

OLD BUCKWELLIANS NEWS



Moving On - GrExit Time

After 16 years of editing *OB News* I have decided it is time for a change. I gave this decision much thought – it is not easy to walk away from an enjoyable job, but I feel it is time for a new challenge, and I need to create some time to pick up a new project that I started but has got pushed to the back burner. *OB News* and the OBA are both thriving, and membership has been maintained at a very healthy level, particularly given the inevitable decline in the numbers of our older members.

So this is a great opportunity for someone (or perhaps more than one person) to become involved in maintaining our

network and disseminating the news.

I felt it was only fair to give my colleagues on the committee plenty of notice, so my plan is to continue for three further editions after this one unless we appoint a new editor earlier. I would give full support to the new editor during the transition, and then continue with further support if needed.

During 16 years I have made many new friends and acquaintances from among the thousands of Old Bucks and their families, and I have no wish to break those ties.

Along with editing *OB News* there are, of course, other as-

sociated jobs. You will find them listed on a special insert.

Among our members there are many well-qualified potential successors who could bring a fresh perspective. If that sounds like you I look forward to hearing from you – I promise that an initial discussion would be with no obligation.

I do urge you to consider whether you could help us - the continuation of the OBA depends on volunteers taking on these tasks.

Meanwhile, as always, please continue sending me your news and I welcome your comments about this edition.

Graham Frankel

November 2015

Number 33



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Old Buckwellians News



"We do have this one vital thing in common: at some time (it matters not when) we all spent a few years at the School. We will all spend a great many years away from it. It is only through the Association that we have this last frail link."

Roding Magazine, 1956

Old Buckwellians News

is published twice yearly in May and November by the Old Buckwellians Association. Join the Association to receive future editions. Contact the Editor (see below) for all subscription enquiries.

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www.bhchs.co.uk

Back issues:

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News

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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Stats Update

It's a while since this table was published in OB News. It shows the latest information on how many we have traced from each year group, and how many have subscribed.

Start Year	Intake Note 1	To be Found Note 2	Deceased	% Found	Overseas Note 3	Members Note 4	Members % Note 4
1938	94	16	56	83	5	15	68
1939	87	9	39	90	4	23	59
1940	83	10	35	88	5	31	82
1941	102	9	49	91	9	33	75
1942	96	10	39	90	7	36	77
1943	89	8	28	91	2	42	79
1944	94	3	37	97	10	32	59
1945	93	2	39	98	7	43	83
1946	103	9	32	91	7	44	71
1947	108	16	23	85	11	45	65
1948	102	18	27	82	14	38	67
1949	102	6	24	94	13	62	86
1950	102	16	18	84	10	41	60
1951	102	10	24	90	10	47	69
1952	100	12	15	88	11	47	64
1953	123	14	17	89	16	60	65
1954	113	13	18	88	13	54	66
1955	105	9	13	91	13	52	63
1956	102	4	10	96	15	59	67
1957	103	0	15	100	15	49	56
1958	133	6	14	95	10	74	65
1959	101	3	6	97	6	73	79
1960	102	8	9	92	13	45	53
1961	101	2	9	98	19	64	71
1962	97	6	6	94	11	59	69
1963	85	4	4	95	7	38	49
1964	79	2	6	97	7	45	63
1965	83	5	2	94	7	38	50
1966	88	2	5	98	12	46	57
1967	98	4	5	96	7	45	51
1968	87	7	4	92	4	48	63
1969	99	6	4	94	8	41	46
1970	91	2	1	98	12	45	51
1971	94	4	4	96	10	46	53
1972	91	7	4	92	8	37	46
1973	77	0	2	100	7	42	56
1974	82	6	0	93	9	28	37
1975	64	6	2	91	4	19	34
1976	134	20	4	85	7	34	31
1977	135	24	8	82	13	28	27
1978	123	15	0	88	11	37	34
1979	133	27	5	80	10	25	25
1980	119	33	2	72	4	12	14
1981	126	28	4	78	4	15	16
1982	120	18	0	85	7	22	22
1983	114	32	1	72	4	8	10
1984	123	43	2	65	3	8	10
1985	91	19	1	79	4	9	13
Totals	4873	533	672	89	425	1884	51

Notes

- 1 "Intake" includes pupils joining later than the first year
- 2 Our website has a complete list of those still to be found. See the page "Updates on the Search"
- 3 Includes deceased
- 4 Excludes members now deceased

Back Numbers

Copies of all earlier editions are still available - either digitally or in printed form. Contact the Editor for more information.



BUCKS FIZZ

News and notes about Old Bucks

Sidney Alford OBE



Congratulations to **Sidney Alford (1946)** who was awarded the OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours this year. A world-renowned expert in explosives, and the safe disposal of them, Sidney has made many TV appearances. The clip is from a two hour documentary made for the History Channel on the historical, cultural, medical, and evolutionary importance of....excrement.

Dibble on Carols



Jeremy Dibble (1970) will be returning to his home village of Theydon Bois to give a talk on the origin and development of the Christmas Carol during evensong at St Mary's Church on Sunday 13th December.

Jeremy, who is professor of music at Durham University, is well qualified for the task, having made a special study of hymns and carols. He appeared in a BBC *Songs of Praise* special a few years ago explaining some interesting facts - such as the original tune for *While Shepherds Watched...* was probably *On Ilkley Moor Baht 'at*.

Ancient Discovery in Somerset



Phil Harding (1969) appeared on BBC Local TV earlier this year when a fellow resident of Saltford in North Somerset discovered an ancient Carthaginian coin on the banks of the Avon. The Saltford Environment Group, of which Phil is the Chair, investigated the coin

with help from experts at the British Museum and it turned out to be one of the oldest coins ever found in Britain. If you would like to know how the copper coin, struck in the Western Mediterranean area around 300BC, made its way to Somerset, take a look at Phil's superb Saltford Environment Group website:

www.saltfordenvironmentgroup.org.uk



Election Round Up: Gapes Bucks the Trend

All three of "our" MPs held on to their seats at the May General Election.

In the blue corner, **David Evennett (1960)** held on at Bexleyheath & Crayford, albeit with a slightly reduced majority, and **Stephen Metcalfe (1977)** held off a UKIP challenge at South Basildon & East Thurrock. Labour MP **Mike Gapes (1964)** (see photo) stormed home in Ilford South with a significantly increased majority. David Evennett, who in March had become the first Old Buck to be appointed as a Privy Councillor, has also been re-appointed as a Government Whip after the General Election.

All that means we are still waiting for our first Lib Dem MP and it looks like we shall need to be patient on that score.

Another Old Buck made a bid for parliament this time. **John Marett (1953)**, leader of the Sustainable Population Party, stood for the Maldon constituency but sadly lost his deposit.

Thanks to various readers who drew my attention to a curious feature in the *London Evening Standard* which listed BHCHS among the schools that had generated most London MPs. Eton was way out ahead with seven MPs but BHCHS was joint second with no fewer than nine other schools (including Chiggers), most of the others being from the independent sector.



Mike Gapes



David Evennett



Stephen Metcalfe

Film of the Day

Sunday 17

BARRY NORMAN

FILM OF THE DAY

Made in Dagenham ★★★★★

10.00-11.45pm **BBC2**

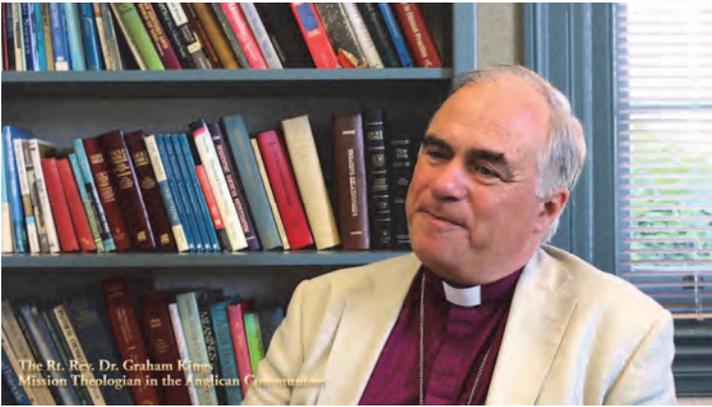
COMEDY DRAMA BBC Films contributes to the making of about eight films a year and this (showing today to celebrate 25 years of the BBC's film production arm) is one of the most enjoyable - the story of a strike that changed the law. In 1968 at the Ford plant in Dagenham, the women who sewed the car seats (here led by Sally Hawkins) struck for equal pay. Little wonder. They were paid as unskilled and worked in such heat that they had to strip down to bra and knickers. Ranged against them was the firm's male chauvinist management, plus Hawkins's own husband (Daniel Mays). Fortunately, they had strong allies; not just Bob Hoskins, a union official who'd found his feminine side, but also

DID YOU KNOW?

Sandi Shaw, who sings the title song, worked at the Ford Dagenham factory after leaving school, until she began her singing career

Good to see that *Made in Dagenham*, the excellent film directed by **Nigel Cole (1968)**, is still getting well-deserved recognition. It was chosen recently by Barry Norman as his film of the day in *Radio Times*. Nigel has made a couple more films since 2010 but more recently has turned his attention to TV, directing several episodes of *Doc Martin* and *Last Tango in Halifax*.

Bishop's Move



Graham Kings (1965), who became our first bishop in 2009 when appointed as Bishop of Sherborne, took up a new post in July 2015 as Mission Theologian in the Anglican Communion. This is a new venture being run as a three-way partnership between the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Church Mission Society and the University of Durham. His position will include elements of research, teaching and publishing, and he will run seminars for theologians.

Graham will be based in London but with frequent travel to Durham (where, no doubt, he may cross paths with **Jeremy Dibble** - see p.3) and also trips to Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Many Hands Make Pianos Work



The multi-handed two-piano recitals organised by **John Rippin** are still a popular feature at Chingford Parish Church, drawing large numbers of regular supporters. Since starting the series with **Don Ray** in 1998, the concerts have raised almost £20,000 for the East Anglian Children's Hospices.

How six performers manage to play simultaneously on two pianos is amazing, but they do it every year with great panache. Apart from John, there were again two other Old Bucks in the line up at their latest recital in January 2015: **Terence Atkins (1958)** and **Geoffrey Pratley (1951)**. Once again there was a fair turnout of Old Bucks in the audience and the music was much appreciated, as were the splendid home made biscuits donated by Ellen Long.

Parking Mad



Michael Owen (1967) recently led a campaign against Bristol council's controversial new scheme to restrict commuter parking in certain areas of the city. The scheme involved painting double yellow lines that are possibly the shortest in the country.

Michael appeared on the BBC local news coverage of the debate, and his point was amusingly made by his photo of an 8cm toy car parked (illegally) on one of the restricted zones.

Welcome Zosia



There are still some Old Bucks experiencing fatherhood for the first time. **James Rose (1987)** is seen here with his daughter Zosia who arrived on the scene in June. Congratulations to James and Lisa.

Triathlon Buddies



Great to see that some Old Bucks are still involved in sports as active as triathlon. **Simon Rose** (left) and **Stewart Tanner**, both from YOS 1977, found themselves competing against each other in a triathlon recently. Both are members of *Born2Tri* based at Braintree. Stewart is the treasurer of the club, which has around 180 members, and both he and Simon still somehow find the time and energy to compete regularly.

Tandeming is Twice the Fun



David Smith (1962) and his granddaughter Sophie joined more than 100 other cyclists taking part in a fund-raising cycle ride organised by CAFOD. A glorious June day saw David and Sophie on their tandem touring the towpaths of the Lee Valley Country Park raising money to help people living in poverty around the world.

ERRORS & OMISSIONS

- In the obituary for Brian Overy I gave his dates at BHCHS incorrectly - should be 1956-62.
- Two of the features planned for this edition - *Transports of Delight* and *Punishments* have been held over because I ran out of space. Please continue sending more anecdotes on both topics.
- *Where are they now?* - Missing for the first time since my first edition. It will return if I get updates from readers!

Reunions Galore



The 1966 year group have been marking their 60th birthdays. **Dick Gardner** recently celebrated his in style with a large group of friends in Dunstable. Guests included (l to r) **Kevin Carter, Dick, Phil Gould and Brian Jones**. Speeches recalled youthful indiscretions, especially during a holiday on the Norfolk Broads. Later in the evening, as both tiredness and emotion took over, the group reflected on missed opportunities during our time at the school, "if only we had worked harder in art..., music..., languages..., just about every subject..." and why all present had quit school before completing A levels and that, in spite of this waywardness, life had not turned out so bad. Even later, they reflected on the whereabouts of other members of the year group "whatever happened to..." and how we hoped to read about others from our year.



Stuart Low (1952) writes.....The Antipodean reunion was once again held at The Brewhouse, Darling Harbour in Sydney. We changed the date to the first Saturday in February. This resulted in two things - great weather and the availability of members who had not previously been able to attend. However, of course, there was a down side and some members couldn't make it.

Numbers were disappointing with only 18 including wives. But we had one new member - Richard Debnam - and three returnees from earlier reunions - Stuart Evans (on leave from his pipe band in Melbourne), Barry Stephens with his wife Yvonne, and Robin Alberry and his wife Eleanor.

Sadly we lost Roger Landbeck during the year and Michael Cooper was unable to come due to illness. However we did raise a glass (full of course) to them both.

We had a great time and caught up with the happenings of the last year. A major event of the day was the announcement by Paul and Emma Faithfull that next year hopefully we will have a new member to our gathering even if he or she arrives in a pram. Congratulations to them both.

I hope one year we will be able to get all the members who have attended in the past to make it for the reunion. If so we could see over 30 (including partners) sitting round the table recounting academic and sporting prowess that never saw the light of day whilst at school!

We have now had nine gatherings since the inaugural meeting in Sydney in 2007 and with 24 different OBs that is nearly 25% of OBs in this vast land of Australia. With mini reunions in Western Australia and in Sydney with overseas visitors we could add another six.

Next year's reunion will once again be the first Saturday in February - the 6th. I am also investigating a different venue but within spitting distance of the Brewhouse.

