



The Old Collyerians' Association

Autumn 2014

President's Valedictory message

There is a first and last for everything we do, all good things come to an end. My term as your president is drawing to its close, but that is no reason to feel blue.

I have enjoyed my year, but it has been tinged with sadness. The passing of past president and committee member Gary Jones shocked us all. We learned of the passing of two more ex-Collyer's boys; OCA member Leslie Weller, who did so much fundraising for Chichester Cathedral, and Fred Woods, not a member, but a very accomplished local musician. I am sure many of you danced the nights away at our Collyer's dances when Fred performed, on his trumpet, with the Progressionaires.

My first big appointment was to the splendid Old Mercers' luncheon. Next came the opening of the refurbished Duckering Hall. I attended the leavers' concert in St Mary's Parish Church; this was a most enjoyable evening and all performances were of a very high standard. Finally, the Spring reunion on 29 June at the Bluebell Railway - very well supported and a great success.

During my term I have thought back to some of the past presidents. Bob Greenop was president during his final year of teaching science in 1954. G. Simmonds followed Bob in 1955. Both addressed the school during assembly by talking about the OCA, and urged the leavers to join up. Some 60 years on, our

Contact us

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College representative: The Principal

E-mail is the best way to reach us: please send all correspondence for the OCA to:

ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com

association still thrives, but we do need more young members to keep the OCA alive.

In my Spring letter I said I had two ambitions.

(a) to complete the banner and

(b) to increase our numbers.

The banner should be completed in time for November thanks to the considerable research and hard work of Mrs Moore. I hope she will join us at our reunion.

I managed to recruit only two new members.

P.A.T. would have said "could do better, must try harder". I am delighted to learn that retired Principal Jackie and her husband will join us again in November.

I must thank all who have guided and supported me this year. Soon I will hand over the chain of

office to our next president, Stewart Mackman, and I wish him a successful and enjoyable year.

I close with a few reflective lines:

We are busy in our different ways

With the problems of all our todays.

As the hours travel on

Each one more quickly gone

But a little of each with us stays.

*The Winter Reunion means meeting old friends
we hold dear*

And wishing them now and for all next year

Greetings most sincere.

Hoping to take wine with you all in November, so now au revoir, but no thoughts of adieu-ing!

*James Pullen,
1950-55*

Winter Reunion Dinner

The booking form etc. for the 2014 Winter Reunion Dinner is enclosed with this issue of the newsletter (or attached, if you are receiving this by email). As a reminder, the Dinner will be held at the College of Richard Collyer in Horsham, in the Duckering Hall, on Saturday 15th November 2014, at 6.30pm for 7pm. There will be a bar open from 5.30pm in the Memorial Hall. The AGM is at 4.00pm in the Memorial Hall - attendance is not compulsory but we would appreciate seeing as many members as possible. The meeting is quite short, usually taking about 45 minutes.

The attendance at last year's dinner was a little below what we had hoped for so we would like to see as many of you as can make it this year. The refurbishment of the Duckering Hall is now complete and if you haven't already seen it I'm sure you will be more than pleasantly surprised and I think we can guarantee you a most enjoyable and entertaining time.

The meal will be supplied, as for the last few years, by our excellent caterers, DH Caterers and the selected menu is as follows:

Starter - *Smoked salmon mousse with lemon and dill.*

Main course - *Pork loin in a wholegrain mustard sauce.*

Dessert - *Summer pudding with vanilla cream.*

Continental cheese board.

Fresh filter coffee and mints.

A vegetarian alternative to the main course, of roasted vegetable Wellington finished with a Pimento sauce, will be available. If anyone should have a problem with the starter, an alternative dish of pearls of selected melons marinated in port can be supplied. As long as sufficient notice is given when booking, our caterers should be able to cope with any particular dietary requirements.

The Dinner is open to any Old Collyerians (staff/students and governors) whether members of the OCA or not plus partners and friends. We have managed to keep the cost the same as last year, i.e. £28 per person.

Last year, some people found that the chairs supplied by the college were a little low. It is unlikely that we will be able to source any different chairs, so if you do think you might have a problem in this respect we would suggest that you bring along a cushion of some kind.

Your committee has realised that in this modern age, those booking places at the annual dinner may like to pay direct into the OCA's bank account rather than the traditional method of sending a cheque to the treasurer. For those wishing to transfer funds electronically the OCA bank details are: Bank - NatWest, 47 Carfax Horsham RH12 1FD; sort code - 601117; account number - 62146556. If you use this method of making payment, please email the Treasurer to confirm, at stewart.mackman@natwest.com.

For further information, please contact Derek Sturt at sturt99@hotmail.com or 01403 261756.

Where are they now?

