



The Old Collyerians' Association

Newsletter

Autumn 2005

Your President's valedictory message

All good things must come to an end, and it only seems like yesterday that I started my year in office. Thank you all for your support during the year.

Being President is not really a very onerous a task, so don't be afraid if you are ever invited to take office, as there are many really enjoyable duties which occur during the year, in particular attendance at a number of formal dinners in the City, which really bring home the wonderful heritage of our School, now College, and its close association with the Mercers' Company, the premier Livery Company of the City of London. The Mercers' Company continues to support Collyers with generous grants to assist with a number of ongoing projects, and for that, we add our grateful thanks. Currently, there are a number of technology projects being supported, where students from Collyers are assisting pupils at both secondary and primary schools locally, and the Mercers' Company is providing some funds for these participating schools as well.

As most of you will know our founder, Richard Collyer, was a Mercer so the association has existed for nearly 500 years. I must admit, that when I heard that the Old School had become a Sixth Form College, I had thought that our heritage was being destroyed. This, however, is not the case, as the once-envied elitist status has really been enhanced by the change, rather than diluted, since it now serves all of the most able students in the area, rather than the selected few. This is well evidenced by the consistently high level performance of the students in A-Level and other examination results. Three students, this year, achieved an impressive five 'A' Grades in their A-Level examinations and two of these had one result in the top five students in the country in their subject. Somewhat surprisingly these results were in IT subjects,

Diary date

Saturday 19 November 2005, at the College of Richard Collyer, Hurst Road, Horsham.

Annual General Meeting 2005

followed by

Winter Reunion dinner

see separate details enclosed with this newsletter.

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and clearly the College has achieved the difficult task of attracting top class professional staff in these and other related fields. Congratulations are due not only to the students but also to the Principal, Jackie Johnson and all the staff, for creating an environment where the students can thrive.

One thing still worries our committee, however, about our association, this is the slow erosion of our numbers, due to slow rate of recruitment of recent leavers from the College. Gone are the days of the annual Old Boys vs Students matches at cricket and football (and netball) now that we are co-educational, and it would be nice to resurrect these. Your committee is looking for ways in which we can enhance interest in the Association, and to that end we are hoping to invite students onto the Committee and to become apprentices to the Civic Guild of Old Mercers. If anyone has any other bright ideas please do not hesitate to contact the Secretary. Let's face it £2 a year or £20 life membership, to keep in touch with your colleagues and all the gossip, is much cheaper than even Friends Re-united.

Finally as my year comes to an end it is time for me to welcome your incoming President, Mark Collins, and to wish him an enjoyable and successful year in office. You may be interested to know that both Mark and I, when students at Collyers, lived in the same house in Warnham.

Best wishes to you all and I hope to see many of you at the Annual Dinner.

Anthony Barnard (1953-59)



Jottings



The Association's archives have been enhanced recently by the addition of the minute book of the Debating Society for the 1930s. This has been beautifully bound, courtesy of George Stiles.

Another purchase for the archives is a copy of Neil Chapman's book on the old Horsham swimming pool "Coming In", while the recent feature in the West Sussex County Times has also been added to the inventory.

Further to the appeal in the last newsletter, we are still in need of a volunteer able to play the piano or keyboards to accompany the singing of the school song at the forthcoming reunion dinner in November. Please, if

you can assist, get in touch with any committee member.

Since publication of the last newsletter, John Meese has been co-opted to the Association committee by a unanimous vote.

Rumours that Chairman of the College Governors Rosemary Cowley was to retire have proved false. Your committee had been considering a suitable presentation for Mrs Cowley, to be made at the winter reunion dinner, but has now heard from her that she intends to remain in the post until such time as she considers she has no more to offer - hopefully a long time hence.

Mrs Wadey's school meals

Triggered by recent discussions led by Jamie Oliver, Iuan Hill submits his recollections of school dinners at Collyer's during the war years.

With the ringing of the bell above the great hall, thus signaling the cessation of morning lessons, there was a mass exodus of boys homeward bound for their lunch. The remainder either enjoyed their packed lunch or made their way to one of the two dining halls. During the period 1939-1946 there was a smaller dining hall, as well as a larger one.

