

recall that Michael was a bright pupil, who was usually placed in the first three in the class and won the school's annual chess tournament at least once. He graduated part-time, obtaining a science degree from University of London. He worked for a time as a chemist with Burroughs Wellcome in Dartford and then went into teaching. After marriage he spent some time teaching in East Africa.

I remain reasonably fit and well apart from the TMB (Too Many Birthdays), still cycle with a club and continue to work as a volunteer at a primary school in Luton. I tutor maths and science and run the after-school science club. It's fun and I recommend it to any retiree, who likes kids. Primary schools are always looking for volunteers to run clubs, to help with reading, or to serve as governors.

Kind regards, Edward S Pepper (1949-1953)

Stan Frith (1954-1959)

After a reasonably successful career in business I took up writing. My fourth book BEHIND THE SMILE was published by Palladian Books on 1st September. Because I support the charity Depression Alliance I want all proceeds from the sale of the book to go to the charity Depression Alliance (www.depressionalliance.org) in memory of my son Jason who died tragically after a four year battle with depression. I have managed to persuade Palladian Books to allow me to initially use the Just Giving website <https://www.justgiving.com/BehindtheSmile/> to sell the book. Then from 1st October they will go on sale in W H Smith and Waterstones but these outlets will take a margin thus reducing the amount going to the charity. So I am pushing it as hard as I can before then and it would be great if generations of Dartford Technical School for Boys/Wilmington Grammar School for Boys Old Boys could help me help others.

There are six million depression sufferers in the UK and last year 5000 deaths attributed to depression. I really would like to help reduce that statistic.

Please go onto the website and help me. If you want it dedicated - just e-mail me your address and the dedication (stanfrith@btinternet.com) after you have donated and I will handle it personally

Many thanks Stan Frith

Garry Barker (1964-71)

Regarding the 'what I am doing now' bit, me and another pupil I went to DTHS with (sometime this week is the 50th anniversary of our first day at DTHS!) are running a not-for-profit organisation that does trips to the Great War Battlefield sites. Our website www.greatwarbattlefields.com has details of the trips. We organise trips for clubs, associations etc. who want to raise funds. They find the bums-for-the-seats and we do everything else. Depending on how much the organisation wants to charge its members (around £240 per person for 2 sharing a twin room for 2 day trip is usual) we find that at about 30-35 bums covers the costs and the excess bums will be funds for the organisation.

As an example in the spring we did a 2 day trip to The Somme for the CrimeStoppers charity and they made £1000. <http://www.e-watch.co/articles.php?viewarticle=4902>

Best Wishes, Garry

REUNION DINNER AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, 4th October, 2014

This year we have changed the timing of our gathering to October from the regular date of the first Saturday in May that we have had for a number of years. My apologies to all for the lateness of the finalisation of details and getting this mailing out, but the eventual move of home, a fall and other general health problems, plus a shortage of material to fill this Newsletter have been major factors.

Over recent years I have, along with Keith Potter and other Committee Members put a lot of work into the arrangements for the 'Annual Gathering of Clans'. This is becoming increasingly difficult for me to do and although I am able to continue with the General day-to-day management of the Association as Chairman I feel that it is time that we had more assistance to keep the gatherings going and would appreciate a member coming forward as Dinner Organiser, either as one member or as a group.

At the last Dinner we were fortunate to have Robin Pitman give us a short talk on his life since leaving the School, something that many members commented should be repeated by other Members and we agreed that this should be done again this year instead of having our normal Guest of Honour. To this end we desperately need one or two Members to volunteer to talk at this Dinner

Regards Dennis Wells (1954-59) (Chairman O.D. & W.A.)



DARTECH AND WILMINGTONIAN

A NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR OLD SCHOOL

NUMBER 28

SEPTEMBER 2014



20th ANNUAL REUNION DINNER & A.G.M.
on Saturday, 4th October, 2014

We hope to have some Old Boys talk about their lives

A Fish/Chicken and Chip Dinner and

of course a Licensed Bar

All ages are welcome, also wives and partners.

21st ANNUAL REUNION DINNER & A.G.M.

2015

Date to be decided

If you wish to find former School friends and get more of your own age group together do not hesitate to contact us, as we have the original Intake lists and facilities to make comprehensive searches.

Visit our Website and check out the names that we have, and if you know any members not listed give us their details
www.odwa.co.uk email: oldboys@odwa.co.uk
or visit our facebook pages Old Dartechs & Wilmingtonians Association

Your next Newsletter is due to be published in 2015 but to do this I need more articles and correspondence. Comments with regard to your memories while at the School, experiences at previous Reunions or details of your own life since leaving will be greatly appreciated.

Please contact Dennis Wells,
24 Gorrige Avenue, South Darenth, Dartford, Kent DA4 9LT.
email: denniswells9to3@btinternet.com

was the very stuff of teenager-ism; noisy, discordant, rebellious - progressive was the word. This was progressive jazz; with such numbers as Peanut Vendor, Artistry in Rhythm, Artistry in Blues, Drum Boogie, etc. Very avante garde records at that time, they would be collectors' items now. In fact, I did collect them; lowering them out of the window into the shrubbery, and taking them home with me when it got dark. I intended only to borrow them, probably as a means of attracting progressive young ladies round to listen to them in my bedroom. But, it didn't work out; like most of my teenage romances, which never got beyond the realms of fantasy.

