

# THE FOSTERIAN

*final*

The Magazine of the Old Fosterians' Association  
^



---

---

No. 33

Spring 2026

---

---

**OFFICERS and COMMITTEE of the OLD FOSTERIANS'  
ASSOCIATION 2025/2026**

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

**Chairman:** P. Dolbear, 2 Staley Cottages, Dig Street, Hartington,  
Buxton, SK17 0AQ. E-mail: philipdolbear@aol.com  
Tel: 07964 255614.

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

**Hon. Membership Secretary:** Gary Ireland  
E-mail: irelandgj@gmail.com

**Hon. Treasurer;** P. Holden., 6 Gorse Corner, Long Itchington,  
Southam, Warwickshire CV47 9AN. Tel No. 01926 811300.  
E-mail: peteholden43@talktalk.net

**Editor;** Kevin Parsons, 33 Badbury Drive, Blandford Forum, Dorset  
DT11 7UJ. Email: rustykev1@gmail.com

**Other Committee:** A Thorne, J. House, D. Noble, Jeni Goode.

**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](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>

## **THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**

Well, it's finally come. The closing of the Old Fosterians' Association. There are, of course, certain practicalities to deal with, such as the cancelling of direct debits and the question of the membership list. These questions will resolve themselves during this year.

What the dissolution of the Association does not mean is the dissolving of friendships and loss of contact. Whether pupils or staff, we shall always remain 'Old Fosterians'. There will continue to be informal meetings. Jeni Goode has organised a meeting at Folke Golf Club on April 4 th. Many thanks, Jeni! Let us hope that this is the sign of things to come.

In 2027, it will be 50 years since I joined Foster's staff. With its 200 boys, it was very small and very special. Later, as a Lecturer at Exeter University, I visited many students on their teaching practice. There were very few schools that even approached Foster's in matters of curriculum, discipline, culture and ethos. I have many happy memories of the School and its pupils.

May I urge you to keep up your contacts and to attend as many informal meetings as possible. I, and other old boys, am always glad to see OFs and catch up on their lives, many of which turn out to be very surprising.

Finally, may I wish you every success in the future. Foster's gave you a great start, and the future is what we make it. Just remember: Possunt quia posse videntur.

All the best

**Dr Ian Maun** (Foster's Staff 1977-1986)

---

## **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Well here we are – the final Magazine. Thank you on behalf of the current and previous committees for the many kind words I have received for the work they have put in over the years and support over the decision to 'wind up' the 'official' OFA. It's been a 'good ride' as they say but hopefully the more informal way ahead, detailed below, will allow Fosters School liaisons to continue for many years to come.

We had a marvelous final reunion last October with 70 Old Boys, partners

and Old Girls from LDS attending along with a smattering of ex Staff! The hire of Thornford Village Hall for the day gave us plenty of time and space. We were also very indebted to the generous donation from an anonymous Old Fosterian who paid for all the drinks!

A small Group once again attended the Remembrance Service at The Gryphon School who kindly let us put wreaths on the Boards there. We have made a final donation to the RBL which will provide wreaths for many years to come.

At the time of writing, the closing funds of the OFA cannot obviously be predicted but should be about £4,000. I have been liaising with the Gryphon Foundation to whom these funds will be gifted. I have also been in touch with The Gryphon School. At the time of writing the following proposals are awaiting confirmation from the Foundation and School. The proceeds and ongoing investment income will be used to fund a new annual Richard Foster Prize in memory of our Founder and The School. Richard Foster's original Charter was to provide education for poor children. Obviously we cannot be the judge of that now! The prize will be to a 1st Year student for the 'Best Academic Improvement'. The thought is this would give further motivation for a continued flourishing academic time at the Gryphon. Although these are Old Boys' funds, politically we have to make it a young person's prize now! Initially the prize will be £50.

Looking to future arrangements, I hope you will have received an email from our new Gmail account, fosters1640@gmail.com, or a letter if we did not have your email. We currently hold an OFA Members database. Under GDPR Data Protection Rules this should be deleted once the OFA ceases. As agreed at the AGM last October, we will keep an informal and private contact list - for those that want to. Accordingly, going forward, along with Jeni Goode (ex LDS and Master Mike Goode's daughter who loves Fosters for those that don't know) we will hold a simple contact list of Name and Email and/or postal address with School Dates on a 'private' basis. We will endeavour to try and keep this up to date but will need your ongoing help and communication. To do this – your response is imperative! If you have not already done so, please reply to the email (sent 6.1.26) or letter to the following question:

***I do / do not wish to remain on the Old Fosterians contact list held by Philip Dolbear and Jeni Goode.***

To repeat some other points, a few reminders:-

1. Members will need to cancel their Standing Orders - although I'm pretty sure when the OFA Account is closed they will just bounce back.
2. Jeni Goode is arranging another gathering at Folke Golf Club near Sherborne on Saturday 4th April 2026 - a date for your diary! Details will follow nearer the time.

