



The Old Collyerians' Association

Spring 2017

President's message

Greetings and best wishes to all OCA members and their families. The new year is certainly shaping up to be like no other in recent times!

I joined the OCA in 1993. I received a phone call from Martin Burgess, an old school mate, suggesting I meet up with him and Alan Lancaster at a pub at Scaynes Hill to discuss joining the OCA. By the time the annual dinner arrived in November, our ranks had swelled to include Derek Hill, Paul Herrington, Howard Matthews and Terry Sweeney (based purely on photographic evidence).

Some twenty years later when I was asked if I would be president, I was delighted to accept as it dawned on me that 2016 would be the 50th anniversary of the year I left Collyer's, plus the 'Swinging sixties' would no doubt be ideal material for speeches, and so it proved.

How appropriate then that Martin should give an excellent introductory speech at my installation dinner last November. It was great to see even more 'sixties boys and girls' on the night, hopefully there will be even more in 2017.

For me the great thing about the OCA is that, even though we have plenty of new technology today that allows us to organise more and more of our spare time, the OCA gives us the opportunity (or excuse) to get together once or twice a year to meet old friends and ex-Collyerians that you would probably not see on any other occasion. These opportunities are even organised for you by your hard working committee!

On the 8th December my wife and I attended the Collyer's Christmas Concert at St Mary's Parish Church. It was a great start to the Christmas festivities and highly recommended.

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L-R: Derek Sturt , Old Mercers' Club President John Murrell, Dave Picknell and Stewart Mackman at the Old Mercers' Club lunch

On the 13th December I was pleased to attend the Prizegiving, a remarkable evening of achievement, with 41 prizes awarded in all. I was there to present the OCA prizes for Outstanding Extra-Curricular Achievement and also Creative Writing.

The first award went to Tabitha Hall, who, besides getting involved in all areas of college activity, has an impressive record in activities leading to her current pursuit of an RAF Officer training place. She has also taken up an apprenticeship with the Guild of Mercers' Scholars (I joined in 2013).

The second went to Sophie Hutchison for her charming piece of observational prose, demonstrating both maturity and sensitivity.

Whatever the future holds we wish them and all Collyer's students great success, which judging by the excellent college results should not be too difficult. Congratulations to Sally and her team.



OCA President Dave Picknell at the College prizegiving, with Sophie Hutchison, winner of the 2016 Creative Writing prize, which is sponsored by the OCA

Lastly, I had great pleasure attending the Old Mercers' Club annual lunch with some friends from the OCA. The lunch was held at the Mercers' Hall and it was sad for me to hear that the Club may close in 2020. The Mercers' School closed in 1959, so does not have the advantage Collyer's has with an ongoing student population.

Dave Picknell

The 'Ox' factor

Staff and students at Collyer's are celebrating a record number of offers for places at Oxford and Cambridge (Oxbridge) with 14 students receiving offers for September 2017 entry. Principal Sally Bromley said: "We have allocated extra time this year to support students applying to universities and there is no doubt that students benefit from this focused extra support from expert teachers who attended Oxford and Cambridge colleges themselves. Congratulations to all."

Ian McAlister, who heads up the Progression Directorate at Collyer's said: "96% of students who apply to university from Collyer's get a place, with 82% at their first choice institution, which is above the national average". He added: "In addition to the outstanding support we offer to students wishing to



pursue Higher Education, we also pride ourselves on the progression and employability events we run such as our Not Going to University (NG2U) event".

Charlie Maclean is one of five ex-Forest School pupils, now at Collyer's, who has received an Oxbridge offer. He is hoping to study Computer Science at Kings College, Cambridge. Chiara Scaduto, who is having a year out, having left Collyer's in the summer, will study Classics at Trinity College Cambridge, and said: "I'm really grateful to Collyer's and it was nice to catch up with Ed Tattersall, who is an incredible teacher. I've also had personal congratulations from Professor Angie Hobbs, who previously studied Classics at Cambridge and was also taught by Ed during her time at Collyer's."

Mark Collins

More memories from the 1970s

Andrew Heaps (1972 - 1979), now living in France, reflects on his time at Collyer's, his love of being on 'two-wheels' and what Brexit will mean for him!

How I ever got an O-Level in French, goodness knows. Errors made in 'Penny' West's weekly verb and vocab tests had to be written 300 times - my solution was to write the whole lot out 300 times before the test and deliver the wodge with a silent "take yer pick, and stuff it where the sun don't shine!" What a sad little man he was. My father's dyslexia was only picked up when he was 65... my son's whilst still at junior school near Salisbury which helped him during his time at Bishop Wordsworth's grammar school there, so it is hoped that things have changed for the better. Funny that I should now have been living for 25 years in France and at one time wrote radio adverts in that language. One would hope that Ernie Brooksbank might have been surprised and delighted.

My aversion to sport was mainly through being somewhat of a large and chunky individual but also not being possessed of an iota of the killer instinct necessary to excel, or of any need to take on the responsibility of being a part of a team. Muddy Lane did however furnish me with my first old bicycle which was nestling in its hedge.... and made plodding its length almost worthwhile on that occasion. The nadir was the annual compulsory cross country. To come last in spite of one's best efforts, year after year, in front of the whole school - one would have to have been a fool, and I was far from that, not to have come to the conclusion, in response to that humiliation, that these activities were a fruitless waste of time. I clearly remember having an enormous set-to with Ray Smith after not responding to a 4 x 400m - I walked, expertly tossing my baton as I went. He was incandescent, I was completely calm. During the subsequent interview in his office I respectfully explained that I had got to Collyer's by using my intellect and would succeed at O-level and A-level by employing the same attribute, and not by messing around on a patch of grass. There was silence - I was a lost cause, but not one who was averse to standing up for himself. Something of a truce was called when he allowed me to ride a bicycle and I used the opportunity to discover the lanes around Horsham (the physical exercise side being incidental) - and since then I have never stopped! I met Ray again years later when I was on the OCA committee and found him to be charming.