One such fantasy concerned Pamela Foster. Ah, even recalling her name now makes my heart miss a beat. She lived in Sutherland Avenue, and I often made a diversion to ride past her house wherever I was heading on my bicycle. Pamela was a friend of Evelyn Antill, who lived opposite us. I didn't fancy Evelyn and cannot remember ever speaking to her, but whenever I saw Pamela calling at Evelyn's house, I always contrived to be in our front garden; developing a sudden interest in watering the small flower bed, mowing the tiny lawn, or oiling the hinges on the front gate yet again. The object was to be available, just in case something might occur that may cause Pamela to need my assistance. Perhaps I had read too many Just William books whilst I had been in hospital earlier? But nothing ever happened to cause the beautiful Pamela to take the slightest interest in my presence, if indeed she was even aware of it. Then, one day, I left the Technical College a little later than usual, and was not travelling with my usual boisterous mates. Just as the guard blew his whistle and the train was about to leave Platform 1 on Dartford Station, Pamela Foster, the girl of my dreams ran into the station, opened the door of my compartment, and jumped in! Train compartments were not inter-connected in those days and we were completely alone, seated opposite each other with our knees almost touching. Just as in the best fairy stories, the moment that I had dreamed of had finally materialised. And what did I do? Absolutely nothing. I just sat there in intense embarrassment for the entire 30-minute journey. Trying hard to think of some brilliant opening gambit of conversation; but my mind had seized up. Each phrase I rehearsed to myself sounded banal and, after several minutes it would have been unnatural to launch into any sort of opening remark. So I stared hard out of the window as if I was absolutely fascinated with the hundreds of suburban backyards that streamed by my fixed stare, afraid to look Pamela in the eyes. Even averting my gaze from her reflection that appeared in the door window whenever the train passed through a dark tunnel. They were thirty long minutes as the train made it's painful journey, slowing down and stopping at each station, doors opening and slamming, listening to the porters call out at each station 'Slades Green'... 'Barnhurst'... 'Bexleyheath'..... 'Welling'. By now, I was half hoping that other passengers would board our compartment to relieve the stress of our silent togetherness. Then, finally, 'Falconwood Station'.. and I rose to open the door for her; but she beat me to it, robbing me of my last chance to play the chivalrous knight for my Lady Pamela. And on the short walk home alone, of course, I thought of dozens of smart, bright things that I could have said to Pamela. And I was reminded of the lines from a current Rogers & Hammerstein song.....

"Longing to tell you, but afraid, and shy,

I let my golden chances pass me by;

Soon you'd leave me, off you would go, in the mist of day

Never, never to know.....How I'd love you, if I loved you".

(Extract from 'Scott-Free' published by the Daily Mail about 20 years ago.)

OBITUARIES

We have been advised that **SARAH BURMAN** (Staff from 1977-19??) passed away on 30th September 2009.

STUART MESSAGE (Staff from 1975-1986) passed away in February 2014.

I am writing to tell you that **MICHAEL HILTON**, an old pupil of Dartford County Technical School for Boys (1949-1953) died in March 2013. We kept in touch by letter over the years, but saw each other just once in recent times, when five of us from the same school year, Brian Hester (now deceased), Dave Hogben, Fred Aldridge, Michael Hilton and myself met for a reunion lunch at Tunbridge Wells. I

Maybe my dad got us to join this to make amends for his protests against us singing hymns for half the morning each day in Junior School assembly. Or maybe it was to keep us on the straight and narrow, away from girls? He had once got very angry and gave me a long lecture after finding a girl's hairclip stuck in my hair when I got home late one night from a 'snogging' session with a girl in Danson Park. Anyway, I rather liked the smart Boys' Brigade uniform with the pillbox hat, the leather Sam Brown belt, and polished brass buckles; and the marching to military music, carrying banners bearing strange devices on church parades. I fancied that this made me look rather dashing and, perhaps appealing to the opposite sex, but I found the actual attendance at the church services rather boring, and a distinct anticlimax to all the pomp and pageantry of getting there. Next, whilst still attending Technical College, I joined the Danson Boys' Youth Club, which met above the Embassy Ballrooms in Welling, where many years later I was to meet Letty Nelson and managed to avoid marrying her for a further 5 years.

The main pre-occupation of the club turned out to be sport. If there is such a thing as a 'sporting gene' in the human genome chain, then my one must be switched off, for I totally lack the drive - inherent in most human males and dogs, and in some females - to run after, throw, kick, catch, dribble, or strike with various devices, a leather or rubber sphere known as a ball. Had Danson Youth Club admitted girls as members I'm sure I would have developed a natural motivation towards ball games, but as it was, I soon became bored playing endless games of table tennis with other pimply-faced adolescent youths. However, on the verge of quitting, I discovered that the boys' club had a music room with a good selection of Swing, Blues, and Jazz instrumental music, recorded on the only audio system then available - 12" gramophone records, played at 78 r.p.m. with steel needles on a wind-up turntable. Listening to some of these records at the club influenced me to extend the scope of my piano playing from the five-finger classics, chosen for me by old Mrs. Rose, the neighbourhood piano teacher, to some Fats Waller numbers. Mrs. Rose was not impressed with my attempts at a syncopated style; it didn't fit in with the strict tempo, beat out by the metronome, which she often had ticking away; sometimes supplemented by the angry drumming of her knuckles on the side of her old upright piano, whenever I stumbled over a handful of dotted crotchets or quavers. But this was a time for growth and development for me. There were a number of sources that influenced my taste in music at that time. I suppose I got bored with sitting at home with mum and dad in the evenings, listening to BBC's light entertainment programmes on the wireless. I remember spending quite a lot of time listening on my own in the front room to the American Forces Network (AFN) and to Radio Caroline, a 'pirate' station transmitting illegally from a ship somewhere in the English Channel. I rushed out and bought sheet music and albums such as by Frankie Lane, and other 'pop idols' of the age, just as teenagers now rush out and buy today's pop and (c)rap on CDs and DVDs. On warmer evenings, I used to cycle from our home to Woolwich. This town, being older than brand-new Welling, and adjacent to the River Thames, conveyed to me a more exciting aura of intrigue and a more exhilarating sense of entertainment than I obtained by listening to the wireless. Woolwich had many public houses that seemed to be full of people really enjoying themselves. Of course, I was then below the legal age for going into pubs, and I had not yet commenced drinking alcohol, except perhaps for a small, supervised glass of a sherry or port at Christmas. But it was not necessary to enter licenced premises, for most of these pubs had the doors wide open in summer, and there was always a piano being played, and lots of joining in by the customers. I sometimes went further afield, taking my bike aboard the Woolwich Free Ferry to North Woolwich and Silvertown, where the pubs seemed to be even livelier, and the singing louder - often amplified by drunks singing into their empty pint glasses held adjacent to their mouths. I used to sit on my bike outside such pubs, and wished that I could play by ear, as most of the pub pianist seemed to in those days. I still wish that; but more than half a century later, I can still play piano only if I have the music in front of me! Some time after listening to the Danson Boys' Club's gramophone records of Original Dixieland, and New Orleans Traditional Jazz, such as Sidney Bechet and his Footwarmers, I purchased a clarinet, a B-flat Boehm system, made of African blackwood; it cost £22 including a smart little carrying case, and I later joined the 50's Trad Jazz revival; now sadly buried again. But my immediate discovery then was the Big Band Sound. I wasn't too interested in bands like Glen Miller, but was really turned on by some of the records in the club's Stan Kenton collection. This

