

THE FOSTERIAN

The Magazine of the Old Fosterians' Association



No. 22

Spring 2015

THE

FOSTERIAN

The Magazine of the Old Fosterians' Association



No. 22 Spring 2015

OFFICERS and COMMITTEE
of the
OLD FOSTERIANS' ASSOCIATION
2014/2015

President

M.J. GOODE Esq.

Chairman

P. DOLBEAR Esq., 12 Blackbirds, Thornford, Sherborne, DT9 6QZ
Tel No. 01935 873497

Hon. Secretary

T. ASHMORE Esq., Lydeard House, Bradford on Tone,
Somerset TA4 1HB. Tel No. 01823 461429 e-mail:
tim.ashmore@taes-energy.co.uk

Hon. Membership Secretary

S. NEWELL Esq. e-mail: simonhnewell@yahoo.co.uk Tel
No. 07770 641027

Hon. Treasurer

P. HOLDEN Esq., 14 Park Road, Leamington Spa, CV32 6LG
Tel No. 01926 422655

COMMITTEE

G. BUNTER Esq., J. HOUSE Esq.,
I. MAUN Esq., D. BALL Esq.

FOREWORD

As most of you will no doubt know by now, our President Ken House passed away last October. He held a unique position in knowing just about all surviving Old Fosterians, either as a school mate, former teacher or Headmaster. He will be sadly missed and our condolences go out to his wife and family. A number of people have asked to provide an article of their memories of Ken and these are included within this edition of the magazine. Mike Goode was approached by the committee to take up the mantle of presidency and he has agreed. We look forward to his guidance to take forward the Association.

In addition to the bad news above the committee has learnt that the Sherborne Hotel is to close in May this year. We have successfully held both the Founders' Day Lunch and the Reunion Dinner there for the past few years. We will still be able to hold the lunch there in May, in conjunction with Lord Digby's school girls, but the dinner in October has been arranged at the Golf Club. Thanks to John House for arranging this on our behalf. Further details are given within the magazine.

Hon Sec.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

A new era in the organisation – life after Ken House. There are many tributes in this year's publication. I will make one further here – end of a Foster's icon and a lasting memory for me from my time at Tinney's Lane. There are many who are indebted to him in a number of areas and all Old Fosterians for the work he has put into the OFA over many years.

It was a unanimous decision by your Committee, and I am delighted that Mike Goode has accepted our invitation to become your Association's President – another icon of the School and Association. Ken's passing has opened a Pandora's Box of Foster's memorabilia that was in his attic. We are indebted to John House who has led the 'project' but your Committee has reviewed all the material and considered where it should reside. Where possible the majority will be documented and held at Sherborne Museum, some will go to the Gryphon. That still leaves quite a bit though and our proposal is to have this at the Dinner in October for Members to 'claim' for their keepsakes on a first come first serve basis. I can assure you, there are some fascinating items that take you on a real trip down memory lane. Form Lists, pictures, Master's Register, HMI Reports, Boarding House building plans and School Play and Commoners' Concerts programmes to name a few.

The Dinner is notified later in the Magazine but we hope to make this a special one in tribute to Ken with past Masters attending and the extra memorabilia that will be on view as described above. Please make a special effort to attend this year.

I will conclude with special thanks to your Committee - John I have mentioned already, Tim for his unstinting work as Secretary and producing the Magazine with Graham, and lastly new entrant! Ian Maun who has taken over coordination of the Annual Dinner.

Philip Dolbear

TREASURER'S REPORT

The balances of the OFA accounts are as stated below for the year end 2014.

Assets at 31st December 2014

Barclays Savings A/c	£1689.65
NatWest Reserve A/c	£ 23.02
NatWest Current A/c	£1173.36
War Stock	£ 165.00
Total	£3051.03

Expenditure at 31st December 2014

Magazine printing / posting	£481.84
Founder's Day Church Ex.	£132.50
Poppy wreaths	£ 50.00
Total	£664.34

I have not received any claims by members of the committee for any expenses incurred by them for calendar year 2014.

Just to remind the membership, that I do not itemise the income for either the Founder's Day lunches or the Annual Dinner (nor their expenditure) as both these events are fully self funding. 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

TRIBUTES TO KEN HOUSE 1936- 2014



Ken House Born 7th April 1936

Joined Foster's School as a pupil and boarder in September 1947. He came from Sturminster Newton where his family lived

Ken left Foster's in 1954 and did his National Service with the R A F. After National Service Ken went to Cardiff University where he was awarded a Teachers Training Certificate in 1958 and a Diploma in Physical Education in 1959

He started his teaching career at The Weald School Billingshurst Sussex in 1959

In 1960 he successfully applied for the job of teacher of Physical Education at Foster's school. Ken also taught mathematics

Ken was Deputy Headmaster for three years before he became Acting Headmaster in 1983. Taking early retirement in 1990 after 30 years teaching at Foster's and 43 years after joining the School in the first place. Ken had already been on the O F A committee and in 1983 he became the Association's President.

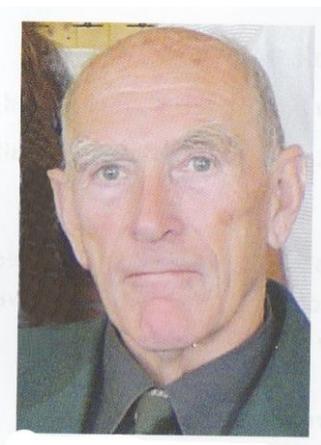
Ken excelled in most sports, He was a very competitive member of Sherborne Golf Club for many years but he was best known as a Cricketer. Ken was in the school Under 14 teams and later on the School 1st XI He played for the Dorset County from 1962 and played

his last Minor Counties Championship game in July 1978. Since then he held several positions in Dorset County Cricket Association and also in the Minor Counties Cricket Association. At the time of his death he was still the President of Dorset County Cricket Club.

