# THE FOSTERIAN

The Magazine of the Old Fosterians' Association



No. 28 Spring 2021

# OFFICERS and COMMITTEE of the OLD FOSTERIANS' ASSOCIATION 2019/2020

**President:** Dr. Ian Maun, 13 Higher Brimley, Teignmouth, Devon TQ14 8JS. E-mail: wordsmith@eclipse.co.uk

**Chairman:** P. Dolbear, 12 Blackbirds, Thornford, Sherborne, DT9 6QZ Tel No. 01935 873497. E-mail: philipdolbear@aol.com

Hon. Secretary: D Noble. E-mail: david.noble@gmail.com

Hon. Membership Secretary: S. Newell.

Tel No. 07770 641027. E-mail: simonhnewell@yahoo.co.uk

**Hon. Treasurer**; P. Holden., 6 Gorse Corner, Long Itchington, Southam, Warwickshire CV47 9AN. Tel No. 01926 811300.

E-mail: peteholden43@talktalk.net

**Editor;** Kevin Parsons, 220b Chickerell Road, Weymouth, DT4 0QF Email: rustykev@hotmail.co.uk

**Other Committee:** A Thorne, M Brewer, J Harring, J. House, D. Noble. K Waterfall.

# Web Address http://fostersdigbys.co.uk/

If you feel able to donate, the Association's bank account details are: Account Name: **Old Fosterians' Association** 

Sort Code: **601912** Account number: **05531349** 

IBAN: GB59 NWBK 6019 1205 5313 49

Your contribution could be a one-off payment or in the form of a regular standing order. Both would be welcome.

# THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

As 2021 begins, it is time to look back over 2020, one of the most disastrous years in the history of these islands. It was, of course, dominated by Covid-19. Among the victims of the pandemic was our friend, Mike Goode. His wife Selena and daughters Jeni and Caroline have written their own tribute elsewhere in the Magazine. Our thoughts are with them, and we look forward to a time when, together, we can commemorate Mike's life with a Service of Remembrance.

Mike's life was devoted to his family and to the service of Foster's School. Whether it was in the classroom, on the sports field, at Blashenwell camps or on the stage, Mike was there. He was a man of principle, and one of his primary principles was loyalty, both to the boys and the staff of the School. Nothing was too much trouble. When I mentioned my interest in the Navy (in which, of course, he had served) he brought in a projector and films that he had shot himself. It was his willingness to go the extra mile that endeared him to both pupils and teachers.

As we say goodbye to Mike, it is time to look forward. The new vaccines offer hope to millions, and by the time this edition of the *Fosterian* is published, it is to be expected that a large proportion of the population will have been immunised.

The future of the Old Fosterians' Association seems to be assured for a few more years. This is not to say that we are financially secure, but subscriptions and donations are keeping us afloat. Elsewhere in the Magazine is an appeal for funds to ensure that its publication can continue in hard-copy form. Ultimately, of course, if we run out of money, we shall have no alternative but to convert to an online version.

So, as we go forward, let us hope that the future is brighter for all of us.

Keep well. Keep safe.

lan Maun

(Foster's Staff 1977-1986)

# **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

It is with great satisfaction I need to keep my remarks brief this year due to a lot of other material to fit in. Thank you for all your contributions – and keep them coming!

What a year, for the whole world with the Pandemic and of course we have not been spared. With great sadness we have said goodbye to Mike Goode for whom there are many tributes later. When we can, we will liaise with Selina, Caroline and Jeni to celebrate his life and contribution to Foster's more fully and publicly. The Committee have bestowed Honorary Life Membership to Jeni who remains a loyal supporter and link between the Goode family and OFA. Of course, thoughts and condolences to all of you who have lost friends and loved ones.

Clearly there was no Founder's Day Service or Reunion last year, though between lockdowns we were able to conduct a very small-scale homage in November to those lost in the Wars - picture later. The Committee have already decided that Founder's Day should not happen again for 2021. We keep our fingers crossed for the Reunion scheduled for <u>lunchtime October 9<sup>th</sup> 2021</u>. We will keep you posted. Save the date! 40 years since the majority of the Class of 74 'scabs' left the School in '81. Good excuse for a major reunion?

At the time of writing, I cannot tell whether you will be able to see the difference, but we have taken the decision, driven by finance, to change our Printer this year. For burgeoning postal cost reasons, the Committee have also taken the decision that copies for overseas recipients will only be available by PDF copy from now on, unless they are prepared to make an extra contribution to cover postage.

This leads me to the ongoing question of OFA finances, which are becoming increasing precarious, with perhaps a few years only of the Magazine publication left, that being the major cost. We have laid out the situation and a further request in a separate piece.

Finally, I will close with very grateful thanks to your Committee who have continued their stalwart activity, even through a ZOOM platform!

With best wishes for 2021 and keep safe!

**Philip Dolbear** 

# HON TREASURER'S REPORT

#### at 31st December 2020

The balances of the OFA accounts are as stated below for the year end 2020.

#### Assets at 31st December 2020

Total	£2845.32	(up £567.13 v	Dec 2019)
NatWest Current A/c	£1440.43	(£ 874.52	Dec 2019)
NatWest Reserve A/c	£1404.89	(£1403.67	Dec 2019)

Subscriptions and donations received from members in 2020 totalled £1714 up £512 on 2019. (please note; 2019 donations were incorrectly recorded last year as £1228 due to double accounting for a lunch paid for, but not charged. Should have been £1202. This did not affect totals)

# Expenditure at 31st December 2020

Donation to Sherborne Douzelage	£200.00	(£200.00	2019)
Magazine printing / posting	£923.09	(£767.53	2019)
Founder's Day Church Expenses	Nil	(£137.50	2019)
BMV Lunch Adverts	Nil	(Nil	2019)
Lunch Guest of Honour costs	Nil	(£ 52.00	2019)
Poppy wreaths	£ 25.00	(£ 25.00	2019)
Total	£1148.09 (	down £33.94 o	n 2019)

I have not received any claims by members of the committee for any expenses incurred by them for calendar year 2020.

#### **Old Fosterian Magazine**

The cost of printing and circulating the magazine as a 'hard copy' by post continues to be our main annual expenditure. Printing cost was; £575.00 in 2020. (£465.00 in 2019)

Postal charges were; £348.09 in 2020. (£302.53 in 2019)

#### **Appeal for Funds**

The appeal for funds, as can be seen from the current account balance, has been successful. However, it has to be stated that the majority of the income is from a relatively small number of very generous donations varying from £10 up to £300. I have made an (anonymous) analysis of our monthly income 2020 v 2019. It shows that while regular donations have increased slightly – and are very welcome – the majority is concentrated in just two months and cannot reasonably be expected to repeat.

Jan '20	£285	Jan '19	£61
Feb '20	£51	Feb '19	£26
Mar '20	£656	Mar '19	£71
Apr '20	£126	Apr ' 19	£81
May '20	£86	May '19	£56
Jun '20	£91	Jun '19	£76
July '20	£26	Jul '19	£21
Aug '20	£16	Aug '19	£11
Sep '20	£67	Sep '19	£38
Oct '20	£101	Oct '19	£486
Nov '20	£189.50	Nov '19	£231
Dec '20	£19.50	Dec '19	£18

While our funds are currently healthy, the Association needs more regular small donations to be financially sustainable.

I would like to thank all who have contributed and encourage others to do likewise.

The OFA current account details are:

**Sort Code**: 60-19-12 **A/c No**: 05531349

All income received by whatever means is accountable and traceable through the Nat West Current account statements. Expenditure likewise is all through the single cheque book operating on that account.

P R Holden 13/1/2021

# **MIKE GOODE**

# 22 April 1939 - 7 April 2020

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Mike Goode. As evidenced by the outpouring of emotion, memories and respect on social media to the news, Mike was one of the iconic Masters of Foster's School in recent times. As 1st Form Master, he was our first contact and guiding light for our early School days, and the experiences just got better from then on, whether in the Physics Lab, at Blashenwell Camp or in everyday life around the School, and Boarding House for some.

He was devoted not only to the School, but afterwards to our Old Boys' Association. We all owe him a debt of gratitude. In latter years he did not enjoy the best of health with Parkinsons, but with no surprise, he tackled this and ageing life with energy, a positive mind and always a cheery smile. Our thoughts go to Selina, his wife, Caroline and Jennifer, his daughters, and the wider family. We hope they will take some comfort that Mike is at peace, and also from the massive recognition he has received on the news of his passing.

Sadly on a national scale, these are unique times and we will not be able to pay our respects for, and celebrate Mike's life for a little while. I know the family are planning something for later in the year and I hope we will be able to play our part in that as an Association. With best wishes, keep well and keep safe.

#### Philip Dolbear Chairman

Mike meant much to all boys who knew him, but before we hear from some of them, we are privileged to have the following, courtesy of his daughter Jeni.

# <u>Michael John Goode – a Eulogy</u>

(This 'focussed eulogy' concentrates largely on Mike's teaching-life. Mike (Dad) lived a very full-life – too full to cover here! Major aspects of his life, family, relationships and interests have been omitted but are of no less importance!)

Mike was born Francis Weare Rivers on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1939, to an unmarried couple brought together (and then parted again) by the wart is believed that his father was a Canadian tank driver! He became Michael John Goode, on adoption at a young age, to Doris (a physiotherapist) and Thomas Goode.

Mike spent his childhood in and around Coventry. During the WW2 bombing of Coventry, he was evacuated out of the city and used to recount how he 'shared a bed with a nun'. The devastation of Coventry Cathedral is the earliest of his paintings!

After a number of step-fathers, and leaving school having gained one qualification in Art!, Mike and his mother moved to Lyme Regis. He was gainfully employed in a number of jobs, his goal – 'to move-out'. Whilst working at the hardware shop, a fellow shopworker introduced Mike to her sister, Selina who became his soulmate.

Mike became heavily involved in the running of the Youth Club in Selina's home village of Hawkchurch, and in 1962 Mike and Selina were married 'on the Parish' (not having to pay anything!).

Mike signed up and served in the Royal Navy only to be invalided out with TB. His time recuperating in hospital was not wasted and he became skilled in both knitting and embroidery!

Back on shore, Mike got a job as a Lab Technician at Woodroffe School in Lyme Regis. He soon became embroiled in the full gambit of school-life. He led pupils to complete the major construction of a pipe organ!, the task having been abandoned as 'impossible' and moth-balled previously. It was not long before Mike was being advised that 'he was wasted as a technician' (a very valuable career) and that he should be in front of the class. Mike set to gaining qualifications (his single Art qualification did not suffice!) and subsequently entered St. Luke's, Exeter where he trained as a teacher.

[In 1964 and 1966 Mike and Selina welcomed their daughters Caroline and Jennifer.]

Mike's first teaching post was at Blandford School, and then he joined Foster's 'to teach the [LDS] girl's science, and to take charge of the First Form'. Mike made Science memorable – perhaps by the mistakes as much as the successes! The watersoaked, alcohol-dipped burning handkerchief! The inverted, overhead jar of water etc. etc.

And Mike quickly wove boys from schools across the catchment and beyond (the Boarders!) into a close-group whose first year at Foster's culminated in Blashenwell Camp (or in the very early years — Carey Camp). Blashenwell Camp (courtesy also of Brian Davis, Dave Register and Ken House): the view of Corfe; the loos; tent inspection; Chapman's Pool; adders and long walks; and Mike unaware, during a thunderstorm, that he was checking on the lad's tents attired in ex-Navy shorts pulled on over striped pyjamas!! When Blashenwell Camp became unavailable Mike found suitable sites for First Form Camps around and about Lyme Regis.

Mike's love of Drama first came to the fore in Lyme Regis Amateur Dramatics Club, and in directing 'skits' at Hawkchurch Youth Club. Drama featured throughout his teaching career: performing in and directing many a Commoners Concert and (Joint) School Play production. The story of trapped Miners and A Midsummer Night's Dream (Bottom's fantastical lion and ass masks were made by Mike too!) were highlights. As was the most memorable Woodcutters 'Dance', which featured Mike's close-friends and colleagues – Ken House, John Charles and Brian Davis.

