



## OLD WINBURNIANS NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2024

***Dear Fellow Old Winburnians,***

'When an early Autumn walks the land and chills the breeze .....

Johnny Mercer's lyric written in 1952 seems somehow apposite 72 years later, doesn't it ? It's been a wretched summer (here in the UK anyway !) cool, often wet, few deckchair days in the garden or on the beach. Scarcely a butterfly, fewer migrant birds – did you hear a cuckoo ? Of course, Mercer's lyric written to a haunting tune by Ralph Burns and Woody Herman in 1947 was a lament to a lost love, but the theme seems sadly appropriate in a world where love of any kind appears to have gone missing. Switch on the TV, open a newspaper and our world seems full of wars and killing, sectarian conflict, mutilation, hunger, disease – human wretchedness in all forms. Our parents, grand-parents, great grand-parents had their fill, didn't they ? Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Franco – the names are enough to remind us all of distant horror. And yet all most ordinary people want is enough food to fill their bellies, a comfortable, safe home for them and their children – and a bit of fun and laughter in their lives.

So let's try to be positive, shall we ? Although most of us have reached our three score and ten, and are approaching the finishing line (see page 32), let's remind ourselves we still have the Old Winburnians Association and one another's company, albeit that some of you do live thousands of miles away – in places like Scunthorpe and Grimsby.

It is extraordinary to reflect that when you walked out of Grammar School Lane for the last time all those years ago, you would still be a part of the WGS community in the year 2024 – remembering old pals and events, and that Victorian building in King Street.

To conclude, I/we, John and I and the Committee wish you all Good Health in the year ahead, a very Happy Christmas and – keep smiling !

Do remember to raise a glass and join our toast to 'Absent Friends' at 2pm (GMT, or UTC if you prefer) on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

***Alan R Bennett***  
***On behalf of the Committee***



***A message from the boys of Walmington-on-Sea (via Your Editor)  
Merry Christmas, everyone ! Enjoy your turkey !***

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**FORTHCOMING IMPORTANT  
OWA DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Christmas Reunion	Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 2024
Summer Reunion	Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
Annual General Meeting	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> Sept. 2025

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**FULL COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Alan R Bennett	11 Hawk Close, Pilford Heath, WIMBORNE	BH21 2NW
Janet Coy	2 Durrant Road, Lower Parkstone, POOLE	BH14 8TP
Anthony Elgar	4 Garden House, Cuthburga Road, WIMBORNE	BH21 1GS
Anthony Gould	1 Manor Cottage, Tolpuddle, DORCHESTER	DT2 7ES
John Guy	"Gateways", Gaunts Common, WIMBORNE	BH21 4JN
Bill Haskell	54 Ryan Court, Whitecliffe Mill Street, BLANDFORD	DT11 7DQ
Alan Maitland	Coles Farm, Milborne St. Andrew, BLANDFORD	DT11 0JL
Ron Mansfield	52 Castle Street, Cranborne, WIMBORNE	BH21 5QA
Betty Read	29 Pembroke Court, West Street, Wilton, SALISBURY	SP2 0DG
Ann Richmond	4 Three Lions Close, WIMBORNE	BH21 1EP
Rainbow Russell-P	Orchard Cottage, Waddon, WEYMOUTH	DT3 4ER
Ken Taylor	31 Canford View Drive, WIMBORNE	BH21 2UW

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

David Finnemore	4 Purbeck Gardens, POOLE	BH14 0QS
Graham Powell	42 St. Peters Court, St. Peters Road, BOURNEMOUTH	BH1 2JU

**EXPECTED ATTENDEES AT THE SUMMER REUNION LUNCH ON  
6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024**

Mr Alan Bennett	49 - 56	Ms Hilary Kemp	Née Kemp	61 - 66
Mr Nick Bishop	60 - 63	Mr Alan Maitland		54 - 59
Mrs Eunice Carnall	Née Chadd 55 - 62	Mrs June Maitland	Guest of Mr Maitland	
Mr Mark Charman	56 - 59	Mr Victor Moss		56 - 63
Mr Peter Clarke	55 - 57	Mrs Jennifer Moss	Née Day	61 - 63
Mr Michael Coffin	70 - 77	Mrs Diana Moss	Née Anderson	55 - 61
Mrs Sue Coombes	Née Froud 56 - 64	Mr James Moss	Guest of Mrs Moss	
Mr John Coombes	Guest of Mrs Coombes	Mr Kenneth Orman		37 - 43
Mrs Audrey Cooper	Née Hallett 56 - 85	Mr David Park		48 - 55
Mr Robert Copelin	46 - 51	Mrs Betty Read	Née White	53 - 58
Mr Desmond Cox	47 - 51	Mrs Irene Whittle	Guest of Mrs Read	
Mrs Freda Croasdell	Née Millard 61 - 66	Mrs Ann Richmond	Née Mitchell	55 - 60
Mr Stuart Dean	56 - 62	Mr David Roberts		49 - 55
Mrs Joan Dean	Guest of Mr Dean	Mr Ian Rogers		45 - 53
Mrs Faith Elford	Née Hawes 56 - 61	Ms Rainbow Russell- Pritchard	Née Lynne Russell	66-71
Mr Anthony Elgar	53 - 60	Mr John Singleton		54 - 61
Mrs Dianne Elgar	Guest of Mr Elgar	Miss Elaine Smith		59 - 65
Mr Tony Gould	51 - 57	Mr Peter Griffiths	Guest of Miss Smith	
Dr John Guy	63 - 71	Mr Timothy Spall		58 - 61
Mr Robin Harris	51 - 56	Mr Richard Strong		55 - 62
Mr Keith Harvey	51 - 56	Mrs Jill Strong	Née Cowdry	56 - 63
Mr Bill Haskell	52 - 56	Mr Ken Taylor		51 - 56
Mr Geoff Hill	58 - 59	Mr Peter Watts		56 - 63
Mr John Pearson	Guest of Mr Hill			
Mrs Guilia Holland	Née Griffiths 58 - 63			
Mr Mick Felton	Guest of Mrs Holland			

**APOLOGIES FOR THE SUMMER REUNION LUNCH ON 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024**

Richard Anstey	Janet Finnemore	Mike Kerley	David Reeks
Morgan Antell	Maurice French	Brian Langer	Peter Russell
Kenneth Bernthal	Patricia Fripp	Ron Mansfield	Marion Ryder
Paul Burry	Elizabeth Goode	Carolyn Martin	Chris Smith
Dan Challis	Carol Griffiths	Ken Nicklen	Geoff Welch
Rod Cheese	John Harper	Ken Parratt	Bill White
Paul Cumberland	Sue Hatherley	Mark Perkins	Prof. Bob White
Dennis Dolman	Christopher Hyde	Christopher Peters	Helen White
Janet Doolaega	Mary Hyde	Christine Price	Havilland Willshire
David Finnemore	Andrew Jones	Jeremy Procter	

**SUMMARY REPORTS TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON 16<sup>TH</sup> SEPT. 2024**  
**REPORT OF TREASURER**

**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FROM 01/06/23 TO 31/05/24**

<b>Income</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
Reunions	£2,927.00	£2,790.00	Reunions	£2,835.00	£2,668.00
Subscriptions	£1,105.00	£1,055.00	Newsletter Costs	£2,069.68	£1,111.90
Raffle Receipts	£342.00	£341.00	Raffle Prizes	£74.40	£58.48
Donations	£90.00	£130.00	Remembrance	£35.00	£35.00
			Day Poppy		
			Wreath		
			Website Costs	£252.28	£0.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£4,464.00</b>	<b>£4,316.00</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£5,266.36</b>	<b>£3,873.38</b>
			<b>Excess of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>-£802.36</b>	<b>£442.62</b>

**BALANCE SHEET AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2024**

<b>ASSETS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2023</b>		<b>ASSETS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2024</b>	
NatWest Current A/C	£9,287.35	NatWest Current A/C	£8,484.99
LESS unrepresented Cheques	£0.00	LESS unrepresented Cheques	£0.00
SUB-TOTAL	£9,287.35	SUB-TOTAL	£8,484.99
LESS Excess of Income over Expenditure	-£802.36		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£8484.99</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£8484.99</b>

**Alan Maitland**  
16<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**REPORT OF MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

**SUMMARY OF CURRENT MEMBERSHIP (as in membership database on 16/09/2024)**

Total Number of Members	: 248 (at 2023 AGM : 264)
UK based	: 204
Overseas based	: 44
Members who are considered as former staff	: 11
Expired subscriptions/resignations (since 2023 AGM)	: 7
New members (since 2023 AGM)	: 4
Deceased members (as reported since 2023 AGM)	: 13
Over the 12 months since the 2023 AGM, the following occurred :	

- Deceased members : 13 in UK, 0 Overseas
- New members : 3 in UK, 1 Overseas

Details can be found on the Old Winburnians internet site [www.oldwinburnians.org.uk](http://www.oldwinburnians.org.uk).

**John Guy**  
16<sup>th</sup> September 2024

## NEW HEADTEACHER FOR QE SCHOOL

*(From the Daily Echo, Bournemouth edition*

*Ed.)*

Queen Elizabeth's School in Wimborne Minster has appointed Thomas Neill, currently principal of Wey Valley Academy in Weymouth, as the new headteacher.

Mr Neill, who will start in the role at QE School in September, has worked in a range of comprehensive schools as a middle and senior leader. He has also spent a year teaching in Florida.

Mr Neill, who will support the Christian ethos of QE School, graduated from the University of Newcastle with a degree in English, achieved his teaching qualification at the University of West England in Bristol and has a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. He is married with two children.



**Thomas Neill**

Mr Neill said: "This opportunity is hugely exciting and I am drawn to the challenge of leading one of Dorset's largest and most prestigious schools."

"I am confident that I have the knowledge, skills and experience required to rapidly improve the quality of education at QE School and secure the necessary improvements."

"One of my first actions will be to establish strong working relationships with our families and to listen to students about their experiences of school life."

Liz West, CEO of Initio Learning Trust, said: "We are highly confident that Mr Neill has the skills and appetite to take QE on to receiving a 'Good' report from Ofsted inspectors, and then beyond."