While 'the end' had to come at some point it still feels quite emotional! For better for worse, often the former, Fosters School had a massive impact on many lives and I'm sure just because the OFA ceases, this will not be forgotten. A reminder - there is a super collection of memorabilia held in Sherborne Museum. Our thanks to them for past and future support building and maintaining this. I will close by adding my sincere thanks to the current and previous Committees. I feel a bit of a fraud as I have mostly only directed efforts and others have done all the really hard work. With all best wishes for the future and good health.

My address, if you need it, is:

2 Staley Cottages, Dig Street, Hartington, Buxton, SK17 0AQ.

**Philip Dolbear, Chairman**

## **FROM THE EDITOR**

Here we are – the last formal Fosterian Magazine after many decades of production, whilst the school existed and then after closure. It was always inevitable, with modern communication methods it means we no longer rely on such magazines to maintain contact with former friends and colleagues.

I have edited and produced this magazine for the last 10 years and it has been a pleasure hearing from Old Boys about their memories and what and where former pupils are now. We are going out with a bang with a bumper edition containing many memories of the school. (I have had to reduce the font from our usual size simply to get everything in to the satisfaction of the Printers.) Although it should not be any surprise, I am nevertheless astonished at how far flung we spread ourselves across the globe in such a wide variety of careers, all from a school that sent around 30 people a year out into the big wide World.

I myself stayed local, living and working in my beloved Dorset for my career with the Environment Agency. With that life over after retiring, I took on a second career (now part-time) as a Registrar of Births and Deaths along with conducting Civil Marriages – an occupation that brings me inevitably

into contact with the Foster's community. As an example, in May, I shall be working across the County boundary in Devon, aided by an older Old Boy, similarly employed by that Council, conducting a Marriage Ceremony for the daughter of another younger Old Boy!

So even though there is no Magazine, we will maintain contact and the memory of Fosters School will live on through work and deed.

**Kevin Parsons** (1971-78)

---

## LOOKING BACK

*Paul Dawkins kicks off our trip down Memory Lane;*

A fond memory of Mr EA Davis Fosters School 1952-69: He taught Latin. Only 6 of us from memory of the 62-69 class opted to take Latin at GCE. Our lessons were held in the little ante room on the first floor opposite the Library. He was a little late arriving for one of our lessons one day. For some odd reason we started tinkering with the clock. It quickly discovered that by removing the pendulum weight the clock would go twice as fast. Mr Davis arrived, we set too to the lesson and after 20 minutes, Mr Davis observed the time and announced, "That seems to have gone quickly boys, you best be away for your next lesson". I don't recall ever attempting that stunt again. I do remember coming top of the class in our mock GCE exam with 15% and possibly being the only one to get a GCE pass grade, albeit a lowly 6!

Chemistry Lessons, circa 1966/1967: I can't recall the name of our, I think, interim teacher of Chemistry, but he had a style whereby he would work on the black board for a minute or two and then turn and point to where he thought one of us would be sitting and say for example "Dawkins, what is the chemical composition of Sulphuric Acid?" but unbeknown to him we would all have rotated around the Chemistry Lab's desks so that we were never where he thought we were. He never seemed to be phased by are antics and the practice continued for many lessons.

The wisdom of Mr Miller 1967-1969: I benefited enormously from Mr Miller's teaching and tutoring. One of the tricks he taught me was if in doubt as to what to do next with a maths problem, take logs and differentiate. An unexpected outcome of how useful this technique turned out to be occurred at Durham University where the Taylor twins (62-69) went to study Law and History. Steve was rooming with another Paul who was studying Maths and had one evening been struggling with a problem sheet. Observing the

mounting levels of stress, Steve later described to me how he had sidled over to where Paul was working, peered over his shoulder and remembering what I must have talked about during homework sessions in the Boarding House, suggested to Paul he take logs and differentiate. Imagine Paul's surprise when it worked.

"Tiny" – the English Teacher. Then there was a wonderful moment in an English lesson being taken by "Tiny" the 6ft + English Master whose proper name I cannot recall, who invited Gray to the front of the class to read out his composition homework offering. It was surprisingly good even if Gray did appear a little flustered. All became clear when Tiny invited Gray to go to the library and ask for and bring back a specific book. On his return Tiny asked Gray to turn to the page marked by an ink stain (I think) and read the text below it. It of course was very similar to that which Gray had already read to us. At this point I am fairly sure that Tiny lifted Gray off his feet and hurled him out of the classroom, inviting him to wait outside the Head Master's Office. I hope someone can remember the name of "Tiny" the English Master in around 1965-66 say.

