when you take a later test. The other reason is to establish the rate at which the score may be accelerating. eg: if your score is now 2, but next year it's 4, something is rapidly changing and needs to be checked. PSA readings under 4 were historically thought to be OK, but because PSA levels rise with age, a score over 2.0 in your 40's may be high, whereas a reading of 4 may be normal in your 60's.

The PSA test is a simple blood test that will detect any sign of potential prostate cancer cells. This test is not 100% foolproof, but if your doctor has any doubts, a repeat test will be done. If there is still doubt, a simple biopsy will confirm the diagnosis.

Some good news. Even since 1998, there have been several new treatment techniques developed that make dealing with this much better, including one method using high intensity focussed ultrasound (H.I.F.U.) technology that requires no invasive surgery and a faster recovery time. Side effects may also be less. Laparoscopic techniques are also being tested.

More good news! Overall rates for many cancers are declining, including prostate cancer. One of the reasons is early detection and treatment. As we all know by now, in life there are few guarantees, but you may improve your odds by making that appointment to be tested.

There are many good books on this subject and plenty of information on the Web including national Cancer Society sites.

Hope this insight is helpful. You can reach me at daveyw@sbcglobal.net if you would like to discuss from a patient's perspective.

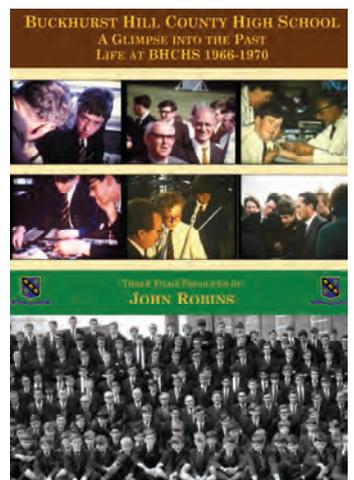
OBA Shop



The distinctive and high-quality OBA silk tie, featuring the school crest and motto, continues to be popular. I am amazed by the number of family members who read these columns, judging by the steady flow of orders requested as gifts. The tie is only **£10 (including postage)**.

We have now sold almost 300 copies of the DVD *A Glimpse into the Past*. I have a limited number remaining. The DVD contains three cine films (total length 55 minutes) shot by former teacher **John Robins** between 1966 and 1970.

The price is **£5.73 (including postage to UK addresses) or £6.84 (overseas)**. Orders for ties or DVDs to Graham Frankel.



Another Time, Another Place

By Keith Madgwick (BHCHS 1942-49)

Dr Keith Madgwick, who has lived in Canada for many years, wrote the following as one of a series of short stories for his grandchildren.

MY FATHER had attended Ilford County High School whose rival was Wanstead County High School. So, because of this rivalry, although we now lived in Wanstead, he preferred for me to attend Buckhurst Hill CHS, which was five miles away and out a few miles into the countryside, so a little safer from bombing. It was a new school that had opened only

four years earlier. I had to travel by train with a 15 minute walk, or by bus with a 20 minute walk, or bicycle the whole way. I did each in turn, but went by train most often. There were no school buses.



We had to wear school uniform, which was short grey pants, navy blue blazer with badge on the breast pocket, white shirt and blue and yellow striped tie. We were supposed to always wear a navy blue cap with the school badge, on our way to and from school, on pain of detention if we were seen without it by a teacher. I only wore long pants when I was in the upper forms (grades).

Although it was a boys' school, many of the men teachers had joined the armed forces so we had mostly lady teachers. I attended there for seven years and my favorite subjects were art and geometry but I also enjoyed geography, history and general science. Our head master was Mr JH Tay-

lor nicknamed "Spud" because of his pink bald head that looked like a red potato. BHCHS was in nearly new buildings with large playing fields and in a country setting. However, it was still wartime during the first few years I was there. In the playground there were brick and concrete air raid shelters, and we periodically had shelter drill, to make sure

everyone got to the shelters quickly in case of a raid.