Latterly, I would chat with the lovely groundsman, Derek, and he would let me mow the out-field of the 1st 11 pitch with the magnificent 36in 650cc Dennis petrol lawnmower. It didn't feel like exercise because I was so enthralled by such a beautiful machine. I now have a vintage example of my own! Other joys were

acting on stage, both at The Duckering and Capitol Theatre, music (we ex-members of the Collyer's Dixieland Jazz Band are still in touch with each other), the CCF - I loved shooting and was really rather good at it - and the haven of peace that was the Art Room, first with Arty Hull with his bow-ties and uke, and then with the wonderful John Tunnicliffe, where philosophical discussion was as stimulating and fruitful as the artistic endeavour. I was always rather terrified by 'Ed' Slynn, with his huge eyebrows and dour face, and was expecting to be roasted for some unknown misdemeanour, when asked to go and see him by the lovely Mrs. Kemp one day. In fact he wanted me to be Head Prefect which came as a shock! I had thought the position always went to some brain-box destined for Oxbridge but considering it many years later I came to the conclusion that he needed a likable public figure able (hopefully) to help him with the transition from Grammar School to Sixth-Form College. It would be for others to judge what success I had but it was fun and there was a certain pride in seeing one's name in gold added to the long list of predecessors.

My lifelong love of old machinery started with that first Hercules bicycle extracted from the Muddy Lane hedge and Collyer's splendid Dennis lawnmower.

I used to cycle over from Horsham to watch the London to Brighton vintage car run, with my thermos, and sit in the drizzle at the top of Pease Pottage Hill with the aim of seeing how many veteran cars I could push when they konked out at the top. My record was seven - simple boyish pleasures... Then in 1999 I had the opportunity to take part on an 1898 Benz. I had to choke back the tears as we crossed the finish line in Brighton (silly really to find such a thing so emotional) and I've been part of team Benz ever since. Hyde Park, as the dawn arrives to the clatters and bangings of these antique vehicles is a joy - less so is the modern traffic on the way down through London. I now have my own four-wheeled contraption from 1900, upon which I might one day take part although the costs are astronomical. There are more and more millionaires per square inch every year as the prices of the vehicles skyrocket.

The Pioneer Run for veteran motorcycles, from Epsom to Brighton, is a completely separate event and the motorbike crowd much more down to earth - most falling into the 'grease monkey' category of muck-and-bullets enthusiasts which is more to my liking.

The route is a delight. From Epsom racecourse we pass down through Reigate, Crawley, up that notorious Pease Pottage Hill, which I've never yet got to the top of, and then from Handcross down through Lower Beeding to Henfield and thence into Brighton and a futter along Madeira Drive to the finish. Wonderful! It really is cruelty to mopeds to get my 1902 Valliere to

haul my bulk, but during the 2015 run we managed it in 3 hours and 20 minutes - something of a record. My baby brother, Simon, who is also an Old Collyerian, was my back-up driver.

As for Brexit - having been disenfranchised the instant after being here in France for 15 years I had no say in

the result of the referendum. My future and status was placed in the hands of others and they proved to be unequal to the responsibility.

The day before the vote I was a European - the day after a Little Englander. I have started the process of naturalisation as a result.

Winter Reunion Dinner 2016

President **Eric Austin** began last year's annual reunion dinner with this grace, and, as always, the evening was indeed one of celebration - of Collyer's past and present, of school and college, and of a strong future assured by another excellent set of exam results and an award of 'Outstanding' from Ofsted.

*"As we dine with friends from near or far
In close co-operation
Lord bless this food we shall enjoy
At Collyers celebration."
Amen.*

Our official guests included the Principal Sally Bromley, the new chair of Governors Carolyn Watson, Marie Heylin the first lady Master of the Guild of Mercers Scholars, Tony Williams from the Old Mercers Club and representing the College students Ella Dobson and Jacob Myers. We were also pleased to welcome three members of staff who started teaching at Collyer's in the 1970's - and were now looking forward to a well-earned retirement. Ed Tattersall, Nick Robins and Jonathan Simons are leaving after well over 100 years of teaching between them. It was also time to say farewell to another familiar face. John Redgrave who has been providing the bar at our dinners for over 30 years, is also retiring. He has provided excellent service and, in particular, a wonderful selection of table wines at very reasonable prices and although we are sorry to see him go he has promised to make sure that whoever takes over the reins will continue to look after us.

Throughout the entertaining speeches we learnt Collyer's still has much to offer students both in terms of education and extra-curricular skills. The debating society is still going strong - indeed Jacob Myer's is current president - as is the Richard Collyer Union (previously known as the school or college council) and students continue to support various local and national charities and take part in drama and music projects for the wider community.

