



# The Old Collyerians' Association

Spring 2008

## President's message

**W**elcome to the Spring 2008 edition of the OCA newsletter. The arrival of Spring is an event keenly awaited by those of who relish the warmer weather, the longer days, and the drawing closer of the departure date for our summer holidays. However, it's also a reminder that the OCA Presidential Year moves on quickly, and by the time you read this, four months will have passed since my inauguration last autumn. So far it has been a "quiet" presidency. I have chaired two committee meetings and made some preparations for the summer re-union scheduled to take place on Sunday 8th June 2008 at the Bluebell Railway, an iconic Sussex location. I do hope many of you will be able to join us for a ride along the full length of the line, followed by a long lunch at a local hostelry. Further

details appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

I was one of the penultimate intake of the old grammar school in 1974. Arriving from the comparatively cosier environment of Greenway Junior School, Collyers seemed forbiddingly large, especially so the Duckering Hall and the Gym. After 7 years at Collyers, I took a law degree at the then Bristol Polytechnic. Staying on there, I completed the Law Society's finals, and then what was called "Articles" at local Solicitors in Horsham's Carfax. I qualified as a solicitor in 1988.

After a period living and working in private practice in the Southampton area, I returned to Horsham in 1991, and began a fresh career, teaching law at North East Surrey College of Technology near Epsom. In the early part of this decade, I was back in

## Contact us (e-mail is the preferred method)

**President:** Clive Barham <clive.barham@tiscali.co.uk>

**Secretary:** Anthony Barnard <ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com>

**Treasurer:** Nick Weller <nickweller@bpp.com>

12 North Ash, Hawthorn Close, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2BW

**Membership Secretary:** Mark Collins <MCollins@rjherbert.co.uk>

4 Stallett Way, Tilney St Lawrence, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 4HT

**Newsletter:** Bill Thomson, <motorship@btinternet.com>

35 Fishers Court, Horsham RH12 2RJ and Lawrence Windwood

### Committee Members:

Derek Sturt <sueandderek@freenet.co.uk>,

Paul Smith <maureentsmith@btinternet.com>

Peter Ticehurst <jenny.langridge@allen-ticehurst.co.uk>,

John Meese <jdoc@jmeese.wanadoo.co.uk>,

Gary Jones <garyjones@compuserve.com>,

Brian Sturt, Brian Slyfield

From the College: Jackie Johnston

practice, this time working in-house at a well-known local Insurance company. I returned to teaching in 2006 at the College of Law in London. My law-teaching career has also included a spell on the Adult A level evening class here at Collyers, so at the annual dinner, I join in the President's request to drink wine with present and former members of staff.

Speaking of the annual dinner, I particularly enjoyed my inauguration dinner, despite having to deliver the final speech of the evening. Although I am well-used to making presentations to students, and indeed Judges, after-dinner speaking calls for a different approach. It is always a good idea to err on the side of brevity, so, one hopes, one leaves the audience wanting more. One of the advantages (and there are not many) of being last to speak is that you get the chance to gauge the right length of the speech for that particular evening. So I found, having prepared reams of material for my theme - the use and abuse of the English language - , that I could safely ditch one third of the volume so as to keep the length of my speech consistent with the rest.

Looking around the tables on that November evening, I was aware that some familiar faces were missing. There could, of course, be many different reasons for this, but one hopes that the absences are temporary and that those concerned have not tired of the event. I maintain that notwithstanding the unfortunate but very necessary rise in price, the dinner still represents very good value for money. The quality of the food this year was particularly impressive. However, the annual dinner is not just about food and drink; of equal, or indeed greater importance, is the opportunity to meet with other Old Collyerians and swap news and views.

One cannot put a price on such things.

At the table comprising the 1974 intake, we could reflect on how very different the world of 1974 was from what it is now. For example, in 1974 the Health and Safety at Work Act had just arrived on the Statute Book, and appeared to be no more than a statement of the obvious e.g. employers shall ensure the health safety and welfare at work of their employees. No one then could have predicted accurately the volume of claims it would spawn in later decades. Often forgotten is a corresponding duty on the employee to have regard for his or her own safety, a concept that does not sit very easily in today's blame culture.

