

# OLD BUCKWELLIANS NEWS



## Double Bonus

THE ongoing search for the missing few has been nudged along in recent months by two welcome developments. One of them benefitted our efforts at the senior end of the age spectrum. This was the unexpected discovery of war-time admissions records, which turned up out of the blue in Loughton (see p.16). Among the newly-found pupils, there were quite a few names that sadly went straight to the list of Other Deaths Reported (see p.21).

The other development has been focussed mainly at the youngsters in our network. We now have more than 350

members on our Facebook page, and this has been useful in a number of ways, some of them unexpected. There are those with negative feelings about Facebook but I don't agree that it is necessarily too intrusive or a time waster. You do need to be careful with the privacy settings and avoid the temptation of spending too long sharing the personal lives of your contacts. If you haven't looked in yet, why not give it a try?

As a result of all this, the quest to trace former pupils and staff is in a very satisfactory state. The current total found (pupils and staff) now stands at 4,517. That figure

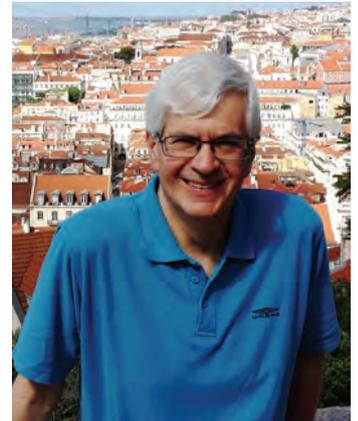
(made up of 4,345 pupils and 172 staff) represents 88.7% of all pupils with start dates up to 1985. There are now 29 year groups where we have traced 90% or more.

Thanks to all who have contributed to our network in various ways. There are some superb items in this edition and I look forward to hearing your comments and updates at any time.

I also look forward to meeting more of you if the history roadshow moves from its starting point in Theydon Bois (see p.2) to venues further afield.

**Graham Frankel**

November 2014  
Number 31



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## Old Buckwellians News



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

Roding Magazine, 1956

### Old Buckwellians News

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

### Membership:

UK: £4 p.a. Overseas: £6 p.a.

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

### Back issues:

Available from the Editor for £1 each. *Discount of 25% if you order five or more!*

### News

Please send your news items and other articles for publication to the Editor by email if possible. Original photographs will be returned.

The Editor reserves the right to shorten or otherwise amend items for publication.

### The Editor

Graham Frankel

46 Mandeville Road

Hertford, Herts, SG13 8JQ

Tel: 01992 422246

Mob: 0777 150 6950

E-mail:

[grahamf49@gmail.com](mailto:grahamf49@gmail.com)

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

### The Old Buckwellians Association

#### Honorary Officers

President: Trevor Lebentz

Vice Presidents: Stuart Low, Chris Waghorn, Alan Woods

#### Executive Committee

Chairman: Dick Battersby

Treasurer: Peter Sharp

Secretary: Graham Frankel

Committee Member: Rob Lane

## A Portrait of BHCHS - Première....



Last chance to book your place at a fully illustrated review of the life of BHCHS from its pioneering beginnings to the tragic closure fifty years later.

The talk will include many photos not previously published either in *OB News* or on the website and there will be time during the afternoon to ask questions and meet other Old Bucks.

### Places are limited — booking is essential

Date: Saturday 15th November 2014

Venue: Theydon Bois Village Hall

Time: Starts at 3pm (doors open 2pm)

Cost: £10 includes refreshments

Tea/coffee and cakes will be served after the talk (at about 4pm)

Contact Graham Frankel (see left panel)

## Untimely Deaths: Corrections and Omissions



Nicholas Blake

Soon after the publication of the spring edition of *OB News* I was given a haunting reminder of how I felt when one of my teachers in 1Z threw back my hastily completed homework asking me to do it again - properly this time, Frankel.

The first mistake that came to light was particularly embarrassing given my supposed interest in music. The photo I had identified as Nicholas Blake, the outstanding oboist who sadly died while studying at the Royal Academy of Music, was in fact Michael Cox. Different person, different year, different instrument and played by someone who is thankfully still with us. Michael Cox (1958) was graciously tolerant of my error and conceded that his skills on the clarinet were far behind those of Nick Blake, who is correctly shown in the foreground of the above photo taken in about 1964. I then had a string of messages that all began something like this: "Why didn't you mention.....?"

In some cases, various tragedies had been reported to me but without any documentary evi-



David Perrin

dence. But I cannot deny there were omissions. One such case was clearly reported in the school magazine of 1946 (see below), and was the first of several fatalities resulting from traffic accidents in Roding Lane.

A further error came to light some months after publication. In the article I asserted that David Perrin's tragic death was brought about by suicide. His family have brought to my attention that this was not the verdict of the Coroner and did not come from any official source. I am happy to set the record straight and apologise unreservedly for any distress that part of the article may have caused.

His sisters have very kindly sent a photograph of David and given their permission for me to reproduce it (see above)

A former classmate of David also recalls that whilst there was no official announcement in Assembly about the death, Mr Neville (Form Master of 1Y) did tell David's fellow form members about the tragedy before start of school when the news broke.

### SCHOOL NOTES

WE deeply regret to record that early in the eighth year of its history the School suffered its first fatal road casualty. John Barrington Green (4c) was cycling down Roding Lane from Buckhurst Hill in one of the thickest fogs of the winter and in trying to overtake a private car he collided head-on with an R.A.F. lorry proceeding from Chigwell. Green suffered little, dying very shortly after the accident. To his mother, father and sister the School expresses its sincere sympathy.

## Old Bucks Ties

Our 100% silk tie, proudly displaying the BHCHS crest, is still available at only £7.

Please add £2.80 postage (UK) or £3.50 (overseas).

Orders to Graham Frankel (see left panel) either by cheque (payable to Old Buckwellians) or by PayPal. Payment email address for PayPal is

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

Alternatively you can pay direct into our bank account using the following sort code and account number (please identify your payment with your name):

Sort code: 60-13-26

Account number: 40686701

You can also still order copies of the DVD containing 3 cine films taken at BHCHS in the period 1966 - 1970. £5 including postage. Payment details as above.



## Editor's Email

Sometimes people ask me which of my various email addresses is correct. The answer is that they should all work, but following recent problems it would be safer to delete the genesishr address and use this one:

[grahamf49@gmail.com](mailto:grahamf49@gmail.com)

I always acknowledge receipt of messages so if you fail to get a response I may not have received the message.

# BUCKS FIZZ

News and notes about Old Bucks

## Demolishing the Midlife Crisis Myth



**Crispin Reed (1973)** is still receiving a lot of interest in the book he wrote exploring the myth of the midlife crisis. We featured *The 7 Myths of Middle Age* in our *Bookshelf* column (*OB News*, November 2012). Crispin appeared recently in a Sky News feature that looked at the issue of the elderly and technology adoption. If your own command of technology runs to searching YouTube and you put in the right keywords you could find Crispin's Sky News feature.

## Murray's Lifetime Award

*Newsletter* Roding Valley HIGH SCHOOL  
March 2014

**Roding Valley High School teacher receives Lifetime Achievement award in Essex Teaching Awards**

A long-serving teacher at Roding Valley High School in Loughton has received a Lifetime Achievement Award in the Essex Teaching Award 2014.

Stephen Murray was among those honoured at the inaugural awards presented at the Lord Ashcroft International Business School at Anglia Ruskin University.

Mr Murray said: "I am absolutely thrilled by this award and would like to thank the school for nominating me."

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my 32 years teaching in the Epping Forest area and have had the privilege of working with excellent students, colleagues and parents."

"Teaching is a hard, full-on job but each day is different, nearly always enjoyable and each day usually has its own moment of magic."

Headteacher Paul Banks said: "Stephen's contribution to the school and the local community is amazing and he thoroughly deserves this award."

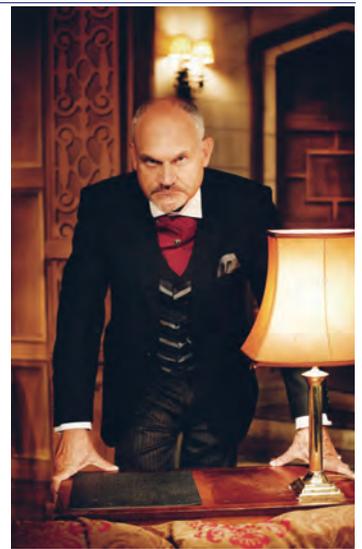
"There are thousands and thousands of children in the Loughton and Epping Forest area who have been taught by Stephen over the years and this award recognises his dedicated service to these students and the community."

continued overleaf...

Good to see **Stephen Murray (1970)** in the news recently when he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Essex County Council after being nominated by Roding Valley High School where he has taught for 32 years. Stephen is shown here on the front of the school's newsletter. Roding Valley High School is, of course, the successor to BHCHS and Loughton CHS, still occupying the original buildings from the latter.

## Greg Knows Whodunnit

**Greg Cox (1964)** landed a satisfying 10 month contract in 2013 when he played Mr Paravicini, a mysterious foreign gentleman, in the West End production of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*. With well over 25,000 performances, this is easily the longest run of any play anywhere. Greg told me he enjoyed his time on the show, despite managing to break a leg during a performance. But he was back in action in time to be visited backstage at St Martin's Theatre by **Chris Bangs** and **Malcolm Glass** who are sworn to secrecy about the murderer's identity. After just a short respite, Greg was back in rehearsals for a new play at the White Bear Theatre, Kennington.



## Presidential Visit



We were very grateful to **Barry Heam (1959)** for yet another invitation to Old Bucks for Leyton Orient's last home match of the season, against Tranmere. The 26 members who attended had excellent seats and a great afternoon. By then, sadly, the Os had failed to maintain their early season promise when they began with a record-breaking run of 10 matches without defeat. Before Christmas, while the team was still looking unassailable in League One, Barry had invited OBA President **Trevor Lebentz (1946)** to lunch before the home match against Preston. They had plenty to reminisce about, having both been former players for the Old Bucks FC. The Os' defeat against Preston was a significant blow, but the boys in red still managed to get desperately close to promotion. Now, of course, the club has been sold, but the many Old Bucks supporters will have breathed a huge sigh of relief when they learned that Barry will be maintaining his links with the club as Life President. Hopefully, the recent tradition of an annual pilgrimage will be continued. Meanwhile, the Brisbane Road brigade can satisfy their nostalgia by reading the contributions by **Stuart Low** (p.6) and **Allan Charwood** (p.20).

## Tony's Play Draws the Crowds in Perth



Retirement to Tasmania has not prevented **Tony Nicholls (1956)** from keeping his links with Perth, where he was previously teaching at Curtin University. Earlier this year his latest work, *The Passion of Christ*, drew an audience of 4,000 at two performances in the gardens of Government House, Perth. Tony's critically acclaimed play is a modern interpretation of the Easter story

### Roy Just Keeps on Rocking Around the World



**Roy Skinner (Physics 1970-77)** is not doing a lot of physics teaching these days - his showbiz career is taking up a lot of his time, and has been allowing him to return to England recently to team up with **Jamie Dalton (1985)**. The pair are shown here playing together in January 2014 at a gig in Stratford with their band *The Old Two Puddings*. Jamie (left in the photo) played lead guitar and Roy, of course, is the vocalist. The audience response was so positive that the organisers insisted on inviting the band for another visit in June.

### Swinging in London



**Martin Wheatley (1969)** is the guitarist in a very popular swing revival group *The Basin Street Brawlers*, regularly appearing in some very swish London venues including Cadogan Hall, Chelsea and the Hippodrome Casino, Leicester Square.

### Hammers Fans 60 Years On (never mind the maths)

Nostalgia in Focus | Upton Park memories

Lifelong friends are still watching their beloved West Ham together more than 60 years later

#### Hooked on Hammers after seeing first game aged 12

**by Kay Abzal**  
Following our recent appeal to readers to share memories of their first match at Upton Park, we feature Peter Sharp's recollection of the Hammers' match against Chelsea in September 1954.  
He said: "Since there was no adult interested in taking us, my school friend and I - two 12-year-old boys - decided to go to our first West Ham match on our own. Having located the boys' entrance to Canille Street we found ourselves on the old South Bank terrace. Realising that we would either see an very little or spend the match sitting on a crash barrier.  
"It was September 1954, a warm, sunny Saturday afternoon. The opposition was Chelsea, who had just appointed the veteran Scottish defender 'Beano' Docherty as player-manager. 'Docherty' had West



Peter Sharp, right, accompanied by his wife Lynden and fellow West Ham fan Ian Hammond as they watch another West Ham match. Picture: Sharon Hooken

Peter saw Hammers' captain Bobby Moore in action and was hooked immediately. The ball broke from another Chelsea player who put it in the net. So Peter was the crowd that the goal was.

Proving that nostalgia and football can extend beyond Brisbane Road. **Peter Sharp** and **Ian Hammond (1960)** appeared recently in the *Newham Recorder*. The reporting didn't quite live up to Peter's high standards of mathematical accuracy. Either that or Peter and Ian look very youthful at 72.

### Double Promotion



In the government reshuffle announced in July Old Bucks MPs **David Evennett (1960)** and **Stephen Metcalfe (1977)** were among those promoted.

David Evennett MP remains a Lord Commissioner to the Treasury but has been appointed the Conservative's Pairing Whip, which I trust isn't as painful as it sounds.

Stephen Metcalfe MP has been appointed Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Lord Chancellor, Chris Grayling MP.

### TV Commission



**Mark Robson (1971)** has recently been helping his celebrated near neighbour, comedian and actor Alan Davies, to launch another TV show. Mark's company - Grand Scheme Media - develops and launches TV programmes and Mark devised the new chat show *As Yet Untitled* (yes, that is the title) which has been running on Dave TV over the summer. Alan Davies grew up in Loughton but went, in the words of Mark, to a posh private school.

### OBE for Braben



Computer pioneer **David Braben (1975)** was awarded the OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List earlier this year for his services to the UK computer and video games industry.

David's company - Frontier Developments - still markets the seminal computer game *Elite* which he invented with Ian Bell soon after leaving BHCHS when the pair met at Cambridge University.

### And Last-ly.....

I was pleased to make contact recently with **Chris Last** who was probably the last member of staff to be appointed at BHCHS - his name wasn't listed at the front of the final school roll.

Chris is a keen Morris Dancer and he was spotted by one of his former pupils featured in the *Epping Forest Guardian* preparing for a trip with one of his groups to Lithuania, where they were scheduled to appear on a TV programme about folk music.

Chris, who continued teaching at Roding Valley HS after BHCHS closed, has been interested in eastern European culture since studying the Hungarian revolution in 1956.



## AGM Goes International



Beamed in from Belgium: Rob Lane on screen and Dick Battersby at the controls

Our AGM on 8th May turned out to be a groundbreaking event. Thanks to some innovative thinking and technical wizardry directed by Chairman **Dick Battersby** and, ably assisted by **Phil Hughes**, we managed an international link up with committee member **Rob Lane** who was unavoidably tied up on business in Brussels.

A Skype connection gave Rob the opportunity of attending the meeting. He was there in voice, and on screen - not at the same time (that is a development for later in the century). And there was that awkward moment when someone said: "What do you think about that Rob?" to be greeted with silence. We quickly realised that Rob hadn't nodded off but we'd lost our connection. The meeting itself went well, and once again Peter Sharp gave us a delightfully clear and pictorially exciting summary of our financial situation.

Rob Lane wasn't the only interna-

tional connection at this meeting because we were delighted that **Chris Kay (1962)** managed to attend in person, having flown over from his home in New York. Chris defied jet lag to make an excellent contribution to the proceedings.

