



The Old Collyerians' Association

Autumn 2007

President's valedictory message

Valedictory is not a word which tends to be used a lot in common parlance today, and indeed the Latin language from which it was derived has not for many a year featured in the Collyer's curriculum with the prominence it used to enjoy.

I find that both the Latin and ancient Greek that I studied in the 1950s, however, are still sometimes useful in interpreting long words in English (and a lot of the ancient Greek I learned has not changed much and has helped me out on holiday from time to time).

But I feel the key point about my education at Collyer's was to me not so much the subjects I took. Curricula inevitably change over time, but the encouragement of intellectual rigour and of enquiring minds has remained an invaluable constant over the last five hundred years. I imagine there are very

few such educational institutions which have had such a long continuous history, particularly in one town. This is something, I think, of which we can all be very proud.

Innumerable Collyerian men and women have, to paraphrase, "fared forth from Horsham town", and the sun never goes down in any part of the world without an old Collyerian being there.

I look forward to seeing those of you who come to our annual dinner (I have never attended one where there has not been at least one old friend), and, if you can make it, at our annual general meeting. Finally, I would like to thank our excellent committee for all their hard work.

Long may the Association flourish and its membership grow.

Paul Smith, (1951 - 58)

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Obituary - Peter Pointer

Peter Pointer, known to many pupils as “Percy”, joined the teaching staff at Collyer’s in September 1957. He had previously taught at Adams Grammar School, Wem in Shropshire, and, in moving from Wem to Collyer’s, he followed in the footsteps of Douglas Coulson who was Headmaster at Collyers at this time. By coincidence, the subsequent Head, Derek Slynn, also came to Collyer’s from Wem.

Peter, who taught physics, came across as a man who maintained a strong separation of his personal life from his professional life. Hence not much is known by the committee about his private life outside of Collyers, save that he was a church-goer, and that he was discharged from the RAF in October 1958, having obtained the rank of Flying Officer.

Subsequently he was a commissioned officer in the Volunteer Reserves (Training) of the RAF where he ultimately attained the rank of Wing Commander. In this connection, many Old Collyerians will no doubt recall that Peter was an active and leading staff member of the RAF section of the Combined Cadet Force.

One committee member also remembers that Peter claimed to have achieved examination success despite the rigours of studying under air-raid conditions. One wonders what he would make of those people today who seek to avoid the consequences of late or poor performance by pleading “personal issues”. They would probably have received a sarcastic or scornful put-down, possibly accompanied by one of Peter’s trademark “good hearty clips around the ear”!

That said it would have been wrong to dismiss Peter as a severe and unsympathetic pedagogue. As stated in the Spring newsletter, his greatest achievement, arguably, was his ability to make physics interesting and comprehensible to pupils (including the writer of this piece) who were not scientifically-inclined. Nearly 30 years on I can still remember the formula for calculating velocity ratio, but this knowledge has been of no practical use since passing O Level Physics in 1979 after which I abandoned the sciences altogether!

This is not to undermine Peter’s achievements, however, because it shows the importance he

attached to equipping pupils with the necessary tools for passing the exam.

Indeed in 2001, on the occasion of the 25 year anniversary open day, a friend and I caught up with Peter, whilst he toured the grounds. His first question, delivered with sincerity, 22 years on, was “Did you pass?”.

As has been mentioned already, his teaching methods included scoldings and minor physical chastisement. Inattention would be rewarded with a clip around the ear or a sudden sharp dig in the ribs.

However there was humour and back-handed praise too. A pupil who offered a numerical answer without the appropriate descriptor (i.e. “5” instead of “5 joules”) would be harangued with the question “5 what? Windows? Oranges? Wheelbarrows?”.

Later, having informed the class that the SI unit of electrical conductance was “siemen”, he would pause deliberately to see who would smirk first, so as to be able to pounce on that person with some well-chosen words. A short ritual - public embarrassment was an essential tool for the maintenance of discipline and undoubtedly “facilitated learning”.

Peter retired from Collyer’s in the summer of 1989. By this time Collyer’s had been a Sixth Form College for over a decade. If he ever felt uncomfortable with the new regime, he would have been too professional to show it. Anecdotal evidence suggests that he returned to Collyer’s for a short time in the 1990s to assist in the maintenance of a quiet learning environment in the library. Possibly some students were treating it more like a common room!

We cannot really know how effective this exercise was, but suspect that the atmosphere of a 1990s sixth form library was far removed from the 1970s physics laboratory which Peter ruled unequivocally. In hindsight his qualities and contribution to Collyers are much more readily discerned than they would have been from the perspective of 13-15 year olds in that laboratory.

Peter and his style will be missed, perhaps to a greater degree than many would be prepared to admit, in the current educational environment.

Clive Barham

News from Collyer's

Exams have dominated the summer term, but students have been able to participate in various activities including international exchanges, art and photography exhibitions, the College Production Cage Birds and the Science Careers Fair. They have also taken part in the Challenge of Management held at the Royal and Sun Alliance, where participants run activities to encourage communication, team building and leadership. Destinations for college trips have included Santroni, Iceland, Lanzarote and the Japan Centre

in London. The Leavers' Prom was at Effingham Hotel, Cophorne, with 185 students attending.

Collyers raised £4,000 for a number of education projects in India, including allowing children to attend their local school and upgrading facilities. Two members of staff, Kate Sharp and Barbara Robinson, plan to travel self-funded to India to see conditions and to help for a couple of weeks during the 2007-8 Christmas holidays.

