

THE FOSTERIAN

The Magazine of the Old Fosterians' Association



No. 31

Spring 2024

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ASSOCIATION 2023/2024**

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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

My first sad duty is to report the death of Mark Brewer (Foster's 1972-1979). Mark was an OFA Committee member and was a frequent guest at our Annual Reunions. He had a passion for anything with four wheels, a passion which he inherited from his Dad, Keith, who owned a garage in Sherborne. I am sure that all Old Fosterians will join with me in sending heart-felt condolences to Hayley, his widow, and to his children and grandson. Thanks for everything, Mark.

Another Old Fosterian who departed this year at the age of 100 was Harry Hughes. William Henry Hughes (b. 1922) was admitted to Foster's School as a Boarder on 18th September 1934 and left on 31st July 1940, having passed his Cambridge School Certificate. The admissions register states he previously attended Buckland Newton Church of England School between September 1929 and July 1934. When Harry left Foster's in July 1940 he joined the R.A.F. He took part in innumerable bombing raids on Germany during World War II and his story is captured in *Five of the Many* which tells of the lives of five men of Bomber Command.

The third of our losses was Philip Antell. Philip was at Foster's between 1947 and 1951. His sporting achievements at school included coming first in 7 different sports - 100yds, 220 yds, 440 yds, 1 mile, High Jump, Long Jump, and Cross country, plus being Captain of the Foster's under-14 Football team. All this when he faced competition from fellow pupil Ken House!

R.I.P., all.

Life has returned much to normal now, after the pandemic, but wars in Ukraine and Gaza have cast a veil of gloom over the world. We can only hope that these conflicts resolve themselves in the near future and that the world can resume its peaceful course.

On a local front, the future of the Association is still under discussion. The logical way forward is for the OFA to join with the Digby's old

girls into one combined front. There is a Digby's Commemoration Service at Castleton in May, followed by a Lunch, and it is to be hoped that this will provide an opportunity for further discussion. I hope that some of you will be able to attend.

May I take this opportunity to thank the members of the OFA Committee for their hard work and enthusiasm during this year. Special thanks go to Philip Dolbear, our Chairman, Kevin Parsons for editing the present edition of *The Fosterian* and to Andy Topp for organising the Annual Reunion so successfully.

Ian Maun (Foster's Staff 1977-1986)

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

For the first time in many years I am writing this as a 'remote' OF, having been lucky enough to retire and now living in North Yorkshire. I am still pleased to be part of the OFA and deliver our small offering to old boys. This Magazine is no small offering though and grateful thanks to Kevin Parsons again for pulling it together. As ever it is reliant upon contributions so please continue supporting.

Thanks must also go to the whole Committee for their unstinting efforts to keep the OFA alive. There are various reports here as usual. Not everybody 'reports' however and there are definitely some unsung heroes! We are pleased to have some young(er) blood involved with the Committee and are exploring ways to reach out and hold gatherings for the Membership, especially those of 70's, 80's and to the last OFs in the 90's.

No matter what we do, the OFA will eventually have to be wound up. The Old Girls Association is at that point and are planning a grand finale around a joint Founders Day Service and luncheon on 11th May. Save the date! Our own reunion, which is really a joint Grammar Schools event as well, is scheduled for 12th October. Save that date too!

Looking to the future, I have had preliminary discussion with The Gryphon Foundation which in the current incarnation of the old Newlands Trust which holds old investments from Fosters and Digby's and supports pupils in the Sherborne catchment in various ways. When the OFA does wind up, any residual funds can be transferred to the Foundation and 'ring fenced' to provide a 'Richard Foster Award' (from investment income) so the name can be continued in history. Any thoughts welcome as to a specific theme or purpose for such an award.

There is also a Gryphon School Alumni with whom I have been in touch. Logically this could become an all-Sherborne Secondary Schools, past and present, Alumni. However, the current Alumni is rather dormant and will require someone, (volunteers welcome!) with a lot of enthusiasm, spreadsheet skills I suspect, and time to re-energise it for all the constituent bodies.

Anyway, enough ramblings from me. Enjoy the Magazine. Hope to catch up with some of you in 2024, and to everyone, please keep contributing. Even the smallest news snippets are valuable for the Magazine, and your old classmates.

Philip Dolbear

HON TREASURER'S REPORT

At 31st December 2023

The balances of the OFA accounts are as stated below for the year end 2023.

Assets at 31st December 2023.

NatWest Reserve A/c	£1425.10	(£1407.15	Dec 2022)
NatWest Current A/c	£3327.60	(£2844.62	Dec 2022)

Total	£4752.7	(up £500.93 v Dec 2022)
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Subscriptions and donations received from members in 2023 totaled £1202.00 down £328.44 on 2022.

Expenditure at 31st December 2023

Donation to Sherborne Douzelage	Nil	(Nil	2022)
Magazine printing / posting	£582.02	(£677.52	2022)
Founders Day Church Expenses	Nil	(Nil	2022)
BMV Lunch Adverts	Nil	(Nil	2022)
Lunch Guest of Honour & costs	£ 93.00	(£104.00	2022)
Poppy wreaths	£ 25.00	(£ 20.00	2022)
Memorial Donations	£100.00	(Nil	2022)
Total	£800.02	(down £1.50 on	2022)

I have not received any claims by members of the committee for any expenses incurred by them for calendar year 2023.

This years Reunion Lunch was dedicated to the memory of Derek Stansfield. The Association was honoured with the attendance of his wife Marilyn. A donation of £100 was made to Parkinsons UK in his memory.

£58 (29 x £2 per head) was paid from Association funds as a gratuity to The Grange staff.

Old Fosterian Magazine

Printing cost was £373.00 in 2023 (£446.00 in 2022 / £468.30 in 2021)

Postal charges were £209.02 in 2023 (£231.52 in 2022 / £313.23 in 2021)

Appeal for Funds

There was a marked reduction in 2023 of one-off donations. Only the month of March saw one donation of £75 and one of £30 and one of £63 in October. Thank you to all who have contributed.

