

# OLD BUCKWELLIANS NEWS



## Life After Death

THE APPOINTMENTS of our first bishop and our first QC are helping to keep alive the glittering reputation of BHCHS. One day soon, I have little doubt, an Old Buck will be honoured with a knighthood. How poignant then that news of such elevation in the Church and the legal profession should coincide with the distressing revelations we publish today about how the school perished. Death by a Thousand Cuts (page 12) tells of its demise and answers the question posed by innumerable old boys with whom I have been in contact over the years: what happened?

The sad truth of how one of the finest schools in the country was forced to close its doors after such a short life is now finally

emerging after exhaustive inquiries among official and unofficial sources. It is not a pretty story but one that needs to be told.

I have been delighted to hear from so many of the "silent majority" who have made some excellent contributions, reminding us that OB News is not just about the great and the good. News, features, letters from fellow mere mortals are just as important.

Once again, travel in its various forms seems to be a predominant topic. Was it something to do with attending a school set in countryside that has given so many Old Bucks a lifetime interest in trains, bikes and cars? We have the usual mix of nostalgic reminiscences of

school trips (pages 14 and 15), as well as much more recent reports of how Old Bucks have built railways (page 9), written books on cars (page 4) and promoted cycling (page 7). And not forgetting how, thanks to the indefatigable Stuart Low, transcontinental reunions of Old Bucks have now become a reality (page 4).

Some brief items of committee news. We have been pleased to welcome Peter Sharp to the committee as our new Treasurer. His experience in helping to keep Ford's finances under control gives us great confidence, and he has been carefully reviewing our expenditure and reserves. The OBA committee is considering whether we should recommend to the next AGM a modest increase in the annual subscription. The level has been unchanged for at least twenty years. No need to panic just yet – if we need more bucks from Bucks in 2010 we will write and let you know.

Finally, I hope you will find much to interest you in this edition and I look forward to hearing your comments, or indeed your own news or ideas for future editions.

**Graham Frankel**



Our first Bishop

See p3



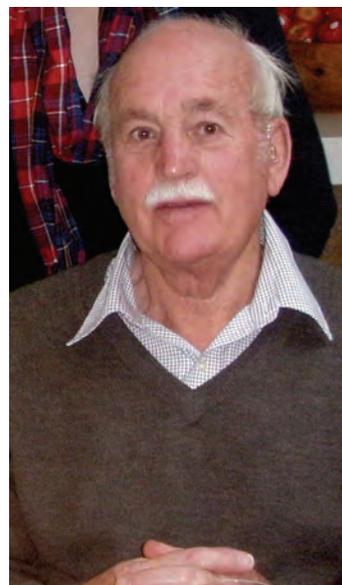
Cross-country champs

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Stuart's reunions now go transcontinental

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Jim Arnold - first on the list!

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# New Web Site Launched



Nicole and Ben Woodward - Emu Design

**In May this year, almost exactly ten years after Nick McEwen's creation of the first BHCHS web site, our brand new site was launched. This is a very important landmark for us, and much more than just a new design. For those of you who have not yet visited or explored the site, I shall highlight some of the key features.**

First, the all-important database. This is what holds all your addresses and other information about what you had for breakfast on your first day at school, and so on. It now sits in a secure server, instead of on my PC. Only a small part of the information is viewable on the public web site. You can search for individual names, or call up a list of everyone who started (or finished) in a particular year. Then, when you have pulled up the list you can look and see whether you have traced the person. Because of the continuing scourge of spam we decided not to include members' email addresses or web sites as links. You can still contact people (whether or not they are members) – via me, and I would normally simply forward a message from you to the person you are trying to contact. You can also use the database to do a keyword search of the whole site. This enables you to see if there is a photo or other article mentioning a particular name, event,

sport etc.

For the first time, we have full editorial control over the site content. Until now we have relied on the patience and good will – generously provided in good measure – of our first two web masters – Nick McEwen and Pete Berrecloth. Editorial control of the site means that ultimately the vast and burgeoning archive material can be uploaded. But the uploading process does not have to rest with one individual. Nor does it mean that anyone can go in and post items as is the case with many of the popular networking sites. We have gone for a more controlled approach, allowing nominated site administrators to have access to the store of photos and other material and participate in developing the site in the future. If this is something that may appeal to you please contact me for a no obligation discussion.

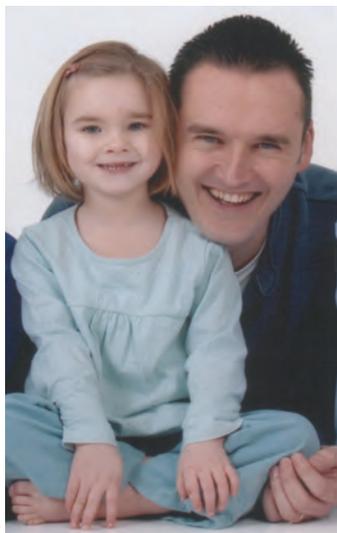
On each page of the new site you will find a "Wiki" feature. This allows any visitor to send in comments. You could do this even if you are viewing the site on someone else's computer and don't use email yourself. This will enable you to: suggest the identity of various mystery photos; add names to team and group photos; post an update on yourself.

So who was the mastermind behind our new site? Not an Old Buck himself, but the son of one,

which must be nearly as good. **Ben Woodward** (see photo left) is the son of **David Woodward (1958)**. Ben provided the technical expertise, while his wife Nicole was the creator of the new graphic design. We are very grateful to them for their work and we would highly recommend them, and their company Emu Design. There is a link to Emu Design at the BHCHS site.

So, please take a look round the site. The address is still the same: [www.bhchs.co.uk](http://www.bhchs.co.uk)

A visit to the "Help" page may be a good place to start. If you then re-visit from time to time you will find that the archive "gallery" grows steadily as more items are added.



Nick McEwen and daughter Annabelle



Pete Berrecloth and wife Julie

Finally, I would like to again express our thanks to Nick McEwen and Pete Berrecloth for all their work and expert advice on the web site during the past ten years. Pete continues his web design business at [www.digitalornaments.com](http://www.digitalornaments.com) and both Nick and Pete remain active members of our network.

## Old Buckwellians News



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

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

Back issues:

(from November 1999) are available from the Editor for £2 each. *Discount of 25% if you order five or more!*

Cheques should be made payable to *Old Buckwellians*. Please send your news items and other articles for publication to the Editor by email if possible. Original photographs will be returned. The Editor reserves the right to shorten or otherwise amend items for publication.

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# BUCKS FIZZ

News and notes about Old Bucks

## A Double First for BHCHS - Bishop and Queens Council!



Graham Kings was ordained by the Archbishop of Canterbury as Bishop of Sherborne at a special ceremony at Westminster Abbey 24th June 2009

Earlier this year we were proud to learn of the appointment of **Graham Kings (1965)** as Bishop of Sherborne. This is the first time an Old Buck has reached such an exalted position. He will be an area Bishop in the Diocese of Salisbury.

After leaving BHCHS Graham studied theology at Hertford College, Oxford. He then undertook further studies at Selwyn College, Cambridge and ordination training at Ridley Hall, Cambridge.

After ordination he served as a curate in Harlesden, London for four years and then in 1985, moved to Kenya as a Church Mission Society (CMS) mission partner, where he taught theology at St Andrew's College, Kabare in the foothills of Mount Kenya.

In 1992 he returned to Cambridge to become the first Henry Martyn Lecturer in Mission Studies in the Cambridge Theological Federation, founding Director of the Henry Martyn Centre for the study of mission and world Christianity and affiliated Lecturer in the Faculty of Divinity of the University. During his time in Cambridge he studied for a PhD from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands.

Graham became vicar of St Mary's Islington in 2000 and in 2003 he became the theological secretary of *Fulcrum*, an interactive, online

theological journal.

He also served with the Bishop of Salisbury on the Liturgical Commission and the Mission Theological Advisory Group of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion Network for Inter-Faith Concerns.

Graham is married to Alison, who is a psychotherapist, and Hon Sec of the Guild of Psychotherapists in London. They have three daughters: Ros, 27, is a doctor and has recently returned to England after working for 2 years in an HIV/AIDS clinic in Cape Town. Miriam, 24, is an artist and works in administration at the Royal Brompton Hospital, London. Katie, 22, is a student of Social Anthropology at the School of Oriental and Africa Studies, University of London.



Graham Kings in 1967



In February, we learned that **Tom Hill (1976)** had been appointed Queens Council in his firm 4-5 Grays Inn Square, a prominent firm of Barristers in London. He is one of the youngest barristers to have "taken silk" this year.

After leaving BHCHS Tom studied law at Jesus College, Cambridge where he was an Exhibitioner, and then at the Inns of Court School of Law. He was appointed as a barrister in 1988.

Tom is a specialist in planning and environmental law, and has been involved in a number of high profile cases, including inquiries relating to the building of airport runways. He led the High Court challenge to proposals at Stansted and Luton Airports.

I am grateful to Alison Lambert, wife of Tom's contemporary **Ian Lambert** for the news about Tom Hill. Alison is an eminent barrister in her own right.

## First Pupil Found!

A very welcome new find in May was **Jim Arnold (1938)**. Jim (see photo p 1) emailed me from Victoria, Australia, where he has lived for many years. It was good to be able to put Jim in contact with some of his classmates from 70 years earlier.

Not only is Jim one of the original entrants to BHCHS but is also, alphabetically at least, the first pupil ever to be on the BHCHS register!

Even though we have now traced more than 90 Old Bucks in Australia I am certain there are plenty more out there still undiscovered. We shall look forward to learning more about Jim Arnold in due course, and if anyone would like to contact him I am sure he would be pleased to hear from you.

## OBE for David Cox



The Queen's Birthday Honours List in June brought another recognition for an Old Buck. **David Cox (1957)** was awarded an OBE for his services to healthcare.

After leaving BHCHS, David studied Sociology at Essex University. He then married Sue (Cawthorn) (ex-Woodford County High School and Essex) and went to Edinburgh University to do a Masters in sociology. His career then took him to Birmingham Polytechnic/ University of Central England where he stayed for 37 years, teaching, doing research, and ultimately a lot of management when he became Head of Department, Professor (now Emeritus) and Associate Dean.

He then shifted his focus to studying health service re-organisations and management and developing vocational education for health service professionals. David has also been involved in NHS public engagement and consumer representation on the then Community Health Council.

Since 2002, David has been Chair of NHS South Birmingham, the local Primary Care Trust.

David and Sue have become very settled in Bournville. They have two grown up children who have both travelled much further afield, after going through the local schools and 6th Form College. Their daughter Juliet now lives in Connecticut and their son Simon is in New Delhi both married to partners from different continents. David has another consuming and very worthwhile interest, promoting cycling as Vice Chair of the CTC (the national body that promotes cycling in the UK). You can read about how he got involved in this in his article on page 7.

## On the Move Again



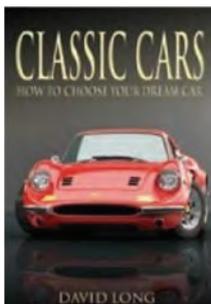
A change of address message from **Nigel Travis (1961)** is normally the signal that the high flyer from my own year has made another career move. At the beginning of this year, Nigel started on his latest venture, becoming CEO of Dunkin Brands which is the parent company of Dunkin Donuts and Baskin-Robbins. Being in control of 15,000 stores in 45 countries and sales of \$6.9 billion, should keep Nigel occupied for a while. The big question is whether he will still find time to support Leyton Orient.

## Classic Cars



The latest book from prolific author **David Long (1972)** is a must for car enthusiasts. *Classic Cars: How to Choose your Dream Car* is a profusely illustrated guide, giving amusing insights into 50 favourite classic cars. David reviews not just the cars but provides many amusing and revealing insights into the men who designed and built them.

*Classic Cars* is published by *Remember When* and is available from Amazon and good bookshops. Read more about David Long at [www.davidlong.info](http://www.davidlong.info)

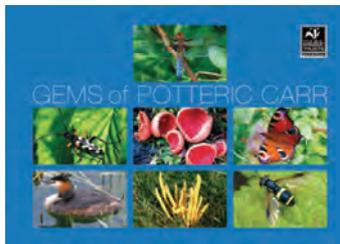


## Madrid Meeting



Another overseas reunion took place in Spain earlier this year when **Bob Horne (1941)** travelled out to meet two of our Spanish exiles. Hosts for the meeting were **John Read (1941)** and his wife Isobel. Also in the party were OBA President **Trevor Lebentz (1946)** and his wife Karen who travelled the 350 miles by train to join the others in Madrid. Karen tells me that John and Isobel went to great lengths to make sure they all had a good time.

## Wild Life Gems



**Derek Bateson (1944)** has recently undertaken a massive task of writing and editing a book on wildlife for the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. The result is a splendid volume, illustrated in full colour with about 280 images of wildlife that can be found at the Potteric Carr Nature Reserve.

Derek tells me "The relevance to BHCHS is the inspiration given me by Joe Shillito as my mentor and biology teacher, when we were studying some of the wildlife in Epping Forest from 1944-49. Some of the work he did back in the 1940s is still quoted in books and scientific journals, as not many people studied hoverflies in those days.

Derek's book, *Gems of Potteric Carr*, can be ordered (£8.70 including postage) from the Potteric Carr Nature Reserve – details via their web site:

[www.potteric-carr.co.uk](http://www.potteric-carr.co.uk)

## Hands Across the Pacific Ocean!

Some months ago **Peter Slade (1954)**, who now lives near Vancouver in Canada and who had read about our Sydney reunions, emailed me to say he and his wife were coming to Australia for a holiday and would it be possible to meet up with some of the Old Bucks here.

I spoke with Bill Matthews and we thought a gathering with wives at the *Lord Nelson* – our previous venue – would be a suitable meeting place.

As a result 19 of us met at the *Lord Nelson* in June 2009. Seven of us dragged along our other halves while three, for various reasons came solo plus of course Peter and Sheila.

Those of you who read of our last reunion may remember that the *Lord Nelson* is the oldest continuously licensed pub in Australia. It is situated in one of the oldest parts of Sydney among many streets of sandstone terraced houses with ornate wrought iron balcony balustrades. It is not far from the original settlement's Garrison Church the foundation stone of which was laid in 1840 and like the *Lord Nelson* is constructed from sandstone cut from the surrounding area.

As we assembled, the area was filled with police cars, motor cycles, foot police and swat teams. Roads were closed and buses diverted from the area or stopped where they were. We know we are an unruly lot but never expected that the word had reached the local constabulary and they were ready for us. It turned out that there was a protest march (greenies and climate activists) coming through the area. About 200 of them marched passed the *Lord Nelson* but were nearly outnumbered by the police.

After about an hour of standing

around drinking the local brew which is brewed in a room at the rear of the *Lord Nelson* and is unique to the pub and making ourselves known to Peter and Sheila, we sat down to lunch at a long table under the watchful single eye of Lord Nelson.

During the meal we presented Peter with a commemorative "certificate" that contained the names of all those who attended, in recognition of his visit and meeting with the "Downunder Old Bucks." We also presented each couple with a fridge magnet printed with the date, Canadian and Australian flags and of course the school badge.

It had been our intention to make the afternoon a do as you want time: either a ferry across The Harbour to Manly, a walk through the Rocks Market or whatever. However, we spent most of the afternoon sitting round the lunch table catching up with careers, kids, sport and of course all our worst exploits while still pupils at Buckhurst Hill – it is a wonder any of us managed an education at all. By the time we were chucked out it was too late to do anything else but say our good byes and best wishes to Peter and Sheila for their remaining few days in Australia and their trip home.

It was generally felt that the inclusion of wives was a good idea and hopefully at the next reunion we will be able to do this again.

Those who attended the gathering were: Peter and Sheila Slade, Les and Clare Bassett, Tony and Pat Brandon, Michael Cooper, Bill and Neroli Hardwick, Phil and Sheila Harper, Richard Horton, Guy and Ann Lee, Stuart and Sylvie Low, Gordon Masters, Bill and Ruth Matthews

**Stuart Low**



## Another Old Buck Promoted to Front Bench



David Betts campaigning in Pangbourne with Conservative front-bench spokeswoman Theresa May (centre) and West Berks deputy leader Cllr Pamela Bale. (Photo: Ann Betts)

**David Betts (1959)** has been invited to join the West Berkshire Council front bench as executive member for the highways, transport (operations) and ICT portfolio.

'This is a big job', said journalist and PR consultant David. 'In the highways area alone we are responsible for maintaining some 800 miles of road – equivalent to driving to Edinburgh and back. Over the past three years we have invested £7.5 million in restoring nearly 120 miles of roads. And that is not the end of the story. Despite the economic downturn, we are investing another £3.3 million in renewing the road network this year and have laid out a five year programme worth £13.5 million.

'I used to think I was responsible for some big budgets when I worked for Shell in public affairs, but this is in a different league

altogether and pretty much a full-time job. Mind you, I don't get paid anything like what I was earning with Shell... and I certainly don't get an executive car.'

David, born in Woodford Green, has been a parish councillor in his adopted home village of Purley on Thames for 10 years and a district councillor representing Purley ward for two.

He continued: 'All of this does mean that I am much busier and spending a lot more of my time in Newbury, but it doesn't mean that I won't still have time for old friends and other interests.

