

# OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

(formed 1926)



## NEWSLETTER 2017

### 1. OFFICERS & COMMITTEE 2016 - 2017

**PRESIDENT** - D A Norman, MBE, *MA*  
(*Oxon*), *M. Univ (Open)*

**VICE PRESIDENTS:**

R. Arnold  
T.W. Birdseye, *JP*  
H.P. Briggs  
H.W. Browne *C.B.E.*  
A.J. Burroughs  
R.T. Darvell, *BA (Hons)*  
D.A. Day  
J. Harrison  
A.A. Hurst, *BA (Hons)*  
N.C. Kelleway  
M. Wren

**CHAIRMAN** - M.A. Skelly, *MA*

**HON. SECRETARY** - T.W. Birdseye, *JP*  
**HON. TREASURER** - C.R.N. Taylor, *FCA*  
**HON. ASST. SEC.** - R. Arnold

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

A.J. Burroughs  
R.T. Darvell, *BA (Hons)*  
J. Harrison  
A.A. Hurst, *BA (Hons)*  
Father J. McCollough  
School Head Boy,  
or his Deputy

**HON. AUDITOR** - A.R. Millman, *FCA*

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR** - S.V. White  
*email: terry.birdseye@gmail.com*

Hon. Sec - Terry Birdseye, *JP*  
810 London Road, Leigh on Sea, Essex, SS9 3NH  
Telephone - 01702 714241, Mobile - 07752 192164  
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### 2. AGM 17TH JULY 2017 AT 7:45 PM AT THE SCHOOL (TOURS OF THE SCHOOL FROM 7:00 PM)

### 3. ANNUAL REUNION DINNER - FRIDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2017 6:15 PM FOR 7:00 PM AT THE SCHOOL DETAILS ON PAGE 3

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3. O.W.A. Annual Reunion Dinner, Friday 8th September 2017 - 6:15 pm for 7 pm at the School, Kenilworth Gardens, Westcliff on Sea, Essex, SS0 0BP. If you would like to look round the School, please be there by 5:30 pm. Details and reply slip on page 3.
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### 3. OWA ANNUAL REUNION DINNER - FRIDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2017

At the School: WHSB, Kenilworth Gardens, Westcliff on Sea, Essex, SS0 0BP  
6:15 PM FOR 7 PM OR 5:30 PM SHOULD YOU WISH TO LOOK ROUND THE SCHOOL  
COST £29.50 (£17.50 FOR STUDENTS IN FULL TIME EDUCATION)  
**TICKETS WILL NOT BE ISSUED**

**DRESS - LOUNGE SUIT, ASSOCIATION TIE (£8, Available from Asst. Sec. - see page 43)**

#### MENU

Vodka & beetroot cured smoked salmon with dill dusting,  
served on a bed of mixed leaves with lemon mango dressing

\*\*\*

Roasted sirloin of beef served with cherry tomatoes  
and red onion and a rich red wine sauce

\*\*\*

Passion fruit mousse served with vanilla ice cream & compote of exotic fruits

\*\*\*

Cheese Board with celery, grapes and biscuits

\*\*\*

Tea or Coffee with Chocolates

*(Vegetarian Meal available on request)*

- No bookings will be taken after the deadline of noon on Wednesday 6th September.
- All cancellations after this time must be paid for.

.....

**REPLY SLIP: O.W.A. ANNUAL REUNION DINNER - FRIDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2017**

**FROM: Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

.....

**Postcode:** ..... **Phone:** .....

**TO: TERRY BIRDSEYE - 810 LONDON ROAD, LEIGH ON SEA, ESSEX, SS9 3NH**  
**TELEPHONE: 01702 714241/terry.birdseye@gmail.com**

**PLEASE RESERVE ..... PLACE(S) FOR:**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>* YEAR DATES AT SCHOOL</u>	<u>COST</u>
.....	(.....)	.....
.....	(.....)	.....
.....	(.....)	.....
.....	(.....)	.....

**TOTAL: £** .....

**\* PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR YEARS AT SCHOOL. THIS IS IMPORTANT.**

**CHEQUE PAYABLE TO "OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION"**



4. (i) TO: HONORARY SECRETARY O.W.A. - TERRY BIRDSEYE

OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

Careers Guidance Support Form

As in previous years, we are continuing with our careers advice network. The intention is that both current pupils and Old Boys can tap into the wealth of knowledge about careers and universities held by us, the membership of the OWA. Those seeking advice will be able to search anonymised data and then submit pertinent questions for direction to the appropriate alumni by an intermediary at the School. In order to set up and sustain the network we are asking willing Old Boys to supply a brief resume of their career history below:

Name: .....

Years at WHSB: .....

University, Subject, Degree Level, Dates 1: .....

.....  
.....

University, Subject, Degree Level, Dates 2: .....

.....  
.....

Profession(s)

.....

Email Address:

.....

By signing below I consent for this data to be kept on record and to be used solely to match those seeking careers advice with those offering it.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

#### 4. (ii) HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

As one advances in age, the years seem to pass with increasing rapidity and it is once again time for my report to you, the members.

The Association has had another successful year with a healthy balance sheet, an enjoyable reunion dinner and thirty nine new members, of whom twenty three were recent school leavers. If anyone can spare a little time to help run the OWA I would be delighted to hear from you. Bill Warby and Kirsty Hickey contacted me last year offering their help and they will be drumming up support and helping to publicise this year's dinner, for which I thank them. Thank you to those who have given donations. These are always welcome, since it enables us to keep our subscription rate at an easily affordable level.

I have been notified of six OW's who have passed on, namely, David Evennett, Clifford Lane, Major Philip Wand, M.A. Cocks, Derek Rowe and recently Rick Morgan, who was one of my contemporaries. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones.

Last year's annual dinner was a hugely enjoyable event with eighty nine attendees. Our guest speaker was Martin Townsend, who is editor of the Sunday Express. I am sure Martin and his wife enjoyed the evening as much as we enjoyed their company.

This year, our dinner will be on 8th September, and our speaker will be Neal Martin, internationally renowned wine expert and an OW. If you have been before then I am sure that you will want to join us again, and if not why not make this the year when you make the effort. They are always jolly occasions and you will not be disappointed. Catering will, again be by Affinity who have served us so well in recent years. Please see page three.

Our AGM will be on 17th July at 7.45 pm in the school. This year in an effort to attract more support, there will be a reception with wine and nibbles and an opportunity to look around the school. We hope that this will turn the evening into more of a social occasion without, of course, detracting from the core aim of the evening.

Since the last newsletter, the Alumni Network has been launched with two newsletters and a reunion evening, last Autumn, at Davy's Wine Bar in London. This is intended to reach out, together with the OWA, to our alumni across the globe. The next reunion evening will be 23rd June at the school.

I wish to place on record my thanks to David, Jemima and Nicky in the Community Development Office for all their help, particularly Jemima and Nicky for their help at last year's dinner. They are stars.

At this year's AGM, Colin Taylor will be stepping down as Treasurer after twenty five years of sterling service looking after the finances. We all owe him a debt of gratitude and he will be a hard act to follow, but follow him someone must. Since my appeal to the members, a volunteer to take over from Colin has come forward for which I thank him. Cedric Hennis is a retired solicitor and you will be hearing from him in due course.

Please visit the website, where you will find some interesting information, including past copies of this newsletter.

Many thanks to all of you who have corresponded with me. It is gratifying to know that the OWA is held in such high esteem. please keep the letters and articles for the newsletter coming, now of course for the 2018 edition!!

My thanks, as always, goes to our editor Shanie White, who somehow turns our scribbles into common sense!

Lastly, I thank our Chairman Michael Skelly, who has always been on hand for sage advice and to my committee. I wish you all good health and happiness always.

**Terry Birdseye**  
**Honorary Secretary**

**4. (iii) NEW MEMBERS**

George Barnes	(09-16)	Robert Hurst	(75-83)
Taylor Barrall	(14-16)	Alexanda Kelly	(09-16)
Nathan Barrett	(09-16)	Phillip S Levi	(56-59)
Ian Barnett	(82-87)	Lorna Maclean	(13-15)
Chris Burls	(51-56)	Rebecca Makin	(14-16)
Henri de Causun	(07-14)	Michael Newstead	(56-62)
Chris (Gus) Chesney	(54-59)	Chisom Oguibe	(09-16)
Jack Confrey	(09-16)	Lewis Popplewell	(09-11)
Kallum Delf	(13-15)	David J Pymer	(55-61)
Amelia Dillane	(14-16)	Junad Rashid	(09-16)
Neil Dulley	(65-71)	David Rees	(55-62)
Tony Emery	(57-63)	Max Rigby	(09-16)
Tom England	(09-16)	Harry Slack	(09-16)
George Evans	(09-16)	Simon Smith	(75-81)
Joshua French	(06-13)	Owen Styles	(99-04)
Dr Anthony Gershlick	(61-69)	Joshua Uren	(09-16)
Thomas Gill	(09-16)	Devan Vadher	(09-16)
Ian Graves	(77-84)	Katie Wagstaff	(13-15)
Alexander Hockley	(09-16)	Bill Warby	(09-16)
Victoria Humphries	(14-16)		

**Total     39**

**4. (iv) MEMBERS DONATIONS**

Members who have given donations over the last year, which are received with grateful thanks:

Peter Johnson  
Father John McCullogh  
A J Parlane  
Keith Stephens

## 5. HONORARY TREASURER

**OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Life subscriptions	280	350
Profit on ties etc	163	94
Donations/raffle	1,290	344
Surplus on function	59	-
	-----	-----
	1,792	788
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Deficit on function	-	9
Printing, postage & stationery	276	580
Sundry expenses	130	80
	-----	-----
	406	669
<b>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>	-----	-----
	<b><u>£1,386</u></b>	<b><u>£119</u></b>
	=====	=====

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2016**

	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Stock of ties etc	704	792
Cash at bank	5,956	4,982
Cash at building society	2	2
	-----	-----
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b><u>£6,662</u></b>	<b><u>£5,776</u></b>
	=====	=====
<b>FINANCED BY</b>		
General fund brought forward	5,776	5,657
Surplus for the year	1,386	119
	-----	-----
	7,162	5,776
Donation to WHSB for CCF	500	-
	-----	-----
<b>General fund carried forward</b>	<b><u>£6,662</u></b>	<b><u>£5,776</u></b>
	=====	=====

-----  
C R N TAYLOR FCA  
HONORARY TREASURER

-----  
A R MILLMAN FCA  
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER



## **6. PRESIDENT**

This has been my sixth year as President of the Association and it continues to be a pleasure to serve. We have continued to seek to strengthen our links with the school, as members will, I hope, have noticed in recent communications. Nostalgia will always be an important element in any association of old alumni, but I have sought, as President, with the admirable support of the current Headmaster Michael Skelly and his staff, to try and demonstrate just how much we old members can be proud of in the School of today. At this time it is all the more important for old Westcliffians to seek to support our old school in every practical way that we can. (This is all the more important as the School's Centenary approaches).