1974 was the year when we had two general elections; now it is very hard to motivate the public into voting at one in every 4 or 5 years. One might contrast that with the situation "over the pond" where the Clinton -v- Obama clash has generated extraordinary levels of interest. In 1974, looking back, the fashions seemed rather weird, and so school uniform provided a safe haven from the worst excesses of the sartorial inelegances of that decade! It was also a time when we had to interact with one another without mobile phones and e-mail.

I look forward to continuing to serve the OCA for the rest of this year, and to meeting or hearing from as many of you as possible. One of the most welcome items on the committee's agenda is "correspondence" when we look at the content of letters and e-mails received from members, and I should welcome the opportunity to hear from you, and to share your thoughts and opinions with the committee as to what the OCA is doing right, and indeed what could be done better.

*Clive Barham*

## J o t t i n g s

**Brian Osley** writes from Chepstow, in response to the piece by one of his contemporaries, Mickey Bartlett, in the last newsletter. He and Bartlett were good friends at the school, being from similar backgrounds - in fact the boys tended to arrange their groupings by background, with those from better-off town families in one group and the less-privileged in another. The staff, particularly Mr Tharp, tended to ignore such divisions, the facts that all had

passed the 11-plus and wore the uniform being further levellers. He wonders what has happened to many other contemporaries, who do not appear on the OCA membership list. Brian has sent in some of his memories, which appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

A further selection of reminiscences of the same period came from Francis Holford by e-mail to our past president, Paul Smith, and these two are included in this issue.

**It was good** to hear from the Old Mercers president John Grandsbury following the OCA winter reunion. He had enjoyed the event, particularly the chance to meet Harry Curtis for the first time. Bob Smith, master of the Guild of Mercers' Scholars had also contacted the OCA to express his enjoyment of the reunion.

Several comments had been received from members attending the reunion, most spoke favourably about the very high quality of the food from the new caterer and, despite the inevitable price increase, most considered it good value for money.

There were some concerns about the speed of service, but the organising committee can assure members that these have been taken on board and a different system will be used should we employ the same caterer for the 2008 event, which seems highly likely.

Costs will also be kept under tight control, so that ticket price rises can be kept in line with inflation rather than, as recently, held artificially low then subjected to periodic larger price hikes.

**Collyer's** principal Jackie Johnston reported to the OCA committee that planning applications had been put in for all three phases of the next building programme at the college. We had previously had a sneak preview of the architect's drawings, and the new additions promise to be both striking and functional, examples of excellent design, unlike the much-maligned 1970s addition to the original building.

Rather surprisingly, all three applications were passed at the first attempt, and it is hoped that work will begin on the first phase in summer of this year, subject to the finance being made available.

The college rugby team had been doing exceptionally well, as had the football team. On a rather different theme, there had been a significant number of awards in the UK Senior mathematical challenge.

**Some** of our younger members may recall Roger Birch who came to Collyers in the late 1970's to teach geography. He is still at Collyers today where he teaches geology and as well as lecturing at Sussex University he has found time to write a book entitled "Sussex Stones" (ISBN 0-9551259-0-1). It looks at the geology of the county with particular reference to the famous Horsham Stone and Sussex Marble.

**Justin Frank** (1970 –1977) writes to say how much he enjoys the newsletter and says:

"I was interested to see mention of Audrey Garnett in reference to the voluntary work undertaken after O-Levels. She was a gifted teacher and somebody that I would love to contact as an ex-pupil.

"I was in Mr. Collins' French class trying to decipher declinations of verbs with little success until O-level groups were arranged with a new 'lower ability' group being taken by Mrs. Garnett in the then fairly new language lab.

"We were to all intents and purposes a 'sink' group destined to take the lowly AEB O-Level exam syllabus instead of the Oxford or Cambridge one.

"We were taught conversational French by this kind and gifted teacher until many of us were fluent. Written work came a bit later and was a natural evolution from spoken French.

"She was an amazing teacher and my grade two O-Level and a subsequent love of France and a competence in the language is down to her. I don't think anybody expected much from us but I got a better grade and grasp of French than lots of my pals who continued to decline verbs on paper, thanks to Mrs. Garnett."