Christmas Carol Service at the Abbey 1968: This was probably the point at which Mr C.R.W. Francis realised the mistake he had made in appointing me as Head Boy and Head Boarder. After the Carol Service, we 6th Form Boarders loitered with our friends, especially those from Digby's and just possibly might have entered a hostelry. I can't actually remember that but it might explain the reason why I suddenly spotted what the time was and legged it back to the Boarding House only to find all the usual entries locked and all lights off, apart from the Headmaster's front door. I don't recall too much about the sanctions that were imposed presumably, but it was interesting to hear from Jerry Neads, my successor that he had been advised that he couldn't be any worse than the last head boy!

As for me.: In my last year at Fosters, I won an Engineering Scholarship with British Railways as it was then. This enabled Imperial College to offer me a place to study Civil Engineering provided that I gained at least two A Levels at Grade E! That took all the pressure off the final year.

I did a year of industrial training with BR during which I met my wife to be. We married eventually in 1974 and have been blissfully happy about that ever since. We have 4 children and 7 grandchildren now.

Full employment with the railway commenced after completion of the degree course getting an upper second. There clearly were lots of opportunities to

be had with the Railway, but one of the reasons I wanted to be a civil engineer was to see the world. I left the Railway as I was finding it difficult to get the site experience needed to become a Chartered Engineer. This was achieved by working as part of the Resident Engineer's team on the Thames Barrier Project. And then I was away and have subsequently worked on Mainline, Metro, Light Rail, Guided and Trolley Bus projects in UK, Ireland, Zambia and Tanzania, South Africa, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Qatar, Israel, USA, Australia and New Zealand.

I finally hung up my boots 3/4 years ago and now see Sue every day of the week where we are happily residing at our home with some land near Truro, Cornwall.

**Paul Dawkins (1962-69)**

***Jonathan Field gives us his memories of the Commoners Concert.***

I was privileged to take part in the Commoners' Concert in five out of my seven years at Fosters. I use the term "privileged" quite deliberately – extracurricular activities at Fosters were overwhelmingly sport-driven, and for those of us whose abilities (and indeed preferences) inclined more to the stage than the rugby field, the Commoners' Concert provided a relatively rare opportunity to shine (or to show-off, if you prefer).

The year was 1975. The format of the concert in those days was squarely based upon three one-act plays, performed by the junior, middle school and senior forms respectively, and all selected and directed by staff members. The junior play was produced under the stewardship of the estimable Mike Goode. His claim in this year – whether substantiated or otherwise – was that he only had one script left in his anthology of one-act plays, which just happened to be "Hewers of Coal", a gritty drama, originally written for radio, about a mining accident in the Northumberland and Durham coalfield in the 1930s, and certainly not the usual fare performed by 12 and 13 year-old boys. The consensus seemed to be that we acquitted ourselves well enough, even earning Mr Goode a coveted congratulatory memo from headteacher Mr Francis, as reported in a previous edition of this magazine. Much of this success was attributable to a fine central performance by John Pearce – sadly, this was the only role he ever took on the Foster's stage.

The play was presented in two scenes – during the second of which I was supposed to be in a state of semi-conscious delirium. Even with eyes firmly closed, I recall the heat of the lamps from the front-of-house lights (which

were far less energy-efficient than their modern-day counterparts!), and a strong sense of being at home on that stage. I particularly recall the surprising weight of the miner's hats, and some bright spark having the idea that Swarfega would be a suitable product for cleaning off the black paint which did duty as coaldust, but that is another story altogether!

Fast-forward to 1980. Dr Pearse had by then taken over from Mr McKay as concert coordinator, and original contributions from pupils were actively encouraged. So it was, on a gloomy January afternoon, that the idea for the "Murder in the Staffroom" sketch was conceived during a "private study" session in the library. Pitched somewhere between "The Goodies" and "I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue" (which, curiously, had become "required listening" in the Sixth Form common room at the time), with a little Morecambe & Wise thrown in for good measure, this sketch was primarily intended to parody the previous December's worthy, if somewhat stodgy production of Agatha Christie's "Murder at the Vicarage", but was also a riposte to the Commoners' Concert of two years previously, when the staff had all but taken over the show. That year, there were a total of FOUR staff items, including "Radio 4 presents...", a spoof radio sci-fi drama which gave Ian Maun the opportunity to air his celebrated impersonation of Kermit the Frog (you had to be there...) and "Dai Bach – a musical assassination", a fine Loussier-style duet by Messrs Maun and Stansfield. The crowning glory, of course, was an unforgettable Nutcracker delivered by the splendidly-tutued "North Dorset Sand & Gravel Company".