Jan '23	£79.50	Jan '22	£122.06	Jan '21	£78.50
Feb '23	£89.50	Feb '22	£90.50	Feb '21	£153.50
Mar '23	£229.50	Mar '22	£124.50	Mar '21	£578.50
Apr '23	£119.50	Apr '22	£274.50	Apr '21	£213.50
May '23	£119.50	May '22	£119.50	May '21	£93.50
Jun '23	£66.50	Jun '22	£71.50	Jun '21	£58.50
July '23	£39.50	July '22	£39.50	July '21	£33.50
Aug '23	£29.50	Aug '22	£29.50	Aug '21	£23.50
Sep '23	£59.50	Sep '22	£60.58	Sep '21	£74.50
Oct '23	£128.50	Oct '22	£164.50	Oct '21	£112.50
Nov '23	£210.50	Nov '22	£403.30	Nov '21	£223.50
Dec '23	£30.50	Dec '22	£30.50	Dec '21	£31.50

Clearly the Association is somewhat more financially stable than it was a few years ago with approaching £5k in the bank. This has been as a result of a steady subscription income, reduced costs (magazine) and due to Covid, cancellation of Founders Day and temporary cessation of our benevolent actions.

The OFA current account details are:

Name: Old Fosterians Association

Sort Code: 60-19-12 A/c No: 05531349 IBAN: GB59 NWBK
6019 1205 5313 49

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 12/1/2024

LOOKING BACK

The theme of our Looking Back this year is that well-loved excuse to let our hair down each year – the Commoners Concert. These articles, the Authors of which have been waiting patiently to see their missives in print, are in no particular order.

*We begin with memories from **Mike Dunk**.*

Bearing in mind that my last appearance in the concert would have been in 1959, you are stretching my mind to recall some of the acts that were performed.

I certainly was a member of the gym club most years that did an exhibition each year which when coming to do the vaulting was never easy as the run up from the back wall of the corridor outside the art room (as that was what the stage was used for during school of course) was very short but somehow, we managed to come through unscathed. The only person that I can remember also being part of the gym exhibition was Keith Chant.

A couple of acts stick in my mind. Les Shirley had a good voice and I can recall him doing some solo work and then Peter Perry would play his trombone. His other claim to fame was of course that he was the first Fosterian to be given an Open scholarship to, I think, Cambridge University or was it Oxford?

I laid the foundation for my “hobby” in later life. I took part in a sketch that involved a radio broadcast skit and I was the radio station announcer. Little did I know that would lead to me being a sports commentator and program presenter for 25 years firstly in what was then Rhodesia and then South Africa. Having retired from that “hobby” around 2005, funnily enough I have twice this month been phoned to be interviewed on tennis matters appertaining to South Africa.

Another recollection is that the then headmaster Bertie Lush, his wife and daughter who “doubled” as the Matron at the Boarding House, always had posh armchairs to sit in right in the middle of the front row whilst the audience sat on “the old school chair.”

The concerts were great fun and there was always something in them to send the parents and friends home happy and realize that school days were fun days as well as preparing us for the outside world in years to come.

Mike Dunk 1952-1959

... from David Prout...

I took part in a couple in a Musical "performance"

I used to play Trombone in Sherborne Town Band Juniors and Peter Burness who was Music Teacher at the time persuaded four of us to form a Quartet- two trumpets and two Trombones if I remember correctly. We were ably supplemented by Paul Cosh who by that time was a very proficient Trumpeter and went on to become well known in professional Brass Music Circles.

Peter wrote his own Brass Version of the St Anthony Chorale which we made a reasonably fist of on the two nights of the Concert. We were taught by Cyril White who at the time was leader of Sherborne Town Band.

If any OFAs want to make contact with Peter he is on FB.

Also remember one "skit" where some of the Teachers took part. One dressed as a lady and Mr "Pip" Davis the Latin Master dressed as a Roman Official uttered the words "And how is my fair Puella today?" Laughs all round including the usually sullen Head Master of the Day!

David Prout 1958-65

Rod Whitemore remembers his Commoners Concerts...

In thinking back to my days at Fosters, one yearly highlight that always fondly surfaces is the Commoners Concert. As we all know, a sort of 'anything goes' (within reason!) mix of sketches, music and performances put on for the enjoyment of friends, teachers and family

alike. A chance to really let go with our creative energy and imagination.

If I'm honest, for along time I was always the shy one, so deciding to get on stage in front of the whole school probably seemed like an odd thing to want to do. I suppose it was the chance to pretend to be someone else for a few minutes. To enjoy the feeling of entertaining others and making them laugh. Well, hopefully making them laugh! Also I had always used humour to combat my natural tendencies to be a bit of an introvert, so the need to channel that into something creative was, perhaps, inevitable. Whatever the reason, the process and the day itself were always wonderful. Nerve wracking, but wonderful.

I remember taking part in three concerts distinctly, there may have been others. If my memory serves me correctly, our first effort was



'World of the Strange'. Myself, Alan Manning, Matthew Weinel and Justin Butcher were the cast. A kind of supernatural chat show gone wrong with some very questionable guests! I wrote it as a comedy sketch. Was it funny? At the time, absolutely. Now? I'm not so sure. I'm sure we would all cringe if we rewatched it today.

Next up, I think, was our homage to the original Star Trek. Not a bad effort. We certainly improved on our first. Some extremely bad puns and visual gags

made it to the final script. The 'Captains Log' being an actual log of the wooden kind, brought on by a crew member sticks in my mind. Possibly the same year, James Garland and I performed a Smith and Jones sketch simply titled 'The Yorkshireman Sketch'. I remember really having fun with this one. Partly because someone else had already written it and all I had to do was learn the lines. Lines which still knock around inside my brain to this day.

"Anything you've got down south, we've got more of at the Arndale Centre in Ripon. And it's cheaper and more expensive and ya can't park!"

Finally came our wrestling sketch. I remember being obsessed with American professional wrestling at the time for some reason. I think we put on a pretty good show, with grand entrances to our 'ring' on stage, some decent action and of course the now obligatory terrible puns and sight gags. There was definitely an intentionally badly made dummy which stood in for one of us while the other threw it violently around the stage! I still have a video of it somewhere.

These memories have stayed with me throughout the years because I enjoyed my time on the stage, having fun with friends. I think (I hope) all those of us who performed did. I remember other's performances as well of course. James Godden and Jay Taylor's drum routine was great. Some of the sixth form performed an excerpt from 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail'. 'Beaujolais Jones' must have played at more than one. A wonderful and diverse array of entertainment to look back on.