Attendees included: **Barry Stephens (1951), Bill Hardwick (1956), Bill Matthews (1945), Chris Aplin (1949), Richard Debnam (1950), Grahame Clarke (1953), Paul Faithfull (1988), Phil Harper (1957), Robin Alberry (1946), Stuart Evans (1953), Stuart Low (1952).**



A gathering of Old Bucks from YOS 1956 took place in Sawbridgeworth in July. In the photo, left to right: **Malcolm Clark, Dave Hopkin, Dave Blythe, Ron Davis (1958), John Berrett, Mick Carter, Steve Hyam, Dave Cross, Terry Hall.**

Mick Carter tells me that Christine Carter, ably assisted by Ann Scott, served a superb lunch. Plenty of beer and wine was consumed - so much so that the group finished up by singing the first verse of the School Song. Sadly their performance was not recorded.



The **Gardeners Arms** in Loughton was the meeting place for a group marking 30 years from leaving the sixth form which was by then combined with Loughton CHS. Left to right: **Gareth Griffith, Bruce McLean, Jonathan Jacques, Stuart McGregor, Fenella Tallon, Ruth Stranack (now Ballestas), Carl Willson.** I understand a larger reunion of this group is planned - to contact them see the *Class of 1985* group on Facebook.



Three school mates from the 1974-81 contingent met in Notting Hill recently when **Paul Osbourne** (centre) had returned from New Zealand for his brother's wedding and took the chance to catch up with **Jon Hunn** (left) and **Steve Edwards**.

Facing the Music

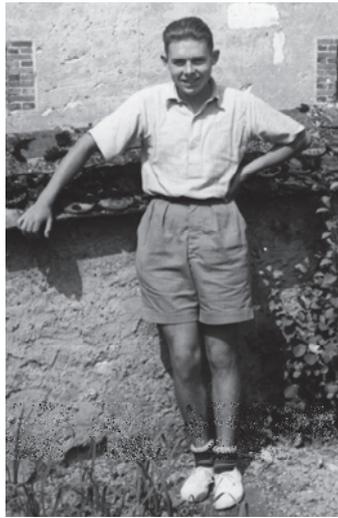
By Dennis Carney (BHCHS 1947 - 54)



AFTER spending seemingly endless hours in air raid shelters in school playgrounds in the early 1940s, they were happy days in the immediate post-war years, but pupils in the 1947 intake as a consequence of so much missed education were not rated as a strong cohort academically, as the 1952 school certificate results seemed to confirm. I was no exception to this and having no penchant for sport my interest was towards music, and having been born with what musicians call "perfect pitch", a career in music was my overriding ambition, so I was much indebted to Bob Wright and Don Ray, as well as to my private piano teacher, one Primrose Clarke of Wanstead.

The school orchestra and the

choir were weekly extra-curricular activities, giving regular performances at Christmas, in the summer term and at Speech Days. Not playing an orchestral instrument my role was as pianist in the orchestra and accompanist for the choir, and in later years, in the absence of the music teacher the Headmaster would ask me to play at assembly, not just the hymn, but also some "in and out" music and occasionally to provide a musical item. Playing in front of the whole school



was a daunting experience, but good training I guess for later student days. In the early 50s Gordon Mead, a teacher with a fine voice, formed a madrigal group, performing to a very high

standard and proving popular with pupils, promoting essentially Tudor music. As this was unaccompanied I was happy to make a vocal contribution. So we musicians were provided with opportunities to pursue our minority interests.

The House System provided a convenient way of organising competitive sport and "Cock House" each year depended on results in the numerous sporting activities. By the early 1950s Chigwell House had never attained this accolade, but by a remarkable coincidence the majority of instrumentalists were members of Chigwell, so when an Inter-House Music Cup was presented to the School by the parents of Campbell Matthews (1944) it came as no surprise Chigwell were clear winners for three years running.

I missed National Service (by failing the medical due to a knee problem) and so it was in 1954 I became the first pupil from the School to gain entry to the Royal Academy of Music, duly presenting a crest, now sadly gone missing. In the same year another pupil, Allan Charlwood (1945), achieved entry to the Royal College of Music. I studied piano with York Bowen and composition with the Russian composer Manuel Frankell, but my interest pointed towards teaching and I qualified in 1957.

My career took quite an unortho-



dox course. The first eighteen years of teaching were spent in junior schools at Walthamstow, Harold Hill and Fairlop, and I was amazed at just how high a standard in music children in this age group could reach. Either through private teaching or from Fairlop Junior School, a good number of pupils attended BHCHS and were able to continue contributing widely to music. Among them were Chris Rowland (1958), Philip Lewis (1958), Chris Patient (1967), Richard Friend (1967), Greg Sharp (1967), Martin Koch (1969), Neil Dellar (1970), Ian Mack (1970), Stephen Bushill (1970), Stephen Parker (1970), Brian Harper (1971), Simon Mansfield (1971), Paul Davey (1972), Andrew Williams (1973). A brass band I had started at Fairlop in 1968 became an independent band after the pupils left Fairlop Junior School, and forty-seven years on still exists as *Fairlop Brass* [www.fairlopbrass.co.uk] having recruited from far and wide. My contribution now is as Band President.

My final eighteen years of teaching were in a large secondary comprehensive as Director of Music at Gaynes School, Upminster. There I established an orchestra and a brass band, but it was the Choral Society, consisting of pupils (always 50% or more of the membership), staff, parents and friends, which reached out most to the local community. Highlights were a public performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in 1982, a concert at Snape, Aldeburgh in 1985 and the regular Easter performances in the local Parish Church of the Fauré *Requiem*, Stainer's *Crucifixion* and parts of Handel's *Messiah*. I found those years of secondary teaching were as rewarding as they were challenging, with A level work the icing on the cake, but life always seemed a frantic rush!



BHCHS Orchestra, June 1951. In the days before Don Ray, just consisting of strings and recorders (and Dennis the accompanist!). Front row (L to R): Campbell Matthews, ???, David Hoffman, Bob Wright (Head of Music), Quentin Fuller, Ken Madgwick, Keith Marston. Second row: ???, Jim Faulkner, Nigel Wilkins, Ken Riches, Don Lindsey, ???. Third row: ???, David Cobb, ???, Dennis Carney, ???. Fourth row: ???, ???, David Charlesworth, ???. Back: Terry Hooley. Can anyone help us fill in the names of the unknown players?

Interview with Roger Odell

While at BHCHS between 1953 and 1958 Roger first became interested in music inspired jointly by music teacher Donald Ray and Lonnie Donegan, the skiffle-maestro. After a brief flirtation with the guitar Roger took up drumming, which became his passion and would lead to a 40 year career in the music business. I interviewed Roger about his continuing success as one of the founder members of the group **Shakatak**.

GF: Did any of the music at school influence you in launching your career?

Roger: I remember Don Ray playing piano every day as we came into assembly and I asked him about one piece that particularly appealed to me. He told me it was the first movement of *Trois Mouvements Perpétuels* by Poulenc which rocks along and is quite jazz-like. I think he was pleased that at least one boy was listening to him!

GF: What were your other main interests at BHCHS?

Roger: Mainly football. I played

where I remained!

GF: How did it all start with Shakatak?

Roger: I was already working as a professional musician in and around London during the 70s playing the popular music of the time but I had always been interested in modern jazz and there was a new style emerging from the USA which combined jazz and funk music. I became very excited by this and I wanted to form a band to play this kind of music. I was living in Bishops Stortford; I joined forces with fellow residents Bill Sharpe and Keith Winter to



Roger (front row, second from right) in the 2nd XI Football team of 1957-58

for the school at all levels. My proudest moment was when I scored a hat-trick for the 2nd XI. I was then promoted to the 1st XI which mainly contained 6th formers. I played really badly wandering around like a lost sheep and got demoted back to the 2nd XI the following week -

form a band which we called *Tracks*.

GF: Did *Tracks* become *Shakatak*?

Roger: Not directly. I was doing session work in London and the producer needed a pianist so I recommended Bill. Later that same producer suggested that we record some original tunes and Bill wrote a few things which we recorded with Keith and a bass player. Two of the tracks were put out as a kind of demo and Polygram heard one called *Steppin* and they offered us a recording contract.

GF: So it all happened quite quickly.

Roger: Well, I guess so. We did gig around the UK a lot playing small clubs and although we had some success with our first Polygram recordings it wasn't until we recorded *Easier Said Than Done* that things really took off. It received a lot of airplay on Radio One and suddenly we were playing to sell out crowds - albeit still in relatively small venues.



Roger (left) with the current Shakatak line up

GF: As well as your UK success I understand the band are very popular in Japan?

Roger: Yes. We have toured there every year since around 1983. The follow up record after *Easier Said Than Done* was a track called *Night Birds* and after reaching the Top Ten in the UK it became a massive hit in Japan. At one time we had four of our albums in their charts.

GF: What other countries have been "Shak-attacked"?

Roger: Our UK success had led us into the rest of Europe and we toured Germany, Holland, Spain, a number of the East European countries and even Russia. The Japanese success led to tours of The Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. Pretty much all over the world.

GF: Do *Shakatak* still play regularly in the UK and abroad?

Roger: Yes, we have played a number of UK festivals in the last couple of years, The Chilfest in Tring and a big festival in Rochester, Kent. Every year we play a four night stint at the *Pizza Express* Jazz Club in Soho and The Stables in Wavendon is another annual gig.

Last year we toured Japan, Mexico, Germany, Holland, Spain, Slovakia and Hungary and others I can't remember! This year we have played in Spain, Japan and Holland apart from the UK dates.

GF: Do you still record CDs with *Shakatak*?

Roger: Yes, we released our latest CD last year called *On The Corner* and we make a new CD about every two years. During our career we have recorded over 30 CDs and there are loads of compilations. Our back catalogue is very big now and I'm sure one of our

tracks will be playing somewhere in the world as we speak!

GF: Apart from *Shakatak* do you play in other situations?

Roger: I have just recorded my own CD under the group name of *Beatifik* which I produced with my son Jamie who is a keyboard player, a DJ and even has his own record label. It also features my jazz singer wife Lorraine plus other brilliant UK jazz musicians and singers. I recorded the first *Beatifik* CD fourteen years ago and have just got around to doing the follow-up! The first CD was called *The Blue Window* and is still available on iTunes and Amazon. My wife and I also run a fortnightly jazz club in Clare, Suffolk and we book top UK jazz musicians to appear with our resident trio.

GF: You must have seen great changes in the music business over a 35-year career.

Roger: Like most other businesses the biggest change is a result of computer technology, not only in the way we record music but also the use of the internet to communicate with our fans. *Shakatak* has its web site at www.shakatak.com and my jazz activities are displayed at www.jazz-nights.com. Although I'm not a regular tweeter I find Facebook is a great way to keep in touch with old friends and new.

GF: Are you still in touch with any of your BHCHS colleagues?

Roger: A few - but I'd welcome more! I particularly remember my old football team-mates. Golden days!

GF: I'm glad that such a long and successful career has its roots in BHCHS and long may it continue.

Roger: Thanks very much. Keep up the good work with the Old Bucks.



Early days of drumming

My Year with Mrs Crump

By William Schotsmans (French, 1970 - 71)

Earlier this year, I received an unexpected but welcome message from one of our French "Assistant" teachers who spent a year at BHCHS. William asked me to pass on his good wishes to anyone who remembers him and I can't think of any better way to do this than to share with you some of his amusing anecdotes of his time in England.



THE YEAR I spent at Loughton and at Buckhurst Hill - where I tried to convince the pupils that my language was worth learning - is among my best recollections.

I arrived at BHCHS two days before the start of term, and was greeted by John Whaler, Mavis Leach and Miss Coulson who kindly informed me she had made the housing arrangement for me. John Whaler gave me a lift to my future address where I was introduced to my landlady, one Esther Crump, the widow of a tailor who had exercised his job at Buckingham Palace.

After John had left me on my own in the claws of the widow, with a playful smile, Mrs Crump said to me: "I've never had a French tenant because I don't like the French. I accepted you because you bear an English first name and to please Miss Coulson." ...Waou!

And realising she had been a bit too straightforward, as finding an excuse she added: "Oh don't worry William, I don't like the French but I don't like foreigners in general"Waou!

So I asked her: "Why, have you met any?"

And she answered: "NOooooo! Oh yes, once, a German. But it was so brief. It was in 1941, he had baled out of his shot-down bomber and landed in the next door garden."

After that warm welcome we got on pretty well for the next ten months and kept writing to each other for many years; she knitted a gear for my newly born daughter in 1979, and in the 1990s she informed me that she had sold her Loughton house (she was 90) to move to Halifax where she

had bought a new house close to her only daughter and her granddaughters. She was a delightful old lady and my "mère de substitution" for that year.

John Whaler did his best to facilitate my life in London by concentrating my working hours and leaving me a lot of free time. I also sailed with the 5th and 6th formers on a nearby lake to teach them to sail dinghies.

A few weeks after the beginning of the first term, I left the staff room in the mid morning to go to the toilet, with a book as usual. After ten minutes I heard some sort of buzzer ringing but didn't pay attention to it as it was close to the end of a period. There was the noise of people in the corridors but nothing alarming. A few minutes later, the building was completely silent so I made up my mind to leave my good read and see what happened. It was as silent as in the desert. I came down the steps without meeting anybody and made for the backyard where the whole school (except me) was assembled for roll call. There were grins on the faces in the foreground and laughs in the background. John Whaler explained that it was the usual fire alarm drill that had taken place to check that procedures were implemented. I didn't need further explanations and felt so ashamed that I blushed: I was quite shy at that time.

In France I had never had a fire drill at school or college. It was not in our culture to prepare for that sort of threat...and still is not to my knowledge. On warships we practise fire and flood fighting drills on a daily basis at sea. When I asked my daughter how many fire alarm drills she'd had at school and at university she looked at me as if I were ET! It is cultural. We do not train to avoid accidents, we convene working groups to find remedies after accidents have occurred.