'If you are into social media you can befriend me on *Facebook* or follow me on *Twitter* <http://twitter.com/dabetts> - but there is a health warning here... you will find strongly-expressed political opinions in addition to where I am and what I am up to.'



A great nostalgic photo from Phil Kelley: A steam train Sunday excursion from Loughton to Eastbourne via Liverpool Street – empty coaching stock passing through Buckhurst Hill

## Staying on the Rails

By Philip Kelley (BHCHS 1939-43)

READING through recent editions of *OB News* I noticed the news item *Branch Line to Ongar* (May 2008) which mentioned that two Old Buckwellians contributed to it. I was another contributor - some of my photographs are in it, and I know the author very well.

All this made me think I ought to send in a short history of my life since leaving school. I was 80 last October which means I should get on with it. Anyway when I left Buckhurst Hill I became an apprentice optician in London. I was living with my parents in Ilford. We were bombed out from Ilford in 1944 and we all moved to Woodford Green. I stayed with Frederick Bateman & Co for 5 years and left in 1948, the reason being I was unable to get completely qualified; I passed all the practical parts but the Maths beat me! I wasn't any good at maths at school anyway.

In 1948 I joined British Rail Eastern Region at Liverpool Street as a clerk. I moved to Fenchurch Street Control Office in 1950, and to the timing section Shenfield in 1951. I was then promoted to Passenger Trains Office Marylebone in 1952. Another promotion to Public Relations Office, Marylebone in 1953. One of my jobs here was to be the Liaison Officer to Ealing Studios where I organised the location for the film *The Ladykillers*. I had been taking railway photographs since 1943 and was promoted in the same office as a photographer. In 1956 I was appointed as a photographer in the Civil Engineers Office at Liverpool Street.

I left the Eastern Region in November 1956 and became an Assistant Archivist at the British Transport Commission Archives near Paddington. I left there, on promotion, and went to the Museum at Clapham as Technical Assistant in 1962. I joined the Western Region Publicity Office in 1969 doing Station Signing. I was promoted to the Regional Architects Office at Euston on the London Midland Region, in 1976. In 1979 I was made Historic Buildings Assistant to the Chief Architect at the British Railways Board. I retired full time in 1983 but carried on part

time until 1988.

Throughout all this time I was taking photographs and have had many published in magazines and books. I have always been interested in railway history hence the type of jobs I managed to get at British Rail. I have written four books on Railways and am at present writing another.

I got married in 1964 and we had a fantastic life until my wife unfortunately died in 2007.

I'm still taking pictures and have just gone over to digital. I moved to Wiltshire when I finally retired. I am a railway modeller and have an '0' gauge line in the garden. I am a member of many



Phil being presented with an original painting at his 80th birthday celebrations at Didcot Railway Centre - he had a steam train to himself with 81 guests.

Railway Preservation Societies and am a Trustee of the Great Western Trust at Didcot Railway Centre.

Despite leaving BHCHS with no qualifications I haven't done too badly. I think Mr Taylor despaired of me as I was only any good at Art and Music. I learnt to play the church organ and played at various churches in London. I have an electronic organ here at home. Dr Sidney Campbell, who was our Music Master, encouraged me and I have a lot to thank him for. I used to visit him when he was at Ely Cathedral and finally at King George's Chapel Windsor.

My railway history, which apparently is quite unique, is on audio record at the National Railway Museum at York.

# Versatile Teacher Settles in Promised Land

By Jeremy Weil, Economics (and more!) 1975-1983

Jeremy Weil was a popular teacher at BHCHS and much missed when he decided to leave teaching and emigrate to Israel. Described by Hugh Colgate as "a man of many parts" he taught Economics, History, Sociology and Maths, as well being a sixth form tutor and Careers Master.

I REMEMBER my eight years at BHCHS with pride and pleasure – working with dedicated staff under Hugh Colgate to try and inculcate some education into more or less willing youngsters and teenagers. There were highs and lows. ....among the lows must count the dreaded green slips indicating the need to take an absent colleague's class during what would have been a free period. Among the highs was teaching some very keen sixth-form girls and boys. One class made a very nice party at the end of the Upper 6th in which they read and presented me with a very witty poem (not totally complimentary) all about me and my teaching. The best time was the summer term after the exams when (at least for those teaching the exam classes) things were more relaxed - more free time and quite a few events out on the playing field in the warm sun. There were a few episodes at BHCHS that particularly stand out.

Our second son was born in mid-December 1982 on a Sunday, just before the start of the Christmas holidays. I asked to be given the Monday off for looking after things at home. Essex refused to give me the day off. Before I could complain about their stingy attitude, however, I received news from Mr Colgate that Essex agreed to give me four days off to fly to my brother's wedding in Israel at the start of the new term in January 1983! After that, I could hardly complain about the other day they didn't give me! One unpleasant event was an accident on Roding Lane on a Friday afternoon in winter. Tragically one of the pupils was killed crossing the road to the bus stop. For years the police and county council had refused to put in traffic lights at the school crossing despite it being such a fast and busy road. Apparently secondary school pupils were not considered to be in danger from



Jeremy Weil (front row fourth from the left) in the Upper Sixth Form photo 1981-82

fast cars! It was just when I was leaving to get home for the Sabbath and of course I had to stay to help. I finally got home two hours late and my wife was frantic – those were the days before mobile phones!

Another incident I remember occurred after taking a group of 1st and 2nd years for badminton after school which I did for some time. After the practice I always took one of the boys to his home in Chingford which was (sort of) on my way home (I lived then at Winchmore Hill). One evening before Christmas he announced that he had a Christmas present for me to thank me for taking him. It was a deodorant. I always wondered if there was a subtle hint somewhere!

I left BHCHS in November 1983 to go and live in Israel. As we did not know if we would stay, we went only with our clothes. We left our flat in London with a management agency who were extremely inefficient, choosing the worst possible tenants. But they were very efficient at collecting their fees! We lived for nine months in an absorption centre in Beersheva in the Southern desert – we had one bedroom, a kitchenette with one burner, one table and two chairs for us plus two little children. I remember Christmas Day 1983 sitting on our balcony with the sun blazing at 25°C. Both my wife Eva and I studied Hebrew in intensive classes and got free board and lodging and pocket

money. But we were treated like errant school kids. Once, someone stuffed a foreign coin in the washing machines, so the management shut down the machines for two weeks. During that time we had to wash our soiled cloth nappies by hand!

I got a job in an import agency in June 1984 as Office Manager and with a reasonable salary (with inflation of above 500% I earned over one million shekels annually for a short time – the only time I have ever been a millionaire!) We moved to a rented flat after nine months just when our third son was born, in August 1984. We returned to the UK in July 1985 to pack up our things and to sell our flat and returned to Israel in October.

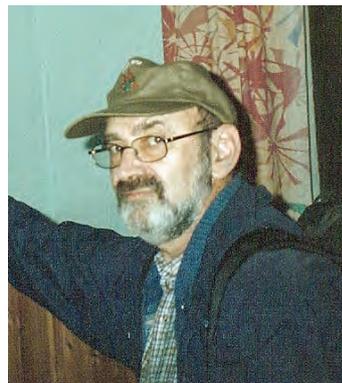
Thereafter we lived in two rented places for the next two years until we moved into our own house in July 1987. We still live there.

I took a new job as Purchasing Manager of a pharmaceutical company in 1996, a job which I left in January 2008. Since then I have set up a small business as an independent consultant to small companies on international trade and logistics. My wife has been teaching English and Maths privately to school pupils who need help.

We have four children. Three boys, all who have done service in the Israeli army. The eldest is an officer in the Air Force and worked there for nine years as a computer programmer. He re-

cently left in order to start his own business. The other two boys are at University studying Civil and Mechanical engineering respectively. Our youngest is a girl who has completed one year's national service and now works in one of the local supermarkets. I also had to do military service – one month's basic training at the age of 39 and one month per year reserve duty throughout my 40s.

I have kept up correspondence with Tony Cunningham throughout my years here and we still meet up usually when I visit the UK. I also met Hugh Colgate a couple of times and was very sorry to hear of his passing some years ago. I had a lot of respect for him and his personality and learned a lot from him. All in all I look back at BHCHS with feelings of pride and pleasure but also with some sadness that the local authority could not find a place for such a worthy institution to continue educating the next generations.



# Lycra, Suits and Blazers

By Dave Cox (BHCHS 1957-64)

WHEN I was a lad back in the 50's my mother would take me to White City to watch the athletics. She was a keen athletics fan and I enjoyed watching and eventually did a bit of cross country running for BHCHS. One thing that stuck in my memory was the administration, the guys (mostly) in blazers and slacks, who fired guns and measured shot puts. They looked ancient and I guess they were about my current age.

I rode to school each day and did some rides with Kit Sumner out into Essex but a moped and then a driving licence took over. I returned to cycling in my 30s to commute and explore on holidays from French campsites and gites. I gradually migrated from cropped jeans to "proper" roubaix tights and padded shorts and eventually lycra. Apart from occasional duties on my local cycling club committee (Beacon RCC), I never really aspired to become a cycling politician and join the blazers. I've spent a lot of my working life suited up and working through agendas, minutes and matters arising and preferred to escape on the bike at weekends.

However, earlier in the year I was tempted to apply to join the Cyclists Touring Club National Council when there was a by-election for a west midlands representative. Although this is not quite a role in "sports" administration and no one has yet turned up in a blazer this is a new experience for me. Inspired by Barack Obama's campaign, we held an impromptu primary at Bridgnorth Railway Café around a manifesto which included taking VAT off carbon fibre and closure of a certain unmentionable café in Worcestershire. With the support of my trusty network of 10 supporters (all Beacon members who can remember their CTC number), I've stood again in the "general election" and such is the apathy of CTC members I've been returned unopposed. Like a true professional politician I've now, of course, abandoned my two campaign commitments.

What attracted me to get involved in the CTC rather than just reading the magazine and relying on the insurance package

was the prospect of having an impact on the role of cycling in Britain's national life. Issues around health, the environment, transport and congestion as well as sporting success and fashion have quite quickly brought cycling centre stage. Working in the NHS, I've found it an uphill grovel to make progress with cycling issues. People nod assent but the work mileage allowance stayed at 6p per mile for years and has only recently gone up to 10.2. The Cycle Purchase Scheme was to be delayed until the Autumn in case it was too popular. It took me 6 years to get some proper bike parking hoops put in outside our headquarters and safety concerns make the Public Health Department keener to advocate dance and Tai-chi as routes to physical fitness. Our Beacon Go-Ride initiative for school children is slow starting partly because of the lack of attractive off-road venues.

But then I went and saw the beautiful people of Paris gliding by like angels on Velolib. Quite suddenly, committed towns and cities with effective local authority and health service partnerships could bid for substantial sums of money to improve cycling facilities, training and routes. The London mayoral election had cycling as one of the central issues and the shadow cabinet are busy demonstrating their cycling skills, like jumping lights and getting a bike nicked outside a takeaway.

I was invited to give a talk about cycling futures and imagined a world where diesel or petrol cars were only allowed out on alternate Sundays for enthusiasts' at Donnington Park while Victoria Pendleton, cleans up the medals at the Olympics, marries one of the princes and we have a second Queen Vic statue on a track bike outside the Council House. Carried away with all this I decided that the CTC Council was the place to be, offering the prize of ending the marginalisation of cycling and achieve Dutch levels of cycle usage in this green and pleasant land.

So far I've managed my induction in Guildford (where I learnt all about the CTC and nothing about the role of a councillor), an AGM in Belfast (great fun with a

reception in Stormont and a ride down the Langan cycle path), and several meetings. One colleague describes the CTC Council as like the proverbial Brooks leather saddle – hard work at first but you can gradually mould it to your shape. I've clearly not put in enough bum on seat time yet but am gradually learning the ropes. The CTC staff are impressively professional and well connected nationally. However, the governance reflects the fact that it's an organisation dating back to 1878 and seems unwieldy and long winded. Complex agendas, papers which are hard to get to grips with and there is an accretion of issues and sensitivities which go back years. Should we support mountain biking – er yes, I think it's here to stay. What about abandoning the new fangled yellow logo and only using the famous winged wheel?

So far so much like the NHS, local government or a university but a bit more archaic. Other Council members bring a lot of experience and expertise from various fields but nothing seems straightforward or easy to sort. Partly this is a creative tension between serving the wishes of the dedicated cycle tourists and local associations, keeping ahead of the needs of a much larger general cycling membership while acting as the UK's largest cycling organisation. I've been plunged into an interesting existential debate about the relationship between the CTC Club and the CTC Trust and have lots of homework to do on charity law.

So a blazer? Well there is a problem of a lack of diversity amongst those of us willing to put time into these aspects of the "sport" ("activity"? pastime?). I instantly recognised the other new member at Guildford station – beard, glasses, greying, Brompton folding bike in hand – like looking in the mirror. Three of us did a tour of the HQ, meeting staff. "Nice to put a face to



David Cox with medical colleague Dr Sukhdev Singh

the name" said one woman on the helpdesk – "but it's the same face !!!!".

In Birmingham there seems to be a great potential for better coordination between cycling as part of sport, as part of transport, as part of health, fitness and leisure opportunities for school aged children and for adults. Birmingham did make a rather rapidly produced bid to becoming a Cycling City but did not get short listed and now Bristol has scooped a lot of favourable publicity as well as money by getting the nomination.

We should be entering another golden age for cycling inspired by the Olympic successes. I'm coming to realise that this won't just happen automatically and that the favourable surf waves of change need to be ridden with skill and commitment if winged wheel is going to achieve its potential. I do think the CTC is a key resource in this and will be pleased to be involved once the cultural saddle sores wear off and can get comfortable in this new role.

Meanwhile, if you have views on the future of cycling I'd welcome feedback so I can raise issues with some authority next time I'm sitting there trying to play into the debate.

You can email me on [david.cox@ctc.org.uk](mailto:david.cox@ctc.org.uk)

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



prospect of having two parents from the start (even in some cases just because it was the “in-thing” to do just to get pregnant OR often producing babies for bargaining purposes), (e) formerly revered public figures being exposed as being far from acting in the public’s interest (eg bankers and MP’s) and so on and so on. Couple this with worldly threats of terrorism, then all these things being reliably reported facts, gives reality and understanding to the chap’s pronouncement.

My view is not to give in and die but wake up, don’t just talk but ACT and support the reintroduction of discipline to the country. We must NOT be totally ruled by intellectuals and the “self-centred” but by ordinary people with their feet on the ground, as were the majority in the past who took on the dominant slave trade with determination, thus opposing and beating its considerable financial influence and horrendous immoral actions.

Finally, back to the lighter fun things with a challenge – can you recognise for what rhymes of childhood the following letters stand?

OKC LMM TGODOY  
SASOS GGG HDDTM  
BBBS TBM

For example HDDTC would stand for “Hey diddle diddle the cat ....”

**Tony Jolly (1943-49)**

*Answers to puzzle items on page 26*

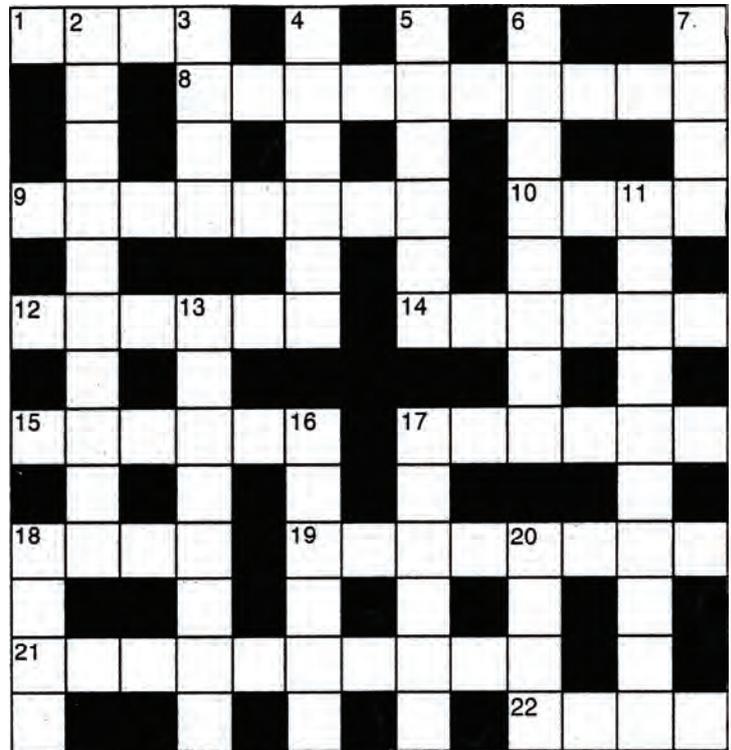
AFTER an excellent summer (sometimes even perhaps too hot and wet?) we are now looking forward to a splendid autumn. Off we go again sitting in a chair gazing across the harvested fields with an Adnams pint mug of home-brewed real ale and thoughts piling in again. A quote from something said in my hearing recently by a chap, made me think – I’m not saying that I entirely agree with it but I have to say that it made me think. The gist of it was that he wasn’t keen on living much longer and experiencing future life as current trends seemed to prophesy it would be unbearable in quite a short time.