## MORE OF LIFE ON THE 'B-DONG' BUSES by MARK PERKINS (62-69)

Ah, wonderful. Another excellent OW magazine which just seems to get better with each edition. Sharing more of my memories of QEGS, here is a response to the super writings of Robin Christopher and Alan Bennett.

Firstly why 'B-doing' buses (in the heading I deliberately missed the 'i' because the word looked by a verb rather than the adjective which was intended). John, brother Polly, and I would recall the old Bere Regis buses by that name since one particular bus/coach had seats which would 'B-doing' like crazy as the springs in the seats objected to the movement of the coach on bumpy road surfaces.



Dorchester Road, Upton, looking west. 'X' marks the spot we gathered.

Due to my slightly younger age that our two worthy correspondents, I note that one significant change occurred between our travels on the "Two-tone Browns". I began walking to the crossroads to meet the school coach outside the old garage next to the post office in September 1962. We didn't share our travel with the folk from the west (i.e. Moorland Way), since they had a coach of their own departing from Moorland Way at about the same time. I cannot recall exactly how many pupils

embarked at our starting point but it was quite a number. Those I can recall being David James, Duncan Ellis, Christopher Munford, Diane Powell, Sean O'Shea, Eric Wallington and a few others whose names, I regret, escape my memory. Latterly Annelis Ojastu would also use this coach and we would walk home together. I lived in Sandy Lane, nearly opposite Geoff and Peter Stokes' home and also a stone throw from Annelis's home called Seacombe'.

Note here for Margaret Stokes. Firstly, Margaret, I loved your article about Geoff's motoring habits. We lived at 'Stonehenge' nearly opposite Geoff's home and I remember Geoff going to work but walking, maybe before he was driving? Certainly I knew of his, and Peter's engagement with cars. I rather think that brother John could well have been an almost-contemporary of Peter at school?

The Cross-roads coach drove nearly directly to Lytchett Matravers. It diverted via Organford to pick up Barry and Jeremy Willmot from the Post Office in Organford on the way. Turning up the Wareham Road and collecting Paul Morris from the grocer's shop, and other stops (sorry, but names escape me) before bearing left at the 'Rose and Crown' and onwards along Lime Kiln Road to meet the A350 to take us to Sturminster Marshall roundabout picking up Colin Haysom at the 'Old Farm' first. The coach would then drive to Wimborne on the A31 collecting more pupils on the way and, again, my memory fails me in recalling names.

Actually the thing that struck me was just how many people from Upton went to QEGS. I do remember several of the names mentioned in the two articles in the Spring/Summer 2024 magazine. It also struck me that the single coach used at that time must have been pretty full by the time it arrived in the playground of the school. From my recollection our coach was fairly full and, although only travelling on the Moorland Way coach on a few occasions, that too was also well patronised. On one occasion in my first year, and after a last period of the day in the artroom, Mabel (Thorpe) chose me to be the washer-up of the paint palettes – anyone remember that lottery? Clearly I didn't do it well enough and had to repeat the whole operation. By the time I passed her inspection of the bloomin' palettes I rushed off to see my coach pulling out into King Street and raced madly to grab a place on the Moorland Way coach. Phew!

I actually preferred the Moorland Way coach which seemed so much more relaxed and quiet than the Cross-Roads coach. On my regular ride Duncan Ellis could be prone to bullying and Christopher Munford would join in. Alone, either of them were pretty chummy, but it didn't make for comfort when they were together.

Well it is amazing how, by writing this, old memories arise and are, on the whole, happy and I rejoice at the excellent teaching in both Upton Infant's school and Lytchett Minster Junior school. Between them they took a very average pupil and gave him enough 'something' to reach QEGS. For that I am grateful.



*[Some more examples  
of Bere Regis Coaches]*



## **THINGS I REMEMBER OF MY LIFE AT WIMBORNE GRAMMAR** **by ROGER WILSON (59-67)**

So, the first day of the new school; a trip on the bus from Ferndown to Wimborne. Bus already quite crowded, so seat upstairs on one of those long benches with the aisle on the right hand side.

On arrival at school, being allocated to a class and then being grabbed and thrown over the low brick wall in the playground. First and second years were at the old buildings in East Borough. We were told it was an ex-work house and it did seem like that. In the garden of the empty house opposite the playground, the caretaker grew vegetables and we also thought he grew tobacco plants for the head Master "Neddy".

After leaving the second year, we transferred to the big school and our class rooms were in the huts just off Grammar School Lane. They were very cold in winter and the coke stoves worked hard. Opposite were the woodwork room for the boys where we each very carefully made a wooden watch stand to give to our parents; upstairs domestic science classes for the girls.

"Tarzan" taught us history. Year 4 classroom was located next to this building and I always remember the gas heater in the ceiling which kept us almost warm in winter. "Fishy" taught us English and he was always going on about Thomas Hardy and it took years until I started reading and enjoying Hardy's novels. "Taffy" taught us French and my French friends always laughed when I spoke to them in French with the Welsh accent that he taught us.

Year 5 in the new school and in one of the upstairs classrooms, the one next to where "Mabel" [Miss Thorpe] taught art, the ceiling always moved when the wind was blowing. Downstairs was the physics lab where we were taught "Rich Old Yokels Gobble Beer In Volume". Outside next to the main playground was the class room where "Granny Grey" taught maths; the only female teacher we couldn't call Miss and had to call Mrs Grey. Near her classroom was the PE hall and nearby were the two fives courts. I did a second year five and moved onto 6th form in the classroom above the teachers' day room where you had to wait outside when you'd been naughty. And not far from the Head Master's study where you waited in fear when you'd been really naughty.

In my last year, I was appointed a prefect; I always think this was because my mother ran the school guides and was also secretary of the PTA. Supervising putting the dinner tables and benches away; walking around the playground during the breaks and always wearing the prefect tie. We lived in a lovely prefect room in old school looking onto the playground.

Every morning assembly, and being Catholic, we sat in the side dinner room next to the kitchen and chatted whilst the hymns were being sung and we could hear the organ in the background; I was always pleased I wasn't one of the children who had to pump the organ. Then, we filed back into the main assembly room and "Neddy" made his usual morning speech – and off to lessons. On the way out, we always looked at the



huge dark wood memorials of those who attended at the Grammar school and then fell in the wars; but their memory stayed on in our thoughts.

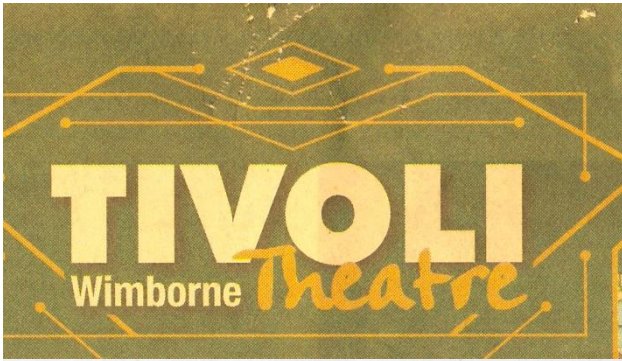
Other memories of the school playing field, the tennis court and the walk back to big school. The changing rooms in Grammar School Lane from where we ran to the gym and back past the tuck shop; getting morning milk from just inside the caretaker's big office; the caretaker being hit on his head when one of the ears of a stone gargoyle fell off the Minster; the school 50 mile walk overnight and finishing extremely tired the next morning; cross country runs through the fields and taking a short cut over the river.

Sadly, my parents moved to Salisbury during my last year of school so after the Summer term finished, I never went back to Wimborne and lost contact with all my old friends. The school photographs from 1960, 1962 and 1966 still hang on my office wall as I type my memories; faces that alas I no longer recognise and friends I have long forgotten.

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### THE TIVOLI REMEMBERED by YOUR EDITOR

The Tivoli played a role in all our lives, notably as a venue for our annual Speech Days. Some of us first 'trod the boards' in a theatrical sense on such occasions, including your editor. Others in our Association received their school prizes on its stage. Many of you will remember seeing films there, possibly in the company of your first boyfriend/girlfriend. Those were the days !



**Tuesday 10th September 7.30pm**  
**AN EVENING WITH SNOOKER LEGENDS**  
An unforgettable experience for snooker enthusiasts and fans of the game. The line-up of world champions and iconic figures in the snooker world, including Steve Davis, John Parrott, Dennis Taylor, Ken Doherty, and John Virgo, ensures a night filled with humorous stories, laughter and entertainment along with insights into their illustrious careers.  
Tickets £35 standard / £65 VIP  
(VIP ticket includes a pre-show meet'n'greet and photo)

***(Whatever would Messrs. Neil, Maiden, Kerswell, Holman, et al make of the price of the tickets? And the nature of the entertainment?!)***

## BEAUTY SPOT WOES (EYE BRIDGE)

*(From the Daily Echo, Bournemouth edition (Georgia Revell)*

*Ed.)*



'EYE Bridge could become a victim of its own success'. That's what National Trust fears the future could bring for the popular beauty spot near Wimborne. The trust recently shared concerns that Eye Bridge was 'suffering due to more extreme weather events as a result of climate change'. Now, it adds that high visitor numbers are also posing a problem.

A spokesperson for National Trust said: "For 40 years the National Trust has cared for Eye Bridge and welcomed many people to enjoy the peace and quiet of this riverside location. However, increasingly the site is coming under pressure from over visiting. There are issues with the number of cars impacting on the habitat and blocking local roads. In addition, anti-social behaviour; litter, illegal barbeques and dog waste add to the problem."

As reported, National Trust has launched a survey for visitors to discover how Eye Bridge is being used. Feedback received will be used to develop plans for the site's future management and conservation. The trust has also switched up its parking arrangements for visitors to Eye Bridge in order to avoid polluting the River Stour. A spokesperson said: "There is a small car park at Eye Bridge with space for 10 cars. In previous years we have opened an adjacent field as an overflow car park, but this year weather conditions and increased frequency of the river flooding has meant the overflow car park is unusable. Due to the river location and the car park being in the floodplain we are unable to carry out any ground work as material put down would eventually be washed away by heavy rain and future floods, causing pollution to the river." As a result, visitors are now being offered car parking in another neighbouring field, but this will only be temporary due to planning rules.

