



# The Old Collyerians' Association

Spring 2012

## President's message

I feel rather like a ship that passes in the night. I was installed as your president at the reunion dinner in November. The event was memorable. I had almost no input to the planning, and am still amazed at the efficiency with which the many facets of the evening were brought together by your hard working committee. After drinks in the Memorial Hall we moved to the Duckering Hall for the dinner. This was a quantum improvement from the previous venue, and we must hope that our use of it for the highlight event of the OCA year will continue in years to come. Our thanks must go to Jackie, the principal, for her indulgence. For the 50

or so people who attended it was a really good night, and we look forward to seeing more of our extensive membership at future dinners – there is plenty of room.

Our most pressing concern is the lack of former College students in our membership. Despite many initiatives there are still relatively few who are members, and none of those are on the committee. We really need a younger voice to help us understand how we can appeal to a new generation.

Much looking forward to seeing you at the summer reunion – I might even provide a glass of wine !

*Peter Holmes*

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## Contact us

**President:** Peter Holmes

**Secretary:** Anthony Barnard

**Treasurer:** vacant

**Membership Secretary:** Mark Collins,  
4 Stallett Way, Tilney St Lawrence, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 4HT

**Newsletter:** Bill Thomson, 18 Vale Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1JA  
and Lawrence Windwood

**Other Committee Members:**

Nick Weller,

Paul Smith,

Peter Ticehurst,

Derek Sturt,

Brian Sturt.

College representative: Jackie Johnston (principal)

E-mail is the best way to reach us: please send all correspondence for the OCA to [ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com](mailto:ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com)

# Annual Reunion Dinner 2011

For those of my era it was the Library (initially under the iron fist of 'Mungo' Parks and then the more relaxed hand of 'Yogi' Morris); for others it was the Assembly Hall and a venue for, amongst other things, boxing matches; and for current students it is the Memorial Hall - named of course after the Rolls of Honour recording those who laid down their lives in the service of their country. Now sadly bereft of its book shelves (whose contents now have a new home in the Resource Centre - partly furnished by a donation from the OCA) and the comfy chairs (where in my day one could enjoy browsing through a great range of monthly periodicals) it is now a 'performance space' as witnessed by the lighting rigs and PA equipment.

And last November another use was added to the list when it became the bar and reception area for those attending our Annual Reunion Dinner.

For as long as I've been attending our yearly get-togethers the bar has always been in the Duckering Hall but this was now to be our dining room - our previous location in the student Common Room no longer being suitable following refurbishment and the installation of fixed café-style tables and chairs. Some of our more senior members will, I'm sure, remember that the Duckering Hall was where the dinner always used to be

held so it was more of a home-coming than a new beginning. Indeed, what could be more appropriate than using the very room where daily school dinners were served in the 1970s, although back then the catering staff didn't have the advantage of the College's new hi-tech kitchen and home economics department which we were able to make full use of for the first time.

The formal proceedings of the evening saw the installation of Peter Holmes as our new President and the time passed all too quickly as the wine and memories flowed freely. Our guests included both Master and Clerk of the Guild of Mercers' Scholars and Barbara Palmer, widow of Ted whose obituary appears elsewhere in the newsletter. It was good to see some new faces amongst the regulars too and a special mention should go to Bill Carcas who travelled down from Scotland to attend for the first time.

As for this year's event do try and join us on Saturday 17th November. Why not take the opportunity to contact some old friends and use the occasion as a mini-reunion for your own year or class? You don't need to be an OCA member to attend and whether you come on your own or as part of a group you will be assured a warm welcome.

*Mark Collins (1974 - 1980)*



*This is what you may expect on 17 November 2012; do please make an effort to attend (pic: Mark Collins)*

## WE NEED YOUR MEMORIES...

Items for the newsletter are always welcome.

Please send your contributions via the Hon Secretary,  
Anthony Barnard,  
[ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com](mailto:ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com)

### \*\*\* SITUATION VACANT - Hon. Treasurer REQUIRED \*\*\*

The O.C.A. is in urgent need of a Treasurer. The current incumbent, Clive Barham, has decided he would like to give up the post, which he has held for the past few years.

We need to resolve this situation as soon as possible and, hopefully, before the A.G.M. in November.

I am advised that the position is not too onerous, the busiest time being around October/November when subscriptions are coming in and the annual dinner is imminent.

If you feel that you could take on this post (it is not essential to live in the Horsham area provided you have e-mail and are reasonably accessible) please contact our Secretary, Anthony Barnard on [ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com](mailto:ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com).