**Pete Berrecloth (1976)** was on hand to take a further set of nostalgic photos. As in previous years, several of the participants took the opportunity to have a look around to see their old classrooms.

We are really grateful to the headmaster of Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College for his hospitality in allowing us to hold our meetings there.

You can view the AGM minutes and the papers presented to the meeting on our website - look for the News section.

Details of next year's AGM will be published in the spring edition of *Old Buckwellians News*. Who knows - maybe we shall try a transcontinental link up?

## Quiz Fun

We held another great Quiz Night at Theydon Bois in April 2014. Thanks to our superb quiz master **Phil Hughes** the evening was a huge success. The photo below shows the winning team - *The Prefects* - in the foreground and the other photo (right) shows **Paul Happe** and **Mick Gould's Blazers** who finished a creditable fourth despite having only 5 team members.

A departure from previous quizzes was to use a local catering firm to serve a hot supper during the interval.

Once again, all proceeds after expenses were given to the St Clare Hospice, Harlow.

We were grateful to **Judy Hughes** and **Tom Frankel** for marking the papers and to everyone who kindly gave generous raffle prizes.



# Leyton Orient: through thick and thin

By Stuart Low (BHCHS 1952 - 58)



I CAN'T remember when Leyton Orient became my team. It must have been in either 1954 or 1955 as Vic Groves was playing for them and he was only at Brisbane Road for those two seasons. Like many Orient supporters I started following them because Leyton is on the Central Line into London. To follow another team such as the Spurs, Gunners or the mighty Irons would have involved a train into central London, a change of line and another train to their ground.

My very first encounter with professional soccer was at White Hart Lane. An uncle took me to a floodlit match between Tottenham and a team I can't remember now. My first impression was of wonder at the greenness of the grass under the floodlights and the colour of the shirts as the teams ran onto the pitch.

With Leyton being on the Central Line it was easy to get to midweek matches after school and to the home games on a Saturday. Dave Wilkins and I would run from Leyton Station to the ground, dodging pedestrians on the way. When we got to the ground we would buy our programme for tuppence - oh how I wish I still had my collection of Orient programmes - and find our position behind the goal. We normally went behind the opposition goal so that we could see all the Orient goals close to. At half time we would run from one end of the ground to the other under the stand to once again be behind the opposition goal.

In those early days, when the Os were in Division 3 (South), we had such players as Vic Groves together with Phil White on the wing, Ron Heckman and Johnny Hartburn in the forward line with

McMahon, McKnight in the half back line, Stan Charlton at full back and a very young Phil Woosnam up front for a couple of seasons before the Hammers pinched him. Our favourite was



Tommy Johnston

Tommy Johnston, the burly Scot who still holds the record for the most goals scored by an Orient player.

Incidentally, after emigrating to Australia, I was at a local league club when a friend asked me to meet his friend Tom Johnston. I recognised him at once and said, "You played for the Orient and I saw you score three goals when the Os beat Aldershot 8 -3 and you had a broken arm." My wife was gobsmacked that I could remember all this after many years. Tommy then proceeded to get from his wallet a cigarette card of himself in Orient colours.

In the early days of my support the Os wore a blue shirt and white shorts (below the knees) and this, of course, changed later to the white shirt with the red "V" and then through all kinds of red and white combinations.

Since those early days many good players have come and gone at Brisbane Road - Kitchen, Roeder, Rofe, Groombridge, Facey, Fairbrother (whose father was bricklaying subcontractor on some of our contracts), Allen, Welton, Blizzard, Cunningham and many more - I wonder what happened to them after their football days were over. For a time we had Peter Shilton playing for us and someone kindly sent me a video of the match when he competed in his 1,000th league game.

The ground has changed so much I can hardly recognise it. The old wooden stand opposite the main stand has gone and a modern stand built. The terracing at either end has changed and, of course, it is all seating now.

Crowd numbers now are pathetic compared with how they were. I can remember being in a crowd of 29,000 for a crucial promotion match when I could lift my feet off the ground and stay where I was.

My immediate boss at W&C French was an honorary ground development officer who had a seat in the directors' box. One day, when we were demolishing an old brick building on one of

nearly had heart attacks at the end of the seasons when they have - mostly - fought off relegation and then had heartbreak when they have missed out on the promotion play offs. On Sunday mornings, during the season, the first thing I do is log on to see the Orient results.

The Orient have always been an average side mainly because when they had any decent players they sold them on to keep their heads above water financially. It seemed to me we won about a third of games played, drew a third and lost a third and our points were roughly the same as games played (when a win was 2 points)

I still follow the Os from afar. In my study I have an Orient mouse mat and Orient mug, two Orient shirts on my study wall, Orient banners, scarf, car window hangers, plus a limited copy of pencil sketches of Orient greats. I have the book *Leyton Orient - the complete record* and an Orient tax disk holder in my car even though it is useless in Australia. My latest acquisition is an Orient garden gnome that my sister brought over when she visited this year and which stands proudly in my sports memorabilia corner.



Glory days. The team that became Division Three champions in 1969-70

the sites, I was asked to take a number of Crittall windows from the demolished site in the company Transit van down to Brisbane Road where they were incorporated into a toilet block under the main stand. It was the first and only time I had the opportunity to walk on the pitch and see how the stands appeared to the players.

Through my Orient history the Os have been up and down so many times it is unreal. Once they actually made it to the First Division, as it was then. I have

My wife thinks I am crazy but I believe a true supporter follows their team through thick and thin. You don't change just because they are going through a bad patch. I have requested that some of my ashes be sprinkled on the pitch at Brisbane Road so that I can keep an eye on the team from the hereafter!

However, I do rather unkindly tell the story of when I was caught climbing over the wall at the ground but I was made to go back in and watch the game with all the others!!

# My Passion for Poland

By Owen Easteal (BHCHS 1951 - 58)

Owen Easteal is a lecturer at the University of Poznań and Consultant to the travel industry who spends a lot of time in Poland. He describes how his passion for Poland became established, and how he sees the future of Poland as a travel destination. This article was written for a travel magazine *Discover Poland*. Owen now lives in a village in the French Pyrenees and made a welcome appearance, with his brother Martin (BHCHS 1959-66), at our BHCHS75 Dinner in 2013.



I AM often asked how I became so interested and involved with Poland. I really don't know, unless it was a vague memory as a very young child. I grew up in Epping in Essex, which is close to the former World War II fighter station, North Weald. One day whilst out with my mother, there was the usual queue in front of the local cinema and one airman had a strange pointed hat. Upon asking my mother about this she replied, "That is a brave Polish airman."

I had little or no contact with Poland for many years until our local parish decided to build a house for one of the many displaced persons in Europe at that time. Mrs. Zielińska duly arrived, and as my mother could speak German she became the point of contact. Mrs Zielińska did not really know where she came from, but with her name it was probably from the eastern extremity of Poland as it had been before the war.

Communist Europe had always fascinated me. I had the undoubted historical privilege of being in East Germany in 1961 as 'the wall' was built in Berlin and then living in Germany when it was dismantled years later. Back in 1961, I wrote a postcard to my parents saying that I may be delayed on my return from East Germany – however, I was let out on schedule!

When I started work for the tour operator National Holidays in the mid 1980s, I was surprised to learn that they operated many coach tours through what we then called Eastern Europe, with a tour each fortnight to Poland.

The passengers flew to Warsaw with either LOT or British Airways and a minibus took them to Kraków and Częstochowa, before returning for a couple of days to Warsaw. En route visits were made to Wieliczka, Zakopane and Auschwitz. How strange it seems now, but we only ever had small groups, as if tourists from the United Kingdom were frightened to go to communist countries! As I was responsible for all tours in mainland Europe, I maintained very close contact with Polorbis in London and became very friendly with the Sales Manager at the time. He returned to Poznań in the late 1980s and I lost contact with him.

Later I was working for Holiday Inn as the Director of International Sales when we re-established contact. Subsequently, I shared a stand with him at Tour Salon in Poznań to promote the Holiday Inn. On a private visit to Poznań, my wife and I were invited to a get-together with a youth music group and officials from the city of Nottingham (Poznań's twin city), where I met the Rector of the Akademia Ekonomiczna. I expressed an interest in lecturing there and after three years I started with one lecture every month, in English, on various topics associated with the economics of tourism and management.

When the changes first started, there was a multitude of new entrepreneurs who wanted to try their luck at commerce. I well remember the plethora of mobile phone shops along streets in Poznań, all of which have now

disappeared. I attended a workshop in several Polish cities organised by the German National Tourist Office and was surprised to learn that there were more than 600 so-called 'travel agencies' in Poznań, started often by academics who wanted to have the opportunity to travel to areas previously inaccessible to them, and the easiest and most cost-effective way of doing this was by organising group travel. I doubt whether any of these exist today.

At that time Holiday Inn was actively investigating business opportunities in the former Eastern Europe and I compiled a report in 1991 with prognoses on possible future growth and the political stability of each of the Comecon countries – is my prognosis coming true? There is no doubt that Poland will become the first of the former Eastern Bloc countries to reach parity with their neighbours in the West. I also published an article in 1998 on the problems likely to be encountered in integrating these countries with those in Western Europe. Even almost ten years after the breakdown of Communism, I commented that there was a need for a proper service mentality to develop if tourism was to become a successful economic driver.

I was also involved in training and consultancy within the hotel industry in both Poznań and Zakopane. The problem was not so much that older people were incapable of offering good service, forgetting the sombre and unsmiling ethos of the Communist era, but far more that they were frightened for their jobs, especially since most enterprises were considerably over-staffed. This situation is still slowly being resolved even 20 years after the 'change'.

I have now been lecturing to students in the final year of their Master's or Bachelor's degree at the Akademia Ekonomiczna for 16 years and have been delighted to see the positive changes that are still taking place in Poland. When I started the students of 23 to 25 years of age had only learned Russian at school as their first foreign language, so were largely self-taught in English. What a difference nowadays – their English is generally excellent and we have the added bene-

fit of students from many other countries arriving for one semester under the Erasmus programme. Recently, the institution has been renamed as the Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Poznaniu in accordance with the name changes made to the many other universities in Poznań.

It is always fascinating for me to return to Poznań after the long summer vacation to see the changes in the city since I was last there four or five months ago – new pavements, trams, shops and the excellent, large shopping centres which bear testament to the considerable wealth held by a large part of the community. However, what is also fascinating about Poland are the social changes and, of course, the people and their dry humour.

There is still a long way to go but the GDP of the country is still growing at a fast rate and the tourism industry is now entering a more mature stage in its development, which in turn will give more stability. There is a strong awareness of the very unique things that Poland has to offer the tourist – wild forest areas, mountains, bison, beautiful old cities, often lovingly reconstructed after the devastation of World War II, as well as an excellent reputation for good food in plentiful portions, great beer and vodka.

A country is, however, not just scenery, eating and shopping – it has to be marked by the people. I remember my first visit to the University well. There was a vast crowd of students in front of the main entrance – as I arrived they parted as if by magic to let me in. I was so surprised that I thought perhaps the President was behind me! This level of politeness still persists today; I still think that they are speaking with someone else when two or three youngsters stand up and offer me their seat on a crowded tram.

The future growth of Poland will be significant as a beacon for the smaller economies of neighbouring countries, but perhaps the thing that I most admire about Poland is the maintenance of a Polish spirit during considerable trials and tribulations throughout the centuries – frontiers being arbitrarily moved, invasions, disappearance of the country – yet the country rises each time like a phoenix from the ashes.

# Kerri: Conception, Birth and Early Years

By Kerri Mitchell (BHCHS 1979 - 84)

The second part of the story of Kerri Mitchell who was wrongly born as a biological boy

Where were we? Ah yes, the Eureka moment! I knew who I was and what I needed to do. But how? Suddenly the obstacles became apparent. But before we get into those, a brief recap as it has been six months or so since the last instalment.

After the better part of 43 years of loneliness and sometimes despair, I finally knew who I was. From early feelings of femininity and the need to cross-dress, through the Army years and then a marriage that failed as Kerri became an ever increasing part of my life. That is wrong. Kerri was always the largest part of my life, hence the sadness. I just didn't know what to do about it. But now I did. The Eureka moment...the story continues...

So here I am in Romford market, on a gloriously sunny Saturday morning in November 2010. The question is answered - I AM Kerri. Hooray. If only this was *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* I would be rich! After all, I have answered the million pound



Day 1: Pauline, me and Bernadette (Pauline's daughter) go out to celebrate

question. But it is short lived as straight away other questions spring to mind. What about work? What about Helen (my wife - we both work for Westminster Council)? Without doubt there are many other questions that I haven't even thought of yet. So the £1,000,000 question was actually only to get to the £1k mark. So, let's do these one by one:

Work. Westminster City Council. I had no worries about the organisation itself as it was Local Government after all. Socially accepting and definitely inclusive. But actually going to work

in a skirt - how do I do that? This was solved the same day. I had joined the Beaumont Society (a support group for transvestites and the transgendered) fairly recently and I still had the latest edition of their magazine to read. Later that same day I read about Delia, who was just like me (well, slightly older if truth be told). She had done what I was considering. I said to myself, "If she can do it, so can I!" 1st box ticked. The concept of work is solved.

Family. That was quite easy. All my close family knew I was a gay transvestite (well I thought I was and, after all, that is what I had told them) so it would be an easy one to solve. 2nd tick. With one exception...

Helen. The most difficult obstacle. The hardest for me. I still cared for Helen. I do until this day, but I was about to bring her world crashing down. Again. Not something I enjoyed doing. Being slightly cowardly, I left it for nearly three months. I knew I had to tell her by March 2011 as

there was another round of redundancies at Westminster Council and if she were offered this opportunity, I wouldn't want her to make a decision without knowing what I had in mind. So one Sunday, I made an excuse to visit Helen and break the news. Unsurprisingly it went down like a lead balloon. I had just taken away the only part of her life that was safe from Kerri. I left her in tears that day. I felt awful. I cared about her and here I was causing more sorrow. A day in my life mixed with relief and sadness. But, I had done it. Tick three.



With Jane (bottom right), Jake (far right) and 66&Main after their gig in Utah

Back to December. 2 - 3 months prior to telling Helen. My boss. The concept was easy but now was reality and I had to broach the subject with David. I arranged a meeting with him through his Executive Assistant, Holly, before Christmas as my next scheduled 1:1 was nearly a month away. Holly knew what I was going to tell him as I had explained why I needed an urgent meeting. The morning dawned and I sat through two one-hour meetings with David before my scheduled meeting and had thought of nothing else other than telling David. I had made very little useful contribution to either meeting which was not really surprising. The scheduled hour arrived. David asked Holly what was next. Holly said it was me. David then threw me completely; he said, "I don't think I need to meet Kevin. We have covered everything." I was stunned into silence. Fortunately Holly saved me. She said, "Kevin REALLY needs to see you!" And we met. I told him and it was fine. Don't really know what I was worrying about. Tick 4.

The last issue to deal with, and this may sound daft, was my hair. It had been short since I joined the Army at 16. I had planned to wear a wig. When I mentioned this to my former manager she told me not to be silly and to grow my own hair. It would be much more natural. At this point my hair was about an inch long. Google led me to a hair dresser in Hornchurch that did extensions. I strolled in one Saturday and met Justine. After she stopped laughing and I managed to convince her that I was serious, I had a vague plan. Tick 5.

And the waiting game began. What else was there to do? Nothing really. I didn't have an actual date in mind. I wanted to give

Helen the opportunity to make a decision about her future in Westminster but not push her. For some reason, and I don't know if there even was one, I chose 1st October for Kerri to be born properly. I decided that Kevin should have leaving drinks on 30th September (it was a Friday) and that was settled.