Ken died on the 18th October 2014.

At the specific request of Ken, a private family service only was held.

John House



Ken House 1936-2014

I arrived at Foster's in 1947, along with Ken, Terry Chubb and Robert Earnshaw. The four of us played together in the School Football and Cricket teams. We found that in the Cricket team, everyone wanted to be a fast bowler.

The man that changed my cricket future was Mr Miller. One afternoon at cricket practice, he took me to one side, took one look at my hands,

and asked me if I had ever thought of becoming a leg spinner. He coached me, sent me to Len Crease at Sherborne School.

Upon leaving Foster's I did National Service. I joined 1st Battalion Royal Gloucestershire Regiment and spent 20 months in Kenya.

Thanks to Mr Miller, I played my first game for Sherborne Cricket Club at the age of 13 at Bude. I continued to play cricket for The British Army in Kenya.

When I returned to play for Sherborne in August 1956, who should be playing for them but Ken!

I have two vivid memories of Ken. Firstly we beat Taunton on the Terrace. They had two or three Somerset players in their team. They set us a big total to win. I was promoted in the order and I joined Ken. A quick chat and we put on 89 in 10 overs and we won the game.

Secondly, the match at Swanage was on a horrible wicket which Ken was not happy with. The ball was flying everywhere. Ken took a few knocks and a very angry Ken decided to open the bowling. I have never seen a Club bowler as fast as he was.

Ken always gave 100% in sport and he will be sadly missed.

Denis Ball

1947 -1953

KEN.

To the Editors of the Fosterian. I wonder if you would consider including a few memories of Ken which might reflect some of his rather more personal qualities.

Cricket

I was first aware of Ken at the end of the summer term prior to my joining Foster's. I was invited to join the Staff cricket team in their annual match against the 1st X1. By default I was asked to 'keep wicket' and by tradition the Staff fielded first. The bowling can only be described as timid thus the performance behind the stumps easy. School soon

were scoring freely reaching the boundary almost every other ball when the captain asked Ken to cover this boundary area.

Soon the ball reached him, I quickly placed myself perfectly to receive, immediately the ball landed in the gloves at bail height. Wonderful; until I was aware that my whole body was lifted some inches into the air. The ensuing pain to my hands was excruciating and the bruises remained well into the holidays. Eventually the Staff were asked to attempt to reach a daunting total and Ken and I came together at the crease. At the end of the first over we joined each other to discuss tactics. Looking me up and down he asked as to 'what on earth was I at, it was not required for me to chase every ball like some over-excited dog'. My next ball faced saw me on the way to the pavilion. During discussions in the Staffroom at the beginning of the next term Ken described the details of his bruises following batting against the great West Indian bowlers, Joel Garner, Viv Richards and Andy Roberts. It was only then that explained my previous experience. Ken had a distinguished career with Minor Counties Cricket and Dorset County Cricket.

Camping

1978 saw us making full use of the full camping kit, purchased by the School with an important contribution from the Parents' Association, The 3rd form camp was on a farm at Shapwick, Uplyme, just outside Lyme Regis. Having settled in we walked into the town for the opportunity for each group to buy their supplies for breakfast. On our return to camp Ken organised a game of 'commando' cricket. During his innings the ball was hit to every quarter and fielding sapped any residual energy hence the camp quickly settled for the night. On opening the tent in morning, all was quiet and a marvellous sun shone over the fresh green meadow when I noticed large patches of pure white dots. Soon we were cooking a breakfast of bacon and vast quantities of freshly picked mushrooms. The resultant drifting smell brought our campers to enquire as to what we were cooking. Unconvinced by the explanation and an invitation to join in, they wandered back to their tents with an air of anxiety as to our wellbeing following eating

such un-pasteurised delicacies. Ken loved mushrooms.

Skiing

Each year Ken would organise a skiing trip and I always enjoyed accompanying him and was grateful for his knowledge and encouragement to follow the sport. When taking groups to the higher slopes an established routine was followed, that being Ken would lead, next the group, and I would follow as a 'sweeper'. This occasion having reach the top of a high chair lift I acknowledged all were gathered Ken declared to 'follow him'. Unfortunately as he was at the edge of the piste and must have lost his 'edge' and gradually slipped sideways down the mountain some 20ft below us finishing amongst a few young Christmas trees. A most hilarious situation. No one laughed or even smiled although I sensed the muffled amusement. Clearly a mark of outstanding respect.

Another occasion was when the group were taking their skiing lesson early in the morning, so taking full advantage Ken, Mrs. House ('Chips') and myself ventured to the very highest slopes. Luckily we were the first on the lift, indeed we were the only ones. Having reached the top a vast gradual sloping piste stretched out as far as could be seen. Very soon it became clear that we were skiing on sheer ice. A surface difficult to manage the normal controls and soon we were gathering speed in a straight line. Conversation ended and full concentration was needed. As I glanced sideway Ken was now in the crouched position of the best downhill speed skiers. The challenge was on and we were at speeds that I had never before experienced. The only sound was the rushing wind and the clatter of the skis, a noise like some express passing through Clapham Junction. Neither would give way and eventual running out of slope we agreed that was something special. Chips caught up with us and we made our way to a tiny chalet where its owner was proudly raising the Italian flag. We were invited for a coffee

and he collected water from a nearby stream. Sitting in the blazing sun taking in the clear cool mountain air, sipping steaming coffee surrounded by the snow covered peaks moved us to suggest that this would be one of our lasting memories in our old age.