# Jottings

## Proposed free school in Southwater

It is understood that proposals for a 'free' school to be set up in Southwater include a planned sixth form; this could have a negative effect on the College of Richard Collyer, and the Principal has been much involved in discussions about this.

## Greetings from the Antipodes

*Received by our Secretary from Jim Partridge in New Zealand:*

Thank you once again for the latest OC Newsletter received this morning. Despite my increasing years I still find items of interest and note, in particular, the deaths of Roy Ford and L P Lewis. I joined Collyer's in September 1938 and, if my memory serves me correctly, Lewis was a prefect in my house, Hurst, and a contestant in the heavyweight section of the annual boxing competition. At that time I was appalled, and still am at such brutality!

The comments from Ivan Hill also struck a chord with me, in particular, the mention of A P Whitaker, who taught me for several years in French and English. Always known as 'mothballs', this wonderfully talented gentle man brought a lifetime of experience to his classes and was a veritable 'Mr Chips'. Apart from his academic skills, he was also a competent pianist and I can well remember him teaching a new hymn to the entire school during Friday morning's music session when we were all gathered in the school assembly hall. Without his help I doubt whether I would have passed the Oxford School Certificate examination!

However, staffing during those wartime years must have been a recurring headache for PAT with some of the younger ones, A. A. Henderson and Dick Rivaz joining the Army and RAF

respectively, and some of the best teachers, S (Sammy) Taylor an outstanding maths teacher, and G F W Hughes from the Science department. Leaving for better opportunities than Collyer's could offer. Lady teachers arrived on the scene for the first time in the school's history and proved themselves more than able to teach and handle lively youngsters.

Unlike many of your correspondents, I was not an enthusiastic scholar and was very happy to say farewell to Collyer's in December 1945 when I was called up to join the RAF in which I served as ground staff in the Middle East for two and a half years.

Since then I have spent seven years as an assistant manager of tea estates owned by the Assam Frontier Tea Co in Upper Assam, NE India, worked for the Government of Mauritius on a tea development project and the rest of my working life in New Zealand. For most of this time I worked for Shell Oil NZ Ltd, who, incidentally, have seen fit to sell off all their assets here to NZ company ownership. I have been retired for 24 years and during the more recent years I was encouraged by family and friends to write my life story. This was done principally for our nine grandchildren but it has enjoyed a wide adult readership. As a matter of interest a copy now rests in the Alexander Turnbull Library, New Zealand's national library, the Canterbury University Library in the South Island and remarkably, Harvard University Bookshop (the library), both of which requested a copy following a notice of new publications on the Alexander Turnbull website. We have encouraged a number of friends to write their life stories, because we all have interesting stories to tell. We may not have achieved academic or commercial success as the world sees us, but these

histories are invaluable especially to our children and grandchildren and posterity deserves to know what events shaped our lives.

*Jim Partridge*

## OCA Rules

A recent committee meeting decided that it is likely that there are several items in the Association rules that may need revision, as these have not been looked at for many years. A sub-committee is to be formed, and any recommended changes will be put to the next Annual General Meeting.

## DATA PROTECTION

It is obviously essential that the OCA, like all other membership organisations, maintains an up-to-date list of its members. These details may be stored either in paper form or electronically and the storage and dissemination of this information is governed by the terms of the Data Protection Act.

One of the O.C.A.'s main roles is to put former pupils and students in touch with each other and this necessarily requires us to share the information we hold on our database of members. These details are only ever provided to other members of the OCA and although we sometimes get requests for information from outside the Association we never divulge such information without your consent.

Those members who have joined in the last 12 years have given written agreement to the sharing of their personal details to other members of the OCA. However, for those of longer-standing, who joined up long before Data Protection issues were a major concern, their agreement to the above is assumed.

If any member wishes to opt out of sharing their details with other members, either now or in the future, then please contact the Membership Secretary.

# Summer reunion 2012

**F**or our Summer Reunion this year we are returning to the Wey & Arun Canal, and will meet at 3.30pm in the Canal Car Park at the rear of the Onslow Arms, High Street (B2133), LOXWOOD, West Sussex RH14 ORD.

Our boat, the *Zachariah Keppel*, is booked for 4.00pm and the cost for the Canal trip will be £10 per person (a small amount of this sum will go to the OCA funds to help towards our general costs). The 'voyage' lasts approximately two hours.