During the evening the President's chain of office was passed from Eric Austin to David Picknell (1959 - 1966) whilst a contemporary of David's, Martin Burgess, told us a bit about our new President and how they had grown up together; going first to Trafalgar Road Infant school, then to Greenway and finally on to Collyer's fostering a friendship that has endured for over 60 years. These were the days of the 'swinging sixties', of



David Picknell (left) receives the President's chain of office from past president Eric Austin

mods and rockers squaring up to each other on the seafront at Brighton, and of coffee houses and local dances - all of which provided plenty of reminiscences.

The amusing anecdotes continued when David himself came to speak. By his own admission he was never the most academically inclined and struggled to devote as much time to his studies as he ought to (his A-Level Physics report stated "Only a very determined effort during the next few months can avoid a disastrous result in June"!) but he found time to excel as a runner and to be an active member of the army section of the CCF, finishing as Colour Sergeant in his final year.

Outside school there were plenty of other distractions some of which he shared with us: "I remember on one occasion we heard that the High School for girls held dancing classes. We made a grand entrance by rolling up outside the dance hall on our scooters, complete with parkas and berets. However, having joined the dance class, we soon discovered that you were not allowed to select your own partner for each dance lesson, you were given one. Needless to say we didn't return!"

He also recalled his meeting with the careers master 'George' Henderson who sat back in his chair, opened a copy of the *West Sussex County Times* at the classified ads page and declared, "There is a vacancy at Edwards in Crawley. They are a science based company and you like science, why don't you apply"? The fact he had been to Collyer's was enough to guarantee him an

interview and, although the role he had applied for was a clerical one, the company decided he would instead be perfect for an engineering apprenticeship and further education.

Having successfully completed his courses and gained an HNC he went on to study for a Diploma in Marketing, working during the day and attending classes during the evening (his Physics master would have been most impressed!) and having passed all his exams went on to have a successful career in sales and marketing working for Edwards until he retired some 40 years later - proof indeed that going to University isn't always an essential prerequisite to worthwhile employment (the College recognises this today and,

despite a record number of students being offered places at Oxford and Cambridge, has just run a 'Not Going to University, NG2U' event to offer alternative routes into later life.)

With a respectable turnout of 80 Old Collyerians and guests it was another memorable evening with attendees travelling from as far north as Sheffield - one of whom, Michael Wright, was making his first trip back to Collyer's since he left in 1962 - and as far west as Canada in the case of Michael Ansell (another contemporary of our new President).

Next year's dinner will be on Saturday 25th November. Please do join us if you can.

Mark Collins

Life in 3B 1957-1958

3 B was something of a cross-roads form. It consisted of boys demoted from the A stream, boys promoted from the C stream (so that they could continue with Latin), and the balance of good middle grammar school boys. One criticism of such a system was that boys who had passed the selection process and were in the C stream were now starting to be categorised as not much good which was far from true. In fact, although many did not go on to higher education, they left after the fifth year and were highly successful in banking, insurance and the trades, probably earning more than many of the "high-flyers".

3B in 1957 - 1958 was larger than usual - 35 or 36 13-14 year old adolescent boys. We were lively, and a handful to those masters with weaker discipline, but we wanted to achieve and responded well to firm teaching. Our form-room was room 1, close to the front door, but screened by the need to pass through Room 2. Chas Woollett, our form-master, was very laid back and did not interfere. In reality, he probably suffered from poor health - he had a yellowish wrinkled complexion, and died nearly as soon as he retired. He was also our maths master. Lessons were predictable; an example or two worked on the board, and then setting us to work through our textbook. Chas would sit with and challenge the ablest boys with more advanced examples, but he would only help those with problems who asked, and boys being boys, many did not request his attention.

It was unfortunate that science, or General Science as it was called, was taken by a new young pink-faced man with a high pitched voice and an unpleasant disposition, Captain Percy Pointer. Pointer would shout, slam doors, keep us behind for half an hour for no reason on Wednesdays, but never on Fridays when it was Combined Cadet Force after school and he was in uniform. No doubt he was a competent commander, and indeed a good physicist, but his patience with a mixed class, some of whom would go on to specialise in

sciences, but others who inclined to the humanities and languages, was short. General Science was supposed to consist of one third physics, one third chemistry and one third biology, but we could have spent no more than the last two in the entire year. Pointer had some original methods of punishment which would certainly not be tolerated today; these included ear twisting, hair pulling, rubbing his bony knuckles down your spine with blazer off, and placing a pencil under your nose and forcing your head back until tears streamed from your eyes. It was fortunate that in the following two years I benefited from the solid science teaching of 'Dan' Twidle which resulted in a good O level pass.

Pointer was a little man which may have accounted for his belligerent attitude. Another master, short of stature was Gosney who, by rumour and no evidence whatsoever was purported to be deficient of one or two bodily organs. He had a loud voice and sarcastic tongue, and little apparent sense of humour. I took German, and whilst few warmed to the man, he was a very competent teacher and we all gave him our best. A lambasting of his tongue if you slacked was enough to ensure that!

"Gedge" G G Hunt had the misfortune to take 3B for both Latin and history so we saw quite a bit of him. By then, he was elderly, basically a kindly man, who had drawn the short straw. When allowed to get on, his teaching of Latin was traditional but adequate, but he was easily diverted and argued with, and whole lessons would be lost. Again I was lucky in the following two years to have the good offices of Dick Tidey to plug any deficiencies in G G's tuition. Obviously history was a fill-in timetable subject. The Tudors and Stuarts should have been a fascinating period, especially for teenage boys, but endless copying of notes from the blackboard plus said diversions destroyed history for me. It had been one of my best and favourite subjects up till then. The following year, deputy head 'Gob' Willson took us for history - probably the only form he taught. Despite

being of Gedge's generation, his teaching was inspired - he brought the period of the social and early agricultural and industrial changes of the 17th and 18th centuries to life, and invited discussion. His methods were way ahead of the time and he rekindled my interest in the subject. Returning to Jedge, at least he read us classic ghost stories at the end of term.