John Foakes (1956-1961)

Thank you for advising of the annual reunion, unfortunately I will be unable to attend. However you may remember that some time last year you emailed me to say that Alan Brennan had been in touch and asking if you had my email address. I contacted Alan who now lives in Sydney Australia, by coincidence we had already planned a trip down under to visit my daughter and family who live just 60 miles south of Sydney. Several emails later between Alan and myself we arranged to meet at Bulli railway station for our own reunion. Having first met at junior school in Mottingham 1953 but not seen each other for over 50 years since leaving DTS in 1961 we were concerned that 2 67 year olds may not recognise each other. Fortunately I was the person on the railway platform and Alan was the only person to get off. So the task wasn't so difficult. We then spent the day together by the beach in brilliant Australian April sunshine recognising faces on old school photos, reminiscing and discussing our lives and having an enjoyable day together. Who would have thought all that time ago that our next meeting wouldn't be for another 50 years and 10,000 miles away. We hope to meet up again soon.

John Bodycombe (1963-1968)

I enjoyed metalwork with Mr. Pestel, woodwork with 'Pud', and the close proximity of the Girls School across the road. Best achievement - successfully making snares to Mr. Daley's design, and collecting many rabbits on the way home across Dartford Heath - After the usual detention for being late. According to Mr Mogford. I was 'a great disappointment'. Now retired: Director, BT Japan. Senior Vice President, Standard Chartered Bank Singapore. Vice President, Credit Suisse Asia Pacific.

Malcolm Green (1957-1963)

Hope you are well and look forward to seeing you at the Old Boy's dinner on 11th May. I shall be sending my form and cheque off to Keith shortly. Thank you for the newsletter. As always very enjoyable reading and thanks to you for putting it all together. There was an article in the newsletter from Frank Pearson which as interesting as it was, mentions me, but it contains something which I have to correct. Frank and I are ardent football supporters, Frank: Cambridge United and me: Dartford. I met Frank at Dartford's Princes Park this season when our two teams met, as Frank writes, but he states that I'm a DFC Director. However, whilst our Architects' Practice have been a club patron in the past, I have to state that I am not a Director. I thought I'd better clear this up in case any actual Directors of DFC ever read the newsletter!

TED HARPER - Famous son of a famous father

Ted Harper, who passed away at the age of 82 on 18th August, 2010, was one of the legendary figures of schools' football in Kent who did much to shape the Kent Schools Football Association into the organisation that it is today. Ted's long teaching career at Bromley Grammar School (now Ravensbourne) not only saw him establish the school as one of the strongest in schools' football in the South-East, but gave him the platform from which he organised the Kent teams at the Under 19 age group. He was instrumental in the setting-up of the inter-county festivals, initially at Bognor and subsequently at Skegness and also acted as an international selector for the English Grammar Schools representative team.

Ted grew up in Blackburn as the son of his famous father, also Ted Harper, who played for England, Blackburn Rovers and Tottenham, and who in the 1925-26 set the then record high of 43 league goals in 37 games. In 1932-33, playing for Preston alongside the legendary Bill Shankly, he scored 37 goals, which remains a club record. Ted Harper senior was born in Sheerness in 1901 and played for Whitstable Town and Sheppey United prior to joining Blackburn - it is fitting that his son contributed so much to schools' football in the county of his father's birth. More details of his father's career can be found here: <http://www.sheppeyunitied.com/EddieHarper.htm>

As a player, Ted's skills were developed at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn which was

then, as now, a school with a strong footballing pedigree. The school's football captain from the time remembered Ted as a prolific goalscorer who once scored sixty goals in a season. More importantly, he remembered him not just as a quality footballer, but a quality person, and certainly Ted's later involvement in the game was very much in accord with the school's motto, *Disce Prodesse* – Learn to be of Service. On leaving QEGS, Ted performed with great distinction at amateur level. Whilst doing National Service in the Army and stationed at Bodmin Barracks in Cornwall, he played football for Saltash United, the County and in various Army and FA representative XIs. Many considered him unlucky not to have been selected for the England Amateur team. Following National Service, having turned down approaches from several Football League clubs because he wished to retain his amateur status, Ted taught at Dartford Technical High School and then in 1956 became Head of PE at Bromley Grammar School where he built the school's reputation

as one of the most successful in the South-East, with several of his former players going on to gain Blues at Oxford and Cambridge. He also encouraged pupils to take up refereeing and formed what was believed to be the first Referees' Society in a school. At the same time, he continued his playing career at the top level of the amateur game, representing



Under 15's Football team in 1954 with Sports Master Ted Harper. John Smither top row 2nd player from left, the only other players he can remember are David Lewington bottom row extreme right, Keith Blackman goalkeeper and Mike McCarthy, captain

Walthamstow Avenue, one of the strongest amateur clubs at the time, and later Bromley - just across the road from his school. His time at Walthamstow was marked by his involvement in their famous FA Cup run (possibly the most famous by a non-league club in the history of the FA Cup) and their fourth-round games in 1952-53 against Manchester United - the first match at Old Trafford ended in a 1-1 draw before a replay at Highbury (Walthamstow's Green Pond Lane ground, which had accommodated 16,000 for the previous round game against Stockport County, was considered too small for the replay), which resulted in United winning 5-2 in front of a crowd of 46,000.

Ted took over the Kent Grammar Schools FA in the early 1960's and was instrumental in the successful amalgamation of the organisation with the Kent Schools FA, which hitherto had been responsible for schools' football in the county up to the age of 15. In many counties, similar amalgamations were not immediately successful, but in Kent it was amicable and straightforward and to the benefit of all concerned, providing representative football and well-organised competitions for all age groups.