Numbers are limited so it has to be a case of 'first come, first served' - however, if you would like to come along without joining the boat trip you are most welcome. We are suggesting that after the trip we adjourn to the Onslow Arms for food and/or drink of your choice or you can bring your own picnic and dine 'al fresco'. If you would like to join us for the boat trip please send a cheque for £10 per person made out to 'the Old Collyerians Association', to our Social Secretary, Derek Sturt, at 8 Old Guildford Road, BROADBRIDGE HEATH, West Sussex RH12 3JU. If you should need any further information please e-mail Derek at sturt99@hotmail.com.

Further information on the Wey and Arun Canal can be obtained from their website, [www.weyandarun.co.uk](http://www.weyandarun.co.uk).



## School plays, cricket - and afterwards

*Michael Dinnage (1947-1952) has sent a follow-up to Tony White's article in the 2010 Autumn edition regarding School plays, and goes on to describe his later life in Africa.*

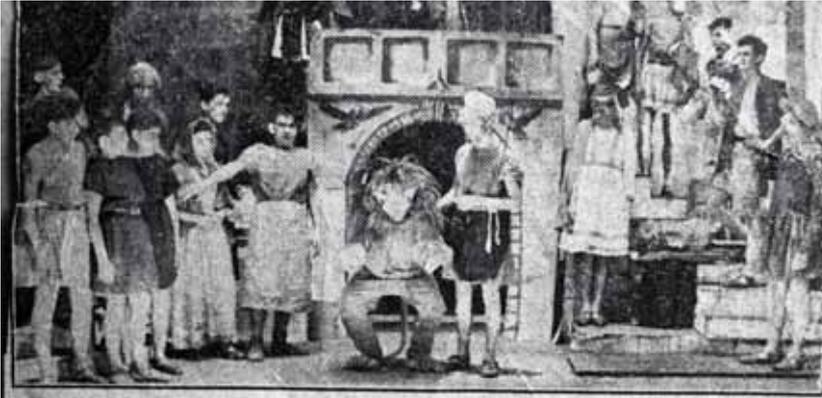
**I**remember well all the teachers mentioned, especially Bob Greenop who had the wooden leg. He was a sidesman at the Parish Church. I was in the choir and can remember Mr Sutton the organist, who taught at school, being followed by Mr Hodgson, who after choir practice would often give a rendering of jazz music on the church organ. This would sometimes break down during a service due to a power failure. To keep it going a long piece of wood was placed in the side and pumped up and down. I remember when I was about 12 going on a choir outing to a beach near Ferring Sussex and swimming in the sea. It was one of the first to be cleared of mines after the war

I was involved with the theatre in the play *Androcles and the Lion*. In those days the school had no stage and the bottom end of the Main Hall had to be converted for this.

I played all sports being in the under 14 cricket and football teams. I won the high jump and Wakefield cup for swimming. My favourite sport was Fives. I found this was a good starter for squash which I played until I was 59.

I left school at 16 and joined the Royal Navy as an Artificer. On *HMS Corunna* I had the privilege to serve under Godfrey Place VC, of midget submarine fame in sinking the *Tirpitz*. In those days your tour overseas was two years plus, and coming back home I can still remember seeing all those funny long sticks on the house tops. It was of course TV.

I left the RN aged 30 and spent the next 29 years overseas in sometimes very hairy situations.



His lion tamed, his Christian fellow-prisoners saved, Androcles, Greek tailor hero of Bernard Shaw's comedy, prepares to leave the scene. Collyer's School, Horsham, Drama Club presented a lively production of "Androcles and the Lion" last week-end, with C. Neville as Androcles and M. L. Dinnage as the lion. (Report page 7).

"ANDROCLES AND THE LION"  
 Though Collyer's School Drama Club's choice for their autumn production of Mr. G. B. Shaw's "Androcles and the Lion" may have seemed a little ambitious, the performances in School Hall on Thursday, Friday and Saturday showed that it was not beyond their scope. The play was well produced and well acted, and the story of the tailor, condemned by Caesar with other Christians to the wild beasts, only to emerge unharmed with the lion sent to attack him, from whose foot he had once removed a thorn, was charmingly presented. It is no possible reflection on the excellent playing of Androcles by C. Neville, if the "hit" of the play is accorded to M. L. Dinnage, as the lion subdued by the tailor's kindness from great ferocity to complete surrender, dancing with his benefactor to the ballet music "Les Sylphides." Also effective was the performance of the Drama Club Secretary, B. Arrow, as Ferrovius, another condemned Christian, whose single-handed devastation among the Roman Gladiators in the arena brings about a change of heart in the Emperor (J. A. Forrester).

