

Mr. Keith Potter, OD. & WA,  
11 Thirlmere Road,  
Bexleyheath, Kent

**Please submit to arrive no  
later than Friday 27th April  
2007. Thank you.**

I would like ..... tickets @ £20.00 each for the 14th Annual Dinner on Saturday,  
12th May 2007.

Name .....  
(Please print)

Pupil / Staff at School from ..... to .....

Address .....

.....

.....

e-mail address .....

Telephone number .....

Vegetarian Option required ..... Yes / No

Name of partner / guest(s) (if any) .....

I would like to join the Nostalgia Tour at 3.45p.m. YES / NO

I would like to receive the Newsletter by email / post.

Association may publish / may not publish my email address on the ODWA  
website.

Association may / may not give out my email to other members on request.

I enclose a cheque, payable to ODWA for £.....  
This includes a donation to Association Funds

I have remitted £..... to the ODWA Bank Account at Barclays Bank -  
Dartford. 20-25-42 10931373

Details if money from abroad: -  
IBAN GB35 BARC 2025 4210931373 SwiftBIC BARCGB22



Please cut off and return this slip to : Mr. Keith Potter, Old Dartechs & Wilmingtonians' Association, 11 Thirlmere Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 6PU  
or email a copy to treasurer@odwa.co.uk



# DARTECH AND WILMINGTONIAN

A NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR OLD SCHOOL

NUMBER 21

MARCH 2007



## 14th ANNUAL REUNION DINNER & A.G.M.

# on Saturday, 12th May, 2007



Guest of Honour **Philip (Pip) Cartwright** 1959-66

There will be a Carvery Dinner and of course a Licensed Bar and a Conducted Nostalgia Tour.  
**All ages are Welcome.**

## 15th ANNUAL REUNION DINNER & A.G.M.

# on Saturday, 10th May, 2008

Our Guest of Honour will be announced soon

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**

Your next Newsletter is due to be published in February 2008 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,  
3 Millbro, Victoria Hill Road, Hextable, Swanley, Kent BR8 7LF.  
email: dennis.wells1@ntlworld.com

Since the last Newsletter our President, Brian Titterington, has retired as Headmaster to Derbyshire and in his place we have been able to welcome Fiona Cottam as the new Headteacher and our President. A special thanks goes to Brian for the work that he put in to get the Association going again in 1994 and his work for us ever since. We are also pleased to welcome Keith White, Assistant Headteacher, as our School contact. After a spell in hospital and a slow recovery we are pleased to say that Marion Miller is returning to good health but regretfully Marion has had to offer her retirement from the Committee

The application form for your ticket for this years dinner can be found on the back page of this Newsletter, please apply early so that we can confirm numbers with our caterers. Wives/partners are always welcome to attend. We ask that dress be tidy, ie NO Jeans or shorts! Tickets can be reserved via the Website, [www.odwa.co.uk](http://www.odwa.co.uk) but bookings will not be confirmed until payment has been made to our Treasurer Keith Potter, details on application form. As we will not be issuing individual tickets again this year, confirmation will be made by email where possible, if not it would be appreciated if a stamped addressed envelope could be included with your booking to help keep our costs down.

Our thanks to all members that added donations to your ticket money for last years Dinner, also those that tendered their apologies and sent a donation. These donations save us having to charge a Membership Fee, which would create a lot of work, plus will no doubt cause a lot of those that we have contact with at the moment to sever that contact. So once again we continue the appeal for donations, even if you are not able to attend the Dinner. Owing to a shortage of articles it is becoming more of a struggle each year to put this Newsletter together, so please start writing.

The Website ([www.odwa.co.uk](http://www.odwa.co.uk)) is fully active again and has started to grow again, with member updates being added, normally within hours of being received. Any amendments to your details can be made through the site on the Old Boys page, if you have an email address that we can send your Newsletter to it saves us money and time, there is also a feedback page to let us know what you have achieved since leaving School.

### DID YOU START IN DTS IN 1957

Failed the 11-plus first time? Scraped an Interview? Landed in the first (and last) ever "1D"?

(OR JOINED THE POSH LOT IN 1C UPWARDS?)

### THEN 2007 IS YOUR BIG YEAR!

Yep - It's your **GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY!**

[50 Years since your big move to Secondary Education.]

Don't miss this chance to meet up with your old Classmates. If you've been to a reunion before then you know where it's at and what it's about. Eat, drink, smoke and do all the things THEY wouldn't let you while you were in school. [Aside from wrecking the place...] Never been before? Then this could be your finest opportunity to meet more classmates than ever. Whilst many may have received good grades in their GCE subjects, none of us passed "Immortality!" Remember all those things you talked about at School? [or would like to forget??] Get back down memory lane before the remaining few million brain cells get there first.

If you know anyone on the mailing list "qualified" to attend the above extravaganza, please get in touch with them and pass on the information. Come to the Reunion in May 2007.

Guest of Honour will be **Philip (Pip) Cartwright Staff - 1959-66**

WITH THE ATTENDEES GETTING YOUNGER EVERY YEAR, IT'S TIME TO PUT THE **"OLD" BACK IN "OLD BOYS!!"** - SEE YOU THERE!!