One thinks of things being reliably reported like (a) children being paid to go to school (that is being “bribed” instead of receiving parental training), (b) the declining respect for others extending to frequent violence, stealing and knife crime, (c) the rampant use of drugs (d) more babies being born even with no

**OB NEWS CROSSWORD**

No.14 “MARGANA” By Mike Ling

In each case the answer is an anagram of consecutive letters in the clue, which span more than one word. A conventional definition is also contained in each clue.



ACROSS

DOWN

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Circle overhead - a holy depiction? (4)</p> <p>8 Paper for instance. Production may start in Yeovil (10)</p> <p>9 Fairground ride which clears our heads? (8)</p> <p>10 Points on fountain pens; biros-not! (4)</p> <p>12 Swordfighter whose form tailed off recently (6)</p> <p>14 At once! Or no PT for you today! (6)</p> <p>15 Standing, depending on trust, stability and honesty (6)</p> <p>17 Bring about improvement, not for mere pleasure though (6)</p> <p>18 Girl who may mar one’s enjoyment (4)</p> <p>19 Form of betting - will it stop a tenner being lost? (4-4)</p> <p>21 Old court game using internal setting (4,6)</p> <p>22 Type of window which has sliding action (4)</p> | <p>2 Seemingly, any planter appears to be OK (10)</p> <p>3 Capital tied up in cotton and wool stocks (4)</p> <p>4 Old German Emperor found in a ski resort! (6)</p> <p>5 Stimulus - but not from a pill fixation! (6)</p> <p>6 Intermittent, like one’s love of fondant fancies? (2,3,3)</p> <p>7 Small metal loops for hooks may seem fiddly (4)</p> <p>11 Projecting supports - the Trust sees brickwork as the answer (10)</p> <p>13 Shouts of disapproval will cast a cloud over proceedings (8)</p> <p>16 Balances used in class exams? (6)</p> <p>17 Sailor involved in tragic accident (6)</p> <p>18 Grape residue from which I am creating spirit (4)</p> <p>20 Overtake, as speeding is allowed! (4)</p> |
|--|---|

*Solution on page 26*

**STATS SUMMARY**

Old Bucks traced (YOS 1938 - 1985)	3,680
Deceased	466
Percentage of all pupils traced (YOS 1938 - 1985)	86%
Number still to be found	675
Teachers traced (not including deceased)	110
Top five years (numbers traced)	YOS 1973 (100%)
	YOS 1970 (99%)
	YOS 1957 (96.1%)
	YOS 1945 (95.8%)
	YOS 1971 (95.7%)
Top five years (membership*)	YOS 1940 (87%)
	YOS 1945 (84%)
	YOS 1949 (84%)
	YOS 1942 (76%)

\* membership as a % of number traced (excluding those deceased)

# Central Line to Perth

**Peter Lawrence (BHCHS 1953-60)**



In hindsight I believe it was almost inevitable that I would end up living in the world's most isolated capital city, Perth in Western Australia. At school I was always a bit of a loner and on holidays I still seek the most isolated spot on the beach (and there are plenty of those here in WA). However, I did make some good friends at BHCHS among them Mick Claydon, Terry Harrow and Johnny Murrell. Those names evoke memories of girl friends from Loughton, dances at Walthamstow Tech and cycling to home games at White Hart Lane.

I was fortunate to attend BHCHS because I was a questionable pass in the 11+ examination. A personal interview with the Headmaster saw me through and I started in 1C with Mr Still as Form Master. That early encounter with the Headmaster had its downside. He knew me right from day one and always addressed me as "Brother Lawrence". The "one size fits all" academic programme of the fifties suited me well enough and I gradually moved up through the forms, eventually to finish up in the Upper Sixth Science under the ever watchful eye of FAS.

Indeed, I still have one of his textbooks from his days at King's College, London, which he gave to me to help with my Physics studies.

I could not say the same about the "one size fits all" physical

education programme. I was a slightly built youngster and had difficulty just lifting the medicine balls in the gymnasium, never mind throwing or catching them! Possibly Messrs Webb and Cave did make some allowances but I never did see any sympathy when I had the "stuffing knocked out of me" by a medicine ball in the chest. And I utterly loathed playing sport and team games. Ironically, after such a bad start, I later went on to enjoy and excel at Orienteering and Nordic Skiing from my late 20s to my late 40s.

I went up to university in 1960, first to Hull then to Leeds, graduating with a BSc and a PhD. I found student life delightful. If only I could have prolonged it for longer than the seven years I spent at university, but I had a living to earn and a life to live. The next four years were spent "bouncing around" between Yorkshire, Devon and London starting out in several possible careers. But none really inspired me. Finally, in 1971, we sold most of our possessions (by this time I had a wife and a baby daughter), packed what remained in two large sea chests and set sail for Sydney, Australia.



*Peter Lawrence with Terry Harrow (left) in 1958*

From the very first day in Australia I realised I had made the right decision. I adapted well to a life that at times seemed not so very different but in surroundings that were in stark contrast to those back in England. I hesitate

to say "back home" because I can quite honestly say I have never felt homesick for England. It did not stop the "bouncing" though. The next ten years saw me living in Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Bendigo, and trying my hand at Engineering Materials Research, University Academic, Statistician and Geophysicist. It was while working as a geophysicist in 1982 that I ended up in Perth, Western Australia.

Since then I have made my home in Perth, been divorced, remarried, produced two more beautiful daughters and settled into my final career – urban transport planner and modeller. I still enjoy my work part time for my own (one man) consultancy, Asymptote Consulting, with contracts reaching out to at least 2012 when I will be 70.

I was involved in a major building project in Australia. The Southern Suburbs Railway from Perth to Mandurah. This was a \$A1.3 billion project to build a new urban railway through the southern suburbs of Perth where much of the metropolitan population growth is expected to occur over the next 20 years. This was the first major urban rail construction project in Australia for decades and certainly the biggest public transport infrastructure project ever for Western Australia. I was a member of the team that wrote the railway master plan. This document defined in broad terms the principal plans, processes and outcomes for the construction of the railway. Then followed the engineering plans and finally the construction phase. All this took some eight years, the railway opening on 23rd December 2007.

I was responsible for the building, programming, calibration and application to future transport scenarios of a computer model of Perth's urban transport network. The model proved invaluable in evaluating the likely passenger demands for alterna-

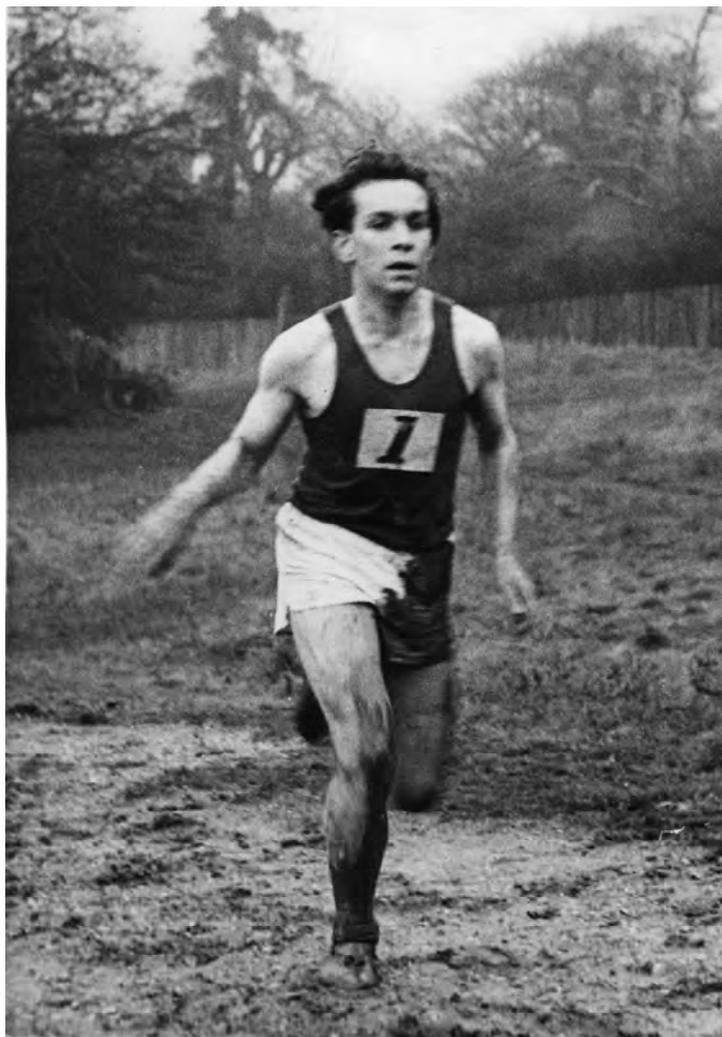
tive railway route alignments, station locations and land uses. So much so that the model has been established as an important tool in the strategic evaluation of many other public transport infrastructure proposals in Perth. And continues to do so, hence my continued employment. I am past the official retirement age (65 for men here in Australia) but still working 3 to 4 days a week either as a consultant to government or as a part-time associate professor at two of Perth's universities. With another 3 years of projects lined up I have no thoughts of retirement until I am at least 70!



*Mandurah Rail Perth*

I have to admit though that I did have a vested interest in seeing a successful outcome to the Mandurah rail project. I now ride the train into the city when I have to travel to the office and each journey gives me a real "buzz". More than that it also brings on a touch of nostalgia. The section through the city centre is underground and some of the curves are very tight. If I close my eyes and just listen to the sound of wheels on rails I am taken back fifty years to journeys on the London Underground. In the middle to late 1950s I often found a holiday job in the City of London and travelled on the Central Line to Bank or St Paul's. And those tight curves on that part of the Central Line sounded no different. Home life is interesting with my two youngest daughters living at home and at university, a vicarious pleasure. I am still very physically active with mountain biking, kayaking, sailing and swimming. And last but not least I revel in the Perth lifestyle with its Mediterranean climate without the crowds!

# Cross-Country at BHCHS Part Two 1949-59



Dickie Doe

IN THE first part of our cross-country survey we saw how, by the end of the 1940s there were signs that BHCHS would compete successfully against other local schools. 1950 saw the first win in an inter-school competition when the team of Doe, Rendu, Chambers and Dunbar helped the school to victory in the Smeed Cup, which was an event involving local schools. The bigger challenge was the Burn Cup - an Essex wide competition with twelve schools participating. In 1950 BHCHS achieved its best result to date in this competition by finishing in second place to Felsted School. As in previous years, there was a lot of pressure to participate in the inter-house races. **Nigel Overy (1942)**, the captain of cross-country, states in the opening of his report on these races, that *just over 380 boys "decided" to enter*. The senior race was thrown open by the absence of **Dickie Doe (1945)** and was won by **John Rendu (1945)** in a record

time, with second and third places going to **Ian Dunbar (1945)** and **Ken Chambers (1944)** respectively. Another record was set in the junior race, with **Barrie Lucas (1947)** winning the event for the second successive year.

### Doe's Dominance

The following year saw the emergence of Dickie Doe as the finest cross-country runner in the school's history, being first home in both the Burn Cup and the Smeed Cup, as well as winning the senior cross country by a margin of 42 seconds. BHCHS retained the Smeed Cup, with Wanstead CHS and Ilford CHS finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. Once again, however, the Burn Cup eluded Doe's team and BHCHS finished runners up, this time to Romford Technical School. Barrie Lucas, who had previously dominated the junior cross-country races, maintained his early promise by finishing second to Dickie Doe in the senior race while still only

in his fourth year. Meanwhile, in the junior race, **Brian Davis (1948)** who was destined to become another important figure in later triumphs emerged as winner by a clear minute from the second runner.

By 1952 the BHCHS cross-country team was the dominant force both in the county and local area. It was hardly surprising that they won the Smeed Cup for the third successive year against local rivals including Ilford CHS, Wanstead CHS, Chigwell, Bancrofts and Leyton CHS. But this year the team romped home to

Hainault House) the cross-country achievements of Barrie Lucas were very close to those of Dickie Doe. In fact in the senior cross country, Barrie Lucas edged Dickie Doe into second place despite being just over a year his junior. In winning that race he also became the first boy in the history of the school to have won all three (First Year, Junior, and Senior) races during his time at BHCHS. These two were consistently and capably supported in the inter-school races by **Norman Tyler (1944)** and **George Milburn (1945)**.



The start of the 1952 Burn Cup

win the Burn Cup, which had just eluded our team for several years previously. They won convincingly, finishing well ahead of their nearest rivals Felsted School and King Edward VI School, Chelmsford. Dickie Doe finished first in both races, with Barrie Lucas finishing third in both. While the 1951/52 year must be remembered as Doe's year (not only was he captain of cross country and athletics, but also Head Prefect and Captain of

### New Blood

Not surprisingly, the loss of Messrs Doe, Lucas and Tyler at the end of the 51/52 year left a huge gap, and the following year's team failed to retain any of the major trophies. But a talented new generation was not far behind. **Brian Davis (1948)**, who won the senior inter-house cross-country in 1952/3 was the mainstay of the team, while **Jeff Meddings (1949)**, who had not



The winning Burn Cup team in 1952: (l to r) George Milburn, Norman Tyler, Dickie Doe, Barrie Lucas



Brian Davis

performed with any great distinction in his first three years, was now rapidly developing stamina. Another fine runner to emerge at this time was **Alan Wiseman (1949)**. Under the captaincy of **Roger Landbeck (1946)** this team managed to regain the Burn Cup in 1954 after a gap of one year with Brian Davis the overall winner. The team also finished second in the Smeed Cup. In the following year, the momentum continued, spurred on by the newly appointed PE teacher **Reg Cave**. Brian Davis, who was by now captain of cross-country, records that the season had "provided the most successful cross-country team the school has had." Given their results, this seems a fair claim. Not only did they retain the Burn Cup, but also regained the Smeed Cup. For the first time ever, they also won the Highgate Harriers Invitation Race which annually attracted a very strong field. There were several others trophies, and the team appears to have been unbeaten in all competitions. Brian Davis duly won the senior inter-house race for the second successive year, followed by Jeff Meddings and **Hugh Davidson (1949)**. The middle school race

was won by **Roy Oliver (1952)**, reversing the order of the previous year's junior race when he had just lost to **Dennis Brown (1952)**.

**Declining Fortunes**

The departure of Brian Davis in 1955 was a serious blow for several school teams, not least that of cross-country. Jeff Meddings was still in place, training was still as enthusiastic as ever, but BHCHS failed to win any of the major inter-school trophies in the 1955/56 year. In the following year, Jeff Meddings reported that the team showed a lot of promise for the future, being



*In the absence of any action photos from the era, this photo of the mud-spattered (but clearly happy from their triumph) cross-country team that defeated Chigwell School in November 1954 will have to suffice*



*Burn Cup winning team 1954: Back row l to r: Roger Webb, Warren Roe, John Rogers, Brian Hunter, Derek Hayward (Secy). Front row l to r: Jeff Meddings, Alan Wiseman, Roger Landbeck, Brian Davis, Colin Howes.*

mainly under 16. The best performance by the senior team that year was to finish second in the Smeed Cup. Jeff Meddings came home first in the senior inter-house race, followed by two fifth formers: **John Batchelor (1952)** and Roy Oliver. The next two years certainly saw some success in inter-school competitions, the achievements did not quite match those of the glory days in the earlier part of the decade. BHCHS was beaten twice by Leyton CHS in the Burn Cup,

but managed to win the Wadhams Cup (Ilford AC Schools' race) in both years and the Smeed Cup in 1959. The inter-house races were still an important feature of the school calendar, and a new name - **Don Shephard (1952)** - emerged to oust the stalwarts Oliver and Batchelor in 1957, before John Batchelor regained the title in the following year.

The end of the decade saw something of a decline in popularity and support for cross-country in the school. **Chris Chapman**

**(1953)**, the cross-country captain for 1959/60, may have been correct in pointing to the fact that there was no outstanding runner to inspire the team. The main individual success was that of **Colin Overy (1953)** who not only won the senior inter-house race that year, but also represented Essex in the National Schools' Championship.

In the next chapter we will learn whether BHCHS was able to return to the mud and glory days of the early 50s.

# Death By a Thousand Cuts

## The demise of BHCHS - Part One: 1966-76 Grammar to Comprehensive

DURING ten years of tracing Old Bucks, there is one question I got used to hearing very frequently. What happened to the school? If you asked me that question you will probably have heard an abbreviated response. But I was curious to find out the full story. How was it that a school which, in the days before league tables became trendy, appeared in the list of top 100 secondary schools in the country, was closed down less than twenty years later?

My research has been helped by some recollections from former staff, and also by digging into records at the Essex Records Office. But the most revealing evidence is contained in the reports given to parents during the *At Home* meetings - the 1970s version of *Speech Day*. The significance of the Headmaster's reports will be better understood if I remind you that the *Roding* magazine pre-deceased the school by 16 years, depriving us of the very useful school notes.

### Trouble ahead – national trends

So when exactly did the terminal process begin? As we shall see, the change in the school's status from grammar to comprehensive was planned over many years. Furthermore, the transformation also did not happen at a single point in time.