**Benghazi Libya from 1965 to 1970 - working on the airport.**

In June 1964 during the Arab-Israeli war there were anti-British demonstrations. Via our Embassy we stayed in the Enniskillen Army barracks for 12 days. After there was a curfew for two weeks with Algerian soldiers on the streets. However in 1969 everything changed. King Idris was deposed and Colonel Gaddafi took over. We were replaced by Egyptians. When we left the customs were very nasty taking away jewellery. I had foreseen this and put my wife's in our airfreight in an iron.



Above: My wife Danie with Ali

Right: Beer mat commemorating US Marine Corps anniversary

**From 1970 to 1972 in La Luz Nicaragua**

A gold mining town in the middle of the jungle. The only way in from Managua the capital was by air or through the jungle on a donkey or up a river from the Atlantic ocean on the other side of the country. On 12 December 1971 I was on a TACA flight from Miami to Managua and hijacked to Costa Rica by four Sadinista guerrillas. The plane was later blown up and the guerrillas shot by the Military.

**1972 to 1975 Mogadishu Somalia.**

This was our best posting. It was a wonderful country and the people were always friendly. A Bedouin gave us a lion cub; we named him Ali. He only had one eye. He gave us so much pleasure but eventually he got too big and we gave him to the zoo.

The US Marine Corps were next door to us, I was an honorary member. They held their 199 years anniversary in our villa and garden. Later on Black Hawk Down and the mess the country is in now.



### 1979 to 1982 Maputo Mozambique

Samora Machel was the President of Frelimo, a Marxist regime. There were Russian soldiers everywhere. All the fish in the sea had been shipped back to Russia and the market was empty.

From 1975 to 1992 The Renamo anti-Communists backed by South Africa were fighting against them. I was shot at crossing a bridge on the Zambezi travelling from Tete to Moatize and stopped in my car by armed scraggly soldiers on the South African border going on my monthly food trip. They wanted bread, boot polish etc. This I gave on my return and afterwards continued this routine, becoming good friends.

In Tete the control tower had been blown up by the Rhodesians. There were still anti-Smith posters on the street walls in Portuguese. In the new airport I would often hitch a free ride to Maputo in small aircraft.

### 1986 Maseru Lesotho

Formally Basutoland. From 1966 there was continuous fighting between the Basuto Congress and Basuto

National Party until 1998 when the Lesotho Congress took over.

I flew down from Johannesburg to Maseru in a DC3. This was the same plane used in the film *Raid on Entebbe*. One could still see Wild Geese on its sides.

### 1986 to 1988 Sri Lanka

New Communication Equipment installed in the Air force Base. Colombo Airport was blown up after three months by the Tamil Tigers. They also blew up the fish market in Negombo where I was staying, killing six people.

### 1988 to 1990 Maputo. Mozambique

Still government Renamo and Frelimo rebels were fighting each other. There was little food and as it was impossible to go by road to South Africa I would fly by a small four-seater plane every month to stock up. A new communication system installed in the north at Beira Airport was blown up by the Frelimo Rebels in May 1989.



I left IAL in 1990 and joined PanAm at Salalah Airport, Oman and returned to UK in 1995 when aged 59, after 29 years overseas.

*Michael Dinnage*

*The picture is of the under-14 Cricket team. I am on the top second from left. I think Gareth Perry was next to me and possibly Brian Gates in the bottom row.*

## RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-Mail

We are hoping to hear from still 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)

## 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.

# Obituary - 'Ted' Palmer

**G**eorge Edward Palmer, who taught PE for some 37 years at Collyer's, was born on 13 May 1925 in Ryde on the Isle of Wight, the son of a police sergeant. He attended a local grammar school where he excelled academically, taking five A levels a year early, and went on to study engineering at Southampton University. After graduation he worked for the Air Ministry before deciding to take up teaching. However, in those immediate post-war years National Service intervened and instead he ended up going to Sandhurst and took a short-service commission with REME. Most of his service was spent in Palestine, where he took up parachuting and ran fitness classes for his soldiers.

After the army, he revisited his ambition to teach, and attended Carnegie College of Physical Education to train as a teacher of physical education. In his spare time he became a football and boxing referee and a qualified weightlifting coach.

On completion of his training at Carnegie, he applied for several PE teaching positions, including one at Collyer's. A Mr Stokes, who was on the Collyer's staff, had been one of 'Ted's' old teachers on the Isle of Wight, and recommended him to P.A. Tharp. PAT travelled to the Isle of Wight and 'Ted' was offered the position on a walk over Tennyson Down. Thus began an association with Collyer's, and Horsham, that would last for the rest of 'Ted's' working life.