As always, our Annual Dinner proved to be the highpoint of the OWA year. Many organisations report a decline in the demand for formal dinners of this kind but it is pleasing to report that our numbers are actually growing in recent years and it is particularly heartening to welcome so many members who have left the school in the past decade. This surely bodes well for the future of the OWA. It was therefore a proud moment for me to announce at the dinner that we had members present spanning nine decades. Long may that continue!

**Councillor David Norman MBE, MA (Oxon), M Univ. (Open)  
President**

## **7. CHAIRMAN & HEADMASTER**

### **Headmaster's Report**

I am delighted to have this opportunity to share with Old Westcliffians the latest news and developments relating to WHSB. As there is so much on which I would like to report, I wish to begin this year by encouraging you to refer to the School's website and, in particular, to our latest edition of the Westcliff Diary. These pages provide details of the many activities and successes enjoyed by the School, in what has been another highly successful year for our community.

You will be pleased to know that we stand at the top the local results league tables and have recently received a letter of congratulations from Nick Gibb, the Secretary of State for School Standards, for our outstanding GCSE results which placed us in the top 5% of national performance. At A Level, 76% of all entries were graded A\*, A or B, and we are the top local school at the A\* level for the third year in a row. The majority of our students continue to progress to the established universities and nine students from Westcliff this year go up to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The refurbishment of the Science Building has been completed and we are pleased with the work that has been carried out. The improvements to the Science Building have been arranged in two phases. The first phase involved refurbishing the outside of the building at a cost of £1 million. The walls were reconstituted and cladding was applied, the roof was replaced and new windows and external doors were fitted. The second phase involved refurbishing the inside of the building. The layout of the inside of the building has been rationalised and the building now houses ten full size science laboratories, three preparation rooms, staffroom, office and work spaces for staff, as well as toilet facilities for pupils and staff. We anticipate that this recent refurbishment of the interior of the building, completed at a cost of £1.5 million, should assist in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

Currently, the School is working closely with the Education Funding Agency to draw up plans to refurbish its Technology Building.

We remain heavily oversubscribed and we have expanded to take 185 pupils in both Years 7 and 8. Our Westcliff Centre for Gifted Children, established to encourage increased local entry at age 11, remains exceptionally popular and the five Year 5 courses this academic year have been heavily subscribed.

We continue to work with local primary schools and the Local Authority to encourage more local children to 'have a go' at the 11+ Test. We work with them to promote aspiration, remove barriers, and challenge the culture of 'good enough' where it exists.

Continually we impress upon our pupils that society's future success will depend upon their application of their talents, and seizing the opportunities this may present. This is integral to the culture at WHSB and it is important that we share it with others.

We have had a resurgence in drama this year with three new productions, including a superb, three-night run of *Oliver!*, and our extensive musical programme included a superb performance of Schubert's third symphony. Our new Director of Sport, Mr Morrish, has introduced a new model for sport involving the regular use of coaching staff, and early morning training sessions, and this has led to improvements in pupils' performance and participation. The CCF goes from strength to strength and the contingent has now swelled to over 100 cadets.

Last summer, we saw the retirement of two valued and long-serving colleagues; Mr Dudley Maughan who served for 41 years and Mr Doug Wringe who served for 45 years. A combined total in years that is not far off the ninety-seven since our founding! Again, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of our School community, to offer our thanks and best wishes to them. They received a much deserved standing ovation from the School at our last assembly of the summer term.

Remaining with news on staffing, it is with great sadness that I write that, in December 2016, Mr Nigel Senior, Head of Technology passed away due to illness. Nigel's funeral took place in Nottingham, his wife's family home where she and their children are now living, and I and a number of colleagues from WHSB were in attendance. Nigel was a truly outstanding servant of the School and we miss him greatly.

We have less than three full years until we reach WHSB's Centenary year. A planning committee has been established and we look forward to working with the entire School community to create a memorable and fitting year of events to celebrate our first 100 years. Old Westcliffians will play a significant role in our celebrations and I hope you will find the time to support the programme of events. Further details on the work of the planning committee and activities will be shared with Old Westcliffians over the coming months.

The financial picture for schools across the country is looking increasingly challenging over the next few years. The introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF) in its current draft state will likely result in a 2.9% reduction in Government income for WHSB in 2019/20 (and all secondary schools in Southend). When combined with the additional cost pressures that the School has already absorbed, such as changes to National Insurance (£75k), Pensions (£60k), Sixth Form Funding (£128k), Educational Services Grant (£219k), Apprenticeship Levy (£7k), and others, WHSB now faces a substantial shortfall.

These recent cost pressures absorbed a total £0.5million, and it will interest you to know that the funding figure for WHSB in 2017 is £50,000 lower than it was in 2012, in circumstances where we now have an additional 60 pupils. The situation is serious indeed, and whilst it is possible that further efficiencies can be made through improved procurement processes, it is clear that the bulk of this work has now taken place and further adjustments will be minor in comparison to the scale of this problem. The School must now look to increase its revenue through effective fundraising if it is to sustain the quality of education for its pupils in the future.

A good education is not just a timetable of subjects, lessons and a list of grades. Amongst other things, a good education equips one with the resilience and true sense of self-worth to meet life's challenges and make reasoned decisions. It is about self-discovery and developing the potential that lies within. That is at the heart of what we do each day at Westcliff, and your continued involvement in providing support to our School community remains important.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in the School and I hope to see you at the AGM and/or Annual Dinner.

**Michael A Skelly**

## 8. IN MEMORIAM

David Ernest Evennett	07/05/2016
Mr M A Cocks	October 2015
Jack Forbes	30/01/2016
Clifford Jack Lane	April 2016
Rick Morgan	06/02/2017
Derek H Rowe	01/08/2016
Major Philip Wand	02/07/2015

*All will be sadly missed*

## 9. OBITUARIES

*Jack Forbes* 30/01/2016  
*Rick Morgan* 06/02/2017

### JACK FORBES

I was sorry to hear of the death of Jack Forbes. I had hoped to meet him – for the following reason....

In 2009 I was singing with friends from York at the American Museum of the Sea in Mystic Connecticut.

Every night there was a big shanty session where the most popular song was Tilbury Town. Never having heard it before, and knowing that the State had its own Maldon, Essex etc, I initially assumed that they were singing about Tilbury USA.

Imagine my surprise, when Google told me that, not only was Jack from Southend, but that the next gig for his band was in Leigh North Street School, where I had been a pupil until 1953.

Last year my group, Two Black Sheep and a Stallion, recorded Tilbury Town, and I shall always be grateful to Jack's song for bringing back happy memories of growing up in South Essex, UK.

**Martin Bartlett** - York

### JACK FORBES

**(20 June 1944 – 30 January 2016)**

Jack was a pupil at WHSB (approximately) between 1955 – 1962. He had been born in Kilmarnock – hence the Scottish surname – and arrived in Leigh-on-Sea (via London's East End) at the age of four, as his father established a tailoring business in Elm Road. Living then round the corner in West Street, I shortly made his acquaintance, and as we both developed strong interests in folk and traditional music, I remained in touch with him throughout his life.

Jack trained as a teacher at Newland Park Training College, and his first job as a teacher was at Hinguar Street, Shoebury, and subsequently at Darlinghurst, where he gained a richly-deserved reputation as a gifted and respected teacher.

Whilst still a pupil at Westcliff, he had developed an interest in music, surreptitiously playing jazz records on a battery record player, and he later met his future wife Linda at the Sunday Jazz Club at the Top Alex.

This interest broadened into folk music as the Southend Folk Club commenced in 1963, and as a multi-instrumentalist he formed a succession of folk bands (The Band of Hope, Hobbin, Jack Tapp, Bodkin, Waterfront, and finally Slow Loris). He also became a regular at the Hoy at Anchor Folk Club, and was musical director of the Essex Folk Festival at Rochford in the 1970s, and an organiser at the Leigh Folk Festival. With Peter Monk, he ran the Saturday lunchtime concerts at the Palace Theatre ('Palace at Twelve') for many years, as well as originating various traditional singarounds and 'come-all-ye's over the years. His band sustained the first Traditional Folk Carol Service (at New Road in 1978) and he last performed at the 38<sup>th</sup> (at St Clement's) in 2015. He wrote traditional style carols for these events, which continue to be sung.

He was a prolific songwriter and composer in the folk traditional style, and I have heard his songs sung at clubs and festivals throughout the country, often introduced as traditional shanties or folksongs. He composed a 'radio ballad' (musical documentary) of the 'Cockle Men of Leigh' (broadcast on Essex Radio), and other similar productions such as the 'Rolling Down the River' show about Tilbury Docks), 'Down the Hill to the Old Town', and many plays for the Palace schools theatre project.

His unexpected death after a short illness was a shock to all of us who were involved in local folk music, and he is sadly missed on the local folk scene, and far beyond. He made a unique contribution to local life and culture which I doubt will ever be matched – and yet always with such a modest and unassuming manner with it all.