Sometimes the names of the teachers I had drinks with at the local pubs, some 45 years ago, spring to my mind and I remember well their faces. The German assistant was Klaus Miltenberger. I also remember that the headmaster of the time was a rear admiral retired, which is fun as I made a career in the French navy. I am now a naval captain retired in Toulon which shows that English leads to many pro-



William Schotsmans in 1971

fessions - practising your language helped me a lot on warship bridges.

Between lessons, I spent hours in the staff room reading or doing nothing but listen to teachers exchanging on any subjects. Some funny and clever young guys like John Lakeman or John Loveridge teased the "Dons" which was fun. Most of the old teachers didn't pay any attention to the two foreign assistants, we hardly existed. But the younger staff were all right (I include John Whaler, Mavis Leach and a few in their forties) and we used to go on the spree at the Three Colts on Fridays: all the Johns (Loveridge, Lakeman, Drury, Hoskin), Klaus and me. I never drunk so much beer in my life and I remember my landlady telling me in the morning: "You had a rough night William, I should tell your mother", for I had travelled several times to the loo to drain the bilges.

John Loveridge dwelled in my street (Stonards Hill, Loughton) and was a really nice and funny bloke. I also remember John Hoskin, a teacher engaged to a beautiful brunette (they both visited me in Morlaix the next

summer). I was off on afternoons and went to London down-town almost every day to rejoin foreign girls in a Leicester Square bistro, happy life for a young Frenchman aged 21.

You pupils were generally a polite and well educated lot that didn't pose any problem of discipline. It was sometimes difficult to find with you a subject of interest and I usually left you the choice of the topic of discussion. I am not sure the pupils learned a lot with me as I am not, properly speaking, a pedagogue.

Another anecdote about Mrs Crump. On 11th November 1970 I was coming down for breakfast when she looked at me quite seriously and said: "William, I have a very bad news for you: General de Gaulle died last night. I am terribly sorry for you because I know you liked him, but it's such good news for my country!"

A few months later, Georges Pompidou, our newly-elected president decided that he would give a green light to the UK entry in the European Market. Hearing the news on TV, Mrs Crump said: "In that case Wil-

liam, I shall have to increase your rent because the cost of living will rise.” (What if she had known the Euro!)

My reply was: “I am sure you will finally regret de Gaulle who always opposed your entry in the EU.”

Twenty years later, in 1990, then in Martinique, I gave her a costly overseas phone call. “Why are you calling me William?” she asked me with a shivering voice (she was probably over 85). I answered “because I have bad news for you Mrs Crump. Maggie Thatcher has resigned”. She said: “Oh yes William, it’s such a bad news.” To which I replied: “Yes, for you, but it is so good for my country.” Vindication after 20 years! I reminded her of 1970 and we both laughed. It was the last time I heard her voice.

I never wanted to become a teacher. I had learned to sail at the age of 10 in the bay of Morlaix, just across the water from Falmouth. I wanted to join the naval academy but was not good enough at mathematics and sciences, so I graduated in languages (English and German) and my job at Buckhurst Hill was part of the course.

During my year at BHCHS, I flew back to Brittany for the Christmas and Easter vacations and in April 1971 I met the girl whom I married in 1973 and who still shares my life. We are the parents of a daughter (36 and not yet married).

I taught English to adults for three years at Morlaix and after my young wife fully agreed to see her husband put to sea for long periods I applied for a commission in the Navy. The navy board accepted me and that was it.

Now I am fully retired in Toulon (Provence), our main naval station, and every month we meet for a cheese and wine party with the US, UK and other NATO officers posted in Toulon to speak English. I do my best to keep in touch with your language and I read in English exclusively, and I don’t care about making grammatical, phrasing or wording mistakes. But the year I spent in your country helped shift from the academic English of the college to the vernacular language spoken in the country.

At the end of the year I spent in Essex, it was clear to me that if I were to live out of France someday, the one and only country where I would feel at home was your country, the UK. And I still think that. Of course I would miss the palm trees and sunshine.

IT SEEMS TO ME...

CHAS BROWN (BHCHS 1955-62) REFLECTS ON SCHOOLDAYS AND BEYOND



HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

I don’t want you to be unduly concerned, but I was under the weather one day early in 1955. Nothing serious, you understand; just the usual sore throat, running beak and feverishness which assails us all in the dead of the year. None of this would have mattered had I not been scheduled to sit for the 11+ exam.

I passed, but nothing like as well as I should have done, having spent ages as perpetually second at Churchfields to an exceedingly bright young lady (Jane) who went on to Woodford County High. For some obscure reason the authorities made us sit in class exam order. Therefore Jane and I shared a double desk for what seemed like, and probably was, years. Although there was no animosity at all, I think we barely exchanged a word. No disrespect to Jane, but I would have preferred to share the desk with the likes of Jenny Alcott, the very pretty little sister of Mickey Alcott, whom I later encountered at BHCHS, and who was remarkably kind to the mere sprog that I was then.

In March 1955 I sat for a Harsnett scholarship at Chigwell and did infinitely better than in the 11+. I heard on the grapevine that I and several other lads comfortably exceeded what any reasonable person would regard as a pass mark, but that there was only one place available, and that went to a young gentleman from the Red School in Woodford Green. Seemingly an example of lip service to common entrance. I soon became very pleased indeed that I went to BH rather than joining the gentry up the hill.

If you’re still with me, I salute your stamina. I will now explain that, against the above background, I was determined, as I joined the crocodile of other new boys in the playground with my stiff, shiny

Stockdale’s satchel creaking over my back, to show ‘em what I could do.

And it worked. At least initially. I remember certainly two reports with seven As and one B. Maths, since you ask. This kept me around the top of the year until about 4A, when I began seriously to concentrate on boredom-induced satire and my Silly Noises Project. With the benefit of half a century’s hindsight I think I have identified my own condition. Though no clinician, I have dubbed it “Virtual Intelligence Syndrome” – a superficially impressive state that actually amounts to little more than a very good memory.

There was also I think an obverse of the condition, so far unnamed. This includes the real stars of *Old Buckwellians News* – lads who didn’t impress greatly at school but who have, we learn, gone on to leap tall buildings, swim the North Sea and have become professors of this or CEOs of that.

Oh, get on with it.

Where was I? Ah yes – schooldays. Hanging over everything, of course, was that great sine qua non of the grammar schools – GCEs. To start with, they were a distant, almost mythical ogre too far away to worry about. But as the years rolled by they became of greater and greater urgency. I remember my folks attending a parents’ evening where Tom Leek opined funereally that I would be “lucky to get two O Levels, which would be a tragedy in view of his undoubted etc etc.” As may be imagined, I got the mother and father (sorry!) of a kicking when they got home. In the event, to my astonishment and relief, I passed all nine, with some quite decent grades, and basked in the glory of one of my very few accomplishments.

As the euphoria diminished the thought occurred to me: Blimey, that’s it; it could all end now – I might have to get a job.....as what? Having dismissed that as unthinkable and decided to stay on in the sixth form, I had to choose subjects. As a jack of all

trades, I could have had a crack at anything that wasn’t maths or physics, but wound up with French, Latin and geography, all of which, after two rather turgid years (several good mates had left after the fifth form, and Trev Hyde pushed off after a year), I passed, and, bereft of any better ideas, drifted into banking – real banking that is; nothing to do with “investment banking”. Don’t get me on that.

Not surprisingly the early days in the bank consisted of little better than clerical hod-carrying, and it was hard work. Although I had become thoroughly sick of the pious love-rat Aeneas and his conning of Dido (“following my destiny” indeed – tell that to the marines), I soon began to wonder what I had got myself into. As Peggy Lee asked so poignantly: “Is that all there is?”

At about this time my pal Chris Cuff was establishing himself at Leeds and, dear friend that he was, he arranged for me to be bombarded with prospectuses from every conceivable faculty of that university, in the hope that I might apply and maybe join him. Thanks mate, but it was difficult to envisage unravelling everything at that stage and so I remained a bankie – hopefully a good one.

What really saddened me, though, was the essential pointlessness of amassing all those Os and As over seven years unless you were to use them as a ticket to tertiary education. Although I acknowledge that I was pathetically naive not to realise that earlier on and to take the initiative, I knew precisely nothing of the politics and mechanisms of university entrance, and it would have been nice if somebody, anybody, from Management had bothered to broach the subject – to say something along the lines of “Don’t you realise, you facetious toad, that a degree, any degree, is of lasting, tangible value? People, companies are impressed by them. Don’t you realise what you’re missing out on?”

I think I would have listened.

Coming Up.....

Features planned for our next edition include:

- ◆ *Transports of Delight* – your anecdotes of travelling to and from Roding Lane (contributions welcome).
- ◆ *The early life of one of our most popular teachers.*
- ◆ *Punishments* – very few escaped, and some were never out of trouble. Let me have your personal reflections and any amusing memories.
- ◆ *YOU.* If you haven’t yet told us what you have done since school, now is the time for an update.

A Heap of Broken Images

By David Patrick (English, 1973 - 88)

David Patrick eventually moved to Chelmsford County High School for Girls, where he spent the remainder of his career, retiring in 2014 as Head of English, Drama and Psychology.



I CERTAINLY never planned a career beginning at Buckhurst Hill. I'd come home to Peterborough from uni having decided I wouldn't be a teacher, and that a prolonged summer holiday would suit me rather well. My parents felt differently. If I was going to continue to live with them, I could contribute to household expenses and pay for my pleasures myself. With no other source of income to meet these stipulations, I reluctantly turned to the Times Educational Supplement. It was some weeks after the deadline for resignations had passed, and there were only a few jobs in the paper – it was usually a bad sign that schools advertising by that stage were the ones no reasonable teacher would want to go to. I never found out why Buckhurst Hill had left it so late. There was no mention of it being a grammar school – I probably wouldn't have applied if I'd known, since the educational establishment had warned student teachers not to apply to these as the government would soon close them all down. It was Essex or penury, so I drafted a letter. We didn't have a phone: next day I received a telegram inviting me for interview. Again, not a good sign – it smacked of desperation.

I'd never been to Outer London before – it was a great shock when the tube train came out into the open beside Leyton Cemetery. I got off at the wrong stop, approaching Buckhurst Hill via the Hainault loop, so I was very late for the interview time. Walking down from Chigwell station I

was approached by a bald man in a smooth car who told me to get in. How Hugh Colgate had guessed it was me I do not know, but soon I was sitting in his office. The only thing I remember about the interview is that I asked about his policy on corporal punishment and he showed me his cane cupboard. So far as I know, it was never opened again during the time I taught there. I was, inevitably, the only candidate so thought I had a reasonable chance of getting the job. So I joined the club of BHCHS teachers appointed against nil competition. We liked to claim that we were a kind of élite – that when HAC had a choice at interview, he usually chose the wrong candidate. There was a certain amount of evidence to support this view!

I was given a tour of the school before I left. The staffroom was empty apart from one small man with a nicotine-stained moustache who stood there smoking. I could hardly penetrate his accent or the atmosphere surrounding him. This, I was told, was Dr. Buchanan. By this stage of his career, he was on a very light, not to say non-existent timetable and he spent his days topping up the staffroom ashtrays. Smoking was still at this time an enthusiastically practised staff activity, something which made it rather difficult to enforce its ban on the pupils. I was introduced to the chief architect of the no-smoking policy: a man with a mission and a pipe. I was soon to learn that Eric Franklin used his pipe rather as Harold Wilson and Tony Benn did, lighting it to buy time while he thought of reasons to say no to any suggestion put to him that involved disruption to school routine, such as a theatre visit or a school play. Apparently as tough as school chalk, he never-



Dr Buchanan

Photo Roger Pfister

theless had a kindlier side which he showed to me as an inexperienced teacher, though this never extended to reducing the amount of cover I had to do. I enjoyed his scabrous sense of humour; he often talked about the rugby matches he refereed at weekends, and I got the impression he was much happier blowing a whistle than being a deputy head.

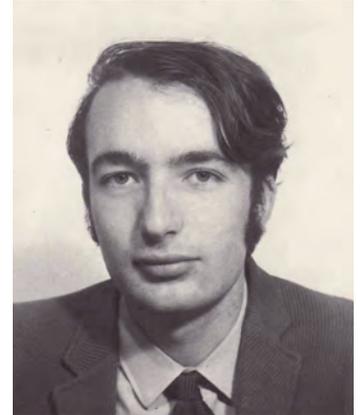
The member of the English Department who made the most impression on me that first day was not there. I was told so much about the unforgettable virtues of Mr. Griffiths (I have no idea of how to spell his first name, which I always see in my mind as Taiwan). For months afterwards I was mentioned as the teacher who took over from Taiwan, usually with a nostalgic sigh for days of Celtic character irrevocably gone. Rather more



Chris Toms

substantial was Chris Toms, who gave me a lot of helpful advice and support in my first year. I suspect that because as a probationer teacher I had a lighter timetable he ended up with a greater proportion of the difficult classes – if so I owe him a debt of gratitude. I remember him that year squaring up to three thugs, all of whom were taller and stockier than him. As Chris tore furiously into these boys, they did an act of contrition which was rather undermined by one of them patting him forgivingly on the head as he moved away.

As I left the school gate on that first day, I was passed by a class of boys running a cross country. Much, much further down Roding Lane, the two who were indubitably last in the race were walking slowly down, deep in conversation. They were strikingly dissimilar in a Laurel-and-Hardy kind of way. I found out



David Patrick in 1972

later that this was Russell-and-Gomm, boys who volunteered for everything at BHCHS, occasionally with disastrous results. They responded, for example, to Pete Downey's harnessing of their talents by painting his stage for him. The wrong colour.

The last thing that remained to be done was to find somewhere to live. I couldn't help feeling that the Chigwell houses I had seen that morning would prove beyond my teacher salary. As I



...an enthusiastically practised staff activity..... Drawing by Colin West

went further and further away from the catchment area in my search for lodgings, I seriously thought I would have to commute from Peterborough. Finally I found a room in Chingford, only two bus rides from the school. I had not banked on the fact that you get paid salary in arrears, and that at the start I was put on the emergency maximum income tax code. As I borrowed and begged my way through that September, it became clear that teaching was not to be my path to untold material wealth.