Three footballers – David Jennings, Max Coleman and

Andy Waddingham – played in the winning Under 18 Sussex Schools football team in the National Cup competition. A group of 18 dancers from Collyers took part in the International Dance Grand Prix festival and won trophies in the musical theatre category and for choreography across the whole competition.

The end of the Summer term was marked by the retirement of Steve Gilham as Vice-Principal of Collyers after 29 years as a member of staff.

Mark Collins

J o t t i n g s

Reginald Fuller

The Revd Professor Reginald Fuller died in April this year at 92 after a career as a distinguished theologian and teacher. He was Head Prefect at Collyers; he gained first class honours in classics and second class honours in theology at Cambridge. After being ordained, he held academic posts in England, Wales and the USA. He retired from his last appointment at the Virginia seminary in 1985. However he continued to write, publishing his last book in 2006 and also authoring entertaining reminiscences for the Friends of St Mary newsletter.

Mark Collins

Jack Puttock

Thank you to Tom Tidy for providing this tribute with the help of Jack's widow, Cathy

Jack attended Collyers from 1937 – 1942. He was a year ahead of me, so I did not come into contact with him very much, although we became great friends over the past forty years.

When Jack registered as for National service, he was selected as a 'Bevin Boy' and was sent to Wearmouth Colliery in Sunderland, but left in

1945 due to ill-health.

Jack then went to work in London. He qualified as a Chartered Municipal Engineer and worked for the Crawley Borough Council until he transferred to the West Sussex County Council (Highways Division), based in Horsham until his retirement.

Jack had a passion for driving and was very keen on aircraft. After retirement he spent some years collecting and delivering new cars for a local garage until it closed down.

Jack was President of the OCA in 1962-63. He once told me that, when invited as President to the Old Mercers' Dinner in London, he managed to mix the dates up and turned up a week too early. He was a staunch member of the Association and regularly attended the Annual General Meeting and Winter Reunion. He was also a keen member of the Richard Collyer Lodge which he joined in January 1949; at the time of his death, he had been a member for over 57 years. He was also a member of the Richard Collyer Chapter, which he joined in 1966.

He married Cathy in 1973 and they lived in Queen Street. We send her our condolences.

More about the late George Styles

Ivan Hill has written to say he appreciated the very fine tribute to George Styles from Eric Stockdale in the Spring issue of the newsletter. In recent months Ivan has been in correspondence with Joy Budgen, George's sister. Joy attended the High School and travelled on the 8.32 train from Crawley to Horsham. She recollects travelling with Pip Piper, Bob Evans and 'Smudger' Smith, though of course this was highly irregular as the dictum was 'The twain must not meet on the train'. Fortunately neither Miss Marchant nor Mr Tharp were aware of all that happened on that route.

During 2005 George moved to be with his sister Joy. She, together with her son and daughter-in-law provided the very loving care for George until he passed away during the early hours of 1 August 2006.

The following eulogy was given by Mrs Didy Grahame MVO at George's funeral on 16 August 2006.

'If George hadn't been such a modest and private person, this chapel would be full to bursting with those who loved and admired him. As it is, this select gathering represents all that was important and dear to George. His family, his childhood in Crawley, his true friends; the Army and the company of the bravest in the land where he was amongst others of his calibre.

George was an exceptional man, not least for his total integrity, his thought for others in all that he did, his loyalty to his friends and his most remarkable intellect. His enjoyment of, and fascination in, guns and ammunition from an early age made him a natural for his role in the Army. But for George this went further than any of his contemporaries. His determination and dedication, coupled with his ability to think his

way through and around the most complex of problems, made him most definitely, as John Reid might say, fit for purpose. The enemy he faced in Northern Ireland must have been amazed and totally frustrated by George – and the fact that his skills were matched by his courage made him a marked man. His courage is legendary amongst those who witnessed his actions and those who have subsequently heard about them. His award of the George Cross reflects this and truly recognises his gallantry.

I don't think George ever fully realised the extent of the admiration and respect he engendered. I was privileged to be able to accompany George when he went back to Belfast for the first time. He wanted his visit to be low key, but it was impossible for him to fail to realise how thrilled everyone was to see him. It was memorable for me to be able to go with him to the Europa hotel and relive those ghastly times. There was much happiness on this occasion too, not least from the owner of the hotel.

George's depth of feeling regarding his enemy can be traced to when his good friend and colleague, David Stewartson, had been killed by a booby-trap bomb which George always felt had his name on it. He went back to the little village of Castle Robin, with a wreath when he was in Belfast, to pay his own tribute to David. When he got there, he found there was another wreath on the spot and then discovered – by visiting the nearby pub – that his friend's memory was kept alive by the villagers who always laid a wreath on the anniversary of his death. This touched and delighted George and renewed his faith in humankind. He had witnessed so much destruction and evil intent.

It was wonderful that the final eighteen months of his life were surrounded by loving care and comfort, which enabled him to face his end with dignity and allow him time to come to terms with the bombs in his own life he couldn't defuse.'

Why has my newsletter arrived by post?

Our Secretary is in the process of moving house and as a result his trusty computer is currently boxed up for safe transit! Unfortunately, this means that there will be a delay in sending out the newsletter by email to those who normally receive it this way. You will receive your usual full colour email newsletter in due course but in the meantime we have sent everybody a copy by post in order that all members will have details of this year's dinner in plenty of time to order tickets.



Michael Longley's friendship with George Styles spanned many years. Michael mooted the idea of a suitable plaque commemorating the award of the George Cross to George. He undertook all the arrangements, together with the manufacturing and fixing of the plaque to 28 Westfield Road, Crawley, for which Joy and her family are very grateful.