*This Newsletter is made up from contributions of Members and the views expressed are those of the individual and not of the Association.*

Outside, heads were down, caps off, elbows out, it was mayhem! One of the most successful tactics was to run around the front of the bus, into the road and reappear at the rear, the pincer attack. Running around behind the bus shelter to find a weak gap nearer the front was another favourite of mine. The only approach I didn't try was absailing from the bus's roof, I often wonder why? Every day was different. Every opportunity had to be assessed in a split-second. Every move meant success or failure.

I soon realised that technique was all that mattered in life; with tactics and technique, I couldn't go wrong! Funny that I've spent the last 30 years in Advertising.

So my days at Dartford Tech stood me in good stead, but perhaps not in the way my parents or teachers intended.

*(Editors apologies to Martin as this article was written about 6 years ago and did not get published, but has just been found amongst some old copy).*

### David Walsh - 1962 - 1967

After 40 years I have just discovered this site, some familiar names (teachers and fellow class mates), keep up the good work!! Still got the sports day programs for the 5 years I was there, expect all of my records have now been broken and I never did make the Olympics. Instead of spending all my time running round an athletics track (if you remember), I now run a carp fishery in France after operating an accountancy practice in the UK up to 2001. Would be pleased to hear from any of my old (and yes we are old now) school friends.

## IN MEMORIUM

I am sorry to report the death of **David Meredith** on 5th November, 2006. He and I traipsed the roads of Dartford between Essex Road and Lowfield Street between 1945 and 1948. On leaving DARTECH he took up a full apprenticeship at J & E Hall's, trained initially as a Draughtsman and became a qualified Marine Refrigeration Engineer. He applied his many skills and talents to diverse activities, from building a 9' gauge steam-locomotive (which he ran at Swanley Park) to restoring vintage motorcycles. Until recently he would be seen driving around Bexley in his pristine 3-wheeler Morgan. He was a superb model maker, paying great attention to detail - a man of many talents, sadly missed.

John Edmonds (1945-1948)

### Association News

Arrangements are well in hand for this years Dinner and we have agreed to continue with the same format of a conducted tour of the School in the Afternoon followed by the Annual General Meeting and then the Dinner with our usual large display of memorabilia. Of course our Licensed Bar will be available for alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks following the return of the touring party and until everybody has retired for the evening.

Our Guest of Honour at this years Dinner is Philip (Pip) Cartwright (Staff 1959-1966)

**The Menu will be as follows:**

#### Starter

Paté with Toast

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Carvery Main Course

Roast Beef with Horse Radish Sauce

Roast Turkey with Cranberry Sauce

Vegetarian Option

Roast Potatoes

Selection of Vegetables in Season

\*\*\*\*\*

A selection of Sweets

\*\*\*\*\*

Coffee and Mints

### John Smither - 1952 - 1955

The following is a letter sent to my father on 27th November 1953 from Mr. Wall:-

Dear Mr. Smither,

It has come to my notice that your son is behaving in a very foolish manner. He is climbing the outside steps, (forbidden to boys) and hanging some 20 feet up by his hands (in fact one hand) on a slippery rail.

I now ask you to warn him and to make him understand that another such occurrence will mean his exclusion, unless I have your written letter accepting responsibility for his behaviour. You will appreciate, I know, that I cannot allocate one member of staff to be with your boy always, but have now to make special arrangements to keep him seated during dinner hours and under supervision which is wasting the time of my staff.

Yours sincerely, L.V.Wall (headmaster).

I can remember the incident well and I just happened to be the only one who was caught although I can't recall for how long the punishment lasted. It will be interesting if anyone else remembers this.

### Donald Nicholson - 1948 - 1951

I refer to your news letter dated February 2006 (number 20) in which Adrian Luff shares his memories of Dartford Technical College 1948-1951.

I am one of the names mentioned by Adrian but his memory of our class and school are far superior to mine.

Of the names mentioned, I do remember Carter (good footballer), Mills (very intelligent and studious), Hadler (another good footballer) McCaffery (I believe that he had a brother a year older who was an excellent athlete). One name that I can add to the list is Pete Rogers, who I met in Queen Mary's Hospital in Spring of 2004 and we discussed old times.

Adrian mentions numerous teachers, his memory again, is superior to mine but I vaguely remember the woodwork teacher, Mr. Gregory who was not mentioned.

I have attended two re-unions at the school and on one occasion 'Maggie' Mountjoy was the guest of honour. Mrs. Mountjoy was naturally very popular and it was difficult to speak on a one to one basis due to pressure of her 'admirers'. I did manage to recall an incident to her where at Essex Road a student climbed to a very high point on the building by climbing on alternate bricks which protruded, possibly due to war damage.

Mrs. Mountjoy clearly recalled the incident, she remembered the boy's name, the first master at the scene and the boy's injuries, quite amazing for a lady of her age recalling an incident which occurred over fifty years earlier.

I won't bore you with too much of my life span, as I do not appear to have achieved the success as many of the previous contributors to the magazine.

I did my National Service, 1st Battalion the Buffs, serving in Kenya and then completed my full pensionable service in the Metropolitan Police, serving in Woolwich.

I am still married to the 'young lady' I married in 1957 and we have three children, who have presented us with nine grandchildren between them, two boys having been to the 'old school', one still there in the sixth form.

I wish everyone the very best of luck and perhaps we will meet someday at a school re-union.

*P.S. Any bad spelling or incorrect grammar is down to my wife, who typed the letter and not due to the education I received between 1948-51.*

### John Turner - 1975 - 1980

Please find attached my up to date details and can I take this opportunity in thanking you for sending me the news letters. They certainly bring a smile to my face and bring back happy memories of my time at the school.