So, you may be wondering, did this school-age introduction to the stage lead to a glittering acting career? No. Well, yes and no. I never for one second thought I had what it takes to be a great actor. I am in fact, a picture framer. But the love of film and television never left me. In fact over the years it only intensified. Fast forward to 2013. The filming of 'Far from the Madding Crowd' came to Sherborne and at the last moment I managed to land myself a role as an extra. My first day on set saw me filming a scene with Michael Sheen. For four days

I lived my dream of experiencing life on a film set, in front of the camera no less. After that I discovered that I had been signed on with the agency providing extras for the film. Amazingly a whole new world opened up to me and I ended up working on shows like Broadchurch and Poldark. I think that the Commoners Concert played no small part in lighting the fire of interest that led to those roles. I'm sure it inspired many others over the years as well.

Rod Whitmore

Phil Stainer adds his memories...

I was involved with every Commoners Concert & School Play from the very first one that came up after I entered the school in 1951 until the year I left in 1959; even if I only had one line...or no lines at all. For many years I was the Hon. Secretary of the Fosters School Amateur Dramatics Society. Some 65+ years on I can still recite huge chunks of my lines from "Julius Caesar" ... and bore the pants off anyone unfortunate enough to be around! I can also remember a lot of other character's lines too, even if I wasn't in their play. For example, if I have a fraught journey I am inclined to burst out in broad Dorset: "Ooargh! An oiy 'ad a jarb gettin' yer moin!" to the total bafflement of most onlookers. It's a quotation of (was it Russ King's?) opening line in a Commoners Sketch pushing 70 years ago! You will get enough similar rose-tinted memories to fill the magazine twice over, so you might assume I must therefore look upon my sojourn at Richard Fosters Grammar School with something approaching totally unbridled joy & happiness. I do not. Amateur Dramatics was actually the welcome relief from the reality that was my school life, and the Commoners Concert & the School Play were my saving grace at Fosters School.

The one thing that gave me relief was acting in The Commoners Concert and the School Plays. While I read slowly, I learn English Prose relatively quickly, and when acting you can become someone else. No longer the gangling fumbling teenager who is hopeless at football and cannot catch a cricket ball, but the brilliant, scheming Roman Senator, intent of removing Julius Caesar from the throne, or the upright English Father fighting the despicable Lords of The

Admiralty to get justice for his wrongly accused son, or the funny character who just makes the audience laugh out loud.

My first part was as Lord Chancellor in "The Emperor's New Clothes" in the commoners concert around 1951/2 . The script was written by our own First Form Master, Tony Palmer. He must have chosen the story, and then the cast, before he then sat down and wrote the script; because his version of the play was stuffed full of all sorts of oblique references to the locality, local characters, the school itself, and even to the origin of the boys playing in it. One character was "The Grand Mufti of Ryme Intrinseca" played by John Rooks of that same village. Part of the enjoyment was picking out all the local references...and the veiled rude remarks. We small boys didn't "get" half of them ourselves and were sometimes surprised when the audience laughed at what seemed to us a pretty insignificant remark.

The Audience clearly loved it; and I was hooked! From then on I was "in" everything I could!

In a short sketch called "The Old Oak Settle" my friend played a grasping old farmer while I was his even more obnoxious younger wife Anne, running a "scam" passing off modern reproduction furniture as ancient family heirlooms to any travellers who called in at their farm for a glass of milk. At the end, the farmer and his wife, having just sold a young couple a fake oak settle for over four times its proper price, were utterly devastated when the couple drove off with the settle but forgot to pay for the milk!

With a fellow pupil John Jameson, we put on a short faux "melodrama" called "Prunes & Prisms". It was all in rhyming couplets, with John playing Aunt Selena and I his (her) wayward niece Lavinia. We were dressed up in wigs and wore padded bras & crinolines over our underpants and normal footwear. However, being taller now, our crinolines were a mite short and our black school shoes, half socks and hairy legs were clearly visible to the audience. We wondered why the audience were laughing before we had said a word, but our director (pretty certain it was Stanley (AKA "Jock") McKay) made sure that we did not change a thing for future performances. The play

required split second timing as the rhyming couplets shuffled back and forth between the characters, and so I can still recite both parts. If he is around, I'd bet John can too.

I cannot remember the exact year that was, but it was when Quatermas was on the TV. John was a boarder, but Quatermas was not considered suitable viewing for boys by either the Headmaster or his wife and daughter who ran the Boarding House. Probably a very wise decision; Quatermas was the stuff of nightmares, and the last thing a Boarding School needs is half a dozen boys running round at two in the morning screaming their heads off. I doubt many of their parents would have been too impressed either. But John and a few others were desperately keen to know the outcome. So each week when it was on, he would sneak out of Fosters Boarding House and nip up to our house in Priestlands to watch it on our TV. He arrived as regularly as the program, not more than 2 minutes before its commencement...and was out of sight and halfway along Newlands before the credits had finished rolling at the end. We never quite knew whether John was a "lone operator" or "the nominated escapee". [Obviously someone had to be in on this escapade to let him back in.] None of my family ever pressed him on that matter.

While the teaching staff were behind every Commoners Concert contribution, occasionally the staff put on their own plays. A Staff play written by French Master Ernest Hume, also in rhyming couplets involved bailiffs & unpaid bills, and peculiarly invokes not only memories of that time but throws an interesting light on the changing fortunes of our high street. In the play, the commentator described the increasing "melodrama" of the plot:--

"And Bailiff Three, now looking tenser,
Takes out his watch from Marks & Spencer!"

Ernie confessed later that he did not think Marks & Spencer actually sold watches, but it scanned. Truth was, at that time they did not. They sold only clothing. However, the line not only rhymed and scanned, but it was also enough to infer that the bailiffs were perhaps "not that well off ". Because in the 1950s Marks & Spencer was on a

par with Woolworths, so thought of as a bit "cheap". Everyone knew that all M&S clothing in those days came entirely from the UK suppliers and was good solid quality, but it was "inexpensive". It took years for the idea of "M&S Quality" to catch on...and not long for their clothes buying department to lose it. Consequently, in the 1950s shares in M & S were undervalued, and rose & rose thereafter, till the management forgot what it was that got them there, and from then on M&S shares have struggled.