Mike was a keen supporter of all aspects of a Fosterian's life. He coached and cheered-on much athletics, and many rugby (Rugger) and cricket matches, and was often seen officiating (Selina in the hall, making teas!). He took many a 'duty' at Friday Night Swimming at the Boys School; and thrilled in participating in Ski Trips. After major surgery for cancer, getting back [to health] for the Ski-Trip became Mike's goal. (What were the hats with the everchanging coloured pompoms, all about?) Mike listened and helped many, through woes both academic and personal. When 'boys' needed to be chaperoned to take exams late, they stayed at Mr Goode's; when they missed the bus or needed a lift, Mike took them home; when the Boarding House needed resident House Parents, Mike and Selina took up the positions ..... and what tales they could tell!

Mike was never more pleased than when those who had left Foster's called at his home at Christmas (an early tradition) or years later. Whoever they were, whatever they had been – they were whole-heartedly welcomed.

When Fosters closed, Mike made the transition to the Gryphon School, but 'Foster's' Ruled' and The Old Fosterians' Association became a greater focus. Mike served the Old Fosterians' enthusiastically and with joy. He worked tirelessly as Secretary, later becoming President. Becoming a Life-Time President of 'The Old Boys' was the pinnacle of his teaching life. The Certificate remains in pride of place on his desk.

Mike was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease shortly after moving back to Selina's 'ancestral' home in Hawkchurch. Mike truly LIVED with the cruel condition. Of course, it progressively affected him, and for brief moments this would 'get him down', but these moments were the exception and he never let Parkinson's stop him! Mike continued to delight in shore-fishing, gardening and in his 'workshop' – and, of course, in his painting! (raising money for Parkinson's by exhibiting his pictures).

In later times, Mike and Selina moved near Dorchester to a converted dairy on Jennifer's partner's farm. Gardening and the 'workshop'; pride in his new home; and helping, how he could, on the farm (he always loved 'life on the land') filled his time. Mike would have been proud that Parkinson's never took him off his feet!

Mike died on 7 April, 2020, and was buried at Hawkchurch on 22 April. It would have been his  $81^{\rm st}$  birthday – and the sun shone and the birds sang.

Fiercely loyal, Mike loved family! He loved his beloved Selina, he loved his daughters, and he loved Foster's!!

Jeni Goode

# **LOOKING BACK – Mike Goode**

This year, I asked for your memories of the Commoners Concert. Events were overtaken sadly with the death of Mike Goode. I felt it appropriate therefore that this year, our 'Looking Back' slot should be dedicated to Mike and the wonderful memories he left us with. Never fear with regard to the Commoners Concert – it will appear next year.

Even though we all knew he was elderly, Mike's death came as a shock to us all and as Philip mentioned above, we took to Social Media to express our thoughts and memories. Thanks to Simon Newell, we have collated a few of these, grouped loosely into headings, to remind us of him.

#### **A Great Physics Teacher**

<u>Adrian Leppard:</u> A Good Man; I can remember him marking a Physics exam paper of mine (science was never my strong suit) and he came to the question 'Definition of Energy' and me being a smart arse teenager had put E=mc2. It was of course not the syllabus answer but Mike being Mike did not want to argue with Einstein and gave me a mark (and a knowing look).

<u>Pauline Elsworth:</u> I really struggled with Physics and having missed many lessons I remember Mike telling me I should probably give the GCSE a miss as I didn't have a chance of passing. I said I would prove him wrong and managed to pass. He said to me after "I knew you could do it with some motivation".

<u>Tamzin Elliott</u>: A brilliant teacher - our very first shared Physics lesson at Foster's and he went through the register to identify and introduce us - my maiden name was Campbell-Orde, and with my then more unusual first name he came to my turn and just looked up and said "how much?!!" Slightly further on he was convinced they'd got another girl, Sydney Francis', names the wrong way round. Always made time to explain and made sure you understood. Fond memories.

<u>Fiona Coverdale:</u> I well remember physics lessons with 'Mr Goode' - on one occasion he was most surprised when he found out that a book I had used for a piece of homework belonged, not as he had assumed to my Dad but to my Mother!

#### **Boarding House Master**

<u>JP Hamilton-Savory</u>: Thanks Mr Goode for putting up with me and the rest of the boarding house.

<u>Jason Linney:</u> I was at the boarding house for three years whilst he was in charge, so he was my father figure in some of my formative

years. Couldn't have asked for a better one. A true gentleman and a lovely human being. Immensely sad.

<u>David Price</u>: He always ignored my smoking habits in the boarding house bike shed. Super fellow...and part of my formative years. <u>Alan Stevenson</u>: He was housemaster in charge of us at our worst, and yet was always there for support. A sad loss.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Form Camp

<u>William Stafford:</u> Mike was OiC 1<sup>st</sup> Form Camp of which I have many memories, including Tim Carr and his team (which included that scallywag Jeff Tompkins) hiding the clues on the orienteering exercise. <u>Trevor Manuel:</u> He always had time for everyone and enjoyed the times he spent with us on the school camps. There was that walk along the coast that went under the waterfall. Depending on when you reached it and how far the tide was in determined how wet you got. I remember coming back on the bus home and Martin 'Tubby' Jones, who came on the camp as one of the prefects, drove into the back of the bus in his car!

<u>Colin 'Fred' Hart</u>: What a great gentleman. I remember Mike rushing around the Kingston camp site in a thunderstorm to check we'd tucked our broadsheets in.

<u>Philip Dolbear</u>: I remember rather naughtily calling him back and forth from one tent to another in the torrential rain just to make sure he got a good soaking before getting back to his own sleeping bag!

## That Trip to Austria

<u>Giles Weston:</u> A top bloke. He took us on a fantastic 1<sup>st</sup> Form camp and was perfect at looking after us, was always an entertaining and kind teacher and was the highlight of a Tyrolean evening on a school ski trip to Austria!

<u>Matthew Day:</u> He was one of my favourite teachers at Foster's. I still remember him getting a bit tipsy shall we say and dancing on the table in an Austrian bar on a school trip in the early 80s!

#### Unflappable

<u>Debbie Ellis:</u> I remember his blue car with the letters 'SFX' in the registration. As a first year at LDS I recall tearing off 'Izal' toilet paper into a strip, sticking it on the plate and making the 'F' into an 'E' to change his registration to SEX...and thinking it was so funny! Mike was so tolerant and just dismissed it as kids' banter. He was a brilliant teacher...and I can still remember him teaching me how to light a Bunsen burner c.1976/7.

#### Those Experiments...

<u>Gillian Ewington:</u> We had Mr Goode for Chemistry. His double lesson was the highlight of the week not because we got to go to Foster's, but also because his brilliant and exciting experiments always went totally wrong! We would be sitting on those benches with our heads under the table trying not to laugh!

<u>Melanie Sealey:</u> He always had a great sense of humour, and I remember his failed experiments, including the time he set his handkerchief on fire!

<u>Laura Weston</u>: I was terrible at Physics and hated the subject but loved Mr Goode's experiments - big explosions or damp squibs - never knew what you would get, so cheered the subject up! And always his cheerful bounce in the room.

<u>Sam Ollis</u>: I will always remember his lesson about the distribution of weight - "what should you do if you are charged by an elephant in the jungle? Hide under a door of course"! And then demonstrating it with, I believe <u>Paula Carnell</u>, lying on the floor under a door and him jumping on it!

<u>Caroline Kirkpatrick:</u> He was my Physics teacher in my first year at Digby's. His experiments often didn't work, but he got his point across with kindness and fun.

<u>Becky Russell:</u> He was my Physics teacher when I was at Digby's (87-92; I remember him exploding a tin can which flew up and hit the ceiling, leaving a scorch mark and dent for many years, I loved his lessons, so much fun!

<u>Paul Jesty:</u> I remember his experiments with fondness; they sometimes worked, they were always entertaining. He made school years more enjoyable and for that I am grateful.

#### High Jinks in the Lab

<u>Steve Joyce:</u> I have many fond memories of Mike, from our introduction to life at Foster's with him as the 1<sup>st</sup> Form master to his teaching of chemistry and physics. He tolerated a number of schoolboys' "pranks" - I remember stories of pupils asking to leave the physics lab to go to the toilet, to them re-enter the lab via an underfloor storage area and a "trapdoor" at the back of the room, so seemingly getting back into the room without using the door they left through! He was a great teacher, and a kind man.

<u>Kate Martin:</u> I remember Mike getting the Mercury out and rolling it on the lab desks. And I think someone let off a stink bomb one day - one of the boys? He dealt with it in his usual unflappable manner. I think he threw a sponge at me once, too, as I wasn't paying attention. I can still see his Science room in my mind. Wasn't there a trapdoor at the back on the floor? Lots of great memories.

<u>Sarah Shutler:</u> RIP Mr Goode, I will never forget his lessons, and how he'd go to fetch something and never be seen again. He was a very, kind and sweet teacher. His wife was the teaching assistant at the old Abbey school when I was there, she was just as kind.

<u>Simon Manaton</u>: My stand-out memory of Mr Goode was during a chemistry lesson, (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Form I guess), during which my ink distillation apparatus just ever-so slightly exploded sending blue ink in a variety of directions before settling on walls, exercise books, my face, with even a substantial blob hitting the lab ceiling. He really didn't bat an eyelid, just told me that when they finally knocked the school down, I would have to come and claim "my bit of ceiling". Obedient as always, I did just that, searched amongst the rubble and now have piece of Foster's by which to remember Mr G. One of the best!

<u>Neil Kitcher.</u> I remember a Mike as a great form and Science teacher. Fun experiments whether they worked or not and one particular moment when a Bunsen burner caught a classmate's hair on fire.

#### **That Bell Jar Moment**

<u>Kath Jackson</u>: I remember Mike well and liked him very much during my years at school. I seem to remember him setting the sleeve of his suit alight one day and I am sure there were stories of a bell jar of water emptying over his head at some point!

<u>Robin Jackson:</u> The bell jar of water was legendary. He was showing us the thing where you slide a piece of card over a glass container of water and invert it. Something to do with surface tension but on this occasion there was not enough surface tension and he got a soaking. <u>Marc Neilon</u>: The huge jar of water on his head. One of my most memorable moments at school. Full stop.

<u>Elly Key:</u> I also remember the "jar filled with water/cardboard underneath "trick that didn't quite work but it made Mike all the more human, and being a Science teacher, that was some feat! We all remember the great teachers!

#### **Funny Tales**

<u>Jon Dale:</u> Mike was a true gent, he was house master at the boarding house for a number of years when I was there, a great role model, I have some great memories. I still recount the following story to this day, when Mike was told by a pupil in the year below me how tough they were finding Physics at 'O' level, Mike's reply was "Do you know Flash (me)?" The pupil replied "Yes". Mike's reassuring response was "Well, that Bunsen burner knows more about Physics than Flash does and he passed"!

<u>Debbie Bryant</u>: One of my fondest memories of Mike was him saying to me "please tell me you aren't going to take physics at O level!" Much to his relief I didn't!

#### **Commoners Concert**

<u>Phillip Dawson:</u> He was a true gentleman and put up with the most terrible things including our weekly astronomy quiz which we insisted he complete in the staff room. I remember his excellent glass music at the Commoners Concert. And the Piddle Can!

<u>Chris Dawson</u>: A lovely man and teacher. Strangely, my lasting memory was of that small frame dangling helplessly on stage in a

school skit with Ken House. A version of Python's "I'm a Lumberjack and I'm OK" I think.

# And finally...

<u>Peter Vincent</u>: A great teacher, moderator and guide for life; he will be missed by many, many people.

<u>Marc Neilon:</u> A lovely man who always took a genuine interest. When you look back at your school days and try to think of inspirational teachers he's right there. Lovely man and a lovely family.

<u>Paul Eggleton:</u> He was an absolute legend and always the first teacher we remember when discussing old school days.

## Mark Love shares longer, more personal memories of Mike

I started at Foster's in 1975 when Mike was already the experienced First Form Master. I assume he was selected by Mr Francis for this role, as he was the perfect combination of a no-nonsense disciplinarian with a sympathetic core. He quickly established these credentials without even seeming to try. I am sure many Old Fosterians recall his "Welcome to Foster's speech", of which the essential message was "you are lucky to be here; don't waste the great opportunity". Mike delivered it brilliantly and it stays with me to this day.