I am living in Cumbria, just outside the Lake District and married to Karen who is a tutor at the local college. I have two daughters who are now of an age where they are experiencing

secondary school life. I am a Police Officer working in a town called Ulverston and I moved to the north of England in 1992 after meeting Karen. She is originally from the area and having experienced many weekends visiting her relatives the scenery and the way of life certainly took a hold and it was decided that we would settle here and start a family.

Some of my memories of the school are: The melee at Leyton Cross getting on the bus. School trips to Wales and Bruges. Cross country runs when it was raining and of course the teachers who are mentioned time and again in your news letters. They all had their different attributes which made attending the school an experience and one to look back on, as stated before, with a smile. From one liners to stop you in your tracks to missiles thrown with superb accuracy.

One day I hope to visit the school to see what, if any, changes have been made. As long as it is ok with them.

#### **Arthur Hill - 1960 - 1965**

I am Arthur Hill, sentenced to five years from 1960. Left when I was in 5c in 1965. I have just come back from xmas holidays in Toronto where I met up with David Walden who I first met on the 477 bus on our very first day at school in September 1960. The attached photo was taken at a restaurant called Jack Asters in north Toronto on 3rd February 2007 where we spent a very pleasant three and a half hours chatting away.

As we had not seen each other for over 40 years, naturally we had a lot to talk about.

Needless to say we had made contact on the ODWA website. Keep up the great work and thank you.



#### **Rod Cronin - 1955 - 1960**

Thanks for the ODWA newsletter, it just doesn't seem possible that a year has passed since my first trip back to Blighty and my visit to the school.

I had a wonderful time meeting with you at last and seeing the school again although I must admit that I was a bit disappointed that there were no members from my years present at the dinner, however to be seated next to Mr Austin was a pleasant reminder of those days past. If you see him again let him know that I might not have passed exams but still use my set squares, protractor and compass set, that my dad bought for me when starting Dartech in 1955, for my current attempts at design and woodworking.

Whilst in the UK I managed to track down Anthony (always the soft th) James Tweeddale, now known as Tony by phone up in Derbyshire which was very nice as nobody turned up for dinner, played at a couple of 'Shadows' clubs in Kent and Essex, found Jenny the only love of my life in Dover and rode a push-bike around the villages of Kent as I did as a youngster. And I hadn't ridden a pushie since aged 16 when I found two wheels with an engine much more to my liking.

With my health giving me a few more reminders that I am only mortal, heart surgery is on the books for March 30th this year which eliminates any thought of returning for the 2006 dinner, however be warned that if I get off the slab a fitter man, keep me a chair warm for 2007. If any of my year should turn up this year's dinner let them know that I will be back. (Rod has since confirmed that he will be over again for this years Dinner and has appealed for more of the 1955 intake to attend)

#### **Peter Wright - 1954 - 1960**

I hope I find you and your family fit and well. It is some time since we last spoke and time seems to disappear at a great rate of knots. I have spoken to Stan Frith and Dave Laken in the last 18 months and seen Alan and Malcolm Gregory, introduced Mike Saunders to the association by chance through business and now having received the latest newsletter can

its grandeur. None of us lowly pupils were allowed to use this entrance; it was 'staff only'. We had to use what had probably been the servant's entrance; we knew our place.

Mr Wall, the Headmaster, used to drive his beautiful Wolesley car up the driveway and park by the main door. One could perhaps imagine past owners being driven up this sweeping driveway in their horse drawn carriages. Mr Wall was the only person who drove to school in those days. I wonder how many pupils drive to school now? How times have changed! In 1971 *Wilmington Hall* was demolished, supposedly to make way for extensions to the school to allow it to become a comprehensive school, which were never built. I always remember *Wilmington Hall* as a magnificent, historical old building and when I heard that it had been demolished I was aghast. In my mind this was an act of sheer vandalism. When it is remembered that the *Hall* was 228 years old and that *Finchcocks House* and *Wilmington Manor* are still in existence it makes the decision to demolish the *Hall* even worse. I wonder what happened to all those beautiful marble mantelshelves and stone blocks, or were they just dumped?

Without doubt the *Hall* may have required a lot of money to restore it to its former glory but beautiful old buildings such as this deserve better treatment. With the amount of land available on the site to build extensions to the school the *Hall* should have been retained for some other worthwhile use, such as a Library or maybe a Museum.

Edward Bathurst must have turned in his grave!

George Whitehead - 1950 - 1953 (This article can be found on the website with Photographs)

PS. Unfortunately, for me, I am not a descendant of Sir James. My Thanks to Iris Heddle for the help she gave me when I started this project.

#### **Martin Salmon - 1959 - 1966**

Dartford Tech! My most vivid memories of the School was going home!

The steep hill up to the edge of Dartford Heath seemed to incline sharply as the days in the week progressed. Text books seemed to get heavier, legs seemed to get shorter, arms seemed to get longer and eventually, by Friday, my bloated school case would scrape on the uneven asphalt to the top of the hill. Then it levelled out. Somehow, it was Heaven just getting away. Except Heaven was the hellish Leyton Cross Bus Stop!

It was notorious. The general public would often complain about the unruly behaviour. And rightly so.