Retirement

Following retirement we kept in touch and particularly enjoyed our golf matches with Old Fosterians Bob Earnshaw and Jim Derham at Warminster and back at Sherborne. Despite his low handicap Ken was a difficult person to beat. Together with Chips they would kindly visit us at the cottage just over the county border in Devon. June 2014 was his last visit. Following lunch he felt strong enough for a visit to Lyme Regis. Parking up at the outskirts we strolled alongside the River Lym and through the narrow twisting lanes towards the seafront. Chips and my wife decided to find somewhere for a rest whilst Ken and I continued slowly along the Marine Parade. Before turning around we looked out to a beautiful blue sky and a calm sea. Ken explained the current situation regarding his health, fully accepting the ultimate conclusion. We exchanged a few more memories, finally he told me how lucky life had treated him and we walked back to join with our wives. October 18th 2014 Foster's lost a unique pupil, teacher, Headmaster and President of the Old Fosterians' Association but for many a great friend.

M.J.Goode.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2014

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Sherborne Hotel, Sherborne, starting at 17.30pm on 11th October 2014. 8 members attended and apologies were received from John Paulley. The Chairman P Dolbear Esq., conducted the meeting.

Minutes of the previous AGM

The Minutes of the AGM held on 12th October 2013 were proposed by K. Waterfall, seconded by J. House and agreed unanimously and signed by The Chairman as a true record.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Reports from Officers

Chairman – PD. Thanks were given to Ian Maun for organizing the annual dinner and to Graham Bunter and Tim Ashmore for production and printing of the magazine. Philip reported on the programme of events for the forthcoming year, in particular the Founders day service and lunch where the former girls from LDS continue to outnumber the OFA representatives.

The Remembrance Service will be held on the Tuesday 11th November at the Gryphon School and all OFA members are welcome to attend but are required to give either PD or John House notice if they wish to attend. JH was to liaise with Ken House regarding the arrangement for the wreaths.

Treasurer – PH. PH was unable to attend the meeting but annual statements are produced at the end of each calendar year as agreed by the committee and endorsed at the previous AGM. TA reported that the

funds remain stable each year with each event self funding and the cost of producing the magazine closely matched annual subscriptions.

A full financial report for the year 2014 is provided in the magazine under “Hon.Treasurer’s Report”.

Secretary – TA. Tim Ashmore thanked Ian Maun for organising the annual dinner and Simon Newell for managing the OFA membership database. He also thanked Jeff Jenkins for continuing to manage the website despite his recent illness.

Election of Officers

The election of the officers remains the same with no new proposals for the main officers. The position of President will remain with Ken House during his illness.

Stan Love resigned as a committee member due to personal circumstances and Ian Maun volunteered to join the committee. This was unanimously agreed by members.

TA has agreed to continue with the production of the magazine for another year as there were no other volunteers for this role. Simon Newell has agreed to continue managing the membership database.

No new resolutions had been received or proposed

A.O.B

Links with the Gryphon School (possible joint old boys events?). ***PD agreed to liaise with Nicki Dodgson at the school to discuss options***

Joint association with LDS old girls.

There was no willingness from members at the meeting to consider this further, with feedback that LDS were not keen on this idea either.

Website – Social Media

The meeting agreed that the website should be prominent in the magazine, also is there a Facebook page? Also the blog comments should have the latest comments at the top.

TA to arrange

Documentation, including Bound copies of the Old Fosterian magazines.

KH has accumulated a significant amount of memorabilia which will now be passed to the committee. The meeting agreed that this should be passed in the first instance to the Museum for first refusal. ***John House to collect the artefacts and then liaise with the museum.***

N.B. this has been done by JH and the committee have agreed that the remaining artefacts, not required by the museum, will be available for OFA members to take at the reunion dinner in October on a first come first served basis.

The scanning of all documents held in the museum was regarded by the meeting as being too onerous and anyone wishing access to them will have to go via the museum.

The meeting closed at 18.21.

Hon. Secretary

OLD FOSTERIANS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held on

SATURDAY 10th OCTOBER 2015 at 5.30 pm
(Preceding the Reunion Dinner)

At the

Sherborne Golf Club

Agenda

- ! Minutes of the AGM. 2014
- ! Matters arising from the Minutes
- ! Election of officers and committee Resolutions
- ! AOB

Members are reminded that should they wish to submit any resolutions for the consideration of the meeting, copy(s) must be forwarded to the Hon. Secretary of the Association, 21 days prior to the meeting.

Old Fosterians' Dinner 2014

The 2014 OFA Dinner was held on October 11th at the Sherborne Hotel. Thirty-four people attended, including Old Fosterians, staff, wives and partners and former pupils of Lord Digby's School. The Dinner was preceded by the AGM.

The President, Ken House, was unable to attend owing to his illness and was sadly missed. Mike Goode was therefore the senior member of staff and the teaching contingent included Ian Maun, Jill Kohn and Howard Williams.

John Frost (1938-1943) was the oldest OF attending and he remembered well the move from Hound Street to the new buildings in Tinney's Lane just before the Second World War. Many regular attendees ('the usual suspects') were there including a contingent who were at Foster's when it closed in 1992.