Sometimes pupils would write their own sketches. John (AKA "Chimp") Knight was particularly good at them, though heavily influenced by "The Goon Show" as I recall! For my generation however, the abiding memory of Commoners Concerts has to be Peter Perry, standing alone at front of stage, playing "In Cellar Cool" on his Bass Trombone. Peter was note-perfect, and I don't think it was originally supposed to be funny...but it was! It's such a truly ungainly instrument, and as Peter reached the final deep bass note, the blast sent the, by now giggling audience, into hysterics...and it was rumoured that Tower Bridge opened!

Fosters School bred some boys who could have become brilliant actors and singers. When I played Arthur Winslow in "The Winslow Boy", my Mother & Father said they could see, even from their place in the audience, that the lad who played my son "Ronnie Winslow" was interrogated so well by "Sir Robert Morton", he was reduced to real tears on stage as both had become so totally embedded in their parts. Roger Sidaway, even though he was actually physically smaller than the character really required, was still able to pull off being both "amusing" and "absolutely terrifying" as Ferrovius in Androcles & the Lion. John Read, in "The Importance of Being Earnest", was so good as Lady Bracknell I swear I have not seen any professional actor play it better! And John Read also had such a marvellous tenor voice he became in great demand as an amateur tenor around Birmingham where he went on to live. There were such a lot of good actors and singers, yet in those days none were ever encouraged to consider it as a career. A good solid job like a Bank

Clerk, Accountant, Surveyor or a Council Administrator...that was the sensible option.

A terrible waste of talent and a huge loss to the people who would have enjoyed listening to them!

One of the major problems in the 1950's with both the Commoners Concerts and the School Plays was filling the female parts. In comedic sketches like "Prunes & Prisms", and "The Oak Settle", boys playing female parts simply added to the humour in what one might call "A Touch of The Monty Python's Flying Circus" or " Life of Brian". It might possibly be argued that in the Shakespearian plays, since in the time of Elizabeth I and William Shakespeare ladies were not allowed on stage by law, boys playing girls parts somehow adds an "Air of Authenticity". However, especially with regards to most School Plays, not having girls playing the female parts greatly reduced the authenticity and the realism and was a major contributory factor in the choice of plays that we could put on. While towards the end of my days at Fosters there were the occasional tennis matches between Fosters & Lord Digbys School, and their girls were allowed to attend the **strictly supervised** dancing lessons once they reached the Vth form or above, it was a long time after I left that Fosters School began to more fully cooperate with Lord Digby's School, both for Vth & VIth Form lessons and in Amateur Dramatics. I am aware that Miss Thompson, the formidable Head Mistress of Lord Digby's School in the 1950s, believed her ladies were so superior to the rough creatures that attended Fosters that cooperation might have been difficult. Lord Digby's Girls were summoned to Miss Thompson's office for a "severe dressing down", if a boy from Fosters School so much as met them at the gate at 4.00pm to walk them home after school! So even as Secretary of the Fosters School Amateur Dramatics Society I never bothered to broach the idea of co-operation in Amateur Dramatics with the Fosters School Headmaster. In any case I have reasons to believe the Headmaster for most of my stay at Fosters School was himself not in favour of any such thing!

Phil Stainer '51-'59

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE - 2023

Old Fosterians were invited to The Gryphon School Remembrance Service again in 2023 and were represented by John House, Alex Thorne, Kevin Waterfall, Stan Love, Mark Love and Jeni Goode. Nicki Edwards has retired and we were invited by Jim Gower, Acting Head Teacher, for tea and coffee in his office before the service. This gave us an opportunity to hear updates of the school, including that it now has 1,520 pupils including 450 in the 6th form. Also to learn of the progress with replacing the temporary classrooms, that Jeni Goode remembers were at the school when she taught there 25 years ago.

The service this year was run by the School Chaplain, Jim Edie, who is also the minister at St Paul's Church. Commander Iain Baxter of the Royal Navy, who had been at The Gryphon as a pupil gave the address. He told of his fellow classmates who had joined the forces and what opportunities that provides, as well as some of his personal service memories and the importance of fellowship.

Students from several year groups, including some from their cadet force, took part in giving readings and prayers as well as playing the Last Post and Reveille. The Roll of Honour was read out and wreaths Laid below the Honour Boards by Students and Old Fosterians.

Before we all departed we thank both Jim and Jim for inviting us and had a photograph taken of us on front of the Honour Boards.

Kevin Waterfall

... and other Looking Back

Memories – 1974 - 81 and later

Having spent the last goodness knows how many years pleading for Magazine content, I thought it was about time I 'walked the talk'. At the risk of being hauled over the coals for grammar and essay construction, I have gone for the easy option of a bullet point list. In no particular order as you will realise. It's just a brain dump of memories and thoughts, some of which may resonate with you, the reader. It might even instigate your own article?!

- 11+ practice papers – books of them – my parents really did value a good education. On reflection I was still only borderline as a discussion with the then Head of Holwell Primary School was clearly an ‘interview’ to see just how much I really wanted to go to Fosters!
- A taster day at Tinney’s Lane - how would I remember that labyrinth of corridors!
- Day 1. Probably to the embarrassment to the 6th Former from our village whose coat tails I hung on to on the bus to make sure I didn’t get lost.
- End of term gym lessons - Pirates! Would health and safety now allow that?
- The Chemistry Lab gas cabinet at the back. Fearing for your life if you went near it thinking it might be nerve gas or worse!
- Sports afternoons - Wednesdays and Fridays – how cold and wet and miserable could it get on those playing fields some days? Mind you, never as bad as away matches at Shaftesbury on the hill in the snow.
- The 6th Form Common Room. A real risk in the lower school of kidnap pranks and being made to dance on one of the tables in there to ‘earn’ your freedom.
- The Printing Hut - another den of mystery.
- The concrete bench outside the door at the top corridor. The hierarchy of status to be allowed to stand on it. Or worse be lobbed over the top.
- Keeping our ‘stuff’ in our own lid top desks with the old ink well holes in our Form Room. The dread of seeing whether it had been sabotaged by other users in the day?
- Room 2 French . Room 3 Geography. Room 4 English. I can’t remember others?
- If you wanted to catch a Master for a question, knocking on the door of the Staffroom at breaks.