In our first two years, Geography had been taught intermittently by non-specialists who thought that learning by rote, rivers, capes and bays and products of different countries was the entire subject. Then Mr Ambrose, a young, just out of college PE master came to the school, and for his pains was given 3B for geography as well. This was an eye-opener. He had obviously taken geography as his subsidiary subject at Loughborough. This was geography as a respectable discipline and taught as it should be. He taught us to understand why there were variations across the regions, and how physical, economic and social factors came to influence them. Then there were also the basic elements of physical geography, weather and climate, geology and relief, vegetation patterns etc. I had always had an interest in the natural world. Ambrose lit the flame which, together with the later inspired teaching of Bill Stokes and 'Larry the Lamb' Thomas encouraged me to study the subject at university and obtain a first class Honours degree.

Being a PE teacher meant that Ambrose had no problem with class room discipline. He had had some time in the RAF, and so his physical training was hard although fair. He knew there were boys who were not cut out as world athletes, and as long as they tried their best, he would encourage and be satisfied with what they did achieve. The second part of the lesson was taken up with some game or the other, and his versions of British Bulldog and Shinty would have had the current Health and Safety industry in fits.

One of the best and most inspired masters at the time was 'Jerry' Hanratty who took us for English in 3B, and was also my form master in 4A. He was a young Geordie whose interest was in the creative side of the subject - indeed he had had a play broadcast on the radio, and produced some brilliant school plays. Sadly he left after a couple of years to take up a post at a teacher training college where, no doubt, his forward thinking approach was passed on to generations of English teachers. His lessons were also something to look forward to, and although he paid lip-service to the traditional teaching of grammar and the accepted traditional texts, he encouraged us in our reading and writing- horror stories, sci-fi, adventures. It was a case of not being entombed in traditional acceptance of the classics but to explore all types of literature and think for ourselves.

Another master I owe a lot to was Jim Hodgson. Jim was older and very different in outlook, organist at the Parish Church, and a talented pianist in his own right. For the first two years, Jim had taught us something of

the theory of music, but from the third year he branched into musical appreciation. That is, after the absolute torture of having each one of us adolescents with breaking voices, sing a solo in front of the entire class. Jim's own musical tastes were eclectic., and he had a wide selection of the then new LP records- not just the Beethovens and Bach, but modern composers, then including Schoenberg, Britten, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Copland, and also masters of the Twentieth Century and Romantic era - Mahler, who was little known then, Nielsen, Vaughan Williams et al. The secret of Jim's teaching was "The Innocent Ear", by which he meant we should not refuse to listen to or dismiss any type of music, but rather to listen to it attentively and examine our reaction to it regardless of the label attached. On this basis he himself would listen to jazz and the modern "pop" of the era courtesy of Radio Luxembourg and express his honest reaction. Later Jim would allow a trusted few access to his records to play at lunch break. I had no musical background but have Jim to thank for my current wide taste and enjoyment in music.

Although he did not teach me until 5A and then General English in the 6th form, another excellent master was Vernon Davies - the English department were lucky with their teachers. 'Gur' Davies was able to communicate his own love of Twentieth Century literature and poetry - the War Poets, T S Elliot, Yeats, Auden, Housman etc, - and again the importance of seeking out what meant most for us and not read what people determined we should read.

A master I did not personally like was the art master, Hull, whom I found to be an artistic snob. Fortunately art could soon be dropped. My dislike grew from the fact that I was poor at drawing and painting, and often Hull would hold up my sincere although flawed efforts to ridicule by the rest of the class. He was another master who lavished his time on those with talent, but gave little help to those less skilled. His attempt to introduce us to the masters of art was to have a series of reproductions with brief biographies pinned up round the walls. Each week, a red spot was attached to one of these and during the lesson we were expected to assimilate the details of the painting of the week. When the bell went to go home or to lunch a boy would be picked upon to regurgitate details of the selected item. Failure to do so to Hull's satisfaction meant that you had to go back and "refresh your memory". Meanwhile, the rest of the delayed class would be whispering threats at their delay while you stumbled! To this day, I have little appreciation in the visual arts. unlike in music or literature.

In our year in 3B, woodwork and craft master Mr Routley was away on a year's course. He was replaced by a retired master, Stan Tolliday. Stan's main purpose was to use the facilities to build a boat - teaching came very much second. Indeed, he did not care if we did nothing at all, so for all but the few, woodwork was a

social club, and even boys who were excused games would drop in for a chat. Most of us dropped the subject at the end of the year anyway. Generally we knew that as long as we did not run around or make too much noise we could get away with it. Heaping wood shavings in the store room, setting fire to it and locking a boy or two inside with the smoke was about the most risky thing we did. Poor Routley must have wept tears when he returned and saw the state of his beloved workshop!