Kent took part in the annual ESFA Festivals of Football during the Easter holiday period - always keenly anticipated events - where Ted made many long-lasting friendships. He also established the annual Ravensbourne Sixes competition which attracted entries from many of the strong football-playing schools in the South-East.

On retirement from teaching Ted ran the village Post Office at Shepherdswell near Dover for several years, rapidly becoming a well-respected and popular member of the local community. He continued his interest in music, notably as an accomplished double-bass player but also as a pianist. He then entered full retirement and moved the short distance to another local village, Staple, where he lived with his

I would be more than happy to act as the coordinator.

Roger Piercy



Left to right: Edward Hillman, John Middleton, Robin Clark, John Hardman, Peter Wright and Roger Piercy

Hi Dennis,

Here's a souvenir picture of the six of us (1953-1957) for your notebook or dartboard, taken by Andy during our visit. It was great to see you again and thank you for taking the trouble to share our visit.

Best wishes, (The other) Peter Wright

EARLY ROMANCES **Ray Scott (1945-1947)**

In Shakespeare's '7 Ages of Man', the Schoolboy 'creeping like snail unwillingly to school' is followed by the Lover 'sighing like a furnace, to a woeful ballad'. These two ages overlapped in my life because I remember being extremely interested in girls since I was 11. This early obsession is probably why I didn't do well at the 11+ exams, so went to Tech College instead of Grammar School? The trouble was that I was very shy and uneasy in the company of girls, particularly of those that I 'fancied'. Coming from a family of three brothers and no sisters, I knew there was something missing in my life, but had no idea how to talk to girls of my age. There were few opportunities to chat up girls at either the Senior School, or the Tech College, because both were segregated! Girls, therefore had to become an extra-curricular activity. Yet even this was difficult, as most clubs and youth organisations seemed also to be segregated during my teen years. My brothers and I had been members of the local Cub troupe but didn't graduate to the Scouts as I believe we were too cynical to accept the strange role-playing and all of this 'Jungle Book' symbolism. Pity, because otherwise I might have gone on to join Masonic Lodges where grown men with pompous titles, give funny handshakes, clout each other on the forehead with a ceremonial mallet, and shout "BOAZ!" A number of my friends went on to perform these rituals behind locked doors; maybe I could have made myself richer if I had only entered into the spirit of things. But, from an early age, I have always had an eye, and an ear, for the ridiculous. Apart from other weird rituals, such as being called a 'tenderfoot', and wearing a 'woggle', made from an old dog-bone, I did manage to earn my 'sixer' stars, and to win two badges. One was for Firelighting; this came easy as I was already something of an arsonist - making fireworks from unexploded incendiary bombs, and setting light to a sizeable section of Oxleas Woods during the war. And torching an old building in Dartford, for which I nearly got expelled from Tech College. The other badge was for Darning Socks! I was in hospital with a kidney disease for several months and couldn't attempt the more physical tests so was invited to try for the darning badge instead. This was a Girl Guide badge, but in the days before feminists emerged to warn society about the awful dangers of stereo-typing children in such a blatant sexist manner. As a 'modern' man now, I could darn my own socks using one of those wooden mushroom things with the bodkin needle compartment inside the stem, but it's scarcely worth the effort now that Paisley socks are only 99p a bunch imported from Vietnam or Taiwan.

Next in my segregated upbringing came the Boys' Brigade, then known as 'The Church Lad's Brigade'.

I was the only person at work, well there were only 3 of us on the payroll, with me doing everything-preparing the coffee for restaurants all over London and then delivering the stuff. They taught me Italian so I could take telephone orders from our many Italian customers-that was interesting. The most important phrase being 'non sono Italiano sono Inglese' which would stop a rapid flow of Italian, an apology and further conversation would be in English.

I left Costa after a year or so for more money in a different trade but after a few years found myself in Crutched Friars so thought I'd call in on Fratelli Costa. They had moved to Lambeth, a bit too far from where I was heading, so I left a message with the new occupier and was on my way. That evening at home the phone rang, the long and the short of it was Sergio asking me if I wanted a job - touch of 'deju vue' here! So off to Lambeth more negotiations and I'm back on the payroll. This time the workforce must have numbered about 10 people, all Italian and Spanish apart from Ted who worked in the office. The business had grown tremendously, the brothers were very ambitious and had some very good ideas, and I have to say some very dumb ones. One of these very good ideas was to back some 'London cabs' have them sprayed brown and white with pictures of huge Mexican type hats on the doors emblazoned with COSTA and where the cab had it's 'for hire' sign it was replaced with 'Costa' always lit up.

I stayed there for a few years 'til I decided it was time to do something else.

Years later I read that Whitbread had bought into Costa and now has outlets all over the place, oh and the price was about £20,000,000! One brother, Bruno, lives in Surrey while Sergio apparently lives in Monte Carlo. My son suggests maybe I left a little too early and laughingly still calls me 'the fifth Beatle'!

It only took 55 plus years to re-unite!

The story starts when a letter dropped through the letter box of Rod Acock from Peter Wright asking him if he was the same Rod Acock that had lived in Orpington and had gone to Dartford Technical School in the years 1953-1957. Pete, having "Googled" Rod's name had been fortunate enough to find the right Rod Acock. What Pete wasn't to know was that in finding Rod after 56 years he had also made contact with 3 others of the same year group, Johnnie Middleton, Robin Clark and, yours truly, Roger Piercy. The significance of this grouping was that 6 of us had decided to celebrate our last year of school holidays by going to Scotland for a camping holiday. Now for those of you paying attention there appears to be someone missing; Edward 'Dag' Hillman to be precise, and with renewed enthusiasm and encouragement Pete tracked down Eddie quite soon.

There then followed a massive exchange of emails containing pen pictures of our careers and stories as one more pupil of our year, John 'Hardy' Hardman, whom Pete had tracked down some years previously joined in.

Obviously the next stage had to be to meet up and it was decided that it would have to be London what with Rod and I living a few miles from each other on the Black Isle in the Highlands, and Hardy down south in France, Johnnie and Robin in the south-west, Pete in London and Dag on the south-coast.