But my best memory of Mike comes from nine months later at Blashenwell camp, then the traditional end of first year event. Mike ran it with Ken House and their wives, so it was well organised, structured with leisure and educational content, and a great memory for all who had this opportunity. Large tents housed six of us. I recall being in a tent with Colin Hodges (who shared a great chocolate cake from his Mum) and Greg Hurst amongst others. We had fantastic weather all week, there were many hikes along the south Dorset coast and an endless game of cricket orchestrated by Paul Weston that kept us amused in camp. The grand finale to the week was a Treasure Hunt, with a prize that escapes me now, but we all thought it was worth winning at the time. We set off in our teams, all well bonded units at the end of the week.

The weather turned. Five days of sunshine become heavy rain and a mist that cut visibility to 20 metres. We were not equipped for the bad weather, and it was not much fun trudging over the hills after the clues, but we were well motivated by the prize and glory. Our team found a particularly tricky clue concealed at the base of a post, as the weather came in even worse. We thought we were in a winning position, but the following team were clearly gaining on us. We heard them through the mist, obviously close by, and sold them the dummy.

Before they could see us one of the team loudly whispered "Don't tell them the clue is a lot further up the valley; they will waste time looking for it here". It was enough to convince them to race on up the valley.

Mike Goode appeared next. None of us had come prepared for the rain, but Mike demonstrated his versatility by commandeering an old blue fertiliser sack, and cutting out two armholes, was wearing it as a make-shift gilet, supplemented by a corner of the sack cutout in a V as a hat. It gave a scarecrow look, but he was dryer than us. "We are abandoning the Treasure Hunt. Everybody straight back to camp" he ordered us. We reluctantly nodded our agreement. "And have you seen the next team; where are they?" he questioned us.

We explained how clever we were to fool them into going up the valley chasing the clue that was not there. We were not so clever. Mike was not happy. Standing in the rain wearing his upside down fertiliser bag, Mike literally jumped up and down with frustration as he delivered a rebuke that contained some inappropriate language, fortunately before the days of recording such evidence on a smart phone. We understood the message; we were not as clever as we thought. We shuffled off back to camp where Mike's wife welcomed us with hot rice pudding that we did not deserve but wolfed down.

Meanwhile Mike started off up the valley "at the double" to rescue the other team, which of course he did. We all ended up safely back in camp having learnt a few more life lessons, even if just to check the weather forecast before going hiking.

So whilst I can still visualise the man jumping up and down in the fertiliser bag, I can see the teacher who was an embodiment of Foster's values throughout his life who helped so many through their school years and beyond. He cared. A few years ago, I inadvertently saw an advert for teacher recruitment with the catch-line "you never forget a good teacher". I thought of Mike.

Mark Love mrmlove@hotmail.com

# THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

Minutes of meeting 10 October 2020, Zoom meeting Attendees:

David Noble (Secretary), Philip Dolbear (Chair), Ian Maun (President), Pete Holden (Treasurer), Howard Legg, Ian Brooks, Jeff Jenkins, John House, Kev Parsons, Mark Brewer, Mark Love, Max Horsey, Michael Dunk, Steve Joyce, Tony Mifflin, Jeff Quick remotely via the Chair

#### Chairman's welcome

**Apologies for Absence**; David Prout, Simon Newell, Kevin Waterfall, Stan Love.

**Minutes of 2019 AGM**; The minutes were agreed.

Matters arising from Minutes of 2019 AGM; None outside of Agenda items.

Comments on the passing of Mike Goode; Chairman offered thoughts and remembrance for the passing of Mike Goode. The Committee was notified that when quarantine restrictions are over that a remembrance event should be held.

lan Maun suggested that Members should submit memories/photos etc of Mike for the next edition of the Fosterian.

**Chairman's Report**; The Chairman thanked the committee. Full report will go into the magazine, but the focus will be on Mike. Disappointing not be able to have the lunch this year, but clearly the right decision. Hopefully next year will go ahead, with the Founder's Day in May and next year's dinner.

Thanks were offered to the committee and others for all their work through the year on various activities especially Ian, John House, Kevin Waterfall, Simon Newell and Kevin Parsons

**Treasurers Report**; £1404 in reserve account. £1155 in current account. This is an increase of £966 over last year.

Subscriptions and donations received, £1404 up £963 on previous year.

£200 spent on Douzelage as usual.

Magazine posting and posting. £923.09 compared to £767 last year. Poppy wreath expenditure to come, none for meal and Founder's Day advertising as expected.

No expenses claimed by committee.

**Magazine expenses**; Printing increased by £110 from last year: £575 from £465. Post up by £46: £348 from £302.

**Donations**; Donations came mainly in two months, January and March. We need more regular recurring subscriptions every month, rather than lump payments. Regular subscriptions have probably only gone up by a relatively small amount. Repeat regular payments are essential.

£1404 in donations. In January we got £285 (including 2 donations, £100 and £99) with only £25 in regular repeating donations.

In March £656 (from 71 last year), £500 of that was between 5 people, and £400 was between 2 people with one £300 donation. This seems unlikely that this will repeat.

We need more regular donations rather than lump sums, as this makes planning viable. Monthly and quarterly subscriptions have barely increased from last year.

Suggestion for a magazine appeal for more donations, especially for regular repeatable donations, to avoid a major problem in a few years. There are 229 active members, but nowhere near that number contribute at all or regularly, probably around 35.

There was a considerable discussion around the magazine's hardcopy future. The Committee will review and identify some proposals. It was suggested that members who want a hard copy should pay for it, around £5.

**Election of Officers and committee;** Committee agreed to continue with current membership.

Resolutions - None

#### AOB;

**President –** Requested a Mike Goode memorial for the magazine.

**Approved** 

**Chairman** – Make Jeni Goode an honorary life Member of the OFA.

**Approved** 

9th October for the 2021 meal

Too early to tell about Founder's Day (since the minutes, this has clearly been cancelled)

**Treasurer** commented that he has not necessarily recorded who has made donations, but this means it is difficult to record who has donated, hence why they are recorded together in the finance report.

Members event in November will NOT be going ahead due to quarantine, however there is an offer for a small number of local members to be invited to attend to lay wreaths.

John to chase the British Legion and confirm costs so that cheque can be raised.

There was a suggestion from Mark Love on the future of the organisation in the medium to long-term future. The Chair agreed to take this away to the committee for future consideration.

Michael Dunk offered his praise and thanks for the work by the various iterations of the Committee to keep the Association going. Seconded by Max Horsey.

It was requested to try to have a Zoom version available for next year's AGM for members who are not able to make the venue physically.

Content request for the Magazine from Kev Parsons, with the deadline is end of January, especially about Mike Goode.

Question about the health of Harry Hughes, the Chair resolved to investigate further having not had responses to recent enquiries. The Chair will forward known contact details to Kevin Parsons.

## Meeting Closed.

# **OLD FOSTERIANS' LUNCH 2020**

Needless to say, the mighty pandemic rather scuppered our annual social gathering. I am sure we have all been affected in such a manner with our lives, especially the inability to visit friends and more importantly, our families. When viewed in the light of what is going on in the world, a missed lunch pales into insignificance but with luck we will soon be able to meet up again in person.

# **APPEAL**

The Old Fosterians' Association has few expenses. The annual Dinner (or Lunch) is self- financing, and the Richard Foster Bursary paid to Sherborne Douzelage amounts to £200 per annum. This fund pays the expenses of Gryphon School students wishing to take part in educational activities (traditionally overseas). It also serves to keep alive the name of the Founder of the School.

Our primary expenses are the costs of printing and postage on the Magazine. In 2020, these amounted to £923.09. As our current balance is only £2845.32, it is clear that we cannot endlessly support the publication in hard copy of our much-loved *Fosterian*. Ultimately, if funds dry up, we shall have no alternative but to produce an on-line-only version of the Magazine. Many members will wish to see the continuation of a printed copy, with its familiar orange cover and the School crest.

To try and eke out funds, the Committee have already taken action to reduce printing costs. The Committee have also made the difficult decision that the Magazine will only be available to overseas recipients by PDF electronic copy (unless prepared to fund extra postage). We have also given notice that 2021 will be the last year we can guarantee the Richard Foster Bursary.

In order to secure a longer-term future for a printed Magazine, it is the OFA Committee's opinion that we now have to ask Members to make a small contribution to publication and postage expenses. If every OF makes a donation of £1 per month, i.e. £12 per annum (or better still round it up to £20!) this will keep us going for the next few years. This could be done through a standing order through your bank into the OFA's bank account, whose details are to be found in the Hon. Treasurer's Report in the present edition.

May we therefore please ask you to consider making such a contribution (less than the cost of a cup of coffee per month)? The survival of the Magazine in printed form depends on the willingness of the Members to contribute.

Ian Maun - President

Philip Dolbear - Chairman

# Banking Details on Page 1

# LOOKING BACK - SOME MORE GENERAL SNIPPETS.

Thanks to Sherborne School archivist Rachel Hassall, we have been alerted to the fact that this February just gone was the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the No.617 (Sherborne School & Foster's School) ATC squadron. Further information can be found at the website; https://oldshirburnian.org.uk/venture-adventure-no-617sherborneschool-flight-air-training-corps/

In the meantime, read on...

# 'Venture Adventure': No.617 Sherborne School Flight, Air **Training Corps, 1941-1946**

On the 5th February 1941 the Air Training Corps (including No.617 Sherborne School Flight) was officially established in the UK, with King George VI as the Air Commodore-in-Chief, and within the first month of its inception the size of the old Air Defence Cadet Corps (ADCC) had almost doubled to more than 400 squadrons. Their motto 'Venture Adventure' was devised by Air Commodore Sir John Chamier, who as secretary of the Air League of the British Empire founded in 1938 the ADCC which became the ATC.

A number of Dorset schools received authority in 1941 to raise flights, these included Bryanston, Blandford, Canford, Weymouth Grammar School, Wimborne, and Sherborne School.

No. 617 Sherborne School Flight was formed by a Royal Warrant on the 5th February 1941, signed by Air Marshal Sir

Philip Babington KCB, MC, AFC. Its aim was 'to provide young men with the means of preparing themselves for air service with the Royal Air Force or the Fleet Air Arm.'

Shortly afterwards a Town Flight was also recruited, with instruction and training being provided on two evenings a week. On the 11th April 1941, an advertisement encouraging cadets to join the new squadron appeared in the *Western Gazette*:

'A Squadron of the Air Training Corps has recently been formed in Sherborne under the Air Ministry Scheme. The object of the Air Training Corps is to provide pre-entry training in technical subjects for boys between the ages of 16 and 18 years, who, when called up for military service during the period of present hostilities, wish to join the Royal Air Force, the Fleet Air Arm, or the Royal Navy, intending Cadets should apply for further information to the Council Offices, South Street, Sherborne; or to M.A. Ellison (Provisional Commanding Officer), St Edmund's, Westbury. Sherborne.'

The Sherborne School Flight was commanded from 1941 to 1944 by Flying Officer Mervyn Ellison FRAS (1908-1963), who was Head of the Army and Navy Class at Sherborne School, with Pilot Officer William G. Hewitt in charge of the Foster's School contingent. They were assisted by Pilot Officer Frederick Mee who in 1944 succeeded Ellison and remained in charge of the Flight, assisted by Pilot Officer Henry Gervis, until it was disbanded in 1946.

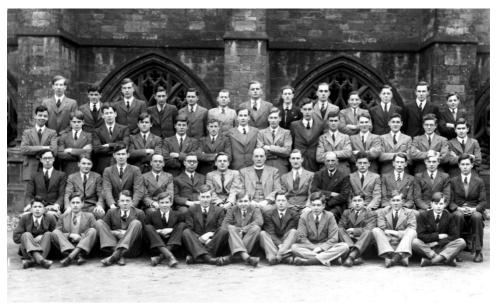
The appeal for recruits met with a positive response from both Sherborne School and Foster's School and membership of the Squadron was from the outset good, with thirty-four cadets joining in February 1941 (twenty-five from Sherborne School and nine from Foster's School), eighty-two cadets in October 1941 (fifty-three from Sherborne School and twenty-nine from the town and district), with, at its peak in summer term 1942, 110 cadets.