I clearly recall, without reservation, the most satisfying daily lunches that were produced by Mrs Wadey. They were not only nourishing and wholesome but generally most appetising. It was truly amazing that she, together with her small staff, were able to provide us with such fine fare during WW2 rationing conditions. A good selection of fresh vegetables were included too.

During recent days there has been much discussion as to the value and quality of the meals provided within our schools. As for ourselves, we enjoyed some good home cooking, not heated-up food. I guess that Mrs Wadey provided in excess of 100 meals daily. Some members of staff together with 'PAT' joined us in the dining hall. Once grace had been announced scholars formed an orderly queue and then collected their meal.

'PAT' would conduct his routine patrol round the various tables, once the main meal was eaten, to ensure that all plates were free of any food. His eagle eye missed nothing and when he came upon an offender he would wait and watch until the food was consumed. Then, and only then, the plates were collected up. 'PAT' had an absolute abhorrence of

waste in any shape or form which, I am sure, made a deep impression on each of us for the remainder of our lives. At the outset of the meal, as you may guess, there was always someone who was pleased to receive any unwanted food, though this had to be skillfully manoeuvred.

The variety of the main course was exceedingly good. I recollect sausages often appeared, as did a homemade meat pie. Casseroles, as well as cottage pie, liver and bacon and fish were regulars. During the summer time there was a good selection of salads. Unlike the present day, chips were rarely available. When it came to desserts there was a range of milk puddings. Also suet pudding with syrup was a favourite. The sumptuous chocolate sponge with chocolate sauce was a luxury during those wartime years. How we yearned that a second helping might become available. The jam or treacle tarts were sought after too. The black skin on the rice pudding was a problem for some who managed to wrap it in something and later flush it away. No plastic bags in those far off days!

Mrs Wadey and her small staff provided us with a splendid daily lunch not to be compared with the school lunches of the present day - so it seems. I trust that we expressed some appreciation for her labours.

Lawrence Windwood adds that Mrs Wadey was also famous for her 'yellow peril', a sponge pudding of doubtful parentage. The editor recalls things were less satisfactory in the 1960s, with menus being imported from outside kitchens, to be kept hot for several hours. Things improved dramatically with Collyer's own new kitchens, built as part of the Duckering Hall project.

The Scotts of Collyer's

As a very new member of the OCA committee I fairly soon found myself being asked to contribute to the newsletter. However, the interest was not in the Sturt family but in my wife's maternal forebears, the Scotts. Her grandfather was one Rupert Scott who was the original co-founder of the Scott & Sargeant ironmongery business which still trades under that name in East Street in Horsham (although several owners down the line) - he had two daughters and two sons, both of whom were at Collyers. The younger, Derek (1930-1940), emigrated to Australia in the early 1950's to follow his career in the world of insurance, finally retiring to Noosa Heads on the Sunshine Coast of Queensland where he died in 2001. His grandson, Adam, is currently the top Aussie golfer and ranked no.7 in the world.

The older son Ray(mond) had a distinguished career in industry in the UK and abroad and the military during WWII especially with his exploits in Burma, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was at Collyers from 1926-1933 and a couple of years before he died in 2002 he put together his life story entitled 'I would do the same again' - what follows is a shortened version of Chapter 3 - 'School Days.'

"In 1926 I started at Collyers at which time the pupils numbered 220 with a sixth form of 10, divided into four Houses: Collyers; Denne; Hurst; and St. Leonards, and I eventually became Head and Captain of Hurst, a prefect and vice-captain of the school. Under Headmaster P.A. Tharp (PAT), for whom I had a great respect, there were 12 masters, all very capable and assiduous in trying to instill into us a detailed knowledge of the subject they were teaching.

"PAT was passionately devoted to hard physical exercise and we, consequently, played a tremendous amount of games - in summer cricket, tennis and swimming, football in winter and in spring term rugby, hockey and athletics. We also played fives all year round and I played regularly with PAT when I was in the sixth. There was also the 'Pondtail,' the twice-weekly cross country run.

"The school sports teams travelled to play other schools including Varndean, Lancing and Midhurst and we entertained them in return. I remember taking part in the athletics at the Public Schools' tournament at the White City - we didn't win but it was good fun.