I was into my gestation period. I had six months to go and it felt like a lifetime away. April came (another birthday loomed) and the next step in my transition with the Health Authority was upon me. My meeting with a psychiatrist. The final step before referral to Charing Cross Hospital. Mr D was just like Dave Allen. Really, all he needed was a stool, a cigarette and a whiskey and it was him. Looks, hair, mannerisms and the Irish accent. We chatted for a bit and I explained about laser hair removal of facial hair and he said he would refer me to the Gender Identity Clinic (GIC). Job done. Just the waiting game now.

Suddenly Monday 26th September was upon me. Kevin's last working week. Ever! Helen had left the week before. I had a fairly substantial wardrobe to start me off at work, despite most of my life being in storage due to a delayed flat purchase. The week didn't pass slowly. Vroom in fact. Leaving drinks and the questions but I wasn't nervous. I was excited. A new chapter in my life was beginning the next day and it was almost unbelievable. Correct that - my life was beginning again, as it should have.

D-Day dawns. It is Saturday 1st October at 9am. I was at the hairdressers. Made up with no wig and it felt really strange. Five hours later I emerge with shoulder length hair. Brilliant. I trot off to Hornchurch to get my ears pierced for a second time and then, after a short stint in my

favourite beauty salon to get my eyebrows/eyelashes shaped and tinted, I return to my temporary home. My landlady Pauline (and real buddy – mentioned in part 1) sees me and makes me feel a million dollars just by saying, “Wow.” Kerri was born. That was the first day of the rest of my life so to speak. Or, if we want to be accurate, the first day of the right life. The life I should have been born to. I had booked two weeks’ leave from work to assist with my transition. I felt it important that I became comfortable with myself before I tackled work. So for two weeks I got up, shaved (sadly) and lived the right life. On the shaving issue, I still shave every day. I have had a few sessions of laser hair removal and this has been very effective but only on the dark hairs – laser hair removal needs a contrasting colour to work effectively. It does mean that I no longer get a 5 o’clock shadow so not all bad.

The big day came. Monday 17th October. My first day at work. I had met a couple of colleagues during my two week ‘comfort’ leave but this was the big day. I was still staying at Pauline’s and got up at about 4.30am. Shaved and showered. Washed and dried and straightened my hair (all things Pauline had taught me – guys you have no idea the effort us girls put in!). Make up and clothing and the train in. I worked in an open plan office and I planned to get in first so that I didn’t walk into a full office. I preferred the idea of the people coming in one at a time. Remarkably I wasn’t nervous as I walked towards the office. I was excited. It was easy. An absolutely brilliant day in my life. There were a couple of people that didn’t know about Kerri and I spoke to them but there was absolutely no hostility.

That same week was my first appointment at the Gender Identity Clinic (GIC) in Hammer-smith. Much more nerve racking than work. This was the really important day. I had no idea what was involved. What to expect? How to behave? I thought about what I was going to say. Should I try and say what I thought they wanted to hear? And then I said to myself, “Just be you. Don’t lie – there is no point.” I saw Dr A and for a little over an hour we went through my life story. Early feelings. Sexuality. Current feelings. Family and hostility. The appointment finished and I was sent for a blood test to check my current hormone levels, and at the end of the meeting I was told that I would probably be prescribed



*Phil Collins eat your heart out! Doesn't the hair work*

hormones at my next appointment which was to take place with Dr L in about five months, but that it wasn’t a given. I walked out. I was shell-shocked. Dr A took no prisoners. His bedside manner was very curt and businesslike. But it was done. I had changed my name by Deed Poll prior to this visit and I had started the required two year ‘Real Life Experience’ to be eligible for consideration for surgery.

For the next five months nothing of much note really happened. I moved into my flat and Kerri was living a happy life. A couple of comments, but nothing I couldn’t handle. I became more comfortable with myself. I began speech therapy to soften my voice and then big day number two at the GIC arrived with Dr L...

March 2012. Very important as I wanted Oestrogen. And they had it! I walk in to see Dr L. A completely different experience to five months earlier. We talked through my life story again. He was friendly, jovial, welcoming even, and after a little over an hour I walked out with a prescription to start my hormone treatment. Success. Life continued. I also got two letters after this appointment from Dr L., for the DVLA at Swansea and the Passport Office to get new correct documents. When I received them in the post I was so relieved as it stated that “Miss Mitchell suffers with gender dysphoria... please issue her a new... in her correct gender role”. I was over the moon. I wasn’t imagining it and they agreed with how I felt. Woop woop!

Life continued. I was me. Life was good. All my friends would remark that I was so much happier now. Relaxed. Life was very, very good.

I am going to move to my third appointment at the GIC. These appointments were very important as it meant another period of time had been ticked off.

But I was back to see Dr A again. I was not looking forward to it. He fooled me. It was a whole different experience. He was welcoming and we talked through any issues that had occurred and he was a totally different guy. My reasoning is that I was now real. I had been living my life for almost 10 months. I wasn’t messing about and life went on. Only a couple of incidents, one that really stands out only took place recently. A guy thought it acceptable to come up



*Jane and me on the Brooklyn Bridge*

to me in my local pub and say to me, “You are obviously a f\*\*\*\*\* bloke!”. I looked at him and he said it again. So I replied, “You must be a w\*\*\*\*\* then!” And that was it in a nutshell. He actually accused me of making it hard for him to speak to me with my reply to his statement. It turned out he is a history teacher in the local school.

In July 2013 an Army reunion beckoned. I had decided to go for the first time as the real me. The year before I had given it a miss, but now was the time. I had been going over and over it in my mind and come to the conclusion that my friends were my friends. If they couldn’t accept me then they were not my friends. The

big day arrived. I had informed the Association that I was going, just to ensure I was treated fairly. To be honest though, I expected nothing less. I arrived at the gate of the camp in Winchester. I met a Brigadier that I had contacted at the association. He was so sweet. He asked me if I wanted to sit down. That made me smile. I wasn’t ill, but it felt so inclusive. I went in and, guess what, everything was fine. Brilliant in fact. The evening passed in a blur, but two things stand out. A good friend that I hadn’t seen for three or four years came towards the group. I said hi and gave him a kiss on the cheek. He looked right through me. I was a little surprised as he knew I was transitioning. A few minutes passed. He came back and apologised as he didn’t recognise me and said I looked great. I was on top of the world. The second moment came a couple of hours later when a guy, unknown to me, approached me and said, “I have fought the Taliban and you are braver than me.” I don’t think I agree with the statement but the sentiment was overwhelming. I had a fabulous evening answering various questions from wives on my hair and makeup techniques. A brilliant event and I am so looking forward to the next one....

As the end of the two years ‘Real Life Experience’ approached I visited an old friend, Jane, in the USA – thanks to Facebook we had caught up with each other after 27 years apart. We met in New York, where we spent four brilliant nights before joining her family at their home in Utah. A memorable night was had at the Canyon Inn, Salt Lake City. Jane’s husband Jake had organised a gig for his band 66&Main while I was visiting. I love to dance and did so all night long. The final leg of the trip was to Nevada, and I went swimming for the first time in a bikini in Las Vegas. Lying there on the sun lounger a photograph was taken of me and when I was shown it, I was amazed – I had a figure. Little things like this make you feel good about yourself. Three weeks in America was a real blast but as the adventure drew to a close, I had a very important appointment to attend.

A Monday in October 2013. I had been back from the USA for just 48 hours and I am again at the GIC for my sixth and most important appointment. My final psychiatric assessment and, hopefully, referral for surgery. Dr PL, a completely new doctor so a little daunting. I had thought about this appointment for two years and it was here. It was all very pleasant and then I was



With my beloved Nigella – she loves a wedding dress

asked what Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS) would mean for me. I knew it was coming. I had rehearsed it over and over for two years. I had seen people's rants on support group websites that said things like "I can't be a woman until surgery" etc. etc. But I didn't feel like this at all. I am a woman. I live as a woman and dress as a woman. So I took a deep breath and told her that it wasn't the be all and end all, as I was living my life as a woman, but GRS was important to me. It would mean that I could use changing rooms again and be able to go swimming and clothes would fit better and I wouldn't have to worry about the giveaway bulge between my legs. There, I had said it. She looked at me and said fair enough and the reasons were valid. It was over and I was referred for surgery. I walked out smiling and looked forward to my appointment with the clinical nurse that afternoon. Just for the record and to ensure there is no doubt, I do want a vagina. It is very, very important to me but not the 'Holy Grail', so to speak.

So to the box I didn't expect to tick... I had always seen myself as having to sit in a nice box in relation to my gender/sexuality. It had changed at least three times. I will explain. Think of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender – for those that don't know). In my life I had considered myself to have ticked three of the four. Gay – yes, for a while I thought I was a gay transvestite. Bisexual – speaks for itself. Transgendered – needs no more words really. It was April 2013 and it was my first visit to - how should I put this – an adult establishment of what some would think of as being as unusual. Yes, 50 Shades-ish is probably a good description. I met a wonderful person (transgendered like myself) who was to give me my first experi-

ence of BDSM. I am not going to go into too much detail except to say that I am a submissive and she is a Mistress/Domme. And she is very good with a whip. And yes, I do have a *slave* contract. To cut to the chase, our relationship blossomed and we grew into a couple quite quickly. We just click. So now I tick the last box – Lesbian – well, sometimes anyway.

Nigella is also sometimes Nigel but she/he makes me so happy. So when it comes to ticking boxes, I now say 'all of the above'.

As we all know in life, and to quote Einstein – "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction". So the upside is Nigella, but the downside is my big brother. Some of you reading this will know him - he went to West Hatch but some of his friends went to BHCHS (one was mentioned in the last edition of *OB News*). He can't deal with Kerri. It makes me sad but he can't help it. I have tried with no luck. I felt a little let down when I first transitioned as his support would have been so welcome. But I can't change how he feels. I think that he is worried that I have changed. I haven't. The same person is inside. I have just changed the wrapper to match. My thought process hasn't changed, but I do get dreadful mood swings – 30,000 feet one minute to the depths of despair the next. So guys, please give your wives a break when they are feeling like this. It is not done on purpose, it is hormonal and just happens. Back to my brother. One day he may take a leap of faith and meet me for a drink. I keep my fingers crossed that this may happen but I am not holding my breath. My thought is that the longer it goes on will mean the chasm gets wider and, therefore, more difficult to breach. I am quite lucky though. Some people in my position lose everyone. I have had only one casualty. But I do miss him and I definitely do not blame him.

So, there we are at the end of part two. Not too boring I hope? Or too risqué? Or maybe not risqué enough? I don't know. But in summary, would I change me? Would I do it differently? Am I happy? No, no and a resounding yes!

By the time you read this, I will have seen a surgeon and hopefully I will have a date this side of Christmas for my GRS. If you would all indulge me some more, I would like to write a final part in the next edition just to round off my story. Until then, thank you for reading and wishing you all a good Christmas, by which time I hope certain areas of my anatomy will be very different.

## Aussie Branch Thriving

Stuart Low reports



Once again the first Saturday in March heralded the Old Bucks reunion in Sydney, once again The Brewhouse was the favoured venue and once again it rained.

The attendance this year was somewhat better than last year despite the weather not being in our favour. It seems that come rain or shine the reunion is as popular as ever.

Including wives, partners, sons and daughters, there were 24 of us to down a few schooners and to get stuck into some reasonably priced tucker.

Whilst we had no newcomers this year it was good to see the first timers from last year again this year. However, some of our regulars from previous years were unable to make it because of other commitments: these included Michael and Jean Cooper who have been regulars from the start and Martin Williams from New Zealand.

Son Tim (TJ) was over from the UK again and, in the absence of Sheilagh Harper, Phil brought along his daughter Dawn as an excellent replacement. Emma and Paul Faithfull attended for the first time as a married couple and later Emma was dragged off kicking and screaming to go shopping in Darling Harbour with a couple geriatric shopaholics - look no further than the Low/Hardwick connection!

All in all it was another great day, and a straw poll indicated that the venue was probably the most suitable for everyone, whether they travelled interstate, locally or from overseas.

Therefore, our next reunion for those who are thinking of coming to Australia next year, will be at the Brewhouse, but on the first Saturday in February, in an effort to avoid the rain and make the date more available to those who can't make it in March.

With a number of Old Bucks living in the ACT (Canberra region) and also in Melbourne there is the

possibility that reunions could be held in these regions, which would be great and increase the social contact of our Association.

### Attendees:

Andy Ford (1979) - Sydney  
Bill Hardwick (1956) and Neroli - Sydney  
Bill Mathews (1945) and Ruth - Sydney  
Chris Aplin (1949) - ACT  
David Lee (1944) and Barbara - Athelstone, South Australia  
Gordon Masters (1948) - ACT  
Grahame Clark (1953) - ACT  
Guy Lee (1953) and Ann - Jamberoo, NSW  
Les Bassett (1953) - Sydney  
Paul Faithfull (1988) and Emma - Sydney  
Paul Thomas (1952) and Robbie - ACT  
Phil Harper (1957) and Dawn - Penguin, Tasmania  
Tony Brandon (1948) and Pat - Sydney  
Tim (TJ) Low (1973) - Yorkshire, UK  
Stuart Low (1952) and Sylvie - Penrose, NSW

**Great job Stuart - when will someone offer to get the USA organised....? - Ed.**

### More from Down Under...

Thanks to **Roy Skinner (Physics, 1970-78)** for this one. Roy is in Perth.



Why science teachers should not be given playground duty.

# How my Education Hit the Buffers

By Bernard Butler (BHCHS 1955 - 62)

IN MANY ways I had a disaster-prone education at BHCHS.

## An unfortunate start

In the 90+ first year intake in 1955 we were “unseeded”, but the end-of-year exams enabled us to be sorted into ability groups for year 2. Unfortunately, I was absent in the spring for several weeks with whooping cough and ended up about 32nd in the year, so was placed in 2B, rather than the 2A my parents (and I) had hoped for.

## A disaster

No such health problems in year 2, and with an end-of-year overall placing in the twenties I qualified for 3A – hurrah! It was then that everything started to go wrong. Martin Frizelle (future Head Boy) and I were the only two boys to graduate into the top stream from below. Unfortunately, 2A had done a year of Latin – the only group in that year to do so, and we clearly would not be able to catch them up. The school in its wisdom decided that the solution was for us to sit at the back of Latin lessons, teaching ourselves the new-to-us subject of German (without any talking of course) with the noise of the class a constant distraction! Throughout year 3 and year 4 this nonsense continued. There was never any checking on our progress, nor tutorial support in any way – I actually learned more Latin than German!

## The next disaster

So, having qualified for year 4A in about 29th place overall, the end of year 4 exams loomed. For year 5, the GCE year, those who remained of the original 1955 intake were to be split into four groups again, after three years of being in three groups. I was nothing if not consistent in my overall performance, and once again came about 29th – oh dear! This meant I was not going to be in 5A but in 5Alpha, rejoining many classmates from three years previous who had been studying the General Science O level route, whereas the A stream (and Martin and I) had studied the three separate Sciences in 4A. Of course, I didn't know the General Science syllabus and they were half-way through it already. What a mess!