**Congratulations** to Gil Prewett (1916 – 1926) who celebrated his 100th birthday on 15th January 2008. Membership secretary Mark Collins tells us that former Deputy Headmaster Vernon Davies (1946 – 1982) rang to remind us of this auspicious event.

"Vernon, now in his 90th year, and Rose Davies, who also taught at Collyers, are both in good health and enjoying their retirement in Wales.

"During our conversation I mentioned that in the mid-70's whilst in the army section of the CCF we visited the Brecon Beacons for a week's camp, staying near Llangynidr. He told me that a friend of his had a large farm in the Brecon Beacons that he made available as a base for Collyers camps although this was not the site we stayed on during our visit.

Mark asks if anybody recalls camping on a farm in Wales whilst in the CCF?

**Sadly** we have to report the deaths of three members in this issue, including Roger Hibbs (1940 – 1946) who was President for the year 1981-1982.

# Summer reunion 2008

## Bluebell railway Sunday 8 June

This year's Summer Reunion will take place on Sunday 8th June, and we shall be visiting the Bluebell Railway line in Sussex. According to its web-site, the Bluebell Railway was, in 1960, the first standard-gauge preserved railway to open in Great Britain. 100% of its passenger trains are steam-hauled, and they run for 9 miles between Sheffield Park and Kingscote. The volunteers aim to recreate a country branch line complete with goods trains, stations, signal boxes and sheds where engines, coaches and trucks may be restored.

Our trip will start at Horsted Keynes where we board the 11.17 train to Sheffield Park. It is recommended that we arrive at the station by 10.55. There is a car park, and the station is located on an unclassified road between the A275 at Danehill and the B2028 at Ardingly. Ordnance Survey Map 198 shows these roads in detail. This journey terminates at Sheffield Park, but we are then booked on the 12.00 from Sheffield Park which takes us the full length of the line to Kingscote. If any one is running late, they may find it convenient to catch up with us at Sheffield Park, which is on the A275 north of its junction with the A272.

After arriving at Kingscote (where there is no facility to park cars), we return to Horsted Keynes at 1.15. We shall then have a leisurely pub lunch at the Green Man in Horsted Keynes

village. So if any members and their party simply wish to join us for drinks and lunch then, please aim to be at the Green Man for about 1.30.

We hope that as many of you as possible can join us for what promises to be a most enjoyable day out. Your spouses, partners and children are very welcome too. Please send a cheque for £10.50 per person (£5.25 for children aged between 3 and 16) together with a stamped addressed envelope to the Hon Treasurer, Nick Weller at 12 North Ash, Hawthorn Close, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2BW. Cheques should be made payable to The Old Collierians Association. Please make it clear that the cheque is for the Summer Reunion and indicate if any of your party is a wheelchair user.

*Clive Barham*



Picture - Bluebell Railway

## Guild of Mercers' scholars

Regretfully, the Guild Master, Old Mercer David Harvey, died in office in the Autumn and the Immediate Past Master, Old Collierian Bob Smith, has taken over as Guild Master for the second time.

Social events which had been planned by David Harvey are continuing and please note that the Installation Dinner for the next Guildmaster will be held at Tallow Chandler's Hall on 8th October. Anybody interested in joining the Guild can obtain details from the Guild's Old Collierian representative, Anthony Barnard, at 1 Walnut Close, Yalding, Maidstone, Kent, ME18 6DH.

# Obituary - Michael Beckwith

## Michael Beckwith 1940 - 2008

Sadly we have to report the death of Michael in January in his 68th year.

Michael was a Horsham resident for most of his life and attended Collyers 1951 - 1959, where he became head prefect, and gained his love of cricket and rugby. He joined the Horsham commuters to London where he worked in the Ministry of Agriculture which probably accounted for his immaculate garden and prolific allotment. Latterly he became a crown servant administering the Queen's estates. Mike played cricket at Horsham Cricket Club and rugby at Blackheath and latterly was active in administration at Horsham Cricket Club and Sussex County Club. He gave a great deal of time and energy to coaching mini rugby in Horsham and led Sussex Rugby Colts tours overseas.