While I shall aim to keep this account chronological, the best clue as to where it all started comes almost at the end of the tragedy. In his 1985 report to parents, retiring headmaster Hugh Colgate was clearly aware, even though it had not been officially announced, that the end of the school was not far off. He said:

*When I came here in 1966, I was told at interview that the future was uncertain and that this school would be reorganised with other local schools to become a comprehensive.*

There was little evidence, in contemporary published records, of any major crisis developing for the school during the early years of Hugh Colgate's tenure. The school notes during the late 60s appear to describe a school sailing in untroubled waters,



Retiring Head JH Taylor introduces his successor Hugh Colgate in 1966

unless you count the watery problem of finding funds to heat the swimming pool. There are various mentions of financial stringencies, including frequent comments about how heavily the school relied on the Parents' Association to support additional school equipment and extra-mural activities. But no suggestion that the very existence of the school was under threat.

The impending problems may not have been widely publicised within the school, but the move to comprehensive education was gathering momentum. It is likely that Hugh Colgate's interview took place very soon after the policy decision pushed through by Anthony Crosland who was Secretary of State for Education in Harold Wilson's government. The brief return to power of the Conservatives in the early 70s would only give a temporary slowdown of the national trend, with the momentum being picked up again from 1974. Essex finally implemented the policy of non-selection in 1976.

### Trouble ahead - local plans

While life at BHCHS appears on the surface to have continued unchanged, the inevitable conversion to comprehensive was a frequent topic of discussion at Governors' meetings. By early 1968 the governors had accepted that ultimately the school would become comprehensive. But it was far from clear, at that time, how BHCHS would fit in with other state schools in the district. The answer would not be known for a further eight years. Over

this period the Divisional Executive wrote a series of reports aimed at resolving this dilemma. What they were aiming for was the efficient use of buildings and resources in the district, given the predicted number of pupils. Certainly this was a complex matter, and maybe those preparing the reports were aware that the sheer length of time being taken over these deliberations would result in a huge amount of stress and uncertainty for those directly involved in running the schools affected.

The earliest proposals were not received favourably by the governors. These involved turning BHCHS into an eight-form entry school by merging it with a "Junior High" to be established at Luctons School. One of the governors' main concerns (ironical in view of subsequent events) was around the feasibility of administering BHCHS and Luctons as a single entity, when the buildings were separated by two miles.

By 1972 several more reports had been published. The future now seemed a bit more hopeful. The plan being tabled now involved a major expansion of BHCHS, combining it with Loughton CHS at the Roding Lane site. This plan was favoured by the governors, and would seem to have assured the long term future of both schools.

### Redbridge withdraws

But the Divisional Executive was not ready yet to make a final decision. A further report was being prepared, and more delay

ensued. By now, however, events outside the district now meant that some kind of change – even if only an interim one – would need to be pushed through much more rapidly. BHCHS had traditionally taken about 30% of its entry from neighbouring Redbridge. Like much of the rest of the country, Redbridge was considering how to reorganise education. They did not wish to end selection at 11+ (and have since maintained Woodford CHS and Ilford CHS as selective schools), but they did not want to continue supporting those more able pupils who preferred to attend selective schools outside their area. It seems likely that there were financial reasons – including the subsidies for transport – but perhaps there was also an element of parochialism in wishing to retain the more able pupils for the non-selective schools in their own area.

The immediate result of the Redbridge reorganisation was a damaging blow for BHCHS – a reduction of 15 pupils from the first year roll of 1973/74. Over the next three years, the Redbridge first year contingent would reduce to zero. The overall first form entry would reduce from 83 to 58 in the space of three years. It was clear that an urgent change at BHCHS was now required. Hugh Colgate and the governors would not have the luxury of waiting for many more versions of the Divisional Executive's plans.

### Another plan demolished

By the following school year, it was apparent that the earlier proposal to amalgamate Loughton and BHCHS at Roding Lane was in serious doubt, and that there was now a real threat to the future of BHCHS. This doubt was expressed to parents by Hugh Colgate:

*.....the country has plunged into a period of economic depression comparable to that of 1929. Some children are inevitably being educated for unemployment and nothing can be more soul destroying than that. In our own particular local circumstances we have seen the ambitious plans for the re-building of Loughton County High School, together with an Adult Education*



*Centre, a Sports Hall and squash courts put in serious jeopardy. We are facing the possibility of leaving this wonderful site. No one could be more heart-broken than I am at the possibility of leaving this building which is my life. I know just how much work and money you and the staff have raised during the past nine years to build up facilities here and into providing items which the County has been unable to supply. I am, however, sufficient of a realist to know that we are likely to bow to the cold wind of economic necessity and that in the present climate £1½ million pounds worth of building is extremely doubtful.*

The governors now had to face two unwelcome facts. Firstly, the ultimate plan to radically increase the size of BHCHS and combine it with Loughton CHS had not been accepted by the Secretary of State. We must assume, from the words Hugh Colgate used in his report, that it was a cost consideration, but the governors' minutes do not state this explicitly. Secondly, it had become apparent that one of the key considerations for any interim solution would need to incorporate those pupils who were currently at The Brook, a small secondary modern school in Loughton which was scheduled to close in 1976.

In one of the earlier plans it had seemed likely that The Brook would merge with West Hatch. But this was not seen as a satisfactory solution for West Hatch – probably because of the physical distance between the two

schools. The distance between The Brook and BHCHS was marginally less, and it now looked likely that BHCHS would be required to incorporate the smaller school, along with the remainder of its existing pupils, into the future plans.

#### **The interim plan - bilateral**

By now, the urgency of converting BHCHS to a comprehensive school meant that the likely proposals should be announced to the parents of existing pupils. The 1974/5 report contains the first mention I can find of the term “bilateral” entry. This term needs some explanation. Under the bilateral system, the school retained its grammar status for some of the pupils, while simultaneously allowing other pupils, who had not been through a selection examination, to attend. It is not clear whether the “bilateral” concept was agonised over for at least some of the nine previous years, or whether it was a last minute solution in response to the urgency of the situation. I have not been able to find any detailed analysis that led to the creation of this interim approach. With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to see that this hybrid system was unsatisfactory. Perhaps it was an attempt to appease the expectations of all stakeholders (parents, teachers, existing pupils, governors). Possibly Hugh Colgate did not have a lot of choice by the time the change was effected.

He announced it thus...

*...we anticipate taking two selective and one non-selective form in September 1976. I want*

*to emphasise that this is a bilateral and not a comprehensive intake. The present forms will not be in any way disturbed. We shall continue to maintain our present very high standards, not only for those already in the school but also for those who will enter it in September 1976 and in subsequent years. I give you my pledge that there is no question of the bright boys being held back in any way. At the same time, we shall offer to the 30 non-selective pupils likely to join next year's first form a first class education. We have planned and prepared for this change over the past two years and are ready to meet it with cheerful self-confidence.*

The final plan was refined yet again. The 1976/77 school year began with two selective and two non-selective forms. The bilateral entry scheme was then continued for three further years, meaning that it would be 1983 (when last grammar entrants completed their fifth form) before the final vestiges of grammar status would disappear. During the following three years the two populations co-existed in the same building, with separate classes, and with the same teaching staff. I have been told that it was almost impossible for any pupil to move from one category to the other. It is not appropriate here to divert to a discussion of streaming, but in the pre-comprehensive days – at least during part of the school's history - movement between streams had been a normal occurrence.

This, however, was not the only change. Plans to create a combined sixth form with Loughton CHS had been in discussion for a number of years, partly in preparation for the larger transformation to a comprehensive system, but also with a view to providing greater subject choice and perhaps greater efficiency in teaching staff across the two schools, given the reduced numbers of sixth form pupils overall. Despite these apparent benefits (and not to mention the obvious attractions for pupils of the two establishments), this was arguably another of the wounds that would eventually destroy BHCHS. It may have been something of a novelty that on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1975 girls started attending lessons at Roding Lane, and that BHCHS sixth formers were similarly travelling to Loughton CHS, West Hatch and Loughton College of Further Education. But the logistics of managing a sixth form curriculum spread over such a wide area must have been something of a nightmare.

So, this was only the beginning, or maybe the end of the beginning.

#### **The end of an era**

Whatever one may say about the process, an important landmark was reached. In his following year's speech to parents Hugh Colgate reported that on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1976 he had written in his log book: *the School closed at 3.30 p.m. and ceased to be a grammar school.*

In the next chapter we shall reach the point in time when the school closed at 3.30pm and ceased to be a school.

# School Rules OK?

By Dick Spall (BHCHS 1954-61)



The tour party at the Matterhorn. The author is missing from this photo - maybe sleeping somewhere?

**“Educational visits and out-of-school teaching can bring learning to life by deepening young people’s understanding of the environment, history and culture and improving their personal development”** Alan Johnson, Education Secretary, 2007

THE YEAR was 1957. The prospect of a first trip abroad beckoned – a trip to Switzerland with the school. We were to stay in youth hostels and experience the delights of that fabled country – lakes, mountains, waterfalls, glaciers – (entirely on foot and in frequent rain as it turned out) for three whole weeks. The party was to be led by Mr McCollin and accompanied by a sixth former with the curious nickname of Bette Davis. Thus a group of 15 year old boys assembled at Victoria Station on the appointed day to get the boat train to the continent. The party would maintain cohesion by following an inflexible rule: if one boy was late for a rendezvous, the party would leave without him – *pour encourager les autres*, no doubt.

The holiday turned out exactly as promised – lots of hearty walking up and down mountains, hearty sleeping on straw pallets, hearty eating of simple and wholesome youth hostel fare and hearty drying out of wet clothing – all made worthwhile of course by the stunning scenery. By the end we were all fitter,

healthier and more culturally aware although chronically exhausted. The party discipline had been good; the inflexible rule had been invoked only once when three boys failed to turn up at a station on time. The spectacle of them pounding along the platform desperately trying to catch the departing train was enjoyed by the rest of us hanging out of the windows catcalling and guffawing. They rejoined the party on a later train.

At the end of the three weeks, we were due to catch the train home from Basel International Station. We were shown the train that we were to catch and then with sev-



Graham Rutherford

eral hours in hand, left to our own devices. After sampling the delights of Basel station (few) a small group of us found our way to a waiting room. Here the efforts of the last three weeks caught up with us and we fell deeply asleep.

When I awoke I was alone. Panic propelled me at a run through the station to where the train was waiting. Or should have been waiting. As I looked desperately for it, the naked rails stared back in reproach: ‘you broke the golden rule, you were not at the right place at the right time’. I pictured everyone else carousing their way across Europe to England and Home. At that moment I knew what loneliness was.

I explained my predicament to a station official who clearly thought that what this young Englishman needed was a nice cup of tea. He presented me with a cup of warm water with a teabag lying in the bottom. Another new experience, as I don’t think that teabags had reached England at that time. I was eventually grafted onto another British school party returning home to Manchester. I found myself sitting in a compartment full of strange creatures called Northern Girls. They cast a few dismissive glances in my direction and then spent the rest of the journey gossiping, giggling and doing their makeup.

Dunkirk arrived at last, then Dover and British Customs. You’ll remember the drill – an unsmiling customs officer presents you with a card detailing all the dire penalties for smuggling and insists on you reading it.

You only pretend to because you’re so nervous. Next is the question, ‘Have you anything to declare?’ On this occasion I had a nice Agfa camera hidden in a bag of dirty socks in my rucksack. It had been bought in a fit of bravado. (We know how macho and idiotic 15 year old boys can be when they get together.) With my bowels turning to water I tried to look pure and innocent and told my lie. He let me through.

Next stop Victoria. The Buckhurst Hill party had arrived long before and the boys had piled off the train calling across to my parents ‘We’ve left Spall behind in Switzerland!’ You may imagine the effect this news had on them. Anyway they decided to wait and in due course their beloved (stupid? chastened?) son arrived.

The end of an unforgettable trip. Yes, my learning had definitely been brought to life and my per-



Peter Anderson

sonal development improved. Whether the Education Secretary had in mind the ‘in the deep end’ philosophy of education is another matter.

As an interesting footnote, my parents never lodged any form of complaint to the school. Such was the respect for (fear of?) authority in those days.



David Williams

# Blisters and Brotherhood - A hike in the Rhinelands

By Ian Hammond (BHCHS 1960-67)



Our gallant guides: Eric Franklin, Dennis Clayton and Dave Clapton

WAY BACK in the murky mists of April 1964, a gaggle of overburdened teenagers and three trepidacious teachers gathered at Liverpool Street Station. This was to be the commencement of the hiking field trip to the Rhinelands. The train would take us to Harwich, where we were ushered into the bowels of a ferry bound for the Hook of Holland.

A couple of years ago I came across my black & white pictures of this trip, so I thought a contribution to the magazine might be of interest. (Apologies to GF for the long wait). I only have hazy memories of this endeavour, but luckily my old mucker John Levoi has augmented his. If any other "hikers" read this and have destroyed less brain cells than us, they will probably pick up on factual distortions.

It was a cold, misty morning when we arrived in Holland, and by way of various trains, we finally arrived at Trier (I believe) on the Mosel river. After ensconcing at the youth ho(s)tel, in someone's wisdom, we were then allowed out on the town. A few dunkel biers later the locals were being serenaded with cordial choruses of "We won the war, EEAYEADIO, we....." The following day was to be the start of

the planned "backpacking" hike from hostel to hostel up the Mosel. Back in those days backpacks weren't exactly like today's. My rucksack had a rather uncomfortable metal frame, and however hard I tried to adjust it, the entire load would gravitate invariably, to hang like some grotesque growth behind my backside. The boots... In spite of my parents' foresight to do a couple of "breaking in" walks, their efforts were to prove in vain. That first day our spirits were dampened by unrelenting cold rain on the perhaps over optimistic 20 mile hike.

Half crown sized blisters ensued, and JL remembers a couple of less fortunates had to be sent back home. Daily packed lunches consisted appetisingly of hard boiled eggs, even harder crusty rolls or rye bread with salami, washed down with weak tea. Eventually there was a mutiny. We couldn't or wouldn't walk any further, and in spite of protestations and cajoling, our hard pressed leaders gave in and trains / buses (?) were taken. I don't do the trip justice, it wasn't all grim. Amongst the better times we visited Cologne, (because one of the photos showed the cathedral). Also we had a longish, restful boat trip down the Rhine, which passed

the Lorelei rock in much improved weather. My personal highlight was to receive a telegram! We were in Koblenz at the time, staying in the fort perched precariously above the river. My father had managed to get me a cup final ticket to see my beloved West Ham. I went to the final with my regular fellow fan Peter Sharp, another long standing Buckwellian mucker. They

went on to win, followed by a European Cup Winners win at Wembley in '65. And as we all know West Ham also won the World Cup the following year!

One of these days I would like to return to that area and see some of the sights, but the walking would have to be kept to a bare minimum!



John Levoi and Peter May enjoying the walk



Myself (left) and some other BHCHS reps in Koblenz

# Working on the Chain Gang

By Gordon Lacey (BHCHS 1959-1963)



Gordon Lacey and wife Jeanette on a recent Orient Express trip

“WOULD you like to come over for the New Year? We have just got Chris and David (Conway) coming over. You met them two years ago and I know that they would be pleased to see you again.”

Scroll forward to New Year's Eve. We have left the dinner table and are all sitting chatting with some music playing gently in the background and our friends are reminiscing about their youth and the wonderful times they had when they visited Chris and David at David's parent's home in Loughton. “Where did you go to school, David?” I asked casually. “Oh, I went Buckhurst Hill County High” replied David.

I couldn't believe it. I was amazed by the coincidence as I had only once in 45 years bumped into another Old Buck who was not a classmate and very, very few who were.

“When did you start?”

“I don't remember”

“Well, when were you born?”

“He was born in January 1946” piped in Chris.

“Well you must have started in 1957, two years before me, because I started in 1959 after passing the 13-plus and went into 3R. Do you remember that? You must do, I spoke to John Whaler many years afterwards and he told me that taking a whole class of 13-plus pupils was a big experiment for BHCHS”

“No, not really.”

We spent as long exchanging memories of people we remembered as was polite in the circumstances, after all, such information is not quite as riveting to the non-combatants and said I would send an email after getting home.

The meeting with David came at the right time and with him not knowing about the great 13-plus experiment I resolved, at midnight, to write the article I had long promised myself I would. So here goes.

In days gone past, when driving around the country on business, I often thought about my fellow pupils from 3R and tried to remember them all. Not so difficult as it might seem as we were allocated our desks in alphabetical order, up and down the rows, but there were always some blanks and I cursed the day I lost my 'Blue Books' which I had kept for years.

Remembering all my fellow pupils was a major challenge. However, I have had a go and at the end of this article I have made a list comprising 27 original 3R pupils but I have it in my mind that we started off 28 in number but, 50 years later, who knows? I am certain that there was a Martin Shaw in the class but he is not shown on the website but I believe that he left the school and moved away after a year.

I was sad to read Chris Rowsell's obituary (*OB News, November 2008*) but at the same time pleased to read a bit about his career in TV broadcasting. I will remember an afternoon when there were a number of us in the pavilion, it must have been a games afternoon, watching Chris demonstrate his CCTV system that he had put together. I seem to recall the camera being outside and the TV in the pavilion but what was being filmed I haven't the faintest idea!

I believe that most boys were local, living in Loughton, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, Woodford etc. but some of us came from farther afield including Harlow, Ongar, North Weald, Epping. This motley crew came together in September 1959 from our various secondary schools having been fortunate enough to



have had a second go at getting to grammar school and passing the dreaded exam.

Few of us knew any of our fellow pupils when we were delivered into the tender mercies of John Whaler that late summer morning. Christian names suddenly no longer existed, and we were directed to our desks in strict alphabetical order.