The Sherborne Hotel laid on the usual excellent carvery and we thank them for their hospitality and service. Sadly, the hotel is to close in May and will no longer be available as a venue for our Dinners.

Although the Dinner was advertised with plenty of advance notice, ticket sales were slow and at one stage it looked as if the event might have to be cancelled. Members of the OFA are therefore asked to book as early as possible this year to ensure that we can go ahead. It would be really good to have a large number of people there in October, as this will be the first Dinner since the passing of Ken House, who is greatly missed by all.

Thanks go to Tim Ashmore and Philip Dolbear for their help to me in this, my first year of involvement in staging the event.

I hope that we shall see many of you on October 10th, 2015, at the Sherborne Golf Club for this year's Dinner.

Ian Maun

Staff, 1977-1986

THE KEN HOUSE MEMORIAL DINNER.

Saturday 10th October 2015

**At Sherborne Golf Club DT9 4RN.
6.45pm for 7.15 pm.**

Tickets £18.00

Please see separate enclosed sheet for applying for tickets which should include your choices from the menu

Please send ticket applications to:-

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

Cheques to be made payable to “The Old Fosterians’ Association”.

Early application is requested. Seating is limited. Reservations will be First come first served. Please keep a record of your choice.

Accommodation is no longer available at the Sherborne Hotel. Please book directly with local Hotels and it is recommended that this is done early.

From enquiries before publication, many of the smaller hotels in Sherborne are already busy. An alternative is the Manor Hotel in Yeovil. If you are looking for accommodation it may be beneficial to contact the Hon. Secretary to see if there is sufficient interest in arranging group transport! e.g. a minibus to and from hotels.

Founders' Day Service

Once again a minority in number of Old Boys joined the Old Lord Digby Girls at Castleton Church on 10th May 2014. The Service was taken by The Revd. Jane Craw, Chaplain of Castleton Church. She spoke on the theme of "A gift for the Future". She asked why we were there? Perhaps it was not just to renew old acquaintances, but to value our education. This would not necessarily be in terms of exam results and league tables, but by memory of the School Plays, Camps, Sport, Friendships and perhaps even the pride of a uniform. These were the defining years of our lives.

She explained how she herself had trained as a Teacher, but became disenchanted believing the Curriculum had become too prescriptive and crowded and did not leave enough room for creativity. She believed that learning was not linear, but varied and that there should be room to discover and flourish. She believed that Schools should be able to innovate without fear of failing. Space was needed for spontaneity.

She posed the question what parents (and grandparents) could do to help. She considered activities for young and old, simple, creative, inexpensive and which would allow room for discovery and the opportunity to dream. She recalled her own time kite flying where different types did the same thing, where they learnt by experimentation and where they did things together as a group.

She talked of having fun – the dressing up box, modelling from recycled materials; much more fun than operating a gadget with 2 thumbs!

She encouraged us to spend time with children. To listen, watch, advise, provide positive encouragement and pass on our own personal 'gifts' to children. She concluded whether we had our 'calling' in the Reading from Isaiah (Ch 6 V1-8) "Here am I Lord, send me".

Philip Dolbear

FOUNDER'S DAY 2015

LORD DIGBY'S and FOSTER'S SCHOOLS

9th MAY 2015

11.30 am *Service at Castleton Church, Sherborne*
Preacher; To be confirmed

1.00 pm *Luncheon at the Sherborne Hotel*

Tickets(£12.50.)

Available through: Hon!Secretary OFA, Lydeard!House, Bradford!on!Tone, Taunton TA4 1HB. Cheques made payable to 'THE OLD FOSTERIANS' ASSOCIATION'; please include a SAE or e-mail address.

Final date for tickets. 25th April 2015

Menu

Beef and Pork carvery

Vegetarian option

Choice of Desserts

!

Tea or Coffee and mints

Remembrance Service 2014

The Gryphon School's Annual Remembrance Service was held on 11th November in partnership with the Old Fosterians. This year we were joined by Leading Aircraft Controller Leah Payne, from RNAS Yeovilton, who gave a moving address on service, sacrifice and the importance of remembrance. The Roll of Honour was read by Old Fosterian John House who reminded us that in 1914 there were sixty boys on roll at Foster's and that during the First World War 100 Old Fosterians served in the forces, 22 of whom lost their lives. We will remember them.

Philip Dolbear



Diane Tregale-School Chaplain, Arthur Morris-Year 13, Jack Crouch, Mike Goode, John House-Old Fosterians, Lynne Robshaw-British Legion Standard Bearer, Graham Bunter-Old Fosterian and Steve Hillier-Headteacher.

Front Row: Leading Aircraft Controller Leah Payne, Emily Karabina-Year 13, Don Mildenhall MBE-Governor

REPORT ON THE DOUZELAGE PROJECT (PART FUNDED THROUGH ERNEST HULME)

The Douzelage project organised a number of trips abroad for young people in Sherborne last year. Old Fosterian Kevin Waterfall has played a key role in this organisation. Below is a report from one of the participants on these trips.

Granville Carnaval 2014

As part of the Douzelage, we went to Granville, Normandy. We caught the ferry from Portsmouth to Caen on Thursday 27th February, and then drove to Granville to meet the family that we would be staying with. That evening, we saw our *Stars 80* float that we would be on for the carnival. It was in a large outbuilding with the other floats – a sinking ship, a boxing ring, and a princess's castle, all but to name a few!