So, a date was set for March, travel arrangements finalised, a location to meet up and then, at the last moment Rod had to pull out for family and business reasons - a big loss to the gathering. We soon realised that an afternoon, evening meal and breakfast together needed something else to occupy us and that was when it was decided to see if a tour around the old school could be arranged. Now we knew this could be a problem as we were educated in the original building which had been demolished although in our final year we did have some lessons in the then brand new school. However, we knew there would be plenty of interest and we were granted an hour of the Head's busy schedule for a guided tour, which was fantastic - what facilities! For old time's sake we were able to visit the sole remaining building that contained our Drawing Office where we spent many happy hours with Sam Austen, the Physics room where Percy Black instilled more into some of us than he could have imagined considering that I went on to teach Physics in a Scottish secondary school!

After a school lunch, which launched lots more reminiscences, it was time to say our farewells and head west, south and north to dream of when we might meet up again.

If any of these names mean anything to you and you would like to swap pen pictures of your career then

wife Jean until her death from cancer. After several years on his own, Ted met and married a lady from Rotherham, also named Jean, and they shared some thirteen happy and caring years at their home in Wickersley before his health and mobility deteriorated, culminating in his death on 2nd August 2010.

Ted was a remarkably talented man, with a marvellous sense of humour, and an ability to engage with people of all ages. His achievements will long be remembered - his legacy in schools' football in Kent is something we will treasure and maintain.

(Material for this tribute to Ted was kindly provided by his KSFA colleague and close friend for over fifty years, Alan Philpott. Printed with the kind permission of Kent Schools F.A.)

Some of the notes received prior to the 2013 Reunion

Thanks for the reminder. Unfortunately I will not be able to make the reunion on 11th May. I would dearly love to attend but as I live on Bribie Island, Qld. Australia, it is a bit too far to travel. Hopefully one day I will be visiting the UK at around the same time as the event, but until then I must give it a miss. I hope the reunion goes well for all those who can make it.

John Bodycombe, (1963-68)

Hope you all have an enjoyable evening tomorrow.

I have just been looking at the ODWA website to see the list of attendees, and noticed there is also a list of apologies as well. Please could you add my name to that list. My best wishes to you all Enjoy!

Regards Peter Samson (1958-61)

Sadly, I shall not be able to join you all this year at the Reunion Dinner and have left this notification very late in the hope that changing circumstances may allow me to do so. I wish you all a very enjoyable evening and hope to be there next year. As a small token of support I shall pop a cheque in the post tomorrow and thank you for your continued hard work on behalf of us all in order to keep the Association running. Kind regards, ***Dr Peter Wright (1953-57)*** (Not the other Peter Wright!)

Hello Dennis, unfortunately I shall not be able to attend the OD & WA Reunion dinner as I am always out of country during the months of May and June. However, I do hope it goes well and that you get a good attendance. Thanks for all your work over the past years because without it we would not have an OD & WA to have a reunion dinner. Every club or association needs someone like you to keep it going and from my own experiences of running various clubs I do understand the amount of time and effort you must put into keeping the OD & WA afloat. Long may you continue and once again my sincere thanks for all your hard work over the many years that you have kept the association going.

Best regards, Alan Gregory (1953-57)

Hi, I'm really sorry but I won't be able to make it this year, I hope you have a great time, thanks.

Simon King (1979-86)

Thank you for your email. I have sent a reply to Keith via the post but it is obviously still in transit.

I won't be attending the Dinner this year - please present my apologies. I have however sent a contribution to the funds. I do hope the event is viable and that you all have a successful evening.

Very best wishes Brian Titterington (1991-2006) (Headmaster)

Thanks for the mail; very useful information. Unfortunately there is nobody from my era on the list and so sadly I have to say that I won't attend this year. By the way, I still can't access the features of the website. I can get the home page only. I've tried on more than one computer and using three different browsers but no joy. Hope you are keeping well and hope you have a very enjoyable day on the 11th.

Warm regards Monica Cassidy (1968-73)

Unfortunately I will not be able to attend this year's reunion. It will be the first time for several years that the 1948 - 1951 year will not be attending. Please accept my apologies for late reply.

Kind regards John Barber (1948-51)

Please accept my apologies for this year's reunion. I will be away on holiday at the time.

Regards, Gerry Spice (1961-66)

I regret I am unable to attend this year

Greetings David Edgington (1955-58) (Staff)

As I think I mentioned before, I will not be able to attend the Reunion Event having just spent 2 weeks

in the UK. Interestingly, while there I was able to attend the Diamond Jubilee of my old Primary School. With three other first day pupils they made quite a fuss of us. The News Shopper was even there. Anyway, I hope you get a better turn out than it looks at the moment. In lieu of my attendance I have made a donation by direct deposit (hopefully Keith will see it in a day or so) to help with your expenses.

Best regards, **Dave Catchpole (1957-64)**

Thank you for your email though its content makes a disappointing read. I'm sorry that I shan't be able to join you this year. My wife is having a serious operation on the 8th and I feel it only right that I am with her during her recuperation.

Best wishes **Bob Gammon (1959-66)**

Apologies. I attended the reunion several years ago, relived some memories, caught up with old faces and enjoyed myself. Family priorities and work take up all my time.....

I appreciate it takes a lot to organise a dinner, hopefully new blood will swell the ranks?

Best regards. **Chris Hennelly (1970-76)**

Not for me, Dennis - sorry. But please give my regards to the 1957 starters.

Regards **Graham Bennett (1957-63)**

If it helps I will be there in spirit - **Robert Alexander (1961-66)**

Sorry, we are travelling but I do hope you surpass the "make or break" number,

Regards, **Terry Staples (1956-61)**

Thanks your email and sorry to hear of the small response but trust it will proceed.

No sure whether I sent you my apology but I will not be in UK at the time of the function.

Regards **Mike Parkinson (1956-62)**

Many thanks to you for working hard to keep ODWA going, with a few others.

The annual dinner cost is much more reasonable, but I'm already booked for a couple of activities that day, so must send my apologies. If it's always on the 2nd Sat in May, I'll see if I can come next year. In addition, I must make an effort to write an article for next year's newsletter; reading thro' the latest one triggers memories!