To be continued.

Terror from the Skies

By Tony McMahon (BHCHS 1974 - 81)



THE ORDEAL and loss suffered by people in Woodford and Wanstead during World War Two is described in an incredible book that surfaced recently on eBay - which I quickly snapped up.

It's a detailed account by the Borough Council of Wanstead and Woodford of how the area defended itself against Nazi air raids. Published in 1947, it begins with a letter from the local MP - Winston Churchill. He praises the efforts of locals who had struggled with the aftermath of bombing raids.

"From my own intimate knowledge of the area and my visits to the Borough in the time of trial I know how efficiently the Civil Defence Organisation served the inhabitants," the war-time Prime Minister wrote.

The war had begun with civil manoeuvres that caused more mirth than alarm among local residents. But on August 8th, 1940, the smiles disappeared. Enemy bombers attacked shipping in the Channel and off the Essex coast. The Battle of Britain was underway!

Tension mounted as it became obvious that the nearby east of London with its docks and industry would be a target for the Luftwaffe. Inevitably those planes would continue dropping

their deadly loads as they passed over the suburbs. This was confirmed just two weeks later. Woodford residents awoke at 3.30am on August 25th as a stick of bombs fell on the rugby ground behind the White House in Woodford Green. Five days later, three bombs fell resulting in just one minor injury treated at the designated First Aid post at Jubilee Hospital.

This was simply a prelude to the horror about to unfold. The afternoon of Saturday, September 7th 1940 was warm and sunny with a blue sky. At just after 5pm in broad daylight, Londoners heard a "monstrous monotonous droning" that in only one hour left the Thames docks ablaze. This allowed the enemy returning at around 8pm to guide their bombs by following the fires below. As this terrible night progressed, Woodford and Wanstead took several hits.

Three high explosive bombs and a staggering five hundred incendiaries fell in the postal area. Typical of the damage was numbers 7 and 9 Grove Park in Wanstead, which collapsed killing four people. Land mines also parachuted down, the first hitting the Unilever sports ground in Churchfields. Another mine in Eastwood Road, George Lane failed to hit the ground and instead was "caught by the boughs of a tree and the mine remained suspended precariously until the residents were all removed from their homes and naval personnel made the monster harmless and removed it".

The Blitz came in waves and this first wave continued until May, 1941 after which it petered out for a while. In one raid, four local Civil Defence Services members gave their lives. They



Bomb damage in George Lane, South Woodford

ranged in age from Thomas James Hutton (a warden) of Blake Hall Crescent, Wanstead who was 44, down to Roy Frederick Broome (a messenger) of Lake House Road, Wanstead aged just 17.

In spite of Winston's stiff upper lip, what emerges from this fascinating account is a fear at the height of the war that Hitler could mount an effective invasion. Signposts were removed, as was an ancient seven-mile stone on Woodford Road, giving the distance to the middle of London. Terrified residents reported seeing the enemy parachuting down over Woodford. They were indeed German airmen and they landed in Chigwell. But they weren't invaders. Their plane had been hit and they were bailing out.

Locals also reported "mysterious markings" on trees, which they believed had been put there by spies to help German troops find their way. In fact, the markings had been put there by the British armed forces and they had forgotten to notify the local Civil Defence.

At a closed meeting at the Majes-

tic Cinema on June 7th, 1942, the Invasion Defence Officer told Civil Defence Services that in the event of Hitler crossing the Channel, the borough would split into six self-supporting mini-boroughs. People would have to become self-sufficient, even being taught how to draw water safely from lakes and ponds in the forest!

1943 saw a resurgence of bombing, only this time the dreaded unmanned flying bombs arrived. Brentwood, Dagenham and Ilford were hit then on June 23rd, "the chug-chug of a buzz bomb" was heard over Woodford. It had been launched from the Calais region. "Then the engine gave the final cough that in future was to be a familiar danger warning." As the power cut out, the bomb plummeted from the sky on to Empress Avenue, near the junction with Salway Hill. Five people were killed, including a three-year old girl, as the explosion roared and a vast column of dust was thrown up.

Our borough was still enduring bombings a year after D-Day, but on March 21st, 1945, the last rocket hit the area. It fell on Wanstead Golf Course and killed a rabbit. In the preceding four and a half years, 250 people had lost their lives, 500 homes were destroyed and many more people injured, with 1,348 houses severely damaged. With the German surrender, Woodford and Wanstead's public shelters and wardens' posts were dismantled and new buildings replaced bombed shops and homes. But it took a lot longer for the emotional scars of those years to heal.

Tony McMahon is an author and journalist. His peers at BHCHS will remember his outstanding skills in public speaking (see photo p1). Read more about Tony at his website: www.thetemplarknight.com



"No delivery" - a scene in South Woodford

Making up for Lost Time

By Roger Farrow (BHCHS 1955 - 61)



THE RANGE of feelings I have for the old school do not extend as far as the few very negative ones I have seen and in retrospect it wasn't as bad as it sometimes seemed at the time. Being currently immobilised with a broken ankle gives me a good excuse to think about some of the lows and highs at BHCHS and beyond.

The obituaries in *OB News* have to be looked at whether you want to or not. The name Stuart Mallindine caught my eye. He was the only lad I had a fight with. To this day I don't know why because he was one of the nicest and quietest around, and I was more of a runner than a fighter. I don't know how it started but it was more like handbags at dawn, no bruises and certainly no blood. Other boys sauntered by with hardly a glance. Nothing like the epics between Dave Shanks and Johnny Taplin, drawing huge crowds shouting fight, fight until a master came and dragged them apart. I think our battle petered out with an embarrassed handshake.

Steve Hyam's comments about sex education (*OB News*, May 2014) reminded me of Ernie Turner's attempts to teach it: our lesson was illustrated with some form of flying insects, not rabbits. It totally confused me but luckily Norman Walmsley didn't shirk the subject.

French lessons were mayhem. One day I was talking to the lad behind while, unbeknown to us, order had been restored. We were both given detentions. One of my mates in another form also had a detention and said he always signed them rather than have his parents know. I handed the slip in signed in my mum's best handwriting. Later that day I was called to FAS's office with my mate. "Did your parent sign this?" FAS asked with those beady eyes. Being a total coward I confessed. My mate's signature looked like a spider had crawled out of an inkwell but he held

steady and said yes. FAS let him go, presumably happy with one prisoner that day. I was given a Saturday detention and my first and only caning. Yes it hurt and I still had to get my parents' signature and confess all to them. Lesson learnt: if you are going for gold don't be a coward.

The physics/chemistry labs were interesting with their foul smells and explosions, (not all intended). In one lesson I looked up and saw my mate Dave Hockley opposite writing away and his head leaning over a Bunsen burner, with his fringe alight. Seconds later he would have got badly burned, but we managed to extinguish it quickly. I think we just banged him about the head.

The class photo (right) used in an earlier article by Trevor Ireland (*OB News*, May 2006) shows me on the far right. Trevor gave us all a good laugh. He had his desk top up and was being harassed by the master to hurry up. Trevor gave him a V sign behind the safety of the raised desk top. The sun shining through the window cast a perfectly enlarged shadow of the offensive sign on the opposite wall. The only one unaware was Trevor. It caused such a laugh even the master cracked a smile and I don't think there was any retribution.

Andy Imms' contribution (*OB News*, May 2003) reminded me of him wearing a black tie the day after Buddy Holly died. I think Dick Tarry sounded more like Buddy than Buddy. By the way, Andy, I still have the Elvis version of *Blue Suede Shoes* that I swapped with you for my Carl Perkins version. That must be worth something by now. Perhaps we can swap back one day?

Martin Jordan's contributions are always interesting. His stone throwing adventure with Jeff Wardell (*OB News*, Nov 2002) was one of the least extreme exploits but they were always very entertaining. Google his impressive website sometime.

On the occasions I drive along the M11 stretch adjacent to the school, I think how near I am to the back of the cow sheds where we used to smoke. On one occasion a group of us were in the cycle shed at the end of the gym wing. Suddenly round the corner came Reg Cave with a class of first years jogging behind. Reg looked straight at us and immediately said to his class: "Right lads turn round," and away they went. We were surprised that we never heard any more about it.



5 beta class photo taken by Martin Bone
Perhaps Reg smoked.

Some other assorted memories: the smell of Old Holborn mixed with new mown grass at break time on the playing field. Escaping over the fence on sports day and walking crouching along the bank of the Roding to the best crossing point without being seen. Mick Nash falling off his bike and us trying to convince him he was all right when he had actually broken his arm. Batting at cricket and being hit on the head by a throw from the wicket keeper. Brave (or daft) boys balancing on the pipe over the river.

I was a mediocre student, bumping along the bottom in both academic and physical education.

It wasn't until I was in 5beta that I began to realise that in the near future I would be out there in the job market and so started to make a bit of an effort. Far too late! I only achieved one O level, in art. I had started looking at jobs in some form of engineering but all required at least English and Maths O levels. I bit the bullet and requested to stay on another year to get these and joined 5beta with the lads from the year below for the next term. In the end I did scrape these two subjects plus general science. Ford were advertising for trainee engineering project managers but required physics, so that was out. I was sent to an interview by the school careers department and got a job as a trainee draughtsman in a small firm. This was great together with the fact it was in the west end of London, pubs, jazz clubs etc. The apprenticeship meant I had to get HNC in Mechanical Engineering. It was payback time. All the wasted days at BHCHS had to be made up for by attending evening classes. No day release then. For five years it was three nights a week plus two for homework. Even the exams were in the evening. Having passed and learnt more than

in all the previous years at school, I then joined a company in Epping as a qualified draughtsman, and stayed for 23 years. In the last couple of years here I made chief draughtsman and had some very good times. It included travelling to job sites around the UK and later Europe, USA and Australia. This firm was acquired by a company that was hoovering up a lot of smaller firms and relocated to Kent. I stayed with them for three or four years and left when they started to contract. In the following years I moved around quite a lot with various titles such as engineering manager to the final 'permanent' job in a company that supplied mechanical handling equipment to Ford. The irony was that I would attend meetings on the opposite side of the table to the Ford project managers who must have got at least their Physics O level. With the closure of car assembly at Dagenham the company carried on for another couple of years, but business became harder with more competition and a diminishing market. At sixty it was not a good time to get another job but I had made a lot of contacts over the years, and within a few weeks I had my first contract and started as a Sole Trader. With very few breaks between jobs I was still getting work until late last year. Sometimes I wish I had gone self employed earlier because it paid off so well. So working life after BHCHS has been pretty good.

I have been married to Sue since 1967 and lived in Billericay ever since. We have two smashing daughters, and six grandchildren. I try to explain to them that school years are relatively few so get stuck in. I wish I had listened to my distraught parents.

Looking back, my time at BHCHS was not too bad. It's surprising how much knowledge stuck in the end.

Stewart Still Rocking

STEWART MILLS (BHCHS 1960-67) must surely be one of the most tenacious and persistent musicians to have emerged from BHCHS. At school he showed early signs of this endurance in cross country where he was a member of one of the most successful teams during the 1960s.

After leaving school, he performed for several years with *Hackensack*. This was a heavy rock band that came close to achieving stardom during the early seventies. At one point they had achieved over 400 live performances in two years, including tours of Europe and appearances at the *Cavern Club* in Liverpool.

The group made several recordings but the elusive mixture of luck, skill and sheer graft didn't allow them to break through to the very top level, and Stewart decided to return to the banking career he'd started immediately after school.

But he managed to successfully combine banking with rocking for many years. Stewart is now retired from the bank but still plays regularly with *Jukebox Junkies*. Recently, he wrote a history of his earlier group *Hackensack* and this is on *Wikipedia*.

Stewart tells me he is not particularly looking for work, but *Jukebox Junkies* are available to hire.

The group can be found on *Facebook* at:

[facebook.com/jukeboxjunkies](https://www.facebook.com/jukeboxjunkies)



Photos: (above) Stewart running at the Essex Championships 1967, (top right) a recent photo - Stewart is second from the left, (bottom right) *Hackensack* in their first publicity photo - Stewart wearing the top hat.



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY



Although this is a recent photograph it will be instantly recognised as the "forbidden" central staircase that led to the Assembly Hall gallery. Nestling under the narrow stairs is the Deputy Head's office.

This was one of a series of photographs taken by **Pete Berrecloth (1976)** at our AGM in 2014. When he published the full series on our *Facebook* page recently, the reaction was truly amazing. Within five days the photos had generated well over 200 comments.

This particular photo was - perhaps surprisingly - one of the most popular, and the resulting online chat ranged over various school topics including canings, board-rubber chucking and Saturday Detentions.

We're grateful to Pete for posting the set of nostalgia-provoking photos.

Our *Facebook* group now has more than 450 members. If you haven't yet signed up for it, why not drop in sometime. Those who are stubbornly resisting could perhaps enlist the help of a grandchild to make a visit.

[facebook.com/groups/buckhursthillchs/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/buckhursthillchs/)

Election Fever

WHILE we are still in election year, it is a good time to take a look back at elections at school. In earlier editions we have focussed on the “small p politics” that some would say hastened the school’s demise. Party Politics was also an intermittent feature of school life, so let us dig into the archives, and the memories of some of the protagonists.

The War Years

Only a small number of readers will remember that the first ever mock election held at BHCHS (see results on p15) was in a year when there was no general election in the country. The pupils at secondary schools in 1943 will have had only distant memories of the previous general election of 1935. The next one, scheduled for 1940, was cancelled for obvious reasons. In 1943, however, a group of fifth formers took up the challenge of organising the very first school election. Sadly, none of the candidates are with us now.

July 1945

The 1945 general election, following rapidly after the end of the war, was not well-timed in relation to the school year and in particular to the publication of the magazine (July). But there is evidence that the school was interested. **William Hamiman (1941)**, secretary of the Current Events Society, wrote:

The Society has provided a useful opportunity for boys to give vent to their feelings after a school day, and who knows but that one of us may one day be doing so in the House of Commons? Before the end of term we hope to hold a “general election.”