He was ever ready to share his experience and skills, and help others in whatever way he could. Although short in stature, he will be long remembered as one of our 'greats' in so many talented ways.

**Ken MacKinnon (WHSB 1944 – 51)**

## **RIC MORGAN**

### **EXCERPT FROM THE EVENING ECHO – 8 FEBRUARY 2017**

**'Independent thinker' and columnist Ric, dies at 71**



TRIBUTES have been paid to a former Echo columnist and councilor who sadly died on Monday morning.

Ric Morgan died at the age of 71 from a heart attack.

As well as being a columnist and Southend councilor, Mr Morgan was a commentator on BBC Essex Radio Airshow which was heard by hundreds of thousands of people and was the producer of the County Trail.

Fellow councilors have paid tributes to the man who was described as "a one-off character" and known in the council chamber for his outspoken views.

Independent councilor, Stephen Aylen, said that Mr Morgan was a dedicated councilor who spoke his mind.

He said: “He was a councilor and he was very good at it. Lots of people dismissed him but he wasn’t afraid to speak out and say something when he thought it was needed.

“I don’t think people realised how good a councilor he was. He had a very sensible approach and he always asked for things to be checked correctly – he would ask the right questions.

“He did ‘sanity checks’ which were the obvious questions like when the new council website was built, he wanted to make sure it was accessible for everyone.

“He made such a difference but lots of people didn’t realise. He always worked hard in the background and never needed the recognition.”

Independent councilor, Mike Assenheim, added: “It was a great shock when I heard the news. I am truly sorry – he was always a very active councilor and member of the independent group.

“He was a nice guy, worked with people, quite outspoken at times but well-liked by those he helped. He will be sorely missed by the people he worked with and helped.”

Mr Morgan was first elected in Prittlewell in 2007 as a Lib Dem councilor and retained his seat in 2012.

Over the years, he also became known for having strong views on what he felt was his party’s lack of policies for the town.

In 2012 Mr Morgan announced he was quitting the Lib Dems, claiming his local colleagues were “lacking in vision”, changing to sit as an Independent.

Alan Crystall, who was a Lib Dem councilor, said: “He was a good colleague, very interesting and well informed.

“He was very outspoken and found it difficult to work as a group, but he was a one-off character and added to our lives.”

Tory councilor, Tony Cox, tweeted: “So sad to hear of the death of former Lib Dem councilor Ric Morgan. An independent thinker, never afraid to speak his mind. Rest in Peace Ric.”

## **RIC MORGAN**

### **A tribute by David Norman**

Rick Morgan teacher, journalist, radio personality and local politician died suddenly in February this year. He was 71.

Rick attended WHSB from 1957 to 1965. Born in Leigh he followed the well trodden path from North Street School to WHSB. He would have been the first to admit that, like many of us, he was not an academic high flier. His great love was drama and he could well have gone into acting but in the end he followed a more secure route to Teacher Training College.

Rick was widely recognised as a superb teacher and he was to become one of the youngest head teachers in England, greatly admired by colleagues and pupils alike. Sadly health problems eventually obliged him to give up teaching, but to his great credit he then built a new career as a journalist and he served as a presenter on Radio Essex for a good many years.

His popularity in the local media led the Southend Liberal Democrats to approach him to stand for the Council and he was elected on his first attempt as a Councillor for Prittlewell.

I had known Rick since we were in our teens (when we were both in the Young Socialists). I think it fair to him to say that he was never really happy as a Councillor. He was particularly scornful of the bureaucracy – (he wrote a humorous novel loosely modelled on his Council experience!). Neither did his free spirit ever make him comfortable with the Party whip and he eventually resigned from the Lib Dems and sat for the remainder of his time as an Independent.

Rick was passionately committed to Education and he spoke and wrote on the subject both on and off the Council. He had a great sense of humour and on form, could be a witty and articulate speaker. He was a colourful character who will be greatly missed.

**David Norman**





## **10. NEWS OF AND FROM OLD WESTCLIFFIANS**

### **DONALD N FRASER**

Just to let you know that old age (89) is catching up with me.

On 8th July I completely collapsed at home and had to be rushed by ambulance to Southend General Hospital. I was there for twelve days, during which time I was fitted with a pacemaker.

When I got back home I was very kindly looked after by my three daughters-in-law. However, it was unfair to continue to rely on them, so on 2nd September I moved into my new dwelling. Originally, I was there on a two-week respite care. However, after just two days I decided that I would stay here permanently. The home is sheltered accommodation, managed extremely well by Abbeyfield Housing. I have my own room at the back of the House, facing on to a lovely garden. We have Coffee at 10.30 a.m., Lunch at 12.30 p.m. and Tea at 5.00 p.m. There are no staff between 6.00 p.m. and 8.00 a.m., but there is a night on-call service if required. In the corner of the room is a small refrigerator and a sink. Accordingly, I am able to have my cornflakes for breakfast, together with toast and a drink.

My main problem is with my legs. I frequently leave the House but have to walk slowly using a stick. Journeys that used to take me 10 minutes now take 30 minutes. Until two years ago, I was still cycling round the town, but then decided that it was safer walking.

Until January this year I was travelling to and from London most Thursdays and Fridays to work as a volunteer at Blackfriars Settlement; also on most Tuesdays to work at Waterloo Action Centre. However, I then decided that more than three hours travelling each day was becoming too strenuous.

I am still a member of Leigh-on-Sea Town Council, with 19 years' service. On 11th September I surprised staff at the Town Council Office, when I appeared for the first time after two months absence. On four afternoons each week I now attend the Office for about two hours, during which time I find plenty of work. I have also resumed attendance at evening full Council and Committee Meetings.

Best wishes

**Donald N Fraser**

### **PROFESSOR TONY GERSHLICK - WHSB 1961 – 1969**

A TOP professor has been handed a lifetime achievement award by a leading cardiology institution.

Professor Tony Gershlick, who grew up in Westcliff, told how it is a “true honour” to receive the inaugural British Cardiovascular Intervention Society Lifetime Achievement Career Award in recognition of his contribution to the field.

Prof Gershlick, who is now a Consultant Cardiologist and Professor of Interventional Cardiology in Leicester, acknowledged the importance of a strong start to education - praising Westcliff High School for Boys, in Kenilworth Gardens.

The 64-year-old said: “I thought this was an excellent opportunity to show how important early education is. I had a fantastic start to academia at Westcliff High School for Boys and I am very grateful for that.” Prof Gershlick has been involved in coronary intervention since the mid Eighties and still remains active clinically, being on-call for patients with heart attacks and having a full clinical practice.

He has been involved in practice-changing research, conceiving, initiating and running four major national and international trials that have changed the way patients are treated and have been incorporated into international guidelines for doctors.

Of his award, he said: “This is indeed a true honour and my sincere thanks go to the British Cardiovascular Intervention Society and to all those who have supported me in trying to make a difference.”

Prof Gershlick has two sisters, Pat and Janet, who still live in Westcliff. Janet said: “We are all so immensely proud of him.”

Tony was at the school from 1961 to 1969, and now lives in Thruxington, Leicestershire.



## “A TRIO OF GAYNER’S”

**NIGEL GAYNER:** WHSB 1959-64  
Midland Bank 1964-1992 (ACIB);  
Managing Director, Arncliffe Business  
Services Ltd. (FIAB) 1992 until  
retirement 2014. Appointed Justice of the  
Peace 1989; Treasurer, Southend Hospital  
Charitable Foundation; Public Governor,  
Southend Hospital Trust; Chairman,  
Southend Talking Newspaper for the  
Blind. Married to Dr Nidhi Gayner,  
Consultant, Obstetrics & Gynaecology.



**TOBY GAYNER:** WHSB 1986-1993  
Senior Prefect, Cambridge (Magdalene  
College) 1993-1997 Chemical Engineering  
(MEng), 1997-present working in  
chemical manufacturing in Birmingham  
(UK), Baltimore and Boston  
(USA). 2013-2014 attended Pastors  
College in Louisville (US), pursuing  
ordination within Sovereign Grace  
Churches. Delightfully married to Kelly  
since 1997 and attempting to keep up with  
seven wonderful children.



**PAUL GAYNER: WHSB 1989-1996**

Deputy Head Boy, Canterbury 1996-2000  
B.A. (Hons) French Dissertation Prize;  
PGCE 2000-1, teaching 2001-present  
Southend High School for Boys. Happily  
married to Faye since 2000 with two  
children.



**TERENCE JOHN GROVE**

WHSB 1949-1952

My name is Terence John Grove and I was a pupil from late 1949 to Summer 1952.

My story may be of interest, as I did not come to the school through the normal 11+ route.

Early in 1946 as a result of my late mother having applied for me and my elder brother to be admitted to the Duke of York's Royal Military School we both went by train to Dunblane, Scotland and were admitted to the Queen Victoria School for Boys as it was then named. The Scottish education system differed from that in England and in our school in addition to the usual academic subjects including French from the age of 9, I was taught sewing, woodwork, swimming and other sports, drumming and the bugle. Both my brother and I were in the school band and enjoyed many engagements with the pipe and military bands at hotels, sports events and community fairs.

In 1948 I was asked by the head teacher whether I would become a regular soldier at the age of 15 or 16. I was told that my academic results were such that one route was that and otherwise the school could not help with my further education. After discussion I was recommended for admission to Bishopshalt Grammar School near to home. I accepted the recommended change and from September 1949 was a pupil there.

After returning from the forces my father was not able to find good work and an application for a Council house was rejected. A decision was made for us all to Move to Westcliff on Sea where my father found work and then set up in business on his own account. Before the move the headmaster of Bishopshalt recommended to Westcliff High School that I be admitted as a pupil from January 1950; which was accepted and that is when I continued my education in Westcliff on Sea.

Whilst the course content differed (I was in the Science class) nevertheless I fared reasonably well and after promising to meet any costs if I failed the GCE papers, sat for these in 1952. That year it was either pass or fail, but I do recall being asked to see the headmaster Mr. Henry Cloke who told me I would have received some form of distinction for the French result. I still have a book prize also from 1950.