We had a dining hall where lunches were served at two shillings and six pence a week (about \$2.50), and every morning we were each given one third of a pint of milk to drink. The milk was not chilled or particularly tasty, but when there were shortages of food it would have been unpatriotic not to drink it up.

In the school there were woodworking shops, but because of the war there were no available materials or teachers, so we never had carpentry or metalwork lessons. Classes stayed together and each year we had to take lessons in all subjects. After the first year the A stream took Latin, the B stream took German, and the Cs extra Mathematics and English. PE and sports were compulsory, but only those who got onto school teams went on Saturday for games against

other schools. In winter we played soccer, or cross country running in spring, and in the summer term cricket, however badly you played. The whole school met for Prayers (assembly) every morning.

My academic career was marked by persistence rather than brilliance and I always felt I was struggling to keep up with others in the A stream. However, because I liked books I managed after a while to become a Library Monitor and thus could go to the Library most days instead of the playing field after lunch.

The teacher I remember best was Mr Wigley who was our history teacher and form master three years in a row. When he came into the classroom and told us he would be our form master for the third year, the whole class groaned in unison. I now hope we didn't hurt his feelings too much because we could have had much worse.

Spud Taylor, the headmaster, taught us Religious Instruction. His own religion was golf. His father had been British Open Golf Champion five times, and he himself had played for Oxford University. I explained his teaching to my parents by telling them that he taught evolution, but put God in the place of the missing link (a popular idea today).

The teacher we most feared was Mr Steele, a tall, thin, dour man who was the assistant head teacher and who looked as if he had a chronic stomach ulcer (I wonder now if he did). One day I was running along a corridor with my head down (running was forbidden) and barrelled right into his stomach. I did survive. Maybe he was too winded to say much.

There was also "Basher Bill" Ward who periodically dealt well-deserved clips around the ear. He taught us mathematics in a broad Lancashire

accent by telling us to "work it out in oranges." He was also known to tell students: "Eh, lad, you're proper daft, you're so daft you don't know you're daft, y'ought to be in Claybury, lad." Claybury was the local mental hospital.

My favourite subjects were art and geometry. I was not good at all in languages and in the School Certificate exams (= grade twelve) I failed both English and Latin. I got a credit in French but only because Mr May – our teacher in that subject – pushed us very hard. In fact it was said that the other teachers complained their homework wasn't done on time because we had to do our French first or face Mr May's displeasure! I repeated English, and second time around got a Credit.

After School Certificate I stayed on for another two years in the "sixth form". Although I had dreamed of becoming an architect, for which I would have needed more math, my parents expected me to become a medical doctor, so I found myself taking botany and zoology with Mr Shillito. He had red hair and a bad temper, and had discovered a new species of mosquito in Africa. I don't remember him as a very good teacher, but maybe that was because I wasn't a very good student. I also took physics and chemistry for the Pre-med course.

In high school I often felt depressed and overwhelmed. I felt peculiar and a little lonely, as much of the time I was the only Adventist in the school, and couldn't take part in inter-school or other events on Saturdays. I was sometimes teased because of my slightly Irish accent. Today I am thankful to my teachers for giving me an excellent education in spite of myself. I also made a few good friends who I still contact occasionally.

From the Editor's Postbag.....

Straightening the Record

Alan Boyce (1943-50)

I'm sorry to have been instrumental in Ralph Steele's put-down of David Walling (BHCHS and Beyond, May 2008). I feel a vague belated guilt at having snitched on him, although I have no recollection of the incident; however Steele was intimidating enough for me not to have risked being more evasive in my response. By contrast, in the same issue of the News John Burrow puts himself down (Where are they now?). His lamented Speech Day appearance was not a complete non-starter; he got a good way into the messenger's speech from Medea before drying at pater de ho; he was rescued by an urgent stage-whisper of the next word kleemon from (almost certainly) Samways himself, who would have been on the platform behind. John thought later that this untypical lapse had been triggered by the first onset of polio. And he had no need to swot. At best the rest of us in the Sixth with him had beta-plus brains; John's was an alpha. And he completely fails to mention his First in English.