But enough was enough. I guess we thought that we were being extremely clever, but what presented itself as an open opportunity to air our own impersonations of various staff members – only shared previously during the aforementioned "private study" sessions – was just too good to miss. The cast was as follows: Mike Sartin as Inspector Cyclops Bungalow, Simon Chant as Constable Burke, Phil Marks as Archie Medes, Rob Carroll as A. Sleep, myself as Pentland Crown, Dave Austin as Dr Nodule, and Jeremy Hutchinson as Dr J.R. Eel.

For those of you who were around at the time, the sledgehammer subtlety of these names will clearly indicate which members of staff were being parodied – and I should stress that these were quite definitely affectionate parodies. The gentlemen concerned took it in good part (mostly) – we even had one or two complaints from those who had not been included!

Just a final thought. In the years that followed “Hewers of Coal”, my contemporaries largely lost interest in drama, so I generally found myself performing with casts comprised entirely of boys in the years immediately above or below my own. This was no hardship – I certainly learned a great deal about delivery and timing just from watching performers of the calibre of Steve Wheatley, Johnny Moyle and James Roberts at close quarters. But, in “Murder in the Staffroom”, it was a refreshing change – and just good fun – to rehearse and perform a sketch with a bunch of mates. I have stayed in touch with Dave Austin over the years, and I believe that Simon “Sammy” Chant went on to a highly successful career in the wine trade.

Otherwise, I have no idea what became of the rest of Cyclops Bungalow’s band (Mike Sartin’s name, in particular, I don’t recall seeing in any edition of the Fostorian since, but I hope that he’s doing well). Gentlemen, I salute you all, whatever you may be doing. The diary, which I kept fairly faithfully at the time, records that “cordial scenes” were enjoyed in the Black Horse after the Saturday performance (underage drinking m’lud? – never!). Happy times indeed.

**Jonathan Field (1973-80)**

***Mike Challoner shares some of his life at School.***

I joined Fosters from Gibraltar grammar in April 1970 which was the last term of the third form. So many events took place, too numerous to mention all.

For 3 months at some stage, I was enrolled in the Boarding House in Hound Street. One Saturday night a party had been organised at the Westbury Hall and I quietly slipped off for the usual cider and vimto at the event, thinking they wouldn’t miss me in the Boarding House. Unfortunately, others had the same idea (not connected with my party)

Mr Francis happened to pass through the main reading room and wondered where everyone was. A rollcall took place. Crow then waited patiently for the wanderers to return. We were all caught and strangely the only punishment appeared to be extra helpings of porridge the next morning.

On the sporting field I was useless but did win the U15 javelin event one year, only because Ian Paul (Hamish) was expected to walk away with the triple crown of javelin, shot putt and discus, but was disqualified when his javelin exited the protected area and just missed Ken House.

Another sport was playing a football match with a plastic lemon jiffball in the prefect's room, usually with Roger Cowley and Stephen Denyer. I cannot understand how the masters couldn't hear it in the adjacent Masters Common Room.

**Mike Challoner 1970-74**

***David Prout writes more recollections***

Stanley "Jock" McKay . I did History A level with a small (very) small group. Very informal but just the way he wanted. On one occasion Mrs McKay was not well and he had to take a bit of time off work. Crucial time for Exams and he invited me and one other to bike out to his Cottage at Milborne Port for a few double lessons. Headmaster was totally in agreement, but he would not have been pleased to know that Jock disappeared to the Kitchen at some stage and brought back a splendid Ham Ploughman's together with an equally splendid pint of the local Landlords best bitter!

I have been a Freemason for many years and looking back I think that he had an interest. Took a few of us on one of his History Rambles and we ended up on the third floor of a Bakers Shop in Cheap Street storage room for flour, but he asked us to look at the faded blue Ceiling adorned with seven equally faded stars. Those in the know will recognise that this small room would have been the Freemasons Lodge prior to the building of the Hall in Digby Road.

Ken House: I had left before he became Headmaster. I was rubbish at Games but did excel at Table Tennis where I played in the local league and also County Juniors. He found out and challenged me to a match. One lunchtime I stuffed him in front of a large baying crowd. Think the best I got from him was "Not bad Prout"!