There were far too many pupils for one bus, the giant green double decker, 4.10p.m., 401 to Bexley. Too many bums - not enough seats, and as the next bus was in 40-50 minutes - that's if one bothered to appear. It wasn't surprising that the 'orderly' queue rapidly had a mind of its own. Just the sight of a distant rooftop reflection would activate onslaught positions. An amorphous mass would edge slowly forward, engulfing the prefect that tried to discipline the impending renegade revolt. It was hopeless.

We knew, and they knew, they hadn't a hope in this hell, you see they too knew the irregularities of the foreboding 401, it was us, them and it.

Often the bus knew. Usually it would slow-crawl around the corner towards the bus shelter. A belch of black exhaust fumes enveloping us all - just to let us know. The prefects would do their best to allow the young, child-laden mothers to step off. Shopping would fly in all directions - packets of Persil and 'Gollywog' Jam would be trodden underfoot in the mind-squelching puddles. And then there were the oldies, the odd OAP - perhaps an old woman, bespectacled, slow on her feet, gingerly steadying herself as she tried to venture off. She didn't stand a chance!

The prefects (and they know who they are) would sneakily, smugly-smile and hop on. Right that's it! Mob rule followed. Well it wasn't really mob rule, there was no rule, it was everyone for themselves. The old lady would be pinned to the ticket collector as a throng of testosterone-charged boys would force them, stair-wards, in an unstoppable wave of determination to find a seat. Another surge would fork off into the lower deck, and still more bodies followed. One after another, after another.

George Russell	47	Gentleman	Jane Russell	47	Wife
Jane Russell	20	Daughter	Mary Russell	18	Daughter
Emily Russell	10	Daughter	Fanny Russell	8	Daughter
Harriet Russell	6	Daughter			

If there were any sons in the family they were obviously away from home on the night of the census.

Also resident in the house were;

James Russell	36 (age)	Gentleman	Jane Russell	36	Wife
Henrietta Russell	14	Daughter	Lydia Russell	6 mths	Born in Ireland
Harriet Penser	45	A lady of Independent Means			

The live-in servants were;

William Pawley	21	Hugh Dougal	14	Eliza Atkins	24
Mary Atkins	22	Saphra (sic) Staples	23	Eliza Staples	23

None of these servants were born in Kent so one assumes they accompanied the family when they moved to Wilmington.

Another live-in servant was;

Mary O'Reargan 25 Born in Ireland.

George Russell died in 1856 and the House was taken over by William Cosier.

Two relevant entries have been found in the Richard Combe Miller diaries. The first records that the name of the building known as *Common House* has been changed to *Wilmington Hall*.

The second entry states that on "Friday Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1875. Bessie and Stella drove in an open carriage in the afternoon and called on the Herveys' at *Wilmington Hall*".

This family could possibly be related to Lord Hervey who, at some stage, leased Darenth House.

In 1875 Mr Tasker laid gas mains to *Wilmington Hall*.

In 1889 Mr and Mrs Lloyd became the owners of the *Hall*.

Sir James Whitehead was born in Sedburgh, Yorkshire in 1834. He made his fortune in London and retired at the age of 47 years to live in Wilmington. In 1896 he purchased both *Wilmington Hall* and another building on the opposite side of Common Road known as *Heathside*. He changed the name of *Heathside* to *Wilmington Manor* and he assumed the title, 'Lord of the Manor'. Boys had to touch their caps to him and girls had to curtsy.

Shortly after WWII *Wilmington Manor* was used by Dartford County Technical School for Girls in their first year. They completed the remainder of their curriculum in the school at Townley Road in Bexleyheath.

Sir James lived in *Wilmington Manor* with his wife Lady Mercy Whitehead. Their son George Whitehead and his family lived in *Wilmington Hall*. George had two sons both of whom died during the First World War. He was succeeded by his brother, Sir Rowland John Rathbone Whitehead, 5th Baronet who lived at *Highfield House*, Kent and he continued the family line. Sir James established a modern farm in the grounds of *Wilmington Hall* and he had a foot-bridge built over the road for the family to use when they visited each other.

(The bridge was still there when I was attending the school from 1950 -1953 and it survived until sometime in the 1970's.)

Sir James died in Wilmington in 1917 at 83 years of age. His title and *Wilmington Hall* passed to George Whitehead. Sir George and his family moved to Oxford in 1920.

Lord Dudley Gordon purchased *Wilmington Hall* in 1920 and remained the owner until 1950. During the Second World War *Wilmington Hall* was used mainly as a drawing office by *Vickers Engineering Company*, and in 1950 it became *Dartford Technical School for Boys*. The Agricultural Section of the school used the surviving parts of the farm that had been established by Sir James.

The 1950 intake was the first to complete their full course at *Wilmington Hall* so it has always occupied a special place in my memory. The magnificent old building with sweeping staircases, open fireplaces with marble mantle shelves and a huge main door that added to

identify the player seated 3rd from the left as Geoff Lloyd who was a close friend and neighbour of mine.

Anyway receiving the newsletter has prompted me to write down a few memories and thoughts which I really should have done before now as I was so involved with the association both with cricket and football until my move to Berkshire in 1982 leaving behind many friends.