- The exhilaration, or was it fear of lining up and entering the Headmaster's office to receive 'Commendations'. Was it 4 credits for a Commendation?
- Whole School Assemblies – daily! The 'procession' of Masters. Antics in the Form lines. Easier the older you got and the further back in the Hall you were.
- The joy of our bus being late and being able to miss Assembly but waiting in the corridor at the bottom of the Library stairs to enter and stand at the back for the end to hear any notices.
- The 'late' bus home - was it Tuesdays and Wednesdays? Either in disgrace because you had suffered a Detention or because there was sports teams practice.
- The Commoners Concert. The highlight being any Staff sketch. The 'Woodcutters' stand out as a highlight for me.
- School Dinners. On reflection, they were pretty good. There was the mixed blessing of a Master on your table. Best behaviour was required but at least ration servings were seen to be more equal from the hierarchy distributing on each table.
- Cross Country – Haydon's Gate. No means of escape or cheating.
- Athletics - how steep did that running track feel up the far side?
- Summer '76 – we were allowed to come to School with no blazer and no tie!
- 6th Form – the privilege of being able to wear a coloured shirt!
- Computers – 2 arrived in the Projection Room at the top of the Library stairs (overseen by Shakespeare on the way up).
- The Careers Room at the top of those stairs too.
- 3 magnificent reading tables in the Library - I wonder what happened to them?
- Saturday morning or afternoon sport – does that happen now outside Public Schools?
- Away Sports Teams trips – ranked by the quality of the teas. Usually a food fight at Milton Abbey?

- A flake of snow – all chance of concentration in a lesson gone and would we be getting an early bus home?
- Last day of term – final assembly and home at 1130!
- House competitions and assemblies. I remember St Dunstons used to meet in the Physics Lab.

I have probably bored you enough but hopefully triggered a few smiles. I have mentioned no pupil names, staff nicknames or their idiosyncrasies – that would not be fair. Looking back, it was a very traditional education and in today's terms quite narrow. However what it did, it did very well and I surprise myself how much good basic knowledge is installed in me. My education at Fosters gave me self belief and equipped me for life. I look back on it with pride.

Philip Dolbear 1974-81

... John House brings back memories of the(original) Cross-Country Run.

I believe it was after the Christmas Holiday that one afternoon each week, probably Wednesday's sport time we had to undertake the cross country run.



The run commenced from the School into Tinney's Lane, proceeded left down Newland, passing two pubs, the New Inn and the Black Horse and then crossing the Long Street to Osborne road (two-way traffic in those days) and over the railway bridge in New Road. As soon as you reached the other side of the river bridge you climbed over the metal railing fence and set out across the field (Purlieu) to climb over the fence again to proceed along New Road

towards the junction with the A352 Dorchester Road, where you crossed the road and went down the road towards Thornford.

Passing Limekiln Farm the road bends right and to the left is a footpath/farm track, (part of the MacMillan way **) we had to go up this track and eventually come out on the road that leads to Lillington where we turned left out to the A352 Dorchester Road (at the top of Sherborne Hill). We immediately had to turn right onto the A3030 Bishops Caundle road at Westhill Lodge.



Round the bends and we came to the (North Wootton) lodge gates and private drive on the left to go down Gainsborough Hill past the Terrace playing fields and down again to

cross New Road and over the fence and cross Purlieu field back towards the school. Crossing Long Street and running up what now seems the up-hill part of Newland, back up Tinney's lane and into the school.

A run of around four and a half miles in total, often in very muddy in wet conditions. Although mainly downhill for the return part you had

to run up the hills in the first part. Even in the 40's and 50's no staff was there to supervise the crossing of the A352 Dorchester Road or the worst place around Westhill Lodge and out towards Alveston along the A3030 road with no pavements.

What year 'Elf & Safety' caused the run to be part of History I do not know but sending schoolboys to cross a main road twice at two dangerous junctions and run along the A3030 bends with no pavements would definitely not be recommended to-day.

*** The Macmillan Way is a long distance trail which fundraises for Macmillan Cancer Support.*

It is 290 miles (467km) from Boston in Lincolnshire to the Jurassic Coast at Abbotsbury in Dorset.

The Trail is signposted and passes through a number of Dorset towns and villages including Sherborne, Yetminster, Evershot, Cattistock and Maiden Newton on the way to the coast at Abbotsbury.

As with many long distance trails, it can be shortened into smaller trails for day walks or short breaks.

Ordnance Survey maps show the route of The Macmillan Way. The local maps you can buy are: Explorer 129 Yeovil and Sherborne, Explorer 117 Cerne Abbas and Bere Regis and Explorer OL15 Purbeck and South Dorset.

You can find more information on [The Macmillan Ways website](#).

John House 1949-54

*... from **Phil Stainer***

Attached are some pictures I found rummaging through old pictures that fellow members might like to see.

Do you know: I can still recognise all of these faces, but for the life of me, most of THE NAMES have fled my head! That is the

problem with getting old & decrepit!

It's THE NAMES that go first. Or so I was told. One person not in any of them is me, as I took them.

The first photo - Fosters Digby's Tennis, must date from 1958 or 1959 : Standing on the far left is Pat Miller, Fosters Maths Master & Deputy Head. At the other end was the New Fosters Headmaster who replaced Mr Lush, but his name has gone! Second from the right at the back is Arthur Critchley, Sports Master at Fosters.



Kneeling on the far right is Melian Boards (though I'm sure that spelling is wrong!) and kneeling behind her is Richard Smith. Whereas I can remember everyone else so well, including the girls, the names will just not come!

The second picture is from around 1958 and I believe is the two Fosters 6th forms. Bottom row far left is Peter Gregory, and next along is I think Martin Bishop. The next face I know so well but again his NAME won't come. On the far right bottom I am pretty sure is Ian Miller, late son of Pat Miller the then Maths Master.

Second from the right at the top is Deon Hall, and standing in the middle is John Northam. Standing between them is that Bill Masters?