Then we had 'Froggy' Kenyon for French. Despite his seniority, it was to him that we gave the roughest time. Most French lessons were in the afternoon, and first period after lunch on a Friday afternoon must have been hell indeed. Froggy would always get involved in arguments with the entire class, could lose his temper, and had little sense of humour. (At least, when some of us were studying Molière with him in A level French, he would snort and giggle at subjects like cuckoldry and hypochondria, whilst us 17 year old boys stared on without comprehension.) I recall we would sometimes all arrive wearing large dock leaves in our lapels "in memory of all the frogs who had lost their back legs in the last war." He had the unfortunate habit of picking his nose, and whilst the class were supposed to be studying their books in silence, Froggy would look up and find the entire class with their index fingers buried up their nostrils to the first joint.

Each year, the school would host a French assistant, always a smart young lady, who inevitably went by the generic name of the "French Tart". She would hold French conversation with small groups in another room. In reality, the young lady concerned always made a good job of drawing out communication from bashful and unwashed youths, and they were enjoyable classes. Frog's fear of rudeness was indeed groundless as these sessions were conducted with extreme chivalry and politeness. But when we demanded lessons with the "French Tart", it was like red rag to a bull.

Froggy had written a series of textbooks, *Le Français Vivant*, which we worked through at the rate of one volume a year. He always spoke of "MY" textbook when setting 'Prep' as homework was always called. Whether we finished the volume or not at the end of the year, we moved onto the next one the following September. One well-behaved, hard-working and quiet lad in 3B whose name I'll not mention to avoid his blushes, suddenly started to get into trouble for not doing or handing in his homework - most unlike the lad. Investigation eventually revealed the reason. Now the block of outside toilets consisted of two parts - the older and probably original section and the slightly newer block. It was only ever the four cubicles of the newer block which were supplied with toilet paper, if that is what the hard shiny Bronco could be called. The errant lad along with many others had not been aware of this distinction. His early morning bicycle ride to school led to a frequent need to make use of the

facilities in the old block. With no TP, the lad was in the habit of ripping a couple of pages from the back of his *Le Français Vivant*. Unfortunately, the time came when his desire for personal hygiene and his linguistic studies met head-on, and there were no pages left in the later section of his text-book for him to do his homework. (Pre-mobile phone days, don't forget!). A mole from the staffroom later revealed that for weeks, Froggy would keep repeating, "But why my French book? Why was it only ever my French book, he used?!"

Then there was Major Reeves for RE. For the first two years we had been taught divinity by a respectable Church of England clergyman. Reeves had been a padre in the forces for many years, and was certainly a rough diamond in comparison. His lessons consisted of reading a chapter, usually of Acts of the Apostles, together with a rather robust commentary and personal reminiscences. As long as we were quiet, it was an occasion to do some prep. However, Reeves did need some marks for the fortnightly order, so we would be set a chapter to read and then there would be a test. Paper was given out and ten questions would be rattled off, made up as he went along. Boys would write the most idiotic comments by each number and then papers would be passed to a neighbour for "marking". A mark would also be appended - say 7/10. This would duly be read out when Reeves called for the results. He would then have the papers collected up for later checking, but by the end of the lesson they would end up in the bin unseen.

Of course, teenage boys would try to push the line by asking risqué questions. Reeves was always ready with a stock answer. I recall that circumcision was always "the unkindest cut of all", and fornication was "what begins by drawing on the lavatory wall and ends up on the front page of the News of the World".

I will mention 'George' Henderson because although he never taught me until A level history he was our house master in Weald House. He was a very kindly man, a bit old maidish as he lived with a maiden aunt and his mother. Sadly he was often ragged by more junior boys and alleged shell-shock meant he was very nervous. The bursting of a paper bag behind him was an unkind act, severely punished if caught, but which caused him to disintegrate into fits of shivers. He was getting past his sell-by date, but a most enthusiastic supporter of Weald. The success of the house was largely due to his fortune of having a succession of very able prefects. I fear his history teaching, mainly a regurgitation of his very tattered university notebooks - again the Tudors and the Stuarts. I was never lucky with that period of English history!

In the sixth form, George took selected students on quite a few educational visits and I am very grateful to him for that. As other students passed driving tests, other cars were available so that sometimes the party consisted of ten or a dozen lads. I recall his taking us to Oxford and to visit his old college. Near Reading, he

"remembered" a shortcut from his student days- no motorways in those days. The minor road became a track, and then suddenly we were surrounded on both sides by walls of lavatories piled high. He had inadvertently taken us into the Twyford sanitary-ware factory by a back entrance. Imagine the look of astonishment on the employees faces when several car-loads of students emerged in the front of the factory, waved at them, swept round in a circle and returned the way they had come!

A visit to the Law Courts in London provided us with another cause for amusement. We were quietly ushered into the gallery of one of the courts to view proceedings which turned out to be the Case of the Gay Bull! Apparently the owner of a prize stud bull loaned it out at considerable cost to farmers for breeding purposes. The bull however stubbornly refused to do what was required, and indeed had nothing to do with the cows on offer. The farmers wanted their money back and were also casting doubts on the pedigree of said bull. Lawyers were called in, and when we arrived, evidence of the most intimate details was being presented. George was highly embarrassed and wanted to get us out as quickly as possible. We, of course, were fascinated, and in his efforts to get us to move, George was asked to leave along with his students.

We then went across to the Old Bailey. A juicy murder this time, but again we arrived when sordid details of the adulteries leading up to the slaughter were being presented! Once more, George tried to get us out. All too much for a bachelor of his generation.