Yours truly, **Patrick Hawes (1949-53)**

I trust that you have wintered well and all the aches and pains are disappearing with the onset of Spring (Ha Ha). Congratulations on the latest newsletter. I have been in touch with Malcolm Gregory about the obituary for Dave Elliott who I knew very well but had no idea he ever played for the O.B.'s it must have been after I left the area that he played. As I intimated when you were over last Autumn it is difficult to attend the annual dinner and again must ask you to accept my apologies for non attendance. I really do hope that this year there is a good response as it would be such a pity if the event was to finish. I will send my usual donation direct to Keith Potter (who I unfortunately do not know) with a covering letter. If you are coming over to the island again this year hope to see you then. In the meantime keep well and kind regards and Jenny sends her best wishes. **Peter Wright (1954-60)**

I regret to advise you that both my father (Alan Wells - ex staff) and I will be at a family wedding on the day of the dinner. I hope that it proves to be a success and I will try to make an appearance if an event is held next year.

Regards, **Phil Wells (1975-79)**

Sorry but I won't be able to attend. Long time since you came to Guernsey - any plans to come this year?

Cheers **Clive Goodhew (1962-67)**

Hi Dennis thank you for the news letter, you do a brilliant job.

Unfortunately I won't be able to attend this year's dinner, as my 70th birthday falls on Sunday may the 12th. If I came I would have to have an overnight stay and return home by midday Sunday. My family are arranging a birthday lunch for me, and it would be pushing it to make it on time. I hope you and my fellow school friends would understand.

Regards **David Rose (1954-59)**

I regret that I shall not be able to attend the re-union on 11th. May 2013 as I have a prior engagement. I particularly regret this as I have missed consecutive gatherings and have always enjoyed the occasion.

John Read (1956-62)

All the best for xmas and 2014. How's Hextable, it seems a long time since we lived there. Almost 11 years in NZ now.

Nick Moon (1973-78)

It was good to hear from you again and thank you for the update on the timing of the Newsletter for 2014. Please add my email address to your list of those to receive the Newsletter by email in future.

I do hope your house move goes well when you finally leave Hextable. It will doubtless be a wrench, but it is the right thing to do. Very best regards,

Brian Titterington - Headmaster 1991-2006

Hope your move goes Ok - probably need to get rid of a load of stuff! Please note email address.

Mike Watts (1957-62)

Season's greetings to you my friend. The 20th anniversary might be an ideal occasion to try and get "our lot" together again mid 2014. How could I help in that regard? Have a great Christmas and hope to see you in 2014

Stan Frith (1954-59)

An email to send you Xmas Greetings and thank you for all the work you do for the OD & WA, it is much appreciated.

You may have seen the Press coverage given to K Richards on his 70th birthday, it is a constant source of surprise to me that so many apparent rational people seem to admire him. Certainly most people originating from the Dartford Area will not now be doing so after the derogative comments he wrote about them in his 'autobiography'! Good luck with your move,

A (Jim) Garlinge (1952-55)

Cheers Dennis. A Very Happy Christmas to you too and I hope A Guid New Year. I intend to attend next year's gathering, might need a passport then though to get over the border

Clive Jay (1955-59)

Thank you for your Christmas greetings, and I send them to you as well.

Many thanks for all the hard work you do and have done over the past 20 years, very much appreciated. Wishing you a Happy and Healthy 2014, and hopefully I will be there for the October reunion and the 20th one at that!

Tony Clarke (1956-63)

Many thanks for the news and all your hard work that goes into organising the events.

Happy Christmas and see you in October.

Malcolm Green (1957-63)

Terry Rooke (1961-1966)

I don't know how hard up you are for articles but if you're desperate your welcome to this (apologies for spelling mistakes, grammar, punctuation and spelling)!

When I left Dart Tech, Easter 1966, I didn't have a clue as what to do with my life. Mr Parker, my Maths master, suggested I might try the Civil Service Customs office-some chance (I ended up in the Prison Service so he was pretty close)! I found myself at the Youth Employment Office at Miskin Road Dartford and then in Carmelite Street EC?, how that happened I don't have a clue. From there I was directed to Trig Lane off Upper Thames Street which was at that time home to LeGrain Coffee(maison fonde par Gaston Legrain) late of Gerrard Street WC2. Legrain then upped sticks and moved to Bermondsey Street, south of the river, I thought each move was heading the wrong way - I'd have preferred to have started in Bermondsey and ended up in the West End but beggars couldn't be choosers! After a disastrous fire it was all back to Trig Lane then, after the fire was put out and the warehouse made good, it back to Bermondsey.

The year is now about 1972 and I'm at work, still Legrain Coffee, when a regular customer came in to collect his order of coffee. He was Italian and about my age, we chatted away as usual when out of the blue he asked me if I wanted a job-I said I already had one but he mentioned money so we met in a pub down the road and negotiated my new 'contract'.

My new place of employment was French Ordinary Court off Crutched Friars, which was a windowless little place under a railway viaduct under Fenchurch Street Station, and I was the only employee!

From little acorns etc....my new employers were Sergio and Bruno Costa. It was a strange job, some days

was spoiled for a period of time by a short lived games master who delighted in giving you 5 minutes to shower, get dressed and get out of the changing room. Failure to comply meant us all lining up for three whacks with a large plimsoll. After a while we gave up trying, just accepted our fate and enjoyed the hot shower. This guy disappeared pretty quickly for what is, nowadays, very obvious reasons and for other offences that came to light in due course. As the new school buildings started to take shape, so the Lowfield Street days sadly came to an end which meant a full week's work at the school. I am not sure that the site still exists having lived away from Kent for many years now but I think that those that were involved will have fond memories of those days long ago.

Some messages received following my Christmas emailing:

Oh dear Dennis, I'd especially made May free this year for the reunion as I'm a '57/'64er. Now you've gone and changed it to 4th October which is my annual weekend away cycling with the "Jolly Boys".

So sorry I can't make the ODWA reunion this year again.

Trevor John (1957-64)

I seem to remember having already expressed a preference to continue receiving the newsletter as a hard copy. This, I feel sure, was around the time of booking the last re-union meal. I also made a small donation when booking (as I always do) and feel sure I suggested that some of the donation be used to cover postage costs. If this amount is insufficient, please let me know as I do wish to continue receiving a hard copy.

I'm sorry but I cannot be sure about my availability on 4th October at this stage but I'll certainly attend if at all possible.