The final photo is also around 1958 and is I believe a tennis team Fosters fielded against Lord Digby's. I got a feeling the guy on the left is Keith Hunt, the next name won't come, but next to him is Ian Winks



and then Richard Smith The next two I knew so well but the names won't come. The name Simon Churchill rings a bell as probably the guy on the far right, but wouldn't put money on it.

Can other members

remember their names?

Philip Stainer 1951-1959.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Minutes of meeting

Chair: Philip Dolbear, President: Ian Maun

Attendees: David Noble – Secretary, Pete Holden – Treasurer
Richard Cole, Stan Love, John House, Andy Topp, Mark Brewer,
Alec Thorne, Jennifer Goode, Richard Trickey, James Reilly, Roger
Taylor, Mark Coe, Paul Tackley, Rob West, Ian Strong, Katherine
Barker, Sydney Francis, Sara Pring.

Apologies: Kevin Waterfall, Kevin Parsons, Gary Ireland

Minutes of last meeting: Approved.

Matters arising: How to continue the name of Richard Foster.
Chair to try and connect with new Acting principal of Gryphon.

Chairman's report: Thanks to; Ian, Kevin for magazine, Gary for
membership, Kevin W for socials, John H for general support, Pete
Holden as Treasurer.

Attendance at the memorial event at the Gryphon.
Connection with LDS Old Girls.

Treasurer's report: See Treasurer's Report.

Up £700 on last year, due to expenditure lower than before. Postage
and printing costs for Fosterian lower again as more take
electronically and improved printing methodology.

Election of Officers: Committee continues with no changes.

AOB

- Magazine: Any contributions gratefully received. Foster's experiences or life experiences happily received.
- Remembrance service Nov 10th at 10am with tea at the Gryphon.
- LDS Old Girl's founders service 11th May. OFA are invited to join. Is being held at Castleton Church with lunch at Digby Hall.
- 12th October 2024 for next AGM and meal.
- Charity for Derek Stansfield, £100 donation. To Parkinson's UK. **Approved.**
- Mark: longer term future. Discussion. John H: should we look to the younger members, is it the wrong type of meeting, a social evening rather than formal meal.
- Any discussion with the Gryphon alumni society, but they don't have one.
- Pauline, Phil and Alec as a zoom based working group on how to carry name of Richard Foster.
- Newland's Trust page for next issue of magazine.

Meeting closed at 12.06

OLD FOSTERIANS' LUNCH 2023

Old boys and girls from the former Fosters and Lord Digby's Sherborne Grammar Schools gathered at a recent reunion held at The Grange Hotel, Osborne. Spanning back to friendships made in the 1940's, many a tale were shared during the course of the AGM and following lunch with nearly 30 attending.

This year, it was held in particular memory of Derek Stansfield, former Music Master and also Sherborne Abbey Choir Master.

Marilyn Stansfield, his widow attended as Guest of Honour. Despite some lack of enthusiasm at the time, the seeds had been sown by Derek for musical appreciation in many pupils in later years. Particular pieces noted were Elgar's 'Enigma Variations' and Saint-Saens' 'Carnival of the Animals'.



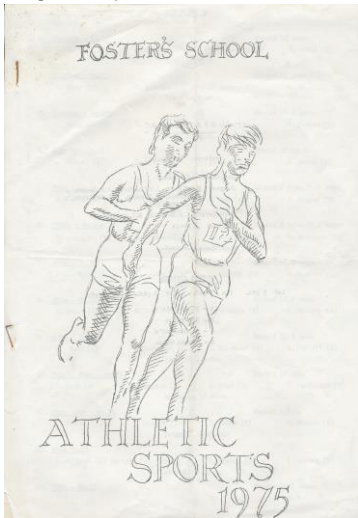
Our four most senior members at the AGM. From left to right, Bob Earnshaw (1947-54) Jim Derham (1948-54) Stan Love (1946-49) and John House (1949-54).

Future events planned include a joint Founders Day Service on 11th May 2024 and the 2024 Reunion on 12th October. Details will be posted the old pupils Facebook page or contact philipdolbear@aol.com.

Philip Dolbear

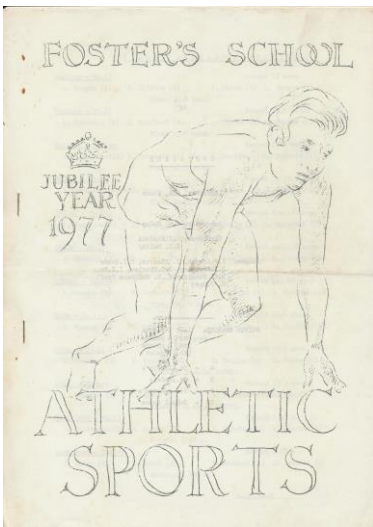
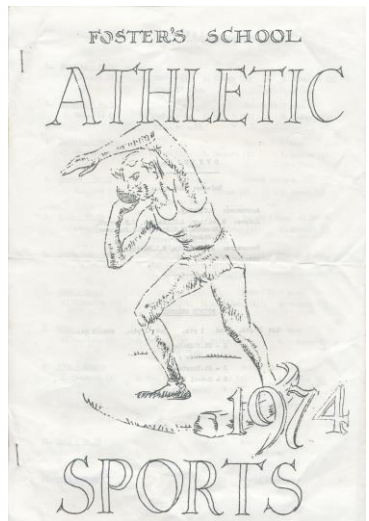
THIS AND THAT

Nigel Joy came across a box of paperwork, amongst which were the following drawings. They are the front cover of the annual Sports Day programs and in themselves, are nothing special, except that the artist was Art teacher Edgar Maltby. His flowing style is unmistakable and graced many publications across the years.



So is a Malby worth anything these days? It would be lovely to think so, but I doubt it. To us though, it is a reminder of

a respected and much loved teacher whose lessons were a relaxed affair where we were generally free to express ourselves as we wished (read into that what you will!)



Does anyone else have a Maltby to share?