Flying Board Rubbers (1)

Colin Overy (1953-60)

I recall a board rubber being hurled rearwards by a forward facing maths teacher - Wocko I believe. Unbelievably deadly blind aim. Rubber is deflected by boy and impacts window, breaking it. The incredible upshot was that initially, the boy was given the bill for repairing the window! I don't think he ever paid for it, I wonder if Wocko did?

Flying Board Rubbers (2)

Brian Boothroyd

Latin 1970-79

As a young teacher at BHCHS I had the occasional problem to cope with, and I recall to my chagrin that, in one of my Latin lessons, a boy was not attending, so to wake him up I threw a board-duster in his direction. Bear in mind these board rubbers were about 6 inches long and

quite heavy, and had a hook at the end. Unfortunately he moved his head and the board duster ricocheted off the desk and impaled itself in his scalp! It could have been worse! I can only think that I was very lucky (as was the student - I think his name was Bell).

Hugh Colgate was very good - he made his peace with the parents, and gave me, deservedly, a big bollocking!

What a pity that Harry Samways didn't have an opportunity to coach his young successor in the art of controlling indolent Latin classes with humour. - Ed.

Career Stimulus

Roger Lewis (1967-69)

I was very pleased to see that you had included the BHCHS production of *The Fireraisers* by Max Frisch in your article about drama at Buckhurst Hill. I played the Chief Fireman and am standing next to Philip Hinds in the photograph. That production set me on a teaching career, from which I have recently retired, closely linked to drama and the performing arts. I still run a drama club at the local primary school.

I would be very grateful therefore if you could forward a copy of the photograph to share with the children in the club and keep as a memento for future reference.

I was pleased to send Roger the photo. If any readers have got any photos of drama productions after 1970 I would be pleased to hear. The drama series will be continued in the next edition. - Ed.

Chance Meeting

Brian Peck (1949-54)

While on a cruise circumnavigating the British Isles in July, I engaged a person on my right and after a few pointed exchanges he turned out to be Alan Leggatt (1947). Even though this was a brief encounter, and Fisticroffs were not exchanged, it does prove that BHCHS lives!!

Brian and Alan currently live about 5,300 miles apart! - Ed.

The Mysterious Duchess

Clive Greenwood (1952-59)

When I was growing up in Woodford Green in the late 1940's and the 1950's, we used to see from time to time near Woodford Green station and the nearby shopping parades a rather singular-looking lady.

As far as my memory can serve, she always wore a full-length satiny gown, rather faded green in colour, carried a rolled parasol, had her greying hair piled up on her head, wore dark glasses, and powdered her face white, giving her a rather ghostly impression. Rumour had it that she had lost a husband or a son in the war and went regularly to the station to see if he was perchance arriving back home. My mother referred to this enigmatic lady as 'The Duchess', as much for her upright gait as for her stagy finery.

My brother John also remembers her and added that her gown was short-sleeved but she always wore elbow-length gloves. He also says that when he was in a shop in the Birmingham area, some years ago, telling someone about this eccentric lady, a listener piped up: "I remember her - I grew up in Woodford."

John added that Peter Haining might possibly have been able to discover more information about this mystery.

I wonder if any other Old Bucks from the area of the station and Snakes Lane can recall this lady and, if so, whether they can throw any light on her identity?

Reading Clive's letter for the first time sent a shiver down my spine. I remembered this lady well, even though we moved away from the Woodford Green area when I was five. I found her appearance very disturbing, and my mother tells me this was also her reaction. I am aware that there was some correspondence about the lady in the local Guardian earlier this year, but don't know if any conclusions were reached as to her identity. - Ed.

Football Then... and Now

Peter Wright (1946-52)

Following my earlier letter ("Football Connections", *OB News*, May 2008) I was sad to read of the death of Gordon Hartnell. His name brought back more memories of Old Bucks soccer in the '50's. Gordon was our goalkeeper in the 2nd XI at that time - and very good he was too.