On Friday, we visited a local school. It was very interesting as it was so different to our own. We showed the students photos of The Gryphon, which they enjoyed, but they were particularly interested in our food and what puddings we had! That afternoon, we visited Mont St. Michel which was beautiful – and very windy!

Saturday was sunny, so we enjoyed watching the children's procession and throwing confetti at each other (our host explained that they find confetti in the house for several months after the carnival!). We explored many of the little shops and went for a walk along the beach. The carnival was on Sunday. It was cold, so we were thankful of our fur coats (part of our 80's costume, along with sparkly dresses and silver boots). We had lots of fun dancing along the route to the music blaring from our float, and dodging confetti being thrown at our faces! On Monday, we said our farewells to our hosts who had put up with us for the five days. We then went to the Bayeux Tapestry and the Normandy Beaches, before driving to Caen for our ferry. I'd like to thank the Douzelage, The Old Fosterians Association and Kevin Waterfall for taking us – it was a fantastic experience and a great opportunity to practice French speaking – and it certainly helped!



Helen Semmons

Articles from the Museum Archives

Below are 2 more articles taken from the document compiled by Barbara Elsmore on the history of Foster's School. The complete document is available on line and at the Museum. Many thanks to Barbara for this contribution.

John Jackson—a Schoolboy in the War Years

John Samuel Jackson of Milborne Port remembers what it was like to be at school during the war years.

I previously went to Stonegarth School 1937 – 39 which was situated at the bottom of The Avenue. The Headmistress was Miss Sparkes. Having taken the Entrance Exam I then started at Foster's School in Hound Street in 1939 when I was not yet ten years old.

The Headmaster was Mr H Lush. Later that year we all moved up to the new school at the end of Tinney's Lane.

School in the War Years

Trenches were dug on the far side of the playing fields (well away from the school building) in a zig-zag formation with duckboards in them to stand on. When the air raid siren sounded we all had to run across to them entering from both ends and when meeting in the middle numbering off.

On one occasion I remember a German plane flying quite low over our heads with his machine guns firing, probably just to scare us. The school caretaker (Mr Pollard) and the groundsman later found some bullets scattered around the playing fields.

We travelled to and from school on Southern National buses. Milborne Port was only three miles and the fare was 3d (three old pence) return. But as petrol and diesel were rationed and in short supply the buses ran on gas by towing a trailer with a coke burner which sent gas to quite a large bag on the roof of the bus. The bus went extremely slowly especially up the hills. The coke furnace used to glow red hot after dark – it looked quite weird.

On 1 October 1940 German bomber planes on their way to Westlands or Bristol were met by British fighter planes and turned tail. Seeing a built up area below them (Sherborne) they just dropped their bombs in order to make up speed.

Although no bombs actually hit the school some landed nearby blowing all the glass out of the windows on the front of the school and shards of glass were stuck in the notice boards on the far side of class rooms. Fortunately school time ended at 4.00 pm and the class rooms were empty. The school was then closed for two weeks while the windows were re-glazed etc.

As the photograph shows the house in Newland, which Miss Billinger (Headmistress of Lord Digby's School) lived and shared with Miss Sparkes (Headmistress of Stonegarth), had a direct hit. The wall in the foreground of the house is where I and other children were waiting for the bus to pick us up at 4.05 pm on route to Milborne Port and Henstridge. To the best of my knowledge the bombs dropped on Sherborne at around 4.45 pm.

Of course because the war was on we had to carry gas masks and the first lesson on Saturday mornings was gas mask drill. As you can imagine in a class room of approx 30 boys it was quite a comical sight, which led to a certain amount of laughter, which in turn caused the eye screen to mist up and lots of strange noises coming from the sides of your face where the rubber fitted.

In the early 1940's several masters were 'called up' into the forces, two of which were Mr Hulme (French) and Mr Hewitt (Geography). Their places were taken by their wives who were also qualified teachers. I believe both masters returned to their teaching posts when the war was over.

During my time at school any article you may have mislaid or maybe dropped in the school area, be it an exercise book or gym shoe etc, usually ended up in the 'Pound' which was in the Headmaster's office. To retrieve same article you had to go to the office and pay the sum of 1d (one old penny) to the Headmaster's secretary, Mr Harry Otton.

For sports matches and competitions etc the school was divided into three houses. St Aldhelms, St Bedes and St Dunstans; I was in the latter and proud of it.

Fellow pupils at Foster's school from Milborne Port were my two cousins, Sam Pettis and John Pettis and also Royce Gay.

Unfortunately in 1944 my father, who ran a butcher's business in Milborne Port had to withdraw me from school to assist in the business as three of his staff, Charlie Hinks, Reg Pattemore and Michael Coyne all got called up for war duty. So at the age of under 15 I was doing a butcher's delivery round, sometimes actually driving until the local policeman warned my father.

I am pictured below with one of the vans belonging to the family business which has the war time white edge painted around it. No street lights were allowed during the war.