OLD BOYS' NEWS

Simon Snook

After leaving Foster's, I went to The University of Birmingham to study Medicine, graduating in 1996. My initial career had me training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology and General Practice at various sites in the West Midlands and Australia, before emigrating permanently to New Zealand in 2003. Once in New Zealand I moved into a career as a Specialist in Sexual and Reproductive Health specialising in Abortion, Sexual Dysfunction and Vasectomy. In 2024 I was awarded the Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (NZ equivalent of the O.B.E.) in the King's New Year Honours, for services to Reproductive Health (full citation below).

I live in rural New Zealand, about 90 minutes North of Wellington, with my wife (and native Kiwi) Kelly and our 4 children. I am still in touch with James Murray ('84 – '91) who lives in Washington state and works in the computer games industry.

Simon Snook 1984 - 91

Dr Simon Snook - For services to reproductive health

Dr Simon Snook has dedicated more than 15 years to improving access to abortion in New Zealand, particularly for those in disadvantaged circumstances.

In 2005 Dr Snook developed services in Wairarapa and Tairāwhiti allowing early medical abortion at home, which has since been adopted throughout New Zealand. In 2008, he worked with Hauora Tairāwhiti to develop a medical and surgical abortion service based in a community clinic to improve access for people from rural regions. He published the landmark paper 'Abortion services in a high-needs district: A community-based model of care'. Several of his initiatives have been incorporated into or mirrored by the national Ministry of Health-funded Decide service, including his national directory of abortion services website, the after-hours advice service 0800 MED TOP, and establishment of the New Zealand Abortion Assessment Clinic in 2015, providing a free, confidential assessment and referral to an abortion provider. During the COVID-19 lockdowns, he

pioneered and delivered abortion by telemedicine, and he now leads Magma Healthcare as the sole provider of telemedicine abortion nationwide through Decide. He developed a training programme for clinicians to deliver point-of-care ultrasounds for early pregnancy assessment within the abortion clinic. Dr Snook co-authored the 2018 and 2021 New Zealand Abortion Guidelines and has been Chair of the Abortion Providers Group of Aotearoa New Zealand.

John Chubb 1948-53

I am related to Gordon and Terry, both OF's but I have had no contact with either since leaving Fosters in 1953. I believe Gordon was running a chemists and Terry was with a tobacco company for some time. I was one of the last called for National Service but signed on and finally did 22 years. My wife and I (married 18/5/61 in Sherborne Abbey) returned to Dorset in 1982 to Poole, but still visited Sherborne regularly to see other relations (one living in Chrysanthemum Row, so near Fosters). Retired from business (Director Italian Company SPEA UK Ltd) in Wareham in 2000, then living near Dorchester. Moved to Kent in 2011 after loss of local relatives, to be near daughter. Was in Sherborne in early December 2023 to soak up the memories again. Born 1938, still active most of the time.

Glad to find Fosters is still remembered, such a loss as it was a really good education establishment.

Regards to all the survivors.

John Chubb

VALETE

NEIL PETERS 1957-64

It is with great sadness that I find myself writing to say that my good friend Neil Peters (1957-1964) passed away on 26 September 2023.

I met Neil in the autumn term in 1960 when I became a boarder at Fosters Grammar School, and, despite the restrictions of boarding school life and the fact that Neil lived in Holwell, we became good friends as well as members of the school football team: a friendship that endured more than 6 decades.

We met up a couple of times after leaving school and then went our separate ways. Typical of so many school friendships. Many years passed by. After maybe 40 or so, we met up again, through Friends Reunited. Like any good friendship, we just seem to pick up where we left off.

Neil used to say that the lives of the boarders, whose parents lived abroad, intrigued him and ultimately led him to follow a life in international commerce with the Eastern Bank, which over the years eventually became part of the Standard Chartered Bank. Neil had hoped to join the RAF, but this was thwarted by his colour blindness. Nevertheless, Neil's ambitions were more than fulfilled with postings to Hamburg, Colombo, Hong Kong, Brunei, Bangkok, Gaborone, New York, Vancouver and London.

Unfortunately, Neil was no stranger to tragedy. His wife Dain passed away in 1985 and, as a result, Neil and his 3 children moved back to the UK to his London posting. In December 1988, Neil was a passenger on one of the trains involved in the Clapham train crash, leaving 35 people dead and 484 injured. Neil seldom spoke of this incident, nor of the horrors he had witnessed, but it understandably had a major impact and caused Neil to reappraise his life.

Neil left the banking world to become the highly respected Bursar at St Mary's School in Shaftesbury, where he remained until retirement. Happily, Neil had met and married Sue in 1986 and she has also become a close friend of ours.

Neil led a very active life, enjoying the demanding rigours of hiking, running, cycling, and come what may, his daily run was the main item on the agenda.

In 2015, Neil was diagnosed with Parkinson's, followed by Parkinson's Dementia, a double tragedy for someone who was so active, and in 2021 he entered a local nursing home, where he was well cared for. Neil's strength of character came to the fore as he took

his adversity in his stride, helped by the support of Sue, his family and friends and his devout beliefs.

At his funeral in Holwell on November 2nd, Sue gave a wonderful tribute to Neil, encapsulating his life, loves, achievements, character and personality. Three of Neil's former classmates were present and the Neil we had known so many years ago as a strong, even handed, energetic, and humorous friend shone through in every step of the way.

Graham Lovatt gblovatt@gmail.com

MARK BREWER 1972-79

As indicated by our President, we have to report to passing of Mark at Christmas. Mark was known to many of us as one of the Old Boys who 'stayed local' to Sherborne. His recent funeral was attended by a number of his Peers. We hope to print a eulogy in next year's magazine.

WILLIAM HENRY 'HARRY' HUGHES. Flt. Lt. RAF DFC DFM AE

The Association has lost its eldest member, Harry Hughes, who passed away on 25th July 2023.

Born on 10th August 1922, Harry was one of the first pupils to attend the new Tinneys Lane site. He left Fosters in July 1940 and joined the RAF aged 18 in March 1941. His service as a navigator with Bomber Command defied the odds. He completed one tour on Halifaxes - 25 missions - attacking targets in Europe, having a number of near death experiences. Following a so called 'rest' at an Operational Training Unit, he returned to operations now on Mosquitoes of the Light Night Striking Force part of No.8 Pathfinder Group. By the end of hostilities he had completed 76 missions! He left the RAF in 1949 and worked in the City selling ships. Ironically this included the Royal Mail ship Highland Princess on which he had travelled to Canada in 1941 to start his aircrew training. He retired in 1982 to St Ives in Cornwall, where he was a volunteer for the National Coastwatch Institution for 20 years.