Summarising the efforts to preserve Eye Bridge, Eleanor Egan, countryside manager at Kingston Lacy said: "We're committed to conserving and caring for this place forever and for everyone. But if we do not act now Eye Bridge could become a victim of their own success, more and more people are choosing to visit which is terrific, but we still need to ensure nature is given a place to thrive and the site protected from over-use and pollution, whilst at the same time making Eye Bridge fit for the future and for future generations."

## **EYE BRIDGE (AN OLD WINBURNIAN'S PERSPECTIVE)** **by ALAN R BENNETT (49-56)**

There will be few among our readers not acquainted with Eye Bridge, albeit that it was a very long time ago that you last set eyes upon it.

Let's begin with those former WGS Students of a certain vintage who remember their cross-country running days along the River Stour. Our PE staff usually decreed that cross-country runs would replace football or rugby when our playing fields off East Borough were waterlogged after heavy rain had fallen. The starting point was in the lane adjacent to the Green Man public house. Competitors would wind their way through the allotments where, among many others, Messrs. Maiden, Pursey and Williams at different times cultivated their plots. (Your former chairman, Ken Taylor, too until very recently when it was decided to build a vast estate of houses on the site).



Back to our runners now wending their way along the Stour across the water meadows, clambering over a variety of stiles; the pace-setters already a very long way ahead of the sluggards, red-faced and muttering their discontent.

A mile or so, probably a little less, then before them to their left – Eye Bridge – and a sharp turn to the right is called for, on to the road and the hill leading up to The Vine public house. Past the idyllically situated Pamphill village school, a handsome avenue of trees ahead, on the left the village green and cricket square with a few conveniently situated benches for spectators or weary walkers. A little further along the road St. Stephen's parish church with its links to the Bankes Family and the Kingston Lacy estate, turn right past farm buildings and several cottages and down the hill towards the town. By now our front-runners, our WGS pacemakers, are in stern competition to the finishing point. The stragglers are limping, complaining, red-faced and resentful.

At this moment, as in a Hitchcock movie, we'll leave the race and return, the outcome ambiguous – back to the subject of our story – Eye Bridge.

Moving back to Dorset in the late 1960s, after living in a tent on a goat farm in Kent for 4 months, 4 years in Clapham SW4 and another 4 years on the Hampshire/Berkshire border, I was especially keen to resume acquaintance with the Wimborne countryside and its wildlife. (I'm not referring to my old pal, Geoff Hill's amorous adventures !). Growing up in Upton/Lytchett Minster in a very Sandy Lane (along with several other OWs) beside unspoilt heathland with a view down to Lytchett Bay, hearing the



evocative calls of curlews and the churring of nightjars as an accompaniment to daily life, how could I not be fascinated by wildlife in general – and birds in particular ? So began my regular walks along the Stour – and our old cross-country route – especially at New Year and in the Springtime recording the species I identified. I realise not all readers will be interested in ornithological facts and figures but they do record what is, very sadly, a verifiable truth – many species are in serious decline and Wimborne and district is a seriously poorer place as a consequence.

To summarise, on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1974, (I keep detailed records) on my walk along the Stour and in neighbouring woodland I identified 26 species of bird. A similar walk in recent times the figure barely reaches double figures. When I returned to the area good numbers of swallows and martins could be counted in mid-April around Julian's Bridge (over the A31) and along the Stour to Eye Bridge. In 2024 the figure is zero at Julian's Bridge and just the odd bird or two at Eye Bridge.

Let me recount an episode I recall with depressing clarity which occurred about 30 years ago. It was early afternoon and I decided to take a walk along our familiar stretch of river. Ahead I could see activity and hear the noise of machinery. A team of men were cutting back the riverside vegetation, not just the reeds but just about everything that overhung the river. The scenery was changing almost beyond recognition before my eyes. The bank opposite was all but completely bare. I spoke to one of the men engaged in the operation. 'Flood prevention' was the explanation.

When I returned a day or two later the landscape was depressing beyond words. Everything was so bare, so empty. Where once several species of birds like sedge-warblers had regularly nested there was nothing. True, the water was flowing faster to the sea but the habitat for several species of birds had completely disappeared. Today in 2024 it has never grown back – or been allowed to grow back. Was there prior discussion/consultation between river management and conservation groups ? I doubt it very much. A habitat that had existed for decades, centuries even, was gone. Walk that stretch of river today – and beyond – and there is precious little left for several species of bird, little insect life, few mammals. Add to the picture the vast estate of houses, mostly expensive, built on Cuthbury – the football field is gone too – and it is a depressing scene compared to what the readers of this piece may distantly recall. As for what Mr Albert Maiden would say, I cannot imagine. On the subject of what our old English teacher would say, let me recount a little episode I recall.



As I wrote earlier he used to cultivate a plot at Cuthbury and grow strawberries for sale. I remember an occasion I happened to be in the fruit/veg shop in The Square, then in the ownership of a particularly uncouth woman and her more agreeable

husband. Mr Maiden entered the shop as I was standing there bearing several punnets of strawberries for sale in the shop. The woman, ostensibly serving customers while taking large mouthfuls from an apple, took the fruit from him. As he left through the door she made some derogatory remark about him sneering at his age/appearance. I was furious and said something to the effect that he was/had been one of the most important figures in the town – councillor, Mayor, teacher and someone who years earlier had been largely responsible for getting mains water/drainage in an area of the town and would long be remembered with respect and affection. She took another large mouthful of apple into her face even as she served her next customer. It wasn't long afterwards, I am pleased to say, the shop passed into more pleasant hands.

I began writing about the River Stour – and I finish with an anecdote about one of our old and most respected teachers !

(P S : It was on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1970, that I recorded my only Grass-hopper warbler close by the river's edge. Today I would be more likely to hear a Taylor Swift chart-topper blasting out of one of the nearby newly built properties. It's called progress ! What do our readers think ?)

## **BACK TO THE CROSS-COUNTRY RUN**

### ***THE RESULT***

Winner	Ken Taylor	11 <sup>th</sup>	Timothy Spall	21 <sup>st</sup>	Richard Strong
2 <sup>nd</sup>	David Park	12 <sup>th</sup>	Kenneth Orman	22 <sup>nd</sup>	John Guy
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Ron Mansfield	13 <sup>th</sup>	Victor Moss		
4 <sup>th</sup>	Frank Hackforth	14 <sup>th</sup>	Bill Haskell		
5 <sup>th</sup>	John Singleton	15 <sup>th</sup>	Robin Harris	Disqualified	{ Anthony Elgar Tony Gould Geoff Hill Alan Bennett
6 <sup>th</sup>	Nick Bishop	16 <sup>th</sup>	Stuart Dean		
7 <sup>th</sup>	Robert Copelin	17 <sup>th</sup>	Michael Coffin		
8 <sup>th</sup>	Desmond Cox	18 <sup>th</sup>	Mark Charman		
9 <sup>th</sup>	Ian Rogers	19 <sup>th</sup>	Peter Clarke	Non-runners	{ David Roberts Keith Harvey
10 <sup>th</sup>	Peter Watts	20 <sup>th</sup>	Alan Maitland		

Distances : A short-head between winner and 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 10 lengths back to 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 200 yards back to 4<sup>th</sup>

As Ken Taylor crossed the winning line, he was heard to whisper "Has anyone got a ciggy ?" John Guy explained the reason for his poor performance on the fact that he had stayed up the previous night until well after midnight calculating the distance in feet and inches between Mars and Jupiter. He intends to ask David Singleton and David Scrase for their advice and assistance.

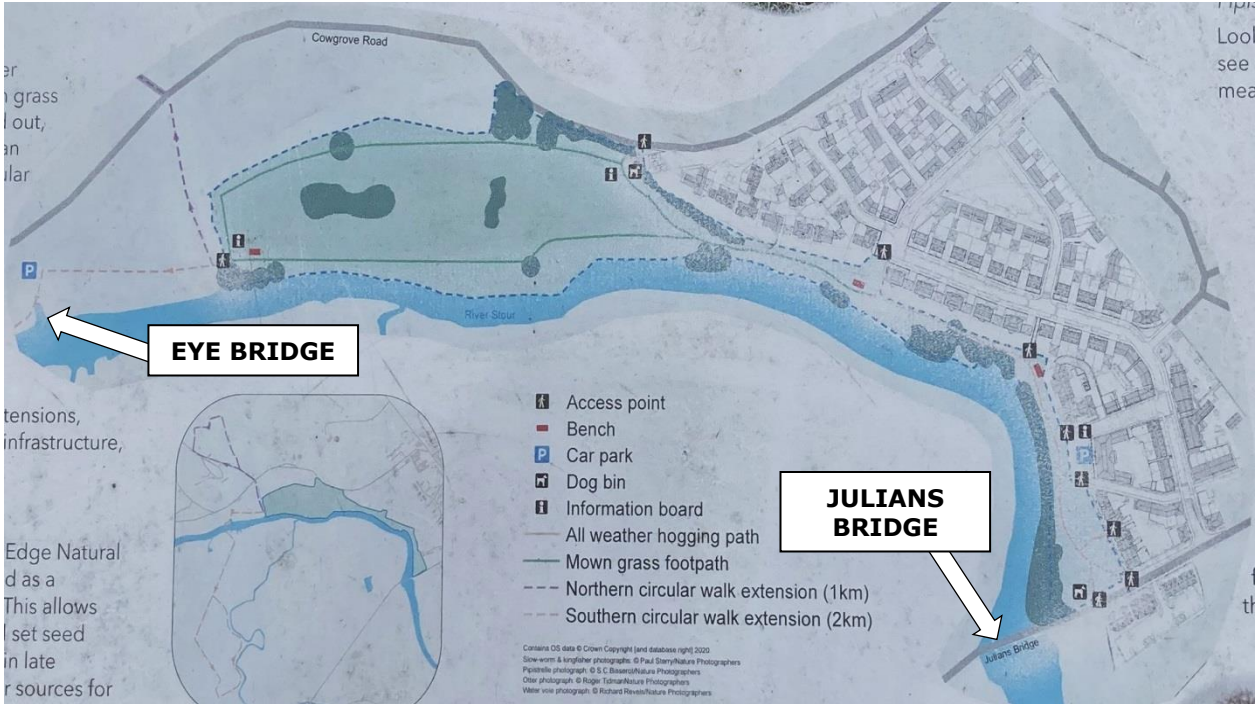
### ***STEWARDS' ENQUIRY***

Geoff Hill, who crossed the finishing line in first place, was disqualified after a stewards' enquiry discovered that the boy who only recently arrived in Dorset from a London

school had, in fact, spent the afternoon drinking several glasses of 'scrumpy' in the nearby Green Man public house. It seems that when the runners were lining up at the start Hill slipped through a side entrance and only emerged as Ken Taylor approached the finish line. Hill was also given 'six of the best' by the Headmaster the following morning. Hill apologised for his 'error of judgement' and assured the Headmaster "I will not get caught again", muttering under his breath to his cronies that he would "go to the King's Head in the future" ?