At the end of February a memorial service was held for Michael at St. Mary's Church Horsham. The church was full of his family, relatives and friends including representatives from Horsham and Sussex County Cricket Clubs and from the Rugby Football Union. Mike's daughter Karen



read from Philippians, the same reading that Mike had read at Founder's Day, 1959, and from the original service booklet. Tributes were given by Philip Beckwith (son), Michael Parsons, for Horsham CC, Gary Henderson, for the RFU, Alan Dinsdale, friend, and Rev Peter Apted of St Leonard's Church. The music was provided by Winchester Cathedral choristers and Susan Parsons (organ)

We send our condolences to his wife, Elizabeth, and his family.

## 2007 Winter reunion

The 2007 A.G.M. took place in the Memorial Hall, which was originally the old school hall, followed by the Winter reunion dinner.

As ever, the latter was an excellent occasion with plenty of good company. Unfortunately our chairman of governors, Rosemary Cowley, was unable to attend as she was having an eye operation, but we were pleased to entertain the president of the Old Mercers' Club, John Grandsbury, the immediate past master of the Guild of Mercers' Scholars, Bob Smith, and Dr Jackie Johnston, the principal of Collyer's.

The new caterers produced a very high quality meal and the wine flowed.

At the end of the meal David Lacey proposed the toast to Collyer's and Dr. Jackie Johnston

replied. The retiring president, Paul Smith, transferred the chain of office to our incoming president, Clive Barham, and the old school song was sung - as usual - with gusto.

Student governor Phil Applegate proposed a toast to the Old Collyerians' Association and Clive Barham responded.

A successful raffle concluded the evening and then the assembled company retired to the bar.

Although the dinner made a small financial loss this was mostly down to the need to hire certain equipment - an alternative source has now been identified so this cost should not be incurred in the future. The proceeds from the raffle, to which must be added a donation subsequently and gratefully received, will be sufficient to fund two school prizes.

# Further 1950s memories

For a while, Mickey Bartlett and I were friends, but we sort of drifted apart with his moves, and when he went off to sea we lost touch. Over the years I have wondered what became of him, and now I know, thanks to his article in the last newsletter. His career has been much more varied than mine. Reading the article, I realise that during the seven years I went to Collyer's, although some events and activities remain with me, the whole period is really a blur.

When I passed the 11-plus my parents were proud but poor, and neither of them had good health. I knew even then that they were making sacrifices, mainly because my father had won a place at a grammar school but his family could not afford the books, so he was denied his chance. As a result, I think he saw that chance in me.

When I went to the school I was already a paper boy for Bert Weller on the Common – under age but in those days we didn't have the nanny state we see now. This meant being up around 6am, cycling to the shop, sorting the papers, doing the round and home around 8.00 for breakfast, before going to school. This was seven days a week, and on Saturdays I had the extra task of collecting the money from the customers, and making sure my accounts balanced for Bert.

Later I got an evening job as the Lipton's delivery boy four nights a week after school plus Saturday mornings, and for about two years I ran both jobs. All this was mixed in with my homework, a big involvement with the 5th Horsham scouts, and various other interests. School just became the filling in the sandwich, and not being the cleverest I knew I had to work so got my head down and managed to stay in the A stream for the first four years. I was dropped to the B stream in the fifth year, mainly, I have always believed, because my Latin was not up to PAT's standard.

Interestingly, a programme about child poverty suggested recently that children have the right to at least one week family holiday away every year. We never managed that – my holidays were the annual scout camps and my parents never went away.

I don't think there was anything unusual in this at that time.

During the first five years I went home to lunch, or would have a 'nose bag' as it was known, and coupled with my jobs out of school, this meant I missed out on much of the school life. When we moved to Southwater, I did eat in the small dining room for a couple of years, and I recall with pleasure Mrs Wadey's cooking – especially her liver and bacon

made with the special 'Wadey gravy' which hardly moved. The moving round the table was OK, though I think we all used to dread the two days when you were sat either side of PAT. I recall that Les Higgs used to sit next to me. I was always hungry and because he was a small eater, he would give me half his dinner – we evolved a smooth sitting down procedure to mask the transfer from PAT.