John Meakins (1959-64)

Thank you for your kind greeting and a Happy New Year to you all on the committee.

John Pritchard (1957-63)

Let's keep it up, you never know where it goes! Merry Christmas

Chris Tapping (1959-64)

Thanks Dennis and happy Christmas. I have also advised my 1956 classmates of the 2014 date and the reasons for it in my usual Christmas circular to try to keep in touch with the group and encourage better participation. It also gives me the chance to check of changed email addresses - for some I have their work address and of course that goes when they retire - just a few remain in work as we are all around 68 years old.

I have asked our guys to think about making some new story contributions for your newsletter. At the very least I will do something myself.

Moving house is always painful so best of luck. We once arrived at our new house after a difficult move - the old one was 3 story and the banisters had to be removed to get stuff out of the tool floor. When the last of the furniture was being unloaded the guys said "where do these go" - they were of course the previous house banister rails etc. They did at least realise it was their mistake and agreed to take them back that same day.

Brian Hyland (1956-63)

Thank you for that. May I return the compliments as well. A Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you. Who knows I may even get to a reunion one day. Are allowed to take zimmer frames on the Motorways? Kindest regards.

Andrew Prewer (1951-54)

Good to hear from you and to hear about the revised date for the Autumn Reunion. Great to say this does not clash with my autumn holiday so at last I can meet up with those of us still walking the earth although how many of them I will recognise, I cannot say. Unfortunately my memory over the last 10 years has deteriorated rapidly — any chance we could wear name tags?

Anyway, I am very flexible re: menu so soup, cod/chips and cheese/biscuits — or anything really is good for me.

Bruce Timms (1954-59)

Thanks Dennis, maybe with notice I can get to the reunion.

Jerry Finch (1955-61)

Congratulations on doing a great job. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best wishes to all who work so hard to make the Association a success,

Alan Russell (1959-66)

Sorry I won't make it. We are still happily living in NZ. Hope the evening goes well.

Regards ***Nick Moon (1973-78)***

Malcolm Green (1957 -1963)

Many thanks to you, Keith and Ken for organising yet again another very pleasant Old Boys gathering. I'm sure I can speak for all in saying it was most enjoyable.

I do though feel moved to write on the future of the Association and particularly regarding a comment that a member (who I do not know) made at last night's meal, about us all paying say £10 membership fee and then never actually meeting because it would become a "virtual association".

I recall with much pride my days at Wilmington Hall (57-63) and in particular our English lessons with Mr Pearce, who managed to get me passes in both language and literature.

As part of GCE English we studied a short story by EM Forster called "The machine stops": a story I have never forgotten because even then back in

1962/63 it bothered me. The crux of the story was that Forster's characters all lived insular lives in 'cells' communicating only by tv screens never having to meet. Fifty or more years later this 'virtual' world is becoming a reality.

We could have football matches where no one goes but are only watched on tv, virtual church, virtual school etc - the list is endless. Please let's not have the ODWA go this way. There is no substitution for face to face interaction with fellow humans, and in particular your old school friends who will probably be, other than parents/siblings, the people we have known the longest in our lives.

I know that the computer age has advanced considerably since our first massively attended reunion dinner some 20 years ago, meaning that year groups can now easily interact on a daily basis if they wish, but there is no substitution for meeting your old school colleagues at a meal.

Historically eating together is probably the most enduring social contact ever.

I do hope that we continue meeting at our old school site. It is the common denominator for all years and ages even if the buildings have changed, the soil on which they sit hasn't.

At future events it might be worth Old Boys giving a resumé of their lives leading up to their Wilmington Hall days and thereafter, just as Robin Pitman did yesterday. What an act to follow though!!

With all good wishes and thanks again for all the hard work you have and continue to put into Old Boys.

Sid Hollands (1947-1950)

I must admit I was surprised to find my email to you included on the back page of this year's Newsletter, surprised but also pleased.

I have been trying to work out when I first went to Dartford Technical School (An adjunct of Dartford Technical College) in Essex Road but I believe that I started in 1946 and left in 1950. I know that I left before we received the results of the Matriculation Examination (the school was not qualified to allow the GCSE to be taken at the school at that time) and I remember two boys on bicycles coming to my house (my parents house) in Hallford Way to ask how I had got on. I had (fortunately) passed but neither of the boys on bikes had done so, I believe one was David Durrant the other was Ron Piper (possibly).

I remember the boy who climbed up the 'toothed' brickwork at the side of the college in Essex Road, he was Ian Henderson and unfortunately, halfway down, one of the bricks broke under his foot and he fell to the ground severely injuring his legs. I reported the incident to the staff room and an ambulance was called and a teacher and two or three boys (myself included) went to try to locate his house to tell his mother the sad news. I would guess that this was in 1949. I remember seeing Ian when he returned to school and he was hobbling quite painfully on his legs.

When we moved to Wilmington Hall as the 'top' form we were allocated a room at the very top of the Hall I suppose an 'attic' room. I remember we had to go up a fairly steep flight of stairs to get to it and it was quite narrow and passing one another was a bit of a 'breathe' in moment. Quite soon after we moved in and because of this narrowness one of the boys managed to barge into the fire extinguisher at the top of the stairs outside the attic room. and the fall started the extinguisher off. Not knowing what else to do

he opened the window and discharged the contents of the extinguisher over the gravel outside the front entrance to the Hall. No action was taken by the staff it was accepted as an unfortunate accident.

I have searched the archives but have not found any of my former classmates names we are just too old I suppose.

Rhoda Windiate-Blackmore (Staff - 1943-1949)

According to my late cousin, who died last year in her 99th year and who when young had lived in the Wilmington area, fairly close to Wilmington Hall in the 'old days' - if any of the plebs were walking in the vicinity of the Hall and the owners drove past in their carriage, they had to stand stock still; the lads doffing their caps as the vehicle swept past, while the girls had to give a very deep curtsy!

Miss Gladly Blowers, who was Secretary to the Principals of the College from 1946 to the late 60s, celebrated her 90th birthday last September; she is not that great in health but still possesses an active brain! She still keeps in touch with Rita Swain who was in the college office for a few years up until the late 1950s.