I had awaited this day with considerable trepidation and this did little to dispel my discomfort and, although it was not apparent at the time, I am sure that many of my new friends-to-be shared similar feelings.

There was one exception to this generalisation. Dave Millard was not a “13-plusser”. He had joined the school the previous academic year having moved to the UK from New Zealand, although he was a Brit, and was a bit different. He already had friends in the 3rd year and knew the ropes. He was a strong, muscular lad and didn't have the standard short back and sides but sported a somewhat longer mop of hair slicked back with lashings of Brylcreem to form a wonderful DA!

This motley crew, this band of brothers, was destined to stay together as a form under the care of our form-master, Mr Whaler, for two years, first as 3R and then 4R. At the end of our second year we were to repeat a year as “4th years” but dispersed among those moving up from the 3rd to 4th year according to our exam results. I was severely “hacked off” to be joining a bunch of youngsters. Worse still, to be put in 4 Alpha instead of 4A, despite being placed 22nd in the year overall by exam results,

because I had not studied Latin!

One of the reasons for my initial trepidation on joining the school was because during my two years at secondary modern I was aware that academically I had been treading water. This was not because of lack of effort but simply a demonstration of the gulf between the academic standards of grammar and secondary modern schools. The latter, institutionally, had no interest in nurturing high ambition in their pupils only in providing grist to the economic mill.

Given my foregoing comments, to be denied what I saw as my rightful place in the ‘A’ stream was a blow to my pride and morale. In my report at the end of my year in 4 Alpha Spud commented “He has fallen by 39 places in the year. Why, I wonder?” Was he that lacking in schoolboy psychology? My final year was spent in 5B but mercifully this seems to have been the kick up the pants I needed and I achieved some creditable ‘O’ level results to enable me to follow my chosen career.

Returning to September 1959, John Whaler turned out to be a marvellous form master and he was held in respect and high esteem by us all. He was firm but fair and had a sense of humour and when dishing out impositions, rarely detentions as I recall, he informed you that you were joining the ‘chain gang’. At the end of our first academic year someone organised a whip round to buy a record for Mr Whaler – it was *Chain Gang* by Sam Cook! He was highly amused by this and quite moved, I think.

It must have been around the end of the 50's or 1960 that the BIC ball point pen was invented. They were certainly not allowed to be used for writing purposes at BHCHS but the clear plastic tubes, minus the ball point and tube of ink, made wonderful ‘pea-shooters’. Well chewed paper made marvellous ammunition and many a boring lesson was spent aiming these spittle soaked, soggy pellets at the rather large glass light fittings where they accumulated like a forerunner of that other 60's invention for the modern house of the time, Tyrolean rendering.



Gordon Lacey and Bill Martin

Needless to say these encrustations were on the pupil's side of the lights and were not obvious to the master taking the lesson but who was no doubt wondering about the cause of this intermittent low-level noise like a blow-pipe and the accompanying sniggers. I don't remember anyone being taken to task for this at the time.

Mr Maishman ('Mashie') took us for English and, I am now sorry to say, was seen as a bit of a soft touch. He would busily be writing notes on the board, and whilst his back was turned there would be much surreptitious shuffling forward of desks and chairs, including the master's desk, so that when he turned to face the class he would be virtually pinned against the black-board. It is amazing how much pleasure was given to a class of boys by such infantile activity and almost as amazing that we were allowed to get away with it so often. But then again maybe we didn't!

We were entering the 60's and fashion became more important. Ray 'Sid' Bonning was our resident 'mod' and given that the latest fashions were not available as they are now, it was nothing short of miraculous how Ray managed to make his school uniform conform to strictures of 'mod' fashion. The short, boxy, Italian jacket style of his school blazer and the length and width of his grey school trousers forever changing to ensure he was

never embarrassed by being behind the times. For a period of time he even wore boots with Cuban heels and winkle-picker toes but as a keen playground football player I am not sure how long they survived such abuse but maybe he gave up playing temporarily.

Ray, if I have exaggerated and embarrassed you by having a faulty or selective memory I apologise and hope you will forgive me. I am sure the reason I have these memories is that I was envious and would have liked to have been able to match your style and panache. The rest of us made do with wearing our ties the wrong way round (to make them slimmer) tied with a Windsor knot and wore our trousers with the turn-ups removed by our mothers.

The real bane of our life was the school cap which was incapable of being moulded to some fashionable form, indeed they were totally beyond the pale and, in modern parlance, were totally without 'street cred'. We wore them as little as possible and in so doing ran the gauntlet of prefects, particularly at the school gates, and masters.

I have made reference to playground football and this was regularly played during breaks. In the summer, when we took breaks on the playing field, hand tennis was the game. In the playground the cycle sheds became the goals and on the playing field ties, jackets and caps marked out

the tennis courts.

Sport was not my strong point although I did enjoy taking part, except for cricket and gymnastics where the latter required somersaults. Len Wood was a great all-rounder; he played in the school football team and was a good sprinter and hurdler. Denis Grey was another good all-rounder but I remember particularly his gymnastic skills. 'Tom' Millard was a terrific cross-country runner and I see from *The Roding* 1962 that he won the 4th year race that year.

Much has been written in *OB News* about Pete Sillis, Tommy Leek, Arnold Smethurst and various other masters who were legends in their own time. I remember these three very well and with affection, although it has to be said that they taught the subjects that I enjoyed. I cannot remember who taught maths but it is a subject that I always struggled with except for geometry and trigonometry. At the time I frequently cast aspersions upon his skill as a teacher. I was similarly unimpressed with our chemistry master but, again, this was a subject that caused me grief. My autumn report in 4 Alpha stated 'below form average' and it went downhill thereafter until my Spring report in 5B stated 'He did absolutely no revision' following an exam mark of 0/40! I don't think, by that time, revision would have helped and to this day the periodic tables and chemical equations remain one of life's great mysteries. Colin Vose was the whiz-kid at chemistry and I wonder if that directed his career choice?

I had the good fortune to go on the 1961 trip to the Rhinelands, the Bavarian Alps and Salzburg along with Graham Hannah from 4R. I say good fortune as we were not eligible for the trip but two spare places resulted in Graham and I having our names successfully drawn from the hat. It was a fantastic trip but unfortunately I only have a few poor quality black and white photographs. Of those there are only two with images of fellow pupils, one of me and Bill Martin (according to my note on the back) sitting on a fence and another of me and two others sitting on a rock but I cannot recall who the other two are. I am sure someone will know despite the poor quality.

I left the school in 1963 after 'O' levels to pursue a career as a chartered surveyor. At that time I only needed 'O' levels to do so but if I had stayed on into the 6th form the impending RICS rule changes would have required me to obtain some decent 'A' level results and, at the time, I wasn't that confident of doing so. Besides, did I want to leave school at the great age of 19!? I am retired now and 19 seems ridiculously young, not only to me but to all three of my sons!

I am sure many will have other memories of those times at



BHCHS or different emphases or perhaps to have tried to erase the memories. Travelling to Buckhurst Hill to school, and a grammar school at that, put distance between me and my former friends at home and it was difficult to develop friendships with school pals outside school when most lived what then seemed significant distances away. Nevertheless my memories of those times are generally happy ones.

This group of 13-year old schoolboys was thrown together fifty years ago and it seems to be an opportune moment to muse upon the possibilities of a 3R reunion. Is there any support out there for such an event?

#### 3R ROLL CALL SEPTEMBER 1959

ATKINS Terence	INGLES Terry
BATEY Colin	LACEY Gordon
BONNING Ray	LEWIS TCH
BRAZIER Rodney	PAGE Greg
BULL Robert	POOLE David
DIXON Ray	PROUT Geoff
DONNO Tony	RICKETTS Phil
DUKES Paul	ROWSSELL Chris
DUNCAN Alan	SACHON Dave
FEATHERSTONEHAUGH Martin	SMITH Hugh
GREY Denis	SHAW Martin
HANNAH Graham	VOSE Colin
HILDER Bob	WOOD Len

*Editor's Note - it would be interesting to know why the "big experiment" was never repeated. Pupils from an earlier generation will be more familiar with a rather different version of the "Remove" concept (see Ted Cocking's item on page 20).*

# Educators Re-evaluated

## 1. Peter Oliver (BHCHS 1945-52)



I LOOK forward to each issue of *OB News* to recapture some of the essence of the formative years I spent at school. I was particularly moved by the essential sadness lurking in the tribute to Pete Sillis. He was one of the most influential of my teachers. As a pupil I enjoyed the years when he came fresh from Cambridge with a First Class honours degree. I experienced the enthusiasm, the efficiency of his teaching and interest that he inspired.

He was pragmatic enough to have a tactical approach to preparing his pupils to achieve good result in exams but this was a necessary distraction that he only concentrated on as exam time drew near. In the main I believed he was carrying a torch for enlightenment. History was one plank in that body of knowledge and he was helping us understand our heritage, our place in history and how to interpret the events of the world.

I was particularly saddened by the suggestion that he became somewhat disenchanted in later years by the changes in the personnel, the changes brought by Comprehensive Education, and possibly the administrative load and the measurement systems and the impacts of the increasing politicization of the education system.

For those excellent teachers in the school all the contrived measurement systems that the bureaucracy introduced to manage the profession must have been incredibly irksome. How do you measure enlightenment, or the success in passing some of it on to the next generation? It is only the kind of hubris that politicians possess that could have

imagined a system that would measure the success of education with their own new crude tools.

It made me particularly ashamed that I never returned to the school to thank him and other members of the staff for the immense gift of their combined dedication to giving us a liberal education. When I heard of the minimal acknowledgement he received for his life's work I felt severely chastened for my own callow behaviour and I wanted to acknowledge that I owe an important and permanent sense of gratitude to him. If he ever felt teaching was a thankless task then I must admit my poverty of spirit in failing to acknowledge how significant he was in my life.

With Pete Sillis I would also like to thank Rusty Steele, Tommy Leek, of course Spud Taylor, and Bernard Samways, Ernie Wigley, my various Math teachers and Faz Scott. In their various ways and their different disciplines, they taught the rigors of language, the logic and methods of acquiring knowledge, the heritage of thought and culture and its expression in literature, and some of the formative forces that place us in time on this planet. They pointed to the building blocks from which to build our own personal philosophies and world view. Most of all they developed our capacity to think, without teaching us what to think.

These immeasurable gifts encouraged us all to go out into the world with aspirations to succeed, from their selfless example to give something back, and to remain curious and capable of continuing learning throughout the rest of our lives. For these gifts I remain permanently grateful.

With Pete Sillis and Rusty Steele, I first glimpsed the complexity and ambivalence of life; to distrust the conventional certainties; to sometimes recognize that there is paradox everywhere - in literature, the human psyche and history - and that doubt is essential to understanding, creativity and discovery, the best way to confront the unknown and the unexpected, and the way to re-

main alert to the possible fallacies in our normal assumptions.

The immediate post war period when I joined the school was a period of optimism and belief in a socialist nirvana as the inevitable fruit of historical evolution. Maybe the subsequent achievement of "opportunity for all" in Comprehensive Education undermined the sense of value that education was a privilege.

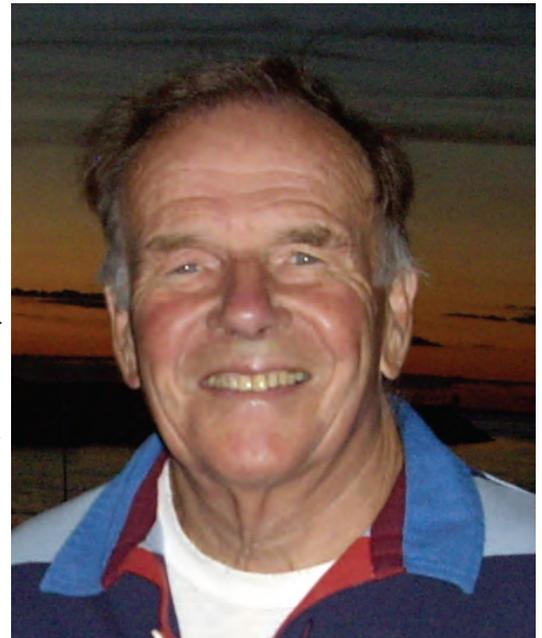
Maybe it was a bridge too far. And little did anyone then expect the counter revolution of the Reagan/ Thatcherite political and economic consensus which has dominated the last 30 years. Both the proletarianization of education and then the subsequent business approach to all things, however inappropriate, I am sure contributed to the frustration of teachers during the latter part of their careers.

The Thatcherite assumptions fortunately have been assaulted by recent events which are forcing everyone to re-evaluate them. Hollow though they always were it has been surprising how little intellectual leadership and questioning of the assumptions there has been over the same period. In some ways we are and have been living in a Capitalist and yet Orwellian era and we are by no means out of it.

Maybe there is a new spirit of re-assessment in the air - the kind of synthesis which Karl Marx would recognize as fitting neatly into his notions of history, of Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis. Maybe there are other important measures than the bottom line. And maybe profit is not the only useful and important measure, as we slowly realize that soaring profits, a shrinking economy and growing poverty are an unsustainable and unhealthy cocktail.

Maybe we have to go back to

producing real things to create wealth. Maybe also some of that wealth is in intangible things like education. Re-evaluating the contribution of those capable teachers who transfer their knowledge and wisdom to the next generation is long overdue. They are the conduit for intellectual investment and development in the next generation and some of it manifests itself in the economy in later years.



When I read the recollections and the life adventures of past pupils both of the academic successful and of the recalcitrant students and even those who really hated their time there, it seems that none of us passed through without acquiring something on which to build some of our life skills.

Sometimes people say that adolescence is a time of enormous development anyway so how can you ascribe so much credit to these teachers? I can't separate my adolescence from that time or even sensibly try to do so. I can only say that they were a particularly patient and nurturing group of adults who have helped, with my family and some of my junior school teachers, and the Congregational Church in Woodford, although I can't claim to have any faith, to fashion my ability to interpret my life, society, and the times. I think and refer to my memory of them often.

# Educators Re-evaluated

## 2. Colin Brown (BHCHS 1955-62)



I WAS very impressed by the many and fulsome eulogies to Pete Sillis. Quite clearly he was a remarkable chap. However, I have to say, without rancour, and with sincere respect to his family, that I have some difficulty in recognizing the jovial and inspiring guru that he seems to have been, away from the blackboard. He was, poor chap, 'my' history master all the way from 1G to 5A and I struggle to remember much, if anything, in the way of smiles or words of encouragement, throughout those years. Were we really that enervating? Perhaps.

In similar vein, my jaw tends to drop when I hear the rather alarming FAS referred to as "Fred". Fred! My indelible mental picture is of his billowing at great speed with a huge pile of bumf under his arm, and the thunderous glower of a dyspeptic vulture on his face. The very notion of addressing him as Fred chills the blood, even now.

Other correspondents have commented that the prevailing ethos at BHCHS was that only swots need apply, and I fear that that is pretty well my judgement. I am quite sure that the po-faced authority which pervaded everything had a profound effect on me and a lot of my friends. No doubt the likes of Pete and, er, Fred were delightful blokes when they lightened up. What a shame that we erks never saw it.

Least I be thought entirely negative, and it has been known, let me hasten to say that there were members of staff of whom I retain very fond memories. People like the redoubtable Roger Webb (something of a hero, he), Archie Winmill (English), Jock Ingram (English) and Mr Baker who

taught us A Level French Lit. All these men seemed to believe in 'leading out' rather than 'drumming in' and realised that a light touch would probably not bring the temple crashing down. With Tom Leek it was rather different. He was a superb geographer, which I greatly respected, but he seemed uneasy that I just may have had a good memory, even though I 'did' A level geography, and passed it. Very happily, we met up several times later on, when I was playing for the Old Bucks against the BHCHS first eleven. He always greeted me very warmly, and on at least two occasions announced loudly, to nobody in particular, that I still had a good left foot. Coming from a former captain of Barnet and England, that meant a good deal.



I was delighted to receive this poem from Jeremy Hayes. He wrote this as part of a creative writing course he is doing with the Open University. Jeremy has dedicated this to John Rippin. Jeremy is in the photo above taken in 1980 (middle row, centre)

Jeremy Hayes is deputy Chief Sub Editor on the sports desk at the *Daily Mail*. He lives in Devon with his wife Jo who is a solicitor and their children Oliver, 16, and Alice, 12.

I must also mention dear old Harry Graydon, my first year form master. Kind and fun, and dead at 48. He won the MC as a padre with the 8th Army and often took us through the technique of frying eggs on the bonnet of a jeep. He left us to join the Church, but tragically didn't survive long.

Having launched into print, may I take the opportunity to send my warmest regards to my particular



old muckers, including: Chris Cuff, Ronnie Docking, Trevor 'Doc' Hyde (well done, mate, proud of you!), Grahams Herbert and Williams, Johnny Barrett, Geoff Purkiss, Keith Lovell, Ian Paterson and so many others. I was particularly sorry to learn that we have lost Bill Bennett, Dave Pegrum, and Grahame Eales. Bill was a terrific footballer but never played for the school, preferring to do a milk round to pay for flying lessons. This led, in his words, to his becoming a 747 driver for BA. Dave was, as many will remember, a brave and capable goalie, whilst Grahame earned a crust as a solicitor but was really a cracking cyclist and an authority on good old cars and good old ale.