So what of these snapshot memories of the school and its life? Here are a few, but in no particular order:

- Full bike sheds, with the masters' bikes at the Hurst Road end.
- Dreadful smelly toilets by the quad – best avoided.
- The dark corridor past the Head's office and the prefects' room – the latter a sort of secret place which always seemed untidy when glimpsed from the corridor.
- Bob Greenop's leg squeaking as he walked down the laboratory – and his telling of how he lost it.
- Senior cross-country run by all (how would that happen today?) which took in the Warnham deer park where we had to run through a gate by a silage pit with the mud/slurry knee deep, and the long painful drag up the hill past the Dog and Bacon. We were advised in morning assembly by PAT that we could collapse at the end but should lie down for no longer than one minute.
- Trips to the House of Commons and Leith Hill – both, I think, with George Henderson in charge.
- Breaking new ground by getting permission to ride an ancient, pre-war motorcycle to school, along with Maurice Arnold (Tiger Cub) and Kim McKenzie (Velocette). We parked under the old shelter next to the science block.
- PAT regularly interrupting Mr Kenyon's class to restore order, and the day one of our number quietly wrote 'FROG' on the latter's fingernails, while he was leaning on a desk, trying to enthuse us with his love of French.
- Mr Hodgson in a music lesson extolling the new 33  $\frac{1}{3}$  LPs – so flexible, he said, not like the old 78s. He then bent one to demonstrate, and it snapped in two.
- Mr Bennett's gown flying out as he sped through the hall, his amazing accuracy with a piece of chalk, and his ability to start writing with his left hand, continue with his right, and defy you to tell where the change had occurred.
- The day it snowed, and in assembly PAT said 'no slides' – thinking of people like Mr Greenop, I believe. When he later found one in use by the fives court, he took on and beat all the boys using it – the rumour was 30-plus.

- Gymnastics and playing quoits/shinty in the main hall – which had its own peculiar smell reflecting its mixed activities over the day.
- George Hurrell being carried off the cricket field with the stitch marks from the ball clearly visible on his face where it had hit him – put me off the game forever.
- Trips to the school dentist in the clinic opposite the school, where I once had four back teeth filled at the same time, with the old slow drill and no jabs to kill the pain. Then back to school.
- Practices for Founder's Day, marching on the square by the CCF hut, with house prefects in charge. And, of course, the march through the town to the Causeway.
- Running 440 yards for the school at the Varndean sports, and later being threatened with detention for refusing to run on a Saturday. Luckily PAT understood why I needed to work and promised to sort it out with the sports master, who had sent me to see him as a punishment, I guess.
- Dancing classes at the High School, with the fear of being chosen by Joy Swain to demonstrate – she had a vice-like grip. Also the shyness of actually dancing with a girl, though that did pass.
- Playing rugby on Saturdays in the scrum with Dick Tidey, drinking with him and the team afterwards, and then facing him in Latin on the Monday. For a lot of Latin in 5B, we went over what I had done in 4A, so I was able to copy my earlier work. For years I thought I had got away with this, but Dick told me later he was fully aware but did not want to spoil my illusion.
- During my two years in the sixth, I worked solidly every Sunday from about 10am to 6pm on my homework. Fortunately this paid off in the end.
- A group of us got permission to use the new tennis courts, at the far end of the sports field, out of hours – more to play mixed doubles than to improve our tennis. My partner was ambidextrous, so had two forehands which was helpful.
- PAT playing fives – to our young eyes we were amazed.
- The grotty changing rooms between the science block and the fives court, cold wet floors and often cold showers.
- Sitting with Roger Ottley as a sort of duo in a childish attempt to confuse the teachers – it seemed to amuse PAT anyway.
- Mr Wilson cycling around the junior (Pondtail) cross country course to make sure we ran and didn't walk.
- The creaking of the floors in the old library, and the pleasure of working quietly in there. Similarly, the homely nature of the 'chapel' with Mr Davies opening our eyes to literature.
- The cigarette and pipe smoke that used to drift out of the staff room as you walked by.
- The galvanised iron bucket with the hole in it, brought out to show the CCF cadets how dangerous the wad in a blank .303 cartridge can be, as they set off for the annual field day.