But, more than anything else, I was grateful to him the day he took us to the House of Commons. It was Prime Ministers Question Time. And a very elderly Winston Churchill hobbled in with his two walking sticks and sat on a front bench. Apparently he rarely appeared due to his age. How pleased we were to be able to say we had seen the great man in the flesh. As it happened, the leader of the opposition at the time was Hugh Gaitskell, expected eventually to become prime minister at the next election as the Conservatives were appearing to be running out of steam. Sadly, this was not to be- Gaitskell died, and Harold Wilson became the P.M. So, thanks, Hendy- that was really a day which sticks in my mind.

Although nothing to do with 3B, there is one other master I would like to pay tribute to - Mr Lees. He took us non-scientists for General Science in the sixth form. I believe he was head of science, but he was a brilliant man, well-read, and took us through a maze of inventions and developments at the time - latest thoughts on cosmology and the universe, other earth shattering developments in science, even the future possibilities of computers. He also welcomed debate on the ethics associated with scientific breakthroughs. Sadly he was diagnosed and died of cancer. He worked until not long before he died and we saw his decline - he even explained to us his cancer, and treatment and why he would not recover. A remarkable man!

Sadly virtually none of these teachers are still with us. They were a varied bunch but in almost every case, were I able, I would have been pleased as an adult to shake their hand, and thank them for what they did for me- I did get all my O- and A- levels, so even the weaker links must have had some effect. Certain of them, Hanratty, Davis, Ambrose, Stokes, Thomas, Hodgson and Henderson, I would like to tell them that they had made a big difference to my country boy education. And just two, of all the teachers I had at Collyer's, I would turn my nose up and ignore. One as mentioned here would be Pointer, in my opinion, a thoroughly unpleasant man, and the other Coulson, headmaster whom I have written about before, whom I considered a thoroughly two-faced, cold, bigoted, stuck-up and insensitive man who created an uncertainty and fear in a school which could have been a so much happier and successful place.

I am sure others who were there at the time will have other perspectives and disagree with me. I fully accept these are my personal memories. I do apologise if I have inadvertently misspelt any masters' names.

Finally and maybe a little more light-heartedly, who remembers the school song which we sang so vigorously at Founders and other formal days? Is it still around, and ever used? I bet not. I may not be word perfect, but it was something like:

*In Collyer's School. It is our rule
To sing our worthy Founder's Praise
Who faring forth
From Horsham Town
In London City won renown
An honest Mercer all his days.*

In the third, fourth and fifth form, there was an informal version sung sotto voce and bearing in mind it was especially sung in the summer months:

*Hooray! Hooray!
The First of May.
Outdoor sex begins today.
Hurrah! Hurrah!
The First of June
All good boys will be getting it soon
Boo Hoo! Boo Hoo!
The First of July
Those b*** Prefects will soon be saying goodbye!*

Malcolm Papes

Editor's note: Thanks Malcolm for these notes, I am sure many of us share those memories and even some of the opinions. Some masters made different impressions - Andrew Heaps (see earlier) had quite a different view of Mr Hull, as did I, but art was the one subject I was actually good at. I surprisingly thrived under Mr Pointer, but do appreciate that if you went just an inch too far you got his full venom. And your version of School Song verse one is correct; it is still performed, but as far as we are aware only at the annual OCA Winter Reunion (and of course we never change 'piety and learning' in the refrain to 'piracy and burning'...)

Summer Reunion 2017

As summer rapidly approaches it is time to tell you about the Summer Reunion. We have chartered a two-hour trip on the Wey & Arun canal at Loxwood, on the *Zachariah Keppel*, starting at 11am on Sunday 11th June. The cost is £10.00 per person and as seating is limited, if you are able to come please book early to avoid disappointment.



'Zachariah Keppel' on the Wey & Arun Canal

All bookings should be made with Derek Sturt at 8 Old Guildford Rd, Broadbridge Heath, HORSHAM, West Sussex RH12 3JU, complete with a cheque to cover the trip cost. Any queries please contact Derek by email (sturt99@hotmail.com) or telephone on 01403 261756.

I have to admit that I have a soft spot for the Wey & Arun canal restoration. This project started in 1970 and membership of the trust has grown to be one of the largest in the country.

When I stopped work a few years ago I needed an activity to keep me fit, so I joined a gym. It took me less than my first years membership to realise that rather

than exercising looking out of a large window, I would rather be outside. I had considered golf, but based on my friends' playing patterns it seemed to be either addictive or not cost effective. I wanted a voluntary activity outdoors with no commitments. Horsham Green Gym and the Wey & Arun Canal Trust fulfilled these needs.

My activities now involve hedge laying and general canal related clearance work. This work highlighted to me what an amazing project it is, to restore 'London's lost route to the Sea'. Since joining the Trust I have attended the opening of two rebuilt locks (one previously blown up by the Canadians during the 2nd World War). and last year the opening of the new Compasses bridge at Dunsfold Aerodrome. This event marked the Bicentenary Celebrations of the canal opening in 1816.

It is proposed that after the trip, all those who would like a good Sunday lunch before heading off can meet at the Sir Roger Tichborne at Alfold Bars which is a few minutes' drive towards Alfold. We will need to advise the restaurant on numbers for our table, so please confirm when booking your trip if you are to join us for lunch. Further details including menus are on the website, www.thetichborne.co.uk

The canal centre is right behind the Onslow Arms in Loxwood, ideal for pre-trip refreshment, and behind that is a free car park (through the gate). Please arrive at least 15 minutes before the trip starts. Full information can be found on the Trust website. www.weyandarun.co.uk Also please make a note in your diary for the OCA Winter Reunion Dinner on the 25th November 2017, held at the College. Further details will follow in the Autumn newsletter.