Two boys, Richard Copelin and Desmond Cox, were reprimanded for 'hiding in the undergrowth' at one point on the course and 'eating doughnuts'.

Tony Elgar was also reprimanded for 'stopping not far from the new Modern School at Pamphill to enjoy a snog with one of the girls'. It appears that Elgar had made an arrangement with the girl two nights earlier ! Tony Gould was reprimanded for reading a copy of the Daily Worker near Eye Bridge. The Headmaster recommended The Times or the Daily Telegraph as alternative reading material. Alan Bennett was also reprimanded for pausing to study the day's runners in the Sporting Life. Peter Clarke was reprimanded for singing the well-known song 'Jezebel' so loudly that he woke two old ladies sleeping on a bench near Eye Bridge. 'What would your father think of such musical taste ?' the Headmaster asked. Alan Maitland was reprimanded for stopping to discuss the state of his turnip crop with an elderly gentleman tending his allotment.



[Schematic of the 'Rivers Edge Natural Greenspace' from Julians Bridge to Eye Bridge - plus the housing developments !]



[A montage of some of the things seen along the old cross-country route today]



## A "GRAND" PIANO by Dr JOHN R F GUY (63-71)

On a recent visit to QE School I was asked by the then interim Headteacher Brian Boyes and Head Boy Jake Churchill if I knew anything about a grand piano which was, at that time, standing in the corner of the School's main entrance lobby. They believed it was transferred to QE at Pamphill from WGS when the Kings Street site was closed, but they were not sure. Since I "gave up" music at WGS after my second year (not because of Mr Emery's teaching, but due to timetable pressures, having to make choices of the subjects to study to O-level and other interests) I had no knowledge of this instrument – but I thought I know someone who might remember it !



[All photographs taken by Dr John Guy]

One of our OWA staff members (and former Head of Music), Mr Grant Bocking, was kindly able to confirm that the piano used to stand in Big School and was indeed moved to Pamphill when the Grammar and Secondary Modern Schools were combined. He recalls that a lack of funds prevented a proper refurbishment (i.e., replacement of felts, balance of action, etc.) being done, but it was tuned annually to keep it in some shape.

***(The 'Minns of Bournemouth' label inside the piano implies it was supplied and/or maintained by them. I remember them being the premier music shop in the area at one time. Do any of you remember playing this piano ? Ed.)***

## **WIMBORNE MINSTER AND THE ROUNDHEADS**

**by PAT TRAYLER (née BROWN) (62-69)**

Whilst looking in the parish records of Dorset there was a gap in the births, deaths and marriages. This coincided with the years of the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell. Another distraction from sorting the stories of my ancestors.

The old Monarchy and nobility had affected the residents in the Wimborne area. The workers and tenants on their estates were expected to follow their political stands. The Gaunts and Beauforts tales have been told before. In the Indices for Court Rolls, Henry Duke of Lancaster held the first court at Wimborne. Richard II and Henry IV were also listed as holding court in Wimborne.

Henry VIII declared himself head of the Church but remained Catholic to all intents and purposes. He was paranoid about those who wished to return to Popeism and sought ways to execute any that might be a threat. Queen Mary tried to return the country to Catholicism - with a large number of executions of Protestants. Then Queen Elizabeth started reforms for Protestant services and James the first authorised the English version of the Bible, actions which would influence everyday lives and produce more free thinking amongst the population. However many in the country thought that the reforms did not go far enough and joined dissenter groups.

Oliver Cromwell was educated in Cambridge University and in 1628 became a member of Parliament. At this time the King believed he had a divine right to do as he pleased. But Oliver believed in an elected Parliament and the right of the members to debate and pass laws that ran the country. His original plan was to curb the King's powers not to depose him. Cromwell also wished to shake up the running of the Church. He abolished the Bishops and encouraged the congregations to appoint their own ministers. As the commander of the New Model Army, Cromwell could do things his way. Civil War soon broke out.

As with many new ideas there were extremists, the Puritans wanted more freedom from the pomp and ceremonies, the organ playing and singing of both Catholic and Protestant churches. Many of strict Puritans who had developed very strict ideas on behaviour and dress emigrated to the Americas, but many stayed behind to cause problems and tried to break up church organs and prevent singing.

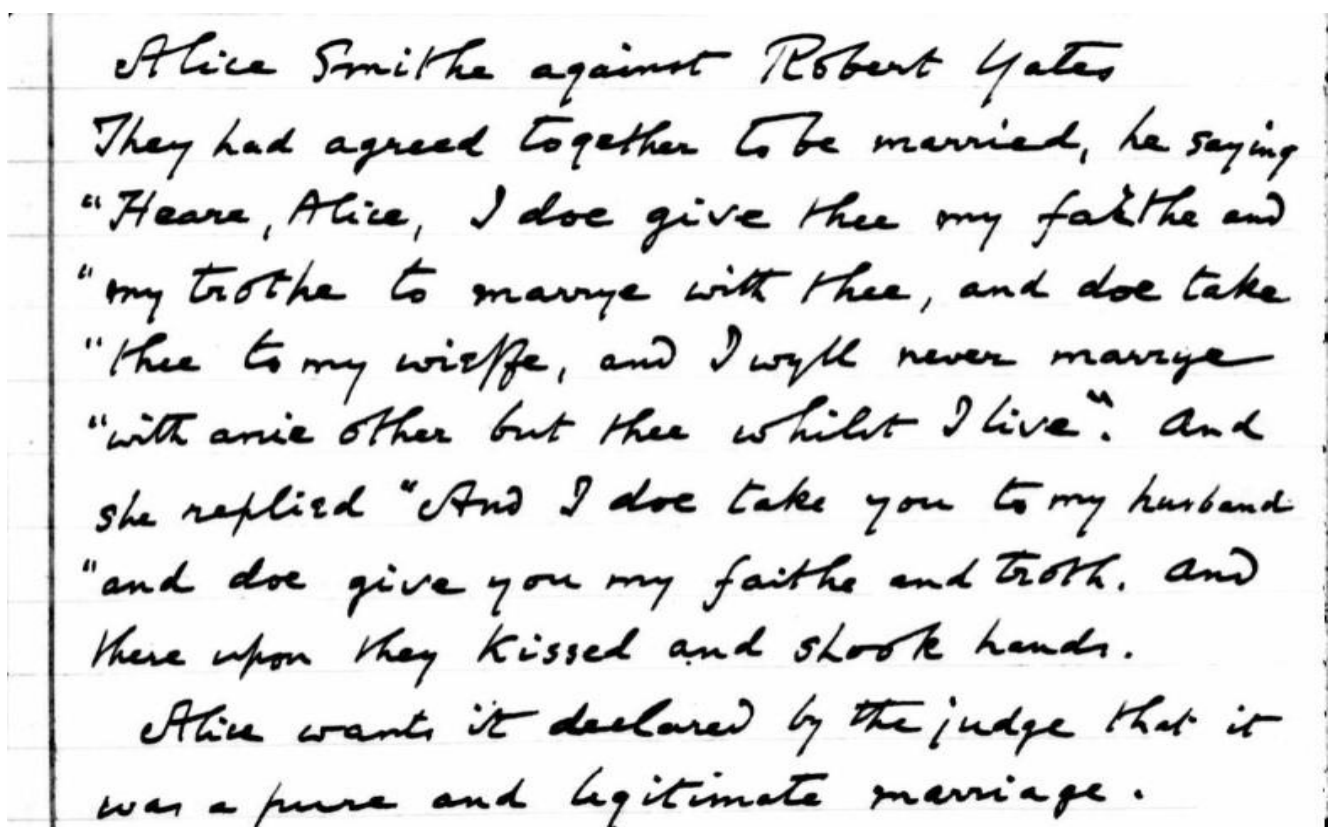
The Minster itself got off lightly with only a few items removed by the Puritans The church organ survived. Oliver Cromwell was believed to be less obsessed with many of the extremist Puritan ideas. He reportedly did listen to organ music, smoked and drank sherry, and had dancing at his daughter's wedding. He was tolerant of all religions, including Catholicism - so long as they did not create disorder and unrest. There were a large number of sects appearing at this time, mostly variants of Methodism and Baptism. He did not approve of what he thought of as heretics, Quakers, - and the Fifth Monarchists he had dabbled with at university. This last sect believed in the Prophecy in the Book of David that after the end of 4 Monarchies the Fifth would be the establishment of the Kingdom of God. A member of the sect, Mary Cary Rand,

prophetess, wrote about Church Reform, Equality for women and Poverty. Maybe there were topics included that were not in line with the Parliamentarism view.

Wimborne in the early 1600s appeared to be mainly Royalist, and Protestant in the case of religion. The Minster church wardens, acting on behalf of the Governors of Queen Elizabeth's school, excommunicated many of the townsfolk, often for petty reasons, some repented and returned to the fold. However many others disliked the interference in their lives, so joined dissenter groups. Poole joined the Parliament side and when Corfe Castle had been taken, in a wise move Sir Anthony Ashley first Earl Shaftesbury and major Landowner, changed sides from Royalist to Parliament and would expect his tenants and workers to do the same.

It was a mystery how Oliver Cromwell managed to subdue and keep control of most of the UK. For most of the Wimborne inhabitants there was no need to fight the new system, therefore minimum enforcers were necessary. The Roundhead soldiers were apparently billeted in the George Inn. There are no accounts of battles in or around Wimborne but there are Re-enactment Groups who think some action might have taken place there.