*Editor's note - I am very grateful to Peter and Colin for these thoughtful and enlightening comments. Thanks also to others who responded to the feature about Peter Sillis in the last edition. It would be really interesting - and I hope some readers rise to the challenge - to see some similar contributions by pupils from later years: maybe from YOS 1965 and 1975!*

## Choir By Jeremy Hayes (BHCHS 1974-81)

When first I heard the joyous noise our voices made, it startled me that I had been a part of such a sound.

We didn't know that we could sing, still less such splendid music make — we were just boys in shorts, in rows, in school.

It mattered not that no one heard (though later it was said our hymn drew crowds outside as players shunned their games).

Our teacher's dancing fingers led us, drew from us our opening line: 'Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts.'

We tiptoed, pianissimo at first, then blew the breezy sound around and heard it grow and build into a roaring forte, storming forth in echoes all around the hall until the wood-lined walls were drenched in song.

Then in the silent second's pause between Amen and his applause, our hearts skipped beats and hair stood up on necks.

And what contentment would be mine if I could find the joy that filled That sacred silent second one more time.

# Where are they now?

**Brian Mummery (1940)**



My secondary schooling started in circumstances which are probably almost unimaginable to the present generation of schoolchildren. The Second World War was being fought, food and fuel were severely rationed, there was a black-out at night, bombing sometimes occurred and there was no TV.

I had gained a place at Buckhurst Hill CHS, to start in September 1940. However, my parents wanted me to be away from the risks of living near London, so I was evacuated to Gloucestershire for the first year of my secondary education. I returned home to BHCHS at the beginning of the second year and completed my secondary education there, subject to the occasional disruption by bombs, V1's and V2's. Academically my schooling was fairly unremarkable as I coped reasonably well with most subjects (except art, where I have no talent!). In due course I was a Prefect and House Captain.

One problem arose when I started in the Sixth Form. I had chosen the Arts but after two months I decided that this was unlikely to lead to a career of interest (I certainly did not fancy school-teaching) and I asked to change to Science. My father was told by "Spud" that such a change had never been done before, but he relented eventually. Some of the teaching was very good; in Maths it was superb (Eddie Dolman) and excellent in Chemistry (Lees). I shall not comment on physics. I finished up with a County Major Scholarship. This was before UCCA was created to assist with clearance and I had difficulty finding a place in a university. The fact that

I was under 18 did not help and there was no such thing as a "year off" in those days. Eventually I accepted an offer of a place to read Physics at University College Leicester (before it became a university – they took London degrees in those days). I graduated with a good External London Honours degree. I also played in the hockey, cricket and tennis teams, so I had quite a good time. Next stop was National Service in the REME, where I qualified as a Radar Mechanic and was posted to the Eskmeals Gun-Range, a Government Experimental Establishment on the Cumberland coast. I was in a very small group, servicing the radar and electronics needed to measure the performance of guns and ammunition and to detect ships which had wandered into the forbidden gun-range area. At that time I was very glad to be sent to this wet and remote corner of England as the likely alternative was to be sent to Korea, where the Korean War was on. I am always willing to do my duty but have never had ambitions for martial glory!

The gun-range was a few miles from Windscale, which was part of the expanding atomic energy programme. Atomic Energy was a growth industry and was thought to have a promising future. (It later acquired a controversial reputation which we must now rectify to get a nuclear contribution to the security of power supply and help the struggle against global warming). Thus on demobilisation I included it in my various job applications and was offered a management training job at the new Atomic Energy Works at Capenhurst near Chester. This was a new factory with new technology, separating the isotopes of uranium. Surprisingly, I have only met one Old Buckwellian since leaving school and I met him there. It was Alan Johnson (1942), younger brother of Keith Johnson who had been in my form.

After four years I moved to the northern Atomic Energy Headquarters at Risley near Warrington where I stayed for seven years. I worked on proposals for new atomic energy plants, the physics of the design of the Windscale Advanced Gas-Cooled Reactor

and nuclear fuel problems - all rather a long way from life at BHCHS.

My next move was to the CEGB in London, where (through various reorganisations) I remained for the next 26 years, changing responsibilities and moving up a few notches, finishing up as Head of Nuclear Fuel Operations.

In my later years I was running some specialised operational services for all of the CEGB's nuclear stations. The services were those which were more conveniently or effectively run from Headquarters. I enjoyed it, although it was stressful at times. When necessary I visited nuclear power stations and nuclear sites at home and abroad and had meetings with many official and international organisations. A friend of mine says that he has noticed that the longer people have been retired the greater their former responsibilities become. For those of you of a serious disposition I must explain that it is meant as a joke but, like many jokes, it contains an element of truth. I hope it does not apply to me, but perhaps it does!

For many years one area of my responsibilities was making the operational arrangements for the safe transport of the spent fuel from all of the CEGB's nuclear power stations to Sellafield. After a time this became a highly controversial political and public relations matter. As a result, apart from my managerial and technical duties, I spent many hours talking on this subject, and other nuclear fuel subjects, to public organisations, MP's, councillors and occasionally on TV and radio. It was demanding, but a necessary part of the job.

Since retiring I have been able to spend more time with my wife of 52 years, also my family, including our three grandchildren. Like some of my contemporaries I took up golf (playing erratically, but enjoying it if successful!) and I joined the Sevenoaks Rotary Club, where I was President in 1998. I thought I was living a boringly healthy life until last September (2008) when, out of the blue, I suffered a heart attack and subsequently had to have a heart bypass, but I have now recovered and am getting on with life.

**Ted Cocking (1942)**



One of the best things that happened to me educationally was to gain a place at BHCHS. However, it needed an interview with the Headmaster J. H. Taylor to convince him that I was up to the standard required having only just scraped a pass in the written part of the 11+ examination. Following the outbreak of the War in 1939 I had a chequered and disturbed education. I was evacuated from Westminster to Littlehampton to escape the London Blitz and then to Redruth in Cornwall and finally to a junior seminary boarding school near Rhyl in North Wales where one of my uncles was a monk. My parents were caught up in the war effort in Westminster and I left the school in Wales and went to live with an aunt in Wanstead to take my 11+ examination. Coming to this new school in its idyllic setting overlooking the River Roding, daily by steam train from Snaresbrook to Buckhurst Hill, gave me the first opportunity that I had ever had to be well taught and also to enjoy what I was studying.

Sporadic bombing raids were still taking place and the air raid shelters in the playground were in steady use. Several teachers were on war service and female teachers were enlisted to teach the younger boys. Initially I was in form 1B and later in 1A (taking Latin instead of German) with Miss George as Form Mistress. In my first year, school slippers had to be worn, the corridors were highly polished and any running in the corridors always merited a detention. Each day as we assembled in the School Hall for a hymn, a prayer and a brief address by the



Headmaster; we felt that we were part of a young community not quite knowing what we were heading for. The V1 flying bombs were stressful both at home and at school; all of us were lucky to survive the blast from the flying bomb that landed near the front of the school blasting out all the glass, but fortunately we had all been sent home the day before because of the intensity of the raids. A very significant event educationally, that was to have major implications for our future, was when the Headmaster addressed our form to let us know that we had been selected to take the equivalent of GCSE in four rather than five years to give us the opportunity of three years in the 6th form to increase our chances of being awarded University Scholarships. For our form, now called 'Remove' this was an exciting challenge. We even produced a 'Remove Review' magazine to celebrate. These years however were not easy for most of us due to wartime and post war conditions. We were also affected by the scourge of polio and several of us contracted polio. Being at school all day with nutritious school dinners readily available in the purpose built Dining Hall helped greatly in fostering a sense of ongoing community wellbeing. Our school plays (Tony Jolly and I masterminded the electrics), the school orchestra and music tuition (I graduated from violin to viola) and chess matches against neighbouring schools, as well as our excellent sports facilities, all also greatly helped.

I was increasingly attracted to science by the inspirational teaching and excellent laboratory facilities, especially chemistry with Mr

Lees and later Mr Wilson, physics with Mr Scott and Mr Buckley, mathematics with Mr Dolman and Biology with Mr Shillito. Even though he was erratic and often lost his temper, it was Mr Shillito who encouraged me to think about science and its relevance to everyday life, especially about plants and their key role in the well being of Planet Earth. Usefully all our school reports were bound together in one booklet that was given to each of us when we left the school; it's possible to trace how my interests and capabilities developed during these formative years, including my height and weight! It was a great disappointment to the Senior Master Mr Wigley, a truly outstanding teacher, that I went into the 6th form Science stream in 1947 rather than into the 6th form Arts (having collected various prizes for history in earlier years).

Many of my contemporaries have achieved distinction in different walks of life. Derek Walker, for instance, came to head up the Baltic Exchange in London and John Burrow, himself a polio victim, became a Professor of English at The University of Bristol. John Ringrose, a Wrangler at Cambridge, and one of the two of us in the 'Remove' form who became Fellows of The Royal Society finished his career as a Pro-Vice Chancellor at The University of Newcastle presiding at the degree ceremony when my own son graduated there in 1982. For my own part, having been awarded a State Scholarship in 1950, I accepted the advice of Mr Shillito and took a new degree course in Biological Chemistry then starting at the University of Bristol, declining the offer of a place at The

University of Oxford. In due course I became Professor of Botany in the University of Nottingham where I am currently researching symbiotic nitrogen fixation in cereals to reduce the use of costly synthetic nitrogen fertilizers which pollute the environment and contribute to climate change.

In my final year in 1949-50 as School Captain and Head Prefect, I got to know J.H. Taylor much better, having to escort him daily into School Assembly. Also Kate Coulson the School Secretary was an invaluable asset to us all, always helpful and understanding. We knew well JHT's love of golf passed down to him from his illustrious golf champion father, and we understood why he was frequently absent on some afternoons! Above all JHT was a gentleman and a Headmaster whose life was centred on our well being – and we knew it.

#### **Robin Keable (1951)**

I left BHCHS in 1956 and did four years as student apprentice at Ford, gaining ONC in Mechanical, Production and Marine Engineering in 1958. Later that year a head injury in the factory knocked out my ability to learn more for a while. In 1961, after a year of dead-end jobs and unqualified teaching, I did a 3-year teacher-training course, and qualified to teach Secondary Maths. I climbed to Head of Department, and gained my BA (Open University) in 1980. I also taught Computer Studies, and IT. In 1990 my progressive loss of hearing (due to the head injury) was affecting my ability to control my classes, and I called it a day. I retired on an invalidity-enhanced pension, and filled my time with supply teaching and voluntary work. I have been secretary of a branch of the Labour Party in Basildon, secretary of the National Union of Teachers in Southend-on-Sea, and am now helping to run a Credit Union in Southend, and I am treasurer of the University of the Third Age in Thorpe Bay. I live, with my wife, in Shoeburyness, and we had three children, all grown up now. I have three grandchildren.

My experience of the wider world has been confined to foreign holidays, in Europe, Africa, Cuba, Florida, and China. We plan to extend our coverage in due course.

#### **Barry Stephens (1951)**

I did sciences in the 6th form to please my father, but failed all 4 subjects, although I obtained 3 of them the following year at SE Essex Technical College and a 4th after I had taught for a year as a Supply Teacher at SE Essex Technical School. Gaining tertiary qualifications in science and technology was like beating my head against a brick wall- great when I finally stopped.

Following a failed BEng Physics at West Ham College of Technology, (passing only Engineering Drawing and Fluid Mechanics) I did an ONC (in Building) at Brixton, followed by the GradIStructE while working in the LCC Architects Dept. I might have made a career as a District Surveyor's Assistant but decided to see something of the world- I have always enjoyed travelling in exotic locations. After I returned to UK in 1969, went back to the GLC as a Professional Assistant at Hammersmith and bought an apartment which I sold 11 months later at a profit of 25% (it would of course fetch a King's Ransom now, but I have always believed in burning my bridges behind me) before driving to Spain where I lived and worked for six months in a hotel on the Costa Brava I had been staying at until my money ran out. I returned to England just long enough to collect the proceeds from the sale of my apartment and pack my possessions in a sea trunk which I forwarded to Melbourne before flying Jet-Ship to Singapore in time to catch the sailing of RMS Patris for Melbourne via Fremantle.

I have been back to the school on several occasions, horrified to learn of its closure (by a Conservative Government) and sale by Essex County Council. I have always held an unflattering opinion of politics and politicians, but the fate of BHCHS is a good example of their duplicity - far from "dividing the nation" I believe the State Grammar Schools were the only means by which children from less well-off backgrounds could hope to compete with the "public" schools, which still exist and were (and still are) a real cause of division.

Although we have no children of our own, my wife's 22 year old niece whose mother died suddenly at the age of 42, has lived with us since she was 17.

**David A. V. Baker (1951)**

The approach of my 70th birthday may have intensified nostalgia; or the November 2008 issue of the Newsletter containing a piece by an old classmate, Alan "Herbie" Wheeler (and I clearly remember the occasion of his christening with the nickname); or your appeal to the "Silent Majority" in the most recent issue has finally triggered me out of my typically apathetic attitude, an accusation frequently used in my Report Book, (from which you may gather that I still have the bloody thing!). I also have a class photo taken in 1953/4 of 3C but can only identify a few of the faces and not all of those with certainty.

They are: Back row 4th from left - Dougie Gower, 8th - Brian Low? 9th - Jimmy Matthews, Last - Michael Ford?

Middle row 3rd from left (the other) David Baker, 4th - Me.

Front row 1st Tony Gold, Robert Bartlett?, Peter Yoxall?, Jerrold Baum, Keith Foister (Form Master), Chris Imms, Alan Wheeler, John Billett, Last - Peter Haining.

I can duplicate Herbie Wheeler's account of Eddie Dolman and the blackboard rubber. I saw Eddie perform this feat on what must have been another occasion as the target was Stephen Rees who sat near the centre at the back of the class. In a single movement the teacher turned from the blackboard, whipped up the blackboard rubber from his desk and launched it towards Rees. The rubber flew up the column of desks and each boy ducked as the missile approached. Rees only saw it at the very last moment and, as he ducked, the wooden back of the rubber smashed into the soft wood pin board that ran along the back of the classroom leaving a long triangular dent some 1/8" deep which must remain to this day. If Rees had been a fraction later I suspect that dent would have been impressed on his skull. Incidentally, Eddie Dolman was an equally accurate marksman with a piece of chalk. He was also a very good teacher of maths who could have taught the subject to a brick wall if only the wall listened!

I used to cycle to school from South Woodford with John Billett (we lived in the same road and were joined at the hip in those days) generally in company with Gordon Mead (Geography) and occasionally Eric Franklin (Maths).



On the way to school the wind was always in our faces and 75% of the hills were upward facing. By going home time the wind had always reversed direction and, mysteriously, the landscape had tilted so that 75% of the hills were still upwards.

My father was the proprietor of a family business, T. Baker, Woodford, manufacturing soft drinks and supplied the Coronation Fête at cost. Spring 1956 was a stressful time for me as my father was dying, more help was needed with the family business and 'O' Levels were looming. In June, my father died and, as the business was the only means of support for my mother, brother and I, any dreams of progressing to Sixth form and eventually to University were suppressed. An otherwise undistinguished academic career was eventually capped by 'O' levels in English Lit. and Lang. French, Geography, General Science and Maths.

In October 1956 I started work at The Post Office Research Station at Dollis Hill within sight of the twin towers of Wembley Stadium. I spent one day per week on day release at South West Essex Technical College (now part of the University of East London). This was to skew my education from the grammar school bias acquired at BHCHS to a more technical Electrical Engineering slant. The first 2 years was spent in each of 7 disciplines including a group headed by Tom Flowers, the guiding light in the development of Colossus, which was instrumental in code- and cipher-breaking, at

Bletchley Park during the war. Just before I joined that last group they had finished developing ERNIE, the number picker for Premium Bonds. I also received training in mechanical, metal-working skills such as sheet metal work ("tin-bashing") and lathe work as well as less formal training which involved being sent to the stores for a capful of holes or a long weight (try saying it!).

For the last part of my preliminary training I joined the Electronic Switching Group that was involved in the development of the first Electronic Exchange. My formal technical education was progressing in fits and starts through to an HNC in Electrical Engineering. The work was satisfying as developing technology introduced first transistors and later integrated circuits and challenges in the digital world became more and more attainable. I moved first into Telephone Instrument development and then into Digital Transmission and, in the outside world, watched people first circle the moon and then land on it. In our world Pulse Code Modulation and Digital Multiplexing was developing to take the place of Frequency Division Multiplexing and, by 1973, we could predict the current spread of digital transmission to virtually every home.

Also at this time the Research Station upper echelons were making decisions to take the whole shooting match to Martlesham Heath, near Ipswich. I largely approved of this move as a relatively new entrant onto the housing ladder believing that out of town house prices would be less de-

manding than in London. The move to Martlesham was to be phased over a period of about 3 years and, as my group was to move nearer the end of that period house prices elevated to astronomical levels. I saw little point in moving to where the wind blows directly from the Urals without some monetary advantage and moved out of Research into Development to a post in the City overseeing development of Primary Multiplexes. This involved visiting field trials and contractors' development works countrywide. Around this time The Post Office became British Telecommunications and eventually British Telecom.

At the age of 50, was made an offer I couldn't refuse involving 2 years salary, taking my pension forthwith, and no longer subjected to the daily torture of the Central Line.