Cadets were offered a training program that aimed to prepare them for entry to the RAF. Instruction was given in navigation, aircraft recognition, signaling, mathematics, drill, and shooting. There were also regular opportunities for flying at RNAS Yeovilton, and in 1943 for gliding instruction at No.81 Gliding School. Flying Officer Ellison reported on these first gliding lessons: 'The first afternoon was somewhat spoiled by heavy showers, but at least one Cadet with some previous flying experience, made a good "slide" across the aerodrome; the remainder seemed to drop one wing about half-way across and could not right themselves. Before the end of term we hope to have

acquired sufficient experience of the controls to indulge in short "hops." It is unfortunate that the time available is so restricted and that Cadets have to return for evening Chapel.'

In 1941, the Sherborne School Flight went on their first camp to RNAS Yeovilton, where they were joined by cadets from schools in Bruton and Crewkerne. During their stay, the cadets were allowed two flights per day, with a rule that anyone who was air-sick had to clean out their own cockpit!

On the 5th July 1942, the Sherborne Flight took part, like all other Squadrons of the ATC, in Air Training Corps Sunday celebrating the eighteen-months' anniversary of the founding of the Corps. An inspection of the School and Town Flights in the Courts was followed by a service in the School chapel, after which the Squadron marched through the town to the saluting post at the War Memorial, where the salute was taken by Lieut.-Col. J.B.H. Goodden. The Summer Camp that year was held at RNAS Yeovilton where cadets took part in the normal life of the Station and obtained several flights in service aircraft.



The above picture is of the first parade of No.617 Squadron ATC (Sherborne School & Foster's School) in the Courts at Sherborne School, 1941.

#### Roger Taylor sent in some memories of fellow students

I wrote a short note of commiseration to Philip following his email notifying us of the cancellation of our reunion last year and mentioned a couple of school chums with whom I am still in touch. Simon has invited me to expand on this for the magazine, which I am more than happy to do and I am extending it to three chums though Tim, sadly, is no longer with us.

By way of background, I arrived at Foster's as a boarder aged 13 in 1957. Coincidentally, this was the year of the Asian Flu epidemic so, in the Boarding House, we had two weeks lockdown, or quarantine as we called it, fairly early on.

#### Howard Legg. 1955-62

Howard was a fellow boarder and at some point he invited me to join him when his parents came to visit.

They collected us in their beautiful drophead Mk V Jaguar (I am a car enthusiast) and we were popped into the back seat. Mrs Legg then turned round, brandishing two Millers Dorsage Steak & Kidney pies, and said, "I bet you boys are hungry." Talk about Seventh Heaven, soft leather, the growl of the straight six and a delicious pie! From that moment on, his parents took me under their wing.

Howard's Dad was a Portlander (Mum was from Wyke Regis) and was a local businessman and entrepreneur. He started The Lobster Pot and converted Pennsylvania Castle into a hotel. When I knew them, they lived at the Higher Lighthouse, having sold the hotel. However, the hotel was always our Sunday lunch destination where we enjoyed a fine roast with all the trimmings and an accompanying glass of Sauterne. The height of sophistication for we simple country schoolboys!!

I loved the Higher Light and my stays implanted an enduring connection to Portland. I enjoy introducing friends to the Isle and watching their faces as they first take in the panorama of Chesil Beach from Portland Heights.

I kept up with Howard in our student days and we had a lot of fun cruising around in his Triumph Herald convertible. He trained at the Telecommunications College in Malvern which I think then became QinetiQ. At some point we lost touch but contact and meetings have been revived in later years. He now lives in Wyke Regis and I was hoping to see him at our planned reunion last year.

#### Tim Gillham. 1955-62

Tim was a day boy. He was exceptionally bright. So much so that he took O Levels in the Fourth Form and then moved straight up to the Sixth.

Our friendship really began when I entered the Sixth and we actually had two years together because he was advised, as a prelude to university entrance, to do a third year in the Sixth. Amongst other things, I recall that he polished his A Levels into S levels and indulged his passion for classical music. We both enjoyed acting and did our bit in the Plays and the Commoners Concerts.

We were also doing the same subjects, which we enjoyed and met our first girlfriends (Lord Digby's) at the same time.

We were chatting one day and discovered that we both wanted to apply to Oxford or Cambridge, so we arranged to see Mr. Sugden. He was far sighted, helpful and knowledgeable. I remember him looking at us and saying, "Gillham, you should apply for a scholarship though you will probably get an exhibition. Taylor, you will apply for a commoner place". I had to ask him what that was and he said, "normal entry". To cut a long story short, that is exactly what happened. Better still, we both went up to Oxford and Tim's college, Wadham was just along the road from mine, Keble.

We both went to London after graduation and our friendship endured till Tim's untimely death in the early '90s.

## **Terry Payne.** 1956-63

Terry was a year younger than me and I did not get to know him well till my second year Sixth. However, on Saturdays he used to serve petrol on Dewey's forecourt in Newland (now part of Waitrose car park) which I passed regularly on trips into town. He was a fellow car enthusiast, so we found we always had something to talk about when he wasn't serving a customer.

We were brought together towards the end of my last summer at Foster's in a completely unexpected way.

Russell Blackwell was in Terry's form and was one of his friends. Russell's Dad had a job change which brought the family to Sherborne from North Wales. At his previous school, Russel had a pen friend, Peter, from Vienna and he kept up the connection whilst at Foster's.

Russell told Terry that Peter was planning to drive from Vienna to stay with him and was apparently very keen to visit some English pubs. However, Russell's family were strict Methodists and therefore teetotal. Russell asked Terry if he could take Peter around and Terry invited me to make it a threesome. I know it was after A Levels so I had free time but I and Terry have forgotten how we contrived to meet Peter's wishes, but meet them we did and very happily!!

My friendship with Peter and his family has endured to this day and he still has fond memories of Sherborne. He became an eminent psychiatrist in Austria and his full title is Herr Professor Doctor Peter Konig.

Terry and I have never lost contact and his home became my second home in my Oxford days (my Dad was serving with NATO in West Germany) and beyond. So much so that I always called in when passing and my children got to know his Mum. His Dad, Cyril, a lovely man, passed on in his middle sixties.

Terry began his career in Local Government at Sherborne UDC but then moved to London, where he still lives, to work for The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea from which he retired as Chief Rating Officer.

Last February, before Covid struck. Terry and I visited his parents' grave in the Cemetery at Newlands, to mark the twentieth anniversary of his Mum's passing at the age of 94 when she was reunited with her beloved Cyril.

These are connections and memories that I value deeply and I owe them all to my time at Foster's.

#### Epilogue. Harold Osment 1937-43

I should record Harold's passing in September 2018 at the age of 92. He was my inspiring teacher who suggested Foster's to my parents and was my oldest friend in every sense of the word.

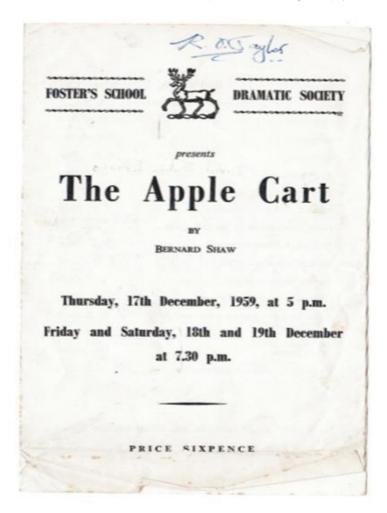
Roger Taylor 1957-62

Just to complete his profile, **Roger 1**957-62 confirms as follows; 'I divide my time now between Ludlow where I was a solicitor since 1971, finally retiring as a consultant in April this year and Lymington where we have family connections and, since 2004, a second home.'

# "The Apple Cart"

Roger has continued to make use of his lockdown time by sending in these memories of a drama played out by the Foster's School Dramatic Society. It is 'The Apple Cart', the 1928 play that Wikipedia describes as 'A Political Extravaganza' by George Bernard Shaw. It is a satirical comedy about several political philosophies which are expounded by the characters, often in lengthy monologues.

Shaw's preface describes the play as: ...a comedy in which a King defeats an attempt by his popularly elected Prime Minister to deprive him of the right to influence public opinion through the press and the platform: in short, to reduce him to a cipher. The King's reply is that



rather than be a cipher he will abandon his throne and take his obviously very rosy chance of becoming a popularly elected Prime Minister himself.



Rear L-R: Roger Willsher, David Evans, Roger Taylor, (??). Front L-R: Michael Mence, Chris Mainwaring, Tim Gillham, David Calderhead, Chris Coffin?

Characters (in order of appearance)

Pamphilius	A.M Coldwell
Sempronius	P.I. Marshall
Boanerges	T.P. Gilham
King Magnus	D.J. Evans
Princess Alice	R.T. Guy

Proteus, The Prime Minister	R.O. Taylor
Pliny, Chancellor of the Exchequer	D. Calderhead
Nicobar, Foreign Secretary	M.J. Mence
Crassus, Colonial Secretary	C.J. Mainwaring
Balbus, Home Secretary	C.J. Coffin
Amanda, Postmistress General	R.A. Green
Lysistrata, Powermistress General	N.M.F. Brown
Orinthia	C.E. Presswood
Queen Jemma	R. Willsher
Vanhatton, American Ambassador	N.J.C. Green

# The Play produced by the Headmaster

	added by the readments.
Stage Manager	D.P. Turner
Stage Staff	S.A. Gilham, N.C. Moore,
	A.E.M. Thompson, and M.J. Park
Lighting	A.J. Thacker
Property Master	B.K. Stone
Prompter	J.L. Harbour
House Manager	J.A.J. Sherrin
Scenery executed by	Messrs E. Maltby and G.W. Wilkins
Costumes designed by	Mrs E. Maltby and made by
	Mrs Guy, Mrs Presswood, Mrs Ebdon
	Mrs McKay and Mrs Kerley
Makeup	Mr and Mrs E. Hulme and Mr S.G. McKay
Wigs by	'Bert' of London
Prime Minister's Costume by	y Moss Bros Ltd
Furniture kindly lent by	Messrs Dodge & Son
Business Manager	Mr T.P. Blythman

# **REMEMBRANCE SERVICE - 2020**

A Remembrance event was able to take place in 2020, though in a sign of the times, numbers were restricted, and mask were required. Pictured here are L-R Jeni Goode, Philip Dolbear, Stan Love, John House.



# THE RICHARD FOSTER TRAVEL BURSARY

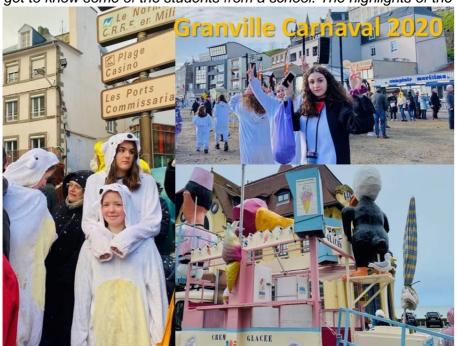
**Sherborne Douzelage Project 2020** 

Dear Foster's Grant Committee,

Thank you so much for helping make our trip to Granville possible. We had a lovely time in the beautiful town and all had so much fun. Throughout our trip, we were able to immerse ourselves into the French culture and traditions, like the atmosphere created during the carnival.

I found it so beneficial for my French A level and it definitely boosted my confidence when speaking in another language. Everyone was so charming and willing to take the time to help you with our speaking. It was so useful to have the opportunity to try and put our vocab and everything that we had learnt through our lessons into practice. Also, by being put into a situation where everyone was just speaking French, I was able to improve my accent by simply being able to listen to people speaking all the time.

We all thoroughly enjoyed our stay with Jean Claude and his family. It was so kind of them! During our trip, we got to explore the town and get to know some of the students from a school. The highlights of the



trip were definitely visiting Christian Dior's house, going out for supper with Jean Claude's family and the carnival itself. Being given our outfits for the carnival was the most entertaining part of the trip, for sure. We spent most of our time laughing and dancing to the music in the carnival. I would like to thank you again for your generosity which enabled me to experience all of the above.