These are all random thoughts, of the sort we all recall in our past. However, the one memory I do cherish is that all of us, whether a high flyer in the Hive or a lower stream struggler, were there to work and learn – with the help of some very good and dedicated teachers – because we understood that we were fortunate in having the chance and shouldn't waste it.

*Brian Osley 1950-1957*

I have just read the latest Old Collyerians' magazine, which I am always pleased to receive. I read Paul Smith's valedictory message with interest and realised that we were near contemporaries, but so near is so far when it comes to schooldays. I have often thought of attending the OCA Dinner but have always hesitated because I have found with reunions that, unless one meets someone who was an exact contemporary, there isn't always much to reminisce about. Perhaps one day I will take the plunge.

I enjoyed my time at Collyer's. I went there in 1950 aged 13 (I had been at prep school, Pennthorpe School at Rudgwick) and so it took me a while to find a friend as by then, everyone had had two years together. I was in Richards House when Norman Dawes was captain. Mr Tharp let me in on an interview and put me in the A stream simply because I had done Latin and he was a classicist. I thought I would struggle but managed to hold my head above water, just. One thing I remember clearly about

## 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.

Collyer's was that we were mostly taught by men who had served in either the First or Second World Wars (some no doubt in both) and we had on the whole an innate respect for them.

Not that we didn't play them up. Mr Henderson was perhaps the one we gave the hardest time to but he was essentially a very kind man and I went on a school holiday with him and Mr Tharp to Germany in 1951. Staying at a guest house in Bonn, our evening meal was interrupted by the arrival of a policeman clutching a bag full of shillings, the same size as a mark, which had been found in a nearby cigarette machine. I also remember on that holiday being stung by a hornet in the Black Forest shortly after Mr Tharp had warned us away from the hornet's nest - I had to throw a stone into it, of course.

We also travelled from Freiburg by a local steam train with carriages with balconies at either end, and we locked the ticket collector out of our carriage. I don't imagine school trips have changed much.

I noticed in Mike Bartlett's article that Mr Henderson was keen on horse riding. This interest came about through my best friend at Collyer's, Robert Myram, whose family farmed at Adversane near Billingshurst. They were very keen on horses and used to hunt regularly with the Crawley and Horsham, and Robert used to ride in point to points. They often had Mr Henderson out at weekends riding and I would tag along behind on my bicycle.

When it came to the sixth form, I elected to do Classics because it meant being in a class of two - Peter Bromham and myself. We sat in Mr Tharp's study reading Homer, Mr Tidey took us through Demosthenes and Gumbie Stockford was another one I remember, but the head of Classics was Mr F G Bennett. I think he must have had a genius for teaching as I find I still remember lots of things he taught us. The translations he set us to do always involved his cat Joseph and the two pekes next door. You would think when you first met him that Mr Bennett had little personality, with his little

toothbrush moustache and his flat Midlands accent and he only ever wore a black tie. But the thing about him was that no one ever played him up - you felt somehow that it would be embarrassing to do so. It was thanks to Mr Bennett that I did so well in Classics and won a place at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

Mr Kenyon, who taught us French from his own text books, was another character. We definitely played him up. He once made the foolish claim that he had visited every town in France. That gave us the perfect excuse because, whenever a town was mentioned, we asked: "Have you been there, sir?" That was the end of that lesson. He also loved to get out his Larousse from a locked glass-fronted cabinet in his classroom and, on one occasion, there was a plague of daddy longlegs and we all collected as many as we could in matchboxes during the lunch hour and fed them through the rather large keyhole. Come the lesson on a too hot summer afternoon and we soon manufactured an excuse for him to get out his Larousse. When he opened the cupboard, out jumped a swarm of daddy longlegs.