On 8 May 2007 the plaque was dedicated by the Rt Reverend Bishop Lindsay Unwin, Bishop of Horsham. Afterwards family and friends joined in a small celebration at the Goffs Park Hotel, Crawley. This was a most suitable venue as it was the former home of General Sir Miles Dempsey, who was one of Field Marshal Montgomery's senior staff during the Second World War.

Collyers School 1950-1955 A first step to a great life

Fifty seven years ago I stood at the bottom of Weston's Hill in Itchingfield waiting for the Southdown single deck bus to take me into Collyer's School for the first time. Fortunately at the bus stop were three senior boys I knew, the Bayne brothers and Dibben who made me feel welcome.

As a short, skinny 10 year old farm boy in home made shirt and, as I was to discover, the cheapest quality tie and blazer I was totally unprepared for Collyer's, I'd never seen so many boys in the one place at the one time, and having to stand in the front row of St Leonard's house at assembly was not what I wanted that day, the back row would have suited me better.

I'd passed the eleven plus at nine, thanks to Mrs Graebe and Mr Mortimer at the Itchingfield School so I was a year younger than everyone else, the smallest in the class and subject to some bullying, although I quickly learned to stand up for myself so it didn't last for long.

Having checked my reports from Collyer's I see I wasn't as bad as I thought as my worst overall position was 16th out of 31 in 1952 and my best

3rd out of 25 in 1953. English, History and Geography were my best subjects with Latin and General Science my worst and I was very pleased to pass nine O Levels in 1955.

My memories of Collyers between 1950 and 1955 are few but I'll share the vivid ones with you.

Algebra was my downfall as I missed the first few lessons due to it commencing during harvest when I wasn't at school as those of us who lived on farms were excused school for, I think, some 10 days to help with the harvest. On my return Mr Davies, who was a brilliant if tough teacher, refused to help me and told me I'd have to choose in future between maths and being a "yokel" ... an unkind term used not infrequently in those days.

Early in my time at Collyer's there was a brilliant younger teacher of Divinity who came from Crawley and was very much one of the Crawley Mob. Although an agnostic I did well, even winning a book as a prize - my only prize as I recall, unfortunately. I was to move on and have either A. N Wilson or the headmaster P. A

Tharp for Divinity for the rest of my time but fortunately managed to do well with them.

As the son of a farm labourer living in tythe cottages we moved every few years, in fact Collyer's was the fifth school I'd attended, and we were to move twice more during my time at Collyer's. Firstly it was to Horley so I became an honorary member of the Crawley mob who travelled on the same train. It was here I met my best friend at Collyer's, Peter Hawkins, with whom I shared a lot of experiences, both during and after Collyers. Unfortunately we lost touch after he returned from managing a tin mine in Malaysia and I haven't met any other Collyerians in my travels since 1955.

Later we moved to Cowfold where I joined the so-called notorious No 17 bus where Collyer's boys were well outnumbered by those from Horsham Tech, but because of our conspicuous uniforms we were often the ones reported for unruly conduct, which led to several naming's of the bus at assembly followed by the long wait outside the Headmaster's office and the inevitable three or six strokes from the cane of your choice. As Mr Tharp the headmaster was reputed to have been an ex cavalry officer each stroke was accurate and painful. However this was infinitely better than a Saturday detention which would have cost me my job, my income and almost certainly a thrashing at home.

In those days there was a quasi competition between the various buses and the Crawley train for the number of times each would be named at assembly and my recollection is that the train inevitably won followed closely by the No 2 bus, which ran from Worthing to Horsham.

Pondtails after school were my pet hate, a series of cross country runs with the distance increasing as you moved further up the school. In singlets, shorts and plimsolls, regardless of the weather, we were required to run after school meaning we arrived home late, having to do all the chores before homework, which I did on the kitchen table under the oil lamp. This probably led to the Headmaster asking on one report "does he get enough sleep?"

In music I demonstrated nil talent so consequently, along with a couple of others who were tone deaf, I sat in the row closest to Mr Hodgson and his piano. After receiving a few healthy rapid blows to the head we learned to watch for him slowly remove his signet ring after which we knew a blow would result for one of

us. Aside from that I enjoyed music, especially when he went modern; I still recall learning the words of the "eeny weeny polka dot bikini" and the "pink purple people eater "in Mr Hodgson's class.

Every Founder's Day, we would march into Horsham, but in 1953 we had an extra occasion when we marched to the Odeon cinema to see the film of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II accompanied by the film "Ascent of Everest" , before marching to church. We were each presented with a Coronation mug and I still have mine.

Although not a brilliant student of French my father who loved France encouraged me to save and take part in Mr Kenyon's annual exchange visit to France which I did in April 1954 having hosted a student from France the previous year. It was my first overseas trip and most memorable as for all but a few days we lived with our French host families in Normandy. According to my photo album, eight Collyerians went along plus four girls from Horsham Girl's High School. The Collyerians were Tony Blackwell, Edgar Bland, Robin Elliot, Roger Hunt, Tom Perry, Pete Simpson, Spud Taylor and Norman Ward.

Our geography and careers master Mr George Henderson was very caring and undoubtedly one of the more popular masters and in July 1954 he organised a riding holiday on Dartmoor, based on the village of Dolton and I was fortunate enough to be included. A memorable week was enjoyed by six of us, Maurice Arnold, Chris Carter, Pete Hawkins, Kim Mackenzie Tom Sutton and I, with our very affable leader George Henderson. He was also responsible for finding scholarships which I could compete for to enable me to undertake my naval training.