The times and my circumstances being what they were and with 2 years National Service an inevitable part of life to be well planned for, when I was helped by the then careers master, whose name to my regret I fail to remember, to an extent that helped to shape much of my later life.

All I wanted then was to find a career where I could continue education, to travel and to achieve a good income. Fortunately one of the old boys had previously been recommended to a firm of London Chartered Accountants and that route was recommended to me and followed.

At school I did not participate in much school sport but took up with playing baseball at South Benfleet. I still recall well one fellow pupil "Johnny" Johnson the son of a school headmaster who joined the school in 1950 and with whom I cycled in two days with an overnight stop at a Youth Hostel, to a summer camp being run by the school not far from Grantham. We were there for two weeks weeding fields putting out a cornfield fire started from sparks off a steam train and helping with some harvesting and keeping some kind of order as instructed by the teachers. I also have one photograph of me with Johnny, Mick Wood and Bob Rae sitting on a bench on the sports field in the front of the school studying and wearing blazers and ties (except Johnny). I recall enjoying school life with school dinners most of us ate (cost about 9d I think), rumours about the girls next door and occasional concerts by a musically talented student pianist in the hall. Just before I "did" my National Service I played for the old boys rugby team - a game I had been well taught in Scotland. But that is my last contact with the school after leaving in 1952 and having been "on the move" from when I qualified as a Chartered Accountant, passing my final examinations in 1957.

**Terence John Grove**

**DAVID GRELLIER:**  
WHSB 1952-57 (I think)

Many thanks for keeping me in the loop, western Washington State is a long way from Westcliff, but the memories of my time at WHSB remain strong, and, like so many, I have come to really appreciate the quality of the education that I received during my five years there. I had the chance to attend a choir concert at the school a couple of years ago. It was interesting to wander around the building, and find my form room from my fourth and fifth years, but what a loss with the filling in of the quadrangles, those so exposed spaces where the prefects would send us for total mortification in full view of a good half of the school population. They were enclosing the quads with glass panels just before I left, but I see that there is now little grass remaining.

All that aside, I came across a couple of items that may be of interest. The first is a photograph of the 1956 to 57 rugby team. All the faces are familiar, but some of the names escape me. No doubt others can fill in the blanks, or make corrections where I have it wrong.

By my recollection, starting at the left, back row we have: Grellier (yours truly), Scudder, Hunt, Not known, Devlin, Buckingham, Morris, Not known, Not known.

Front row: Claude Webber, Duncan, Wiggins, Lafferty ( I think), Henry Cloke, Dunn, Burdett, Bartlett (maybe), Jim Harrison.



The other attachment is a list issued to pupils in preparation for the evacuation in 1940. I came across this at a rummage sale and showed it to Claude Webber who expressed some amusement to see it again. It is possible that I've sent this before. If so, I apologise, although maybe having it in electronic form is of more use. The scanned copy is not the greatest, the original is fairly faded, but it may be of some interest. If you would like the original for the school archives, I'd be happy to send it over.

WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

EVACUATION

Every boy should take with him the following personal possessions:-

- Gas Mask in a box
- Identity Card
- Nation Book
- Overcoat or Macintosh
- Change of underclothes
- Pyjamas
- Handkerchiefs
- Spare Stockings or socks
- Slippers or Flimsies
- Shoe, toothbrush, towel, brush & comb, flannel, *tooth powder, hair cream*
- Stamped postcard addressed to his parents.
- Exercise book and pencil
- Food for the journey
- A little money if possible

Boys should wear their warmest clothes together with the School Cap. Luggage should be packed in a rucksack or kitbag, rather than a suit-case, and must not be too heavy for the boy to carry himself.

H.B. WILLIAMS.

28.5.40

On a personal level, I was able to sell my architectural practice to a former employee who had built his own firm, and I now work for him one day a week, ostensibly to help him out, but more probably as a rearguard action against full retirement. I will always remember the financial help that Henry Cloke was able to arrange for me when I was starting in college. Cash was tight, and his support was very much appreciated at the time. I believe the money came from a fund set up in the memory of HG Williams, and I wonder whether it is still functioning. It was a very human Henry Cloke that was there for me, and one that I had never suspected during my previous five years.

Best wishes to all of you and many thanks for your diligence in keeping the association alive.

**David**

**DONALD HANDSCOMBE**

Donald Handscombe was born in June 1918 in Cheshunt, Herts. He and his family moved to Essex in the early 1920s. In September 1929, he was living in Henry Drive, Leigh, when he won a scholarship to Westcliff High School for Boys. During some of his time at school, he stayed with Hugh Bentall at Hylands House, in Eastwood Lane, as his father wanted him to learn about farming. He played Rugby whilst at school and also played for the Old Westcliffians in the late 1930s. Donald's father bought Hockley Hall and several surrounding farms in Hockley, and he lived there after leaving school, practising his farming skills. He studied animal husbandry and soon became Farm Manager.

Soon after war broke out he joined the Home Guard in 1940 and almost immediately signed up with the Thundersley Auxiliary Unit Patrol, later known as 'Churchill's Underground Army'. They consisted of men who knew the local area well, put into small groups of resistance fighters, trained in guerrilla tactics, including using explosives. Their task was to sabotage and harass the Germans in the event of an invasion, whilst keeping hidden in the woods and countryside nearby. By day, they were ordinary working men, carrying out their usual jobs, but they were trained to be ready for anything. Donald recalled that he was once given the task of blowing up a dummy railway bridge during training. They were observed by a group of staff officers, perched on shooting sticks. Don succeeded so well that he blew one of the officers off his stick.

On one occasion in 1942 the patrol came across an army vehicle outside Hockley fire station and the occupants appeared to be speaking in broken English. One of the men gave a Nazi salute to the fire station and they walked further along the road. Once they had gone, Don's group blew up their vehicle and disappeared back into the woods. They found out later that the strangers were Americans. Another blew up a building in Thundersley Church Road, just off Bread & Cheese Hill, being used by people who sounded like foreigners. They grabbed one of them and handed him over to the Army and it turned out that the men were Free Polish soldiers. Once the threat of invasion had passed, the units were disbanded and Don was able to return to farming.

In 2008 a book was published on the exploits of the Underground Army, including reminiscences and photos of Don and his colleagues.

In 1950 Donald took over the management of Bullwood Hall Farm in Hockley. He married Audrey in 1950 and they had two children, Martin and Linda. Don's work took him to Hertfordshire, where he worked until he retired. Don and Audrey lived near Eye in Suffolk for 30 years until Audrey's mobility deteriorated and she needed care. The couple moved into Seckford Almshouses in Woodbridge, Suffolk, where they had their own flat and enjoyed several years of being looked after. Audrey passed away in 2010.

In late 2016, as Donald's own health had deteriorated, he moved into a nursing home near Ipswich, where he is still living (age 98). He is still very proud of his old school and has very happy memories of playing Rugby.

*Based on information provided by Donald Handscombe and his family, and compiled by Arthur & Lesley Woodward.*



**Donald Handscombe—middle row, third from the left**

**DAVID T HADJICOSTAS MBE BA**  
**MCMi MInst. LM MIAAI:**  
WHSB 1974 - 79

I would be grateful to you if you could include in the next newsletter that my eldest son, David Yannis Hadjicostas, a former pupil of the school from 1998 - 2003, graduated from the Royal Air Force College at Cranwell in May last year with a Distinction to take up the Queens Commission as a Flying Officer serving with Military Intelligence.

I am sure that many former pupils and masters will remember him.

Many thanks and kind regards

**David H.**

## **MIKE KING**

I was not keen on the scholastic side of Westcliff High, and tended to look out the window and imagine I was outside flying model aircraft. This enthusiasm, but not necessarily accompanied by poor attention to the lectures, was also experienced by Fred Grisley, Ron Miles, Clive Cullen and Dave Wilmott among others. One of the group released a tiny slow-flying model in morning assembly, which climbed slowly to the full height of the hall, appreciated by everyone, except Henry C – was that built by you Fred?

Many of the group went on to careers in aeronautics following service in the RAF during National Service.

When doing my ground training in the RAF prior to actually getting airborne, I was stationed at Jurby in the Isle of Man.

Harry Harden got to hear of this and introduced me to his brother, who was in charge of electricity generating on the island. He invited me to spend weekends at his home in Douglas, which was very handy for eyeing up the talent on the promenade.

I continued my interest in model aircraft, starting my own business “Contest Kits” – which enjoyed incredible success in exporting items throughout the world – and the “Wings and Wheels” shop in Leigh.

My time as councillor in Essex and Southend included returning as a Governor to the school. At my first Governor meeting Henry welcomed me with “Good God King – I never expected to see you RETURN AS Governor – come in and have a sherry”!

We were very, very fortunate in having Henry as a head – there are few around like him today.

**Mike**

## **GRAHAM MAAIVELD:**

WHSB 1963 to 1969

I am Graham Mayo a member of the OWA living in Rotterdam in the Netherlands. I attended Westcliff High School from 1963 to 1969.

I retired recently and therefore have had much time to myself sorting out things I have been meaning to do for years. One of those tasks was going through my old school books from WHSB. To my surprise I also found several books from fellow pupils in among my old school books. I have no idea how they got there but they have been in my cupboard for over 40 years without me knowing it.

I am writing to you to ask whether you could mention these books in your next Newsletter so that the owners can have me send them back to them after all these years. These are not text books but the pupils own notebooks written in their own hand from a number of subjects.