John Jackson 1939-44

There are five photos with this chapter none of them have captions. 1 The old school in Hound Street, 2 The wartime bus 3 the new school 4 The Bombing 5. John Jackson standing by the van:-







LOOKING BACK 15

As we read in *Looking Back 4* an article had appeared in the local press advertising places for boys at the school in 1875. During the next ten years two headmasters would come and go with the financial aspect of running the school appearing to cause problems in both cases. By 1886 Mr A P Irwin has stepped up from deputy to Headmaster and at the speech day, reported in the Abbot of Sherborne the school was said to be in a flourishing state. *“The newly appointed head, Mr A P Irwin, can safely lay claim to being on prosperity’s high road, as the beginning of the end of the term of hard struggle was clearly evident at the school concert and prize giving.”* It was also reported that the school house, with accommodation for the Headmaster and his family and dormitories for the boarders, was nearing completion. The numbers of boys now attending was given as 55. In the same edition there is a report on the very first dinner of the Old Fosterian Club which was founded on 3 August 1885. This report captures the evening, held so many years ago, in a way that a quick précis never could and so it is reprinted here in full. It should also be noted that a handwritten version painstakingly copied out, probably by J H Dalwood, the hon secretary, is held in the school archive. He has written on the top *‘Reprinted from The Abbot of Sherborne, a weekly newspaper and general advertiser’*.

From The Abbot of Sherborne 5 August 1886 Old Fosterian Dinner

The first Old Fosterian Club dinner was given on Monday last at the Black Horse Hotel, Sherborne, under most favourable conditions. Host Bradford provided a spread, which, considering the popular price has never been surpassed, if ever equalled, in the town or neighbourhood. Three magnificent salmon were placed upon the table, and in addition, hot joints etc, too numerous and varied to particularise. The menu included a most liberal supply of pastry, and a very choice selection of dessert. The tables were also most tastefully laid and decorated. About sixty sat down, under the genial presidency of Mr George Pragnell, the president and founder of the club. Supporting him

on either side were the Rev J Ogle, Dr Williams, Dr Nutt (governors of the school) Mr A P Irwin (Headmaster), Messrs J H Dalwood jnr, Birch and P D Irwin. Mr Arthur R Adams the hon treasurer of the club, occupied the vice chair and among the friends and supporters of the school present were Messrs A R Adams, Chick, J H Dalwood, Dorling, T D Davis, Folkes, Gover, W Hughes, H Hughes, T Moody, Miles, McKenzie, H G Miller, W G Pragnell, A Pragnell, L H Ruegg, Runnacles, G F Stokes, Stabler, Short, Stewart, Tuffin, T W R White, R Wright, A Westcott, Dr Lieut Williams etc.

The old boys present were Messrs A R Adams, W D B Clark, J C Curteiss, J H Dalwood, C E Garrett, George Pragnell (president) F Pragnell, H Pragnell, E Pragnell, J E Smith, J E Woolmington, A K Woolmington and H J Yeo. The present were represented by Messrs Gare (captain of the school), Atkinson, W C Pragnell, Wright etc.

On the removal of the cloth, the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were given, musical honours being done by Mr G F Stokes.

The Rev J Ogle responded for “The Church and ministers of all denominations” and Lieut Williams for “the Army, Navy and Reserve Forces”.

Mr G F Stokes next sang “The death of Nelson” which was rapturously encored.

The toast of the evening was then proposed by Mr Dalwood, and in giving “The Old Fosterian Club” traced the history of Foster’s School, and congratulated his fellow townspeople on the happy result of being able to point to nearly 150 old boys, not one of whom could be pointed out as having reflected anything but infinite honour to the town and school; very many of the number having already obtained high, honourable, and trustworthy positions in various walks of life. (Applause) Mr George Pragnell responding in a lengthy speech, took occasion to forcibly remind the old boys present of the fact that, in forming themselves into a club as they had done, they had thus drawn public attention to themselves, both individually and collectively, and in order to reflect credit on the school they must all the more strive now to live fearless, upright and honourable lives, and thus prove living

testimonials to the school, whose memory they cherished so carefully, and in whose progress, they were still at all times, so deeply interested. The flattering personal remarks of Mr Dalwood he would pass over by concluding in the words of Hamlet:

“So, gentlemen, with all my love – I do commend me to you, and what so poor a man as Hamlet may do, to express his love and friendling to you, God willing, shall not lack.” The entertainment was concluded in the following order:

Song: “When we were Boys Together” – Mr Moody

Toast: “The Governors, Friends, and Supporters of Foster’s School” Mr A R Adams. Dr Williams, Dr Nutt and Mr Dalwood replied.

Song: “The Powder Monkey” – Mr J H Dalwood Jnr

Song: “The Women of our Native Land” – Mr W G Pragnell

Toast: “The Present of Foster’s School” - the chairman. Mr Irwin, Headmaster, replied.

Recitation: “Billy’s Rose” – Mr Gare, captain of the school. This was one of the features of the evening, as it was at the recent speech day, recited most touchingly and with perfect balance.

Toast: “Absent Friends” – Mr C E Garrett

Song: “The Convicts Song” – Mr A R Adams. This produced roars of laughter.

Duet: “The Minute Gun at Sea” – Messrs Davis and Stokes Toast: “The Chairman” – which was given with musical honours and acknowledged.

Song: “A Farmer’s Boy” Lieut Williams.

The Toast, “To our Worthy Host”, was drunk in bumpers. It was close to midnight when the company rose to sing “Auld Lang Syne,” and after “The National Anthem,” a most enjoyable evening was concluded with cheers for “Our Next Merry Meeting.”