So, since 1989, apart from the indignity of signing on as a "job seeker" to complete my National Insurance contributions and along the way having my CV and letters of application for jobs ignored (once you pass 50 you are invisible and not to be considered as employable) I have existed in idleness. I wish. Once you leave work everybody makes a claim to your time. "You're not working anymore, you could do that!" "Now you're not at work you've got time to..." Well, acting as groundsman to Woodford Green Cricket Club and umpiring in the Shepherd Neame Essex League has kept me busy, and moderately fit, during the summers at least.

**Robert ('Bob') Gorzynski (1967)**

My first thought in writing this is that it really doesn't seem so long ago when I was commuting to BHCHS by underground and saving the bus fare by walking down the hill from the station (a cost of 2 pence if I remember correctly and that was in old currency). I fondly remember meeting up in the 'Three Colts' in Buckhurst Hill in the sixth form years, sometimes still in our school uniform! In fact, I still feel like 15 most days (although sadly I don't look it anymore). I keep in touch with some of my peers including Ed Austin, John Simpson, Patrick Wilson and Nigel Clark (who kindly keeps me informed of many others).

Since 1992 I have been living very contentedly in Lockeridge, a small village in the Kennet Valley in Wiltshire, situated four miles west of Marlborough in the heart of Neolithic Britain. Silbury Hill and the Avebury stone circle are just up the road, long barrows abound and the surrounding countryside is very special indeed. When I returned from Toronto (my wife's home town) I just couldn't settle back in London and moved out West and I've never once regretted it. I remain happily married with two teenage boys who are determined to eat me out of house and home. The cost of driving lessons alone is likely to drive me into bankruptcy.

I have had a very interesting and rather unconventional 'career'. I started life as an accountant (and was hopelessly ill suited to it) and moved through corporate finance into strategy (trying to escape I suspect). During my time as a strategy consultant I have undertaken projects that run the whole gamut from traditional corporate strategy and business finance,

'change management' projects and more people oriented work such as strategic facilitation and mentoring/coaching. I also write and teach and that's how I would describe myself today; a writer and a teacher. I have just published my second book, 'The Strategic Mind, the Journey to Leadership through Strategic Thinking', which is now available from Amazon as well as 'most good book stores'.

I didn't plan my career; it just happened that way. But as a result I've met all kinds of interesting people, people who make a real difference. Some are business executives, some are educators and some are entrepreneurs/social entrepreneurs. Others are musicians, writers and small business people. Most would not use the term 'leader' to describe themselves and would certainly not think of themselves as strategic thinkers. However, they see the world differently and they have the capacity to make things happen. Even at school I was a bit of a dreamer and I haven't changed. I have always been attracted to such people – it breaks my heart to see what we are doing to our beautiful world and it is not yet too late to do something about it. To me many of the people I have met over the years are strategic leaders because they have the capability to make a profound difference, often in relatively unseen ways. I think we can all do this. That's why I wrote the book. For many years, I must confess, I haven't thought too much about BHCHS. I'm not particularly sentimental by nature and I don't tend to look backwards and reminisce. However, in the process of writing this it occurs to me how special the school really was. For me, it validated my core sense of myself, which I promptly lost sight of and have taken 30 years to regain!

**Ian Theodoreson (1968)**

Some people look back on their school days with fond memories - my memories are simply rather foggy. I do remember good times on the music front (John Rippin had the joy of overseeing what was possibly the golden age of music at the school with three or four academic years that produced between them a dozen or so of us who graced the ranks of the Essex and the National Youth Orchestras) and some very low moments watching from my

maths lesson as the class before us set out on a cross country run, knowing we would be next! I also remember staging a strike in the dining hall with my old chum Pete Sears as we refused categorically to be the ones yet again to collect the table's food from the kitchen. Despite threats of dire consequences from the older lads on the table who had used us First Year boys as slaves, we held firm. Nothing untoward befell us afterwards, but I suspect that was as much because Pete's uncle was Reggie Sears than that they held us in such regard for standing up to them, thus proving the old adage 'it's not what you do, it's who you know that counts'!

The other thing I remember from my school days was how little effort I put into my sixth form years, preferring instead to talk to all and sundry about my new found Christian faith (a quote from Mrs Leach the French teacher rings in my ears "the day



you collapse from over-work Theodoreson I will eat my hat"). As a consequence I scraped through my A-levels, side stepped university and went instead to study accountancy at City of London Poly, ending up as a trainee accountant with what is now Ernst & Young. I somehow managed to qualify at the first time of asking, but I spent a considerable amount of my time rather hoping to go into some other career path but found I kept being drawn back into the financial world. During my time with Ernst & Young I met and married a girl from Woodford County High School, Sally Mabbitt, and we went on to have four children.

Apart from a year spent on secondment in Houston we have spent the whole of our married

life in and around the area, and currently live in Loughton.

However, I became increasingly keen to use my financial 'acumen' in something which was rather more worthwhile than auditing (apologies to all you auditors out there!). In 1987 I moved into the charity sector as finance director at Save the Children where I spent seven happy years before moving to Barnardo's where I had a wider role covering all the support functions of the charity. When I first moved into the sector I found it somewhat under-developed in terms of financial professionalism and together with colleagues from other charities we set about putting the sector on the map, forming the Charity Finance Directors' Group and generally bringing about a quiet revolution in what was a sleepy backwater of economic life. Save the Children saw me travelling around the world, rarely seeing the bits the tourists visit, but instead getting to see life in the raw. I managed to survive a plane crash in West Darfur (the pilot forgot to put the wheels down as we came into land) but I became a less confident flier as a result.

Looking back now I realise that all of the above was merely preparation for my latest career move - in January 2009 I took up the position of Chief Finance Officer to the Church of England. My principal employer is the Church Commissioners, but I am also CFO to the Archbishop's Council (the body that leads the work of the Church of England) and to the Pensions Board too. Certainly it is a career to which I believe I have been 'called' - good job too as no sane person would think it a good idea to juggle the conflicting demands of several different organisations - and I am getting used to working with figures with rather more zeros on the end than I was used to!

Outside work, apart from the things I am involved in within my own church (not an Anglican church by the way, that would be too intense), I spend as much of my time avoiding DIY and gardening, preferring instead to cycle as much as possible. If you are wandering around Epping Forest and find a grey haired cyclist covered in mud with blood dripping out of a cut on his leg and a maniacal grin on his face, just say "Hi Ian" and hurry on by. It's the best way.

**Julian Bazley 1972**

I'm currently living near Marlow in Bucks. I'm married to Elissa, and have a sixteen year-old daughter Lottie from my first marriage. Via a relatively unstructured career path, I have ended up working in



the motivation and incentives industry. Recently, through nothing more than coincidence, I took a job with a Loughton-based company, whose offices are above what most of us will remember as the Crown pub, but now called the Nu Bar. The 167 still runs up the high road, but so far I've resisted the urge to hop on, flash my bus pass at the driver and take the nostalgia trip back to Roding Lane!

Sport provides my fondest and most prominent memories from BHCHS – I can still recall the winter games lessons, kicking off with the infamous "Two Bridges" cross country after changing in the sports pavilion on bitterly cold winter mornings. Lionel Marsh was the Head of PE throughout my time at the school and despite being on the receiving end of some of his 'Fergie-esque' tongue lashings, he was a major influence on those formative years – unsurprising as I seemed to spend most of my time playing pretty much any sport that BHCHS could throw at me with Mr Marsh as the driving force, coach, mentor and motivator for pretty much all of it. He's definitely responsible for instilling the competitive streak I still demonstrate when taking part in any sport – aged 47 I can still just about outstrip Lottie over 50 metres, although I suspect not for much longer!

In 2003, I helped set up a 25 year reunion for all those who went on the football trip to the USA in August 1978. It was amazing to bring the squad back together again (along with Mr Marsh and Frank Silver, who had master-minded the whole trip), some of

whom had literally not seen each other since leaving in 1979. We even rolled back the years and turned out against the Old Bucks Vets on the School playing fields. That bit was probably a mistake, as we got hammered, but the drinking afterwards was fun!

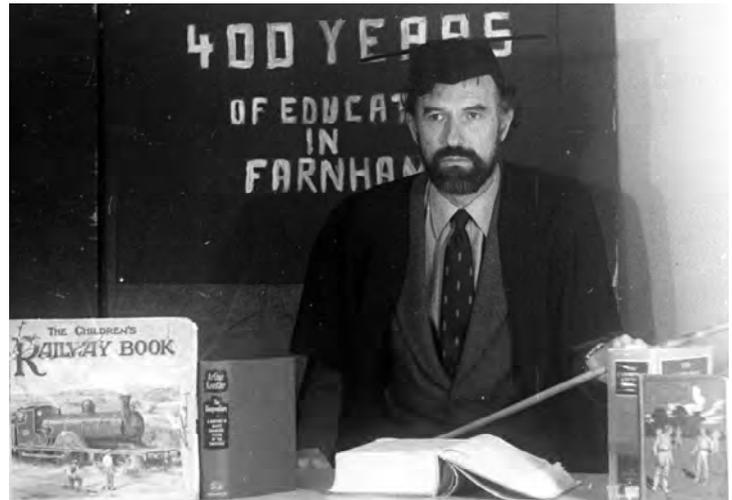
From the classroom, I have some powerful memories of Peter Johnson, who taught French and German from 1974. Although much maligned for starting his lessons before he'd even arrived in the classroom - the words "open your books on page 43" would be heard several seconds before the appearance of Mr Johnson - this just demonstrated his commitment and determination not to waste a minute in drumming home the pluperfect subjunctive and all its many pitfalls!

After BHCHS, I studied French at Sussex University and after graduating lived back in Loughton, Woodford, Ilford and Leyton for another 5 years or so, working locally, playing for the Old Bucks 1st XI for most of that, alongside names some of you will recognize – Nigel Pink (who was still teaching PE at the school at the time); Nigel Whaler; John Thorneycroft; Bob Barr; Colin Muckley and both Andy Pocock and Rick Hewitt.

I'm still in regular touch with a number of mates from my year, and we have an annual 'boys weekend' away somewhere in the UK with a number of other non BHCHS regulars, where we drink more than we ought, play golf and take the p\*ss out of each other for looking middle-aged (you know the kind of thing!).

My brother Simon (1970-77) has lived in Canada for about 20 years now. He's married and has a daughter a year younger than Lottie. Simon's a rocket scientist - need I say more! His year seemed to produce a number of "brilliant minds" who ended up alumni of various top-end academic establishments. Still, he never played Soccer for the first XI!

My claim to fame (reeled out relentlessly on our boys' weekends!) is that I can still remember the alphabetic class register of form 1X from 1972. Not sure what that says about me, but if you don't believe me, give me a call!

**Staff Focus: John McLaughlin****History and Geography 1959 - 1962**

John McLaughlin taking part in the Farnham College fete in 1978

JOHN MCLAUGHLIN was born in Brighton, and attended Brighton, Hove and Sussex Grammar School from 1946 until 1954, and then to Hertford College, Oxford to read History graduating in 1957.

In 1959, he joined the staff of BHCHS, in his first teaching job.

John has happy memories of his



With Ian Lister (1950) in 1961. Ian was doing teaching practice at BHCHS

three years at BHCHS. He tells me that looking back to those days, the history department, with Peter Sillis and Derek Heater were a very good team.

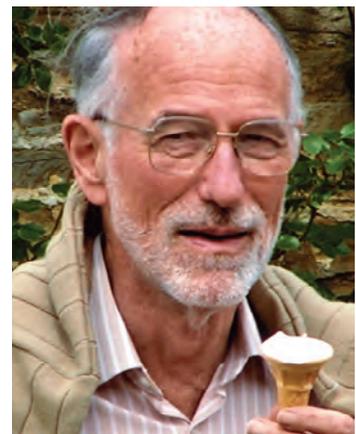
The latter told me of an amusing staff room incident where John managed to throw a piece of chalk from one side to the other, where it landed in Roger Webb's cup of coffee. Roger Webb, despite his initial surprise, was appreciative of John's accuracy. Apparently John had been a mean darts player at university.

After leaving BHCHS in 1962, John moved firstly to a large comprehensive school in Coven-

try, and then to Surrey as Head of History at Oxted County School. During his time at Oxted he witnessed the school's transition to become a comprehensive.

In 1972, he joined Farnham Grammar school as Deputy Head, and after only five terms - following yet another reorganisation in which an open access Sixth Form College was created, he became Deputy Head/Vice Principal of the College, remaining there until his retirement in 1993.

Since retiring John has been able to travel widely, often with the Historical Association. For some years he has participated closely in an equine support group. He is involved in various other local charity work including the U3A, where he has lectured, and he is also the travel scribe for the William Cobbett Society. He also plays table tennis and bridge. John has maintained his links with Farnham College, both as a Trustee of the College and by involvement in a group that maintains links between current and former students.



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

## Encyclopaedic Knowledge

Alan McAndrew (1946-52)

Your article on the late Peter Sillis reminded me of an incident in the dining hall. Peter Sillis was supervising us one lunch break and, as such sat alone at a small raised dais keeping watch whilst eating his own meal.

We all sat, 10 to a table, with prefects at either end, dishing out the food. One day it included a very fresh but basic salad and someone was surprised and shocked to find a big caterpillar crawling from beneath the lettuce. He remonstrated with the prefect who advised him to take it up with Mr Sillis. A crashing silence fell on the hall as the boy took his plate up to the dais. He went up to the teacher and, very aggrieved, pointed to the plate and demanded to know "What is that?" The hall went silent, everyone holding their breath. Mr Sillis calmly looked down, rather contemptuously, and instantly quoted him the insect's Latin, zoological name! The room erupted.

## Pete Sillis - treasured memory

Robert Williams (1968-75)

Thank you for the article on Mr Sillis (*OB News, May 2009*). I often think about him, although I was not keen on history myself. I thought your article showed great insight and reminded me of the film *The Browning Version*. I will always keep this article, very meaningful for me. I also found it interesting that the three teachers I most admired (Mr Sillis, Mr Franklin and Mr Leek) were all long stayers.

*Ed - I am grateful for these and other comments about the PES feature. After reading Robert's note I watched the film he mentioned, and recommend it.*

## No cramping Walter's style

Walter May (French, 1940-47)

Thank you for sending me the latest edition of *Old Buckwellians News*. I have read, not to say devoured it with the keenest appetite.

I see that Joseph Cramp has passed away. He was one of the "A" form from 1938 to 1945 of which the indulgent Headmaster JH Taylor (nicknamed Spud

because of the shape of his bald head) allowed me to remain for five years as French master, as a result of which they had thirteen distinctions in GCE and ensured that I was made HMI and later Head of the newest and largest co-educational Grammar school in Essex (there's nothing like blowing your own trumpet!)

Cramp always sat in the front row and his speciality was to creep out of his seat when I was writing on the board and do a caricature (by his actions) of me behind my back to the delight of the silent class. On one occasion I turned round unexpectedly and caught him, but he was quick enough to remain master of the situation, picking up an imaginary piece of litter and affirming his concern for the tidiness of the classroom!

Am I among the oldest of your correspondents? - I am 99 now.

*Ed - I was delighted to receive this from Walter May, and I think it is safe to say he is our oldest correspondent!*

## Buckhurst Hill College

Gillian Green

The photograph of Buckhurst Hill College (*OB News May, 2009*) caught my eye. This was a girls' boarding school also known as *Oaklea* and was situated in Whitehall Lane, Buckhurst Hill in the first half of last century. My mother was a pupil in 1916 and whilst there she made a lifelong friend who later became a pupil-teacher at the school. I have been friends with my mother's friend's daughter (who now lives in Ireland) and she has recently donated all her mother's memorabilia regarding the school to Epping Forest District Council Museum in Waltham Abbey. I do not know when the school closed but believe the building was used as a Nurses' Home sometime after WWII and has now been demolished and houses built on the site. I have childhood memories of walking past the building and I think it did have a green turret.

*Gillian is the wife of John U Green (1946). The alternate theory about the College was that it became Holly House Hospital, but I think Gillian's explanation sounds more convincing! - Ed.*

## Explosive Speech Day

Paul Rattenbury (1939-46)

Towards the end of the summer term in 1946 Alan Willingale approached me and asked if I knew about chemical crystals which exploded upon contact. I said yes and he asked if I would make some for him.

I did so, and still on their wet filter paper gave them to him in a St Bruno tobacco tin cadged from Norman Macleod (he smoked a pipe!) The crystals were safe so long as kept wet. I did not know their subsequent fate until Spud and his visitors mounted the stage on that 1946 speech day accompanied by loud underfoot crackles and bangs.

At the next assembly Spud asked the culprits to go to his study. I did and received six of the best - on my rear - I must say however that he did not seem particularly angry about it all, perhaps he relished telling his fellow Heads about the episode!/? The chemical was nitrogen tri-iodide. Although Alan Willingale asked for them, I've no idea who scattered them to such good effect.

## Alternative Cross Country

Russ Smith (1970-76)

As it's supposed to be good for the soul, I thought I'd add a small confession inspired by your features on BHCHS's cross-country glories.

Cross-country running was all well and good for those of athletic pretension, but whatever health benefits it may have offered the rest of us, most considered it to border on cruel and barbaric punishment. To some of us fishing seemed a far better sport, requiring some level of skill and cunning.