Kind regards, Ottilie Hurrell

# THIS AND THAT

# More on Sir George Pragnell.

I was at school from 1951 to 1958 and my father taught at Foster's from 1935 until he retired... so for me there are so many faces from all those years that are well known!

Thank you for the work that you do to keep this Association going and to produce a fascinating magazine – I recognise a few faces in the old pictures!

I did see AN. "Tony" Earnshaw in Lechlade from time to time, many moons ago we used to play cricket together when our club sides met. Sadly Tony died in November 2019- he was 81. He was a couple of years ahead of me and his brother Robert - also a fine cricketer - was a contemporary of Ken House and is shown seated next to him in the photo on page 25 of issue 27.

I have enclosed below a piece about sport and Sir George Pragnell- a person who has long interested me!

"The recent copy of "The Fosterian" makes good and interesting reading but inevitably is more relevant to those in the last years of the school. I was at school from 1951 until 1958! The theme of sports at Foster's brings back many memories.... certainly, the cross-country courses ran across Purlieu and for seniors to the Honeycombe woods beyond the Dorchester road. Running through the River Yeo at the bridge by the Castle yard was an option if my memory is right!

The piece by John House about the Sir George Pragnell Prize provoked more memories about swimming at school and in Dorset!

Not many Fosterians will have been much involved in this sport but I got interested early on and am grateful for the many hours of access to the Sherborne School facilities that we were able to enjoy almost every day of the week in summer, even though it was a cold, cold openair pool! I came to Foster's in 1951 having broken my arm very badly whilst at junior school - the Council School in Simons Road. Dr 'Jack' Whittingdale (his son John Whittingdale was an MP and until last year a government minister) had suggested that I should exercise the arm with swimming. My father contacted Norman Pollard, an Old Fosterian from pre-war days who he knew was involved with swimming. (Norman had joined the navy and when his ship was torpedoed, he had had to swim for his life and survived for over a day in the waters of the Channel.) Norman was a super person and coach who helped me for some years and got me involved in competitive swimming and water polo, firstly at Yeovil and then at University and elsewhere. Besides playing all sports, especially cricket for school and then county Under 19s, it was difficult to enjoy swimming fully because it was essentially a summer activity. Dorset had no public indoor pools in those days that could be used for competitions. I swam in county championships in the sea off the pier at Weymouth, in the harbour at Swanage and in the river at West Bay! Open water venues like this were normal and in the early 1960s Dorset played a water polo match in the senior county championship against Surrey in the river at West Bay. It was quite a shock to the Surrey team who were used to good indoor facilities. In fact, they had booked in for the night at the Half Moon in Sherborne - a good hour's drive away! I also remember swimming in a 440 yards championship, again in the river at West Bay, where the sea water was flooding into the river over the sluice gates at high tide and it was hard going against the flowing water!

When I became involved in coaching and schools swimming in Swindon I saw that a Sir George Pragnell had been a President of the Amateur Swimming Association and assumed he was the Fosterian connection with the school and prize that I won in 1958. Alerted by the piece in the magazine I checked in SGM's excellent little book 'Foster's. The Story of a Dorset School' where he confirms that Sir

George 'founded the City of London Swimming and Athletic Association and was a founder member of the Royal Life Saving Society'. There is also a good chapter about him in the Sherborne Museum document "Looking Back at Foster's"

In fact, the Swim England website shows that there are still two 'Sir George Pragnell' trophies up for competition nationally. More interesting is the background information about this Old Fosterian where it says that he "became secretary of the Amateur Swimming Association in 1893. He set about writing a list of objectives needed by the ASA to succeed. He was also elected President of the Association during this time. Following his long term of office Pragnell set about starting the British Red Cross and the Home Guard for which he received his knighthood." Clearly Sir George was an Old Boy whose generosity not only helped many boys at our school in a small town in West Dorset but had a major impact on several well-known institutions - some of which thrive 100 years later!

Ian Miller

# **Haydon Wood writes:**

Hi Kevin, I have just received my Fosterian and noted your request for stuff to edit. I know the feeling! The suggestion of writing about the Commoners Concert made me think why I was never involved and, apart from having no talent, it was also because I lived too far away to get to evening rehearsals. That provoked my contribution below about the misery of the school bus. regards Haydon.

# The school bus

I hope Fosterians who lived in Sherborne appreciate they had it easy. An extra half hour in bed, a gentle stroll or bike ride along to Tinney's Lane and time to compare and correct Ken House's maths homework before handing it in.

Those of us who used school buses had to get up at the crack of dawn - and toughen up quickly to survive. Switching schools aged 11 after attending a tiny village primary was terrifying enough.

But sharing your transport with a gang of very aggressive pupils from St Aldhelm's secondary modern school was a challenging start to the day. They certainly didn't warm to those of us who managed to scrape through the 11-plus. Wearing shiny shoes and a spotless new uniform with badge sewn on by a proud mum made you an obvious target.

Tormenting us boys in blue was a popular way of passing the time during the nine-mile journey from my home village of Melbury Osmond through Yetminster and Thornford.

If things weren't tricky enough, our school caps made us even better targets. We obviously tried to hide our headwear deep in pocket or satchel but if you forgot and the Aldhelm's lads got hold of it they enjoyed throwing the cap to each other around the bus as you tried to grab it back. The hard cardboard peak could be folded in the middle making it a painful weapon if you stayed in your seat hoping the tormentors would get bored.

Once my cap was held out of the bus window and then dropped. The bus driver refused to stop so it meant a long cycle back to retrieve it that evening.

You soon learned the less vulnerable places to sit and who to avoid but the 'late' buses created new dangers and needed a fresh strategy.

These ran two evenings a week late enough to allow those from the sticks to take part in after-school sport or other activities.

But there were only two - each covering many more villages on a long meandering route. So a little inter-village rivalry was added to the rival schools chemistry.

Our big hope was always that a downpour would block the road and the bus would fail to arrive in the morning. This would be optimistically expected even if there had only been a light shower. Our route went over Bow Bridge near Yetminster which had a reputation as a flood blackspot. But I can only remember the bus failing to get through once in my seven years at Foster's and then a 'friend's' mother helpfully volunteered to drive us to Sherborne.

So did using the school bus have any benefits? It cured my car sickness and I suppose it helped me learn to duck and dive. It also turned me into something of an anti-bullying crusader. When I became a six-foot sixth former, no young Fosterian ever suffered the way I had done getting to school.

**Haydon Wood** (1966-73)

Haydon was clearly using Lockdown wisely and feeling bored (his words, not mine!) thought he would make another contribution just in case I needed space to fill. In this case, he reflects on the Friday afternoon Activities.

I wasn't looking for anything too strenuous when I picked my Friday afternoon 'activity' on my first day at Foster's. Mark Twain said golf spoils a good walk but it turned out to be far more of a challenge.

I chose golf coaching - partly to please my dad - but also to dodge more tiring-sounding options like gardening, trampolining or weighttraining. Little did I know!

I set off for the first session on a bike borrowed from new classmate Gavin Oakley for which I was grateful, of course, but it was a weighty model and not blessed with any working gears.

Reg Griffiths saw us off - checking that the prefect he put in charge knew the way. As the only first year, I respectfully tucked in at the back of the group of about 12 in Tinneys Lane expecting a short ride to the local golf course - wherever it was!

But we turned right and the torture began. All right! I know The Avenue is hardly the Alpe d'Huez but it might have tested even Chris Froome as a boy. I had no chance of keeping up. As a village lad, I didn't know Sherborne well. Did every road go up hill? We climbed and

climbed eventually joining Bristol Road, another hill, and past what was then St Aldhelm's School.

The 'peloton' broke up after we forked left onto a narrow lane, another steep incline, when the rest of the group decided it was no longer necessary to stick together. I was told the golf course was right at the top, 'you can't miss it', and left to struggle on alone. At least I was saved the embarrassment of being the one everyone else had to wait for.

Was it worth the effort? Club professional John Parrish was a cheerful coach - teaching us how to grip and swing a club and then trying to fine-tune our efforts. Despite its altitude, Sherborne is a fine course where we were made very welcome. And at the end of each session, you got your reward for the exhausting climb to get there. The return to school was one long, glorious free wheel. A minibus was not provided for another two years.

I remember taking part in a Golf Demonstration at a Foster's open day and playing King's school a couple of times - and losing. I gave up golf to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, but my training gave me an edge years later at the annual works pitch and putt tournament.

**Haydon Wood** 66-73

#### **News from South Africa**

It has been a couple of years since I last wrote from South Africa and after having "attended" my first Old Boys AGM albeit on Zoom, I promised to write an update. Regarding the AGM, I must say that I was disappointed that so few people took part. Whether this is because our numbers are decreasing as time goes by, or apathy, I am not sure, but I would have expected far more especially as with Zoom, all you had to do was sit at home and not travel!

I will repeat what I said at that meeting and that was a sincere thank you to all committee members over the years who have striven to keep this Association going. With no natural feeder system in place following the closure of the school all those years ago, it is no mean feat to still have as active an association with Founder's Day services and lunches/dinners plus an AGM. To be able to produce a magazine of such quality and quantity is remarkable and although names do not mean anything to me as they all seem to be old boys who attended Foster's after I left in 1969, it is still a tribute to the editor to be able to produce such a voluminous magazine (thank you for the compliment Mike, but in fairness, it is not just me, but Old Boys such as you who write copy for me – Ed)

Like everywhere else in the world, 2020 in South Africa was a year to forget thanks to Covid 19. My wife and I were in fact in Cape Town on holiday when the announcement of an almost imminent lock down was made. It meant we had to cut our holiday immediately to drive the two days back to Johannesburg to ensure we arrived home and stocked deep freezes and fridges with food before midnight on that fateful Thursday. It meant the beginning of what was to become almost six months of staying tight at home, reading countless books and finding new authors, and walking as the only form of exercise. No gym, no golf, no bowls and that remained the status quo until midSeptember. I will say that the Government did impose harsh measures but necessary ones and this did entail that we did keep our numbers down compared to other countries. However, a second wave is now with us and after having a short spell of almost normal activities at Level 1, we are now back to Level 3 as I write.

With all sporting activity cancelled it meant that my involvement in the International Tennis Club development program in the African township at Vosloorus, came to a standstill. Restrictions were lifted in the middle of September to allow us to recommence training and I was able to get some of the children to play in a few smaller tournaments before the year end. Of course, the restrictions regarding travel meant that there was no visit to Wimbledon that year nor to see my daughters and grandson in London. I am not so convinced that 2021 will allow me to see them in June either with the current situation. Yes, some

airlines are now flying into and out of the country but very few compared to prior the pandemic.

I am assisting a group of businesspeople with the project of improving tennis facilities within the region in greater Johannesburg where I live. The "blueprint" is to have a facility whereby there would be 9 or 12 courts to house a fully-fledged training centre to cater for players from beginners to elite players whose aims are to make tennis their career and play on the world stage.

South Africa as a country is still magnificent from a scenic and quality of life point of view. Yes, there are still many problems as the judicial enquiry into State Capture is still sitting and despite the former President saying he wants "his day in court", he has taken enormous steps to ensure that, if it happens, it is delayed for as long as possible. The former President, despite his demise, has managed to ensure he has enough supporters on the main executive body of the country to ensure that the current President has one hand tied firmly behind his back.

Like most countries we have suffered economically from the pandemic and are not alone when it comes to a large number of businesses (some small, some not so small) having gone to the wall and unemployment has leapt up from an already far too high 27% and now must be in the mid 30% range. Hotels have closed their doors as tourists have not been allowed into the country and tourism is perhaps our biggest foreign exchange earner. For a long time, like other countries, the sale of alcohol both from pubs and clubs as well as to the general public from bottle stores, was banned (that situation has recently been reintroduced as I write) and the liquor industry is up in arms to say the least with the threat of many jobs and livelihoods at stake.