"School discipline was in the hands of the prefects, who could beat you if you broke school rules or were unduly insubordinate. For ordinary misdemeanours they could give six of the best with a cane - anything more serious was referred to PAT for a more severe response. In my younger days I had my share of visiting the prefects' room - I tried to mitigate the beating by putting my school cap under my trousers but it didn't do much good as they could see the outline and would cane above and below it!

"We had very strong debating and dramatic societies and used to perform the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and various plays, some in French.

"In the summers I stayed with a French family in Rouen to perfect my French. The family had a son, Jean, and two cousins, Catherine and Marie Madeleine, the latter being quite attractive. Jean and Marie used to come over and stay with us in Horsham at our house in Brighton Road and I corresponded with Marie even during my early time in Burma in the mid-1930's. One day I had a letter saying she'd had a proposal of marriage from a

Frenchman but she would wait for me if I was interested. I had to reply saying that though I appreciated her offer we were not allowed to marry for at least five years.

"At Collyers, if you were prepared to take advantage of the facilities on offer, one could receive a first class education. At times I was fed up with Caesar's Gallic Wars and the Latin essays but there's no doubt that Latin proved very useful especially when, in later life. I had to learn other European languages. Great emphasis was placed on teaching English and we were well grounded in Chaucer, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Keats etc. and this, combined with the Debating Society meant that we were all well trained in expressing ourselves in English and in public.

"In the sixth form we had a maximum of three pupils to one master and I remember for maths. that I was the sole pupil learning calculus.

"One of the boarders at school was a Burmese boy called Htoon - his father was a barrister in Rangoon. I didn't know him well as he was older than me so not in the same class - I met up with him again after the war in India where he was then living, a very charming guy.

"One of the main advantages of being a prefect, apart from being able to beat the other boys when they infringed the school rules, was the wearing of a blue cap with gold stripes and a gold tassel

hanging down from the crown. This seemed to have an attraction for the teenage girls of the time.

"Counteracting the effect of the cap and tassel was the fact that in passing from youth to manhood I came out in severe spots on my face and boils on my neck. This was reputed to be due to an excess of sex hormones - this may well have been the case but it ruined any potential sex life for me for a long time as even I didn't fancy myself!

"Despite this one hiccup all in all it was a very happy, rewarding and instructive period of my life and one that contributed, in no small measure to the happiness, enjoyment and whatever success I achieved in my future life.

"I left Collyers at the end of summer term 1933 when I was 18 years old having passed my Upper School Certificate (the equivalent of today's A-levels) and went to work for the East India merchants, Steel Brothers & Company Limited at an annual salary of £80 (plus luncheon vouchers) moving to Rangoon with them in 1935."

I'm sure that these recollections will bring back memories for the older members reading them - perhaps there may be some out there who remember my ancestor Ray; he was quite a character.

Derek Sturt.

A note from the editor

I would like to apologise to anybody who has sent contributions for the newsletter via other committee members, only to be disappointed by the non-appearance of their items. It appears that at least one postal package has gone astray en route to me - unfortunately this included a tribute to the late Alan Hawksworth by his brother Roger. Direct E-mail (editor@oldcollyerians.org.uk) seems to be the most satisfactory method of international communication for those who have access to the facility. I cannot help feeling that it would be far more satisfactory if a volunteer in Britain - preferably the Horsham area - could be found for the not-too-onerous task of putting together the newsletter. Volunteers please at the AGM.

Members may not be aware the the OCA has a presence on the Internet, at <http://www.oldcollyerians.org.uk>.

The site was rather hastily put together by your editor a while ago, but could benefit from a face lift to make it look more professional, as well as regular updating. As web design seems to be an increasingly popular profession (and amateur interest) I would be more than happy to hand over the administration of the site at the AGM to any interested volunteer.

The site is currently hosted, at no cost to the Association, alongside another site of mine, and unfortunately the hosting company I used has proved highly unsatisfactory recently, resulting in the loss of the discussion forum feature on the site. A great pity. I should, hopefully, be able to resolve this problem by the AGM and reunion.

The discussion forum has been sadly underused and would benefit from a few lively contributions. Follow the link to 'forum' from any of the main pages.