Recognising the opportunities afforded by the two laps of the school format used for cross-country during games lessons in the 1970s, Steve Hudson and I concealed some rudimentary fishing tackle up in the beams below the road bridge over the Roding. By not being too near the front (obviously) or rear of the field, we could duck down under the bridge on the first lap, then entertain ourselves by catching minnows until enough panting souls had passed by on their second lap for us to pop up onto

the home straight. It only took a short sprint finish to acquire a convincing level of red face and breathlessness. If spotted? "Just having a wee, Sir."

I still think of it and smile when I take our home-educated son to his fortnightly art class in deepest Northants. If the weather's good, I sneak out to collect the telescopic rod stowed in the boot of my car and spend a happy morning trying to tempt chub in a brook of similar size to the dear old Roding. At least school taught me something...

## Clearing up

Norman Willis (1940-46)

Two items in the May *OB News* caught my eye:

The photos of the damage at the school in 1944 brought back a very clear image. I was the first boy to get to the school after the doodle-bug had exploded (I did live nearer than anyone else!) and was met by a very worried looking Spud who asked if I had come to help -or just to look? I said I'd help if there was anything I could do. He said go into the Solarium and try to clear up the glass. You know how much glass there is - well all of it was on the floor but what has stuck in my mind was that all the stains used by the Upper Sixth for dissections had been smashed on the floor too, so I was met by a glittering rainbow of colour and glass. I did my best to clear up!

Secondly, news of the death of Joe Cramp reminded me of the day he and Walter May had a discussion (in French of course) on whether Joe was right in saying that "ce ne fait rien" meant that it did matter (double negatives). Joe "proved" this by waving his arms to describe cutting a lump out of the air and presenting it to Mr May saying "voila - c'est rien." It was typical of Joe who was the class clown and well known for winding up teachers. When he left school he got a job with Reuters as a reporter, learned shorthand and did his National Service in the Judge Advocate General's department in Whitehall, where he informed me that he "only wore uniform for pay parade" - cushy or not! On the other hand, that he was a very sharp operator probably explains how he ended up being a bank manager!

**The Pleasures of Retirement**

Colin Selby (1940-47)

I would very much like to know how people use their time in retirement, particularly since more of the old boys will be in this category than in work as time goes by.

My own retirement started in 1989 and as I approach my 80th birthday (the new 60 I'm told) I have decided on a quieter life style with more time for gardening, shopping, cooking and meeting with friends and neighbours. In 1989 I volunteered as a helper at the club for people with mental health problems run by our church on Wednesdays with support from social services. I went on a training course run by the local branch of *Mind* which covered 'all you wanted to know about mental health and were afraid to ask'. At this course I met a member who asked if I would like to see how their committee worked. I joined the local branch of *Mind* and was for some years the chair and a trustee of a drop-in centre. At the same time I was elected to the Mid Essex Community Health Council and met a wide range of people working in the field of health care. Arising from this I became a member of the Research Ethics Committee at our local hospital. I found my earlier research training was very useful and it was rewarding to work with doctors, nurses, lawyers and other biologists to help with patient care and the ethical use of trials for new drugs and procedures. As chair of this group for two years I had an almost full-time job which I greatly enjoyed. At 70 I had to retire from these committees. By then the Community Health Councils had been replaced by a range of Patient and Public Involvement Forums and I responded to an advertisement for membership of one of these bodies. I had my first interview for 40 years and was duly appointed to the forum concerned with provision for mental health and again I became chair. This group was responsible for monitoring the work of the relevant Patient Advice and Liaison Service. I enjoyed this range of voluntary work which enabled me to use skills from my working career and also brought a wide range of friendships many of which I still maintain. BHCHS was one of the major influences in my teenage years and Jim Shillito was an inspirational biology teacher.

**Longest Journey to School**

Robin Boram (1943-48)

When I attended BHCHS I was living at Stondon Massey and travelled by steam train from Ongar station to Buckhurst Hill. Tom Fogg was older than me and lived at Fyfield – he also travelled from Ongar.

What was the total area that BHCHS covered and who had the dubious honour of the longest journey to school?

*Thanks Robin for this excellent question. Who, I wonder, is going to take on the challenge of finding answers. I look forward to hearing from volunteers! If you think you may be the furthest traveller send me the postcode of your old address. Sadly, I believe Tom Fogg died in about 1990 – Ed.*

**Jubilee Review**

John Taylor

May I add to the article in your last issue on the rise and fall of the Roding?

The review of the school's first 25 years that appeared in the jubilee edition of the magazine was written, not by Peter Sillis but by my father. I have a clear memory of the pride, pleasure and care he took in putting this account together.

That would have been in the summer of 1963.

*Ed - John is the son of JH Taylor and I am pleased that he reads OB News, despite being an Old Bancroftian!*

**Thanks, Spud**

Derek Horton-Rackstraw (1939-44)

Reading about the bomb exploding at BHCHS (*OB News*, May 2009) gave me quite a shock. I had no idea that after our exams had finished on the 10<sup>th</sup> July the school had been 'doodlebugged' the next day.

I can clearly remember seeing a couple of V1's exploding within half a mile of the school while we were sitting our exams in the gymnasium. Our classroom was in the South Wing. How disastrous it would have been if 'Spud' Taylor had not sent us all home prior to the end of term! Thank you 'Spud'.

It was very sad to read about Mr Beresford and his family. He was such a good chap.

I was also sad to read about Stan Foster. He was a gifted pianist.

**ECHOES FROM THE PAST**

Isn't it curious how certain things that teachers said become lodged in our long-term memory. It could be a repeated phrase or a one-off comment that has somehow made a permanent mark. I thought we could share some of them, and here are a few to get us started. Further contributions are welcome.....

Tony Dearson (1942) mentioned one German gentleman who used to say to a misbehaving pupil, "I give you lines, I give you punishment." Every time he entered the form room, the class all sang these words to the latest song.

Phil Lewis (1958) provided two quotes from "Johnnie" Johnson (Chemistry)

"I wasn't born on a Christmas Tree" - response to nobody owning up to misbehaviour in the back row

"They used to say that if I ran fast enough down the runway I'd take off" - a comment made, when he was in the RAF, about his large ears.



Dick Battersby (1962) remembers these from Tom Leek:

"We're moving"..... "As it were"..... "By and large"..."So to speak"

And these from Bob Sears: "It's not my maths that's wrong, it's my arithmetic."

"54 - Young as I ever was." And from Richard Orrowe (Woodwork): "Come round the front two benches."

John Haberfield (1962) recalled a threat from Dave Stancer: "I'll 'uve yooo, boy!"



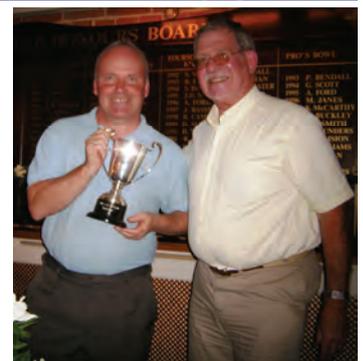
Will Stone (1978) commented on how John Whaler would always start the lesson by rubbing his hands and saying "hold onto your hats and here we go..."



Finally, a favourite of mine from Dr Norman Buchanan: "It's not difficult, it's just complicated."

**Late News - Bob Barr wins the Putter Trophy!**

Congratulations to **Bob Barr (1967)** who is the latest winner of the annual JHT Putter Trophy. Bob is shown here with the Chairman of the OBA Golfing Society **Dave Blythe (1956)**. At the time of writing the Golf Society has only played one match this season, losing 3 - 1 to the Old Bancroftians. The Putter competition and the Bancroftians match were held at the Toot Hill Golf Club.

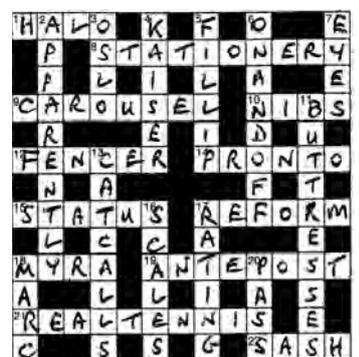


**Gin Corner solution**

I have included the year of origin, according to *Wikipedia*

- Old King Cole (1708)
- Little Miss Muffett (1805)
- The Grand Old Duke of York (1642)
- Sing a Song of Sixpence (c1744)
- Goosey Goosey Gander (1784)
- Hickory Dickory Dock (c1744)
- Baa Baa Black Sheep (c1744)
- Three Blind Mice (1609)

**Crossword solution**



# Old Bucks at the Crossroads

NOTHING to do with Amy Turtle, but one of the interesting items that has found its way to the archives is a brochure printed in 1967, entitled *The Old Buckwellians Association at the Crossroads*. After many years of planning, and a lot of hard work by a dedicated succession of committee members, the OBA had recently acquired its own Clubhouse for the first time. It was also facing a huge financial challenge of meeting the running costs for this facility.

It would be good to hear more about the history of the OBA, and I hope someone who was involved in early days will perhaps offer to write this for us.

No doubt there will be someone who can identify these happy drinkers. I do know that the smiling barman is **Paul Greenslade (1954)** who died in 2007.



(Photo by Kenneth Bray Studios)

The Bar at the Clubhouse—a place to take your friends or renew old acquaintances.

## Ken Simmonds

I NOTED the brief announcement (*OB News May 2009*) of the passing of Ken H. Simmonds who died in 2006.

As someone who sat very close to Ken throughout our time at the school (because of the requirement to sit in alphabetical order) and as a fellow team member at football and cricket I would be very sad if his passing was not recognised in a somewhat more substantial way. I should say that I have had no contact nor even heard anything of Ken since the day we left school in 1956 so

there are certainly others better qualified to comment on his life as a whole; but here are a few comments on his time at school.

The first thing to say is that he was universally known as "Beaver" because of two quite prominent front teeth. Indeed, even after all these years, I find it difficult to think of him as Ken.

Beaver was the classic, incorrigible, naughty schoolboy; always acting before the captive audience that was the rest of the class. Whenever the master's

## Obituary

back was turned Beaver would be whispering, passing notes, throwing things, grinning and generally being disruptive. I recall one occasion when he and I were "fighting" in one of the laboratories and were caught by Mr. Horne (I think). We were both given Saturday Morning Detentions and, as was Mr. Horne's habit, he set us each the task of writing an essay which would subsequently be read out to the class. The two topics were, as I recall, "Knitting a Bicycle" and "Climbing Mount Everest on Roller Skates" although I cannot remember who wrote on which topic. However, I do recall that this was about the only time that Beaver really put his mind to a school task and, when the essay was read out, instead of him squirming in embarrassment as was usually the case in such circumstances, he thoroughly enjoyed watching the class disintegrate into gales of laughter at his imaginative and amusing essay.

However, the most important thing I would like to record is that Beaver was a very fine goal-keeper and wicket-keeper. In both football and cricket the people who play in such positions are often said to be "mad"

because to do the job well they have to throw themselves around, often putting themselves in danger of injury. In both sports Beaver was fearless and acrobatic and played a major part in the considerable success of the teams in which he played.

### Ken Rimmer (1951-56)

*I am grateful to Ken for these memories of his namesake and I would be happy to publish similar belated obituaries about other Old Bucks - Ed.*

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

**Don Hughes (1938)** died on 5 June 2009. He lived near Reading. He had been struggling with cancer for a long time.

**Jeff Pitteway (1943)** died in October 2008. He lived in Ulverston, Cumbria. Jeff had attended BHCHS for two years before moving away from the area.

**John Surrey (1944)** died on 8 August 2009. He had been suffering from Alzheimer's disease for several years.

**Brian Caine (1953)** died in March 2009. He lived in France.



Under 13 Football team 1952-53. Back row L to R: John Coulston, Bill Benstead, Ken Simmonds, Neil Allen, Norman Shepherd, Geoff Tyler. Front row L to R: Peter Haining, Ken Rimmer, Doug Gower, David Missin, Robert Morris

## STEWART BURGESS

STEWART BURGESS, who attended BHCHS from 1947 to 1952 died on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2009. The following is taken from tributes provided by his son Duncan and by Maurice Maple (BHCHS 1953-61) who was a colleague of Stewart's at Sun Life for many years.

Stewart Burgess was born in London in 1936. On leaving BHCHS he joined Sun Life Insurance where he stayed all his working life, rising to the ranks of departmental management. His early working life was interrupted by two years of National Service as an aircraft plotter in the RAF. This would have been wholly unremarkable had he not managed to lose an aircraft one afternoon. Thankfully the pilot was

recovered safely from the English Channel.

He met his wife Daphne on holiday in 1958. They were happily married for 46 years. For the first 14 years of their marriage they lived in Reading and Stewart used to commute by train to London each day. In order to get to the station Stewart used to ride a motor scooter until the day he managed to ride it off the platform edge and onto the tracks. The only time in his life he missed the train.

This was not the only work-related mishap. Stewart once managed to set his waste paper bin, and then his tie, alight with his pipe embers.

The family moved to Bath in 1976 and Stewart continued at Sun Life

until his retirement in 1992. Once he retired he took up many interests: he was a volunteer at Lacock Abbey, a Cotswold Warden which involved the upkeep of a "patch" of the old Somerset & Dorset railway and guided walks and talks in the wider Cotswold area. For many years he was a Meals on Wheels delivery driver. He also had a keen interest in the Weston Village Local History Society and had been chairman for a number of years at the time of his death.

Stewart loved words and the English Language. This was shown in his life long love of Radio 4 – the world stopped at 5 past 7 for *The Archers*. It also showed in his sense of humour – he loved *The Goons*, and *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* – and in his fits of apoplexy at incorrect punctuation and the inappropriate use of an apostrophe. He loved animals and would cross the street to say hello to them and ignore the owners. The family had numerous pets over the years and Stewart was seldom happier than striding across the racecourse with a dog in tow.

He enjoyed sport – both taking part and being a spectator. This included swimming, cycling (very keen amateur cyclist in his younger days) playing squash and badminton, as well as keeping fit in general - this may explain why he managed to be a such a prolific blood donor of over 90 pints throughout his life earning him bronze, silver and gold medals

He was a tolerant man and had few dislikes in life apart from cheese. He was quiet and thoughtful - a still waters kind of man, kind and considerate with a strong sense of fair play. He was very "English" and patriotic – at times appearing old fashioned. I will remember him as an Imperial Man in an increasingly Metric world.

A tribute from one of Stewart's subordinates at Sun Life gives some further insights into his qualities as a manager and colleague:

He was the ideal chap to be one's immediate senior and we always had a good rapport. He was always smart, well organised and to the point. Stewart didn't mince words although he used them in unusual ways at times. Nevertheless, you always knew what he wanted and when. He will be remembered as a true Sun Lifer of the good old days and a lovable character who will be greatly missed by not only his work colleagues but the many friends he made outside.

## Malcolm Woollard



**Malcolm Woollard (1940)** died on 22nd June 2009. He had been fighting pancreatic cancer for something over a year.

Malcolm worked for a large part of his life for Redbridge Council and was also a very keen local politician, having served as a District Councillor with Epping Forest District Council and as a Parish Councillor in Buckhurst Hill where he lived all his life.

He was also an outstanding amateur singer/actor and was for many years a leading light with Woodford Operatic and Dramatic Society.

Malcolm never married but maintained a steady relationship for over 50 years with Muriel Threadgold.

Brian Astley

## Desmond Sherlock

I LEARNED from his eldest son Patrick that the **Rev Des Sherlock (1942)** died earlier this year. Des was orphaned very early in his life in his native Ireland and came to England some time before he was 11 years old. He lived with us for two or three years whilst at BHCHS.

On leaving school, he spent a short time in the army (Commissioned as a second lieutenant) and then decided to go in to the church.

In his early years as a parish priest, he had a living in Aldersbrook where he was, I believe, very popular with his parishioners. It was, during the latter part of his time here, that he was made Rural Dean. Subsequently, he moved to Witham where he spent the rest of his life. He is survived by his four children but his wife, Ann, died shortly before he did in 2008.

Brian Astley

## Martin Tomlinson



Martin Tomlinson (right) leading a geography field trip in North Devon in 1963

MARTIN TOMLINSON, who taught geography at BHCHS from 1960 to 1964, died on 7th January 2009. Born in Sheffield in 1932, Martin Tomlinson attended King Edward VII Grammar School and Sheffield University. He did national service in Cyprus with the RAF's Met Office.

We overlapped for two years at BHCHS – both bachelors, living in digs near each other in Loughton. There we became great friends for life. For most Saturdays in those two years we alternated between shows in London or exploring Essex and East Anglian pubs and countryside.

We did a series of joint holidays throughout the 1960s and David Clapton joined us on these in due course. For the first trip in 1961 we took Martin's new mini, only just on the market, to the Pyre-

nees. The car was the centre of attraction wherever we went.

Those years were also memorable for geography field trips under Tom Leek and 'Ches' to Westward Ho and North Wales. After BHCHS Martin moved to Blackdown High School, Warwickshire and then on to Bilston College, Staffordshire where he became Senior Master until his retirement. He then moved from Bridgnorth back to his native Yorkshire at Hutton-le-Hole. After retirement he lectured for the National Trust, specialising in gardens.

Obviously pupils and colleagues will have different perspectives on members of staff. I imagine the former found him an effective teacher who was a good disciplinarian. But that is not for me to judge – you will all have your own memories.

John McLaughlin