As you will see I now live "abroad" on the Isle of Wight having been lucky enough to take early retirement after a working life in the Machine Tool and engineering distribution industry which took me at times into the Middle East and the better parts of Europe. I always read with interest of your correspondents experiences during and post leaving the school but I will always remember September 15th 1954 when after the 11 plus exams and interviews with Mr. Wall (who frightened the life out of me) at ten years of age I arrived with the rest of the intake to become part of the initial 1st year group. The school was, in those far off days just Wilmington Hall and a few out buildings but with magnificent grounds and playing fields. After games for example there were no showers just a large tin can with holes drilled in the base suspended from the ceiling in the toilet block and a cold water hose inserted in the top of the tin. Gospel truth.

I vividly remember that most of us arrived in short grey trousers much to our acute embarrassment and micky taking from the rest of the school and it took me until after the first Christmas to get my first pair of long trousers.

I remember the first snows that winter and us 1st Years being hunted down and being duly rolled in it. (We got our own back in subsequent years). I also remember the first arranged school football match one Saturday morning and losing 15 - 0. The games master Mr Harper, who I think played for Walthamstow Avenue in the FA Amateur Cup Final circa 1951 was not very pleased.

I was in the Keith Richard year and class and none of us can remember him being brilliant at music. He must have been a late developer. He is in the front row of the school choir photo shown in a previous newsletter next to yours truly. *(pic on website)*

I recall that in the summer of 1956/57 there was a one day rail and bus strike. I lived in Sidcup and my route to school took in both modes of transport. I was to young to cycle to school and unbelievably when you look at this day and age I was told that I still had to try and get to school. My father agreed, and that morning I walked down to Albany Park and met up with my friend and classmate Dave French and we both set off to walk the footpath to Bexley Station. The 401 bus was not running so we continued past Bexley Church and across the fields to pick up the bus route at Bexley Hospital then over the heath to Leyton Cross. We were very late but did not get a detention (big deal) and were allowed out half an hour early to get home exhausted probably with a couple of hours homework. Those were the days.

My regards to everyone especially the 1954 intake and my old friends in the Football and Cricket sections.

#### Roy Jenner 1947 -1949

Thank you for keeping in touch. This is Roy Jenner in New Zealand - pleased to be alive and kicking and a product of Essex Road 1947 - 1949. I am so tempted to get on a plane and attend this re union in May. I think I scored the first goal on the Wilmington soccer ground all those years back. It could be a highlight after Nashville and Memphis last year. Great memories of Mr Wall and Maggie Mountjoy - Misters Clare, Black and Altschul. Thank you for the in-depth news letter - a lot of work there.

Warm regards Roy Jenner Down Under

#### Paul Hills - 1961 - 1968

I had done the usual compulsory school cross country events around the Wilmington site, and did actually quite like it. Then with Paul Parkers' arrival we had the opportunity to run in events out of school. 40 years later I am still an active runner, have been a member of Dartford

Harriers since 1968, and organise a very successful running club at Beths Grammar. Sadly I have always kept records and diaries, so these are my recollections.

#### 1966

**March?** - My first representative run for DTHS was in the Blackheath Harriers schools league at Hayes. I finished 15th. Remember more about the drinks, cakes and hip baths afterwards.

**July** - 1st in the 5th Year 880 yds, passing Pat MacAllenan in the last 150, in a time of 2m 29.4

**9th July** - Upper school mile at DTHS sports day, 3rd in 5m 12.8. I don't recall who beat me, but noted that I passed Ivor Rogers off the last bend to get 3rd.

**26th Nov** - 47th in the Chatham Trophy race.

**3rd Dec** - Another race in the Blackheath schools league - 19th.

**10th Dec** - 16th in a 4 mile cross country at Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar. I remember it as a long race, from Hurst Road to Footscray Meadows, along the Cray to the edge of Bexley before following the River Shuttle back to the school. They also used to provide a good spread of cakes after the race.

**31st Dec** - Kent Youths Championships at West Wickham, which I noted was my "first really big event". I finished in the 50's.

#### 1967

**14th Jan** - Blackheath schools again, better performance - 9th place.

**8th Feb** - Chis. and Sid. 4 by 2.2 mile relay in which we finished 7th team. I seem to recall the team travelling to Sidcup in the back of Paul's van. Also particularly enjoying this event as it was one of the few in school time.

**18th Feb** - Blackheath schools - 8th place.

**25th Feb** - Kent Schools cross country championships at Mote Park Maidstone. Finished 57th, and 3rd for the Dartford and Erith team. Recall that we had had the District trials at Wilmington some weeks before.

**11th March** - Parish Cup and Raggs Trophy at West Wickham. Finished 58th and team were 13th. Interestingly my school team at Beths won the Raggs trophy this year.

**March?** - 2nd place in the 6th Form cross country, in 28-46, which I reckon means it was about 4 miles, and used to go out to Rowhill Woods and the notorious pig farm. I was runner up either to Coffin or Fielding.

**15th Nov** - Cross country relay at DTHS, 4 by 2½ miles. Team were 4th, and I apparently had a really bad stitch.

**25th Nov** - Chatham trophy at Fort Luton, finished 47th.

#### 1968

**17th Feb** - Kent Schools at Knole Park, finished 31st, and was first runner home for Dartford District.

**9th March** - The Parish Cup and Raggs Trophy again, 60th.

**April?** - DTHS 6th Form cross country Finished 3rd behind Fielding and Coffin. Noted that I only moved through from 6th in the last part round the school fields.