Dave Picknell

Atlantic Crossing

An account by College student Tabby Hall, who was awarded the OCA Outstanding Extra-Curricular Achievement prize last December.

Last Autumn I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to join an expedition to sail the Atlantic with a friend of mine and her two parents. The crossing would take 24 days and would push my physical and mental limits.

On the 13th of November I flew out to Lanzarote where the boat was at harbour, due to a final addition of a solar arch on the stern of the boat (to reduce generator fuel consumption) we eventually set off from Lanzarote on the 24th of November. Before we left the harbour we agreed our watch times and daily schedule as well as some basic training on navigation, adjusting

course and sail setting. Wanting to get as wide a range of experiences as possible I signed up for the 0400-0700 and the 1300-1600 shifts allowing me to get both day and night sailing and navigation experience as well as being solely responsible for the ship during the night.

We left with a good weather forecast, 18 knot winds and 1-2 metre swells, perfect weather for our vessel, however by the second evening the weather had deteriorated to gusting up to 45 knots (a force 9/strong gale) and the sea had become incredibly choppy and confused meaning the motion of the boat was difficult to control. The result was we spent that night ploughing through the waves at around 2 knots just waiting for the weather to break. Strange as it may sound this night actually really helped me to settle into the voyage as it increased my confidence both in myself and in the

boat. Having come through unscathed I was far more confident in taking solo watches and making decisions on my own, as well as whenever weather got rough I had complete faith in the yacht.

The weather soon improved and we spent the best part of a week picking our way through doldrums (areas with little to no wind.) It was an excellent opportunity to get some rest in and settle into the rhythm of life on board. Things went smoothly until one evening when we had an accident whilst trying to change sails, we forgot one step in the process and in about 2 seconds had snapped a halyard, bent two stainless steel bars 90 degrees and wrapped several ropes around the forestay (the wire at the bow which supports the main mast.) Although it wasn't very dramatic the end result was we had the genoa stuck all the way up, we couldn't reef it (make it smaller by wrapping it around the forestay,) and we were unable to get it down.

At this point the sun set and the wind picked up. The genoa is the largest sail on the boat, it's about 64 meters squared and is made of heavy windproof canvas, fully out it provides a huge amount of thrust for the boat however you don't want it un-reefed beyond 18 knots as it will make the boat heel (lean over,) if you're caught by a wave whilst heeling you run the risk of broaching (water coming over the side) or in extreme cases capsizing (completely tipping over.)

Naturally we all got a bit nervous as the wind was now starting to pick up as were the waves. The only option was to go and try to untangle the wound ropes from the forestay and haul the genoa down by hand. Myself and Andrew (the heavier and slightly stronger two of the crew) got our life jackets on and made our way to the bow where we clipped on. Maddy and Lindsey tried to keep the boat pointed into the wind so as to make it easier to unwrap the ropes and pull the sail down. We were eventually successful in getting the ropes untangled but hauling the sail in would prove to be much more difficult. By this point the waves and wind had picked up to a point where we were ploughing through some sizeable swells, this meant that at the bow Andrew and I were being drenched by the spray and struggling to keep our feet as the deck pitched.

It was also nearing 2300 and so was very dark, thankfully we had powerful torches that Maddy was aiming so we could see what we were doing but it meant we couldn't predict the waves and were slammed against the railings more than once. At the same time the genoa is so large that the boat's engine is not powerful enough to keep the bow into the wind, the genoa just catches the wind and pushes the bow away which causes it to violently back, a bit like a flapping sheet on a washing line, as a result both Andrew and myself were hit with the sail or were jerked almost off our feet trying to keep a hold of it.

The final complication we faced was if we managed to get some of the sail down the wind would then gust causing the sail to fill and shoot back up again, a couple of times we were lifted clean off our feet as the sail



filled only to be pulled back by our tethers. In the end careful timing and a lucky spot of calmer weather allowed us to get the sail down and lashed to the deck, it had taken about 2 hours. All in all Andrew and I were pretty badly bruised and rather sore but the sail was down and the next day we were able to fix all the damage meaning that although it was a costly mistake it did not impact on our crossing as a whole.

Needless to say this was probably the most challenging experience of the crossing but it also taught me that a sense of humour is essential to keeping morale up and that trusting your team to keep you safe and within your limits is crucial.

I'm happy to say that the rest of the voyage was much quieter, the last week provided some challenging weather but by this point our confidence had grown and it became easier to adapt as the weather changed. I took advantage of any down time to hone new skills: I learned how to repair a wide range of sailing equipment from snapped wrappings to navigation lights and even some engine maintenance and checks as well as improving my knowledge of sailing and of the sea, I became competent on using the radar to track incoming weather systems and plan ahead for changes in wind speed, I learned how to operate the AIS shipping tracker/GPS and adjust course to avoid shipping.

Finally I learned key skills on how to look after both myself and the crew, keeping a good schedule, drinking enough water, eating regularly (even if you didn't feel like it,) and making sure everyone was keeping hydrated and sleeping enough. Not to mention essential experience on living in a confined space with three other people for nearly a month with little contact to the outside world. We reached Antigua on the 18th of December just in time for me to catch my flight home on the 19th.