## Yet another disaster

Before starting year 5 we all had a careers talk with FA Scott, and he asked me what I wanted to do with my life. Maths was my best subject and I was ready for him,



School Orchestra 1961. Bernard Butler and cello front row right.

having previously started to flick through the A to Z book of careers, and I acquainted him with the fact that I wanted to be an actuary (to be truthful I hadn't read beyond the As and had very little idea what actuaries did either). His sole response was to the effect that I definitely needed the maths experience I could get by doing Physics O level. But I was now in 5 Alpha, who didn't do Physics! You can guess what happened – I spent year 5 General Science classes in the Solarium, teaching myself O level Physics from a book, while 5Alpha cut up frogs and made explosions in the lab beyond.

But wait, where were the Latin classes that I needed to sit at the back of to continue teaching myself German? 5Alpha didn't do Latin, or German! In the event, I actually had to teach myself both Physics AND German during the General Science classes.

In those days, O level grades ran from 1 – 9 (best to hopeless).

My results? German Grade 9; Physics Grade 9.

Still, I got a Grade 1 in Maths and with other successes qualified for the 6th Form to take Pure Maths, Music, and English at A level.

## Confidence shattered

In my first Pure Maths class with my new teacher, Mr. Hattam, he went round the class, naming, congratulating and warmly shaking hands with all the pupils who

had achieved a Grade 1 at O level. “At last,” I thought, “a little glory and recognition that I have achieved something, and that I'm as good as these elitist 5A boys!” Sadly, he ignored me. I was mortified. I realised later that he was congratulating the pupils he had taught in 5A, and I was the only non-5A pupil in his A level class who had obtained a Grade 1, but he did not seem to know that. What hurt more was that I had taken O level Maths two terms earlier than some of the 5A boys.

Two years later I failed the A level.

## Disasters continue

During the first term of the Upper Sixth year I was again absent for a couple of weeks. Unbeknown to me, it was in those very two weeks that the sixth form had received all the information about universities and completed their application forms. It seems incredible, but when I returned, nothing was said to me by any member of staff, nor did anyone in my classes mention it to me. In those days, there was no detailed tutoring as such, and my odd combination of A level choices meant I was more amongst acquaintances than buddies, and after each class I would be off to a different timetable from my classmates'. No-one in my extended family had ever been to university (indeed the first would not be until my eldest son in 1991) and we were all so naive that we had

not thought ahead at all at that time. The first I was aware of something being wrong was when, several weeks later, friends started asking me what offers I'd had. I didn't know what they meant! After it was explained to me, I raced round to see my teachers but was told that I had missed the final date for applications, and made to think it was all my fault. I don't know whether there was a system for Clearing in those days, but I was told plainly that I had missed the boat and I would need to look for a job next summer (1962).

## The Penultimate disaster

During the same autumn term, and before the above debacle came to light, I was in a Music A level class one day with my fellow pupils – Pearn, Perkins and Luckett. They were all musicians of some considerable ability, certainly much better instrumentalists than myself, but I had been blessed with a good “musical ear,” which meant that I was perhaps best at aural tests. This balanced us up somewhat, and they seemed to tolerate me, although their knowledge of musical history was also superior by far. John Rippin, in his first term at the school and therefore unfamiliar with our respective credentials, produced a form and announced that he was in the process of entering us for our A level Music exam to be taken the following summer and he needed to record some information from us, namely, our instrument and

(Continued on page 13)

# My Greek Adventure

By John Gray (BHCHS 1941 – 48)



I have been thinking that I should get myself a beret, dark glasses, and take up smoking fat cigars, for now I have somewhat accidentally become a movie producer.

My adventure started very improbably with my well-timed reading of a book on the War of

(1943) allowed me to achieve my aim, and I pledged in the top category, helping to take the total past the target figure, and, earning me the top level of inducement reward, including an expense-paid trip to Symi, with the chance to be part of the process. I have been interested in films and filming from an early age, and so jumped at the chance, even though I had to pay my way from Canada to England to take up the opportunity. My name will also appear on the film as Executive Producer and in the film industry database.

A couple of night's rest at Gatwick did not fully prepare me for the five-hour flight to Rhodes, but it helped, and the following morning, a ninety-minute ferry ride in a hefty gale took me to Symi; fortunately the boat was large enough not to be too badly affected by the weather.

By the time of my arrival in Symi, the weather had cleared, and



*An example of some of the terrain on Symi*

destroyed the other major industry. The population is around a tenth of what it was, and now tourism constitutes the major source of income, together with the significant ex-pat British community whose support is largely what brought the production to the island. One result of the population decline is that the village of Horio, where the film was shot, abounds in the ruins of stone houses - just the kind of place for a horror movie.

Another interesting feature of the area is the maze of narrow alleys. The eastern Mediterranean has been victimised over the ages by pirates and invaders, and so has been a very insecure place in which to live, with the result that the wealthy lived as high up on the hills as possible, and the lanes were built with many turns and alternative routes in the hope that marauders would lose their way, or, at least, could be evaded. During WWII, youngsters would taunt the occupiers and lead them on a wild goose chase, giving them the slip in the maze of alleyways. I shared this experience to my cost, for I would set off following the camera crew on the uneven stone paving, but,

being less mobile than these healthy young fellows, I tended to lose them at the first corner.

The film crew as a whole were highly competent, with good reputations in the industry, and, much to my surprise, I was readily accepted into the group, despite having completely fulfilled my function in the production before my arrival.

The actors, too, were a very agreeable lot, and I enjoyed their company. All of them came with good reputation, and their names are probably better known to UK residents than to me; the only one whom I had seen on television was Lorna Doyle in *The Tudors*. Kurtis Stacey (of *Emmerdale*) was present for the whole of the shoot, and Rebecca Grant and Richard Syms were each there for a couple of days. Wookie Mayer, the noted German star of many film and television productions, was there for longer, having a house on Symi.

The ex-pat community contributed a great deal to the production, and took on the frustrating task of providing lunch at unpredictable times during the days of the shoot, and the professionals said



*One of the Symi alleyways*

1812. My late brother-in-law's grandfather was a Navy man, and when I read about a naval lieutenant with the same surname, I enquired of my step-niece if he was related. Accompanying the negative reply was a lot of family news, including the information that her brother, a resident of the Greek island of Symi (rhyming with 'Timmy') had volunteered to help with a film being shot there, and that her son had also volunteered with the expectation of gaining experience with filmmaking, and of getting some useful contacts in the process.

The low-budget film - *The Judas Curse*, regrettably a supernatural horror movie, my least favourite genre - was being funded through a *Kickstarter* appeal, and I decided to do what I could to help the young fellow achieve his aim. Fortunately, a legacy from my late brother Chris

fortunately for me - and the shoot - the sky remained clear during the rest of my stay, and the October weather there would have outshone midsummer in many other places.

Flying over the Aegean towards Rhodes, I was moved by the thought that most of the islands below me would have sent contingents to the Siege of Troy. Symi contributed three ships, under the command of their King, Nireus, 'the handsomest man in the host before Troy next to Achilles'.

Symi is a small and hilly island that has seen better days. In the 19th century it had a population of around 25,000, but the advent of steam power saw the collapse of the shipbuilding industry (whose demand for timber had left many of the hillsides bare), and over-harvesting of sponges



*Kurtis Stacey, the principal actor, in a scene with one of the Symi residents*



'One-take Harry' in one of his scenes

that they had never eaten so well while working on a film.

Not only did the local residents provide the food, they provided other services, too. In the Mediterranean heat, there was a constant demand for bottled water, which the local helpers provided faithfully; the script writer and the stills photographer lived on Symi; and other residents took acting parts in the film.

One great success was the 5-year-old son of one of the ex-pat residents, being brought up in the



A view from Symi, looking across to Turkey

Greek manner. He was a natural actor, and readily did all that he was asked to do. The only time he was in a re-take was when the professional with whom he was sharing the scene did not satisfy the Director; the youngster was admirably dubbed 'One-take Harry' by the film crew.

I, too, had a part in the film. There was a call for volunteers to be a corpse, and I was the first to respond. I lay down and was covered by a sheet, with my left forearm exposed, and my hand anointed with fake blood - a commodity that flowed in abundance during the shoot.

It was an interesting adventure, offering an experience available to very few. I already knew enough about the process of making a film that my knowledge was not greatly in-

creased, but this in itself was something worth knowing; the real understanding came with the sharing of the general atmosphere of the process - the general camaraderie, and the frustrating waits for circumstances to fall into place before the next shot could be taken.

Apart from this, it was exciting to visit a part of the world that is new to me, and to see the beautiful island of Symi, of which I had learnt in correspondence with my nephew.

There was a price to pay, though; it was a tiring expedition, with the five-hour flight to Rhodes added to the transatlantic flight, and then trudging over a very hilly island following the film crew. It took me a long time to recover from the effort, but the physical exertion, together with the cost, was well worth the expenditure. Besides, I rather like the idea of having 'Film Producer' on my business card; I would recommend the experience to others.

I started out interested in the process, little concerned with the product, but I have become much more involved in the outcome, and even though part of my reward is to receive a DVD of the film, I may even make a brief trip for the premiere to lend my gravitas to the occasion.

(Continued from page 11)  
the highest grade we had so far achieved.

"Pearn" - "Violin - Grade 8; Piano - Grade 8, etc." "Thank you."

"Lockett" - "Flute - Grade 8, etc." "Thank you."

"Perkins" - "Double Bass - Grade 8, etc." "Thank you."

"Butler" - "Piano - Grade 5; Cello - Grade 3." At this, there was a "collapse of stout party" moment!

J.W.R.: "But you have to have Grade 6 in an instrument to be allowed to take A level Music." I didn't know that. No-one had told me. The fact that I had passed Grade 5 when I was only ten years old did not change matters.

This time, it seemed, my education had really hit the buffers. Here I was, nearly 18, with just 5 O levels after disasters over Latin, German, Physics, and General Science; already barred from going to university; heading for a fail at A level in Maths; and now disqualified from taking the only subject I was any good at (I was to scrape a Grade 6 pass in A level English).

After making a phone call, it was discovered that the only thing the school could do was to put down that I was currently studying for my Grade 6 Piano exam to be taken privately in January 1962, the last acceptable date before the June A level. This gave me three months to achieve Grade 6 in January - not too bad if I was currently at Grade 5 standard, but I wasn't. I had not had a lesson since we moved from St. Albans in 1953, nine years previously!

We found a very good teacher and somehow I managed to pass, and so was able to obtain a Music A level after all.

### The final disaster

Whereas most of the previous disasters could be said to be due to bad luck, the final one in the Spring term of 1962 was entirely my fault. The annual music concert was coming up and Mr Rippin thought that the very slow movement from Elgar's Cello Concerto might be a suitable item to include, with me playing the solo. To my shock, during rehearsals I could not make any musical sense of the accompaniment coming from the school orchestra behind me - they seemed to be mystified by the score too. I remember John asking me whether I would prefer it if we dropped the item. Foolishly, thinking that withdrawal would be seen as weakness, I chose to continue. The perfor-

mance was doomed before we started really, because four years previously the school had had a brilliant cellist called Geoffrey Pratley, and comparisons were bound to be made. We didn't have a car, but my father very supportively walked the three miles to school that night (and back) to be incognito in the audience, and the concert duly proceeded. At the end of my cringingly unsatisfactory performance, a stranger sitting next to my father felt moved to turn to him and whisper, "If he were dead, Pratley would be turning in his grave!" Although my father never reported what he replied, he wasn't one for defending the indefensible.

Sadly, both Pearn and Frizelle were soon to pass away but I enjoyed time in their company at school. Another friend, Dick Fenton, has also gone - I remember being startled when he came up to me one day and demanded to know when I had been converted - he was always very earnest about his Christianity. Finally, I was sad to see the passing of Alan Dear - someone who I had never noticed until my final year at the school (he was in the fifth form) when our paths finally crossed. Belatedly I had managed to get into the school football second eleven, and he was the goalkeeper. We used to rush getting changed to be first out, for shooting and saving practice respectively. It was one of those unlikely and totally event-specific friendships - I cannot ever remember seeing him around in school.

So did I go and look for a job in 1962? - yes, but that is another story. The rest of my life seems to have been very fortunate, by contrast!

I won a scholarship to the British Bata Shoe Co. in a scheme similar to that run by Ford at the time, which involved training us to become Chartered Management Accountants.

I duly qualified, but decided to change course and return to the world of education, and commenced my 34 years teaching accountancy at Loughton and Harlow Colleges, where I enjoyed a very satisfying and rewarding career.

I took early retirement at 50 and then immediately managed to secure a substantial part-time post back at Loughton College, which saw me through until full retirement at 60, when we upped sticks and moved to Suffolk - myself, Jane, my wife, and our two dogs (child-replacements, according to psychologists), for our two sons had long flown the nest.

# Old Bucks Cricket: 1971 All Out

By Chris Butler

A nostalgic but not too respectful look back to the club's cricketing exploits of the 1960s. Any libel suit will fail for lack of author's funds!

## An Honorary Buck

FRESH FROM completing my National Service in 1961 I was looking for somewhere to play some cricket. In my late teens I had played for my local church team but they had since folded through lack of support. I had recently met Brian Astley through our common interest in amateur dramatics and he suggested that I might join the Old Bucks.

My secondary education had been an eight year sentence served at a private boarding school where the headmaster delighted in beating his pupils into submissive acceptance of his omnipotence, and the only connection I had with BHCHS was through my younger brother, Bernard, who was in his final year there. Brian explained that a limited number of outsiders could be enrolled as honorary Old Bucks and thus started a very enjoyable decade throughout which, still free from the pressures and restrictions that tend to be imposed on a young man once he takes a spouse, I was generally able to turn out for the cricket team twice each summer weekend.

Those were the days before the OBA built its own clubhouse on a former refuse tip in Roding Lane North and we staged our home games where we could find a pitch. Historically, the club had used the Ashton Playing Fields quite a lot – Mick Cooper's father was caretaker there – but by 1964 we favoured some playing fields behind the Cocked Hat pub on Southend Road (now a housing estate), where the wickets were about the best we came across. The eventual move to our own home generated much excitement all round and, amongst those responsible for bringing the project to fruition, not a little pride. Unfortunately, the quality of the pitches left a great deal to be desired and the short boundaries behind each wicket were less than ideal.

I don't recall how it was that I was asked to open the innings in my first game – I can't believe that I would have gone out of my way to suggest that it would be a good idea – perhaps they wanted to find out if I knew which end of the bat to hold. Anyway, I managed to stay in for about three-quarters of an hour and scraped a few runs together.



Teatime relaxation. The OBA cricketers and their other halves during a 1965 match

Photo Chris Butler

I recall Barry Woods saying afterwards how pleased he was that the club had at last found someone who could keep an end up, and so it was, unless the situation called for some quick runs from the outset, that successive captains always asked me to take first strike.

## Talented All-Rounder

Although I had a reasonably sound defensive technique, I sometimes allowed the need to keep my wicket intact to blind me to the desirability of maintaining an acceptable rate of scoring. So long as Terry Carter, far and away the club's most talented all-round cricketer, was scoring freely at the other end it didn't matter too much, but there were times when I felt responsible for slowing things down.

Time and again Terry was the star of the show. He rarely seemed to fail with the bat (I think he averaged around 40) and he could bowl both spin and medium-pace with economy and incision. There were those who felt that his talents deserved to be displayed on a higher stage but I think he enjoyed being top man at our modest level. I hope he will forgive me for suggesting that he was very much aware of his value to the team and took the view that it would be best if he faced as much of the bowling as possible while he was at the wicket. This led him to farm the bowling in the most outrageous manner, refusing batsmen a single off the last ball of an over while often calling for an 'impossible' run when roles were reversed, endangering his partner's chances of survival.