I only vaguely remember one person whose books I have and that is a J. Soussan who I think was one year below me and left the school in 1970. The others I do not know. The books I have are as follows:

- J. Soussan Class 5 X Subject: Biology Homework
- J. Soussan Class 5 X Subject: Biology
- J. Soussan Class 5 X Subject: History Essays
- J. Soussan Class 5 X Subject: Biology
- J. Soussan Class 5 X Subject: History notes
- J. Soussan Class 4 X Subject: Biology
- J. Soussan Class 4 X Subject: History Essays
- J. Soussan Class 4 X Subject: History
- J. Soussan Class 4 X Subject: History
- J. Soussan Class 3 X Subject: History Classwork

- P. Lewis Class 5 B Subject: Chemistry
- P. Lewis (Brookes) Class 4 C Subject: Chemistry
- P. Lewis Class 4 C Subject: Chemistry
- P. Lewis Class 3 C Subject: Chemistry

- L. Cunningham Class 5 A Subject: Chemistry
- L. Cunningham Class 5 A Subject: Chemistry
- L. Cunningham Class 4 B Subject: Chemistry
- L. Cunningham Class 3 X Subject: Chemistry
- L. Cunningham Class 3 X Subject: Chemistry

Perhaps Messrs Soussan, Lewis and Cunningham are members of the OWA and can easily be contacted? I think the notebooks are from 1968 or perhaps 1969. They would have all been at Westcliff in the second half of the 1960s.

Perhaps you could mention these people in your next Newsletter so that these people can be traced and get their books back. I will keep them safe until then.

Regards

**Graham Mayo**

**KEN MACKINNON**

**LIBERTY HALL - A SECONDARY EDUCATION**

When I commenced my secondary education at Westcliff High School for Boys, midway through the autumn term of 1944, I could not believe the place that I had come to. My classmates were welcoming and explained everything to me – but the main activity of the place seemed to be ‘mucking about’. The whole day was given over to pranks, larking about, and general fun. When I returned home on my first day, my Gran enquired what I had done at school, and I could scarcely tell her for laughing.

In September 1944 I had started at the local school, North Street Elementary, just around the corner from West Street. Headmistress was Miss Taylor. By rights I should have started at Coopers’ Company School in Bow – but I imagine my absence meant someone else had my place instead. The Southend-on-Sea county-borough education department did not let me into either of its grammar schools because I had not passed its exam.



But Mum had good political connections with County Hall in London, and promptly got the powers-that-be onto it. Under the evacuation scheme if you passed the scholarship or a grammar school entrance exam in one authority area, you were entitled to a grammar school place in whatever area you were evacuated in. As we had taken refuge in Leigh-on-Sea to escape the doodlebugs, and the V2s, which were really space rockets, descending without warning faster than sound, my status was officially a war evacuee, so Southend-on-Sea was ordered to admit me. I was allocated to the nearest grammar school, Westcliff High School for Boys, about a couple of miles away. I imagine that the headmaster, Eric Ayres had been reluctant to have this slum boy in his select school, but an interview was arranged, and I imagine that he could find no valid grounds to refuse me, so I was grudgingly admitted to a vacancy in class 2B. Foskett was a sick boy and he eventually turned up about a year later, and the teacher asked, "What's your name, boy?" The little lad piped up, "Foskett, sir!" Thus I recognised my unwitting benefactor. About this time Eric Ayres became the head master of Woodbridge public school, and promptly expelled one of his pupils for being a bastard, as his parents were unmarried. I imagined he would have done as much for me had he known of any irregularity in my own parents' marital arrangements.

Before he left, Eric Ayres also expelled a boy in one of the other classes. One afternoon the whole school was summoned to assemble in the Hall. The head awaited us on stage, with cane in hand. Prefects stood alongside the rear doors which gave onto the impressive main front doors, and outer gates, which in those days were never opened.

When all were assembled, we awaited in hushed silence what was to eventuate. A solitary figure sat on a stool of repentance at the front. Eric spoke of the unspeakable acts which this boy had committed, and said that what was to follow will be a lesson to any of us thinking to emulate what he had done. Precisely what this was, was not specified. The boy was then savagely caned with about a dozen strokes to each hand. This was borne in fortitude and silence. Eric then pointed the cane at the rear doors and ordered his victim to depart and never enter them again. With back bowed and arms clasped in pain under each side, the recipient of this punishment stumbled down the central aisle. As he approached the doors, and outer gates, the adjacent prefects flung them open, and slammed them shut as he passed through. Returning to our classroom, we enquired of our class teacher what the crime had been, and Tud replied that he had no idea. We wondered that without knowing what the crime had been, how could we be sure to not repeat it, and so avoid doing it ourselves? Tud merely shrugged.

When I had first arrived at Westcliff, I quickly accustomed myself to its pupil culture of mischief and fun. My classmates pointed out the teachers as they emerged begowned from the staff room, after the first break, and explained their nicknames to me: 'Black Harry' Smith, who taught chemistry; H. I. 'Ivan the Terrible' Brown (history); 'Daddy' Smith (maths); 'Six Foot of Misery' King (likewise); 'Tud' Davis (French); 'Casey' Cowan (German); The Moke' Morris (Geography); 'Miggles' Midgely (English – and a stickler for precise punctilio and grammatical correctitude); 'Harry' Harden (Latin); 'Tosser' Day (also History); 'Claud' Webber (chemistry and games, with liberal applications of the slipper as he refereed rugby matches).

Later, returning from war service were 'Eggo' Price (French), and the diminutive 'Spike' Limbird, who taught Biology and who had returned late to the school after recuperation from harrowing years in Japanese concentration camps, including the notorious Death Railway. These were amongst many others of our teachers, each with his distinctive nickname and particular characteristics.

The school had standards, these masters upheld them, and the prefects (who wore short undergraduate gowns) enforced them. If we could not all get uniforms because of the clothes rationing, we all had to wear caps, and raise them to our betters, and so forth. In reality though, the place was like Liberty Hall. The 'mucking about' that went on was unbelievable, and I can still never recall it – or indeed write about it – without dissolving into laughter, as I did every day when I got back after school and my Gran would ask me what I had done there all day.

Some of the escapades of the pupils were quite outrageous. Paddy Sheen and Jock Howard got into the school one night, and painted black graphite grease under each door handle and on each black lavatory seat. They also lowered the flagstaff in the girls' school next door, removed its rope and raising gear, securely nailed a pair of corsets to the masthead, and equally securely nailed the pole to its supports. The corsets flew in triumph all the following week, until Mr Brown (whom we dubbed 'Dartmoor Dan' as he was a Devonian) was able to get the mast down and make good. Paddy Sheen later earned a commendation for saving one of our smaller boys, who in freezing weather, had ventured onto the ice and disappeared beneath it, on the frozen Prittle Brook, which ran beyond the foot of our playing fields.

When Shadrach Baker left at the end of a summer term, his parting act was to insert a farthing in a light socket in our classroom, and screw back the bulb. As autumn darkened into winter, the master requested Birchinall, who sat by the switches, to turn on the lights. There was a loud report as our lights failed, and plunged the whole of the West Quadrangle into darkness. Thus they remained until the whole wing was rewired over the Christmas holidays. Come the following term, Birchinall was again requested to switch on the lights at the end of our first afternoon back. The very self-same thing happened again! However, Mr Brown, the caretaker, had the idea of checking all the light fittings. When he came to our room, and removed the front light bulb, out fell Shadrach Baker's farthing. Mystery solved.

On one occasion I had to report a lost history book to H.I. 'Ivan the Terrible' Brown. He was at the time teaching a class a year above my own. I stood beneath the Dias, which elevated the teacher's desk above me, and made my excuses. I then noticed, concealed beneath the lamp-shade above his head an immense spider crab. As I received my rebuke, this slowly descended above Ivan's head. It was being lowered by an extent of black thread manipulated by Mike King and John Laws from a few rows back. (Mike later became a Liberal colleague on Southend Borough Council, and subsequently served on Leigh Town Council. John Lawes was a son of one of the Lawes Brothers – a noted local removals business). As the spider crab descended I could hardly keep a straight face. 'You do not seem very sorry for yourself,' Ivan thundered. I assured him that I was, and with that he suddenly stood up to deliver sterner rebuke. The thread was hurriedly hauled back, the spider crab shot up into its containing light-shade with a loud ping.

This dislodged the layers of chalk dust which had accumulated over time on top of it. Curtains of grey dust descended all around the standing figure of Ivan, as he further berated me.

In my earlier school years I was keen on making radios, starting with crystal sets, and later progressed to valve portables. In the sixth form we took over a small anteroom for private study. It was opposite the head master's study, which was dubbed 'the Cloke Room', as his name was Henry Cloke. I installed my radios, and we would listen-in on headphones during private study periods. Reception was poor, with our makeshift aerial, and I then had the idea of connecting it into the telephone junction box located in this room. Perfect! One morning as we listened-in, the phone went in the 'Cloke Room' opposite. Immediately we heard the head master's voice coming over the radio, loud and clear. The Chief Education Officer, Mr Bartlett was ringing him about a recalcitrant and delinquent student, currently on probation. 'Speak up, man,' we heard Henry Cloke shout down the phone, as our merriment had set up interference on the apparatus. 'Speak up, man, damn you. I can't hear a word you say, with all this interference. I shall have to get the men in!' and with that he slammed the phone down on the Chief Education Officer. We were paralytic with mirth. The following day, early to school, I noticed with horror the Post Office Telephones van outside the main gates. I rushed to our anteroom, managed to disconnect our gear from the junction box, gather up all our radio equipment, and depart through the Hall door, just as the men were entering by the opposite door from the head master's corridor. A narrow shave!

Henry Cloke had succeeded Eric Ayres as head in our second or third year.

Henry Cloke was a breath of fresh air. He loped onto the stage at our first assembly, as we were agog to see what we had got coming amongst us. With gown askew, this tall and foreboding figure commenced the morning service. 'What do you think of him, then?' my neighbour asked me. 'Whatever do you think he looks like?' 'Like a great boot with the tongue hanging out,' I replied. Come to think of it, that would be a good name for him, the Boot! And so it caught on. The Boot he was from then onwards, and throughout his days there! When I was leaving, the Boot wished me well, and told me that I would be back to give the Speech at the annual School Speech Day and Prize-giving. Fourteen years later I was duly so invited, as the very first Old Westcliffian to have become Mayor of the Borough, I commenced my speech by observing to the serried ranks of scholars, parents and staff that, 'Now the Boot is on the other foot!' – to rapturous acclaim and applause.