Life for the most part probably carried on as normal for merchants and workers. One victim of the new order was the vicar for Wimborne Minster, William Stone from 1641 to 1646. The note by this entry in the church records gave the only reference (found so far) to the Parliamentarians presence, was that "William Stone had been expelled by the Roundheads. "The words "the Roundheads" were written very small and was nearly overlooked. (William returned to the church in 1661).The services in the minster were now for prayer and Bible study. Marriages in church were a "clandestine affair" only if a



Alice Smith against Robert Yates  
They had agreed together to be married, he saying  
"Hearre, Alice, I doe give thee my faith and  
"my trothe to marrye with thee, and doe take  
"thee to my wiffe, and I wyll never marrye  
"with anie other but thee whilst I live". And  
she replied "And I doe take you to my husband  
"and doe give you my faith and troth. and  
there upon they kissed and shook hands.  
Alice wants it declared by the judge that it  
was a pure and legitimate marriage.

minister was willing to perform the ceremony in secret. The preferred "wedding" was for the couple to announce their promises to each other in the town centre and then to



go before a magistrate or judge to make this legal. This was much the same as the old ways of marriage. This transcript of an entry in the church records was dated 1592.

Clothing in the time of the "occupation" was subdued gone were the brocades and padded breeches beloved of Henry VIII and the very fancy dresses of Elizabeth. The women's low necked gowns were made modest by the addition of smocked material. Hair was covered by a linen cap. The rich were allowed some lace to indicate their rank. Colours for clothing were brown, mulberry, dull green. Black did not come in the everyday clothing as it was expensive and the colour was not stable. There were several ways to produce black. Barks from alder, walnut and chestnut, and roots containing tannins produced a black which had to be stabilised with a mordant, in this instance iron salts. This product was corrosive to fabrics washed out easily and degraded faster than other colours. Overlaying dyes such as woad or indigo with madder with an alum mordant, produced a good black coloured fabric, but the lengthy process often did not work.

The appointed officials of the Commonwealth kept records, but these were destroyed for the most part when the Commonwealth ended. Most parish church ministers did not recognise the marriages of this time and declared the children baseborn and these were marked by having a second surname as an alias. Records of births and marriages had not been kept officially, but a few clerks attempted to get lists of events after the fall of the Commonwealth. Some couples "remarried" in church, but the children were still "baseborn". The Church records show a return to life as though nothing had happened but there was a definite change in attitudes of the flock. There were attempts to bully dissenters back to the old ways but this did not succeed.



*[Image from Dorset Chamber of Commerce & Industry]*

**FROM THE ARCHIVES**

**(Ed.)**

**MEMORIES OF THE CADET CORPS**

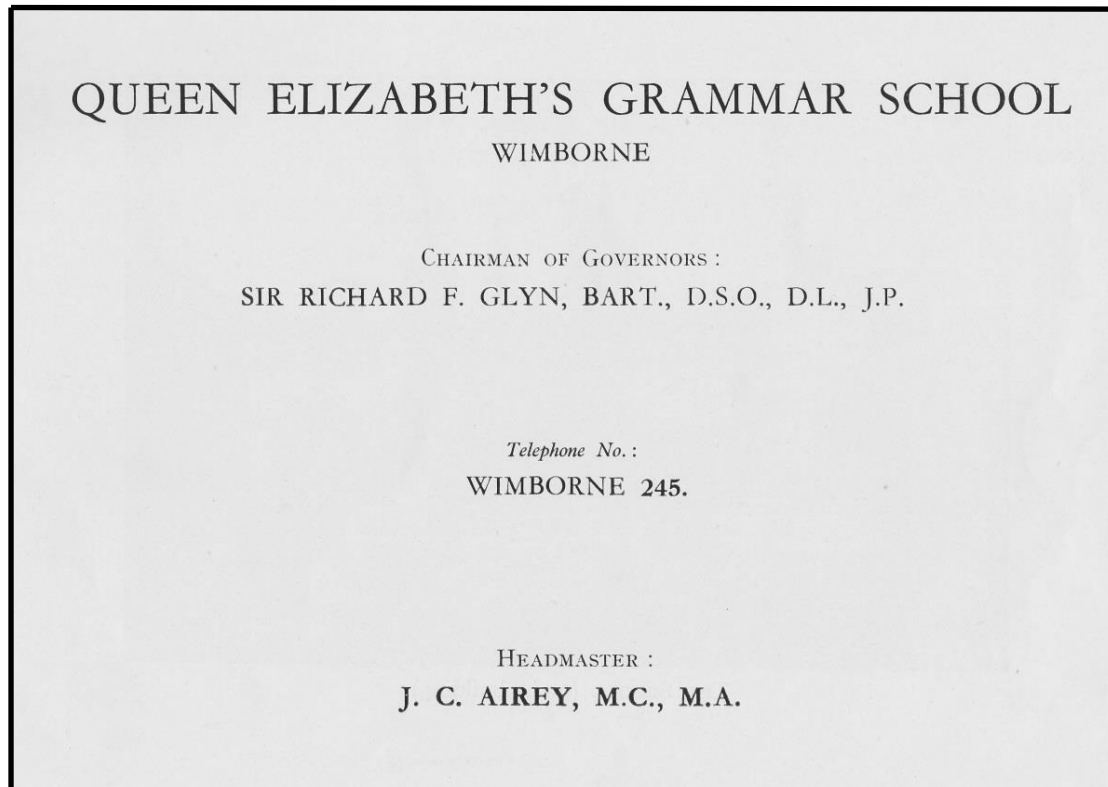
***We have had a request concerning a photograph of some former pupils who were in the Cadet Corps – shown below :***



***We have no names to go with the faces.***

***If any of you can identify anyone in the photo, please let us know and hopefully we will be able to "complete the picture" ! Many thanks.***

**A PROSPECTUS FOR QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL WIMBORNE  
(circa 1939)**



This Royal and Religious Foundation has been established in Wimborne since 1496. Founded by Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII, it was re-endowed by Queen Elizabeth in 1563, and later re-chartered by Charles I. The School is now an Endowed Secondary School, with a sound modern curriculum, and is recognised by the Board of Education.

**History of the School.**

The subjects of instruction include Scripture, English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Latin, French, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Art, Music, Woodwork, Metalwork and Physical Education. Nature Study is taught in the lower Forms. The curriculum provides a graduated course of study from the age of 9 or 10 to 16, with a further course of advanced work to 18.

**Curriculum.**

Boys who reach the Fifth Form (ages 15-16) are entered for the Oxford School Certificate Examination. The gain of Credits in certain subjects gives exemption from London Matriculation.

**Examinations.**

The Sixth Form study for the Oxford Higher School Certificate, London Intermediate Arts, Civil Service, or kindred examinations. Most of the work is done with small groups of boys, facilitating individual coaching.



The teaching staff includes, besides the Headmaster, twelve fully-trained and experienced masters. Woodwork and metalwork are taught by a visiting specialist master. Preparation for public examinations – usually of vital importance for boys who contemplate entering a University, a profession or business – is carried out thoroughly. The soundness of the curriculum is indicated by the School's successes in the Oxford examinations, while individual boys have passed for entrance to the Army and Navy, R.A.F., Civil Service, Post Office, Banks, etc. Every effort is made to advise and assist parents in choosing careers for their boys.

## **Preparation for Careers.**

Most of the main block is taken up by the Headmaster's House, which in addition to the private rooms includes Dormitories, Dining Room, Changing Rooms for the boarders, Hornby Railway Room, etc., and also houses the resident staff. It contains also Big School, which boarders use as a recreation room after school hours.

## **Buildings.**

The New Building (opened in December 1936) is a one-floor building of modern design, so placed as to obtain a south aspect for the classrooms and laboratories. It is a complete unit in itself, but has been so planned that a second floor can be added to complete the block. The accommodation provided includes classrooms; physics and chemistry laboratories, with smaller rooms for advanced work and preparation; cloakrooms, offices and lavatories. All rooms are well-lighted, ventilated and heated, and light colours have been used for the decorative work.



NEW BUILDING AND MAIN BLOCK.

The Woodwork Shop is adjoining, and the Gymnasium and two Fives Courts flank the West side of the playground, with a miniature range for the Cadet Corps on the South side.

The playing fields comprise five football pitches, separate cricket ground and two grass tennis courts. Rugby and Association Football, Cricket and Lawn Tennis are played, while the River Allen which forms one boundary of the playing fields provides safe bathing, always under supervision. Unless exempted on medical advice, boys are expected to learn to swim. All boys spend two periods a week in the Gymnasium, and voluntary Boxing and Gymnastic Clubs meet after School hours in the winter.

## **Athletics.**

The older boys take part in organised games on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, the younger boys on Wednesday afternoons. The games are carefully supervised and coached by masters, and every boy must take part unless physically unfit. There are three excellent pavilions for the use of the players. Inter-School, House and Form matches are arranged throughout the year, and Inter-House contests are held in Field Sports, Swimming, Boxing, Tennis, Fives, Gymnastics and Shooting.

The School Cadet Corps, affiliated to the 4<sup>th</sup> Dorset Regt., contains over 120 boys. In addition to the usual training, instruction is given in such kindred activities as field work, first aid and map-reading. An annual Camp is held when conditions permit.

## **Cadet Corps.**

All boys are not students – nor even athletes – and education deserving of the name must encourage the development of all types. Hence every boy is expected to take part in some of the out-of-class activities.

## **School Societies.**

The Debating Society, Scientific Society, Boxing Club, Dramatic Society, Musical Society and Choir provide a wide range of appeal. The Hornby Railway Club has equipped a large room with a complete system of tracks, locomotives and rolling-stock. These provide an interesting and instructive hobby in leisure time.

Big School is fitted with a portable stage, 18-ft. by 22-ft., complete with a modern system of lighting and curtains, and is used by the School Dramatic Society; also for School Concerts and for the production of plays by Forms.

## **School Stage.**

The School is nine miles from Bournemouth, little more from the New Forest, and is on the edge of Hardy country. Hence from the point of view of health, of variety of scenery, and of literary associations, the district round about is very attractive.

## **Boarders.**

Boarders have always been an integral part of the school, and School House is much more than a "hostel" for boys attending the school.

A special feature of the arrangements for sleeping is that each boy has a separate cubicle, large and airy. This gives the advantage of a degree of privacy, and is invaluable from a health point of view. One of the two resident masters has his bedroom in the dormitories. All boarders are in the care of Mrs Airey, assisted by a fully-trained Matron. There is a separate Sick Room.