**2nd July** - 880yds DTHS sports day, 2nd 2m 23.4

#### Michael Parkinson - 1956 - 1962

Thanks for sending the newsletter with 3 "old boys in NZ we should start a sub branch!!, With much regret I don't think I will be able to make the trip NZ to UK this year for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my year but you never know ..... I will really try to see if I can get an excuse going.

The 1950's picture – Micky Jefferson, Tony Clark, Phil Crane, Trev Hoare, Tony Gilmot are the back line, Cliff Langridge, Rob Deal & Micky Lyons are three of front row cannot recall the others names but will in about 2 weeks time!!!

All the very best to you and if I don't make it I wish you every success for the dinner

Kind Regards Mike

a member. Mr. Farncombe went on to greater things, getting an entry in the Oxford Dictionary of Music. (I'm afraid the entry in the book doesn't mention Dartford in any way!).

#### George Whitehead - 1950 - 1953

Attached is a photo of my final year at Wilmington. It was taken in front of the new sports changing room which I believe was the first new building erected on that site in those days. Frank Payne is the Form Master in this picture. Frank was the same as all teachers in those



days, he was a strict disciplinarian. However, he was very fair and well liked by all of us.

Thinking about discipline, I was surprised to see the article in the one of the News Letters concerning the use of the cane. Mr Wall was opposed to corporal punishment and serious misdemeanours were punished by Saturday morning detention. This was hated by everybody and was extremely effective. It had its down side for staff of course as some of them had to be there to supervise those being punished.

I was at Bexleyheath secondary school prior to going to Wilmington and at that school, like most others, any offenders that warranted corporal punishment were treated to 'six of the best'.

#### THE HISTORY OF WILMINGTON HALL

*(Formerly known as 'Common House')*

The origins of *Wilmington Hall* have been traced as far back as 1678. It is recorded that John Dynes, a Gentleman, owned 8 acres of land to the South of Wilmington Common. This land was later to become the site of Wilmington Boy's Grammar School and part of the playing fields.

Edward Bathurst, (1680 – 1772) the son of William and Anne Bathurst, of Barn End Lane, was a London Barrister and Master of the Bench of the Middle Temple. In 1718 he inherited a house called Finchcocks from an Uncle. Then - following his marriage to a local heiress, Elizabeth Stringer he re-built the house at great expense, £30,000. It was finished in 1725. Edward later sold the house to his second son. His eldest was occupied with their estates in Jamaica.

*Finchcocks House* is still in existence today and is owned by Mr and Mrs Burnett. In 1734 Edward Bathurst built *Common House*, situated in Common Lane, Wilmington. He lived to the ripe old age of 92 and outlived all of his sons.

Edward subsequently sold *Common House* to Thomas Motley of Beckenham who bequeathed it to his daughter on her marriage to Mr Francis Austen, the son of Mr Francis Motley Austen of Sevenoaks.

In the early part of the nineteenth century the Austen family (distant relatives of Jane Austen) owned a large amount of land. They had bought it from the Bathursts'. The Austen's made considerable additions to the property and in 1837 they sold the entire estate.

George Russell bought part of this estate, about 35 acres, which included '*Common House*'. George Russell was Vicar's Warden of St. Michael's from 1845 to 1855. He died in 1856.

Details of the Russell family as taken from the 1841 census will give some idea of the grandeur of '*Common House*' as it was still called then.

Swanley if the bus from Footscray had missed the connection.

Ann and I (we married in 1960) have lived in Spain for 21 years, now in receipt of State retirement pension from both Spain and the UK, and have pastored an evangelical church in Javea for 15 years and publish the parish magazine, 56 pages A4, 3,000 copies a month, just to keep my hand in.

Drove in, round, and out the school grounds a couple of years ago, and found the former chemistry lab about the only bit I recognised . . . But it was all, a lifetime ago.

*and a more recent letter*

Though I normally now reside in Javea, Spain, Ann and I are currently part way through a three week swap of the upstairs apartment we don't use, with the City Centre - but incredibly tranquil - apartment in Amsterdam. For me, it is like eMail Heaven, as there are 9 wi-fi feeds I can pick-up from the bedroom that now functions as an office. Having no internet, when I travel, is my worst nightmare.

I have taken the opportunity of browsing through a couple more old newsletters. I filled in the pro-forma to add my name, details and whereabouts to the list of DarTech members. I was at Wilmington Hall from 1952 to 1954, and have tried for many years to contact the Head Boy, but I cannot even remember if I have his name right as Brian Hester. Certainly people who would have known him (he was a solicitor and national church worker) have not heard of him (under that name).

I have put the date of the 2007 reunion dinner in my PDA and hope we might be present, but as we would probably be coming back to the UK for the British Legion Conference at Bournemouth on May 25, it may not be possible to do both.

I have been trying to remember the name of the Sports Master in 52-54. He played Saturday soccer for Corinthian Casuals (I think it was) (*Ted Harper & Walthamstow Avenue, ed.*) who managed to get to the 5th round of the FA when they were beaten by Arsenal. The ever voluptuous Maggie was teaching English, Mr. Andrews tried to teach me French (7%) and Chic Lewis in Chemistry was a huge influence on my life, through the Christian Union he organised of a lunchtime. (*Clive has now booked his flights to attend this year*)

In December 2006 I was consecrated by the Episcopal Anglican Church of Chile as their Bishop of Europe. I enjoy corresponding by eMail: [cliver@mercuryin.es](mailto:cliver@mercuryin.es)

#### **Brian Mayne - 1952 - 1956**

I've just recently been told about the website by my brother-in-law, Peter Ward, another (very) old boy.