Henry Cloke had modern ideas, forthrightly delivered. Amongst his innovations was an industrial tour of Yorkshire, which I believe was his native county. We drove by coach to Mexborough and camped indoors at Mexborough Technical High School. We visited woollen mills in Huddersfield, steel mills in Rotherham, descended Manvers Main colliery in Barnsley, and toured the LNER railway engineering works in Doncaster.

We visited the opera in Sheffield, and on Sunday we forayed to Monsall Head in the Peak District, with tea at Mrs Birkhead's. Scrambling over the limestone slopes, one of our number, Schönfeld, picked up a nugget of silver. We hunted high and low, but no other was to be found.

The purpose of the tour was to introduce us to new careers in technologies and industry, in place of the run-of-the-mill 'something in the City' jobs, which then dominated the destinations of our school leavers.

The Moke, who taught Geography, had earned his nickname as a mule-driver at the front line in the First World War. He regaled us with many amusing war service stories. I am amazed that war veterans, my grandfather included, who had endured the horrors at the front, could laugh and joke about it afterwards, but I suppose that was the way that some who survived were able to deal with it. If The Moke was due to teach us for the first period after lunch, it was a fair chance that, had the meal been heavy, he would fall off to sleep. The class clowns would then perform in front of him, as though they were stage hypnotists. We had to suppress our mirth and appreciation for fear of awakening him.

Six Foot of Misery would make considerable use of the blackboard to work out his equations, and write out Euclid's theorems and diagrams at length for us to copy. As his back was turned, Kanarek would slip out to the front and perform a balletic pantomime. Keeping one eye out over his shoulder, he was never caught out. He later became one of the town's leading dentists.

In break times we might lark about in the cloakrooms, and squirting the taps for drinking water was one of the favourite pursuits in the lower school. I could manage to get the jet right out into the corridor. The Baron happened to be on duty, striding past the doorway at the time, and caught the jet straight in the face. I was sent promptly to Eric Ayres for six of the best. The Baron was much feared as a strict disciplinarian by the lower school, but he was much loved by the older pupils, who by then had gained a great respect for him.

He was a survivor of Gallipoli, and we were all much in awe of him.

Tud's French lessons and Taffy's Spanish lessons were a riot. Johnny Cowan had a desk-top 'Tudometer' which indicated Tud's varying level of frustration, as we never took these language lessons seriously. We were later taught French by 'Eggo' Price, another late returner from war service. He was bald as a coot, and earned his nickname from Big Eggo, a cartoon ostrich character on the front page of the Beano.

Our first history lesson with Ivan Brown was memorable. He was slightly late and whooshed past the boy holding the door open with a great billowing of his gown. He flung his battered briefcase onto the table, sprung it open and extracted a cane which he brought down on the desk with a resounding thwack. This was a lesson for us to behave. He never had to bring it out again. He had a forthright teaching manner, which the front row received, peppered full blast when he taught Pitt's Passive Policy in the Peace Period. When he eventually retired, Ivan Brown moved to Sidmouth. During the 1970s/80s we often holidayed there for the folk festival. On these occasions we would take Ivan out for events which we thought would interest him. 'I had no idea all this went on!' he said.

As we moved up the school, we were subsequently taught history by 'Tosser', and in the Sixth Form he conducted Current Affairs 'Topics' lessons in preparation for university interviews. I would argue matters of earlier Scottish history, Gaelic language, the Highland Clearances, and the like, which I felt were being neglected in the official curriculum.

In the course of time my son Niall also later followed me to Westcliff, and had similar experiences with the same teacher.

‘Tosser’ Day informed Niall that there used to be another pupil a few years ago with similar concerns, and ‘What is your name boy?’ he asked. ‘MacKinnon, Sir,’ my son replied. ‘So, you’re not his brother are you?’ ‘No, his son.’ It was a shock to Tosser – a whole generation had sped past, and history was repeating itself.

Mr Harden was a dapper and diminutive figure with a twinkle in his eye – but firm in discipline and Latin grammar. He became our form master in the upper school, and conducted a one-year sixth-form crash course in Latin for those likely to be heading for Oxford or Cambridge. Credit at School Certificate would give exemption from their Latin entrance exams, Responsions and Little-go. We were joined by our counterparts in the adjacent girls’ school. Harry must have had a dismal time of it with us. The weekend before the exam, I decided I would go all out for it, mugged up Harry’s Latin Grammar Notes, and learned a likely passage for translation by heart from the English crib. It was the last year the exam was to be held under the then regulations, and I thought the examiners might go out on a blaze of glory by choosing the notorious chapter in Caesar’s ‘Gallic Wars, Book Four’ describing the building of the bridge over the Rhine – in full technological detail.<sup>1</sup> It had conspicuously failed ever to have been set in the exam. When the exam was duly conducted, I turned over my paper to see, with great joy, that the said chapter had in fact been set. I immediately buckled-to and produced the 100% word perfect answer. I thus landed a credit overall, and when the results came out, Mr Harden went out of his way to apologise to me for the damning school report on my Latin the previous term. But since I never went to Oxbridge this result was never utilised.

Spanish with Taffy Davies was a similar crucifixion of its teacher. The School Cert exam at the end of the fifth year produced an indifferent crop of results. He later took early retirement and went into commerce in the City. The exam included a live oral: ten minutes of Spanish conversation with a visiting examiner. My turn came and in I went to be shown a Punch cartoon of a shipwrecked mariner on a desert island, with the overhead sun as a fried egg. ‘¿Qué es eso?’ he asked. I knew what a fried egg was in Spanish. ‘¡El sol es un huevo frito!’<sup>2</sup> I declared, and also added in Spanish that it was not a boiled egg – *huevo pasado por agua*. So for ten minutes I dilated upon all the various types of egg, not giving the examiner any chance to ask me a question I could not understand or answer. I concluded with, ‘¡Es un huevo frito, no cabe duda!’<sup>3</sup> It earned me an overall distinction. Years later we had a winter holiday on the Costa del Sol. Our party of Brits were decanted at Malaga airport. Our bus awaited us outside. A line of porters looked at us, and we looked at them – in silence. Then my school Spanish came back to me in a rush. ‘¡Mozo, mozo, las maleta, por favor!’<sup>4</sup> They rushed to help us, and loaded us on the bus. Inside the remaining Brits looked at the porters, and the porters looked back. Eventually the bus driver grew tired of waiting, and set off to convey us to Marbella in solitary state. Taffy’s school Spanish had saved the situation.

I found my Spanish suddenly returning to me in dealing with local people, and in shops. My daughter’s shoes gave out and she needed a new pair. We sought out a shoe shop. It was packed with locals. But el patrón immediately turned to serve us.

‘¿Pero los otros?’ I protested, but he persisted. ‘Las zapatas de mi hija son rompias,’ I explained. ‘De nuevo por favor,’ the proprietor requested. ¡Escuchân!’ he declared to his local andalucian customers. ‘¡Es un inglés, y habla castellano, muy buen pronunciado – mejor que ustedes!’<sup>5</sup> Later we had driven to the Gibraltar border, and on the way back had stopped in the town square of Fuengirola. At one corner stood a portly civil guard, wearing a comic opera hat. At the other stood an equally portly bourgeois and obviously Falangist local citizen. Seville oranges had ripened on the bushes in front of him. ‘Are they oranges?’ asked Morag. I assured her they were. ‘What on those little bushes?’ she further enquired. ‘Well, pick one and see,’ I said. The bourgeois gent was outraged. ‘¡Es prohibido!’ he declared. ‘¿Porqué?’ ‘Es contra la ley.’ ‘¿A quién es la ley?’ ‘Es a Franco.’ ‘¿Franco?’ ‘¡Sí!’ ‘¿El don señor Francisco Franco, caudillo?’ ‘¡Sí!’ ‘Hijo de puta.’ The affronted citizen called across the square, ‘Guardia civil, Guardia civil!’<sup>6</sup> ‘Into the car, and no arguments!’ I ordered my daughter Morag and the rest of my family. Off we drove at speed, with two portly falangistas following in frantic but futile pursuit. In London, sometime later I ran into Taffy Davies coming out of his place of business in Chancery Lane. I was able to express my appreciation of his Spanish lessons, and assure him that all his efforts had not been in vain.

Anyway, back to schooldays. When I had commenced them it was still wartime, and the school building bore the marks of army occupation during the recent war years, when the pupils had been evacuated to Belper.

Lewd words and phrases still adorned the walls of our classrooms. Lessons were interrupted by air raids, which I for one always hoped would coincide with maths lessons, we would then all repair to the underground air raid shelters excavated into the upper terracing between the school and the playing fields. These later flooded, and we had great fun during lunch hours paddling around their dark, labyrinthine tunnels on the duckboards.

I had always promised myself that I would throw my cap in the air when war finally ended. The news of the final victory in Europe came during afternoon lessons on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945, and we were let out of school early. I was one of the first out, and promptly threw my cap in the air. Others did likewise. Three months later victory over Japan was announced after the second atomic bomb. War was finally over. Few things have felt quite like it since. The nearest was the Labour landslide victory after eighteen years of Thatcher and Major on the, 1<sup>st</sup> May 1997.

We had moved around quite a bit during the war. I had numerous changes of school, and it may have been all that much more surprising that I passed the secondary school entrance exams, but I had done so – and did well in the school leaving exams too. It was a marvel that many others did likewise, and as witness, the school honours boards on the rear wall of the Hall were replete with the names of those awarded state scholarships, and exhibitions to prestigious colleges.