It is not recorded whether this actually happened, but it would be interesting to know if anyone remembers.

October 1951

Surprisingly perhaps, the general election of 1951 also seems to have passed without a mock election at BHCHS. The magazine reports a lively discussion on the British election system as a topic in the newly-established “Junior Forum” in 1950.

May 1955

On this occasion, the school was inspired to launch its own ballot alongside the national poll. The report of this in the *Roding* makes interesting reading:

When the date of the general

election was announced the School Debating Society, hoping to stimulate interest in public affairs, organised an election in school. It was stated that this election would be open to all members of the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms, and that anyone might stand as a candidate provided that he could produce eight nominees and a deposit of half-a-crown.

No fewer than seven candidates eventually fulfilled these conditions: Communist, Fascist, Independent, Independent Nationalist, Socialist, Liberal, and Conservative. Soon posters, “A”, “U”, and “X”, began to appear all along the South Corridor. Meetings were arranged after school at which the candidates endeavoured to present their points of view to the constituents. Before long bright favours appeared, adding some gaiety to the normal solemnity of the school uniform, especially when three or four different colours were worn by the same person. Meetings also took place in the playground when the day drew near, and megaphones were employed with great gusto. At last the great day arrived and polling took place. The statement of totals was eagerly awaited, though few could have foreseen the actual result, a tie.

October 1959

By now the holding of mock elections had become established and the 1959 result was somewhat closer to the national trend with a fairly convincing victory for **Graham Marson (Con)**. *Roding* magazine reported:

For days beforehand, the candidates risked life and limb by holding forth to lunchtime crowds. Various posters and other propaganda appeared at the senior end of the school and a meeting of the Debating Society was given over to political controversy. When the great day arrived, Fifth and Sixth formers cast their votes during the third lunch break; by this time R. Jones found it safer to wear a bicycle cape while making speeches.

October 1964

The 1964 election was expected to be a close contest, and in preparation for the national campaign - which brought Harold Wilson’s narrow victory - the prospective candidates at BHCHS were allowed space in the 1964 school magazine, published in the summer, to state their case. **John**

The 1959 Campaign



The identity of the candidates is uncertain, but the middle photo includes a rear view of (presumably) Roy Jones under the protection of his cycle cape. Photos Rob Crick

Morris, the Labour candidate, didn't manage to emulate Mr Wilson's success, and while he did push the Liberal candidate into third place, this was only by 6 votes so **Alan Beavis** emerged with honour (and presumably his deposit). On this occasion there were only three candidates in the school election, but the 95% turnout was the highest so far.

The 1966 Campaign



These photos are from the cine films about school life taken by John Robins. From the top: Martin Easteal, William Kennedy, Alan Beavis

March 1966

The 1966 school election was a much closer contest than the national one, and **Martin Easteal** secured the Labour party's first win, by just four votes from **William Kennedy** representing the Conservatives. On this occasion there were more candidates, and more lost deposits, including Alan Beavis who was - I believe - the only pupil brave enough to have stood in two campaigns. The full result, posted in the *Roding* magazine that year, also gave the 1964 figures (although these figures, curiously, don't exactly tally with the results as published in the 1965 magazine).

June 1970

During the 1970s and 80s we have to rely on the memories of the candidates, given the demise of the school magazine. In 1970 the *Roding* still existed, but this was the year that the task of editing the magazine was handed

over to the pupils and the last of Peter Sillis's editions contained no mention of the mock election. I can't help speculating whether this was a reaction to Ted Heath's victory. **Greg Cox** thinks there could be something in my theory and remembers distinctly fighting the mock election, and thinks he may have won it for the Liberals. **Mike Gapes**, whose subsequent political career is well-known, was the Labour candidate and he finished in third place, behind **Brian Samwell** (Conservative).

February 1974

This was the year when Ted Heath's government was replaced by a hung parliament, followed rapidly by another election in the autumn. **Mike Walker** stood as the Liberal candidate in the February mock election at BHCHS. He writes....

I'm still not sure exactly how it happened but I became the Liberal candidate in the February 1974 mock election with Bob Millar as my Campaign Manager. Bob's garden had backed onto ours in Epping and I think his father was involved with the local Liberal Party. The Labour candidate was another U6 member, Stuart Masters, while the L6 provided the Conservative whose name escapes me but it might have been Neil Pettifer.

The campaign started with the usual posters (and associated vandalism) and culminated in a full school hustings in the main hall. I seem to remember that Stuart was easily the most political and impassioned of the three candidates and his speech reflected that. Apart from a few lines in stage productions this was the first time I had spoken in front of this number of people and a potentially hostile audience too.

I was obviously not persuasive enough, as the Conservative candidate was duly elected. At the time I was very disappointed but maybe running a very close second to the Conservatives was a pretty good result in that area of the country.

October 1974

By the autumn, Mike Walker had left BHCHS and joined the ranks of student life at Exeter University. We have not yet had any evidence that the October election was mirrored at BHCHS.

May 1979

Political interest was aroused again in the year of Margaret Thatcher's first victory. **Tony McMahon** remembers a landslide victory for **David Long**, the Conservative candidate. Tony writes:

ELECTION RESULTS From the School Magazines

1943

most successfully. The Mock Election caused a great deal of informal political discussion. On March 12th the three candidates for the representation of the school, Mr. B. McCartney (Cons.), Mr. B. A. Tarlton (Soc.), and Mr. W. H. C. Taylor (Lib.), each made his Hyde Park speech. Mr. Tarlton was elected with 25 votes, a majority of 7 votes over his Conservative opponent. Undoubtedly this stimulated political feeling, and was, for some at least, the beginning of a political education.

1955

T. E. Hardiman	(Conservative)	73
J. C. Howes	(Liberal)	73
F. J. Legg	(Labour)	19
J. Jesty	(Fascist)	14
I. G. Liddell	(Independent Nationalist)	13
G. Browning	(Independent)	9
S. D. W. Norton	(Communist)	3
Spoiled Papers		15
Total poll — 219.		Percentage voted— 88%

1959

G. K. Marson (Conservative)	: 90
A. M. Ellis (Liberal)	: 48
R. Jones (Labour)	: 35
H. R. Lloyd (Welsh Nationalist)	: 11
G. L. R. Burne (Irish Nationalist)	: 2
Spoiled papers	: 5
92% of the "electorate" voted.	

Lloyd and Burne lost their deposits — to Forest Hospital.

1964

I. D. P. McKinley (Conservative) 110
J. M. Morris (Labour) 69
A. K. Beavis (Liberal) 63

1966

EASTEAL (LABOUR)	104	1964 Result 68
KENNEDY (CONSERVATIVE)	100	120
DYASON (IND. LIBERAL)	38	—
*BEAVIS (LIBERAL)	19	60
*HARDMAN (COMMUNIST)	18	—
*TYNDALL (NAT. PROGRESSIVE)	8	—
LABOUR MAJORITY	4	
*Lost deposits		

The hustings were held in the assembly hall with speeches on the stage. It was quite rowdy - as an anti-Thatcherite at the time, I found it very unsettling. But Essex had gone very blue! Before then, Mark Kieve and I had briefly formed the Pupils Revolutionary Extremist Party (PREP) and I still have a petition we circulated. Our attempt at a rally in the school playground was successfully broken up by a very irate dinner lady.

Stephen Robinson, at the time in his second year at BHCHS, was fascinated watching the hustings from the playground. It certainly made an impression on him because four years later he was standing as a candidate.

June 1983

Stephen Robinson remembers the 1983 election which was held at the Sixth Form Centre:

There was a member of the

Young Socialists and a Young Conservative in the U6, keen to be candidates. So I (L6) put myself forward for SDP-Lib Alliance. We had a hustings at morning break. By lunchtime, Tom Hill was standing as an Independent Conservative because the official one was not right wing enough! The tallest person in the sixth, Roy Wheeler, was a supporter of mine so my posters were higher up the walls than anyone else's, unable to be taken down!

June 1987

The final mock election before the school's closure seems to have moved back to Roding Lane. **Rich Davy** remembers that **David Whellams** was the Conservative candidate, but that the election was won by the Lib/SDP Alliance. The country remained solidly Conservative, and by the time they had been toppled by Tony Blair, the school had shut its doors for the last time.

Why Play a Girls' Game?

How tennis eventually flourished at BHCHS

TRAWLING through the school archives to follow the history of tennis at BHCHS, some curious facts emerged. Although tennis was never more than a minority sport, I was surprised to learn that the original plans for the school included a "provision for six tennis courts (two hard and four grass) in the north-east corner of the site".

It seems likely that the proposed six tennis courts became a victim of the war. The land on which they were to be built became the RAF camp at the outbreak of war and was never returned to the school. Any plans for tennis courts were shelved, and Spud never knew that the land sacrificed to the war effort would ultimately be sold again to become (wonderful irony) a David Lloyd Tennis Centre.

In 1951, **Roger Webb's** arrival into the PE department resulted in a welcome broadening of the curriculum and when it was clear that there was no immediate prospect of courts being built he looked around for other options, and secured a weekly booking at Grange Farm. The facilities only allowed for sixth formers to play once a week, but it meant that a school team became a realistic prospect. The Grange Farm arrangement didn't continue for more than a couple of years, and it wasn't until the late 50s that sixth formers began to lobby for tennis to be resumed. It seems likely that the PE staff had too many other commitments to nurture a sport that could not be played in the school grounds – swimming suffered likewise at this time. However, a tennis team was assembled in 1958 under the captaincy of **Alex Roberts (1950)** and there was another in 1960 led by **Hugh Dow (1953)**. Another consequence of restricting a sport to just the upper sixth was a lack of continuity. So when two lower sixth formers – who had received some coaching from Lionel Bradford at Chigwell Tennis Club – decided to make a bid to play in school time they didn't know where to go for advice. So the pair – **Stuart Cox** and **Trevor Reek (1955)** – plucked up courage to broach the subject with Spud himself. They knocked on his door with trepidation. Spud's reaction was hardly enthusiastic: "Why would you want to play a girls' game?" That seemed to put the cap on any ideas the pair may have had about matches with Loughton County High. But they got their

wish, and formed another team and, although they may have only played a couple of matches, the seeds were perhaps sown to allow a resurgence of tennis.

The early 60s saw the formation of more teams but with a limited schedule of matches against other schools. We can only speculate whether Spud's opposition to the sport was contained in his outburst to Stuart Cox, or whether the real reason was that tennis was fundamentally an individual, rather than a team sport. This could also explain his failure to promote golf despite his illustrious father.

Following Spud's retirement in 1966 a keen group of tennis players soon established that the Hugh Colgate regime was going to be more liberal in outlook. It took a further four years for courts to finally appear. **Dave Fitchett (1963)**, who was still only in the fourth form, had been coached in tennis from an early age, and he persuaded the PE staff to let him form tennis teams. For the first time, the school achieved some success in external competitions, reaching the final of the Essex Schools Senior Championship. Fitchett himself partnered **Dave Pippard** to win the Divisional U15 doubles.

The acquisition of tennis courts very quickly returned to the attention of the Parents Association who would – as with many other school projects – take on the task of fund raising. During the autumn of 1971 two hard courts appeared. Unsurprisingly they were immediately popular and the PE staff reorganised schedules to allow for play on the new courts during the day. **John Loveridge** was a key influence in generating more interest, organising the busy schedule for using the courts, and arranging house competitions for the first time.

Naturally enough, this resulted in some talented players emerging. Of the generation that first used the new courts, several reached county level. **Chris Godwin (1970)** reached the last eight in Junior Wimbledon and the quarter finals of the Nestlé's National Youth Tennis Championship.

Tennis continued to be popular during the school's final decade. **Howard McGuinness (1973)** is undoubtedly the player who achieved most in the sport. Ranked number 5 in the England junior list while still at school, he

went on to play internationally, once reaching the final qualifying round for Wimbledon, and has been a prominent professional coach for more than 30 years.

So the story of tennis had a hap-

py ending. Who knows what we might have achieved if the planned six courts devoted to the "girls game" had been built. But at least we won the war.....



1958
Captain Alex Roberts (1950). Others included Hugh Dow (1953), Robin Ronan (1952), Michael Arben (1951), Michael Claydon (1953), Peter Lodge (1953)



1960
Captain Hugh Dow (1953). Others included Bryan Cox (1952), Ian Forsyth (1953), Michael Claydon (1953), Terry Harrow (1953)



1961
Captain Michael Norgett (1954). Others (F): Stuart Cox (1955), Trevor Reek (1957), (B): Ian Rouse (1954), Keith Venn (1957), Tony Wilkinson (1954), John Dunne (1957)



1962
 Captain Trevor Reek (1957). Others (F): Stuart Cox (1955), Bryan Cossey (1956) (B): John Dunne (1957), Keith Hurley (1956) Keith Venn (1957), Brian Mountford (1956)



1963
 (F): Mike Fitchett (1959), Bob Barnes (1957), John Dunne (1957), Bryan Cossey (1956) (B): Peter House (1956), Keith Hurley (1956), David Cross (1956), Ian Impey (1958). Unclear if there was a team captain!



1964
 Captain John Dunne (1957). Others (F) Dick Robson (1958), Richard Fergusson (1958) (B) Bob Barnes (1957), Ian Impey (1958)



1967
 Captain Dave Fitchett (1963). Others: Dave Pippard (1962), Alex Pryde (1961), Brian Hughes (1962)

Cornish Delight



I decided to check out what **Simon Vallance (1968)** was doing after publishing the news about his brother Patrick (1971) in the last edition.