However, his main claim to fame at that time was that his father had a car, possibly an Austin A40 or something similar and often came to watch us play (well it was better than Arsenal or Tottenham!), including some away matches. It has to be remembered that in those days, unlike today, young men simply didn't have motor cars, we had to rely on buses and trains; if I had a pound for every time I waited at Waterworks Corner with assorted other Old Bucks for a bus to take us round to the furthest reaches of the North Circular, then I would be a rich man. Gordon's father, then, was like manna from Heaven - we must have frequently broken the world record for the number of young men that could be squeezed into an A40 plus football gear - because he would cram in as many of us as possible, and usually more than that, to go to the match. I suppose today's health and safety commissars and police would have cracked down on this but to us, it was harmless fun and all part of Saturday afternoons.

Many people of my age look back on those days with nostalgic affection through the proverbial rose tinted spectacles but I wouldn't change any of it. Recently I took my son's dogs for a walk to the local football pitch one Saturday, where a game was in progress; it was more or less the football that we used to play; well, I was quite frightened just standing on the touchline - the verbal and physical aggression was beyond belief. I now look back on my days in the London Old Boys League with even greater affection than before.

Obituary

David Johnson OBE



DAVID JOHNSON joined the school in 1945 along with six other boys from Princes Road Junior School in Buckhurst Hill. David was always known to his classmates as 'Doc', a nickname which owed as much to his studious and academic demeanour as it did to the literary associations of his surname. He quickly made his mark as one of the cleverest boys in his year and was always in contention for end of year prizes.

It came as no surprise when David chose arts subjects in the sixth form and he went on to win prizes in both History and English Literature in the first 'A' level examinations in 1951. In his final year at school he became Third Prefect and Library Prefect, and also editor of the *Roding* magazine, a role to which he brought all his customary quiet efficiency and

skill.

On leaving school, David went to University College, London, where he was recognised as one of the outstanding students of his year. His subsequent career as historian and archivist is admirably summarised in the obituary which appeared in *The Times* and which is available online. During his time as an archivist to parliament, many of his old school friends enjoyed his personal guidance around the Palace of Westminster.

Three of his former classmates attended David's funeral in the chapel at Kingston crematorium. During the ceremony, one of his professional associates described David as 'a modest man with much to be proud of' - a sentiment which all of his friends would thoroughly endorse.

Geoff Harrington

Mike Playle

Although an obituary to Mike Playle (1950) appeared in the last edition I am grateful to **Jeff Meddings (1949)** for writing this more personal tribute.

THERE will be sadness among contemporaries who knew Mike Playle during the 1950s, that he has recently lost his extended battle against cancer. It was significant that, having been diagnosed as 'terminal' but ten months after his retirement from a career of fifty years in the brewing industry, his medical team expressed their astonishment at his determined and prolonged survival over the next eight years. Those closer to him, particularly his wife Lola and their three sons, will have regarded his dogged and courageous fight to stay with the people and the countryside that he cherished as being typical of the man they knew.

Those who knew Mike at school will recall a quiet, modest, even shy individual possibly 'laid back' in the parlance of today - but who was firm, confident in his abilities and happy in keeping his own council. Never one to court popularity, he nevertheless enjoyed companionship and gained the respect of his peers through his unassuming manner and amused observations on life around him. His skills were individualistic, providing pleasure throughout his life and he gained quiet satisfaction from the recognition that these received. As a gifted craftsman in wood, he was awarded the annual woodworking prize during his junior years and he was also an accomplished artist whose penchant for cartooning provided him with the perfect medium for expressing his sense of humour. This was very keen and he shared with Giles of the *Daily Express* the ability to portray this accurately in swift line and composition. It was so natural to him that it tended to invade his other work and he was prone to relieve the tedium of everyday toil with a visual satire or two. I recall his enhancement of an earthworm dissection diagram during one of our Zoology sessions by adding sleepy eyes, a bulbous nose and a loopy grin.... Mr Turner was not amused!