One master used to park his Citroen under the large tree outside the woodwork class and had to really rev to get up the hill to the gate. So one day a group of boys slackened off the nuts holding his rear bumper bar, then discreetly lashed the bumper bar to the tree. On leaving, the teacher had to apply more revs than usual, the bumper bar came off and he shot off up the hill barely in control to the considerable merriment of those in the know.

Mr Greenop's science classes were generally fun and we amused ourselves trying to play tunes on the bottles of chemicals on the bench in front of us. If we were too disruptive he'd make us stay back until we could play God Save the King

to his satisfaction on the bottles. Invariably we missed the bus and were late home.

In the 1950s we all ate a cooked lunch in the Assembly Hall and the Headmaster had a ritual whereby he spoke with each of us individually at lunch over the year. He would come to a bench holding five or six of us, ask each of us our surnames, and then give us a nickname. At each subsequent visit he'd ask our nickname and the Headmaster would tell us our surname and hold a short conversation. He was seldom wrong and seemed to know a lot about each of us, all 600 of us. My nickname was predictably "Pears" and my neighbour on the bench, Roger Hart was "Twitchy" - apparently after the ears of a hart which twitch.

In July 1955 I left Collyer's and didn't get the opportunity to visit again until 2000 by which time it had changed beyond recognition. Initially I went to *HMS Worcester*, a sail training ship, entering as a cadet in the Royal Navy Reserve and leaving as a cadet captain in 1957. It was a tough environment but as reveille wasn't until 0630 it was infinitely better than farm life where we started getting the cows in around 0500.



1950s Collyer's riding holiday on Dartmoor, led by 'George' Henderson

After passing out with first class extra certificates I went to sea full time as an apprentice, initially on World War II Liberty Ships which were very slow and basic, graduating over time to more modern cargo and cargo passenger ships and obtaining my foreign going certificates.

My first command was a small Yugoslav freighter flying under the Indonesian flag with a multi-national crew trading between the Mediterranean and the Far East. I eventually paid off in Indonesia and after a series of adventures (or misadventures) I made my way to Australia where I have lived ever since. During my seagoing career I was fortunate to see well over 30 countries and to meet and work with people of many cultures, languages, colours, religions and levels of education which has stood me in good stead wherever I've worked or travelled since.

Initially in Australia, I was in Darwin in the far north, and then moved to Sydney, the nation's largest city, where I met my first wife, married, had two children, built a home and worked in a range of positions in manufacturing and trained as an industrial engineer. I also joined the Royal Australian Navy Reserve as a Lieutenant and thus kept some contact with the sea.

Our eldest daughter suffered a rare illness which could only be treated in Perth, Western Australia so we sold our home, packed our worldly goods into a station wagon and trailer and set off to drive to Perth, a drive which took us 18 days travelling mostly over dirt roads, camping out most nights. A memorable journey where we delivered the mail on the Nullarbor Plain and once travelled 770 miles between water. We also refitted our radiator into the car using mulga wood and Plastibond cement - which lasted for five years.

The hospital was superb: she's never looked back since, so we stayed in Perth for eight years, building a home while I continued working as an industrial engineer, a teacher at technical school and as a factory manager. On one occasion we took off for six months and drove across the roadless Great Sandy Desert to Ayers Rock and Alice Springs and then via Darwin and the Kimberley coast back to Perth, camping out most of the time. My son is still the youngest person ever to have climbed Ayers Rock.

A near heart attack prompted me to move on to Nhulunbuy in Arnhem Land in the Northern

Territory, a settlement of 3,000 with no road access, everything came in or left by air or sea. It was a blissful but busy life, no TV, no radio, one telephone for the town; but lots of work and a very active community. As chief trouble shooter for the mine and the alumina plant I never had a dull moment. I also evaluated all new equipment for the mine so resumed travelling the world with my first visit to my UK family for 18 years. It was while in Nhulunbuy refreshed my association with the sea by running the seaport.

Five years later the Northern Territory won Self Government and I was headhunted to move to Darwin and become the first Director of Marine and Ports. It was a great era, the Territory was on the move, and I was involved in building and developing ports, fishing harbours, marinas, undertaking trade missions and generally being at the hub of a very go-getting community. I was also elected to peak bodies in Australia and the South Pacific and was made a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Transport as well as going to university for the first time.

After 25 years my wife and I separated, I remarried and in 1992 was headhunted again to

become General Manager of the port of Cairns in Far North Queensland. Again it was a community on the move, the port owned both airport and seaport and one of my roles was to make it the busiest cruise port in Australia, which was achieved before I retired in 1998. In doing so I was co-founder of Australia's peak cruise body, Cruise Down Under and its Chairman and Executive Director until 2005. In this role I travelled the world attracting cruise ships and was able to visit Collyer's briefly in 2000 and 2003.

In the nine years I've been retired, my wife, youngest daughter and I have relocated to the Gold Coast in Queensland where we live on a river only 1000 metres from a 30 kilometre long surf beach with over 300 days of sunshine a year. Despite the consultancies I do, plus three board positions, I now have time to re-establish contact with the OCA, hence this epistle which hopefully may contain something of interest. Certainly Collyer's gave me a start which has helped shape my life.

Mike Bartlett. FCIT, MIIE

Summer reunion 2007

This year's summer reunion visited the Amberley Working Museum a place I first came to know through voluntary work during my time at Collyers. The weather has been very kind to us for our summer get-togethers over the last few years but this time we



were not so fortunate. In fact it rained all day but as many parts of the country were under several feet of floodwater it would have been churlish to complain! Our first port of call was the print workshop where we were able to see a hot-metal machine in action producing the type that was frequently used for newspaper press work.