From time to time we get asked to assist in tracing Old Collyerians. We never pass on details of our members without their consent but do forward any requests for information so that our members can then contact those trying to find them if they wish to. We have recently received the following:

"I am trying to trace my cousins Christopher & Nigel Jupp. They would be 68 and 66 years old now so they must have been with you in the late 1950s, early 1960s I suppose. They would have been born in 1945 and 1947 I guess so would have been with you between 1957-1964?"

Christopher and Nigel aren't members of the OCA but if you are in contact with them please let us know in case they would like to get in touch with their relatives.

Another interesting request is particularly relevant in this 100th Anniversary year of WW1: "John Ewart Charman was my great uncle; born in

Horsham in 1898, attended Collyer's in the 1900s, signed up in 1916, went to war as a 2nd Lieutenant with the Royal Sussex Regiment, and died of his wounds in a German field hospital on 25th September 1917 aged only 19. In the mid 1970s his younger brother, my grandfather, donated to Collyer's some of the letters John wrote from the front before he died. At that time I think Collyer's was putting together an exhibition/museum? I would really hope that you could help me get copies of these."

Once again, if anybody remembers the above letters then please do get in touch.

Other recent requests have concerned the current whereabouts of the carved wooden chair used by former headmasters and which featured regularly in the annual school photograph, and an enquiry about a portrait of William Pirie which may once have been on display at the College.

Mark Collins

Summer Reunion 2014

The morning of 29 June started out as a very pleasant summer day and for those of us making the trip to the Bluebell Railway at Sheffield Park this continued for the rest of the day.

This year's response was much improved on 2013 with 29 of us (it should have been 32 but, unfortunately, three had to pull out due to health problems) present with many travelling quite some distance for a few hours with steam trains.

When we picked the date initially we were unaware that a model railway exhibition would be held on the railway over this weekend. This had two main results – first, many excellent model railway layouts of different scales which were well presented and all worth a look and, second, many more visitors present which made things a little chaotic at times.

The trip up to East Grinstead and back takes around 45 minutes each way with a short stop at East Grinstead. Although it passes through some lovely Sussex countryside I think most of us were too busy talking to notice a great deal of it. Thanks go to Anthony Barnard for supplying some wine from his extensive cellar (allegedly) which was enjoyed by a number of us.



When we arrived back at Sheffield Park it was extremely busy so this meant queuing up for food. However, this didn't take too long but did remind me a little of school dinner times, although the food was a good deal better at the Bluebell. I think we all managed to get seated eventually and had time for a natter to talk over 'days past' and other things.

There was then time to look at the model railways (some of them steam), the engine sheds, new museum etc. or just watch the trains. I personally had a lovely day but as a founder member of the Ian Allan Locospotters Club I've always had a soft spot for steam trains. Sad or what?

If you haven't been to the Bluebell it's highly recommended and makes a great day out.

Derek Sturt

College news

Although we were sad to say goodbye to retiring Principle Dr Jackie Johnston, who has been a good supporter of the OCA as well as an outstanding head of Collyer's, we are pleased to welcome her successor at the college, Sally Bromley. We should have the privilege of both of their presence at the Winter Reunion this year.



The College of Richard Collyer again achieved excellent results. Students have excelled with an A2 pass rate at an astonishing 99%, with 58% achieving grades at A*/B.

In a number of subjects the results were particularly outstanding. Art Graphics A2 had a 100% pass rate with a staggering 92% at A*/B, A2 Music a 100% pass rate

with 88% at A*/B, 84% of A2 DT Graphics students achieved A*/B, while 83% of A2 French and 75% of A2 German students achieved A*/B. 73% of A2 Chemistry students gained an A*/B, with 73% of A2 Photography also achieving A*/B. A2 Maths enjoyed a 99% pass rate with 71% achieving A*/B, in A2 Dance 71% of students also achieved A*/B while 69% of A2 Electronics and 66% of A2 History students posted an A*/B. 63% of A2 Economics and Further Maths obtained A*/B, while 62% of Geography students achieved A*/B.

As the pictures show, the students were obviously overjoyed to receive their good results.



Celebrating her final set results after 10 years as Principal, Dr Jackie Johnston said: "It is fantastic to be celebrating more success across the extremely broad range of A-level and vocational subjects. I would very much like to wish all of our departing students good luck for the future! I'm incredibly proud of their achievements!"

Sally Bromley, who is taking over as Collyer's Principal in September said: "It was great to see so many students celebrating with high fives and hugs!"

Some students were still not satisfied - just after completed their AS exams, Collyer's Chemistry students achieved a record medal haul of 15 copper, eight silver and one gold at the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge 2014.

The competition involves a 90 minute written exam, set by the nations' leading academics, that stretches participants significantly beyond the AS-level and A-level chemistry syllabus. The challenge tests how students cope with questions based on what is likely to prove unfamiliar material.