College news

The College, in addition to being accorded Beacon status, has been recognised as a Centre of Vocational Excellence (COVE) in Sport and Recreation, and was due to launch new facilities in these areas in Autumn 2005. Collyer's has also been recognised by the Adult Learning Inspectorate as a 'Top Provider'. Achievements by the various sports teams continue at the usual high standard.

Principal Dr Jackie Johnston reports that Collyer's students have once again produced some outstanding results this summer with an overall pass rate at A-Level of 98 for the third year in succession. Of these 73 of students achieved higher grades and the average points per A Level student were 300 (the equivalent of three grade Bs at A-Level) with the top 100 students averaging 430 (the equivalent of three As at A-Level plus an A at AS-Level).

There were many individual successes but the Principal wishes to make particular mention of Nicola Ryan who was in the top five A-Level students in

A-Level ICT and James Gyton, in the top five for Electronics A-Level. There were three students who achieved an impressive five A grades each at A-Level – Rachel Cummings, Matthew Hancock and Robert Waddingham. They all came to Collyer's from Tanbridge House School. Rachel and Robert have offers to go on to study at Oxford and Cambridge respectively. 32 students achieved four A grades overall. Many students achieved UCAS scores of 480 or above (four grade As at A-Level):- Matthew Hancock, Rachel Cummings, Robert Waddingham, Helen Watt, Rebecca Morris, Elinor Browne, Rachel Ayerst, Lawrence Baynham-Herd, Rebecca Cockram, Stuart Garman, Tina Lee, Eleanor Litten, Joseph MacDonald, Ramin Mandegaran, Rebecca Moss, Emma Rockall, Alexandra Rutter, Nicola Ryan. 31 subjects at A-Level achieved 100 pass rates.

The Vocational A-Level results at 100 pass rate were also outstanding, as were the AS-Levels with a 91 pass rate.

Students at Collyer's studying for

intermediate level courses also have a great deal to celebrate. Results record an overall pass rate of 95 on GNVQ and BTEC courses in ICT, Business, Sport and Art. The ICT results are particularly noteworthy, with 94 achieving Distinction or Merit grades.

Adult Education students at the college once again performed very well, and the GCSE modern foreign languages students showed particularly strong aptitudes in their studies of Italian - eight out of nine students achieving A* - and Spanish with nine out of 11 at A* or A.

The college's consistently high performance was noted by the Principal, who said, "As the only Sussex college

awarded Beacon status by the Department of Education, these excellent results demonstrate the college's commitment to students on our full range of courses. Staff and students should be very proud of what they have achieved."

The principal advised that enrolment for the year was 1315 as opposed to a budget of 1241. Beacon status has given rise to high technology projects with both local industries, including Novartis, BASF and Virgin, and with partner Secondary schools. We have also been advised that the Mercers' Company is funding art and technology projects between the College and local primary and Secondary schools.

Look out for this book...

That child of the 60s, your editor (who attended Collyer's 1960-1965) recently discovered a book that held a lot of interest for him, transporting him back those 40 years to his teenage era. Then, as now (probably even more so, but I would say that, wouldn't I) contemporary popular music summoned up the spirit of the era. Then, the music was not only the voice of a generation as presented through the media - that very same generation, by making the music itself, provided its own voice.

The South Coast Beat Scene of the 1960s may not be the most original or snappily-crafted title, particularly for a work on popular music, but it certainly explains what is to be found inside. Author Mike Read (the same who is better known as a former radio and TV presenter and short-lived 'jungle celebrity') was part of that scene, and through his own and other's often, by definition, hazy recollections and period photographs, relives this unique era.