This fascinating piece of equipment with a very different keyboard from the familiar QWERTY layout was amazingly still in regular use into the 1980s. The adjacent exhibition charting the history of radio communications was also of interest and included a mock-up of the cockpit of a Lancaster bomber showing the important role radio played during WWII. We then made the short journey to the top of the site by Tramocar, which despite the name was not a tram but an early type of bus. Seating about a dozen people on basic



Crossing to the terminus of the narrow gauge railway we could just see the area of the quarry which had been used as the Mainstrike Mine in 1985's James Bond film 'View to a Kill' when the site had been temporarily transformed into a silver mine on the outskirts of San Francisco!

From here we made our return journey by diesel hauled train to the café for a hot drink and a chance to sit down and catch up with the rest of the group. Thus fortified we then made the short journey under the mainline railway bridge at Amberley station to the Bridge Inn for drinks and a very

wooden benches the body had been built from scratch as an accurate replica of the original but the chassis was of genuine 1924 vintage. The ride, on solid tyres, was a little bumpy but preferable to enduring the rain.

convivial meal... and despite the best efforts by the weather to put a damper on things the afternoon and evening were a great success.

We alighted at the Railway Exhibition Hall which featured many interesting examples of narrow gauge rolling stock including a covered wagon especially constructed to carry some of the nation's works of art deep into the heart of the Welsh mountains for safe storage during WWII.

We are hoping that future outings for our summer get-together will include a visit to the Bluebell Railway and a return trip to the Wey and Arun Canal to see and hopefully cruise along their new extension at Loxwood. Don't forget that all members and their guests are very welcome to attend these informal events.

Mark Collins



WE NEED YOUR MEMORIES...

Items for the newsletter are always welcome.

Please send your contributions via the Hon Secretary,

Anthony Barnard,

akbwalnutclose@btinternet.com

Voluntary work

In the 1970's the period immediately after taking O-Levels and before the start of the summer holiday was set-aside for 'Voluntary Work'. Whilst not obligatory, those who did not take this up would be required to attend the school as normal where 'work would be set' and I can't recall anybody in our year choosing this as an option! It was down to individuals to come up with a worthwhile project, which could be anything from clearing an elderly neighbour's garden to painting the pavilion at Horsham Cricket Club. All suggestions had, of course, to be approved by the staff although from memory most proposals were sympathetically received by Mrs. Garnett who during our time was in charge of organising things.

At the time the industrial museum at Amberley - then called the Chalk Pits Museum - had only just been established and my friend Phil Warren's father John (the well known Horsham architect and also an Old Collyerian) was one of the founding trustees. As a result I had the opportunity to join Phil and Tony Melhuish in working at the site for a couple of weeks. The work was varied and ranged from selling tickets and keeping an eye on the exhibition displays to harder manual labour such as clearing scrub and

cutting back trees. I clearly remember levelling the ground for some picnic benches which even in those days needed concreting into place to stop them disappearing overnight!

We also had trips out in the Landrover to pick up items that had been donated for display and were involved with working on restoration projects. One of these was a horse drawn water carrier, which was being rebuilt by a chap called Alan Allnut. I was later told that he was a retired scientist who had been a

'boffin' during the war but was never able to find out anything more about his career. Does this name mean anything to anybody reading this? I enjoyed my time at the museum so much I carried on volunteering both during the holidays and on some term-time Saturday's too and during the time I was there learned a lot of practical skills that even today still come in handy.

Does anybody know when voluntary work began at the school? Did anybody's period of voluntary work lead to a career choice? If anybody would like to share their memories of this or any other aspect of school or college life then please get in touch and let us know.

Mark Collins

Jack Puttock

Not having known Jack Puttock for nearly as long as some of my former colleagues on OCA committees, I was somewhat reluctant to put my memories of him down in writing, but I hope that the following anecdote will explain why I had the temerity to do so.

I first met Jack when I joined the OCA committee at the 1986 AGM. There were no existing committee members who had not already served as President at the time, so I became Junior Vice-President on joining the committee. This caused a few raised eyebrows, and made me feel a bit of a presumptuous new boy. However Jack, who was the most senior of the Past Presidents present, came up to me at the end of the meeting and put me at my ease straightaway, telling me with a smile that I must be popular, because when he tried to join the committee, he didn't get elected at all until his third attempt. Subsequently Jack was an ever-present at the AGM throughout my 16 years on the main committee, his

concern for Collyers and the OCA being obvious. His humour and sense of proportion were always evident, even when events turned out in a way which he would not have chosen.

I got to know Jack better as a stalwart of St Mary's Church, and as an extremely active member of the East Horsham community to which we both belonged. I moved to the area only in 1993, but Jack lived in and around Queen Street all his life, having been born on the South side, moved briefly across the road, then returned to No 52. Jack was a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and a tenacious protector of the interests of the community, and was always to be found in the thick of things when a planning application threatened to compromise its peace and cohesion. It is principally for his geniality and sense of perspective, however, that I shall remember Jack.

Alistair Inglis-Taylor

Memories of wartime evacuation 1939

During recent get-togethers in London I have often been reminded of the close links that existed between Mercers School and Collyers. Up until the closure of Mercers in the 1950s, sports teams would regularly travel down to play against Collyers and I have been told that they always envied the facilities down at Horsham as, being located in the heart of the City, Mercers didn't have their own sports fields and had to travel several miles to Grove Park to play. This relationship still endures by virtue of the Merrett Bequest - a trust set up by Mercers' old boy and retired accountant Harry Merrett - which even today provides annual prizes for Collyers students as well as many others within the Mercers cluster of schools and colleges.