Still reporting success, Collyer's enjoyed a successful night at the prestigious West Sussex County Times Youth Awards earlier this year. The event, at the Capitol Theatre in Horsham, celebrated the achievements of young people across West Sussex. Julia Inglis-Taylor was presented with the Fundraising Award, in recognition of her tremendous support of the 'toilet twinning' project, which actively encourages third world sanitation, while fellow Collyer's student James West walked away with the Media Award, presented by Jack Tracey, on behalf of the award sponsors JSPC, for his film-making.

Collyer's have announced a new 'Dream Team' of students for 2014/15. This team of 15 volunteers visits schools and colleges across the region, to help year 10 and 11 pupils make informed choices about their futures and tell them what Collyer's can offer them in 2015.

The 'Dream Team' provides an opportunity for students to give something back, and help others find out about what one of the team says is a "brilliant college" from the students' viewpoint.

Dream Team members are studying subjects across the range of subjects offered at Collyer's and each shares a passion to help the next generation to understand the road into further education at the one of country's leading Sixth Form colleges.

Jottings

We welcome Ian Wilson as the OCA's webmaster, taking over (very competently) from the late Gary Jones, who, having built up the website to its present comprehensive but clear format, was a very hard act to follow.

You will see a note elsewhere about the **2015 Summer Reunion**. To allow you to get it into the 2015 diary as soon as possible, we will be holding the event on 28 June 2015, and it we will visit Denbies Winery near Dorking.

Because of various changes at the College, it has only be possible to organise a scaled down **Creative Writing Competition** for the students. This prize is normally sponsored by the OCA, alongside the Outstanding Extra-Curricular Achievement prize, which will be awarded as normal.

Did you fulfil your promise?

Finding ourselves a bit short of material to fill this newsletter (has nobody got any memories of Collyer's any more? Are we all getting to that age when selective amnesia creeps in?) your editor was wondering how many ex-Collyer's pupils fulfilled the promise of their grammar school education - or, conversely, whether those who were written off as failures actually made a success of their lives.

Speaking personally, I suppose I come more in the latter category than the former. Back in the 1960s, when there was a clear distinction between the words 'university' and 'polytechnic' there was still a general feeling that you had to come from a reasonably well-to-do, professional or enlightened background in order to enjoy entry to any of the top universities, as many of my contemporaries did. Most of the Collyer's boys from similar working-class rural homes to mine languished in the 'C' stream, from which you could exit quietly after your GCEs and nobody would be too fussed. We had 'careers masters' to offer advice (as I recall it, at my time they were Messrs Henderson and O'Connor). But the guidance was inevitably a push towards either further education or Sun Alliance - which of course is now known as 'More Than' for some unaccountable reason.

But I didn't fit the pattern. By, presumably, an accident of 11-plus results I was put in the A stream with the high achievers. Although I never did particularly well at anything I never did badly enough to justify being moved down, so I stayed in the 'A's until the end of the fifth form, when it was decreed that I had to go out and start earning. The

one subject where I did actually win a prize was art, so my careers guidance was to become an art teacher. Because this would mean either art school or teacher training, neither of which was an option, Collyer's and I drifted apart.

As a result of some 'proper' careers advice some 15 years later I moved into journalism, which, I had to admit, was something I did quite fancy at the age of 16 but everybody warned me against it.

What would my Collyer's teachers have made of this? In particular my English teachers? Both Miss Young and Mr Davies would have been horrified. The only English teacher at Collyer's who managed to ignite any creative spark in my writing was Mr Whitbourn who, I feel, would have been rather pleased.

Despite lacking the university education of most of my work colleagues, I felt I was able to hold my own in the job, becoming editor of a long-established and respected trade magazine. And I put that down to the breadth as well as the depth of the general education I had received. And the fact that I had studied Latin, under Messrs Bennett and Hunt, was a big bonus. In spite of my misguided decision to follow the sciences path at Collyer's - I was useless at any science except physics, and that was only down to Mr Pointer's teaching - I've never forgotten Latin.

And finally, the biggest shock would have come to Mr Kenyon who would never have believed I could have lived in France for several years.

How did other Old Collyerians fare in the 'real' world? Please tell...

Bill Thomson (1960-1964)

Membership

Personal details of members are available
only in the newsletter version sent to paid-up members
by email or post

Membership secretary:

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2015 Summer Reunion

At the suggestion of our 2014/2015 president Stewart Mackman, we will once again visit Denbies Wine Estate near Dorking, following a successful meeting there several years ago.

The date will be **SUNDAY 28 JUNE**, 2015. Please put this date in your diaries - timings, costs and other details will be advised in due course.



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,
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