Much to the annoyance of many an opposition bowler, Terry was

a hopeless fidget at the crease. Various adjustments of his dress (Ian Chappell comes to mind) culminated in the habitual rubbing of the inside of his right wrist on the reverse of the bat as the bowler reached his delivery stride. This movement sometimes distracted the bowler who would often abort the delivery; Terry would then feign an apology with an impish smirk on his face, content in the knowledge that he had done his best to upset the bowler's rhythm – magic!

Our modest aim in each match was to push our score beyond 100, which was considered a respectable effort. This was usually accomplished if Terry was on song; in fact, he and I even had a few century partnerships (I remember one in which I contributed a masterly 17), but the team also had its fair share of disasters and I recall one game on Wanstead Flats where we managed a miserable 14 runs between us. Our opponents usually took pity on us in these circumstances and let us have another go after the official match was completed. Some of us were able to turn out twice a weekend and others just the once, some on a Saturday and others on a Sunday; inevitably, this gave each team its own look and feel. Let's look at some of the other players.

## Player Profiles

Mick Cooper and Ken Button both played regularly on Saturdays at the time I joined. They both looked comfortable at the crease and each had a sound technique but neither seemed to score as heavily as their styles promised. Joe Colton's medium-pacers were a valuable asset to the Saturday side's bowling ar-

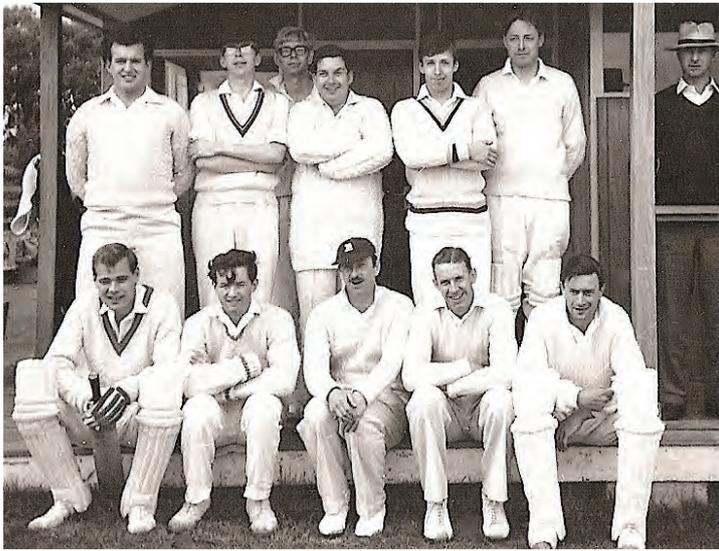
moury. Joe wasn't on the phone at home but his neighbour and Spurs legend, Les Allen, was, and in my days as team secretary I frequently had to ring Les to ask him to go next door and bring Joe to the phone – graciously he never complained.

Other regulars included John Bernard, Alan Blackhall, Don Coates, the excellent all-rounders Pete and Ron Davis (I'm sure Pete would acknowledge that his younger brother was the better batsman), Frank Hardy, John Rivers, Tom Smith, Colin Wood and Barry Wynn. Alan I remember fondly for the jangling sound his loose change made as he approached the stumps; Frank for always talking about matters horticultural; John Rivers for being probably the most seriously affected sufferer from hay fever in the whole of the United Kingdom (on a bad day his eyes really were 'rivers' of irritation), and John Bernard for his sheer raw enthusiasm for the game.

## Generosity

One of the certainties about being captain is that you will usually upset someone most weeks when deciding on your batting order: when Brian Astley held the position of Saturday captain he managed to upset the whole team every week, not so much in that respect as by consistently choosing himself as wicket-keeper! I hope I knew Brian well enough to be able to suggest that his idiosyncratic approach to the art of keeping wicket was centred round a generosity of spirit towards opposing batsmen who often found themselves the beneficiaries of several 'lives'.

There was one famous incident of this that went down in Old



This photo, taken about 1964, was one of the teams on tour in Sussex. Some not identified but the back row includes Colin Wood, Graham Jones, Mick Cooper, Tom Smith. Front (from left): Chris Butler, Terry Carter, Bob Partridge, Brian Astley, Ches Warren.

Bucks folklore. Our opponents were heading for a big score and, although they had by then lost seven wickets, one of their openers was threatening to carry his bat. Brian contrived to drop a simple chance offered by their No.9 but excused it by claiming that, of the two batsmen at the crease, he was not the one we were trying to get out!

To be fair to Brian, nobody else wanted to keep wicket anyway, but such was his incompetence at the task that we used to run a sweep on how many chances would go begging behind the stumps. He worked tirelessly for the club over many years and often contributed useful runs from the lower middle order, although most of them were 'walked' rather than run, as his mobility was hindered by a hammer-toe condition of which he was strangely proud.

Doug Clarke was another player whose lack of mobility turned many a two and the occasional three into singles, but he was a good enough bat to find the boundary fairly regularly by way of compensation. Doug's immobility was rooted in a knee problem for which he stubbornly refused medical intervention; in Stuart Low's case it was simply a question of size. Whenever he was available he always opened the innings with me and I usually ran him out trying to get off the mark. As solid in build as he was in style, his chances of beating an accurate throw to the wicket-keeper, not good at the best of times, were further hindered by his unwillingness to back-up as the bowler reached his delivery stride. Jack Sutton, the OBA chairman, and Charlie Summers made occasional appearances, and, although they raised the conviviality factor, neither was

as slim as they must have been in their younger days, so they too were candidates for being run out going for a slow single!

Towards the end of the 60s Mick Dunlop returned to play for the club, having been absent for a few years laying the foundations of a stable life for his young family. His keenness and athleticism were like a breath of fresh air and he was no mean performer either. Peter Bodley was someone else I wished had been available more often: I recall him stroking a masterly 70 on the Roding Lane North rubbish tip and then disappearing for the rest of the season.

**Bowling Talent**

Perhaps the club's best bowling pairing was Ches Warren with Dick Pingree. Ches was very fast and his yorker frequently wreaked havoc amongst his victims' stumps. I think it fair to say that he possessed an erratic personality which he sometimes found difficulty in controlling. He made no attempt to hide his less than complimentary views about the cricketing skills of his brother-in-law, Brian Astley, and this provoked a number of 'incidents' we could well have done without, but he was certainly a colourful character. Only ever available on Sundays, Dick was a superb fast-medium bowler with a nagging accuracy that regularly produced dividends.

Most cricket teams are able to call on that stalwart chap who is prepared to turn up simply to make up the numbers. In my time as team secretary the Old Bucks were blessed with three such worthies. Dave Maybury and Bob Partridge fulfilled this role on Saturdays and Sundays respectively without complaint for several years. Always batting

at No.11, where any runs they scored were entirely accidental, and never being asked to bowl, they could have been forgiven for throwing-in the towel, but I think they derived enjoyment from the team's successful moments and, certainly in Bob's case, from the after-match refreshment sessions. It was tragic that both men met early deaths.

**Touring Sussex**

The highlight of our season was our Sussex Tour – matches against the villages of Sedlescombe and Icklesham, near Hastings. Most of us booked into a hotel in St.Leonards for two nights (some with our girlfriends, tut tut!) whilst those who could only play in one of the games would usually drive down on the day. Not all of us had cars so those who did were expected to give lifts to those who didn't.

The emphasis was on having a good time but the cricket was taken seriously enough. I recall, as captain, upsetting John Bernard once by taking him off after his first over which, unusually for him, was made up almost entirely of short-pitched dross. As he stormed away in disgust he asked me whether I thought he was bowling like that on purpose; I replied that, with the opposition's score already into double figures, I couldn't afford to take the risk of finding out in his second over. I did bring him on again later though when he bowled with much more disci-

pline, took a couple of wickets and was later kind enough to say I had probably done the right thing.

I never had much luck with my early cars and I don't suppose I was alone in that respect. Returning from one of those weekend trips to Sussex the vehicle of the day decided to give up the ghost in a big way. My girlfriend and I were resigned to abandoning the wretched heap of junk and were reduced to thumbing-down the passing traffic in the hope of getting a lift back to Essex. It was nearly 10pm and quite dark when Doug Clarke, who had been a day-tripper for the Sunday game, recognised the Old Bucks cap I had put on only moments before because of the cold and pulled up to see what was amiss. Not only did he tow my sick vehicle to a garage near Tonbridge, where I left it on the forecourt with an explanatory note on the dash, but he drove my girlfriend and me to our respective front doors in Leytonstone and Loughton. As a lifelong Spurs supporter it warms my heart to say that there are some decent Arsenal fans out there somewhere!

**Hammered**

In 1969 the club played its most prestigious match – against the Sunday social side run by West Ham United FC. Brian Astley was the motivating force behind the idea (after my earlier comments I feel I owe his memory a

**West Ham F.C.**

Boyce, b. Davis, R.	...	...	...	1
Moore, b. Davis, R.	...	...	...	5
Howe, c. Butler, b. Bernard	...	...	...	1
Lampard, not out	...	...	...	105
Morgan, c. Davis, R., b. Bernard	...	...	...	0
Cross, b. Davis, R.	...	...	...	58
Peters, not out	...	...	...	10
Extras	...	...	...	7
<b>Total (5 wkts. dec.)</b>				<b>187</b>

Dear, Sissons, Brooking and Best did not bat.  
Bowling: R. Davis 3 - 51, Bernard 2 - 43.

**Old Bucks**

Butler, c. Howe, b. Dear	...	...	...	37
Wynn, c. Boyce, b. Best	...	...	...	9
Carter, b. Dear	...	...	...	21
Killick, b. Dear	...	...	...	0
Davis, R., c. Best, b. Dear	...	...	...	14
Bernard, b. Moore	...	...	...	0
Spinks, st. Peters, b. Dear	...	...	...	3
Astley, c. Boyce, b. Moore	...	...	...	0
Allum, b. Moore	...	...	...	4
Coates, not out	...	...	...	0
Davis, P., c. Dear, b. Moore	...	...	...	0
Extras	...	...	...	1
<b>Total</b>				<b>89</b>

Bowling: Dear, 5 - 16; Moore, 4 - 19; Best, 1 - 20.  
Don ARLOTT (alias COATES)

Scorecard from the match against West Ham, August 1969, from the OBA Newsletter of October 1969

# Loughton's Archive Treasures

few brownie points here!). The deteriorating condition of the playing surface at Roding Lane North had by then prompted us to look elsewhere for most of our home games and we were by then regulars customers at Wadham Lodge, just off the North Circular Road near the Crooked Billet. Situated in pleasant parkland, most of the pitches were surrounded by banks of tall mature trees which, on a dull day, provided a rather dark background behind the bowler's arm. Sightcreens would have been welcome but, since we never normally played with such luxuries, no one ever complained.

West Ham batted first and started disastrously, losing four wickets before getting into double figures. Ron Davis clean bowled both Ronnie Boyce and Bobby Moore while John Bernard removed Howe and Morgan, both to catches in the slips. Enter then a rather scruffy, long-haired nineteen-year-old, now known to the world as Frank Lampard senior, to stroke an unbeaten century in company for much of the time with Roger Cross. West Ham declared at tea on 187-5.

When our turn came to bat we soon fell behind the required rate. I accumulated 37 runs in my customary pedestrian fashion but once Terry Carter was dismissed for 21 we lacked the potential for that significant contribution that would push our total close to theirs. Nonetheless, when our fourth wicket fell with 80 on the board we still harboured hopes of posting a respectable score, but our remaining batsmen fell to a series of poor strokes and we were all out for 89; Brian Dear, their captain, took 5 for 16 and Bobby Moore 4 for 19.

By all accounts Geoff Hurst was their usual wicket-keeper but, although he attended the match with his young family, he was unable to play, having strained his groin in a pre-season friendly the previous day. Martin Peters deputised and, standing bolt upright throughout, gave the impression that he was incapable of bending his knees. Had Alf Ramsey been there I doubt he would have considered Peters to have been "ten years ahead of his time" in this sport as well! It is rumoured that Terry Carter broke a finger at some stage during the match; I have no recollection of this occurrence though I'm sure Terry has if it is true!

Non-playing support from both sides together with wives, girlfriends and offspring swelled the ranks of spectators to unprecedented numbers and most of the West Ham contingent stayed on

afterwards for a drink or two. It would be nice to be able to report that the game was played in a good spirit throughout; for the most part it was but for some reason Brian Dear, the West Ham captain, lost sight of the fact that he was in charge of a 'social' team. Throughout our innings he was guilty of some rather boorish behaviour towards his own team-mates, which culminated in a venomous outburst aimed at Roger Cross in language entirely unsuitable for a Sunday afternoon – or any other afternoon for that matter – for not paying attention in the field. I've often wondered whether it was entirely co-incidental that before the new football season was many months old Cross was transferred to Brentford!

### A Sad End

The demise of the club came suddenly in 1971. At a committee meeting in the spring it came to light that the match secretary (it would be best if he remained unidentified) had failed to arrange a single fixture! Rather than play for a team that would have to rely on arranging games through the 'emergency pool' system each week, most of the chaps who wanted to play regularly decided to join other clubs, with Loughton's 3rd XI being the main beneficiary.

For me this signalled a sad end to a decade of sporting endeavour in which I had made some new friends and with whom I had enjoyed our fair share of sporting success; but the change turned out well for Brian Astley who seemed to have the last laugh on us all – freed from any wicket-keeping responsibilities at his new club he actually scored a century for them!

It has shocked me to realise that the times of which I write are now half a century distant and that several of those whose names I have recalled have now passed on.

Never having been an Old Buck in the true sense myself it was not easy to keep in touch over the years and in some cases it is now too late. But I have my memories and will always be grateful for having been accepted as one of your number on summer weekend afternoons all those years ago.

*Footnote: Sue Golding, Brian Astley's daughter, wrote to me some time ago asking for any information about the West Ham match, which she remembered attending as a young girl. Sue provided proof of her attendance - she still has the autographs of the Hammers' stars! - Ed.*

IF YOU are an attentive reader you will know that last year a long-held ambition was realised when some enthusiastic former pupils from Loughton CHS decided to set up a website and establish their network. I was confident that this would lead to mutual benefits but I'd been thinking more about the fact that many members from each school have had family or marital links with pupils from the other.

So it was a welcome surprise when I had a message in June from **Christine Spencer** who has been working on organising the Loughton CHS archives.

Christine told me that she had made several visits to Roding Valley High School (which occupied the Loughton CHS buildings after they closed). A considerable amount of material remains at the school and while she was organising it she found various items that originated from BHCHS. Within a matter of minutes I had established contact with **Julia Martin**, the very helpful librarian at RVHS, and arranged to go and inspect the goodies.

A box contained various papers and other items rescued from the black bags that sent most of our school records into oblivion. Some of the items were familiar to me and therefore less interesting, but there were a few treasures, kindly lent to me by Julia. These included some photographs and historic school documents, about which more later. But the most interesting of all was a pile of quarto-size sheets of paper, yellowed with age, 1.5 inches high. Further inspection revealed that these were admissions registers from the war years, specifically relating to the boys who started at BHCHS during the period 1941-1944 inclusive.

This was a significant find. My

early visits to the Essex Records Office at Chelmsford had enabled me to inspect admissions registers from 1945, and this enabled me to establish the database of names as the big Buck-hunt was getting under way. But the identity of the boys who started during the war years had remained incomplete. For those names I had to rely on what I could find in the school magazines and what could be remembered by our members. Many of the names, especially the first names, were uncertain. This made searching for individuals very tricky.