The link between Collyers and Mercers schools was probably at its strongest during WWII when Mercers boys and their teachers were evacuated to Collyers. The article that follows appeared in a recent issue of the Old Mercers' Club magazine and I am indebted to its writer Ken Thomas for allowing us to reproduce it here and to the Club's Secretary, Howard Worth, for arranging this.

Mark Collins

At the outbreak of the Second World War I was on holiday in the Isle of Wight with my parents. Mercer's School had already evacuated to Collyer's School at Horsham in Sussex and it was there that my mother took me direct from Ventnor on Monday 4th September. Naturally, I was in an apprehensive state of mind and to add to my concerns, I was informed on our arrival that I was to be billeted at 8, Hurst Road with two masters - Messrs. Andrew and Fairbairn. My heart sank to my boots!

Having been introduced to Miss Dorothy Anderson (my 'foster mother') and her elderly mother, I felt happier as they welcomed me with sympathy and understanding. I was allocated my own bedroom and the masters and I shared a dining room. School lessons commenced the following day and I was reunited with most of classmates who had been allocated billets around the town during the previous weekend. Our integration at Collyer's and with local families was swift and we were soon enjoying sport and leisure activities in the more rural environment than we had been used to in London. Fortunately during this autumn and winter of 1939/1940 there was very little military activity -

in fact it was referred to as the 'Phoney War' and therefore we had no worries about the safety of our families in London.

Several of our masters soon found accommodation for themselves and their wives and Mr. Fairbairn departed No 8. George Andrew and I quickly became good friends and we had great fun together. He was a lovable eccentric and although at school he had a fearsome reputation for being strict and not slow in handing out a painful chastisement, I soon enjoyed his sense of humour, his bent for practical jokes and his love of sport. Many games of Rugby Fives we played together in the school courts and trying to bowl each other out in the cricket nets was always great fun.

George Andrew was affectionately nicknamed 'Eggy' at school. Most of the Mercer's contingent acquired bicycles and Eggy soon obtained an old rusty mount, probably from a scrap merchant! My father purchased one for me and sent it by rail. I was delighted to collect it at Horsham station, a super sparkling BSA with hub brakes, which I duly polished and stored in the garden shed. The following morning I was a little puzzled why Eggy had left for school earlier than usual, but when I prepared to go I discovered 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:

Peter R Ticehurst, Flat 32, Bowes Close, Horsham RH13 5SZ.

reason - he had ridden off on my new bike and left me his old rattler!

It was not long before Eggy brought his Ford 8hp car to Horsham which enabled us to have long weekend drives into the lovely Sussex countryside and to Worthing on the coast. Petrol was becoming scarce, but Eggy managed to eke out his ration by using various chemical additives in the tank (probably illegal!) including quantities of mothballs purchased at Boots! It was highly amusing to hear these rolling around in the tank at bends and corners before they dissolved. As a master of chemistry, he obviously knew what he was doing and we never broke down.

During the winter, each morning Eggy took cod liver oil and malt as a guard against colds. I would often tease him about this, which would lead to a chase around the room, and I would invariably finish on the floor with Eggy holding me down and threatening to smear the treacly substance around my face!

One of Eggy's aversions was to cold meat pie. He and other masters would regularly pay an evening visit to the 'Dog and Bacon' and on these occasions Miss Anderson would provide a cold supper for him on his return which often included the dreaded meat pie. At this time I was usually in bed or in the bath. The door would open quietly and Eggy would appear with the pie saying, 'Here, eat this for me Tommy'. I would oblige but didn't particularly like it myself! Neither of us wanted to upset the Andersons by showing a dislike for their meals.

In addition to the usual sports at school, football, cricket, tennis and the less well-known Rugby fives, during a long period of very cold weather in January and February 1940 when the nearby Warnham pond (a huge lake) froze over, ice skating became a popular pastime. Ice hockey was an exciting sport pre-war and many

boys supported various professional teams.

At Collyer's school, the art master Mr. R.C. Rivaz had played ice hockey and he soon organised games on the lake. Most of us purchased a cheap type of skates, which we could clamp on to our football boots, and improvised sticks. A puck appeared and we had some exciting games. Some time after I left Horsham, Mr. Rivaz became an air gunner in the RAF flying with the famous Group Captain Leonard Cheshire and he later retrained to become a pilot squadron leader winning the DFC for bombing the German battleship *Scharnhorst* at Brest. He wrote two books, *Tail Gunner* and *Tail Gunner Takes Over* and was later killed in a flying accident. A sad end to a great chap.

On the 10th May 1940, Hitler invaded the Low Countries and advanced into France: Britain was then threatened with invasion. In anticipation of this frightening event, my parents decided that Horsham, being only 20 miles from the south coast, was more exposed to the first German attack than London and if a German occupation developed it would be preferable for us to be together. They therefore collected me and I returned home.

My personal friendship with Eggy continued in correspondence and, to my surprise, he called at my home during the following half-term holiday, having driven up from Horsham, to take me on a weekend visit to his parents in Nuneaton. I was reluctant to go as I was revising for the forthcoming Schools Certificate exam, but he insisted that the break would do me good, which later success proved him right.

I regretted my early departure from Horsham as the previous nine months had been a most enjoyable experience and I always thereafter treasured my relationship with George Andrew.

Ken Thomas (Old Mercer 1937 - 1941)

RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-Mail

We are still hoping to hear from more members prepared to receive their newsletters by e-mail. All monies saved on publishing and distribution, as a result of this, can be re-assigned to other useful activities of the Association.