There is a popular impression that the

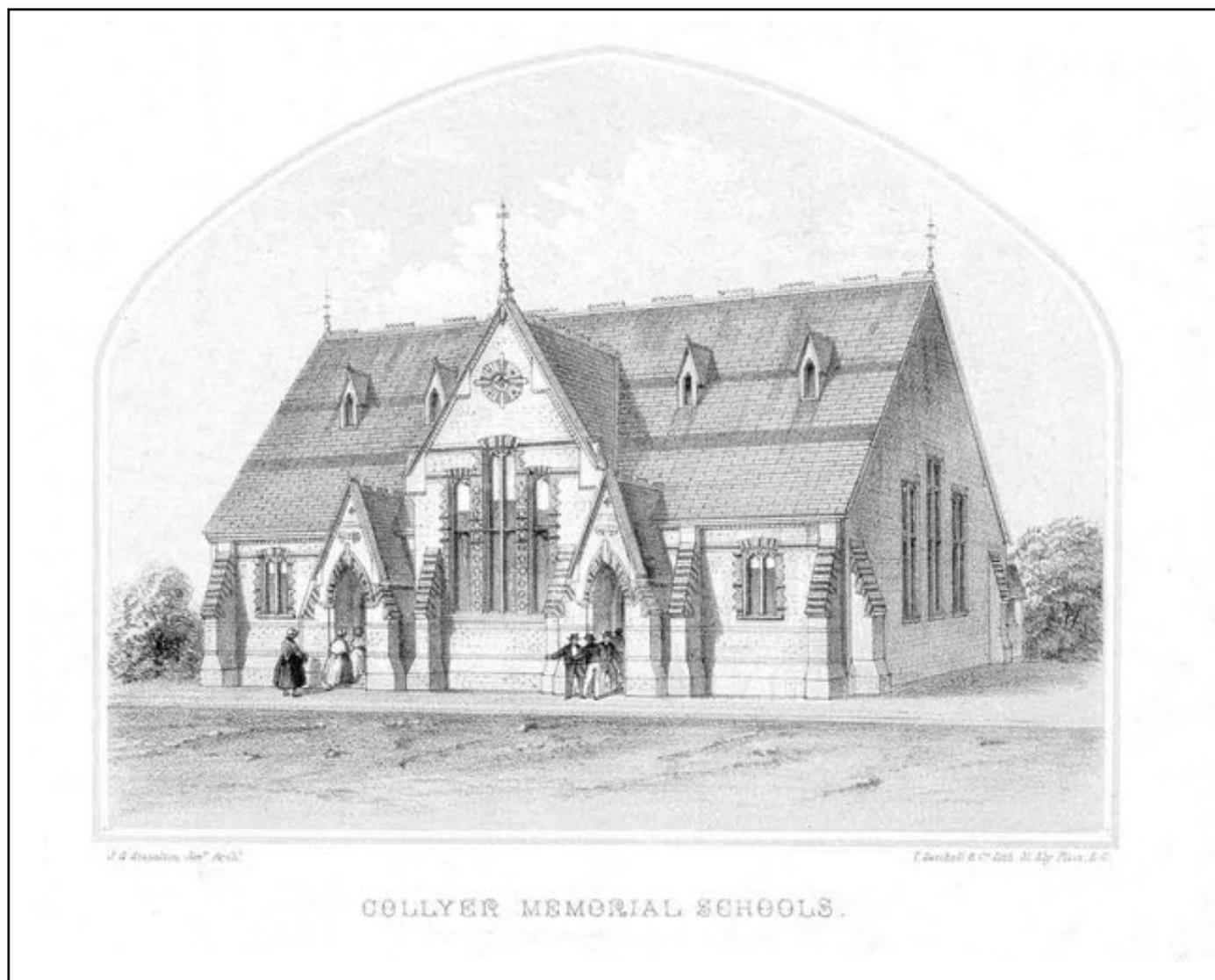
1960s were invented on Merseyside. However, there were 'scenes' in many parts of the country, and the south coast was no exception. In this case, perhaps surprisingly, 'south coast' really means West Sussex, or the area from Brighton and Shoreham east to Bognor Regis. I can vouch for the fact that this was where the 'happenings' were.

Although the more important venues were in Bognor, Littlehampton and Worthing, none of these places were many miles from the Horsham area, and Collyer's, with its population of boys of the right age group, provided many followers of the scene as well as actual participants.

If names like The Henry or The Merchants (who get their picture on the back cover) still mean anything, you'll love this book just as much as I did. If not, you'll probably find the minute detail a bit tedious, even though it does provide a useful social insight.

The South Coast Beat Scene of the 1960s by Mike Read is published by Woodfield Publishing at £24.95.

A parallel Collyerian universe?