Incidentally, the picture of the school choir in 1955 at St. Margarets, Westminster, has one person missing - ME! I was the poor unfortunate prefect who accompanied them all to the concert, AND, to several rehearsals in the weeks before, to help Reginald Clare keep control of the little .....s on the bus. It's just possible, but I can't remember if it was him, but I just may have clipped Keith Richards' ear at some time.

If you are in touch with him, please send my regards to "Sam" Austin. He probably won't remember, but he gave me some advice - to take up the offer of a Ministry of Supply Student Apprenticeship, as I'd never get a better offer, and that they might pay for me to go to university. I did, it was, and they did! Thanks Mr. Austin (as I would have said then).

Cheers for now

*Editor replied that he was one of the little .....s on the bus and Brian replied:-*

Sorry about the implied insult, but some of them on that bus to St. Margaret's did give me some agro.!

Incidentally, I remember that event because the rehearsals were held at (I think I remember the name correctly) The Blue Coat GIRLS School (a public school, I think). I was chosen as prefect for the trip because Mr. Clare taught me violin and I was in the school orchestra. Also incidentally, the conductor for that event was Charles Farncombe, who was also the conductor for the Dartford Symphony Orchestra, and the Dartford Junior Orchestra, of which I was also

#### **Neil McKay - 1954 - 1959**

At our 2004 Dinner Neil advised us that he would have to retire from the Committee as he would be moving to Ireland, he moved despite his new bungalow not being finished building and after a spell in rented accommodation Neil and Mary have now settled in the new Bungalow at Enniscorthy, County Wexford and they send best wishes to the Committee and any Members that recall him, also to the "59 Escape Committee".

#### **Nick Pell - 1963 - 1969**

Herewith my contact details.. I would prefer to be contacted by e-mail and I am happy for my contact details to be made available to other Old Boys and for my e-mail address to be shown in the database.

I would be grateful if my details could be added to the database.

Having scanned through the website I remembered many of names of pupils and staff and look forward to re-establishing contact.

#### **John Boakes - 1958 - 1963**

Hi! I was a pupil from the above dates. Unlike my brother who came there two years later. Unfortunately I was not one of the most academic pupils, but I was good at athletics and football. I well remember Mr. Wall, and at the end of my time there, Mr. Mogford. Good old Mr. Pearce and his gown and mortar board, he gave me my interest in literature which I still have today. Mr. Austen and his linen jacket. Maggie Mountjoy, who scared the living daylight out of me. They all bring back memories of the past with much affection.

I wonder if my old school records for the discus are still remembered. I finally ended up being ranked no. 10 in the UK for my discus throwing and was picked to represent England against the Benelux countries. When I was 16 I had football trials for both Charlton and Chelsea, but in those days you were asked to come back when you were 18. I couldn't wait. I wanted to get on living, it was after all, the swinging sixties.

I got married early, had a family and managed to survive two heart attacks and numerous other problems. Since the early nineties I have been a freelance writer, and have had 6 books published. These were historical in nature, thanks to my history master there, a Mr Smith I think, and about country crafts in particular. Now I am retired and live in a converted barn on the edge of the North Yorks moors, not far from Thirsk.

I have often wondered what had become of my old school and am pleased to find that it is still going strong.

Thanks, and good luck to you all.

#### **Desmond Hughes - 1988 - 1995**

I attended Wilmington Grammar School for Boys and am now a partner in a law firm in Thailand. I still remember the teachers, staff and other students and remain friends with classmates, in particular David Ratcliffe, Gavin Rogers and Alex Hill. Gavin Rogers has even moved closer to me as he has relocated to Singapore where he works for Credit-Suisse. I joined WGSB as a first year primary 18 years ago - 1987. I am 29 years old, born 20/12/1976.

I remain interested in the school and how it performs as some of my closest family and some of my friends still live in and around the area of the school and I certainly recognise as I approach 30, the value of a good education and how it can affect later dealings in life.

The teachers whom I particularly remember: Mr Neville (Biology); Mr Coen (English and 6th form head) ; Mr Ladell (Physics); Mr Hollingsworth (History); Mr Sexton (Geography); Mr White (RS); Mr Riches (Geography); Mr Knights (Computer Studies/Maths); Dr Wachuku (Maths); Mrs Leaborn (English language) ; Mr Nichols (French); Mr Coster (German); Mrs Gill (Biology and Music); Mr James (English literature).

I attended the Wilmington Grammar School for girls for my French; English Literature A-Levels (Geography at WGSB) and my Italian GCSE.

### **Paul Nicholson - 1957 - 1963**

some jottings of my memories of the school 1957 to 1963...

...the asian flu outbreak in 1957..most of my class were stricken and I was out for the count' for a whole week...The masters lunchtime cricket matches and the glorious occasion when Sam Austin hit a 6 straight through a classroom window in the New Building..was he awarded a 'Saturday morning' for his achievement? ...the Winter 1962/63 when the school enjoyed an extended Christmas holiday for 6 weeks[?]...on our return we established an iced toboggan run down the slopes on the back fields..an exciting alternative to the usual activities during games sessions....the 6 week bus strike [1959?] and cycling from Orpington everyday... Those crocodile marches to the church in Wilmington for the annual school services..Those disgusting school dinners [except gypsy tart]....classmates... Terry Canty, Malcolm Green, 'Baz' Gray, Tony Parsons, etc..where are they now?

