

# OLD BUCKWELLIANS NEWS



## Not with a whimper but a bang

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If you are puzzling over the size of this edition, or the headline above, perhaps you didn't receive the email circular in July announcing that the printed version of *Old Buckwellians News* would be coming to a close.

Lindsay Martin, who picked up the editorial reins from me in 2017, told us he is moving overseas. We are grateful to him for his efforts to maintain the twice-yearly editions, as well as being the membership secretary.

The committee invited volunteers to become editor, firstly at the AGM in May and then subsequently in emails to our entire database and and calls to possible candidates. Unfortunately, no one came forward, which led to the committee having to take this decision, albeit somewhat reluctantly. In parallel, given that one of the main purposes of the subscription was to fund the printing and postage, it was also decided that a subscription was no longer needed.

Every action has a reaction, though, and the announcement has galvanised people into sending in an incredible pile of contributions, all packed into the pages that follow.

For me, it has been great fun to emerge from retirement to put this final edition together. I have been overwhelmed with the response, and I hope you will enjoy reading the remarkable collection of features that have been

arriving steadily since the summer.

There is absolutely no reason for the network to disintegrate. We shall send out at least two bulletins of news and other items every year by email. The website [www.bhchs.co.uk](http://www.bhchs.co.uk) and our popular [Facebook Group](#) will both continue. We understand that many have reservations, or even stronger feelings, about social media. My own view is that while Facebook has limitations and problems, the dangers may be overstated. We now have almost 800 members in the group, and I monitor everything posted, as well as taking reasonable precautions to ensure that anyone joining the group has a genuine connection with BHCHS.

I mentioned regular email bulletins. This will serve a twin purpose: as well as the sharing of news it will enable us to maintain the database which, as you probably know, sits in a secure area behind the BHCHS website.

That leads me to a small but very important request. **I need to be as certain as possible that I have got your latest email address.** There is a way of checking this. If you go back in your emails to 1st July 2021, you should find - unless you are one of those annoyingly tidy people who deletes everything - a message from me. If you didn't get it, then it is likely that I don't have your address.

While editing all the excellent material for this edition I have tried to use a liberal sprinkling of some of my favourite images from the vast collection that has gathered in the archives since 1999. But even this bumper edition isn't enough for more than a tiny proportion of the complete library, and we hope to load more onto the BHCHS website. If anyone would like to help us with that, please contact me.

One of the greatest unexpected pleasures of finding 4,500 pupils and teachers has been making acquaintance with people I went to school with but never got to know during those years. It has been wonderful to find out more about them.

You may detect a bit of a biking and travel theme. It wasn't deliberate, and I make no apologies, given that most of us spent far too many recent months locked down. The biking theme doesn't reflect any special interest on my part. My attempt to get fit by biking the 5.2 miles from home to school ended rather dramatically. Pedalling along Buckhurst Way, I failed to spot a parked car. A few years later, having graduated to motorised biking, I was equally unsuccessful with my Honda P50 that left me embarrassingly sprawled in the road after skidding while negotiating the little roundabout in George Lane.

Since we started building the network, we have accumulated various memorabilia from the school. We shall need to find a suitable permanent home for the



material that has steadily gathered in my untidy office. We are currently exploring a couple of options, and will keep you posted. For now, though, if you have ancient items from the school, please don't ask me to find a home for them.

I hope this non-whimpering exit will convince you to keep in contact. There is ample evidence in these columns that many former occupants of BHCHS are finding ways of coping with pandemics and other problems. Several groups have managed lively online meetings via Zoom or Teams and if you would like to do this we can easily help you spread the invitations.

Please do send me your news and any other items you would like included in our future e-bulletins.

The headline is a twist on the final line of TS Eliot's *The Hollow Men*. My English teachers will appreciate that I did pay some attention in class.

Graham Frankel

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