What a jolly evening was had by all. There were six toasts drunk and the last was ‘drunk in bumpers’ (a bumper is a glass filled to the brim). There are some very well known names here from Sherborne’s past. Rev Joseph Ogle, in particular should be mentioned, as he was a

governor of the school. Rev Ogle was the congregational minister living at the manse in Long Street. When the silk mill in Sherborne closed down, causing great hardship amongst many in the town, Rev Ogle reopened it, created better working conditions and extended the operation to weave silk as well as to throw it (the process of making threads from the unwound cocoon silk). He is known as ‘the man who saved Sherborne’. He sent his two sons, (Thomas) Burton and Percy Ogle, to the school and they were attending at the time this dinner is held. Tragically Burton was to die in WW1 and is remembered on the school’s Roll of Honour board. There is clearly a strong contingent from the Pragnell family in attendance and I have a suspicion that George Pragnell may have started his illustrious career in the textile industry because of the presence in Sherborne of the silk mill.

I was especially interested to find a copy of ‘Billy’s Rose’ the poem recited so ‘movingly’ by the head boy Gare at both the speech day and at the dinner. There is a John Gare who left in March 1886 and a Frederick Gare who left in April 1887 both sons of a farmer and I would guess he is one of these two but which? Edward Newlyn has described the head boy as ‘dignified and affable’. The poem is such a melodramatic and very Victorian tale and I can imagine that after several toasts there would not be a dry eye in the house. I have included it at the end of this piece because again it speaks across the years to us.

A cricket match had taken place on the afternoon of this day and the Old Fosterians had beaten Foster’s School by 159 runs to 89. On the next afternoon Foster’s School Past and Present took on Sherborne Cricket Club and an enthusiastic write up can be found in the school archive. Foster’s School P&P beat Sherborne CC 275 runs to 117. Again Host Bradford provided an excellent luncheon.

I am not sure what happened next to the club, after what appears to be a very good start, but I wonder if George Pragnell was the driving force behind it (he was only 22 or 23 at most) and perhaps his own career would be on an upward trajectory and occupying much of his time. Perhaps the club would fizzle out because the next mention I have found is in the very first edition of *The Fosterian*, in 1908, when the

Headmaster Mr Hutchins is “wondering if it is possible to form an Old Fosterian Club and would be glad to receive any suggestions on the subject.” Clearly the club was eventually resuscitated as on 16 September 1913 it is re-established with the now Sir George Pragnell as president, Mr C B Brett as secretary and the committee consisting of Messrs: C A Lowman, H W Lye, E Pragnell (probably Edward proprietor of the Half Moon Hotel), P Roberts, H J Seymour, C J White.

In April 1914 the colours and a blazer were adopted: ‘a very handsome blend of old gold, green and chocolate for the ribbon and tie’ and ‘an unbound blazer of chocolate with crest and monogram on the pocket’. The ribbon (for boater) cost 1/-, the tie 1/6 and the blazer complete from 10/6 to 25/- according to quality. The O.F. colours and blazer could only be obtained from Messrs. Lowman. There are 39 members, at this time, and the minimum subscription was 1/-.

Owing to the 1914-18 war the club ceased its activities and was again revived later by Mr Lush and Mr Gibling on 16 September 1929. I think this is when it became known as the Old Fosterians’ Association or OFA for short. The President was Mr H Lush, Vice Presidents: Sir Arthur Adams, C B Brett, Robert Gibling, T L Hutchins (former Headmaster) and Littleton C Powys, chairman of the governors.

A new design for the tie, with wide green bands, with narrow chocolate and gold, was adopted; it now cost 2/6 and 4/6. In November 1930 the new school song was performed at the OFA dinner. It was written by Littleton C Powys from an original manuscript by Robert Gibling. A rousing tune was composed by Mr J Barham Johnson, Music Director of Shrewsbury School. This tune has been described by an old boy as a ‘real tub thumper’ which went by the name of ‘Castleton’. (Please see *Looking Back* 18 for a copy of the musical score.)

The Old Fosterians’ Association continues to this day. On the closure of the school in Tinneys Lane in 1992 *the Fosterian* changed from being the school magazine to being the magazine of the OFA with one edition a year in March. The current editor is Tim Ashmore. There are three events each year: Firstly, together with the Lord Digby’s Old Girls’

Association, is the Founders' Day Service and luncheon. Later in the year is the Annual Dinner and reunion and finally, in the Autumn, the Remembrance Day Service at the Gryphon School.

There is an active website with much material of interest regularly posted and this is in the expert hands of Hugh Jenkins.

www.fosterians.wordpress.com

Billy's Rose by George Robert Sims

To end this chapter here is the poem that was read 'most touchingly and with perfect balance' by the headboy Mr Gare. It was written by George Robert Sims 1847-1922 who is remembered as a journalist, poet, dramatist, novelist and bon vivant. He also had a strong social conscience and worked, through his undoubted talent in the use of words, to draw attention to the plight of the poor. He is best remembered for his dramatic monologue that opens 'It is Christmas Day in the Workhouse'. Its zealous social concern aroused public sentiment and made Sims a strong voice for reform, dramatising the plight of suffering Londoners. 'Billy's Rose' would have had the same effect

Billy's dead and gone to glory - so has Billy's sister Nell:
There's a tale I know about them were I poet I would tell
Soft it comes, with perfume laden like a breath of country air
Wafted down that filthy alley bringing fragrant odours there

In that vile and filthy alley long ago one Winter's day Dying
quick of want and fever, hapless, patient Billy lay while
beside him sat his sister, in the garret's dismal gloom
Cheering with her gentle presence Billy's pathway to the tomb

Many a tale of elf and fairy did she tell the dying child
Till his eyes lost half their anguish and his worn, wan features smiled
Tales herself she heard hap-hazard, caught amid the Babel roar
Lisped about by tiny gossips playing round their mother's door

Then she felt his wasted fingers tighten feebly as she told
How beyond this dismal alley lay a land of shining gold, Where
when all the pain was over - when all the tears were shed
He would be a white frocked angel, with a gold thing on his head.