Then there was the geography teacher whom we knew as 'Pork 'n' Beans' - I can't remember his proper name (*editor's note - we won't mention his name here, but others who were there at the same time or soon afterwards will remember him from the Collyer's oral tradition*). He obviously had a rather too strong liking for certain boys, and would often call a boy up to sit on his knee while he carried on with his lesson. No one ever seemed to complain and we just took it in our stride. I've no idea if Mr Tharp knew about this propensity or what he thought of his behaviour. The papers would have something to say about that these days. (*I believe he was in fact found out, but the school managed to keep the story out of the public eye - Editor*)

Classics at Collyer's stood me in good stead when I got called up for National Service. I was allocated to The Buffs (Royal East Kent) but failed WOSB and was determined to avoid joining the battalion in Germany as a humble rifleman, so I put my name

## A message from your Secretary

**In order to segregate personal and OCA e-mail communications, I have set up an entirely separate E-mail account for OCA business:**

**[ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com](mailto:ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com)**

**Please note that is only slightly different from my own personal address, but it will mean that all OCA messages arrive in a separate mail box. Please also note that I was without my computer for nearly six months during my recent house move, although I was still receiving e-mails at my old address.**

**Unfortunately, during the change over I lost some e-mails concerning receipt of newsletters by e-mail. In view of this, will anyone who has requested e-mail receipt of newsletters in the past six months please re-make the request through the new address. Don't forget that by opting to receive newsletters via e-mail, you get the full colour version.**

down to learn Russian. While awaiting posting, our regimental colonel visited the depot at Canterbury and it turned out he was director of military intelligence and had me switched to learn Greek. I was sent out to Cyprus during the EOKA campaign as an interpreter to a battalion of the Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and spent the next eighteen months camping out in the Troodos mountains. It wasn't a bad way to bridge that awkward gap between teenage years and adulthood.

I feel that my education at Collyer's has also stood me in good stead throughout my life. It was what I

would call a 'plain vanilla' education compared with my twin brother who won a scholarship to Kings School Canterbury and enjoyed a more exotic education. I eventually qualified as a chartered accountant (strange choice for a classicist) and wound up running a company in the city on the London Metal Exchange. I married in my mid twenties (very conventional) and we had five children and now are expecting the arrival of our 17th grandchild. We have lived in Guildford for the past 30 years for ease of commuting but my heart still lies in Sussex.

*Francis Holford*

## M e m b e r s h i p

Membership details are available  
in the printed or e-mailed version of this newsletter,  
sent to all OCA members

### UPDATED OCA WEB SITE

[www.oldcollyerians.org.uk](http://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. If you have any suggestions please do not hesitate to communicate them to the Hon Secretary.

# Never too late for the OCA

One of our newest members, Peter Dinnage joined the Association a full 71 years after leaving Collyers and has already been along to one of our Annual Dinners!

We are, of course, always pleased to welcome new members from all eras of the school or college so if you are in touch with anybody who has yet to join then please contact the membership secretary who will be pleased to send them details.

## Collyer's in the news

**E**ducating for excellence is town college's proud motto – so read the headline on a one-page article in the West Sussex County Times of 15 February.

The article highlighted the academic record of Collyer's sixth form college which had again achieved the highest points score of all public sector institutions in Sussex. Principal Jackie Johnston was quoted as saying that the success could be attributed to the unique environment, the college's own teaching staff, and the high quality of the feeder schools in the Horsham area.

Dr Johnston was further quoted as saying that it was media nonsense that the large number of A grades achieved made it difficult to distinguish between those students who were merely good and those who were outstanding; the award of a full set of A grades recognised extremely hard work, and nothing should take away the value of such an



College principal Dr Jackie Johnston, as seen by the WSCT photographer

achievement. Richard Collyer himself was remembered in the piece, with the story of his 1532 will making provision to set up a school for 60 Horsham boys; which came to fruition when the original school was opened near St Mary's Church in 1540.

The next programme of building work planned for the college was also touched upon in the article – a project valued at around £10 million in total, including a new classroom, office and theatre block, which will allow expansion from the current total of 1420 students to over 1500. Richard Collyer would no doubt be amazed at how his original vision has developed to accommodate the vastly different educational needs of the

21st century – but we hope he would be proud of the continuing excellence of the college that still bears his name.

### 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. And it arrives faster, and in glorious colour.**

**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: [ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com](mailto:ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com)**