His obituary was published by The Telegraph and his funeral can be viewed on YouTube. A more detailed account of his RAF Service featured in The Fosterian No.24 Spring 2018.

P R Holden.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

We all like a Team photo, if nothing else than to see old comrades. I thought this too recent to be 'From The Archives', but at 60 years old, I think it qualifies!



Ken House, Peter Fish, Graham Lovatt, Went (?), Pullen, Neil Peters,
Front row L to R: Griffith (?) Goode, Keith Kerley, ?, ?, Hutchinson

It is of the School Football Team 1963-64. Ken House is immediately obvious, but also present is Neil Peters whose obituary appears

elsewhere. Due to the size of the school, there were only three 6th Formers in the Team!

The following is reproduced courtesy of the Sherborne Times.

Walking through time

Let me take you on a walk back through time beginning in the present day by entering Tinneys Lane from Newland. Stay on the left past the three cottages and note the stone wall at the back of the last cottage as this marks the lower boundary of the area we are going to explore. Next you will come to a little stone building which is home to a Chiropractor and beyond is the Youth Centre opened by Prince Edward in 1990. The Centre now has 'and Community' added to its title and caters for varied activities. Alongside is an intriguing little round building fabricated in 2015, mainly from straw bales and recycled materials, with a sedum roof that turns a magnificent shade of bright green in early summer.

Beyond the courts and the football pitch is a quiet area where a carved memorial by a local artist remembers Andrew 'Bart' Simpson MBE, Olympic gold medal winning yachtsman who tragically lost his life while pursuing the calling he was so passionate about. Andrew lived with his family in one of the houses of 'Fosters Field' – a title given by the developer of the 92 properties built around curving streets and pedestrian walkways. The names of the streets offer clues to what came before as Francis Walk and Lush Path refer to former headmasters, Miller Way to a teacher and Bede and Dunstan Streets refer to school houses. When Foster's School outgrew its premises in Hound Street a site was sought for a new building and in 1938 a contract was signed with E G Wilkins of Marnhull. Construction began in July 1938 and the new school opened in October of the following year. The cost was £20,864.

School Drive is positioned on the original vehicular entrance to the school where cyclists would stream in at the start of the school day. To the left and leading straight ahead was a narrow footpath,

screened from the school by a high fence, where the hockey players of Lord Digby's School would walk to their pitch laid out across the top of the site.

The school building itself began directly to the right of School Drive and extended along the current pathway. If you stand today where the original foundation stone is set into the curving stone walls that replicate the original brick walls, you are looking towards the main doorway to the school building with the foundation stone set above. Stone steps led up to the entrance where the celebratory school team photos were taken over the years. The remainder of the large site was set out with tennis courts near the stone building, which became the domain of the groundsman, and a soccer pitch in the same area. A further soccer pitch, cricket pitch, running track, long jump and pavilion were situated beyond the school building and parallel to Tinneys Lane.

Now we travel back to the 1920s when the Sherborne Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club occupied a space around the stone building and the hockey field came into being. The remainder of the area was mostly pasture. In 1929 Nora Symes, a pupil at Lord Digby's School recalls: 'I was playing hockey, never a favourite occupation of mine, when Mr Littleton Powys came over the fence of his garden (Quarry House in the Avenue) at the half time whistle and asked permission to show us a rare nest in his hedge. It was that of a shrike and its larder of bees.' Around the same time Ruth Gervis set up her easel and painted 'Elms in Flower' which depicts the area as very much part of the surrounding countryside. There are a couple of buildings in the painting, which is now in Sherborne Museum, with one of them being the stone building. Mrs Gervis lived in the Avenue and taught Art firstly at Sherborne School and at Lord Digby's School.

Further back we go to a very important day in July 1907 with a report in the Western Gazette: 'After a lapse of three years, that well-known fixture, "The Sherborne and South of England Horse Show", was held again, the venue being a field in Newland. The show is open to Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Devon, and Gloucestershire

and there was a substantial prize-list, the money given amounting to over £200. Mr. S. H. Benjafield, of North Cheriton, was responsible for the construction of the 85' long grandstand capable of seating 350 persons. There were 43 covered horse boxes, 100 open horse pens, and a dozen more for brood mares. The jumps comprised hurdle, gate, brick wall, brushwood, and water.' A photographer was on hand to take a wide view of the event.



Photo: Courtesy of Sherborne School Archives

Finally to 1834 when a large estate map of Sherborne was surveyed and drawn by Edward Percy for Earl Digby. At the same time a town plan was produced for Sherborne itself and the area we have been examining is shown as four tracts of land (approximately fifteen acres in total) belonging to Earl Digby and leased to tenants. These are included with another eight tracts between Coldharbour and Tinneys Lane and have annotated over them all - 'Field Walls.' The piece of land where the stone building stands is leased to Elizabeth Hoddinott and listed as: 'Tinneys Lane Stall and Yard'. Having travelled back nearly two hundred years we discover that this small stone building has remained constant and useful throughout.

Dates for your Diary

Reunion Dinner

Saturday 12th October 2024

This will be held on 12th October 2024. We have yet to confirm a venue, but it is likely to be the The Grange Hotel, Osborne again. We will again be welcoming partners and also members of Lord Digby's Old Girls Association.

OLD FOSTERIANS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday

PRECEDING the Reunion Dinner at approx. 11.30

At The Grange at Osborne

KEEP THE DATE FREE!

Lord Digby's School – Old Girls Association

Founders Day Service and Luncheon 11th May 2024

This is open to Old Fosterians as a Joint event.

Look out for more details.

Gryphon School Remembrance Service

Keep an eye on the Web/Facebook page for further details

From the Editor:

Articles for the 2025 Old Fosterian are welcome. Please send them to the Editor, Kevin Parsons, at; rustykev@hotmail.co.uk



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

The **“Old Fosterians’ Association”** is dedicated to the OFA.

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=Old%20Fosterians%E2%80%99%20Association&epa>

and **“Foster’s and Lord Digby’s: our virtual school”**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/432255810148610/?epa>