Your editor was recently offered an old print, knowing his interest in Horsham area local history. The print claimed to show Collyer's School in Horsham. The description suggested that it might just have been the old school in Denne Road. Having dabbled in dealing in antiques and collectables in the past, I know it is always worth taking a gamble if the price is right - if the item is what you hoped, that's brilliant, but even if not, you have something interesting and decorative.

By comparison with the picture in the A.N. Willson history, it is obvious that the picture shows neither of the buildings on the Denne Road site. But

the caption clearly reads 'Collyer Memorial Schools' - though no location is stated. The print is signed 'J.G. Stapleton Jnr Archt', printed by 'T. Satchell & Co, Lith. 31 Ely Place, E.C.'

So is there another Collyer's School elsewhere, seemingly as old, or nearly as old, as ours? Where? Does it still exist? An internet search failed to come up with any reference to Collyer's School anywhere other than in Horsham. Neither the Willson book nor the Mercers' Company website, on a quick perusal, suggests Richard Collyer lent his name to any other school.

Can any OCA member offer more information?

Membership news

Please note: Full membership details are available only to paid-up members in the printed version of the newsletter.

Civic Guild of Old Mercers

The Installation Dinner for the new Guildmaster, Old Mercer Richard Lawman, was held on 2nd June at Tallow Chandlers' Hall. The guests included the Chief Commoner and the Master of the Mercers' Company. Musical entertainment was provided by students of the Guildhall School of Music. The social calendar for 2005/6 includes visits to the Royal College of Surgeons' museum, the 'Gherkin', an event at the Barbican and the War Rooms at Whitehall.

Anyone interested in joining the Guild can obtain details from the Guild's Old Collyerian representative, Bob Smith, who has been elected Renter Warden. Bob's address is 95 Whitebeam Avenue, Bromley, Kent BR2 8DN, tel: 0208 467 5217.

The Richard Collyer Masonic Lodge and Chapter

The Richard Collyer Masonic Lodge is almost as old as the OCA having been formed in 1927, while the Chapter is a mere junior having been formed in 1958. Both are very active organisations and meet regularly at Horsham Masonic Hall. The Lodge members would be delighted to hear from any old Collyerians who would like further details or who might be interested in joining. Full details may be obtained from: Robert Phillips, 1 Mona Cottage, Minffordd, Llanfachraeth, Holyhead, LL65 4UR.

Summer reunion 2005

This year's summer reunion saw a welcome return to the tranquil waters of the Wey and Arun canal at Loxwood where 24 members and their guests (including our president's dog) enjoyed a leisurely trip aboard the narrowboat *Zachariah Keppel*.

This restored section of the canal, which once provided a link from the Thames to the English Channel at Littlehampton, is a haven for wildlife and travelling at a sedate two or three miles an hour gave us plenty of time to take in the wonderful surroundings. (It also meant that a couple of late-comers who had missed our departure were able to overtake us on foot and join us halfway along the route!).

Maintaining an adequate supply of water was always a challenge for the original canal builders and despite modern advances - such as the use of polythene sheeting to supplement the traditional puddled clay - water loss is still a major problem. Incredibly, the mature trees which now line the canal banks and add much to the beauty of the scene are each capable of drawing

0.5 tonnes of water from the canal on a hot summer day.

Those of us who had been at the reunion three years ago had been looking forward to crossing the Drungewick Aqueduct which on our last visit had still yet to be completed. This would have allowed us to travel further south but alas it was not to be. A breach of the canal bed in the new section meant our progress was halted at the same point as last time - a wonderful excuse, if one were needed, to make another visit.

The event was blessed with glorious weather and when we left the Onslow Arms after enjoying an excellent meal the temperature even at 11pm was in the twenties.

The canal restoration is a fine example of what volunteers can achieve and is testimony to more than 30 years of dedication and hard work. Members interested in finding out more are directed to the excellent website at www.weyandarun.co.uk

Mark Collins

The OCA Committee would like to thank all contributors to this newsletter - we encourage others to share their memories, anecdotes, experiences and opinions to ensure that future editions are full and interesting. If space has prevented us using your submission this time, we will try to use any unused material in later editions. The next newsletter will be published in Spring 2006.