Now, for the first time, I had first names in full, plus dates of birth and various additional bits of information as shown on the sample below. The additional information would be unlikely to help me search, but does have historical interest. These were the days before the 1944 Education Act (the "Butler Act") gave free secondary education to all. These wartime forms included data on the "extent of remission" of school fees. Where this section of the form was completed, the box contains one of the following entries: "none", "partial" or "in full". I assume there was some kind of means test, but it would be interesting to discover more about it.

Another curiosity was that a section of the form, "Terms kept", recorded each term when the boy was actually at school. During any periods of evacuation the term/year were prefaced with "Ev". In a few cases, such as the case of the example shown below, the pupil was evacuated for the whole period of war, and even beyond. So while Peter was formally a pupil at BHCHS, it seems likely that he never set foot in our school.

The discovery of these records immediately set me off once again on the trail of finding our missing pupils. Within just a few days I had successfully followed up on 13 of the new names. Sadly, but not unexpectedly, many of those discovered were now deceased. I spoke to several widows who confirmed their late husbands had been pupils. But at least the records are now complete.

If anyone from those years would like to receive their admissions records I am happy to scan them and email them to you.

**The Editor**

Before entries are made, Rule 54 (June, 1937) should be carefully read, in particular those paragraphs which relate to Head 11. Heads 3 and 5 are omitted.

BUCKHURST HILL CH SCHOOL School

Surname: [redacted] Christian Name: Peter Sex: Male

Name of Father: [redacted] Postal Address: 33, Bessant Road, Woodford, E15.

1. Date of Birth: Day 14, Month 1, Year 1930

2. Date of admission: Day 3, Month 9, Year 1941

3. Position on Admission: Boy

4. Day: 1941

5. Terms kept: [Handwritten list of terms from 1941-1944, some marked 'Ev']

6. Place of Residence: Woodford, Essex

7. Occupation of Father or other person in charge: Civil Servant

8. Extent of Remission of Fees: Partial

9. Previous Education: Yes

10. Particulars of any Special Place Award: None

11. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

12. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

13. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

14. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

15. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

16. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

17. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

18. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

19. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

20. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

21. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

22. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

23. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

24. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

25. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

26. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

27. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

28. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

29. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition Fees: None

30. Particulars of any remission of fees or part: None

FORM 71 S. [COVER]

# Where are they now?

**Mick Twiddy (1964)**



And they said it would never last! Yes that's what everybody was saying way back in 1970 when I met my wife Jacque. And here we are about to celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary! Our meeting did affect both of our academic careers as we both left school to enter the job market that summer and, some four years later, had saved enough money to get married, move to Horsham, and enter the property market. I would like to extend my thanks to two other former classmates and fellow Old Bucks - Keith Harris for throwing the party at which we met, and Jeff Leach for being my Best Man.

Not only did it actually last, but nothing has really changed. I am still actively participating in special stage forest rallying (as in Wales Rally GB), and am still using a Mk2 Ford Escort RS that was manufactured in 1975, just a year after we were married - so I really am living in the past!

We both still go to see Rock Bands as we have always done - only last year we saw the Stones in Hyde Park (was also there when they last appeared in 1969), Deep Purple at the Roundhouse Chalk Farm, Mott the Hoople at the O2, as well as several tribute bands. Who else remembers all of those nights at the Wake Arms Groovesville in the early '70s and the Roundhouse Dagenham? Even my hair is almost as long as it was back then, although it has changed colour somewhat, no doubt brought on by the stress of having two children.

In fact we are now even working together as five years ago we both took up the role of Film Extras, having escaped from Royal Sun Alliance at the age of 50 after 30 years service. Gets us out of the house and we get fed well which saves on the food bill! So far the major things we have done are *Robin Hood*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Great Expectations*, in fact anything that requires a period villager/scruffy look.

And I'm still going to watch Arsenal whenever there isn't a rally on or band to go and see.

So after all of this time nothing's really changed. Here's to the next 40 years!

**Chris Parsons (1972)**



I am still living in Germany working for Merz Pharmaceuticals in Frankfurt. I am now also a professor teaching medical students at the university of Tübingen, but more in my spare time and only for a few weeks each year.

My two daughters are now fully-fledged adults. Anna-Katharina works as an architect in London and Francesca is studying dentistry in Witten, Germany.

**Ian Melbourne (1974)**



My first news of Ian was in the first edition of *OB News* when HAC told me he was a professor of mathematics in Houston, Texas.

Since then Ian has moved back to the UK, initially at Surrey University and, more recently, since 2012 at Warwick.

Ian's biography tells us that in the last few years, he has worked on problems in ergodic theory, looking at statistical and probabilistic aspects of dynamical systems.

That may seem a little way from Dr Buchanan's lessons, but I'm sure he would be happy with Ian's progress.

Ian's younger brother Warren was also at BHCHS and, I believe, also a talented mathematician, but I have not had any recent news about him.

**Wing Pang (1978)**



After BHCHS I managed to get myself on a combined sciences course at Leicester University. I finally majored in Psychology. Not that this helped me in my career path as I found myself working in IT for a software house. My previous experience of computing having been with Mr Franklin with the RML380z computer - I never did get to go on the school trip to the mainframe at Chelmsford with the punch cards! Since then I've worked abroad in Atlanta and Hong Kong for various institutions in various IT positions and now work locally in Romford for Towergate Insurance. No matter where I go I always seem to end up back in Essex in some form of hospital, having lived in both Wanstead and Claybury. Memories of BHCHS include Mrs Prior marking an English essay as "mediocre" and not knowing what it meant and doing a project on flags of the world for Mr Gray and getting it all wrong about the Irish flag (I still insist that I copied the information verbatim from the book)! I still drive past the school and reminisce about carrying a bag of maths books over my shoulder walking up Roding Lane come rain or shine as the 167 bus was always crammed full. Perhaps that's why I've developed a frozen shoulder in my old age!

**Mark Wiffen (1979)**



Last time I wrote an article for *OB News* was back in the summer of 2003 and a lot of water has passed under the bridge since then. Still living in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, with my wife of now 20 years, Lynn, and children Tom and Hannah (17 & 14), I am now running my own Architectural Design company, MARLIN Design Ltd. Born out of a need to maintain an income following a number of redundancies during

the 2000s, I am providing services to clients wanting to extend their properties to meet their current living needs. I used to look forward to my Technical Drawing lessons at BHCHS, with Mr Cooke. I still have my drawings, for the project that went to my GCE exam, on dams. This led to me joining ATP Architects from school, where I spent 8 years working to my qualification as an Architectural Technician.

In December 2011 we moved from one side of Bishop's Stortford to the other, in an effort to downsize and restructure our lives. The house we now live in has an office at the bottom of the garden, giving me a daily commute of around 30 seconds. The business has grown year on year since 2010, providing the ideal solution when clients cannot afford to move but need more space.

When not providing Architectural Services I am heavily involved in Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church, primarily as the Organist, a role that I find very satisfying. In March 2014 I was able to play for the wedding of our good friends Chris and Emma. On the other side of the coin, I have had the difficult job of playing the organ for over 30 funerals in the last 3 years, many of whom have been good friends or partners of friends. I am also the Chair of the Premises Committee: looking after a building that is 111 years old is costly and challenging at the best of times.

If any Old Bucks are considering extending their properties feel free to contact me through my website:

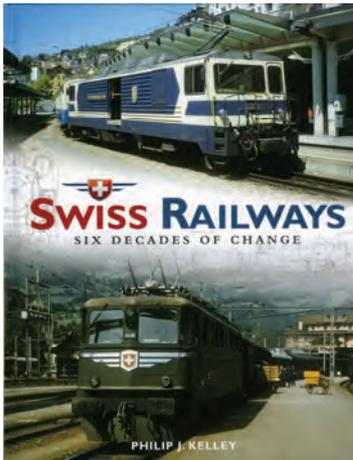
[www.marlin-design.co.uk](http://www.marlin-design.co.uk)

**Jonty Pollard (1983)**



After the closure of BHCHS, Jonty completed his education at Bancrofts before training as a PE teacher at the College of St Mark & St John, Plymouth. He then returned to Bancrofts in 1996 and is now Head of PE there. The photo on p1 shows him on a ski trip in France - Hugh Colgate would have approved.

# BOOKSHELF



## **Swiss Railways - Six Decades of Change by Philip Kelley (BHCHS 1939-43)**

I was so delighted to receive a review copy of this book that I decided to put one of the splendid photos on the front page. I am not a railway buff but have spent a fair amount of time using the wonderful Swiss trains on business. Serious railway enthusiasts should definitely get a copy of Philip's book, which contains around 450 photos and vivid descriptions of his 60 years of travel around Switzerland. When he began his many visits, steam trains were still operating on the main lines, and the gradual changes are described in meticulous detail, providing a superb overview. The photos, many of which were previously unpublished, are supplemented by historical postcards from Philip's own collection.

Philip tells me that he didn't do very well at school but it is clear from this achievement that he has flourished since then. As well as his work in railway history (he is a regular steward at the Didcot Railway Centre) he is also a keen organist, having been encouraged to play by Dr Sidney Campbell at BHCHS.

*Swiss Railways - Six Decades of Change* is published by Shrewdale Publishing and can be obtained via Amazon or from Bookworld Ltd.

Email [info@bookworldws.co.uk](mailto:info@bookworldws.co.uk) Phone 01299 823330

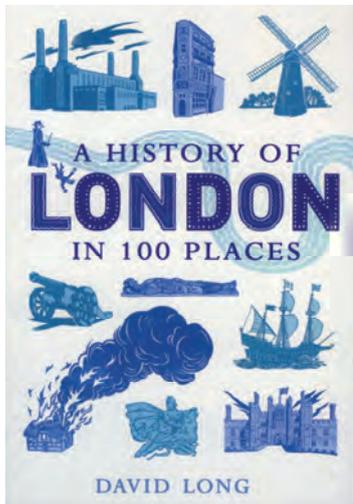
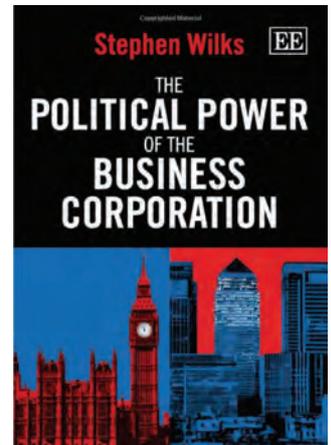


## **The Political Power of the Business Corporation by Stephen Wilks (BHCHS 1960-67)**

Stephen Wilks, Professor of Politics at Exeter University, analyses the way in which large businesses have become a governing institution in national and global politics. He argues that governmental and corporate elites have transformed British politics to create a 'new corporate state', with similar patterns occurring in the USA, and in competitor economies such as China.

Stephen qualified as a Chartered Accountant before taking a PhD at Manchester. He went on to teach at the University of Liverpool and was visiting Professor at Kyoto University before moving to Exeter. He specialises in relations between government and industry. He was a Member of the Economic and Social Research Council from 2001 to 2005, where he chaired the Research Strategy Board. His other main area of expertise is competition policy, where he has written extensively. He served as a Member of the Competition Commission from 2001 to 2009 and is currently a Member of the Competition Appeal Tribunal, where he has recently been working closely with Bill Allan (1961).

Stephen's book is published by Edward Elgar Publishing and is available via Amazon or direct from the publisher [www.e-elgar.co.uk](http://www.e-elgar.co.uk)



## **A History of London in 100 Places by David Long (BHCHS 1972-80)**

This is the 10th of David Long's books we have reviewed since 2006, and, for the latest in his impressive output, David is again in London, with a selection of fascinating corners.

From Roman Londinium to the seething modern metropolis of today, journey through 2,000 years of the world's most vibrant capital.

Shaped by invasion, occupation and immigration, and upheavals as diverse as the Great Fire, the Blitz and the Big Bang, London's history is unmatched for variety and drama. Sharing his passion and expert knowledge, David Long selects 100 places that best tell this incredible story.

Discover Roman temples, Saxon burial mounds, frost fairs on the frozen Thames, Georgian windmills, and one old brown shoe, each with its own unique insight into a critical period of London's evolution.

Whether you prefer to explore history on your feet or from an armchair, this little book will captivate and surprise, revealing oft-overlooked gems among the famous landmarks and the hidden stories locked within.

*A History of London in 100 Places* is published by Oneworld Publications and available via Amazon or direct from David Long's website [www.davidlong.info](http://www.davidlong.info)

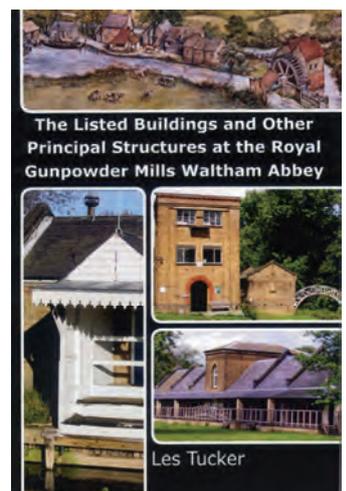


## **The Listed Buildings and Other Principal Structures at the Royal Gunpowder Mills Waltham Abbey by Les Tucker (BHCHS 1947-54)**

Les has written a fascinating insight into the history and archaeology of a local landmark that was for many years shrouded in secrecy but has now been transformed into a popular tourist attraction. Les's book is the result of painstaking research and is profusely illustrated with more than 160 photographs and drawings.

His interest in industrial archaeology and the history of science and technology developed during his career in the oil industry. On retirement he became aware of the waterway system of the Royal Gunpowder Mills and the wide range of surviving buildings and technologies and, pursuing this interest, joined the *Friends Association of the Mills*. Today Les is an archive volunteer at the Gunpowder Mills and his main role is Archivist for the Mills' vast collection of documents and images and maps and plans. During this time he has regularly contributed Archive related articles to *Touchpaper*, the Newsletter of the Friends Association.

The printed version of the book is available via Amazon or as a download from the Royal Gunpowder Mills website [www.royalgunpowdermills.com](http://www.royalgunpowdermills.com)



# IT SEEMS TO ME.....

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



### THE WAY WE WERE

We can all remember the scene. The day is warm, the classroom uncomfortably so. Tom Leek is droning sternly, the way Tom Leek does. Almost all the available oxygen has changed into CO<sub>2</sub> and I am becoming comatose as I doggedly try to commit to memory which is the clint, and which is the grike. Mercifully, and quite suddenly, Tom announces, as we knew he would: "We're moving!" – seeming to me at least to imply a reluctance on our part which is entirely illusory.

And so out into the yard. Fresh air, and the freedom to throw back one's head and bellow with

laughter at something which ten minutes earlier had seemed exquisitely, irresistibly, explosively funny under Tom's stony eye, but which now seems barely amusing.

Or one could play football with a tennis ball, performing, or at least attempting, all sorts of tricks which one would never dare "on the field".

Sometimes we become aware of a knot of lads accumulating in one part of the yard. This usually meant one of three possibilities: (1) poor old Rog was having one of his "grands mals". Not funny, but I hope and believe that he suffered no lasting damage. (2) A fight had broken out; or, more

likely, one of the bullies was remorselessly roughing up some poor defenceless mutt, who presumably had failed to afford appropriate deference to the thug. (3) Someone had got hold of some fealthy postcards. I found the reaction to this, and indeed the subject matter, interesting and instructive. Apparently the required form was to stick one's nose in the air and feign no interest at all. And yet, and yet, the knot maintained or increased its substance.

Odd, that.

As a naïve, Calvinistically raised lad, I have to say that I was rather intrigued and looking for guidance; I noted even that it

appeared to be accepted practice for abundantly male participants to keep their socks on. This was probably by grand maternal edict, with a view to dodging the ague. I never saw scarves in evidence, but my experience in this area was minimal.