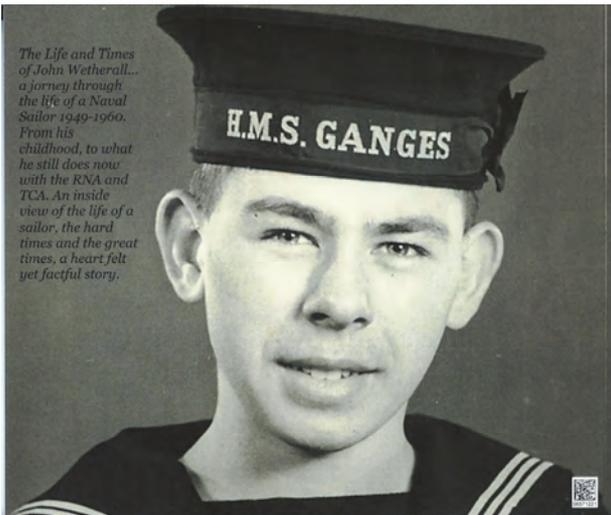
Both brothers had left BHCHS in 1973 when the family moved to Truro. After leaving school Simon studied hotel management in Scotland. After working in hotel management, he returned to Cornwall in 1985 and taught business studies. Then, in 2001, he bought Carnon Downs Caravan Park and has since enjoyed developing the park with his wife Ruth and their family.

Simon's efforts have paid off. Carnon Downs is a splendid site, nestling in woodland but handy for visiting nearby Truro and other attractions. With a Google review rating of 4.8 out of 5 it is clearly worth a visit.

www.carnon-downs-caravanpark.co.uk



BOOKSHELF



***The Life and Times of John Wetherall* by John Wetherall (BHCHS 1944-49)**

This is another wonderful example of how self-publishing has blown open the old restrictions that made it almost impossible to get into print. John has written a fascinating account of his life and career.

The book is beautifully produced and profusely illustrated with photographs, newspaper cuttings and other contemporary material. Much of the content covers John's 11-year career in the Royal Navy - during which he served on 10 ships and worked in 31 different countries.

John published his autobiography with the help of his granddaughter. The book is not on sale commercially but John will send you a copy for a donation to charity.

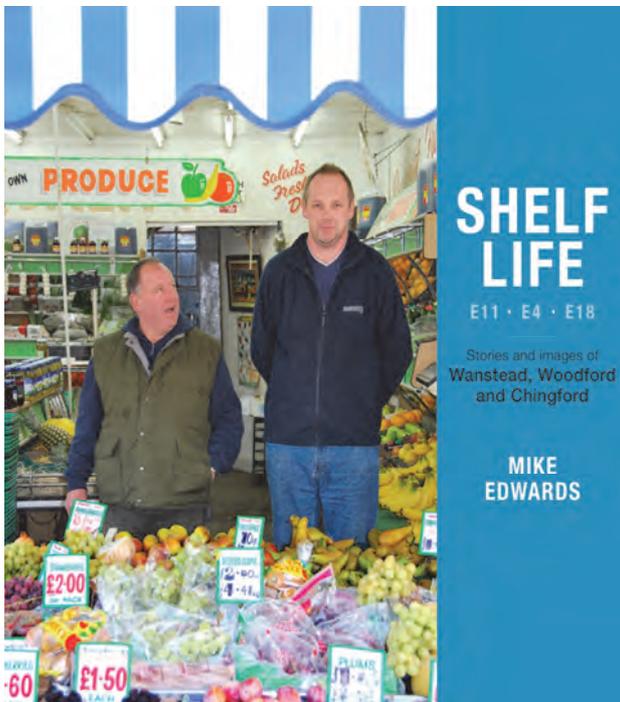
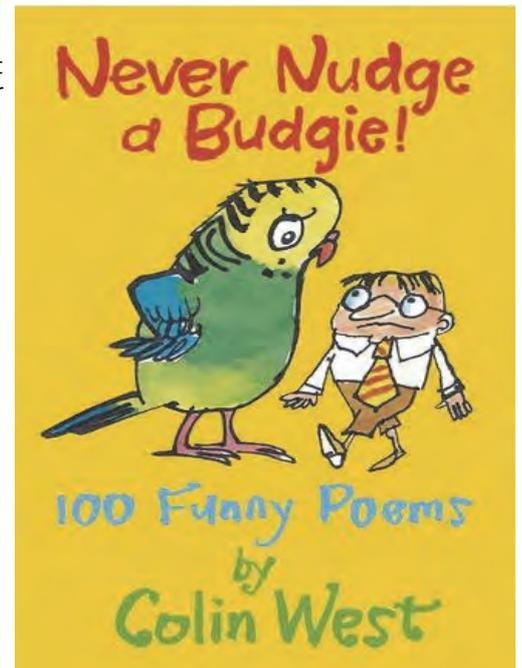
Enquiries to John at 84 Parklands, Coopersale, Epping CM16 7RG.

***Never Nudge a Budgie!* by Colin West (BHCHS 1962-69)**

Hailed as the master of comic verse, Colin West is funnier than ever in his latest side-splitting collection *Never Nudge a Budgie!* Divided into seven sections, which include "Funny Folk", "Curious Creatures" and "Vicious Verses", *Never Nudge a Budgie!* collects together one hundred of Colin's best poems yet. Some are old, some are new; all are infused with his trademark wit.

Each poem is paired with a wonderful and winsome picture by the poet himself - don't miss his drawing of a crocodile getting its teeth checked, or of Betty eating spaghetti. There are limericks, tongue-twisters, shape poems and rhymes, each on a more unlikely topic than the last, such as the Ooglewop's large tummy, whether or not to be a bee, and why you should never ever nudge a budgie!

Available from Amazon and other leading book outlets at £4.99.



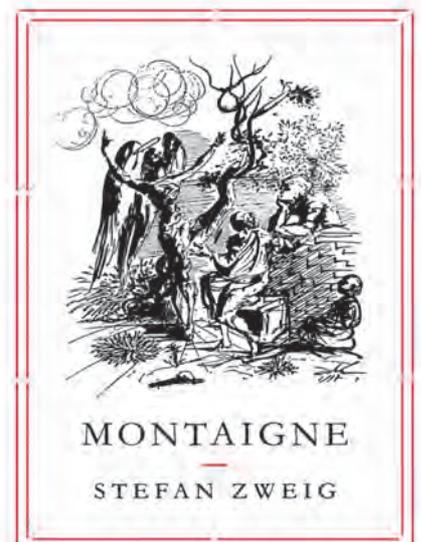
***Shelf Life: E11 . E4 . E18* by Mike Edwards**

I am grateful to **Terence Atkins (1958)** for bringing this to my attention. Mike Edwards (not an Old Buck) is a photographer who has put together an intriguing collection of images and personal accounts of around 40 shopkeepers and other colourful residents of longstanding within Wanstead, Woodford and Chingford.

Shelf Life deserves inclusion here not just because of the local interest, but in particular because one of the personalities, **David Bass (1986)**, is the owner of *International Firearms* - the Woodford Bridge gun shop. David is quoted in the book: "...the first real shock of my life was at fourteen years old. I was at Buckhurst Hill Boys School, and it closed, which meant that all of us boys, wet behind the ears when it came to girls, got transferred to Loughton Girls' School! ...my education went rapidly downhill..."

Shelf Life is published by the author, price £30, but it may be tricky to obtain a copy. Terence found his copy at a bookshop in Woodford. For more information see the author's website:

mikeedwardsphotography.co.uk



***Montaigne* by Stefan Zweig (translated by Will Stone BHCHS 1978-85)**

This recently-published translation by Will Stone is the biography written by Stefan Zweig of the sixteenth century French philosopher Michel de Montaigne. Zweig was an eminent and prolific Austrian novelist and biographer who had fled Austria in 1934 after Hitler's rise to power. Zweig was a pacifist who could never come to terms with the events that followed the establishment of the Third Reich. After moving first to England, then New York, he settled in Brazil in 1940. In 1942, he and his wife committed suicide. Influenced by Montaigne's writings, he was unable to foresee a peaceful outcome for Europe.

Will's translation is published by Pushkin Press and available from Amazon in paperback (£10) or Kindle (£7) editions.

From the Editor's Postbag.....

Name Games

Peter Sheppard (1941-46)

Bob Horne (*Letters, OB News May 2015*) had a lot to say for himself, but then he always did. I was horrified that our members decided on the name *Old Buckwellians* especially as, at the time, I had proposed a much more sophisticated *Old Buckhurstians*.

But our problems fade into insignificance when one considers the problems facing former pupils of the Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College when they come to choose a name for their association!

What say you, Bob?

The Notorious John Hall - 1

Dick Thomas (1958-65)

The name that leapt out from the pages in the last edition (*A Tragic End to a Short Life*) was John Hall. On that fateful day in June 1961 I went badger watching at Loughton Camp in Epping Forest with a friend from school, Roger Smith, who lived in Empress Avenue, Woodford. Despite being armed with honey which we believed would entice the badgers into the open, we were disappointed. Late in the evening we made our way back through the forest to Loughton where we were surprised to run into Roger's dad who was driving around the Staples Road area hoping to find us (our original aim was to walk back to my home in Buckhurst Hill). Mr Smith bundled us into the car and told us that their next door neighbours had been attacked by their son John who had later killed two policemen.

I never knew that John Hall had been a pupil at BHCHS. I can't ever remember it being mentioned.

I realise that Spud would not have been keen to advertise that the school had nurtured a notorious killer, but it's strange that word didn't spread among the boys at the time.

The Notorious John Hall - 2

Eric Stevenson (1953-58)

I was posted to West Ham police station a couple of years after the tragic incident and served with Charlie Cox.

The shooting was often spoken about by the many officers who had served with Phil and Fred but until reading your account I had never heard about Hall's previous schooling.

HK Whiting - 1

Sidney Alford (1946-54)

As time passes, an increasing proportion of old boys who, as OBN informs us, have gone to a classroom in the sky, are my contemporaries. The May 2015 edition notes the passing of several of my class mates but also of a particular teacher to whom I owe a great deal: Mr HK Whiting. I had contemplated trying to contact him a couple of years ago but, estimating that he had probably already died, did not do so. It was therefore with some regret that I learned that his death was so recent.

The only subject in which I was near the top of my class as O-levels approached was General Science and, as I passed into the Lower Sixth, my interest was focussing on chemistry. One problem was that, despite my hopelessness in geography and history being of little impediment, I failed my English Language exam. This was a bit anomalous given my mark for Eng Lit but I attributed it then, and attribute it still, to my English master: a gentleman of little humour who, as far as I can remember, never cast a word of encouragement in my direction. I was therefore obliged to retake the English examination and found myself in the class of the newly arrived Mr Whiting.

After a few weeks of his classes we assembled one day to have our latest essays returned to us with comments. I could hardly believe it when my essay was read out as an exemplar of good writing, including mention of "Alford's literary pyrotechnics" – he knew of my organising some colleagues for the purpose of making fireworks as 5th November approached. This was the first time in too many years that a teacher had spoken well of my English. Two interesting things followed. I passed my retaken O-level in November with a mark among my highest. Not bad. But the second one amazed me. Mr Whiting took me to one side and told me that he had gone to Cambridge with the intention of reading chemistry but he had switched to studying English. Might I be interested in doing the same thing? I had been set on science for so long that such a suggestion struck me more as fantasy than possibility. I do hope that I did not sound too ungrateful in declining that implied offer of help beyond reasonable expectation.

(In the event I studied chemistry at a lesser establishment whence I was thrown out after a year. A few years later I overcame my pedagogic problems well enough to acquire a doctorate in chemistry in another ancient institution and necessarily acquired some fluency in a foreign language to boot.)

Nowadays, though mainly concerned with technical matters, I do have occasion to write articles for a journal. More than once my spirits have been raised as I choose my words by the passing vision of a most welcome shade.

HK Whiting - 2

Owen Easteal (1951-58)

I should like to add a comment about HK Whiting.

When paying a visit for the first time to the Headmaster of one of the two comprehensive schools in St, Neots, Cambridgeshire, in my function as Town Centre Manager, which included liaison with all the schools in the town, I was asked to wait in the lobby. Imagine my surprise when I looked up to see the BHCHS motto under the school crest of Longsands School.

I then noticed a list of former Heads and saw that Whiting's name was the first. He obviously exported the motto and it is still extant today.

Editor's note....I was amused to see this comment from Owen. I had stumbled by chance on the connection between the Longsands motto and ours (BHCHS Motto Mystery - who recycled it? OB News Nov 2007). I contacted the principal of Longsands but he had been unable to tell me the origin of the motto. He added that the first motto had since been replaced, but Virgil's words still appear - quirkily translated - on their Facebook page (see below).

HK Whiting - 3

Ken Rimmer (1951-56)

I couldn't let HK Whiting's obituary pass without contributing a note of my experience of him. He had a greater effect on me than anyone outside my family and I have been forever grateful for his interest.

In my first year he was my English master but never taught me in class subsequently. However, after my second year, upon returning to school to start the new school year I was astonished and apprehensive to hear an announcement in Assembly that I was to report to Mr. Whiting at the staff room immediately after Assembly. When I did so, Mr Whiting told me that he had reviewed my English results for year 2 and been very unhappy with my performance. He had reviewed my report and concluded that I had completely wasted my second year by fooling around, in bad company, and not attained anything like the standard he expected of me. He had decided that, for the rest of my time at the school, I would do whatever English homework was set but give it to him, personally, to mark. Subsequently, I was to collect my marked homework from him and discuss his comments and criticisms. He often made me re-do homework until he was satisfied with the final result.

This continued for the remainder of my time at BHCHS and, although I did not like it at the time, it was the shock treatment that I needed and deserved and caused me to rethink my attitude and effort.

I was very sorry that I never had the opportunity to meet him in my adult life and tell him how much I grew to appreciate his interest in me and his efforts on my behalf.

More Letters

Job and a Half

David Woollard (1952-59)

Have you considered doing a compilation of all the biographies that have been submitted?

Probably a huge amount of work?

Correct, David, a huge job. Perhaps when I have published biogs from all those who haven't yet submitted information - Ed.