**Ken MacKinnon**

- <sup>1</sup> See:- <http://www.livius.org/sources/content/caesar/caesar-on-the-first-germanic-campaign/>
- <sup>2</sup> *'The sun is a fried egg.'*
- <sup>3</sup> *'It's a fried egg, no doubt about it!'*
- <sup>4</sup> *'Porter, porter, the luggage if you please.'*
- <sup>5</sup> *'But the others?' ... 'My daughter's shoes are broken.' 'Again, please. ... Listen, it's an Englishman, and he speaks very well-pronounced proper Spanish – better than you lot!'*
- <sup>6</sup> *'It is prohibited' 'Why?' 'It's against the law!' 'Whose law' 'Franco's'?' 'Yes!' 'Don señor Francisco Franco, the Leader?' 'Yes!' 'Son of a street-lady.' 'Civil Guard, Civil Guard!'*

## MICHAEL MASSE

### WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS FINAL ASSEMBLY 1963

As I recall, the idea was originally conceived by deputy head boy, Geoff?, and head boy, Tony Barnett. I don't remember who arranged for the 'loan' of the skeleton from the Bio lab, but I was one of the 'boys' who fixed the strings to the rear curtains and then took up my position in the small room at one side of the stage, where some of the stage equipment was kept. My opposite number was stationed in a similar room on the other side. I believe Tony selected the passage, indeed Ezekiel 37.

Geoff, I believe, was deputed to read the ominous selection, although it may have been Peter Boston, well-known for his stentorian tones and dramatic manner, and when he came to the key passage:

So I prophesied as I was commanded, and as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone, he read this in a sonorous and necessarily loud voice so that we could hear our cue. We pulled hard on the strings and waited for the reaction. The strings did not appear to travel very far and I at first thought the stunt had misfired, but then it became clear that something was going on in the hall, so we slipped quickly out of our hiding place, not, as was suggested to save our own skins, exactly, but rather to lay a false scent by moving smartly along the corridor which ran outside the hall, and round to the front door, where we encountered Harry Harden. He had obviously left the hall by the main entrance in order to track down the culprits, so I brazenly said that, as a prefect, I had had the same idea, had slipped out of the hall and was engaged in trying to track down the perpetrators before they had a chance to escape. Impressed with my 'initiative', he then went one way and I the other, but, of course, neither of us was successful! I remember that I even ran out of the front door and round the drive, before admitting 'defeat' and reporting same to Harry on my return inside. Our abrupt departure may indeed explain why the strings were not properly released and the curtains did not properly close.

As was correctly reported, no one responsible was ever found.

My one regret was that, thus ensconced with the strings, I was not able to see the effect and the aftermath, so I'm grateful for the detailed report of the proceedings from the business side of things, which I have, until now, not been privy to.

It is quite remarkable that something which happened over 50 years ago is still etched in the memories of so many Old Westcliffians of that era.

**Michael**

## **JIM SANCTUARY**

### **Harry Smith, Horticulturalist and Photographer**

Harry Smith was the longest serving Chairman in the history of Leigh Horticultural Society: 22 years, until his sudden death in 1974. He taught science at Westcliff High School for Boys, where he was irreverently known as 'Black Harry', a nickname whose origin appears to have been lost in time. In the late 1930s, he set up a gardening club at the school and encouraged the students in all aspects of horticulture, creating a flower and vegetable garden alongside the boundary of the school sports field. So successful were the boys, that under Harry's guidance they staged an exhibit of vegetables and soft fruit at the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show.

Harry was a much-travelled and highly-gifted plantsman, and an expert photographer, and over the years the Society profited greatly from his wide circle of horticultural friends and contacts.

A committee member since the 1940s, he was elected Chairman in 1952, at a time when the LHS was undergoing major changes following the end of rationing and the austerity of the war years.

Events such as coach outings and evening lectures resumed, and Harry was instrumental in organising many of these popular activities, often with assistance from his many horticultural associates. His unbounded enthusiasm spurred on many an LHS member to have a go at exhibiting at the Society's flower shows.

Harry's wife, Susan, always known as Susie, was also a keen gardener, and many of the visitors to their garden at Merillies Close, Westcliff-on-Sea, remarked at her extensive plant knowledge. Behind the house Harry and Susie created a beautiful and interesting garden, with beds of shrubs, herbaceous plants and bulbs, many of a rare and unusual nature, collected on their travels in this country and abroad. Susie would call herself 'the plumber's mate'; Harry took the photographs and Susie could always come up with the names. And, in due course, the photographs were to become Harry's greatest legacy.

In the 1950s, Harry took over the photography business of Ernest Crowson, a renowned horticultural photographer, whose work appeared in many gardening books and journals of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Harry was one of the pioneers of horticultural photographers working in colour, and over the years added to the library of horticultural images, which became known as the Harry Smith Horticultural Photographic Collection.



Harry had close ties with many local gardeners, including Dick and Helen Robinson who, in the 1950s, created one of the country's most outstanding gardens of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at Hyde Hall, Rettendon, which they gifted to the Royal Horticultural Society in 1992. Beth Chatto was another good friend and Harry and Susie were regular visitors to her marvellous garden at Elmstead Market.

Harry was a regular customer at Bob Mansfield's rock plant nursery at Eastwood Rise, Leigh-on-Sea, where he and Bob would discuss the merits of rare alpine plants and exchange specimens. This was, of course, in the days before garden centres, and Harry and Susie would travel the country seeking out nurseries that specialised in rare and interesting plants, and inevitably making new friends.

Also great chums of the Smiths' were Roderick and Joy Cameron, who created in the late 1950s the magnificent garden at Great Comp near Sevenoaks, in the heart of the Kent countryside. Roderick declared that Harry and Susie were their most frequent visitors, and he and Joy were very impressed with Harry's photographs, considering them to be the most professional images of their garden. Over the years their friendship grew, and in May each year, under his expert guidance, Harry would arrange for a group of Dutch horticultural students to visit Great Comp and other outstanding English gardens.



**Harry Smith on the right in the doorway at Great Comp with Susie in front of him. They are photographed in 1972 with Roderick and Joy Cameron and a group of Dutch horticultural students**

Other good friends included Fred Whitsey, then editor of *Popular Gardening* magazine, Roland Jackson, who ran Jackman's Nurseries at Woking, and Ralph Gould of Hurst's Seeds, Witham.

It therefore came as a great shock to his many friends and colleagues when his unexpected passing was announced in February 1974. Members of Leigh Horticultural Society were especially saddened to learn of Harry's death. He had been a stalwart of the Society over many years and his outstanding stewardship left a great void to fill. In recognition of his enormous contribution to the wellbeing of the Society the Harry Smith Memorial Fund was launched, and from the proceeds a public address system was purchased. Susie continued to support the Society, and was a regular visitor to the flower shows until her passing in the 1990s.

On Harry's death, his good friend Dick Robinson became custodian of the Harry Smith Horticultural Photograph Collection, and today this celebrated picture library is in the safekeeping of the Royal Horticultural Society, for the enjoyment of future generations of gardeners.

## **Jim Sanctuary**

**Note:** Jim is not an OW and I offer him my thanks for allowing us to print this article. Jim is a past Chairman of Leigh Horticultural Society. TWB

## **JOHN C SMITH: WHSB 1944 to 1950**

I'm a WHSB Old Boy (1944-50)  
Mr Cloak was Headmaster.

After my 2 years National Service (Royal Artillery) - stationed in the Suez Canal Zone (1951-53), I emigrated to Canada in 1954 (Calgary, Alberta) where I worked in a Bank for 3 years before becoming a member of Canada's Federal Police Force, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. During my 25 years service, I was transferred 7 times, including a 3 year posting to the Canadian Police College in Ottawa, teaching management theory to senior police officers. I obtained an undergraduate degree from the University of Waterloo, in Ontario.

On retiring from the RCMP, I worked for the British Columbia Provincial government, as a law enforcement training officer, for people engaged in Fish, Game, Forestry and Environmental work. Now fully retired, I work as a volunteer at one of the oldest theatres in the City of Victoria - Langham Court - where I help build and paint the Sets for the 6 shows each year. I also write. I have published two books in the past 5 years - the first, entitled - 'The Scarlet Sentinels' - a book about the Mounties, in a novel format (based on fact), and recently, a second novel entitled - 'First Class Passage' - about a murder on a cruise ship, while crossing the Atlantic Ocean (Cruise ships do not have police officers aboard). Both of course, can be reviewed on Amazon.ca - by entering the title.

My wife Jean and I had the distinct pleasure in visiting the school in the summer of 2003. Sat in my old classroom on the ground floor in the 'West Wing'.

Lots of memories for me...

## **John C Smith**

Victoria BC, Canada

## KEITH STEPHENS:

WHSB 1945 to 1952

Thank you and all your helpers for the recent OWA dinner.

It was great to have five of my year there. I enjoyed particularly, joining Harry Bacon and Peter White, as they were being shown round the school by a charming and confident deputy head boy.

Five photos, scanned from those in my album, are enclosed:

1. W.H.S.B. Hockey 1949-1950 Back row: K.S., D. Drysdale, D. Dibble, M. Abercrombie, Oakley. Seated: M. Eley, D. Edge (capt.) Mr. Price, K. Balland P. King



2. W.H.S.B. Hockey XI 5 . March 1951 Back: K. Clough, M. Avrll, F. Crayden, K.S., B. Belcher, D. Rodker, R. Richardson, Seated: Mr. H. Brownley, D. Dibble, D. Edge(capt.) Mr. H. Cloke, M. Eley, M. Abercrombie, Mr. Price.



3. W.H.S.B. Tennis VI 1951 Back: K.S., J. Baker, A. Bond, D. Dibble, Seated: K. Green (capt.) Mr. Roberts, G. Collinder



4. 6 Science 1951 Back; Baker, Doughty, Bacon, Garrood, Leonard, Mc.Craith, Sayers, Willmott, Thorn, White. Centre: Roberts, Green, Abercrombie, Cornish, Kaiser, Browne, Pegrum, Eggins, Sargent, Priest, Eley (cut off). Seated: Fosh, Wilde, Clough, Steinert, Dibble, Mr. Webber, Collinder, Edge, Whitworth, Bowthorpe, Llewellyn (cut off)



5. W.H.S. Hockey 1951-52 Back: Mr. Brownley, Zucker, Cobham, Clift, Horsnell, Browne, K.S., Maxwell, ??, Mr. Watson, Seated: Mr. Phelps, Llewellyn, Davies, Eley, Mr. Cloke, Belcher, Frost. Burrows, Mr. Price.