As I plodded back to the living hell of maths followed by physics, my inner spiv pondered the situation: here was a clear indication of pent-up demand; get the supply right and one day you could call the racket an industry and clean up, so to speak.

Who knows, in time you might become rich enough to own a famous football club close to many of our hearts. No, that's silly isn't it?

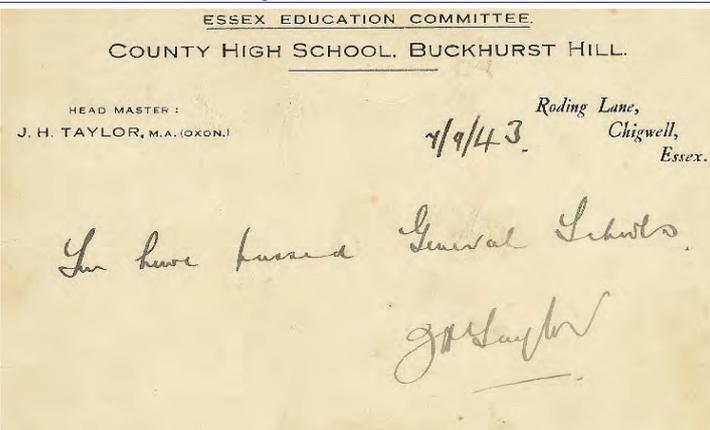
## BITS & PIECES

### The First Boys' School in Buckhurst Hill



If, like me, you imagined that ours was the first boys' school in Buckhurst Hill, you were wrong! I was contacted earlier this year by a lady whose grandfather was a pupil at another boys' school, called Gratton Boys School, and was looking for information. It was easy to find evidence of this school on the internet. Apart from the faded postcard (left), I downloaded a 1909 magazine called *Golden Age* that contains a letter from a boy at the school (11 year old EL Grant) extolling the virtues of vegetarianism. Before you dash to your PC to email me, I am well aware that our school was not in Buckhurst Hill anyway!

### Good News from Spud



How about this for a fascinating piece of memorabilia? A wartime postcard was sent to **Alan Cruchley (1938)** by JH Taylor bearing the good news of Alan's success in the first ever General School Certificate examinations. A thoughtful gesture by the Head, and its terseness could be excused by the volume of work involved - with a new school year beginning.

### Mystery Solved



The *Old Buckwellians Challenge Cup* was a trophy that found its way into the hands of our president Trevor Lebentz by way of an acquaintance who found it in a car boot sale. As reported in *OB News* last year, Trevor had been unable to remember its origin, and I had been unable to find any record of it in the archives.

The mystery was solved by Eric Franklin who, shortly before his death in September 2013, wrote to Trevor informing him that the trophy had been given to BHCHS by the Old Bucks during the school's final decade and was awarded to the winning side in a football match between the school and the Old Bucks Football Club. Eric explained that this competition was held only six times, with the final match two years before the school closed.

The absence of any documentary evidence about this is down to the fact that by then there was no longer a school magazine.

The other trophy-related puzzle - what happened to the main trophies from BHCHS - remains unsolved.

### Pool Prank

A former member of staff, who wishes to remain nameless, asked me if I knew of an incident in the early 1960s where a can of creosote was emptied into the swimming pool at BHCHS. I was at school then, but don't remember it and it wasn't me guv. Is anyone going to own up?



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

## Mystery Teacher

Dave Thomas (1959-66)

During the Autumn term 1966, I was studying for Oxbridge entrance along with Rob White and John Smallbone. We were allowed to use the small room alongside the staff room as our base.

Occasionally masters would come and join us for a chat or to make use of the kettle that we had acquired. I have a vivid recollection of a 'master' called John Morrell who I believe taught English and played rugby for Harlequins. He was also the man who introduced me to the great poet William Topaz McGonagall, of *The Tay Bridge Disaster* fame. When I moved to Edinburgh in 1985, this awareness of McGonagall stood me in good stead, especially as the Round Table to which I belonged performed re-enactments of the above disaster to great acclaim; probably more acclaim than McGonagall earned during his entire life! My problem is that I seem to be the only person who remembers Mr Morrell. Is there anyone out there who can help? I may have spelt his name incorrectly – or have I been smoking something I shouldn't have?

*My initial attempts at trying to identify the mysterious John Morrell ended in complete failure. John Murrell (1953) who would have been a recent graduate from Exeter at that time denies all knowledge. None of the school records available to me give me any information, and we haven't yet found anyone else who remembers him - Ed.*

## How Kevin met Kerri

Chris Youngs (1955-59)

What a refreshing article and what a wonderful contrast to the normal "BHCHS to University to Retirement...how clever I have been...." accounts from my fellow past pupils.

There will expectedly be others who disagree but to see that Kerri's life battles and accomplishments can be put alongside the 'normal' was a stroke of editorial genius and I was delighted to read that the story will continue.

Thank you Mr Editor! ....and thank you Kerri.

*I had many similar messages following the publication of Kerri's story and we now look forward to part three - Ed.*

## Bullying

Lee Summers (1972-77)

When I joined BHCHS in the early seventies it was a fairly intimidating experience in the relative short term. From the safety of a local junior school, where all was mostly calm and intimate, to a world of corridors, structure, uncertainty and being in the presence of bigger boys, many of whom seemed to be men. I went from knowing everybody to just the two others who joined from my school.

Bullying, I have to say sadly, was commonplace. Almost without exception most of us experienced a degree initially...whether it be just a push/shove into lockers, an unprovoked kick/punch whilst walking up stairs/along corridors, a random whack in the testicles with one of those fluorescent bendy curve tools used for angles etc. or just general (if moderate) verbal abuse. Sadly, some suffered, whether it be through interests/personality/physicality, for a protracted period. Then it started to change...

For me, the tipping points were building a reputation through sport with the older boys ("Summers is ok"), developing a confidence, growing closer with a group of class friends, and good old physiology. Year 4, I recall, was the watershed...more physically and emotionally confident and mature enough to recognise the "I'm not having this" mentality, either personally or in support of friends.

Two specific examples spring to mind. A legendary bully from the year above, missing the changes above, attempted the ritual attack on a friend on the Roding walk home...and came out worse! Two black eyes visible for all to see the next day and the myth was destroyed for ever. For me personally it was a playground game of football. A tackle with a known self-believed "hard case" from the year above. He fell over...leapt up. We went eyeball to eyeball....I didn't back down. He did and that was the Rubicon crossed. Never an issue again. My own classmates generally did not participate in much of that behaviour but, sadly, some experienced some very unpleasant incidents at the hands of the bullies until we came of age.

*Bullying, sadly a feature of growing up, has been a regular topic in our columns and I welcome contributions from others - Ed.*

## Another Rugby Teacher

Graham Styles (1950-55)

Regarding your feature on Rugger (*OB News May 2014*), no mention was made of Reg Cave. He was a PE teacher in the 50s as I'm sure you are aware and played rugger for the Old Cooperians, whose home ground was Grange Farm; if my memory serves me correct he was a nifty



Reg Cave

scrum half. I spent many a Saturday afternoon being unofficial ballboy and learning the rules and devious 'gamesmanship' of the sport.

*I have checked back on the references to Mr Cave during his 7 years at BHCHS and no mention was made of his rugby playing. The school magazine of 1954 (Reg Cave started in January) curiously failed to list any staff changes that year. The rugby achievements of other staff were acknowledged as we saw in the last edition - Ed.*

## Pitch Improved

Allan Charlwood (1945-52)

When war was declared in September 1939, I had already been evacuated with my mother and brother to Cornwall. I understand that at this time all professional football was cancelled, theatres closed in fear of the expected air-raids.

In 1940, however, football started up again with the main clubs playing in regional competitions. The London League was formed by all the professional clubs coming together, but now with many guest players who were stationed near London in the services. Tottenham and Arsenal shared the ground at White Hart Lane.

My father, who had been a Spurs season ticket holder, started going to Tottenham, cycling from



Willie Hall

our home in Woodford with my brother and me in tow. I was now 6. We also visited many of the other London grounds as well, this involving bus and train journeys.

So at some time my first trip to the football ground in Leyton occurred. By now, a well known Tottenham star by the name of Willie Hall, whom my parents had met at a holiday camp in Hemsby, Norfolk, had to give up his playing career through thrombosis, which finally resulted in the amputation of both his lower legs. He was now Manager of Clapton Orient, as the club was then called, so we paid him a visit. In 1938, my "Uncle Bill" had scored five goals for England when playing against Northern Ireland. Three of his goals came in a five minute spell - still the fastest hat-trick in worldwide International Football.

The state of the Clapton Orient ground made a lasting impression on me. How could anyone play on a pitch like that, with mud up to your ankles? Clapton Orient was the worst pitch I had ever seen, It was impossible to try to pass the ball. And the spectator facilities left much to be desired.

Today what a different story. The change of name to Leyton Orient happened some years ago now, but, since we have been able to benefit from Barry Hearn's continued invitations, we can all see the many improvements that have now taken place, many as a result of his influence.

This year our seats were in the West Stand Gallery, which gave us a great view of the pitch. The rest of the facilities, the Carvery Restaurant and the number of bars are all much appreciated by the local supporters and away team visitors.

Oh yes, that pitch? Like all the rest, it's stunning!

# Obituary

## Leslie Rayment

(BHCHS 1939-46)



LESLIE RAYMENT was one of the first generation of academically successful pupils from BHCHS, and was particularly inspired by the French teaching of Walter May.

During one of their many amus-

ing exchanges Mr May told him he should either go on the stage or teach. Leslie chose the latter option and qualified as a teacher after completing national service in the Army.

His first experience of teaching was actually at BHCHS, when he stood in briefly during John Grover's absence. Subsequently he taught in many parts of England and in Scotland, becoming a Head Teacher in Ipswich in 1968.

He retired in 1985, having become disillusioned by the way in which politics had taken over education. He then remained in Woodbridge and enjoyed a long and contented retirement, travelling widely with his wife Enid and their family – they had a son and a daughter and five grandchildren.

Leslie was fortunate to experience good health throughout his life. Enid wrote to tell me that his death was the result of an accident at home. At the end of a happy family day he caught his foot at the top of his stairs resulting in a fall from which he never fully regained consciousness.

He died on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

## Colin Harbott

(BHCHS 1939-44)



COLIN HARBOTT became one of several from his year to choose architecture as a profession. He worked initially in private practice and then for the Department of the Environment. Colin married June, formerly of Loughton County High, having met when June had just left school. They were married for almost 60 years. June speculates whether this may be a record for pupils from the two schools. Colin retired in 1988 and moved to Gloucestershire, enjoying many happy retirement years. He died from heart failure on 14th February 2014, having just reached his 86th birthday. Colin and June had two daughters.

## Alf Keeble

(BHCHS 1941-46)



out payment, but covered by an insurance. Unfortunately, because Alf had lost his right eye in a tragic accident when he was two years old, this arrangement was not accepted. He still used his skills in accountancy for several years, eventually becoming a sales representative and finally self-employed, running a light transport business.

Retiring on grounds of ill-health in 1992, and with our families happily settled, Alf and I decided to move right away from the east coast and found our perfect home in Lincombe Lee, a small village in North Devon. For the next nineteen years we grew to love the village, the people and our way of life, which was quiet and modest, but we were deeply contented.

It was a bitter blow to us when, having recovered from breast cancer four years ago, Alf was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia. He died in the North Devon Hospice on January 15th, two days after his 84th birthday and three weeks before our 60th wedding anniversary. He is so sadly missed by his family and all the friends, old and new, who attended his funeral in our village church.

Alf and I had two beloved sons, a granddaughter, five grandsons and three great grandsons.

Brenda Keeble

BORN IN Leytonstone, Alf was the fourth of eight children. The family moved to Barkingside when he was four years old where he attended Fairlop Junior School before passing the Scholarship in 1941. He chose BHCHS which meant a long and tedious journey, Ilford CHS was a few hundred yards walk away.

He often talked of his time at school, and after joining the Old Buckwellians he thoroughly enjoyed reading the magazine, recalling friends and teachers.

Alf had a varied working life but never really settled into a career. He really wanted to be a Chartered Accountant but money was tight. His only option was becoming an Articled Clerk, with-

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

**Reg Cave (PE, 1954-61)** has died, probably in the past year. He lived in Clayhall. See p20.

**Sam Marks (1938)** died in June 2014. He lived in Hornchurch.

**Geoffrey Keiller (1940)** died in March 2014. He lived in Chigwell.

**Peter Chuck (1941)** died in about 2002. He had only attended BHCHS for one year.

**Alan J Russell (1941)** died in November 1996. He lived in the Birmingham area.

**Roy Washington (1941)** died in May 2014. He lived in Bellevue, Washington USA. An obituary will appear in the next edition.

**Alan Dale (1942)** died in 1964. He lived in Epping.

**Graeme White (1942)** died in 1981. He lived in Stevenage.

**Ron Kirby (1943)** died in 1981. He lived in or near Norwich.

**Peter Monk (1943)** was only at BHCHS for a single year. He died in 1980. He lived in Enfield.

**Alan Pratchett (1943)** died in August 2013. He had been suffering from prostate cancer. Alan lived in Wantage, Oxfordshire.

**Tony Giblett (1944)** died in

April 2009. He had emigrated to Canada in 1993.

**Donald Rayner (1944)** died in 1980. He lived in or near Colchester.

**Bryan H Wilson (1944)** died in 1994. He lived in Chelmsford.

**John Green (1946)** died in June 2014 from bronchopneumonia and myeloma. He lived in North Weald.

**Roger Landbeck (1946)** died in July 2014. He lived in Brisbane, Queensland.

**Tony Owen (1949)** died in April 2012. He had been suffering from cancer. He lived in Ingatestone.

**Brian Perring (1949)**. I have been told by his cousin John Perring (1952) that Brian died a few years ago.

**Robin Payne (1950)** died in about 2012. He lived in France.

**Jerry Baum (1951)** died in October 2012. He lived in Melbourne, Australia.

**Roger Booker (1953)** died in May 2011. He lived in London SE16.

**Charles Musgrave (1954)** died in February 2014. He had been

suffering from stomach cancer for a year. He lived in Heathfield, Sussex.

**George Burgess (1956)** died in May 2014 following a protracted illness. He lived in Maidstone.

**Brian Overy (1956)** died in July 2014. He had lived in Cyprus for the past 12 years.

**Frank Spooner (1958)** died in September 1974. Those who remember him may have spotted his photo in front of Norman Beer (see p1). Further information about Frank in the next edition.

**John Tyndall (1959)** died in August 2014. He lived in Layer de la Haye near Colchester.

**Philip Davison (1961)** died in 1970. It was suggested to me that this may have been as the result of a scooter accident.

**Keith Taylor (1961)** died in March 2014. This information from his daughter Sian Rees. I hope to discover more about his life and career for future publication.

**Paul R Davey (1972)** died in about 2012. He was the younger brother of Barry Davey (1963).

## Norman Beer

(English, 1958-65)

NORMAN BEER was born in Devon and educated at a grammar school in Exeter where, at the age of 17, he won a scholarship to read English at University College, London.

He completed his degree before entering National Service with the RAF, subsequently training as a teacher before starting his career at BHCHS. While still at University College, he met his future wife Betty who was also a student there.

After seven years at Buckhurst Hill, Norman left to join George Monoux school, but after only two terms there was appointed as Head of English at Henley Grammar School which at the time was going through some of the similar traumas that afflicted BHCHS, and he remained at Henley when it became a sixth form college.

A few years later he moved to Bulmershe School, Reading where he became head of the Arts Faculty until taking early retirement and returning to Devon.