I did not really get to know Mike until the sixth form and came to appreciate how in tune he was with nature at a time when the term 'environmentalist' was likely to court attention from MI5 or whatever they called themselves in those days. From their earliest relationship at the tender age of twelve, however, Mike and Lola shared a love of nature and the countryside and it was a natural progression for this to

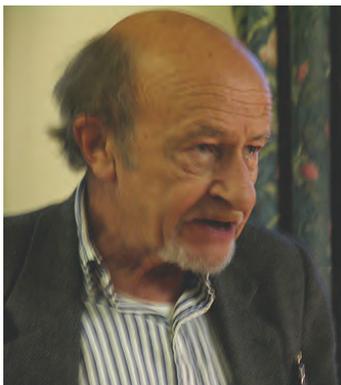
develop and for them to become dedicated and active environmentalists. Mike told me once that he had sat up all night on badger watch at a secluded sett that he had located in Epping Forest. Apparently hours passed with nothing happening; then he confessed, "I must have fallen asleep." You can guess the outcome - waking up to find fresh traces of badger activity all over the place! I never learned whether he had bothered to repeat the exercise.

His chosen occupation would be regarded, I imagine, by most Old Bucks as an Elysian expedition. He joined the brewing industry! Starting as a lab technician he demonstrated an early vocational compulsion and derived from appointments, first in London and then in Norwich, the impetus (or should one say 'fermentation') to gain in record time BSc and MSc qualifications in Brewing Science. This success led to his appointment in 1969 as Head Brewer for Bass in Belfast and, at 30, this made him the youngest head brewer in the industry. It was a career move that fulfilled his ambitions and he remained there until retirement. He was appointed to the Board of Directors and ultimately assumed responsibility for production and distribution throughout the whole of Ireland.

Obviously, this entailed a family move to Northern Ireland and, whilst one can imagine apprehensions over life in that troubled country at that time, it is testimony to their human qualities that they were able to bridge any political or social divides. Initially in Lisburn, the family moved to an historic Georgian manor house in Dundrum in 1972, the idyll for Mike and Lola. Not only did it provide the setting for them to complete their careers, for Mike it proved a haven from where he could indulge his interests and passion for family and nature amid the glories of the Irish countryside and this, essentially, is to sum up the qualities of the man. At the close of the 60s I lost touch with Mike for many years, but it gave me enormous pleasure to renew our friendship - sadly only over the telephone - I never did make it to Northern Ireland to see him.

My memories of Mike are of a quiet, human and determined individual who, with his gentle nature and unique concern for people and his surroundings, was able to amuse and endear him to those fortunate enough to have known him. The world is a lesser place without him.

Michael Standen



MICHAEL STANDEN (BHCHS 1948-54) died suddenly following a heart attack on 1st June 2008.

He was an accomplished writer, beginning as a novelist and turning in more recent years to poetry. Michael's working life was in Further and Adult Education in the North of England. He became District Secretary of the Workers Educational Association (WEA) - Northern District, in 1977, retiring in 1995. He continued to teach literature to adult students, and was preparing a new autumn course this year for Darlington and Newcastle. Michael began to write as a child - his first novel was published in 1965. The following year he won a Cheltenham Literature Festival prize for his poem - 18th Century Print: a Barque leaving Whitehaven. He wrote short stories and poetry throughout his life and gave many readings in the UK and abroad. Michael was one of the editors of Other Poetry magazine and helped organise readings for Colpitts Poetry. He had recently returned from holiday with old friends in Italy and had spent the day reading in the garden, helping on the allotment and enjoying an evening out with family the day before he died. There are several excellent tributes to Michael on various literary websites, and also in *The Independent*. All of these can easily be found via Google.

Terrence Hardiman, who was Michael's close friend at BHCHS and at Cambridge University, writes.....