But we are not unique in these matters as the whole world has been forced to reevaluate a number of situations that in the past were

considered "normal". Whether we can return to "normal" remains to be seen and if so, when is the unanswered question.

Living as we do in a Retirement Village, our internal restrictions have been greater as we are of the age group that is deemed more susceptible to the virus, but it was a small price to pay to ensure that we stayed as safe as possible and ensured that our actions did not endanger the other residents within the village.

I hope and pray that sometime in 2021 we do manage to have our life returned to us and we can go on our merry way without having to wear a mask!!

**Mike Dunk** (1952-1959)

# "THE GREAT POUND ROBBERY" made in 1966 and my unusual journey to Foster's By Max Horsey, its creator, in his own words.

#### The Eleven Plus.

"Don't be broken-hearted". These were the only words I remember when the headmaster of my junior school interrupted our lesson with a bunch of envelopes in his hand. He was speaking to the majority who had not passed. The envelopes were then given to those who had. A small group which included all my friends.

The 11+ was (and still is in some areas) a savage exercise in labelling the majority of children failures. I know a lot of people including Teresa May want to 'bring back grammar schools'. Who could argue, grammar schools are wonderful? But where are all the people saying 'bring back the secondary modern schools'. Odd since that is where the majority would go.

I start with this because it sets the scene for the transfer at 16 from the secondary modern – St. Aldhem's to the grammar school – Foster's. I have achieved everything I wanted, teaching, designing electronic circuits, writing books and articles, teaching electronics courses to physics teachers, designing electronic kits for mass

production, engaging an army of youngsters to build and test the designs and in my spare time, making films. So what harm did failing the 11+ do?

The first year at St. Aldhem's was the worst time I can ever remember. I was already usefully employed (at 11-12) mending all the electrical items of friends and neighbours, wiring plugs, building crystal radios in matchboxes for sale. So at last to be taught in a real science lab was brilliant. There was one science lab for 450 students (compared with 2 labs for 150 students at Foster's), and one teacher, who knew nothing about physics. We spent the year drawing parts of plants. All my plans for future careers were crushed as they all required exams and St. Aldhelm's at that time, didn't take any. So even though I was in the top set of six, I assumed I would be leaving at 15 years old with no qualifications.

The second year was a little better. Firstly, a new boy joined the class, ironically having left Foster's. I never did find out why. He hadn't attended the junior school with me, but we shared many interests and became firm friends throughout our time at the school. The science teacher left, replaced with another biology teacher – Miss Phillips. She was new to teaching, having trained as a mature student and was very enthusiastic. She quickly realised how keen I was and organised many after school science activities, supporting my interest in physics as best she could. Miss Phillips was also our form teacher and very strict. Even the school bully (who had previously had a go at the Headmaster in assembly) was reduced to pulp when confronted by Miss Phillips. Strict but kind, the perfect combination.

By the fourth year (the leavers' year in those days) the school decided that some of my year group could stay on for a fifth year and take GCE O-level. We would be called 5x - as the Headmaster explained – 'x' the unknown – 'we've no idea if this will work'. So throughout my fourth year Miss Phillips stayed behind after school providing free private tuition in physics. It took longer than it should because she was learning it as well and I was learning from the book she provided. I was used to learning from books and magazines as I didn't know anybody with any knowledge about electricity and electronics, so had to be self-sufficient.

There were only four of us in form 5x. It was a great year with lots of free periods and the prospect of getting the much-needed exams including – for me – physics. You needed five O-levels to get into Foster's sixth form. At St. Aldhem's that was a real challenge as most teachers had never taught to exam level. I passed four, but got top grades in physics and maths – in those days quite unusual even for Foster's boys. Mr Miller – the maths teacher at Foster's who lived two doors away gave me the good news. I was in.

So if everything went so well, why the bitterness. Well, what were the chances of a Miss Phillips joining a school, with no physics background, yet still willing to spend many hours unpaid to get somebody through a Physics exam. It was a random chance, a fluke. If it hadn't happened, I wouldn't have gone to Foster's. Joy Phillips became a life-long friend.

## Arriving at Foster's

Anyone who is still reading this will be amused that our near neighbour was Mr Miller – the scariest teacher at Foster's and even more surprised that, conscious that I had not studied calculous, gave me free (realising my parents had little money) private tuition throughout the summer holiday. I would be taking physics, maths and applied maths at Foster's, so calculous was essential.

The first day was quite traumatic. A real newbie joining a group that had been there for five years. The school seemed a bit dated (St. Aldhem's was brand new) but the welcome I received quickly overcame my apprehension. The boys I had known at junior school seemed just the same even though we had been apart for five years. The Head Boy [*E. Hiscock*] – in the year above – made a point of congratulating me on my grades – an act which he had probably forgotten about the next day but created a lifetime memory for the newbie.

The first maths lesson arrived. The boys had warned me about Mr Miller (known as Mick) and at the sound of his footsteps outside, the whole class were silent and poised for work. I had been told that in his younger days, if he needed to 'get to a boy' he would go straight there – knocking aside all the desks and chairs in the way. If he told off a boy, the whole school could hear. But he was a brilliant teacher – you

just needed to behave and all was well. I hadn't realised he was also second master.

### The Photographic Society

Physics went smoothly enough and I got the A-level, along with maths and applied maths. But I was more used to learning from books and interest lapsed a little, creating a gap that was filled by the Photographic Society. This was run by boys and the society owned an enlarger to make large prints from small negatives. I had been interested in photography since the age of ten and already developed and printed my photos at home. But I could only make contact prints, so a proper enlarger was a very big deal.

The Headmaster, Mr Sugden, was aloof and seemed to sweep around in his gown, floating in and out of assembly. My only contact with him was suggesting I made a 'film' (slides and tape recording) showing what it's like to move from St. A to Foster's. I had made a similar slides-recording film of a school trip, so had tested the technical aspect. He didn't think it was a good idea — nobody was interested in St. Aldhem's - and my classmates were less than lukewarm as well.

Sport was irritating; I had managed to avoid it at St. A since the 4<sup>th</sup> year and now we were all expected to play football once a week. Fortunately, nobody seemed to take it seriously (perhaps we were in the B team) and forgetting which way we were playing and so scoring an own goal wasn't a problem.

At the end of the first term a new Headmaster – Mr Francis – arrived. It is well known that the oldest pupils in a school hate change the most and the new headmaster arrived with gusto, determined to tighten up a few things. Firstly, the sixth form would no longer have free periods. They were now, study periods. He introduced a new hymn, which we disliked simply because *he* introduced it. "God is working his purpose out" – it would be significant later.

### Rugby.

Our dismay was complete when we saw the football goal posts being replaced by rugby posts. There was outrage. Even I suddenly fell in love with football – for a few minutes at least. He appointed a surprise Head Boy – who joined Foster's when I did but happened to be very good at rugby.

For balance it should be said that the new Headmaster – Mr Francis, became very successful and well liked, and the Head Boy, Nigel Holmes was the best it's possible to be.

### Satire and "The Great Pound Robbery".

General Studies was taught by a teacher who loved satire. "That Was The Week That Was" with David Frost was in full flow and we were introduced to various satirical books. An odd combination of factors hence came together – my desire to make a film, satire, the horrid game of rugby, the new head-boy, and an angry group of sixthformers looking for an outlet. It could only lead to "The Great Pound

Robbery".

The Pound was the collection of lost games kit which was vast, made worse by the zeal of the prefect in charge of the Pound – known as the Pound Prefect. He would frequently collect up things we didn't realise we'd lost.

I can't remember where the idea came from. The Great Train Robbery had happened in 1963 so was still fresh in our minds. But somehow the idea arose to create a satire around the pound. R Preston – a brilliantly clever boy – wrote the script. And I think it was his idea to include rugby and invent the god Masoch, whose followers would be known as masochists. He then re-wrote the Headmaster's new hymn as follows:

From utmost east to utmost west, where rugby is the game By the boots of many masochists, we inflict much pain What can we do to hasten the time, the time that shall surely be, When the Earth shall be filled with the pleasure of pain, and the game of ru-ug-by.

Virtually everybody in 6.2 and about half of 6.1 took part either in front or behind the camera. Perhaps the most impressive thing was that Nigel Holmes agreed to play the god Masoch. Since he was Head Boy and captain of rugby it was perfect casting and he was much

admired for agreeing to ridicule his favourite sport. Meanwhile, the pound prefect played himself as the Pound Prefect. Both these parts were key to the success of the project and I hope they realised how grateful we were.

There was no budget of course, so we used Photographic Society funds to buy black & white film in bulk, created our own 35mm cassettes and developed the film in a new and complex system so that the negatives were automatically changed to positives ready for projection. The plan was to charge admission to see the 'film' and pay back the Photographic Society. I had a 35mm camera, and one of the boys had a tape recorder. So technically, we were sorted!

Looking back, I can't remember if we were concerned about the satire being aimed so pointedly at the initiatives the new Headmaster had introduced. I can't even remember if we showed the script to any of the staff. We might have involved our form teacher Mr Griffiths – a legend in his own time – I can't remember if we did or what he would have said, but I can imagine that if he had read the script he would have said "yes go ahead, but don't tell the headmaster I said so". In reference to the Headmaster converting our 'free periods' into 'study periods' he once said, "on your timetables I have – in a moment of weakness – written 'free periods'. Please cross it out and put 'study periods". His tone of voice was such that I suspect the whole class have always remembered that moment.

Everybody knew we were making a film, but it's very unclear how much the staff knew about the satirical element. In my experience as a teacher, the staff often know more than the students realise. The skill is in deciding whether or when to intervene.

We took well over 150 photos, in various moments in the lunch break or after school, with little regard for continuity, hence clothes randomly change, the stocking masks worn by the robbers are there in one picture, gone in the next. We were especially proud of the special effect – the god Masoch looking vast, with the rugby players kneeling before him. The reversal processing – a very long task - required several boys, as the double exposure and constant agitating of the developing tank for a long period was exhausting (i.e. the tank used to develop the film had to be shaken for a long time for a good result).

But it was a cheap way of getting slides rather than negatives. Some boys were more vigorous than others and so the quality difference in some of the images which is apparent now, was evident even then.

We sought a narrator with a proper narrator's voice (I think he was in 6.1) and most of the dialogue was recorded in advance and then copied to a second recorder so that the music & effects could be added. There was a considerable quality loss in the transfer, so the odd moments when we recorded dialogue directly to the master tape are very noticeable. Robert Wareham selected all the music from a range of records owned by various boys. Getting right the various audio levels and timing was quite a task and as the project came together, we realised how difficult it was to correct any mistakes. The best example was that we filmed the escape lorry driving down the drive and across the railway track – without the robbers or the pound on board. To explain the absence of the robbers and pound we had to add the dialogue (which is noticeable as an addition) "quickly they rejoined the escape lorry, opening its false bottom and getting in".

# The Premier

The school owned a projector, but it was the type where you manually fed the slides on alternative sides. Hence all the slides had to be divided into two packs, with a boy on each side carefully selecting and inserting the slide into the mechanism ready for me to move it into place at the right moment. A fourth boy operated the tape recorder. We had a special staff and parents showing, and had an impressive 100% turnout, including the Headmaster. We were a little apprehensive though, my nerves in just getting everything working and timed correctly swamped any worry about what the Headmaster may think. There was a short break in the middle so that the tape could be turned over and we could stack the next groups of slides. It is the point where "and when the sun set the previous day, all was ready".

At the end there was a good round of applause and then the Headmaster left without saying anything. Slightly unnerved by that, we were cheered up by the very enthusiastic response from the staff who remained. The question now was would the boys be allowed to see the film – the finances of the Photographic Society depended on it (and

since I was now in charge of the Photographic Society, it would be my fault!).

The following day the main culprits were summoned to the Headmaster's office. The scriptwriter and I were probably the most to blame. But Mr Francis was wiser than we realised and congratulated us on our initiative and imagination. Word quickly spread through the sixth form and at a stroke he went from being viewed as mediocre, to off the scale in admiration. And yes, the school could view the film. We organised two school showings and many boys were happy to pay to see it twice. We covered all expenses and made a profit for the Photographic Society.