**To receive your newsletter by E-mail, please send your name and years of attendance at Collyer's, exactly as it appears in the Address List, to the
Hon. General Secretary**

ANTHONY BARNARD at: akbwalnutclose@btinternet.com

M e m b e r s h i p

Membership information
is available to subscribers
to the full version of
the newsletter

The man eater of Mweya

A true story of sad events on the morning of Sunday 26th January 1992, as witnessed by Anthony Barnard, on safari in Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda. The names of the Ugandan villagers have been changed in order to spare them further grief.

It was 5 o'clock on the morning of Sunday 26th January, a very special day for the people of Uganda. Today was the sixth anniversary of Yoweri Museveni's victory in the long and bitter battle for the return of Uganda to democratic rule. In the little village of Kiburara, close to the Zaire border to Western Uganda, Joseph Kabagambe and his neighbour John Busingye had risen early. They planned to visit

Joseph's cousins at Katungulu, on the Kazinga Channel, between Lake Edward and Lake George, to buy fish for their celebration meal. The round trip would take some six hours as it was nearly twenty miles from Kiburara to Katungulu, and although the journey to Katungulu would not take too long, as it was nearly all down hill, on the return, with a heavy load of fish, they would have to push their bikes up the steep incline for ten miles from the junction with the main Kasese road.

By 6 o'clock, after a light breakfast of tea and bread, they were ready to leave and started on the steep decent towards Katungulu. We had travelled to Mweya Safari Lodge in the Queen

Elizabeth National Park the previous day, and had a most enjoyable bird watching safari on the Kazinga Channel launch. I had shot nearly half an hour of what I hoped would be some superb video. After an excellent barbecue, we retired early to bed. We had set our alarm for 6 o'clock as we had booked a ranger for 6.30 to go to Ishasha in search of the tree lions. As we set off, to our horror, we discovered that we had a puncture. We all piled out to change the wheel. It was nearly seven before we got away in search of a vulcaniser to repair the tyre. At the service station at Katungulu we discovered that they had no vulcaniser. We were forced to go to Kasese to effect the repair.

By seven fifteen, Joseph and John were pedalling merrily along the newly surfaced main road along the edge of the National Park and were only some five miles from Katungulu. All of a sudden there was a mighty roar, an aged lion with tattered greying mane burst from the bush. With one bound he struck Joseph, bringing him crushing down onto the road. A single bite to the back of the neck and he was dead in a trice.

John dropped his bike as all he could do was to run to a safe distance. As the lion dragged the lifeless body of Joseph into the bush, John bravely hurled stones at the retreating Simba, in an effort to make him release his prey, but all to no avail. After a minute or two, the distraught John recovered his bike and rode off frantically in the direction of the Police post at Katungulu.

It was seven thirty when we arrived at the scene, to find a bicycle lying in the middle of the road.

We stopped the Land Rover by the bicycle to see what had happened. We found a pair of shoes and a hat by on the road, but no sign of any damage to the bicycle, to indicate that it had been struck by a passing vehicle. There was no sign of it's rider either, but on closer inspection, we discovered a small pool of still wet blood, on the road some one meter away. We searched around desperately for the injured rider but there was no sign of him in the vicinity.

All of a sudden our ranger Peter cried "It's a lion!" We froze in stunned incredulity as Peter pointed to a newly formed path entering the bush! In stunned silence we heard a thunderous click as Peter released the safety catch on his AK47, in case Simba was still close at hand. I clambered onto the bonnet of the Land Rover with my binoculars. I scanned the bush for any sign of Simba.

After two or three minutes, about one hundred metres away, I spotted the old lion, walking in an awkward fashion as though he were dragging a kill between his front legs. I was horrified to believe that an innocent cyclist, travelling along a busy main road, could have been taken by a lion. Simba must have been desperate for food.

By now a number of other vehicles had stopped, and many of the occupants had got out to see what was going on.

A passing cyclist had also stopped. John told us that he came from Kiburara, he told us that the bicycle belonged to one Joseph Kabagambe from the same village. After a heated discussion, weighing the inevitable risks, with our compassionate desire to return the body to the

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One hidden benefit of the e-mail version is that it is sent out in glorious colour, rather than the boring old monochrome of the printed newsletter. It is in PDF format, so can be viewed on screen or printed off, and we try to keep the file size as small as possible for those with slow internet connections.

If you would also like to receive your newsletter by E-mail, send your name and years of attendance at Collyer's, as shown in address list i.e.

Bloggs J O E 1967 1974

To the Hon. General Secretary ANTHONY BARNARD at:

akbwalnutclose@btinternet.com

family, we decided that if possible we should recover Joseph's body from the lion.

Putting the Land Rover into low range, with Peter beside me, AK47 at the ready, and with my window wound up against possible attack, I drove tentatively in the direction of where I had last seen the lion. After some eighty metres of careful and agonisingly slow driving, we topped a low rise to see Simba dragging Joseph through the parched grass. Hearing the Land Rover, Simba dropped protectively over his kill.

Being no hero, I carefully positioned the Land Rover so that Peter had a clear line of fire towards the lion, and I was far away as possible from Simba, and Peter loosed off one round about five metres behind him. I had expected a thunderous report from the discharge of the AK47 within the vehicle, and was surprised at the gentle pop. Simba just shook his aged head in annoyance at the possibility of losing his easily won breakfast.

I told Peter to fire much closer to the lion and the second round threw up a cloud of dust very close to Simba's belly. At this he released his kill and ambled slowly away!