All boys are weighed and measured at the beginning and end of each term and inspected annually, at no cost to the parent, by a doctor. Special attention is given to the catering. Vegetables and fruit are supplied from our own garden.

The following awards are available for pupils :

- The "Richard Glyn" Scholarship of £50 a year for a course in Science at a University.
- The "Thomas Lynes" Charity gives financial assistance to boys proceeding to Oxford or Cambridge.
- The Governors make a Scholarship allowance in cases of special merit.

Boys are also eligible to compete for the Senior Scholarships awarded by the Dorset Educational Committee, and for State Scholarships.

Choral Scholarships are offered from time to time for boys who possess good voices, to fill vacancies in the Minster Choir.

Special Prizes of books are presented annually for proficiency in individual subjects.

State Scholarships and Open Scholarships to Oxford and Cambridge have been won in recent years.

The School is three-quarters of a mile from Wimborne Station (S. Rly.). There are good trains from the North and Midlands via Bath and Oxford, while, from London (3 hours) and the West, Wimborne is served by the Southern Railway.

Excellent motor-'bus services connect Wimborne with Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset.

## **Scholarships and Prizes.**

## **Railway Facilities.**

## DETAILS OF FEES

### TUITION FEES PER ANNUM.

	£	s.	d.
For boarders and pupils whose parents reside in Dorset .....	12	0	0
For other pupils .....	15	0	0
Text-books (stationery is provided free) .....	15	0	
School Subscription (covers all Athletics, use of Libraries and Fives Courts, School Magazine, and membership of all School Societies and Clubs) .....	1	2	6
Cadet Corps (optional) .....	7	6	

### BOARDING FEES PER ANNUM.

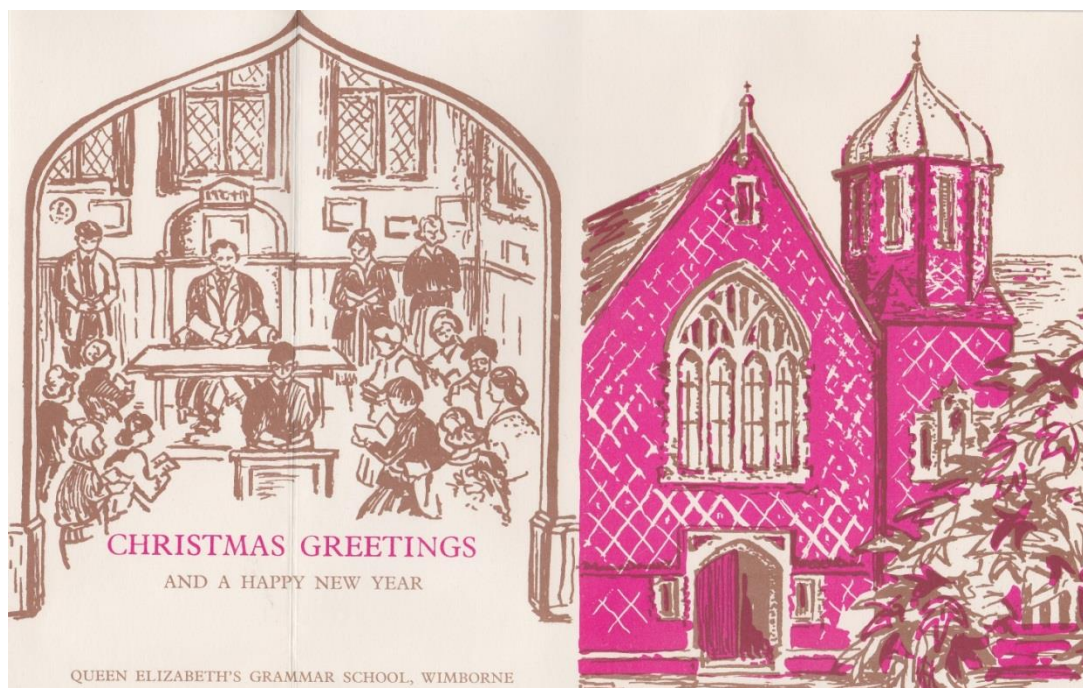
Full Board .....	60	0	0
Weekly Board .....	55	0	0
Laundry .....	3	0	0
Entrance (payable first term only) .....	1	0	0

### DAY BOYS.

Dinners may be taken at the School. Charge per term (5 days a week)    3   0   0

Further particulars may be obtained from the Headmaster.

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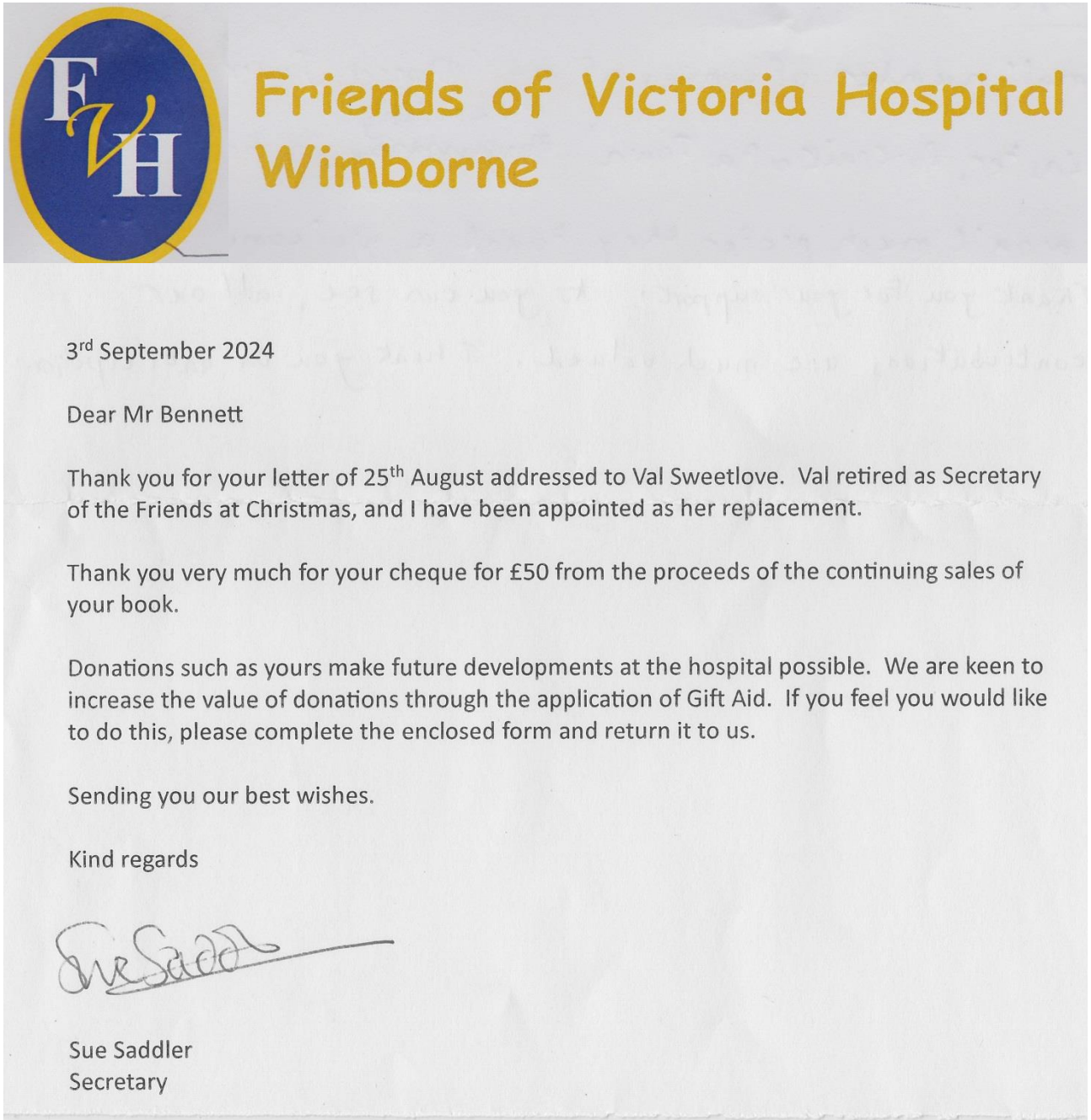
## FROM YOUR EDITOR

All my spare Wimborne books are now gone.

I will still be offering copies of my Dorset Journey to members for a donation I will pass on to the Friends of Wimborne Hospital at the December Reunion. Great photographs by Geoff Hill ('arfur Daley) including one of the OW's Reunion a decade ago.

Thank you for your support. As you can see, all our contributions are much valued.

Thank you in anticipation.





## NEWS OF SOME OLD WINBURNIANS

### CHRISTOPHER PETERS (51-54)

*(Christopher writes to say his health is deteriorating and so he has put 'pen to paper' to give us some memories from his time at WGS and beyond. We hope you are coping as well as can be expected under the circumstances, dear friend.*

*Ed.)*

In June 1951 my father took me to see the Le Mans 24 hour race and on the channel crossing I was delighted to have been told that I had passed the 11-plus. Our entry proved to be the last one of boys only. My two class buddies, Paul Burton and John Ashfield-Salter were both motor racing enthusiasts. The introduction of the biro made it very easy to trace round Grand Prix circuits on desk tops in various classrooms.

I was not particularly skilled at sport but enjoyed the CCF and learned to map read while at summer camp at Bourley, near Aldershot.

I opted to learn Latin in preference to German, but there was a vacancy on a week's trip to Kassel which I filled. My choice of holiday reading, "The Dam Busters", proved totally inappropriate and remained hidden in my luggage as my hosts spent some time afloat as a result of the bombing of the Moehne Dam.

At the end of the autumn term in my fourth year my father took a job in Winchester so my time at Queen Elizabeth's finished at Christmas 1954.

From a very early age I had chosen the Royal Navy as my career and I joined as an artificer apprentice in January 1956 at HMS Fisgard in Torpoint, near Plymouth. My naval career was enjoyable, but six of my 8 years were spent under training. My total time in Her Majesty's ships was a half-day being very apprehensive in an old ex-World War II submarine and a half-day on an aircraft carrier in Plymouth in dry dock !