Norman died in January 2014 after a long illness. Norman and Betty had three sons, one of whom died at the age of 40 in a road accident.

**Geoff Parker, Head of English 1963-67, writes....**

*In 1963, when I was parachuted into BHCHS, Norman Beer had been on site for several years. As we worked together in the years that followed, I came to admire him more and more. He was a supremely dedicated and inspirational teacher.*

*We shared some interests in common, particularly in relation to the outstanding poetry-speaking tradition and the dramatic tradition in the school. We also shared some differences, particularly in relation to fiction. To differ with Norman was an experience, since he did not have enthusiasms about literature, he had passions.*

*Invaluably, Norman always spoke his mind and, even more invaluably, backed it up with lively argument. He was a dynamic force in the department and an ideal colleague.*

*I had imagined Norman in retirement enlivening the existence of those around him as he had done during his working days. Sadly, the news of his death has put an abrupt stop to that vision. Nothing, though, can stop us saluting the stature and the achievement of the man.*

**David Faulkner (1959) writes.....**

*Norman Beer was a youthful, dynamic, popular and hugely enthusiastic teacher of English. I remember him striding madly across the front of the classroom, predating the Ministry of Silly Walks by many years, as he engaged us in the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins. I remember him hauling in a huge heavy Ferrograph tape recorder to play us a recording of a Ray Bradbury radio play ("There Will Come Soft Rains") which featured the early work of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop. The reading list he gave us formed the basis of my lifelong love of books. And I remember him managing to persuade William Golding that BHCHS should be the first place to produce a stage version of "Lord of the Flies". He was the classic example of a great teacher who engaged his pupils through his own knowledge and enthusiasm. At a recent dinner party, we were all asked to name the two or three people who had most influenced us. Norman Beer was the first on my list.*

## Low Tovey

(BHCHS 1938-45)



WITH THE death of Lew Tovey we have lost another of the original intake at BHCHS. His son Lindsay told me that his father had died on 4th May 2014, the day after his 87th birthday, after a 25 year struggle with Parkinson's Disease.

At school, Lew Tovey was one of the leading pioneers in many fields, apart from being the first boy (as Alan Cruchley has pointed out) to wear long trousers. He was in the first school play, one of the first set of school monitors, and played in the first football team to represent the school.

He carried his football interests

**'SIR...'**  
 (SAID THREE SCHOOLBOYS TO THEIR MASTER)  
**'This is your life'**

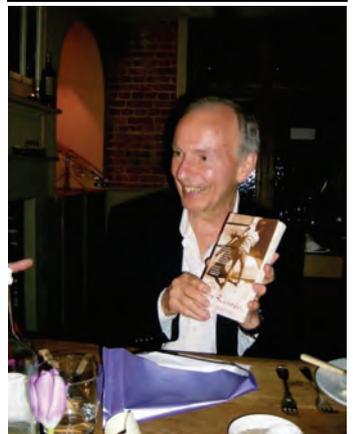
Sunday Dispatch Reporter  
**THREE** schoolboys lured one of their masters into a classroom filled with fellow-pupils. Then one of them, armed with a script, stepped forward and said:  
 "MR. BEER, SIR, THIS IS YOUR LIFE."  
 It was the climax to six weeks' hush-hush digging into the past of their 26-year-old English master Norman Beer.  
 The boys followed the B.B.C. TV formula as closely as they could.  
 They showed pictures of Beer as a baby, told stories from his past, and played a recorded message from his family in Devon.

**The parson**  
 The "programme"—at Buckhurst County High School, Chigwell, Essex—was compared by 14-year-old Alan Vickers, of Epping.  
 Richard Newnham, 14, from Buckhurst Hill, worked a projector and tape recorder.  
 The boy who started it all, 14-year-old fourth former Martin Bone, of Queen's-avenue, Woolford Green, told me:  
 "Mr. Beer's wife agreed to keep quiet. I took pictures of the inside of his house and London University, where he studied.  
 "I discovered the name of the vicar who married him. He gave us wedding pictures and tape-recorded a message."  
 "It was a smashing show," said Richard.  
 But headmaster John Taylor has ordered his staff to say nothing about it.

The schoolboy Eamonn Andrews gives Mr. Beer his "programme" souvenir.

## Richard Gould

(BHCHS 1946-51)



ANOTHER former member of the Old Bucks Football teams has died this year.

Richard's sporting interests began at school where he represented BHCHS in football, cricket and athletics. He played in goal for a very successful 2nd XI team that lost only two matches during the season.

He spent most of his career in HR, retiring in 1990 as HR Manager for the paper firm Wiggins Teape, and then trained as a psychodynamic counsellor, continuing to work near his home in Winchester.

Richard died on 27th April 2014 after a long battle with cancer.

into the OBA, and the photo shows him as captain of one of the earliest OBFC football teams. This team was unbeaten during their first season in the Old Boys' League. John Read (see p.24), who died just three days earlier than Lew, is shown above in the same photo on Lew's left.

Lew Tovey was on course to study medicine but the war, RAF service, and family pressures intervened and he was persuaded to run the successful family furniture and carpet business.

Lew had married in 1952 and had five daughters and two sons. His younger brother Don Tovey (BHCHS 1942-47) died in 2008.

## John Harman

(BHCHS 1949-54)



I AM SAD to report the death of John Harman in May 2014.

He was born on 18th October, 1937 in Chigwell Row. He attended the village primary school and then BHCHS from 1949 until 1954. He was in Chigwell House and represented the school and the house at football.

When he left school, he joined a building company, Thomas Bates of Harold Hill, studied surveying and became an estimator for several years.

His late teens were highlighted by his enthusiasm for motorcycling. His first bikes were James but his pride and joy was a BSA DBD34 Gold Star.

He married his first wife, Pam, in 1959 and they had three children, Kim, Karen, and Rob. He married again, in 1991, to Linda.

John was an enthusiastic driver, a capable DIYer and enjoyed travelling with Linda.

He was an enthusiastic member of the OBA and particularly, the 49ers.

We will miss him as a husband, a father, a grandfather, and friend.

**John Rogers**

*John's brother David also attended BHCHS (1950-55).*

## Peter Southgate

(BHCHS 1944-49)



PETER SOUTHGATE died after a short illness on 27th March 2014. He was born on 3rd October 1932 in Suffolk.

During the war years Peter was evacuated to Bracknell and attended Archbishop Tennyson School. On returning to the family home in Loughton he joined BHCHS.

Agriculture and horticulture were his main interests and after leaving school he worked with White & Miles on the architects before moving on as an agricultural student at Sir Thomas Buxton's Woodreden Farm in Epping.

National Service then called and he was posted to Cleethorpes in the RAF. On return to civvy street Peter found a position with the Singer Sewing Company at Stratford in the sales and marketing department.

In 1960 he met Barbara, whom

The Staff are most grateful to two boys of Form Vb, Southgate and Killick, for making and presenting two coffee tables for use in the Common Room. The tables, of good design and efficient workmanship, not only serve a very useful purpose but add to the amenities of the room.

he married in June 1965 in Ilford. A daughter Kay was born in 1971

Peter enjoyed a variety of jobs during the following years, and retired after working at Browns the agriculture implement company in Loughton. After retirement Peter cared for his father, maintaining a very large garden and at the same time keeping family and friends well supplied with fresh produce.

In 1997 Peter and Barbara left Essex for a happy retirement in Suffolk where they enjoyed tending their garden to perfection, and also holidays in Frinton with his two grandsons.

Peter was one of my best friends at BHCHS and, although we lost touch for many years, we met up again after the help of Old Buckwellians found that we both lived in Suffolk. One of his relatives actually ran the village post office and store in Santon Downham, where we lived at the time. One memory we both loved was making a coffee table for the staff room; it was a joint effort during the woodwork class.

**Terry Killick**

*Peter and Terry's woodwork effort was recognised in the 1949 school magazine (see below).*

## Jim Irving

(BHCHS 1949-57)



JIM IRVING had a unique set of connections with BHCHS as well as being a pupil. Entering the school as the son of a senior teacher was itself very unusual, and something that JHT did not usually allow.

Jim's other connection with the school was that, while working as a chemist at May & Baker, he was a colleague of John Lakeman who would subsequently join the staff. This was a friendship that would endure well beyond the school's lifetime. Jim would make occasional trips from his

home in Cardiff to accompany John to Leyton Orient home matches. He had many other sporting interests and wrote about his particular love of cycling for *OB News (May 2013)*. Jim maintained contact with his year group through regular meetings of the 49ers. He is seen in the above photo (right) with his wife Scarlett on a visit to Peter Green (1949) in New Zealand.

Jim and Scarlett married in 1968 and had a son and a daughter. He was beset by a number of health problems in his 70s and died on 11th June 2014.

## Ray Caswell

(BHCHS 1946-52)



AFTER LEAVING BHCHS Ray Caswell started work in one of the big five clearing banks. After 14 years in banking he switched to accountancy and joined a manufacturing company, eventually becoming Company Secretary. He then joined a firm of fine art dealers in the West End of London as their Accountant. This gave him a lifelong interest in drawings and pictures.

In 1985 he moved to a property management company and continued working until well into his 70s.

Ray was an enthusiastic supporter of the OBA and often attended

our Annual Dinners as well as reunions of his own peers. The photo shows Ray (right) with Alan Day and Alan's wife during a trip to London celebrating Stephen Wright's 70th birthday.

Ray's affection for the school, and his interest in art were reflected when, some years ago, he made the winning, and extremely generous, bid for one of Arnold Smethurst's paintings that he had given to Kate Coulson on her retirement as school secretary.

Ray died on 6th June 2014. He lived in Oxford, having moved there from Loughton two years earlier

## John Read

(BHCHS 1941-46)



JOHN READ was one of the first of the earlier generation of Old Bucks whose name immediately came to my attention. Despite his having lived in Spain for many years he needed no searching out - it became apparent that he was one of those sociable individuals who was always at the centre of reunions and thought nothing of hopping over to attend the Annual Dinner.

John's significant contribution to the establishment of the Old Bucks social scene in the mid 40s was a natural continuation of his school record. His involvement in school activities was nothing short of remarkable. A member of four committees, he was chairman of the Science Society, Captain of Junior Football for two successive years, and played in the 1st XI Football team while in the fifth form. He was also recognised as a promising cricketer and broke the school record for javelin, beating the previous record by 10 feet. His final accolade was perhaps the most significant, considering JHT's well-known views on those who chose to start work instead of entering the 6th form. He was among those selected by JHT as the best footballers from the school's first 15 years.

I am grateful to John's son for the following.....

John Read died in his sleep in Madrid on 1st May. He had been suffering from various ailments including a weak heart, a stomach aneurysm and pneumonia. He is survived by his second wife Isabel, children John Jnr and Tina and grandchildren Philip, Carolina, Ana and Helina.

After leaving BHCHS John studied Spanish and Portuguese at night school, offered at the time

by King's College, London, before joining the RAF for two years. He moved to Brazil with Cable & Wireless in 1952, in the footsteps of fellow Old Buckwellians Dickie Barham and Ron Drewe. There John met and married his first wife Crezilda, with whom he had his two children. In 1963 the family moved back to England as the political situation in Brazil became more complicated, eventually leading to a military coup. In 1966 he moved again, this time to Madrid, Spain where he eventually started his own Import-Export business in the hardwood trade. John remarried in 1980 after his first marriage ended in divorce a few years earlier and he would have celebrated his 34th Anniversary this September. Although never completely retiring, he gradually allowed the business to wind down so that it became more of a hobby, allowing him more time to enjoy his beach apartment in Alicante - where his ashes will eventually be scattered, as per his wishes.

John was a lifetime West Ham supporter, so when he moved to Madrid he decided to support Real Madrid, to compensate for the long time suffering at home! At his funeral, attended by more than 100 friends and family members, his football buddies were heard saying that he had timed his passing on purpose in case Divine Intervention was required to help Real win the Champions League final on 24th May.

While at Buckhurst Hill, John had been an avid footballer and cricketer, sports he continued to play for many years, eventually playing as an amateur for Nautico Clube do Recife in Brazil, before it became a professional team which is still in existence today.

John Jnr, who is also in the hardwoods trade, is married to Elizabeth and lives in Connecticut, USA. Grandson Philip lives in Brazil and granddaughter Carolina in Manhattan, NY.

John's daughter Tina is married to Miguel and lives in Palma de Mallorca with their two young daughters. It is obvious that John's love of travel and foreign adventure has rubbed onto his children and grandchildren alike!

For his 80th birthday John's children organised a surprise party at Simpsons on the Strand, which was also attended by fellow Old Buckwellians from his year: Bill Branch, Bob Horne, Stan Newens and Norman Jones.

## David 'Nod' Cobb

(BHCHS 1969-76)



IT WAS with great sadness that Nod's many friends learnt of his death on the 14th March after a long and dignified battle against lung cancer. He handled his illness with such a minimum of fuss, self-pity or complaint, that it was easy to forget that it would inevitably get the better of him.

My first memory of Nod was on his very first day at BHCHS. Having already been a pupil since the previous year, I was looking forward to see what assortment of oddballs would be in the latest influx of new arrivals. Nod didn't disappoint. Clashing with his brand new school uniform was an oversized red and white (Arsenal) woolly hat, complete with bobble. Inevitably, someone said he looked like Noddy, and so a nickname was born, one which he was saddled with for the rest of his life.

Most of my contact with Nod came through school sports, primarily football and cricket. He was in the all-conquering Chigwell house, and his contribution to that success was not insignificant. He was a very capable left back and, despite his lack of physical presence, he was very rarely outplayed or outfought by an opposing winger. His finest hour was when he faced John Chiedoze, who went on to play for Leyton Orient and for Nigeria. Nod didn't give him a kick. Well he did actually. He kicked him lots of times, but I'm sure you know what I mean.

On the cricket pitch, Nod was a sound man to have behind the timbers. It's not that he actually took many catches or made many stumpings, but many opposing batsmen lost their wicket through a lapse in concentration due to Nod's incessant chat.

His other sporting love was golf. If you had six hours to spare, he was a great companion on the course. He spent more time on the tee, lighting his roll-up, put-

ting it down, addressing the ball, re-lighting his roll-up, addressing the ball and so on, than it takes most people to complete a par 5. Anyway, he was a steady player, and even after the illness took hold he still made the effort to get in a few holes when he could.

Within a year or so of leaving BHCHS Nod got a toehold in the music business, working for Polygram. He rapidly moved up the ladder until he became an A&R Manager for Arista Records and Warner Brothers, signing acts such as Nick Heyward, The Lotus Eaters, and The Katydids.

It was through his love of music that he met his wife, Patricia. Despite parting after several years, this shared passion kept



them together spiritually. Pat was a great help to Nod during his illness, even managing to get him out to several concerts during his final months.

The other huge interest in Nod's life, which I have to reluctantly mention, was Arsenal Football Club. For many years, he was a frequent visitor to Highbury, often going with his old schoolmates and near neighbours, Colin Bird and Tim Bennett. He began to lose interest in the game once rampant commercialisation took hold, but his love for AFC remained undimmed.

I will miss Nod for many reasons. His strange, infectious laugh, having a drink in the pub with him, his random late night phone calls to discuss anything and everything, his rants against all kinds of targets, (his particular betes noires being politicians of all persuasions, the BBC, and above all, Simon Cowell). However, the things I'll most miss about him are his innate decency, kindness, and his concern for others, at all times, even when ravaged by illness.

I'm sure all his family and friends will agree, when I say there won't be another like Nod. God bless him.

**Mick Gould**