The late summer of 1945 saw me arrive at WHSB, Mr H King was my first form master. My end of year report says there were 35 boys in 2A, average age 12.7 Eric Ayres was the Head Master and he said that I was satisfactory.

Page 4 of the 2015 newsletter reminds me of my first year at the school; Gordon Rice and Edward Greenfield were prefects. At first sight these exalted creatures were frightening to first years. I met Gordon Rice on the Waverley, as it sailed from Southend pier a few years ago; he spoke about his friend Ted Greenfield and his days at the school. Val West writes about "The Baron" "(Mr. Rosborough), he was a frightening figure to an 11-year-old; I was told that he taught Latin, maybe he did as well as maths and French? He also presided over Saturday morning detention, luckily I never suffered that. Geoff Singer is listed in the newsletter's in memoriam section.

I am assuming that he is the Geoff Singer that went for clarinet lessons with me. The school had a clarinet with simple fingering; this was given to me after I had shown interest. Music was maybe my favourite subject but I had little ability.

Grade 1 was my peak. I believe the school performed some of Brahms' German Requiem. It contained a three note clarinet solo.

I squeaked when it was my time to come in. I'm sure I was the worst clarinet player ever. Geoff went on to be a competent performer. The summer of 1947 was dominated by Compton and Edrich, between them they scored over 7,300 runs in a sun-drenched season. H.I. Brown was form master of 3A he gave me a good write up despite my 41'Yo in history, my worst subject.

So different was maths, my first experience of "Daddy" Smith a wonderful teacher. Other teachers were: Mr Andrews (physics), "Black Harry" Smith (chemistry), Mr. Cowan (French), Mr Harden (Latin), and Mr. Bates (music) The London Olympics and Bradman's Aussies dominated my 1948 summer but I had to put sport behind me and try to do well now that I was in 4 Science. Two subjects out of history, geography, Latin and music had to be chosen. In my case this was a no-brainer (today's language?). I kicked history and geography into touch. Mr. Bates now took me for chemistry and music; I recall that "Black Harry" was ill. Mr. Robinson taught physics and George Price was my form master as well as my French teacher. Don Day on page 22 writes of Jimmy Harrison. He and Bernard Smith were the star rugby players of my year. The Jim Harrison Sports Hall was formally opened in 2003. I am proud to be a contemporary of a great guy.

Michael Feltham clearly suffered from the same disease as me. Causing explosions of various types fascinated me. This resulted in my "deletion from the prefecture" I spent a short time in hospital after a nitrogen triiodide explosion. I had made some of this from school chemicals and the school found out.

By 1952 I had made my erratic way to 6 Science and A levels. Taught by the same teachers as Peter King (page 31 of the newsletter, see Hockey photo No.1) I think I surprised many. Arriving at school in the late summer, I was sent for by Mr. Cloke. Why not apply for: Manchester, Leeds, Nottingham....., anywhere? There's not much point in you doing a third year in the sixth form. These were the Head's words in essence. With a Borough Major Scholarship I went to Nottingham to read Engineering.

Two names appear on page 37 of the 2015 newsletter, Claude Webber and Geoff Winslow, two very different men. My introduction to rugby football left something to be desired. As an 11-year-old my bare backside was whacked after I had zigzagged up the pitch and scored a try. This was not the way to teach me to pass the ball. Geoff Winslow and I were contemporaries and we both lived near Southend East station. After passing what we called the scholarship, the 11 plus, Geoff went to Southend High School, for some reason I chose W.H.S.B. I don't remember why but it wasn't a bad choice.

**Keith**

## **VAL WEST - A DOUBLE ACT!**

I doubt that a pudding would survive the journey! My wife is of Swiss origin and although we have been married 60 years she has never adapted to some of the old English traditions, like Christmas pudding and Mincemeat! My kids are Canadian and think some of our traditions are "quaint ", but no thanks! My great-grandchildren, now 6 in number, when they can be pulled away from their "tablets" look at me as if I were speaking another language, which I suppose I am! Talk about Generation Gap!

Regrettably I shall decline your offer and try to find a single serving Pud in the store, Sugar free (a vain hope) .

To all of you, and the few of my period who remain, the best of Seasons Wishes

**Val**

## **VAL WEST**

I don't know the School Website. I would be interested in looking to see if I recognise anybody.

I doubt that anyone remembers me, though I do have a picture of a group in rugby kit, with Claude Webber and The head(?). Another taken at a Harvest camp in 1945 just after the Hiroshima bombing. It was the last camp we attended. I recognise some of the boys mostly those in my year, I suppose.

A lot of the lads from my era are gone, by now, and at 87, pushing 88 I think I might be joining them!

My wife and I have reached that point when childhood events are more easily recalled than last Wednesday.

My recollections of WHS are still there, though, probably, a bit mixed up.

My stint in the RAF is still fairly clear, and like a lot of old people I am jotting down incidents I recall. Singapore, Butterworth, Penang, all have changed dramatically since then, but for me, like many others, these places are caught in a Time Warp of my memory. Sorry to ramble on.

Best of everything to all who may remember me.

**Val**

**KENNETH ZUCKER:** WHSB 1946 to 1953

In the last edition of our Newsletter there was an erroneous account as to how Henry Cloke acquired the nickname of "The Boot". The true facts follow.

I joined the School in September 1946. Henry Cloke arrived in January 1948, if my memory is accurate. At that time cinemas were showing "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" starring Danny Kaye. The villain in the film was known as "The Boot". That epithet was transferred effortlessly to Henry Cloke. It stuck. QED.

It would be a pity if Henry Cloke's eccentricities highlighted a short while ago by Keith Warren obscured the fact that he was a truly great Headmaster. I would refer to two aspects of his long reign.

The previous Headmaster E. Ayres ran the school as if it were a minor Public School. All teachers and prefects were permitted to use the cane and frequently did so. There was a culture of bullying, with new boys on their first day being thrown down the bank onto the playing field. Henry Cloke immediately abolished all caning save for an ample reservation to himself. Though he used it himself he was not a bully and did not tolerate bullying in the school.

Secondly he went to great lengths to guide and secure places at universities for departing sixth formers. I personally owe him a great deal. I remember him with affection and gratitude.

**Kenneth**

## **"PICTURES FROM THE PAST"**

1946/7 Team

B /R Mansell Sains Barrel Kemp Shepherd  
Pilgrim Pope Fides Macfarlane Flack

Seated Webber Laurence Smith H.M. Ayres  
Mr "X" Last two not known

Ground Henley Haylock



1948/49 team

B/R Gillman Hammond Lawrence  
Crittenden Joiner Sains Clarke Sayers

Seated Webber Thornton Smith HM  
Mr. Cloke Mac Farlane Price Miens

Ground Bridger Haylock



## **11. OLD WESTCLIFFIAN LODGE NO. 5456**

The Lodge has again had a busy programme of work during the current year. The Master of the Lodge this year has been Michael Feltham, who has done a superb job in both performing Masonic ceremonies and in visiting other Lodges.

The Lodge consists entirely of former pupils and staff at the school and any potential new member is almost certain to come across someone he knows, either a fellow former pupil or former master. The Lodge is open to all former pupils, staff and governors of the school and anyone who wishes to join will receive a warm welcome.

If you would like to know more about the Lodge or Freemasonry in general, please contact any of the three members listed below.

Terry Birdseye (1957-1962) 01702  
714241

Arthur Millman (1967-1973) 07973  
145978

Greg Berman (1988-1995) 07772  
296230



## 12. EDITOR

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Newsletter this year, and I have endeavoured to include all of the articles that there was not room for last year.

I am pleased to see a lot more photographs have been sent in by OWA members. What marvellous memories these must bring back of happy carefree days!

It is also nice to see lots of new members again this year, and a few literary contributions from the “newer” members of the OWA, would be great.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Terry for his help and advice.

As previously, should you know of anyone not receiving their Newsletter, please ask them to get in touch. They can either email their details to [terry.birdseye@gmail.com](mailto:terry.birdseye@gmail.com) or contact the Hon. Secretary by post. Please also keep us informed of email and postal address changes.

With best wishes to all OWs.

Shanie White



### 13. (i) THE OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

The Association was formed in 1926 to enable pupils to have a means of keeping in touch with staff and colleagues.

The Annual Newsletter forms a good link between members at home and abroad.

The AGM is usually held in June or July.

Our Annual Reunion Dinner is held in September.

We welcome a growing membership and our Honorary Secretary will be pleased to welcome new members on receipt of an application.

✂.....

### 13. (ii) The Old Westcliffian Association

\*\*\* Please make ALL cheques payable to “Old Westcliffian Association” \*\*\*

Application for Life Membership Subscription	£10 (£5 if in full time education)
Life Members' Tie	£8
Cufflinks in Presentation Box	£15
Ladies Brooches	£12

NAME: .....

YEARS DATES AT SCHOOL: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....

..... POSTCODE: .....

TELEPHONE NUMBER: .....

EMAIL ADDRESS: .....

*PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE AN EMAIL ADDRESS, AN ADDITIONAL £5 SHOULD BE SENT FOR FUTURE NEWSLETTER MAILINGS.*

#### Send membership cheques to:

Terry Birdseye  
810 London Road  
LEIGH ON SEA, Essex, SS9 3NH  
Tel: 01702 714241  
Mobile: 07752 192164  
Email: terry.birdseye@gmail.com

#### Send cheques for ties and cufflinks to:

R. Arnold  
8 Orchard Grove  
LEIGH ON SEA, Essex, SS9 5TR  
Tel: 01702 521877  
Email: dick.arnold@virgin.net