For the past 60 years since resigning from training at then Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth I have been fortunate to live, love, work and retire around Windermere. Following three years as an outdoor pursuits instructor at Brathay Hall Centre I was accepted as a mature student at Charlotte Mason College in Ambleside to qualify as a teacher. The Lakes School, one of the very early comprehensive schools, provided opportunities to specialise in special education, vocational guidance and, latterly, administrative responsibilities. Early retirement was offered in 1994 following a 6-year secondment to a schools/industry coordinating role with schools and colleges in south Cumbria. Retirement has been filled with worldwide travel, sailing, fell walking and golf.

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School laid the foundations to a most enjoyable life and it has been a pleasure to have kept in touch for the 70 years since leaving.



## **Dr JOHN R F GUY (63-71)**

A number of our members have, at different moments, asked me about John, such a key figure in the production of The Newsletter for the past decade or so. Let me, in just a few lines, introduce the young fellow to those of our readers not personally acquainted with him.

I forget the actual year when Yours Truly became the Editor of The Newsletter but, what I do remember, is that what I and several of the 'old guard' put together were a dozen sheets or so of news and views which I duly took off to the Print Centre in East Street, Wimborne (now since closed down) to print off before dispatch. Not long thereafter, John fortuitously arrived in the scene.

His academic record and range of qualifications are outstanding. John actually grew up in Sturminster Marshall, attended the local primary school before passing his 11-plus to WGS. Leaving in 1971 after A-levels he secured a B.Sc. (Hons.-1<sup>st</sup> Class) in Communications Engineering, progressed to a M.Sc. in Electronics from Southampton University and a Ph.D. in Antenna Systems research at University College London. To abbreviate his employment record he ultimately rose to serve as a Principal NATO Scientist in The Hague in The Netherlands. In the years that followed he joined the National Air Traffic Services (NATS), then still part of the UK Civil Aviation Authority, as Deputy Director Systems Design, rising to Chief Architect-European Air Traffic Management prior to retirement.

Little wonder the lad is working with computers in helping to put together our bi-annual Newsletter. This is not to detract from the brilliant work of our Webmaster, David Finnemore, who does a superb job working with his computers to keep our information database and e-mail communications functioning correctly. We are lucky to have both of them in our ranks – if we didn't, I fear there would be no Newsletter and the OWs would have folded some time ago.

John was a keen cricketer in his pomp, he still follows the game with interest. Like your Editor, some of his happiest schoolboy days were spent watching Hampshire play at Dean Park, Bournemouth, like the irrepressible John Dacombe too. These days John G often travels up to Southampton to watch a game or two.

On a personal note, John has been married to a lovely lady, Avril, for more than 45 years.

Remember the lad – and David Finnemore – when you are raising your glasses at Christmas – if not before !

Cheers !

***Your Editor***  
***Alan R Bennett***

## IN MEMORIAM OF LEN PEARCE (36-41)

***(We take pleasure in paying a tribute to Len Pearce who passed away in 2023 at the ripe old age of 98 years. Len played a critical role in resurrecting the Old Winburnians Association (OWA) together with some of his old school friends more than 25 years ago. We are grateful to members of his family, notably Christine, for providing details of Len's early years at our old school and life in a very different Wimborne from the one we know today. We shall be printing another instalment in the story of Len's life, especially as it relates to a certain building in King Street, in the next issue.***

***Ed.)***

Len lived in Wimborne all his life. He was born in 1925 in East Borough in a small cottage and went to Wimborne Grammar school, having attended the primary school in School Lane. His father was a gardener and also a retained fireman. Whilst dealing with a flood at Crichel House, during a thunderstorm, his father was struck by lightning and survived ! His mother did various cleaning jobs and sewing repairs, etc. She used to look after the 'old people' when she was in her 80's.

In the summers, Wimborne received a visit from a 'flying circus'. This 'circus' was an idea of Sir Alan Cobham, the pioneer aviator and an effort to promote an interest in flying. The typical Programme was a Fly Past, Individual aircraft displays, Aerobatics, Inverted flying 'racing' round pylons, Wing Walking, etc. This is what probably sparked Len's interest in planes and flying.



Len volunteered for the RAF before being called up, and went on to become a Flight Engineer. In March 1946, when returning from leave to RAF Keevil, he and a friend saw a spitfire flying too low to the ground and watched in horror as it crashed just short of the runway. Although the engine was still running, and the risk of fire being great, (small flames had started to appear) Len and his friend climbed into the cockpit and managed to get the pilot out. Sadly, he had passed away. The official inquest said it was pilot error. So Len was a hero !

After being demobbed, Len returned to his job in Insurance.

He met Diana, his 'Dido', on New Year's Eve in Woodlands dance hall. After a courtship of over two years, during which Len was advised that he may be moved with the Insurance company, he moved to the Town Planning office in Bournemouth, where he stayed until he retired. They married in March 1951 and moved in together with Grandma before buying their own bungalow in Merley Ways. During his time in Town Planning, he successfully completed an Open University degree, mainly to prove he could, as he had left school before taking his certificate. It was also because he was fed

up with all the people in the office, who started work after finishing a degree and thinking that they knew it all !!

Len commanded the ATC squadron in Wimborne and then moved to command Poole ATC Squadron. He was the secretary of the OWA, and at 90 became a guide in Wimborne Minster ! Len also researched and published the service details of the men and women listed on the War Memorials in the Minster, the Grammar school, the United Reform Church and in some of the surrounding villages.



After his retirement, Len and Diana enjoyed going on holiday and Len was a great support to Mum with her amateur dramatics. He also enjoyed being with the grandchildren, acting as a chauffeur on many an occasion. Len had two daughters, Jackie and Christine, and four grandchildren, Abi, Chris, Jonathan and Ben. He was immensely proud of all of them. He also had 5 great grandchildren and 3 step grandchildren. Len's legacy will live on in their hearts and in the written memories that he left.

### **LEN AT QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL (QEGS), WIMBORNE**

The first form I entered in September 1936 was 2A (WGS was a two entry school but there were no forms numbered 1). The form master was Mr. T.W. Tapping, who was the senior History master and also taught Maths in the lower school. There were many differences from the school I had just left. There were no female teachers, the staff all had university degrees and wore their gowns when teaching. Every forty minutes there was a mass movement of both pupils and staff since tuition by specialist teachers took place in classrooms and three laboratories scattered all over the school buildings, in the gymnasium and even in Big School. At the Boys' School we had largely been confined to one room with one teacher. It took a little while to remember what subject was being taught, by which member of the staff and where. Our lives got more complicated when we left our own form room and had to take with us all the things we would need, perhaps for a whole morning. Then there was hardly any possibility of returning to get forgotten items, as another form and master would be installed in our room.

The working week was also quite fragmented. Half the school had a half day off on Tuesday and the remainder had Thursday afternoon off. Those afternoons were sports afternoons, when the pupils remaining at school went to the school playing field in East Borough to take part in organised games. Football was played in the autumn term, Rugby after Christmas and, in the summer, Cricket. Since I lived almost opposite the field, I used to change into sports kit after having lunch at home and then nip across the road. I was never a sportsman at school, indeed all my life I have had no interest in either taking part in, or watching sports. If pressed I admit to being a keen but indifferent swimmer and that is about my limit. I am not sure how it happened but when in form 4B I was chosen to play in the under-14 cricket team. Even then I managed to get the job of wicket-keeper, a position in which I did not have to run after balls in the summer heat. Furthermore, I had plenty of protection - pads, gloves and

even a box to shield my pubescent equipment from the hard leather covered cricket ball !

We also went into school on Saturday mornings from 9 until 1pm and I'm sure this was dictated by the need to occupy the school boarders who comprised approximately one third of the pupils. The morning school programme embraced four teaching periods and, sometimes on a Saturday these became two double periods separated by a break, but more often two single lessons and then a double one to end the morning (perhaps some of the staff could then get away early !!). During the first year the pupils took Nature Study in place of Biology, and for this we had Mr. L.H. Mottram, who was quite a 'character', but never-the-less a good teacher. The 'prep' he set was usually, "Make up your nature diaries", which were little green note books wherein we were supposed to record interesting events in the natural history world. Fortunately for me, I had an expert at home and father supplied most of the entries which I made, from special dawns and sunsets to whatever was popping out of the ground or being harvested. No wonder 'Motty' found my efforts impressive !!

The half day off, or alternatively the sports afternoon which I have mentioned, were not a matter for choice and I was unfortunate in that, as far as the Walford end of the town was concerned, I seemed to be on my own. To pass the time away I often went over the bridge to the garage and spent the afternoon with Mr. Pitfield. One day a van from Cowdry's the bakers, whose shop and bakery used to be on the south-east corner of West Borough and Priors Walk, pulled into the garage for petrol. The driver was Eric Cowdry, the younger son of the owner of the business and, in the course of our conversation, he suggested that I should spend every Tuesday afternoon helping him as he delivered bread and cakes in the Gaunts, Holt, Horton and Witchampton areas. The deal we struck was that he would pay me sixpence (2.5p) and I could have some cakes as well. In fact I usually went home with quite a bag full of them. During the next few years I gained a knowledge of the lanes in that area which has stood me in good stead ever since and we remained friends until his early death.

At the Grammar School I would say that it was only during the first year that I really held my own with the rest of the form. Starting there about a term later came a new master, a tall thin young man, A.R. Jolly. Prior to his arrival we had been in the care of "Old Man Ayres", the ancient organist at The Minster, who was a little wizened chap with a nasty temper, perhaps attributable to his age ! In contrast, A.R. Jolly, or "Goofy", as he was quickly nicknamed by the pupils, after the lugubrious Disney cartoon dog, was a brilliant musician and also a useful art teacher but his control over a class was negligible. From "Goofy", I learned to respect the finer points of the opera 'Tannhauser' by Wagner, in particular, 'The Grand March' and also the violins in the 'Pilgrims' Chorus". As regards musical appreciation, it was a big step forward from Rubinstein's 'Melody in F', which I had learned at the Boys' School, in order to sing with the choir at a music festival.

When A.R. Jolly played the organ in Big School, he could make the instrument 'talk'. It was to his playing that I first sang "Jerusalem", No.446 in 'Songs of Praise', the hymn book used at that time for morning assemblies. Yes I still remember both the book and the number after so very many years, so I must have been impressed.