It was a wonderful experience and as with so much that happens beyond the curriculum in school, it gave us permanent memories of a great school with inspirational teachers and a Headmaster whose wisdom ensured he would be one of the best headmasters ever.

I've been very fortunate to have made contact with John Abbott (6.1 at the time) who helped with every stage of the film and sound recordist Niall Munro. It would be wonderful if anyone else involved made contact. I have since converted it to an mp4 film and tried to put on YouTube but the copyright music used caused it to be taken down. But I can supply a copy directly to anyone interested. A sample can be seen at: https://fostersdigbys.co.uk/photographsschool-photos-the-great-pound-robbery/

(Ed – Max can be contacted on mph@radley.org.uk (email published with consent)).

# **OLD BOYS' NEWS**

### Jeff Jenkins writes;

I retired from work this year – have had some health issues over the last 6 years but settled down now – latest episode was finding out I was diabetic in February but managing that pretty well now, had great health care from our local professionals. Still living on the west coast of Snowdonia between Tywyn and Dolgellau and the scenery stuns me every day. We can see Snowdon and the whole of the Llyn peninsular from our front garden.

Lost our two lovely Jack Russell terriers in May and June and couldn't stand an empty house so we now have two new puppies, Snoop Dog and Stan - 100% Welsh, their Dad was a Pembrokeshire Corgi and Mum was a Welsh sheepdog (I think Dad had a stepladder). Quite hard work to start with – they are drovers, used to herding cattle and when we first had them they would herd us around the house by nipping our ankles from behind. We've broken that behaviour now, but they are keeping us busy with three walks a day at least and lots of training. They're getting there slowly with the help of our excellent local dog trainer.

Am in regular social media contact with a number of old school mates including Paul Bingham, Tom Anderson and a number of LDS old girls. Until recently we used to have Rachel Chadbourn as a regular guest to stay with us when she was working up here for a day or so.

Jeff (Hugh) Jenkins 71-76

<u>Richard Emm</u> (75-82) (living in Lyme Regis) appraises us of his younger brother **Tony** (77-82), an Old Boy as well. He works for Danpak as a project manager for their food processing plant installations. He been based there for just over 3 years now and has been enjoying life to the full. He has even started rowing with a local club, so managing to keep fit.

**<u>Bill Stafford</u>** contacted the Editor with the following. A lengthy tome, but worth it – thank you Bill.

# **Qualifications don't matter.**

My first experience with gin wasn't my Grandfather's funeral, it was at a party at the Blackberry Lane Hovel, drinking from a bottle mixed with lemonade, with Clive Saunders (72-77) and Simon Clifford (7881). I sat between them as the bottle was passed. Needless to say, I was horribly drunk that night. But the first proper Gin & Tonic was with my mother, at her father's funeral, in November 1979, just a few weeks before School and I parted company.

As I sat in the Portuguese sunshine (whilst the UK was still suffering wind and rain), with that same beverage dripping condensation into my lap, I opened Facebook, to see a post from Philip Dolbear (74-81; a former classmate, now at his zenith) on the Fosterian page, talking about the latest edition of the Fosterian magazine, for which I had been on the editorial committee in that year, with my good friend Alan Fazakerley (74-81).

"Am I in it?" I asked, with more than a little sarcasm, only to find I was! Mentioned along with a bunch of school mates, with whom I am still in contact, some of whom I have been friends with for more than half a century.

It reminded me of a plea from Kevin Parsons (71-78) some years previously, asking for submissions for the magazine. "I can do that", I thought with a giggle, whilst on my commute from Kings Cross on the Peterborough line. I did, but it is lost now, in the ether, or in some Cloud-based storage facility. As I remember it was laugh-outloud funny, but with a hint of pathos, which would bring a wry smile to even the most cynical of lips...as I remember!

Anyway, the sun is a bit hot, so I've come inside, and thought I would recount my experiences since December 1979, when the very lovely (now, sadly "late") Mike Goode was presented with the poisoned chalice from which I was to drink. "We think you'd be better off in an ongoing job situation" he relayed, quoting directly from the Chris Lea Book of Standard Clichés. In later years I would wonder whether if I had played soccer as well as I played rugby, I may have been retained for the following term, given my athletic prowess (see "110m hurdles, South West Counties 1979", and other School records – which still stand, seeing that the school is a housing estate!), but I wasn't.

Maybe because I was disapproving of soccer players, and maybe because Maths wasn't a strong point in years 1 to 3, Ken and I weren't best buddies. If I were a cynical man, which thankfully, even after three decades of police work, I am not (sic), I may have drawn conclusions about my departure from school. At the time, I wasn't really bothered. I was looking elsewhere – anywhere – but without focus.

Dad wasn't too happy. And I recognise that, even now, I can master the understatement.

I went to Knight's Garage in Sherborne for a few months in 1980. I learnt much, especially how bad I am at being a mechanic, but a careers bloke came to see me, and suggested I consider going to college in Bournemouth. An engineering-based course. No idea what it was about. No idea what I would do with it. But it was, most importantly, not up to my elbows in grease and oil.

So off I went, aged seventeen and a bit, on my new motorcycle, to Bournemouth. For two years.

I grew my hair, as you do, and was experiencing a lot that my erstwhile school mates were not. I travelled back to Sherborne at the weekend, to spend time with my girlfriend, who was still at Digby's (75-82), through every type of weather you can imagine. I played some rugby, did some drinking in The Digby Tap, maintaining my ties with "Home".

Dad had remarried; I was an uncomfortable reminder (for her, not him) of a previous commitment, so I kept my time there to a minimum.

By 1982, the course was done. I had passed, but still had no idea where I was going. My girlfriend (same one) and I went to London. We mooched about. She went to Uni; I rode a motorcycle around Town. We lived in a bedsit that was smaller than my current lounge, but we were young and in love. We didn't care. Actually, I haven't asked her about that bit; I'm just assuming (her sister's husband is an Old Fosterian. There is a rebuttal on the horizon!).

1983, back to Dorset, then off to University, for the first time, at Brunel, in Uxbridge, Middlesex, to study Materials Science & Technology. It was clear to me that I was Out Of My Depth. The Maths was mind-blowing; the Chemistry was beyond me. I played some rugby (and, ironically, some First XI soccer), got drunk, and failed my second year. It was 1985. I was headed Home again!

In 1985 I got trained as a draughtsman and worked for a time in Crewkerne. That girlfriend and I were still an item. She came back to Dorset, too. She went to train as a nurse in Yeovil (at the same hospital my mother and my sister had trained previously). We were

married the next year and managed to endure another couple of years in the South West.

I wasn't cut out to be a draughtsman. I loved the tangible nature of the work, starting with a blank piece of A0 film, on to which I would scribe an item that was to be manufactured, but the mind-set of my colleagues was very different to mine; Very Different. I was (and still am) gregarious (who laughed?); they were not. I was sporty (there...you did it again!); they were not.

I looked about for alternatives and was reminded of a chap I met during my studies, who went off to join Nottingham Police. "Hold Up! The Met are desperate; they'll take anybody" I heard. Fantastic! In August of 1987 I filled in the form. A year later (obviously not that desperate!), in September 1988, with my girlfriend-now-wife in tow, I joined the Metropolitan Police, a constable posted to Canon Row Police Station, just a few yards from Downing Street.

I hated it. The posting was more to do with appearance than any Real Policework.

I'd met Phil Barcelon (71-75) at Saracens RFC some years previously, and mentioned my plans to join The Job, way back then. He'd joined as a cadet. His advice was not to do it. But I had, and his words were exacerbating my tinnitus!

I looked about, within London, for something that would better suit my abilities, and be more fulfilling and more stimulating; you know, more like The Bill....and found it. By the early 90's Catherine (for that is her name) and I had parted company. I was living in Wood Green, just yards from the 144-bus stop, and a posting to Edmonton, N9, came up. The 144 stopped outside the nick!

On my first tour of duty, a night duty, I was involved in an episode of The Bill, with a car chase and everything! Foot chases, burglaries, domestics, sudden deaths; everything that was missing from Canon Row. Fantastic. Things were looking up.

But I had my heart set on Special Branch and sought a posting which would prepare me for it, so I applied for the Diplomatic Protection Group. In 1996 I transferred there, spending most of my time riding a motorcycle around Central London, or sitting in a hotel corridor keeping watch on some Out-Of-Town dignitary who was deemed important

enough to warrant two police officers. I spent some time with the late Augustus Pinochet, too. Not what I would describe as a typical despot, but the money kept rolling in, which was nice.

Then came the exam. Special Branch applications were convoluted and complicated, with a day of examination, an interview, and vetting, even after passing the initial paper sift, so getting there was something of an achievement. To quote a lady who started in the same intake "I worked damn hard to get to Special Branch, but being here, I realise it's not that Special". I wasn't that impressed.

With my qualifications from the DPG, I was destined to be a bodyguard (Protection Officer, in SB parlance). I did the course in 2000 and spent 30 months doing the job. It was whilst deployed "Out Of Town" that I met my current wife. My Principal spent his Saturday mornings at a stable, where, in previous years he had ridden; Britt kept her horse there. Many faces had appeared on the team over the years, but 2003 was a more significant year for all of us.

But being a Protection Officer wasn't as exciting as I expected, and especially not like the recent BBC drama (I watched some of the first episode but gave up after "It's a drama not a documentary" began to ring in my ears!). The people I empathized most with were the Drivers. They were "Seconded", and not "Special Branch Proper" (an anachronism that was later resolved). Some were ex-SEG, some Extraffic, but many were ex-19, the Specialist Firearms Command. It planted a seed, which later blossomed in my application to SO19, where I spent the remainder of my 13 years of service.

No, I have never shot anyone (a common question), but I forget how many people I pointed my guns at. Let's just say "a lot". Thankfully, these people were wise enough to desist from their actions and fully comply with my instructions.

It was exciting. The whole atmosphere suited me so much more. I really enjoyed the work. I did some other courses with them, and became an instructor, being able to pass on my "knowledge" and "wisdom", such that it was. My fellow instructors sat in on my lessons occasionally, using my idiosyncratic style in their own lessons, which is as much of a compliment I have ever been paid.

I did graduate, on my fourth attempt. I was an external student with the University of Portsmouth. They were very tolerant of my student ways, which, when stirred up with old age and cynicism (not yer average student!) resulted in an oblique view of some of the topics with which I was presented. And I was able to use my writing skills to prepare reports and presentations for a variety of people, up to and including the highest ranking of police officers, bless 'em, and persons from external agencies (as we call spies).

If you place your hand in a bucket of water, you will realise how much significance you have in the world when you take it out.

I retired in September 2018. By January 2019, I fully accept and expect my former colleagues to be asking "Bill who?".

Portuguese warmth suits my aching body well, the cheap booze helps, and the very different way of life gives me something to think about (set your clocks back 50 years). Four dogs, three cats, a pony, and my wife take up my time. My motorcycle takes a poor tenth place.

So, what am I trying to convey through all this rambling? It's a message to parents, really, but also to students. It is my conjecture that school teaches you how to learn. I have not used algebra since June 1979. I know (and speak) more French than I did when I failed my O level (twice, by the way). I can't give you the order of the monarchy since Norman times (History; failed) and know little of how farming of the USA has influenced the world (properly failed my Geography O level!). Those who have children going through school, about whom they worry, for their future, try to understand and accept how they learn.

I have come to realise which manner of learning suits me best. I have done many exams since my school days, even passed the majority of them (even PRINCE 2, which was peculiar). I recognise, especially as an instructor, how people learn, and how they should adapt for themselves.

Qualifications *do* matter, but fret not, parents; not acquiring the expected results at aged 16 will not condemn your little one to a lifetime of drug abuse and poverty. Everyone has another chance. My best days were not at school; they came later. I still have friends from Foster's. They are very dear to me, and I would trust any one of them

with my most precious possessions. I have friends from the intervening years, especially from my thirty years in The Metropolitan Police. They all have an array of experiences, which are all as valid as any other, and we respect each other for it.

All of life is about learning. If you ever think you have nothing more to learn, you will be brought up short pretty quickly. It's fun. Spending time poring over books may not be your favourite pastime. It may not be your best way to learn. It may be that you learn best from being shown how to do things, and by getting your hands dirty. Students; don't despair. Do your best. Parents; ditto.