Putting the Land Rover again into second gear, we proceeded to chase Simba with Peter firing the occasional round to speed him on his way. But he was not to release his meal so readily. After only thirty or forty metres, Simba set an ambush for us behind a low acacia bush!

We decided not to take further risk, as we had driven him sufficient distance so that we could return to try to recover the body. Joseph was lying face down with his clothes torn and his partially eaten buttocks bleeding, in tatters, for all the world as though they had been through a mincer.

We gingerly climbed out of the Land Rover, to see how best we could recover the body. All the while Peter was standing on guard with AK47 at the ready.

I realised that with the lion in close proximity, and with Peter having to stand guard, I would find it difficult to lift Joseph's body into the back of the Land Rover on my own. I also did not relish the idea of being covered in blood. Although there did not appear to be too much blood on the back of the body, I had no way of knowing what damage Simba had inflicted on the front.

I therefore suggested that we should return to

the main road to seek further assistance. By this time nearly one hundred spectators had gathered at the road side. We asked a Tata truck driver to drive with us into the bush to recover the body, but he declined.

Among the crowd were a young Danish couple Bo Jorgenson and his wife, who kindly offered to help. They provided a cloth to wrap the body, and agreed to drive with us into the bush to retrieve it. With four willing helpers in the back of the Land Rover we returned to the bush.

This time there was no sign of Simba, but we were taking no risks. Bo parked his car between where we had last seen the lion and Joseph's body, and Peter stood guard, with AK47 at the ready. Our four helpers completed the gruesome task of wrapping the sadly disfigured body into my Land Rover. This was accomplished in double quick time as we had no desire for a further confrontation with the angry deprived lion. On returning to the road the Land Rover was immediately surrounded with hordes of excited Ugandans eager to witness the gruesome sight. After thanking our willing helpers, John agreed to show us the unfortunate Joseph's house, and we set off in the direction of Kiburara, closely followed by Bo in case we had another puncture.

Joseph had lived in small compound, comprising three simple one roomed mud huts, thatched with reeds and set in the middle of his one hectare farm, on which he had grown finger millet, maize and cotton, together with a few vegetables for the household.

On arrival, the members of the family wondered why they had been honoured by the visit of strange white man. It was only when one of Joseph's nine children recognised the pair of bare feet that were sticking out of the Land Rover, and then the fully covered body, that the dreadful truth was revealed. The whole of the family present emerged from the huts, and the air was rent with the sound of an awful death dirge. Joseph's wife threw herself on the ground weeping and wailing in an agony of despair. The terrible sound quickly brought neighbours running from the surrounding homesteads. It was, understandably, some time we were able to organise the removal of Joseph's body from the vehicle into one of the huts.

The floor of the Land Rover was covered in blood, which had to be cleaned out before we

could leave. After paying our last respects we left a small donation to help the family with the funeral expenses. We were told that the body would be laid to rest in a simple grave, on Joseph's farm on the day following. The RC Chairman 1, head of the local political organisation, thanked us for returning Joseph's body to the widow, since had we not done so, the cost would have placed an even greater financial burden on such a poor family.

With heavy hearts we set out for Kasese to complete our original task of repairing our punctured tyre. By 10 o'clock our tyre has been repaired, but it was too late to travel to Ishasha on our planned safari. In any case we had no stomach for further game viewing that day. We returned to Mweya to recount our unforgettable experience to the chief game warden. He told us that this was not the first man that this particular

lion had taken, but that he would have to seek authority from head office, in Kampala, before the lion could be destroyed.

Footnote:

It is most unusual for lions to attack man, unless provoked. There is plenty of game available in Queen Elizabeth National Park to sustain the local lion population. Clearly the lion in this story had become too old and feeble to hunt and had no pride to hunt on his behalf to feed him. He had discovered that man is easy prey in an emergency. The message to would be game viewers, is to stay in your vehicle at all times, unless accompanied by experienced, armed rangers, or on properly organised and licensed walking safaris.

Thanks to Anthony Barnard for providing this saga.

Volunteers again

Reading Mark Collins' recollection of his post-exam voluntary work at the Amberley museum, I was reminded of a slightly earlier version of the same, in my post-GCE period in, I think, 1965.

As in Mark's experience, we were offered the chance to either 'volunteer' or carry on with normal, albeit apparently somewhat pointless, school work. No contest really for a group of adventurous 16-year-olds. However, whereas Mark and his compatriots were expected to do something altruistic in the outside community, our destiny was to provide cheap (well, free actually) labour for the school maintenance department. Various 'useful' tasks were assigned to our happy band, most of which seemed to involve something hearty and healthy around the playing fields - not exactly the dreaded stone picking, but probably not too much more fulfilling. Maybe some of my compatriots will remember the exact nature of the tasks to which their teams were assigned.

But I think ours was the best by far. Dubbed 'Pingobods' by, I think, Frank Whitbourn, we had to redecorate the inside of the cricket pavilion. The name was, apparently, something to do with the Latin verb *pingere* (to paint), though I don't think many ancient Romans painted cricket pavilions. Anyway it kept us amused for several hot summer days - and the potentially messy work meant we were excused school uniform.

I don't know if that pavilion is still standing. But if it is, an archaeological examination will find, under the top coat applied in July 1965, some interesting graffiti referring to certain staff members.

Bill Thomson

UPDATED OCA WEB SITE

www.oldcollyerians.org.uk

The Association is completing the process of updating its Web Site, under the expert care of Gary Jones, making it more comprehensive and user-friendly.

There is a particular need for ideas that will attract recent College leavers.

If you have any suggestions please do not hesitate to communicate them to the Hon Secretary.