Sometimes he could be persuaded to play the organ in duets, with another master on the piano, both of them lived at the school; A.R. Jolly in fact lived in the tower room to the north of Big School with a door through to the rear of the organ. I suspect they sometimes amused themselves and the boarders by impromptu recitals. I also saw "Goofy" lean over the piano from the back and, with his gown over the keys and wearing gloves, play the Chopin 'Revolutionary Study'. This meant that, partially inverted, without being able to see the keyboard, he had to play bass notes with his right hand and use his left hand for the notes above middle C, as well as deal with the black keys which were now closer to him. I have never seen anyone else, not even as a theatrical feat, attempt to play even a simple tune when leaning over the piano as he did, yet he succeeded and overcame the additional hazards of his own making. It was a party piece 'par excellence' !!

The new music master soon set about forming a String Orchestra and, since I could claim some knowledge of the violin, I gained a place in it, as one of the second violins. He even persuaded one of the other masters, L.H. Mottram, to join us and play a viola. Practices were held after school hours and, as time went by, we jelled into a reasonable ensemble. I think it was after the return from the summer holidays, possibly early in October, that Mr. Jolly went to the Tivoli Cinema to see the first full length cartoon film, Disney's "Snow White". The music made such an impact on him that he went back to the school and, from memory, wrote out the melodies and then orchestrated them. The manuscripts were handed out at the next practice and in a very short while, the string orchestra made its first appearance at the School Speech Day, playing, among other items, a selection from "Snow White". That year the Speech Day was held in the Tivoli and we played in the orchestra pit. It was the first time it was used for its designed purpose. Indeed it was not used on many occasions throughout the time the cinema was open to the public.

In addition to playing in the school orchestra during the year, I also made a further appearance at Bournemouth Pavilion with the Combined Schools' Orchestra. However, I never reached the dizzy height of, even the back desk, of the first violins. Being one of the second fiddles was my limit.

The school orchestra was roped in when the annual school play was presented. The stage was a temporary wooden affair which was erected below and in front of the organ gallery. From the organ loft we performed a few musical selections prior to the curtain going up and again during the interval. The remainder of the time we tended to stay in our places and make a nuisance of ourselves by flicking pellets of paper at the actors below as they did their stuff. Productions varied from Shakespeare's plays to one entitled "Island Fires", which was written and produced by Mr. L.H. Mottram. However, most often these "extravaganzas" were produced by the senior English master, Mr. A.R. Maiden and almost all the parts, both male and female, were, of necessity, taken by boys. The girls clothes sometimes being provided by the Headmaster, from his daughter's wardrobe ! (The family lived on the school premises).

***(to be continued)***

## OBITUARIES

### **BRYAN ARTHUR GROSS (42-45)**

***(We received the following from Bryan's wife, Audrey, back in September 2023. It is with very many apologies to her and Bryan's memory that I missed including it in our newsletters since then. Here's hoping including it here goes some way to making amends. Dr John Guy)***

My husband sadly passed away on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

I know he enjoyed re-connecting with his old school in Wimborne. Bryan, after leaving school, became a draughtsman in London. He then gained a Marine Radio certificate with Marconi and joined merchant ships. I met him in Melbourne in 1958 when he was working for The New Zealand Shipping Company. He migrated to Australia in October 1961 on The MV Fairsea. We were married in March 1962.

Subsequently, Bryan joined IBM as a customer engineer and was happily working for them for 34 years. We then travelled widely throughout Australia. He was heavily involved in voluntary work in the community and at the Prince Charles Hospital in giving support to in-patients awaiting heart surgery. We were also involved with promoting Governments to set aside more diverse land for National Parks for the future.

Bryan lived a very enriched life here in Brisbane, Queensland and is sorely missed by me and the family.

### **PETER KINGSWELL (50-56)**

***(We received the following from Peter's wife, Susan Ed.)***

I am writing to let you know that my husband, Peter Kingswell, has sadly passed away. Peter attended the school circa 1950-56 and always spoke fondly of his time there. His older brother Michael also attended QEGS.

Peter was born in Gaunts Common nursing home in 1939 and was brought up on the Crichel House estate where his Father was the chauffeur; he always said he was born 200 yards in the wrong direction !!

He joined the Metropolitan Police at 19 and had a 30 year career, the last 10 years in the Diplomatic Protection Group which he loved. As an armed officer in 1980 he was involved in the Iranian siege in central London.

Peter and I had been married for 54 years, we have two daughters and three grandchildren who will miss him very much – as will I.



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Wimborne  
SOCCER Under 14 XI., 1952



W. Cotterell, Mr. W. Streets, A. Hellier, D. Seabright, P. Kingswell, M. Pryor, Mr. J. Kerswell, J. Jenkins  
A. Crumpler, D. Scrase, A. King, M. Chick, L. Wood  
P. Frampton E. Middleton

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Wimborne.  
1st XI. CRICKET, 1955.



B. E. Ruck (Res.), R. W. Clarke, B. Stickley, P. H. Key, P. R. Kingswell (Res.), A. T. Domoney, P. D. Frampton  
B. H. Antell, E. C. Wood, D. J. Lawman (Captain), J. E. Brewster, R. T. Beadle  
M. T. Chick D. A. Scrase

## **DOUG FREWER (40-49)**

***(We received the following from Doug's daughter, Ginny Bevan Ed.)***

Doug, his brother Pat and sister Jan grew up in Poole. His family moved several times and lived in a variety of unusual homes, including a converted railway carriage and a beach hut.



*[From a school photo of 1949 - Doug is seated at the front in the first row, third from the left & looking very determined]*

Doug's first school was an old fashioned dame school run by a lady of strict ideas with the rather wonderful name of Mrs Silence. Doug and Pat enjoyed school, especially playing in a disused quarry and stealing peas from Mrs Silence's kitchen garden. Doug then moved to Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Wimborne where he was captain of the rugby team, Head Boy and then became a lifelong member of The Old Winburnians. Doug was always very independent, even from an early age.

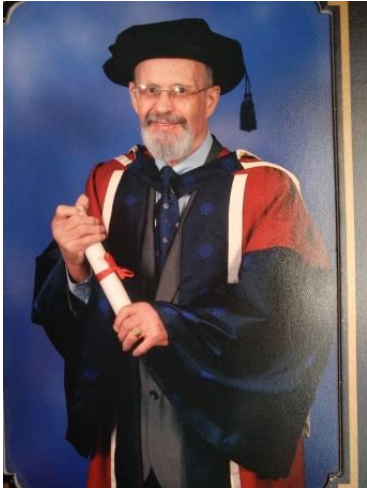
After leaving school he built his own bicycle which had a set of French gears on the handlebars. He then embarked on a solo cycling trip from Poole to Scandinavia, returning by container ship, travelling in steerage and sleeping in a hammock. For his 21st birthday he was given £100 and bought his first car, a three wheeled Morgan. Over the years he owned many stylish cars including a Daimler Dart in Fleet, a Buick Skylark in Texas and a Mazda RX7 in Tokyo.



Doug did his national service in the Education Corps in South Wales and went on to study PPE at New College at Oxford University. Doug supported the college for the rest of his life and was telling us recently about his donation to the college extension. In return for his donation an Italian stone-mason will carve a gargoyle octopus on the new building. Doug was thrilled by this.

After Oxford, Doug joined Royal Dutch Shell and was posted to Nairobi where he met my mother Lynne who had moved there to work as a nurse. They married in 1958 and honeymooned at Treetops. Further postings followed – Doha, Houston, Tokyo and

Bangkok. Doug was even made an Honorary Admiral of Texas Navy in 1973. Doug stayed with Shell his whole career and retired in mid 1980s. He and Lynne built a villa in Almeria, Spain and spent many happy winters there. Returning to UK in the 1990s,



Doug attended the Oxford University Summer School for several years and volunteered as Treasurer of the Friends of Rewley House. Doug went on to study for an MA at Oxford Brookes followed by a PhD on the Social Agency of Japanese stamps, awarded in 2004.

Doug took us on many memorable holidays over the years – my favourite was a grand driving holiday in our yellow Buick Skylark from Texas to California via the great national parks of the south west. What a fantastic and unforgettable adventure that was! Thank you, Dad. Doug also took the family skiing at Mount Fuji in Japan. The scenery was stunning, our skiing less so, but we had a lot of fun.

Doug was a caring and loving husband and father. He and Lynne had a long, happy marriage and celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary in 2018. He was a wonderful father and encouraged me, Tim and Nick to travel and experience other cultures, to be independent and think for ourselves. Doug converted to Roman Catholicism in Nairobi and had a strong Christian faith. When my parents moved to Letcombe Regis in 2010, Doug became a parishioner at St John Vianney Church in Wantage and was a generous supporter of Little People, the charity assisting families on low incomes. He played active roles in Letcombe Regis Parish Council and Richmond Residents Association - and was always ready to offer feedback – as the chef will no doubt recall !

Doug was kind, intelligent, wise, intellectually curious, loved to debate and had a lively sense of humour. He was very hard working, never showed any self-pity and was an incurable optimist.

#### **LORNA SHIRLEY DYTER (née BREWER) (59-64)**

***(We have received the sad news that Lorna had died in Poole Hospital on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024. She was a retired Quality Assurance worker and widow of Paul Adrian Dyter.***

***Ed.)***

#### **MICHAEL JOHN MORRIS (48-53)**

***(We have received the sad news from Michael's wife, Julia, that he died on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2024. We also heard from his sister Barbara, one of our members. We will reproduce more about Michael in our next issue.***

***Ed.)***



**KENNETH NICKLEN (44-50)**

***(Ken passed away in the summer. He was a much loved and highly respected figure in the Verwood community. At WGS he was a prefect who exercised authority with dignity and sound common sense. It was a pleasure and a privilege knowing you, old friend. (We hope to include more about Ken and his life in a future newsletter.***

**Ed.)**

+++++



[Wimborne Square]

Source : Wimborne Camera

***(I wonder how you heard the results of the latest General Election held in July 2024 ?***

***This seemed to be how many in Wimborne heard the results of the General Election of December 1910. This election was held between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of December, the last general election to be held over several days, and the last to be held before the start of the First World War.***

**Ed.)**

Grateful thanks to Melvyn Gilbert at Minster Press for his help in reproducing this Newsletter