Michael and his family had lived in Durham for many years, where he continued to write, lecture, and give poetry readings after retiring from the WEA, and we stayed friends and in touch over the years since school and university days. I last met him and his wife, Val, when he read some of his poems at a venue in Camden, London, earlier this year, and we caught up on gossip and shared news of our respective families. He was always generously

interested in my professional career, and I found his novels and poetry fascinating and rewarding ever since he diffidently showed me his first efforts when we were at Buckhurst Hill. We shared an interest in sketching and painting as well as a deep dislike of 'games', especially cross-country-running, and we often managed to escape to the Art Room to work and 'study for A-level'. I have to admit, though, that he was always far better than me with the pencil and paintbrush, and when we were unable to avoid the cross-country he was able to beat me into next-to-last place!

I shall miss his warmth, wit, and wisdom.

We have learned of the following deaths....

Alan D Spearman (1938) died in 2005. He lived in Epping.

Michael V Barrett (1940) died in February 2008 after a long illness. He lived in Bishops Stortford.

Geoffrey B Salt (1940) died in April 2004. He lived in Ilford.

Roger F Tomlinson (1940) died in January 1990. He lived in Epping.

Ian F Dawes (1941) died in March 2002. He lived in Canterbury.

Ivor Foster (1941) died in February 2008. He had been ill for several years. Ivor was a long-standing member of the OBA.

Michael J Milbank (1944) died in December 2005. He lived in Rayleigh.

Bruce Aves (1947) died in March 2007 following a long illness. He had lived in Canada since 1953.

John Gordon (1947) died in February 2008 after a long illness. He lived near Norwich.

Bill Ollenbuttel (1947) died in January 2007. He lived in Bristol.

John Bennett (1955) died in April 2002 from brain cancer. He lived in Ascot.

Dave Burgess (1958) died in 2004 from prostate cancer. He lived in Barnstaple and was the brother of Colin Burgess (1962).

John Byatt (1962) died in March 2008. He lived in Hutton. Information from Phil Hinds.

Stuart Baillie (1984) died in November 2006 from asthma. Information from Giles Hemmings.

Chris Rowsell

CHRIS ROWSELL, who attended BHCHS from 1958-65, died suddenly in April 2007 following a brief illness.

He was Production Manager in the Faculty of Media, Arts and Society at Southampton Solent University.

The following obituary is taken from the university newsletter.....

After a wide ranging and varied career in television broadcasting, Chris joined what was then Southampton Institute in 1994 as Technical Operations Manager.

Chris played a key role in the Faculty since many of its most popular courses rely upon the facilities for which he was responsible. He man-

aged highly complex and ambitious technical projects and was responsible for a sophisticated technical support operation. Chris was passionate about his work which he saw as a vocation, rather than just a job; his dedication was undimmed even as his health began to fail. He was exceptionally generous with his time, was highly respected, and was popular with staff and students alike. He personified what is now known as a 'can do' attitude and had a mischievous sense of humour.

Chris's loss will be very keenly felt by the University, by those he worked with, and by the students who gained so much from his expertise and encouragement.

Peter Thorogood 1947-1998



PETER THOROGOOD (BHCHS 1958-65) was a distinguished Old Buck, whose outstanding career was tragically cut short in 1998 when he was killed in a climbing accident in the Swiss Alps. At the time of his death Peter was Professor of Developmental Biology at the Institute of Child Health, Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Peter was a pioneer in genetics, with a particular expertise in embryo development, and greatly admired both for his research and teaching.

The tragedy of Peter's death was included, in a rather cursory way, in the first edition of *OB News*. More recently, this item was spotted by Peter's mother Eileen Buckley, and I was pleased to hear from her and to receive photographs of Peter some of which are included here. Eileen remembers several of Peter's peers at BHCHS and



Peter Thorogood aged 14

will be interested to make contact with any of his friends from school.

Please let me know if you would like to be put in touch with Eileen.



This photograph appeared in a brochure published for the opening of a new building at Great Ormond Street Hospital. Peter's death August 1998 occurred almost exactly a year after that of Diana, Princess of Wales, who was President of Great Ormond Street Hospital.