Then she told some garbled story of a kind-eyed Saviour's love How
he built for little children great big playgrounds up above Where
they sang and played at hop-sotch and at horses all the day And
where the beadles or policemen never frightened them away.

This was Nell's idea of heaven - just a bit of what she'd heard, With
a little bit invented, with a little bit inferred.
But her brother lay and listened, and he seemed to understand,
For he closed his eyes and murmured he could see the Promised Land.

"Yes" he whispered " -- I can see it sister Nell;
Oh the children look so happy, they are all so strong and well; I
can see them there with Jesus—He is playing with them too!
Let us run away and join them, if there's room for me and you"

She was eight this little maiden, and her life had all been spent In
the garret and the alley where they starved to pay the rent
When a drunken father's curses and a drunken mother's blows
Drove her forth into the gutter from the day's dawn to its close.

But she knew enough, this outcast, just to tell the sinking boy,
"You must die before you are able all these blessings to enjoy You
must die," she whispered, -- "Billy I am not even ill;
But I will come to you dear brother, - yes, I promise that I will.

"You are dying, little brother, you are dying, oh so fast;
I heard father say to mother that he knew you couldn't last
They will put you in a coffin, then you'll wake and be up there While
I am left alone to suffer, in this garret bleak and bare."

"Yes I know it," answered Billy. " Ah - sister I do not mind.
Gentle Jesus will not beat me he's not cruel or unkind.
But I can't help thinking, -- Nelly I should like to take away
Something sister that you gave me I might look at every day.

"In the Summer you remember how the mission took us out To that
great green lovely meadow, where we played and ran about and the
van that took us halted by a bright green patch of land, Where the
fine red blossoms grew dear, half as big as mother's hand.

"Nell I asked the good kind teacher what they called such flowers as
those
And I remember that he told me that the pretty name was rose I
have never seen them since, dear - how I wish that I had one
Just to keep and think of you dear, when I am up beyond the sun."

Not a word spoke little Nelly but at night when Billy slept,
On she flung her scanty garments and then down the stairs she crept.
Through the silent streets of London running nimbly as a fawn
Running on and running ever till the night had changed to dawn.

When the foggy sun had risen, and the mist had cleared away,
All around her, wrapped in snowdrift, there the open country lay
She was tired, her limbs were frozen, and the roads had cut her feet, But
there came no flowery gardens her poor tearful eyes to greet.

She had found the road by asking she had learnt the way to go
She had found the cruel meadow - it was wrapped in cruel snow,
Not a buttercup or daisy not a single verdant blade
Showed its head above its prison. Then she knelt her down and prayed.

With her eyes up cast to heaven, down she sank upon the ground
And she prayed to God to tell her where the roses might be found Then
the cold blast numbed her senses, and her sight grew strangely dim;
And a sudden awful tremor seem to seize her every limb.

"Oh, rose!" she moaned, " good Jesus - just a rose to take to Bill !"
And as she prayed a chariot came thundering down the hill. A
lady sat there toying -- with a red rose rare and sweet;
As she passed she flung it from her, and it fell at Nelly's feet.

Just a word her lord had spoken caused her ladyship to fret
And the rose had been his present, so she flung it in a pet.
But the poor half blinded Nelly thought it had fallen from the skies
And she murmured, " Thank you Jesus! " as she clasped the dainty prize.

Lo that night from out the alley did a child's soul pass away,
From dirt and sin and misery to where God's children play
Lo that night, a wild fierce snowstorm burst in fury o'er the land
And at morn they found Nell frozen, with the red rose in her hand.

Billy's dead and gone to glory - so has Billy's sister Nell;
Am I bold to say this happened in the land where angels dwell :
That the children met in heaven after all their earthly woes,
And that Nelly kissed her brother and said, " Billy , here's your rose"

George Robert Sims

Mr Hutchins started the school magazine *The Fosterian* in 1908 and here are the words he used to introduce the first edition:

"To Fosterians past and present this unpretentious first number is dedicated. In a utilitarian age the idea which will be prominent in many minds is a query as to its use. First of all, it is intended to be a record of all the deeds which are worth noting, accomplished by the Fosterians of today. Successes in Examination, a good innings played for Foster's when wickets are falling rapidly, a difficult catch which dismissed a batsman fast reaching his century, points gained for the school in sports, will all be reported in The Fosterian, and so it will become a permanent record of the school's life."

The first edition contained 12 pages. Initially it was published each term until 1957 when it became an annual publication. There were 181 editions until the last one in 1990, which contained 64 pages and

included photographs and drawings. The format over the years shows little change but the content increased enormously and now stands as a unique record of the achievements of the school and the many boys who have passed through it. Mr Hutchins' words '*it will become a permanent record of the school's life*' have indeed come true. In 1991 it became the annual publication of the Old Fosterians' Association.

Sherborne Museum has many copies held in the archive but is actively seeking the following editions and if anyone would like to donate any of these the museum would be pleased to receive them:

1908-1917. 1922-1929. Easter and Summer 1931, Easter 1932, Christmas 1937. 1942-1949. Easter and Summer 1955. 1997. 2010

Many copies have also been put on-line at www.fosterians.wordpress.com and more are being added as they come to light. There is also a list of copies that are 'wanted on-line'.