He first stayed in lodgings in Clarence Road, and met a young lady, Barbara Ray, at a badminton match he went

to with art teacher 'Dougie' Hull. Their relationship blossomed, and despite Barbara contracting TB, with 'Ted' visiting her every weekend in hospital at Midhurst and during convalescence in Bognor, they got married in 1953, living first in Burford Road and then in a bungalow they had built near the school, in Pondtail Road, where they lived for the next 45 years and raised their own family.

At Collyer's 'Ted' taught maths, science and technical drawing as well as PE, and served as an officer in the CCF. Barbara went on to become Chairman of Horsham DC. He retired in 1988 at the age of 62. During his retirement he travelled extensively, including trips to New Zealand, Canada and the USA, and also to the Holy Land - he enjoyed a strong Christian faith.

When the house in Pondtail Road became too large to manage, they moved to a smaller bungalow in Southwater to be nearer their daughter. He was a keen gardener and member of the local horticultural society.

Most of us will remember 'Ted' working us hard in the school gym and on the playing fields, and recall his words of encouragement during cross-country runs of varying length and difficulty. I recall being, I think, one of his first technical drawing students, when that subject was added to the GCE syllabus. I later worked as a draughtsman for a while, and although as always the reality of the job differed considerably from the way it was taught in schools, Ted's grounding proving useful in many ways.

*Bill Thomson (1960-1965)*

## College news



**S**t Mary's Parish Church, on the Causeway in Horsham, is still the venue for the annual Carol Concert although the College is now so large it is simply impossible for all students to attend this event! Last December a packed congregation enjoyed an evening of festive music, dance and dramatic performance led by Collyer's Sinfonia and the college

Choir conducted by Head of Music, Dominic Leitner. Canon Guy Bridgewater was extremely impressed: "It's been a fantastic evening. The students have once again demonstrated their outstanding creative talents for us all to enjoy". The Principal, Dr Jackie Johnston was thrilled: "Huge thanks must go to Canon Guy Bridgewater and all at St Mary's for hosting the event. We are also extremely grateful to the students and staff who have made the festive occasion possible. £300 has been raised tonight to support Help for Heroes and our charitable projects in Tanzania - which is a fantastic effort!"

Recent College trips have included a student exchange to Hellin in Spain and visits to China, New York and the Gambia. Holocaust Memorial Day was remembered following a visit to Auschwitz Concentration Camp by three students, whilst International Women's Day was celebrated at the College and money raised for Oxfam as part of this.

*Mark Collins*

# Membership

**A** very warm welcome to all our new members - some of whom are probably reading our newsletter for the first time - and just a reminder that if any member wishes to have a copy of our membership list then please send me an A4 SAE with a Large Letter stamp to cover postage and I will be pleased to put one in the post.

Sadly we have a number of deaths to report this time including Eric Camfield (1928 - 1931) and Christopher Jackson (1945 - 1951). Eric Camfield's widow, Constance, wrote with the following: "It is with sadness that I report that Eric Camfield died in his sleep on 12 November 2011 following a long illness. He always spoke proudly of the time he spent at Collyers School and was always interested in receiving the Old Collyerian Association Newsletters. In January 2012 we would have celebrated 70 years of marriage and 58 years since we emigrated to New Zealand." Christopher Jackson was a retired solicitor and Senior Partner in Francis & Co, the oldest law firm in Cambridge before it merged with Mills and Reeve. His book, *A Cambridge Bicentenary*, recorded the firm's history, and its strong links with the University and Colleges. Christopher's brother, Stephen, has sent the following memory from his school days: "My brother and I were at Collyer's from 1945 to 1951 when P.A. Tharp was our Headmaster. After Advanced Levels we had to remain at school for some weeks until the end of term and one day Christopher and I sneaked off to the then new swimming pool in the park across from Hurst Road without the permission we should have asked for. To our horror we found the only other occupant of the pool was Mr Tharp! However, he seemed to ignore us and all was well. Phew!

"As we were about to leave school and go to London University (which incidentally the Careers Master, A.A. Henderson, rather looked down upon) we felt able to write a truthful review of the school play for The Collyerian. Our unexpected criticisms of at least one of the actors were not well received!"

**Due to data protection restrictions, membership data is available to OCA  
members only.**

**Join the OCA**

**to receive the full version of the newsletter, plus regular membership lists**