TV Mystery Solved

Bill Martin (1957-64)

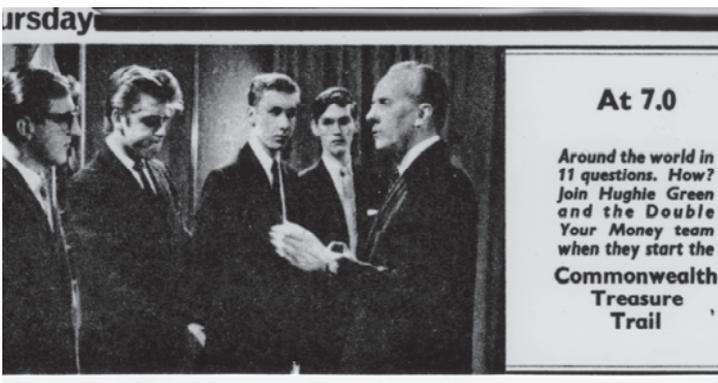
The answer to the question: 'Who was the boy on *Double Your Money* with old Hughie G?' (*Letters, May 2015*) is me.

In 1963 a specially produced series with a Commonwealth theme was prepared by ITV. Some hundreds of hopefuls from throughout the UK were summoned to exams to test our suitability for the show. To my surprise I ended up coming third and landed a chance for the big one-thousand-pound treasure trail to be filmed in India, New Zealand, Australia, West Indies and Canada. I zipped through the questions in London to win £32 and was the second reserve to fly out to an exotic location. The first candidate failed his question in India and I received an urgent call from ITV to be ready to fly out should the next candidate fail the next round in New Zealand.

I was told to get my passport and all the necessary medical shots. Spud was very supportive but a bit concerned that I might have to take time away from school.

And so I waited for the next phone call. Which never came! Candidate 2 knew his stuff - which left me waiting for the bus in Roding Lane....

Bill also sent the cutting below from TV Times that lists his appearance in the show. Bill is third from the left, having his tie adjusted by Hughie Green. - Ed.



Knickers

David Foster (1944-49)

It was a sunny July morning on the last day of the school year and a group of us were walking from Chigwell station to school. We were discussing how we would be spending the six weeks of freedom that stretched out before us when, as the school came into view, we saw something that stopped all conversation and thoughts of holiday.

Flying from the highest point like a flag of victory was a pair of ladies knickers and a bra, or as Spud put it "items of ladies wearing apparel".

This must have been in 1947 or 1948. It caused quite a stir. Does anyone else remember this? I would love to hear the full story.

Richard Fenton

Roger Street (1955-62)

I read Richard Fenton's obituary (*OB News May 2015*) with great sadness. We were good friends for a few years at BH but lost touch when we went our separate ways post-school.

One of my fondest memories is of coming out of a Biology O Level exam with Dick who assured me that he had answered a question on the human skeleton by writing out the words of the Negro spiritual, "Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones!"

Woodwork Woes

Stuart Evans (1953-55)

All my life I have had to deal with having one eye long sighted and the other short sighted. In woodwork lessons I found it almost impossible to saw or drill through a block of wood retaining a straight line across the three dimensions.

After yet another disastrous attempt at making a table lamp, Charlie King memorably said: "How many times must I tell you boy, you can take it off but you can't put it back on."

Obituary

Brian ("Buzz") Morris

(BHCHS 1940-46)



WITH the death of Buzz Morris in December the Old Bucks lost another of its most loyal members.

At school Buzz was a competent cross country runner, finishing fifth in the Junior Cross Country race two years in succession. He left school after completing his School Certificate in 1946. Following National Service with the RAF he obtained a National Certificate at SW Essex Technical college. He then worked at Wiggins Teape, the paper manufacturer, finishing in a senior sales position.

Buzz played football for OBFC and he was also a leading light in the Lodge. He maintained his links with the school, in particular when his elder son Nigel started in 1977 and Andrew in

1978. Buzz joined the Parents' Association, and became chairman in 1978. This was the first and only time an Old Buck was appointed to that position and it also gave him a place as a school governor.

His period as Chairman of the PA was busy and successful. The school, as ever, struggled for funds. The challenges were immense, given the recent sudden increase in the school's intake from three forms to four.

When Buzz retired from the PA in 1982 Hugh Colgate paid tribute to his achievements and his "ever-cheerful" approach. He continued for a further year on the governing body.

He also remained active on the committee of the OBA, and was treasurer at the time of my own first involvement in 1999. Along with the rest of the existing committee Buzz helped to make my own initiation a very pleasant experience. By then, however, he was beginning a slow decline in health that would leave him severely incapacitated.

When Alzheimer's disease took hold he moved to a nursing home where he remained until the end. By 2012, his illness had advanced to the point that he was unaware of Nigel's tragically early and sudden death.

Peter Morden

(BHCHS 1954-61)



PETER was a man of many talents. At school he was an avenger of playground bullies. Anyone who dared to attack his younger brother as a new boy at BHCHS was quickly despatched to the ground, or persuaded to flee to the safety of the bike sheds.

He was a remarkable actor, as when he played the part of Eliza Doolittle to critical acclaim in Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*.

Thirdly, as Mr Selfridge, Peter was a skilled summer salesman of silk pyjamas (Bonsoir, of course), or determined delivery man braving evil guard dogs or obstreperous security officers.

Peter was always jolly company on the long train journeys from Paddington to Swansea as we travelled to and fro in pursuit of our various university studies. He met his wife Christine at Swansea.

Peter was a sportsman, seasoned traveller, rock climber in Austria, quality tennis player, umpire, and sometime hockey player. One of the only times I saw my brother agitated was after a university game against the hard men of the Steel Company of Wales, whose players whirled their sticks like Boadicea's chariot around the opposition's knees.

Peter spent most of his working life in Norfolk, where he was a dedicated teacher, caring educationalist, consummate professional, and enthusiastic season ticket holder at Norwich City. He was a highly skilled linguist, adding Spanish to his portfolio as a late addition.

Peter died on 8th January 2015 from complications associated with kidney failure. He leaves his wife Christine, two daughters and two granddaughters.

Tony Morden (BHCHS 1957-64)

Frank Mattick

(Biology, 1961-66)

Frank Mattick made a significant impact on the teaching of biology during his five years at BHCHS. He was not a follower of convention, and I was delighted when he allowed me a superb and candid account of his time there (*The Ups and Downs of a Maverick Teacher*, OB News May 2002). We are grateful to his wife Ann for the following tribute.



FRANK MATTICK died in Scotland in September 2014 aged 79.

As a young teacher at BHCHS his passion for sports cars was still remembered in a recent edition of *OB News*. His passionate contempt for homework diaries may be less well known!

Frank resented growing old. Now in his late 70s he was feeling his age and starting to slow down. However, he still kept very active - only two days before he died he was happily pushing a manual mower around the lawns, eschewing the use of a motorised model and scorning others for using them.

He attributed his good health to his youthful passion for sport; he had always been keen on sports, particularly cross country running, accumulating several national medals. Table tennis was also a favourite pastime. In his later years he found the Scottish golf courses very wet, which inevitably dampened his interest in that activity!

After leaving Buckhurst Hill in 1966, Frank moved to Harrogate with his wife and baby daughter, where he aspired to challenge his mind and further his teaching career. This was not to happen immediately, as the local school was reluctant to exploit his abilities or embrace his creativity. Swiftly though, his energy and enthusiasm was rekindled when he took a position as Head of Biology at Beckett Park Teacher Training College in Leeds. With the job was the opportunity to move to Roundhay in Leeds - a lovely city.

Frank was a very happy and dedicated Senior Lecturer at the Teacher Training College; the work was satisfying and he was able to inspire his undergraduate and postgraduate students in Biological science. He endeavoured to challenge their minds, ignite their enthusiasm and encourage them to question the norm. He was pivotal in developing innovative, enlightening and by all accounts entertaining in-service training for primary school teachers across West Yorkshire. (Exactly how many uses are there in the universe for a single brick...?) Frank lived for his work, always carrying a notebook to jot down thoughts and illustrations for lectures and seminar notes. He took immense pride in the achievements of his pupils and students whilst they were under his care as well as during their postgraduate careers. He continued to keep in touch with many long after his retirement. His abilities at the College (latterly Leeds Polytechnic) were



recognized and he rose to become the head of department very rapidly.

When Frank was 50, the Department of Education started to implement the national curriculum, a move that he considered abhorrent. He considered it a strategy designed to curtail the imagination and individual flair of good teachers. He feared those with creativity would be driven down to the level of mediocre automata. It was an educational environment he would never have wanted to work in, let alone train others to be constrained by. These political changes coincided with a time of equally great change for Leeds Polytechnic and the fortuitous offer of early retirement. Frank grabbed it and with his family decided to move 'back home to the hills' of his birthplace, Wales. They moved to the mid-Wales rural idyll, Aberangell. His daughter, Rye, and son, Nathan, both finished

their final years of schooling locally before they each in turn returned to Yorkshire to study at Leeds University. Their many postgraduate academic successes gave Frank great pleasure.

A second retirement move took us to an even more remote rural location, where we overlook the sea to Arran and Bute from Argyll, Scotland. Rye is working as a hospital consultant (Newcastle University) and Nathan is a Software Engineer who has spent the last 5 years in New Zealand working for a global radio communications company.

Frank is greatly missed.

Ann Mattick

Steve Newberry (1958) writes.....

Frank was one of a new breed of teachers at BHCHS in the 60s. He didn't conform to contemporary stuffy old-school stereotypes; he drove interesting cars, he didn't take his breaks in the smoke-filled staff room but brewed up his coffee on a Bunsen in the biology lab, he invited boys to help him move a heavy piano at his place.

More importantly for me, he was incensed that the idiotic 6-day school timetable dictated that those who had been persuaded to study Latin (and not German, sigh!) in 2A could not do biology O-level in 5A. So he undertook to teach us one lunchtime per week and he duplicated and provided the written notes. As far as I remember, we all passed.

Drummond Clapp

(BHCHS 1940-47)



DRUMMOND CLAPP was one of the earliest pupils to have had a younger brother (Colin, 1941-48) at BHCHS, and their father helped to inaugurate the Parents' Association in 1946, remaining as secretary for several years after his sons had finished their schooling.

Drummond's school years were interrupted by war, but he devel-

oped a strong interest in music, appearing as a cellist with the school orchestra in later years helping out during major performances. His sister Helen was also a frequent visitor to the school as a cello teacher.

In professional life Drummond Clapp was an architect, initially at Tooley & Fosters in Buckhurst Hill and later as a partner at White & Mileson in Loughton.

During the time when Drummond's son Ali was at BHCHS (1971-78) he and his wife Helen became involved with the Parents' Association. He was appointed as a school governor in 1974, remaining on the governing body until shortly before the school's closure.

Ron Smith

(BHCHS 1963-70)



RON SMITH was an IT specialist whose career began at Rank Xerox in Welwyn Garden City and subsequently at the Water Research Centre in Stevenage. In 1987, after marriage to a German, he moved to Germany.

A daughter was born in 1991, but his marriage ended in divorce. He remained in Munich, working for the German Space Operations Centre.

Ron's health problems began at an early age. He had several operations for brain cancer, starting in 1986. Although these had left him with some permanent defects he had resumed working part time.

Ron finally lost his battle against cancer on 27th January 2015.

John Whaler: The Supreme Professional



JOHN WHALER was born in 1930 in Billingham, near Middlesbrough and was brought up in an environment where further education was the exception rather than the rule, but with the support of his parents he was able to qualify for the local grammar school at Stockton-on-Tees. His academic abilities soon became apparent at school and he took and passed his A-levels a year early and accepted a place to read French at Hull University at the age of 17. After graduation and teacher training he did National Service in the RAF and then took his first teaching job at Sir George Monoux School in Walthamstow.

It was around this time that he met Jane. They married in 1955 and three years later Charlotte was born, followed by Nigel in 1960 and Jonathan in 1964. Both his sons attended BHCHS.

In 1959 he joined the French department at BHCHS. The school was quick to recognise his skills and qualities – the 1959 Roding commented, about his arrival:

We very soon had reason to imagine the dismay of all Monarchians at the loss of so able and pleasant a master.

He wasted no time in becoming involved in many facets of school life. In 1961 he took over responsibility for school cricket, and a succession of cricket captains valued his sound advice.

After just four years at the school, he grasped the challenge of a new opportunity, perfectly suited to his insatiable thirst for knowledge as well as his love of languages. A year-long course in Russian would give him sufficient command to enable the school to offer Russian for the first time. A Level language students would thus be able to benefit from this valuable extra subject.

It is reasonable to speculate that the decision of Hugh Colgate to apply for the Headship on JH Taylor's retirement may have been influenced by the prospect of working again with John Whaler, who had been his colleague at Monoux.

John Whaler was one of a very small number of staff members who achieved significant promotions without moving to another school. 1967 saw the first, when he was a natural successor to Jim Irving as Head of French. Further recognition came in 1973 when he was appointed as Senior Master. Then, just two years later, on the retirement of Tom Leek, he was promoted to Deputy Head, alongside Eric Franklin.

By this time, the school was embroiled in the massive changes that would ultimately lead to closure. Both Deputy Heads had significant involvement in the endless discussions that would allow BHCHS to have a clear way forward that would meet the political whims as well as maintaining the school's reputation. John found himself chairing a



working party of teachers looking at how the sixth forms of BHCHS and LCHS might be merged.

After 15 years as Deputy Head he took his final step up. It was not a promotion that he had anticipated. Ian Richardson, who had taken on BHCHS when Hugh Colgate retired, had been expected to see out the school's closure – which by then was inevitable. But an unmissable opportunity to move to another school left BHCHS leaderless for its final year. So John Whaler was given the unenviable task of shutting the gates for the last time.

By 1990 he was close enough to retirement to make an early exit from teaching, which allowed him to devote his long retirement to pursuing his many other interests.

He was always heavily involved in community activities in Ongar, where the family had lived since 1961. He played tennis at the sports club where he qualified to coach and later took an administrative role. He also joined and subsequently became

chairman of the Ongar town twinning committee. His fluent French was invaluable in twinning with Cerizay. This led to acquiring many friends in the area.