I do so enjoy reading articles from the Old Boys, especially those of the few who were there 'in my time' - sadly lessening all the while, of course.

and in a later note from **Rhoda Windiate-Blackmore (Staff - 1943-1949)**

Perhaps some of the following might be included in a future edition of the magazine??

With regard to Ray Scott's item, when I first started at the College in 1943, (just two days after leaving Bexley Tech - and when you were about to enter the world -), when answering telephone calls, one had to announce 'Dartford County Technical College' - be blown to that, thought I, so shortened it to just 'Technical College.' Of course, it WAS a Technical College for part-time and evening classes, with the Dartford Junior Technical School being situate within it and with the teachers moving between the two entities. Rather confusing of course, to say the least. Once the JTS moved to Wilmington, then of course, it was 'sorted.'

With regard to Sid Hollands' item and the PE teacher. (Sid must have been there during 'my' time when the office was still at Essex Road). The teacher he mentions was Charles L Harris - 'Charlie' Harris. He had a great sense of humour; I think someone told me had emigrated .but not sure where! I don't think it was because of the students!!! .

Well, during my fourteen years at Dartford, I worked in three different buildings of the college/school; only the first still stands, - Essex Road, of course - In a somewhat different form! The two later editions are now no more; the last one has houses on that land, while no doubt the grounds at Lowfield Street are already built on. (Have not been down to the Dartford area for some time, so have no knowledge of what has finally happened there).

I do find it SO amusing to see that at last emphasis is now being placed on technical education once again and almost indicating it was something new the government had thought about, although WE KNOW it had been going strong for several decades earlier! I guess I'm not the only one who has had a bit of a smirk about all the present 'hoo-haa' over 'the new thinking' I must say it's certainly really great to see from the magazine how so many of the students rose to high rank within their companies. Well done, lads!

Paul Dudley (1954-1960)

Thanks for the latest edition of the newsletter, which I always look forward to, even though I have not been able to put in an appearance in recent years. I now have a heart condition to add to the other problems. Nevertheless, I had been anticipating attending the 2013 dinner to mark my recent 70th (a big year for many of our intake), so I was very disappointed to find that it clashes with another event I am committed to.

I was sorry to hear that numbers attending the annual event have fallen markedly in recent years. As time passes, older members are bound to thin out, but I would expect the newer school leavers to maintain the numbers. I can only assume that more recent generations do not have the same interest in their old school as we had; I wonder why this is?

I note the suggestions for changing the format, ie 3-yearly instead of annually, and meeting in a hall instead of the school. I don't think this would be very appropriate. My personal preference would be to maintain the annual get-together at the school, but with flexible catering to accommodate the rise/fall in numbers. Perhaps a buffet style meal with no formal seating.

I have enclosed a cheque to assist with the expenses of the Association in whatever way is most appropriate. I would appreciate continuing to receive the newsletter by post, as my e-mail arrangements are uncertain at the moment and I may decide to dispense with it.

I was saddened to read that Adrian Hatley had passed away. As Peter Wright said in his tribute, Adrian was an all round nice guy who got on well with everyone. I can still see the cheeky grin every time he turned round in class to talk to somebody behind. Sportsman as he was, he still had time for the less sporty types like myself when the two groups, sporty vs academics, generally didn't mingle much. It was interesting how we all eventually integrated in the 5th and 6th forms, when the necessity to pass exams and think about a career was the top priority. I shall miss not seeing him again, but I hope I shall have at least one more opportunity of seeing some of my other old classmates.

The passing of Adrian brought to mind that of another death some years ago of my friend Colin Southworth. Colin left school in 1960 and commenced an apprenticeship with Pye Labgear in Cambridge, working on early colour television research. I visited him after about 3 years, and agreed to keep in touch by playing postal chess. We kept this up for a few months, but it proved to be very tedious and eventually fell by the wayside, and we lost touch. I had re-established contact with him after many years by visiting his old home address in Hawley. The family had long since gone, but a neighbour very kindly provided me with his mother's address. I wrote to her, and she replied that she was delighted to hear from me, and that Colin was living in Brazil, married with 2 daughters, and running his own company importing, supplying and servicing scientific equipment. He was amazed to hear from me, and we exchanged several letters over the next few months. He said that he would try to organise a business trip to coincide with the next ODWA reunion.

Some time passed and then I received a letter from his mother. Colin had contracted an unknown tropical disease, and after 2-3 weeks of specialist care, died in hospital. The nature of the disease was never established.

Peter Wright (1954 – 1960)

MEMORIES OF LOWFIELD STREET

To those old boys born in the midst of WW2 and arriving at Wilmington Hall in the early to mid 50s on thinking back, it was almost like walking into the imaginary world of boys literature at the time such as Greystones or Tom Brown except this was state education and we went home at night. Facilities, in reality there were very few. We had a beautiful old country mansion, a couple of outbuildings with labs and workshops, a toilet block (not particularly sanitary) and a prefabricated assembly hall which doubled up as the dining room with kitchen attached. There was also a farm all of which was set in the wonderful grounds that still exist today.

With the influx of 11 year olds there was an obvious shortage of space as there was no gymnasium and insufficient classrooms until the new building work was completed. This meant that once a week we were transferred to the educational facilities at Lowfield Street in Dartford town centre for P.E. metalwork and other studies. This was fine for those boys living in and around Dartford but for quite a few of us living some distance out in the Sidcup and New Eltham areas our bus and rail passes did not cover the extra stops required. We probably owe the old B.R. a lot in uncollected fares!

The abiding memory of the Lowfield Street site is of the enormous concrete pit that ran along the length of one side of the college that must have been the foundations of a large building possibly bombed during the war. In memory, it was the size of a couple of large swimming pools and just had a small 3 foot high fence separating the site and its young students from a 20ft. fall onto the concrete base. No "elf and safety" "to worry about in those days. Do any readers remember the guy who set out to break the world record for non-stop speaking? He located himself in the hall on the left as you went down the road into the college, started speaking on the Monday and was still going strong when we turned up on the following Monday. I think he succeeded but we were not allowed to go in to watch as we could not leave the site at lunch time. I think we all enjoyed the weekly escape to Lowfield Street, away from the regimentation of normal school life, doing P.E. and other less onerous lessons. Having hot showers after P.E. was a bonus that