PS. Although written pre-Covid, before the UK, Europe, and the rest of the world had a shake, I am confident in my assertions. The pandemic (I wasn't calling this a pandemic before anyone else was calling it a pandemic, Donald) made people look up from their bit of pavement, turn their heads left and right and take in the broader pictures. That, I feel, has been the positive aspect of the whole business, and we – all of us – should maintain that view. It will make for a better community.

As former classmates will attest, I am not a political animal. I vote, but that's my business. I discuss issues of the day but find no satisfaction in opposing political views. However, I have found much resonance in what other, bigger minds share with the rest of us. Have a look at The Frog in the Well.

# <u>John David Jameson</u> 1951-1956 sent us news from way Down Under.

I was a boarder in Hound Street from 1951 until 1956. Mr Lush was then both Headmaster and boarding house master. I enjoyed my time at Foster's and recall very little bullying, although fagging did still exist. I was lucky in my first two years to be billeted over a butcher's shop in Cheap Street which gave one a little more freedom.

I was very much average academically although from glancing through old Fosterian magazines I do note I did well in History and English. The major sports in my time were soccer and cricket at which I was very ordinary, but I did better in athletics (especially cross country).

I remember with affection most of our masters who were able to open the eyes of "plodders" like me. Mr Miller engendered a huge interest and respect for Copernicus. I have always remembered Mr Hewitt's casual remark that "if you get nothing else out of geography you will at least better enjoy a Sunday afternoon stroll". In my time Mr McKay produced the annual school play which I generally managed to get a part in. One of the highlights was the McKay's Sunday afternoon tea a week or so before the performance. Great if you were a boarder.

I remember the Commoners Concerts but not any specific details. My year put on a skit "The Old Oak Settle" I believe. Knight also wrote a couple of skits based upon Shakespeare's Julius Caesar and 1984. Whatever, they were great fun.

I have not kept in touch with other old boys, partly because I left for Australia in 1957. Those boarders I remember include Knight, Hall, Fowles and Mence. I did keep in contact with Deon Hall up until the late 1960s and John Fowles attempted to ring me from America about ten years ago, but we were never able to make contact.

In late 1957 I decided I would emigrate somewhere. Australia was the cheapest so here is where I have been for over sixty years, mainly at first in Sydney. I had no idea what I wanted to do and ended up doing a little bit of a lot. Most of which I enjoyed. What I did not enjoy was working on the land west of Dubbo for six weeks. Horses and I do not get on and that goes for sheep as well.

I worked in factories (producing really large trucks) and a brewery where alcoholism was a real problem, as a copy boy on a national newspaper, and as a door-to-door salesman. That really was the pits.

Whilst life was pleasant I realised I was getting nowhere and I needed some qualifications, which in my case meant part time University. I joined the Commonwealth Public Service and spent my evenings studying for the equivalent of "A" levels. In this I was successful and managed to get a transfer to Canberra and did a part time degree in earth sciences and Geography. I picked up a post graduate degree in 1977.

The Commonwealth Public Service in Canberra in the 1960s and 1970s was zooming off in all directions and I was very much in

the right place at the right time. I was lucky enough to work on some major projects, some of which never came to fruition (the Nuclear Power Station at Jervis Bay), but most of which involved land management.

I was promoted to a Directorial position in The Department of Health that technically involved the development of hospitals. However as often happens I was used more frequently on management issues.

By this stage I was married with three children. Unfortunately, my wife who is from North West Queensland got very bad hay fever in Canberra so a move to Tasmania in 1978 was advisable. I worked as Research Director for a Commonwealth body looking into federalism issues and headquartered in Tasmania for political reasons. It was all rather good fun but cut off from reality.

The opportunity to join the Tasmanian service arose and was appointed as Registrar-General, Births Deaths and Marriages which I very much enjoyed. About fifteen years ago I conducted a wedding in Southport, Tasmania where I met Edgar Maltby's niece. I was able to contact Edgar and visited him in Sherborne. I was also appointed a JP and a member of the Legal Aid Commission.

I retired from the public service in 2000 and was appointed a community member of the Commonwealth Aged Care Complaints Tribunal, and also a community member of the Human Medical Research Ethics Committee and later the Animal Research Ethics Committee.

I have had very happy and broad life especially in Tasmania.

John Jameson

# **VALETE**

**MJ Goode (Mike)** 7 April 2020 1970-92 Former Master, Boarding Housemaster, and President of the OFA

FR Fox (Ray) 1939-46 JD Frost (John) 1938-43 DR Gibling 1932-41 JR Gregory (John) 1939-47

# **AW Mole (Arthur)** 1940-44

**Mrs June McKay**, Hon Member, widow of Stanley McKay. **John.F.Harvey**, Stockwood. At Foster's 1949 – 1955. For many years Yeovil livestock Auctioneers and then Director of Premier livestock Auctioneers. Died June 2020 from Cancer.

Kevin Waterfall writes: Following is an obituary of Peter Nash written by his wife Gill. As you can read, he left school in '63, but I don't know if he started in '58 or '59. He was in my year '59-'64 for some of his time but I recollect that he may have been a year older. Perhaps it is recorded in school records.

#### **Peter James Nash** 19. 08.1947 – 26.08.2020

Peter left school in the long harsh winter of 1962/3. Many weeks of deep snow preventing travel to Sherborne, he found local employment, eventually deciding not to return to pursue the offer of a place at Welbeck Officer Training College. He instead embarked on a life of many and varied skills including driving for Eddison Plant in Dorchester as a heavy plant operator, followed by several years at Dorchester County Hall Work Study Department. During this time he opened an Army Surplus Store in Sherborne, trading for the next twenty years. In 1982 Peter converted the former Methodist Chapel in Leigh to what was to be the family home for his wife Gill and their two children James and Sophie. During his thirty-seven years in Leigh he established a reclamation business in the village, specialising in vintage roofing materials together with the restoration and fitting of Victorian fireplaces, selling pine furniture and garden ornamentation. His time at Foster's had put him in good stead for his life ahead. He very much enjoyed being a member of the school's Army Cadet Force and was proud to be awarded 'Best Recruit' in 1961. developed a talent for painting and drawing.

Peter was unfortunately beset with ill health, eventually preventing him from continuing in business, instead learning new home-based skills including metalwork, woodturning and IT instruction.

He had a great interest in the natural world and researching



local architecture and social history. His son James, known to many, so tragically lost his life in early August 2020 at his home near Andover. Peter already unwell, was unable to withstand the shock and grief causing his health to rapidly deteriorate.

He died eighteen days later with his wife and daughter at his side. His remaining family are heartbroken by this double tragedy. Peter and James now lie side by side at Higher Ground natural burial meadow.

Peter in CCF dress as 'Best Recruit' in beautiful

peacefully at rest in the 1961 Corscombe countryside.

Gill Nash

## **Brian Maxwell Arthur** 1947-51

Phil Stainer reports the death, on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021, of Brian and sends us the following, along with more details from Brian's son, Max.

Brian was born in Lambeth on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1934. He was evacuated to Sherborne at the start of WWII with one of his brothers Derek, who was a few years older than him. They lived with my Aunt & Uncle, Elsie & Samuel Hunt in Vernalls Road. Elsie & Sam had lost their only child to a still birth some years before and unable to have more, the arrival of two little boys on Sherborne Station requiring a home was seen by them as quite literally "God Sent"! They took them to their hearts as if

they were their own children, and while Derek returned home at the end of the war, Brian stayed on at Foster's School and he remained as good as any son to them until they died.

Brian left Sherborne when he was about 17 moving to Bath to work and train as a Surveyor. Whilst with this firm he had a piece of work that took him to Dorchester where he lodged with a certain Mrs Deacon. There he met their daughter and future wife Maureen. He said this was on Valentines Day when Maureen was on a half term break from teacher training in Portsmouth - we think this was 1953. They married 1956. Maureen Alice Elizabeth, born 19<sup>th</sup> July 1933 passed away on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

Phil Stainer 1951-59

Brian's Son, Max, adds the following:

Dad left Foster's in 1951, he went into a Surveyors section of a building firm in Bath and passed his Surveyors examinations. He then did his National Service (which I think was 1956 – 1958) in the Artillery due to his experience as a surveyor. A friend in the Army told him to visit the Isle of Wight. Subsequently, Mum and Dad both moved to Totland, (Dad to a Building firm, Mum Teaching) then Dad moved to a job with a building firm in the Cotswolds where he started designing and estimating as well as surveying. He built his own first house in the Cotswolds around 1961 before moving back to the Isle of Wight to Lake, where he now began managing larger building projects (multiple housing). A move to Bembridge came in 1968.

Dad and Mum thereafter stayed in the Isle of Wight with Dad remaining in the building trade. He built his first swimming pool in 1970. Dad was a MD with his firm until 1974/5 when he went selfemployed.

Dad retired in mid-1990's (really semi-retired) doing jobs around the Island for friends as well as his many projects at home. He was multitalented - an Artist, Builder, Poet, Sportsman, Oracle and a wonderful Father and Husband, full of love, humour and understanding.

Max Arthur

#### Amanda Bedford writes from Australia:-

'I would like to inform "old" Fosterians that my brother **David (Dave) Helliar** (73 - 79) passed away on 14th February age 58 after a long illness fought with immense courage.

He is survived by his son & daughter-in-law (Nathan & Amy), grandchildren (Eliza & Arthur), parents Neil & Elaine Helliar (Neil is a very old Fosterian) & sisters Amanda (Mandi), Sandra & Janey - all ex-Lord Digby's.

Dave lived his entire life in Sherborne and had many friends in the local area.

In his younger years he was in the Abbey choir and had the voice of an angel which we all enjoyed listening too - sing loud & strong up there David .... RIP.'

# ...and finally – a postscript...

Last year, I printed the picture below, supplied by John House, and asked if it rang bells with anyone? You did not disappoint and thanks to Terry Chubb, we have the answer. Terry takes up the story.

"Hello Kevin and congratulations on a superb Fosterian just received. The reason for this note is that if I didn't comment on what I'm writing about now, it would probably not happen at all!

I refer you to page 46 of the current magazine and I immediately thought of the names of those boys shown in the photograph and, unless I'm wrong, they are as follows:-

On the left - Maurice Hiscott, next to him, Pat Frampton and, next to him Alan Hicks with myself, Terry Chubb on his left.

I remember nothing about Blandford Camp, but I do remember that one of our teachers took us on a trip one day. The car, according to my brother (Gordon Chubb) is a Morris 10.

This car in fact belonged to Stanley McKay who, as well as being a teacher at Foster's also ran an army squad and, as the photograph was entitled "Blandford Camp 1947" he could well have taken us there.

As it was 73 years ago, I'm surprised I remember all that anyway! Hopefully, one of the other boys shown may send in their version of events, in which case, I'll look forward to next year's magazine.

Keep up the good work

**Terry Chubb** 



# **Dates for your Diary**

We normally have three dates for your diary, Needless to say, no firm plans can be made. BUT, please note the date for the AGM and Reunion Dinner.

# **Gryphon School Remembrance Service**

We do not propose to attend this year due to the pandemic.

# OLD FOSTERIANS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We hope this will be held on

SATURDAY 9th October 2021

(Following the Reunion Dinner)

At **The Grange at Oborne** KEEP THE DATE FREE!

Final details to follow when we have a better idea of the state of the World!

# Joint Old Fosterians' Association and Lord Digby's Old Girls' Association 2021

Given the ongoing pandemic and the lack of any clear way forward, even with the vaccine, it was with a heavy heart your Committee has decided that we will not hold the Founder's Day service this year. We are sure you will understand the reasons and like us, look forward to this being reinstated for 2022.

# There are two Facebook accounts that Social media fans can access.

The "**Old Fosterians' Association**" is dedicated to the OFA. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=Old%20Fosterians%E2%80%99%20Association&epa">https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=Old%20Fosterians%E2%80%99%20Association&epa</a>

and "Foster's and Lord Digby's: our virtual school" https://www.facebook.com/groups/432255810148610/?epa