### **John Barber - 1948 - 1951**

Hello Dennis. We have not met but I would like to introduce myself to you.

I attended Dartford County Technical School between 1948 and 1951.

I recently placed my details on Friends Reunited website and was contacted by Brian Cogger who was a pupil at the same time. We have recently been discussing the end of year photograph 1950/1.

Since leaving the school I have held various positions in engineering with various employers. Up to retirement in 2000 I was Facilities Manager with Messrs. Freemans P.L.C., a subsidiary of a German parent company, Otto U.K.

I find it hard to believe that I am now in touch with school pals of 55 years ago.

I will be checking the ODWA website frequently for more information in future.

I now live in Peterborough with my wife to whom I have been married for 50 years in September 2006.

Although remote from Dartford, I intend to continue my contacts with old pals and would appreciate information re: membership of ODWA.

### **Staff Cars 1957 – 1965 (Chris Portwine - 1957 - 1965)**

I think that this piece will have more questions than answers, perhaps you can supply some of the answers.

I was wondering what car Eric Lewis had and I couldn't remember. He did usually use an NSU Quickly to get to and fro from Watling Street, and used to give 'Percy' Black a helping hand on his pedal cycle. Can you remember them going across Dartford Heath with Eric's hand on Percy's back?

I remember at the end Percy had an automatic Austin Cambridge, but what did he have before this? RDWH always had Wolseys, did he have two or three during his period at DTHS, were they used or did he buy new. In those days we didn't have the registration letters to help identify the age of the car.

Frank Payne had a Morris 8 and then bought Pestell's Morris Oxford, did it have a headlight in the middle of the front bumper, the only car of that period that had a central headlamp was a Rover and I'm sure it wasn't one of those.

Maggie had an A40 and Norman Amess had an Anglia. John Robinson got a Triumph Herald after arriving at the school carless. I suppose he quickly got fed up travelling from Bexleyheath on the 401 with all those screaming kids!

Wall had a two tone grey Hillman Minx and John Mogford had a green Corsair. Did Reggie Bruce donate his pre-war Hillman to the school, and did he use a Ford Prefect/Anglia before he got the Humber Sceptre?

Was it A Smith who had a small sports car, pre-war MG perhaps. Who had that large sports car, was the car a Lagonda? Was Len Hollingsworth's motorcycle a Matchless?

Gough had a Vauxhall Victor, how quickly was it evident what a rust bucket the Victor was, and what did Gregory drive.

Jake had a Ford, was it a Popular and a pre-war model, it certainly had a defunct driver's seat, he had to peer over the steering wheel. Sam Austen had a Citroen, and even when that was off the road he still arrived in a Citroen.

And for the cyclists, Basher Bates, Percy and Pip Cartwright.

Now your job is to fit these cars in their correct positions in the car park.

It is interesting to reminisce with old boys at the annual dinner. Last year I heard the truth about who really put the names on the parking spaces in the car park at the end of the year. If you have stories that you have told at the dinner why not put pen to paper, or more likely finger(s) to keyboard. If enough old boys do this then we will need a historian to correlate all of the stories.

And then there are all those things we made in craft. In woodwork we made a ruler, a butt jointed box, a picture frame, a tea tray, a dovetail box and a coffee table. Was there anything else? (*Bedside/Table Lamp - Ed*)

### **Neal Turley - 1980 - 1981**

Thankyou for your prompt reply to my email and also for helping me to try and reach Mark. I hope that you are able to trace him for me although it has been close to twenty years since we last corresponded with one another.

On reading some of the past newsletters and information posted on the website, I have become intrigued as to the whereabouts of former pupils and staff from my year at the school. My school house was Cray and I would be interested in any information you may be able to supply me with as to fellow students from Cray and also the teachers of the time. I remember a fondness for a particular teacher who taught me in Woodwork and was also my form tutor I believe but for the life of me I cannot recall his name. I did keep my school report from the time and I am trying to track that down to help me remember but thought you might be able to find this information quicker.

If there are official channels I need to go through then by all means let me know and I will follow them.

I appreciate all of your help and look forward to hearing from you soon.

### **Alan Jesson - 1959 - 1965**

Thank you for sending this. It prompted me to go to the ODWA website and check up some entries. I noted three omissions from my intake year, 1959, of classmates either in my initial form of 1C or subsequently.

Peter Ciappi started in 1959 but left a couple of years later, if I recall correctly.

John Birks and Clive Greenaway started off in other forms but we were together by 3B. We all three started work in the City of London at the same time and used to meet for lunch once a week.

I hope that I will be able to contribute some reminiscences soon, but parish work is a bit heavy at the moment.

All good wishes, as ever

### **Paul Matthews - 1969 - 1974**

Happily married for 25 years, three kids all over 19.

Quit engineering in 1980 for a life in Royal Mail—still there and loving it.

### **Rt. Rev. Clive Read - 1952 - 1954**

I was at Dartford Tech (Wilmington Hall) for just two years between 1952 and 1954, when I upset the Head, Mr. L. V. Wall, by leaving to work as a trainee photojournalist for the Berwick Advertiser Group.

I was greatly saddened to read of the death of Maggie Mountjoy, whom I well remember for a great variety of adolescent reasons.

One of the male teachers had a bull-nosed open top sports car and used to pick me up at