A real focus when planning this expedition was to find something that would push me out of my comfort zone, let me experience totally new sights and events and something that I could be truly proud of. This crossing fully allowed me to fulfil all of these, away from home and at one point thousands of miles away from the closest land it definitely pushed me beyond what was familiar.

We were lucky enough to see some incredible sights; pods of dolphins jumping a few metres away, fantastic night skies, the phosphorescence in the boat's wake, incredible sunsets and (in my case) sunrises and a full range of sea states and weather.

Lastly there were some truly unforgettable experiences, going swimming in the middle of the Atlantic with the closest land being 11 miles below you, taking control of the boat through tough seas, getting

to grips with all the systems and understanding the various pieces of equipment and getting to spend time with great people.

To sum up, 24 days at sea, 3400 nautical miles, four crew members and an absolutely unforgettable and invaluable experience which has not only helped prepare me for my chosen career but has equipped me with lessons that I will never forget, and memories which I will treasure for the rest of my life.

Collyer's last resting place

Did Richard Collyer finally return to his Sussex roots? Last year marked the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London. The inferno raged for four days wiping out much of the city - including the site of the former home of Richard Collyer in Cheapside. It may also have destroyed his last resting place and any memorial to him that once existed.

Collyer's will (the original of which is held in the National Archives at Kew) states: "*I bequethe my soule to Almighty God and to the most glorious Virgyn our Lady and to all the holy company of hevyn And my body to be buried in Holy Sepulcre And after my body buried I wille that all my detts that I owe of right and conscience be paide by myn executours.*"

So where exactly is our founder buried? The Mercers' Company have their own extensive archives and, although they were kindly able to provide a copy of the will, a request to them for an answer drew a blank. What they were able to confirm is that there was, and still is, only one City of London church dedicated to St Sepulchre - this being St Sepulchre-without-Newgate (otherwise known as The Church of the Holy Sepulchre) which stands on the corner of Giltspur Street and Holborn Viaduct. The interior was completely gutted by the fire in 1666 but the church was rebuilt, modified in the 18th Century and extensively changed in 1834 and again in 1878. There is, however, no record of a Richard Collyer having been buried there.



Warminghurst Church, near Ashington, West Sussex

Interestingly, with his Sussex connections another possibility was suggested by the archivist at Mercers' Hall - the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the tiny hamlet of Warminghurst. Having been declared redundant in 1979 this beautiful old building is now cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust and is currently undergoing restoration. Although, once again, there is no evidence of a memorial or gravestone could this tranquil place, less than a dozen miles from Horsham, in fact be the final resting place of our founder? Sadly, unless further information comes to light, it seems unlikely we shall ever know.

Mark Collins

Jottings

Andrew Campbell recalls school trips in the 1950s - any other memories of similar outings are always welcome. I went to Castle Townshend twice in 1957 and 1958. This was my first trip away from home by myself. The party was made up of 2nd, 3rd and 4th year boys. We travelled by train under 'Hendy's' guidance from Horsham to Victoria and then on by steam train from Paddington to Fishguard Harbour. Being a loco spotter this was a great experience! The train was 3rd class but we had 1st class cabins aboard *MV Innesfallen* (City of Cork Steam Packet Company) from Fishguard to Cork. On boarding the ship we had dinner and then went to

our cabins. This could be a rough crossing and on my first trip the scheduled 9 hour crossing took about 12 hours because of the rough seas. Most people were ill but I was up for a full breakfast at 8.00 am! On arrival in Cork we took the bus to Skibbereen via Bandon. There Hendy met us in his hired car and ferried us to Castletownshend. A most relaxed holiday ensued with many outdoor activities. Hendy arranged trips out in the car to local places of interest like the Danish Fort and The Spanish Oven. There was a shop in the village with a bar at one end which served us 13 year old boys with beer or cider and it seemed great to avail

ourselves of this facility, sitting on bar stools! (I cannot verify whether this was legal then, it certainly wouldn't be now!) In the evenings we played Pontoon for money in the dignified first floor lounge overlooking the harbour.

I went sailing most days on *Thea* skippered by Pat O'Donovan. We explored many off shore rocks and islands, some with seals, and we fished for Mackerel and Pollock. Other times we hiked, rode horses, went boating and swimming and did everything outdoors. I didn't want to come home. The two weeks were over far too quickly. Great relaxed break and growing up experience.

We have brought news, over the last few issues, of the demise of several distinguished former Collyer's pupils who were not necessarily OCA members. Few were more distinguished in their field than Crispian Scully CBE who recently died aged 71. Professor Scully, who attended Collyer's in the 1950s/60s, was latterly UCL



Emeritus Professor in Dentistry and Dean of the Eastman Dental Institute in London. He reportedly published around 1500 papers and several books on dentistry. As our Secretary put it: "A serious student of biology and a friendly, cheerful character at school. A great tribute to Roland Soper."

Could you be the next newsletter editor? The current editor, having been in the post now for well over 10 years, feels that maybe it is time for a new approach. The OCA needs to evolve to reflect changing times, and maybe appeal more to more recent College students. If you would be prepared to take on this relatively simple task, please contact any committee member (see p1).

Membership

*Due to data protection regulations,
personal details of OCA members are not available in the website version of the newsletter.
Please address any queries or membership applications to the Membership Secretary (see page 1)*