In 1980 he became a magistrate and continued enjoying that role until enforced retirement came twenty years later. He could never understand why magistrates were made to retire at 70. This meant he had spare time again, and he chose a completely different interest – becoming a volunteer tour guide at Chartwell. He had always been an avid reader of books about Churchill and his appointment as a guide there took his enthusiasm for the subject to a new level.

Jane's death in 2013 left a huge gap in his life, but he was determined to continue his activities with his customary enthusiasm. He remained in apparent good health until suffering a fatal heart attack on 1st February 2015.

His funeral was attended by a huge crowd, including many of his former pupils and colleagues from BHCHS.



John Whaler's footballing skills were captured in the cine film taken by John Robins. This was the 1967 Staff v 1st XI match.

John Whaler: A Personal Tribute By Laurence Gold (BHCHS 1969-76)

At John Whaler's funeral service, the co-ordinator said that there wasn't one person in the room whose lives had not been made better by John – indeed there probably wasn't one person who attended BHCHS during his time there whose life had not been enriched by him.

For me that enrichment was all the more in that I was privileged to have John as my French teacher for seven years and also as my Russian teacher for two.

It started on the afternoon of my very first day at school in 1Y of 1969 as we had our first French lesson. Here was a teacher who did not scowl, did not have a gruff voice, but talked to us all as young men. He asked who had been to France and already had some language knowledge, and to those who answered in the positive, simply asked them to follow the work while the beginners caught up and not to take an air of complacency. Then as everybody reached the similar level we would move forward as a group. Back at home that day I told my parents that our French teacher seemed really nice.

And so my fondness for John grew. I don't think I ever heard him raise his voice. But he didn't need to. He won everyone's respect in the way he taught and the way he treated you.

He would stride into lesson, roll up his sleeves, and politely ask pupils by the windows to open them, maybe point to a couple of guys to stop talking, announce who was going to control the projector and off we would go with Monsieur Dupont, Jean et Colette up on screen.

No one ever argued back, or spoke out of turn, or threw paper darts because John always made his lessons interesting, and he involved everyone. He would conduct his lessons from all corners of the classroom, and stand almost like a traffic policeman, say a phrase in French, and then, pointing at which boy he wanted to answer the question, who, where, when, how, and Monsieur Dupont did what, whether they be behind, in front or beside him – his arms swivelling in all directions to keep the atmosphere alert as he pointed to the unsuspecting boy. You couldn't allow a lapse in concentration or read the Beano below the desk because the next question he may point at you for an answer.

Not only did he involve everyone, but he showed no favouritism. If the knowledgeable pupils were straining an arm to answer

a question, he didn't immediately go to them and he didn't embarrass the weaker ones by asking a question that was clearly out of their depth. Instead he would support and encourage them, and conversely he would know when to let the stronger pupils answer so they didn't become demotivated by a lack of contribution.

As the years ticked by I remember each time on the first day back, having this huge sigh of relief that John was again my French teacher.

My life changed in the 4th year (Dec 72) when my father died, but John was there for me and became almost a school father figure to me. He always had time to answer my questions, whether they related to French lessons or other matters whether after class or outside the staff room. I never saw him turn a boy away, never scold him for asking a silly question or for wasting his time. It was the same John you got, morning or afternoon – calm, supportive and encouraging.

I went on to do French A level and my respect for John just grew and grew, as by then he was treating us as grown up teenagers.

In addition there was a group of us who chose Russian as a 6th form minority subject. I remember the first lesson we boys were joking together as to how we would ever unravel this language with a different alphabet and why ever had we chosen this option.

John strode in, asked what the laughter was about and Cliff Oliver told him about the mystery of the Russian alphabet. John smiled and calmly said that by the end of the lesson we would know it and be reading Russian. Again we burst into laughter at this impossible prospect but we persevered and how John was right – we could pronounce the alphabet and therefore read Russian text, something I can still do to this day, thanks to John.

Yet another proof of John's dedication to his pupils showed as the summer of '76 approached; it was a nailed on certainty I would get a good A level grade in French, but when results day came, my slip showed a fail. In confused disbelief I phoned John to tell him my news. He invited me to his home that afternoon to discuss my situation.

I shall never forget sitting in his garden, how he listened to my upset, calmed me down in that it wasn't the end of the world and

asked me positive questions, and helped me put together a corrective plan. In the next few days he found out the reason for my failure (despite excellent grades in translations, dictation, comprehensive and verbal, a bottom grade in the Literature paper meant outright failure). He organised my exam retake in December and this time I got my French A level, and went on to North Staffs polytechnic to do Business Studies with French.

For the past 18 years in the second phase of my career I was travelling all over Europe as a sales and distributor manager specialising in the pharmaceutical industry with special focus on France, which made me very knowledgeable in all things French. My French language had become fluent, and every day, whether at customers, exhibitions, seminars, or with my French sales staff out in the field, I would think of John Whaler and thank him for the help he gave me to get me where I am.

In 2008 I learned that John was a tour guide at Chartwell, so assuming he was no longer living in Ongar, I put pen to paper, and wrote to him at Chartwell to thank him personally for all he had done for me at school enabling me to succeed in my career.

A few weeks later I received a reply from him with his news of his activities since leaving BHCHS, his involvement with the Ongar twin town in France, his service with the law courts, and his voluntary work as a tour guide at Chartwell, and had a very meaningful conversation together at the Old Bucks dinner in 2010.

He fully deserved his promotions during his BHCHS time to deputy head and later Headmaster. He had such an aura about him that just drew you to like him, enjoy discussions with him, and value his opinions and advice.

When I learned of his passing, I felt immediately that not just a beacon of light of BHCHS had gone out, but a stalwart had been taken from us.

I am so pleased I wrote that letter of thanks so he knew just how much I valued his teaching, and the chat I had with him at the Old Bucks Dinner to catch up on the years.

John Whaler enriched my life by an untold value just as he did for all the other thousands who passed through his teaching.

I will continue to thank him even though he is no longer with us.

Memories of JBW A small selection from the many tributes received

Richard James (1965-72)

Of all the teachers at BHCHS he had the biggest influence on me in the classroom. He taught me every year from the 2nd year up to A level. I also went on to study languages at University, and became a French teacher myself. I don't know whether I would have taken that route anyway but Mr Whaler was certainly an inspiration.

I am not surprised he went on to be headmaster. He was very helpful to me personally, in particular when I was looking at University applications.

On top of all that Mr Whaler was such a good bloke, with a great sense of humour. He was a good sportsman too, and he and Mr Loveridge made a fearsome tennis doubles pairing.

Nigel Henshaw (1978-85)

I don't think I ever remember him raising his voice. He seemed to have an effortless control over the classroom that was quiet and calm, not many teachers have that skill. He was also able to control with humour, a dry witty remark made in front of the whole class to one boy who was not paying attention or was misbehaving was enough to settle things down. I think even the boy who he was targeting had to smile and probably laughed about it later.

Will Stone (1978-85)

One teacher stands out for me, as he seems to have done for so many others. JB Whaler would always start the lesson by rubbing his hands and saying 'hold onto your hats and here we go...' His lessons were always a success and it all seemed so effortless.

He was a true professional. No-one misbehaved and yet he wasn't shouting and snarling like other teachers. He was a natural. I am sure that without his inspiration I might well have let French slip away during 'O' and 'A' level choices, and virtually all that has happened to me since school has had French as a major component.

Nigel Whaler (1971-78)

Jonathan and I learned how much our dad was respected by staff and pupils, in particular by some of those pupils who were known to be, let's say, more 'disruptive'. During my first week, as a tiny 11-year-old, I bumped into a 5th former. I was expecting the worst when he grabbed me and said: "You're Whaler's boy, aren't you?" but much to my relief he followed that with "He's alright your old man".

I am grateful to Nigel Whaler for the biographical information on p22. I hope to publish some tributes from staff in the next edition - Ed.

John Hallett

(BHCHS 1948-53)



JOHN HALLETT was born in 1937 in Loughton and after attending Daiglen Prep. School started BHCHS having passed 11+.

Whilst there, being very keen on sport, he represented the school at cricket, football and athletics; he also played badminton which he continued to play for 50 years outside school, and manned the Loughton Cricket Club scoreboard, where his father played. He also enjoyed verse-speaking and Drama and appeared in several productions. He participated in Youth Hostelling trips with BHCHS to the Lake District and Peak District. The above photo shows John (on the right) with his life-long friend, David Game. The photo was taken in 1951, outside a Youth Hostel, by "Buster" Mayo.

Instead of preparing for A-Levels, John studied at Naval College and joined the Merchant Navy, visiting 37 countries in all, over a period of seven years.

In 1960 John left the Navy, having obtained his Master's Ticket and, although having thought he wouldn't enjoy an office job, eventually began his career with the Midland Bank.

Soon after leaving the Merchant Navy, John met Jean; they were engaged in 1961 and married at Writtle Church in 1964 and moved into their first home in Great Baddow. In 1967 their first son, Robert, was born and in 1969 their second son, Richard, was born and this year John completed his Institute of Bankers' exams.

His first appointment was as a Tutor at Midland Bank Training Branch; in 1972 he was appointed Office Manager at Leyton-

stone and then Manager's Assistant at Walthamstow. In 1977 he was appointed Assistant Manager at Coleman Street & Moorgate, his career culminating in being Manager at Chingford from 1981 to 1988. In 1989, with the re-organisation of Midland Bank, he took early retirement.

When time allowed, whilst working, John continued his love of sport, playing cricket for the bank and enjoying badminton, rugby and tennis. He became very involved in golf, starting to play at Basildon GC where his parents were members, then moving membership to the Warren GC at Woodham Walter, then to Chelmsford GC and West Essex GC, where he enjoyed bank membership. He was also a member of The Old Buckwellians GC, HSBC (Essex) GC, of which he was Secretary for a time, and the Woodbridge Golf Society, comprising a small group of bank friends playing over five days once a year and inviting friends.

During his career, many lasting friendships were made within and outside the bank.

In 1975 the family had moved to Ingatstone and, with a large garden, John was an enthusiastic gardener, growing veg and fruit and pottering in his greenhouse.

His Christian faith had always played an important part of John's life, and he became involved in Church Youth Club activities.

In 1997 John and Jean moved to Colchester, making new friends and attending and supporting St. Leonards, Lexden Church, where, at the thanksgiving service for his life, it was a great tribute to him that the church was full, with standing room only.

In 2000 John was diagnosed with Parkinson's; he suffered a stroke in 2006. In 2008 dementia set in but he continued to fight this with attempting to play golf at Colchester GC and playing bridge - another lifelong pastime - until, sadly, he was unable to communicate, following a bleed on the brain in 2012.

His final three years were so sad and difficult for him and the family with his failing health and frustrations.

John died on 8th November, 2014, but will be remembered as a loving family man, kind and thoughtful for others, very fair and just in business and sport and with a great sense of humour.

Jean Hallett

Johnny Ward

(BHCHS 1949-52)



JOHNNY and I first met when we joined BHCHS as nervous but excited 11-year-olds.

We quickly became friends and seemed to have many things in common. We both left school very early and it was many years before we both admitted that we had made a mistake and thrown away a golden opportunity, but what was done was done. John joined his father as a porter at Covent Garden Market, I went to work in an insurance office. I hated my job and John was not so keen on his either.

John served out his time in Covent Garden until it was time for him to do his National Service, where he spent most of his time in Hong Kong and Singapore. We had by then lost contact.

Fast forward some 50 or more years and a phone call from Graham Frankel asking me if I was the Brian Page who went to Buckhurst Hill County High School. He went on to inform me that Johnny Ward was looking

for me and would it be OK if he passed my details on to him. I was delighted. Later, Johnny and I spoke on the phone and he told me about his long service as a London Black Cab driver and I told him about my life since school days. We soon met up in London and we both had to admit that had we passed each other in the street we would not have recognised each other. We arranged to go to the Old Bucks Dinner and there met Jeff Meddings and Chris Waghorn. We enjoyed this and soon started planning to get together with others from our year. So the 49ers were formed.

Johnny and I became good friends again and were delighted when Johnny's wife Rose and my wife Isabel also became good friends. John did not have the best of health in his last few years but even so we were devastated when he passed away.

Johnny never ever missed a 49ers get together and when it became obvious that he would be unable to make the April 2015 meeting he and Terry Williams hatched a plot where he would have a word (or knowing John a few words) for us via Skype and so be our first virtual attendee; alas John passed away before that but his wife insisted that she purchase a few bottles of wine so that we could all stand and drink to the memory of our friend and co-founder of the 49ers.

We will all miss your humour and your friendship, Johnny, and the world was a better place because we knew you and could call you friend.

Brian Page

We have learned of the following deaths...

Geoff Parker (Head of English 1963-67) died in April 2015 after a short illness. He lived in France, close to the Pyrenees.

Ken Button (1939) died in April 2015 after a short illness. Ken lived in Hornchurch and was a loyal supporter of the OBA, regularly seen at our Annual Dinners.

Donald Glozier (1940) died in August 2014. He lived in North Kelsey, Lincolnshire.

Terry Bowden (1942) died in June 2015. He lived in Attleborough, Norfolk.

Alan Thomas (1945) died in July 2015. He had been suffering from dementia for a number of years. He lived in Chelmsford. Information from Tony Webster (1945).

Ernest Brown (1947) died in April 2015. He lived in Potters Bar.

Information from Ted Carter (1949).

Terry Freeman (1949) died in May 2015 after a long illness. Terry had been an active member of the 49ers and lived in Wallingford, Oxfordshire.

Martyn Oates (1951) died in about 2011. Information from Dick Thomas (1958).

Terry Bayford (1953) died in June 2015. He had been suffering from brain cancer. He lived in Epping.

David Low (1955) died in March 2015. He had been suffering from lung cancer. David was the cousin of Stuart Low and related to several other Old Bucks. He lived in Budleigh Salterton, Devon.

John Kindler (1960) died in June 2015. He lived in Alton, Hampshire.