Ernest Hulme: Real Gentleman who I got to know so well after I left school in 1965. I moved off to Southampton on my Insurance Career and used to come home every other weekend. He and my Dad used to drink at the Con Club on the Parade. He was always interested in my career particularly when I qualified as a Chartered Insurer by examination. So sad when my father told me how he was treated at school which culminated in his early retirement. Shame on those who contributed!

Mr Pip Davis, Latin: Lovely man who passed far too early. Very small A-level group including a couple of "Diggers" girls. The A level set book

included the usual Virgil- Cicero - Tacitus -Horace and Catullus!  
Extremely naughty Latin Poet and Pips Translation of some of them brought about a few red cheeks amongst us “inexperienced” teenagers.

John Sugden, Head Master: I thought he was an ok bloke not shared by some. He caught me in the Lounge Bar of the New Inn on the usual Friday evening underage drinks with the Youth Club Crowd. Looked in the door looking for errant boarders doing the same as me. Greeted me with “Good Evening Prout” and went on his way! Never heard another thing although Sid Maltby told me that I was the talk of the Staff Room for a day or two.

I requested an interview with Mr Sugden to offer some Boarders a visit to the Youth Club on a Friday evening. Surprisingly he concurred although “no underage drinking Prout”!

**David Prout 1958-1965**

***Mike Dunk gives his memories as a Boarder in the 1950's***

When growing up one is always told that “schooldays are the happiest days of your life”.

Now that I am well into retirement, I doubt the accuracy of that statement although I will add that I derived a huge amount of enjoyment from my days as a boarder at Fosters. Looking back, I now realize that with the advent of today's treatment for problems with hearing, they would have been more fulfilling. But that is history and although I never achieved much in the classroom, my ability on the sports field has certainly led me to enjoy “the happiest days of my life” within the sporting world be it in England, Rhodesia as it was and South Africa.

The boarding house, situated in what was the old school building in Hound Street only housed 22 boys broken up into two dorms of 10 (one the Junior dorm the other the Senior dorm) and what was known as the ‘brothersoom’. We were in fact a rather large family in essence although one tended to stay close to those in your year or either side.

We looked up to the senior boys and my first two years (or was it one?). Ken House, then a pupil, was the “hero” to most of us just starting due to his presence and sporting ability. He did project Zen like status to us first-formers.

The headmaster “Bertie” Lush was edging towards the end of his tenure

before retiring to Eastbourne. I always felt comfortable in his presence and bar one occasion can hardly remember a cross word coming from him. He was “old school” in every sense of the word. His wife, Marjorie, was a strong force in the background with an ever-ready smile and cheerful nature. And a delightful signing voice which was evident at Christmas time when we sang carols aided by daughter Ann on the piano. Ann, doubled as the Matron dispensing aspirin for most ailments!

There being only around 180 boys at the school, it resembled a large family in a lot of ways rather than an institute for learning. I do believe that with one or two exceptions (already mentioned over the years) the masters were first-rate teachers, and no one could blame their own failure on their ability to teach. Even today I still hold most of them in high esteem not only as teachers but as gentlemen.

On the sporting front, as we were limited in numbers, we only had one team in most cases for the split of under 14 and first eleven in both football and cricket. Of course, in those days teachers’ extra murals included taking sport and “Mickey” Miller was the first eleven cricket coach. “Mickey’s” heart was in the manner he tried to encourage and coax us to greater achievements. Today’s schoolboys are far better equipped to advance with the coaching available but that is a sign of the times and advancement.

School plays gave me great enjoyment. Produced by Stanley “Jock” MacKay it was the foundation of continuing to be part of theatre in both Salisbury and Gatooma in my Rhodesian days. Also, I guess it led me into broadcasting being comfortable “on stage”. I mentioned a year or two back the Commoners Concerts which I took part in in both plays in as well as the gym club. Never easy vaulting with such a short run up from the wall in the corridor!!

I recall playing skittles in the junior years and then basketball later although these were done internally and not against other schools. But they added to the fact that the school (for that read “masters”) were prepared to spend time with us after school aiding our development.

Looking back, the school did not fail in trying to produce well-educated students well equipped to face the outer world. It was our fault if we fell short in any way. Many have gone on to leave their mark both at home and abroad and I would be surprised if most if not all, said a silent prayer to the

masters who ensured the start of their journey was the foundation of what was to come. It was inevitable that one day the Old Boys Association would come to an end in view of the circumstances. That day has finally come, but I would like to pay my sincere heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all those committee members who have kept the association going for this length of time. It really is a truly magnificent achievement, and I congratulate each and every one of you. You should feel justly proud of your success in having kept the flag flying for so many years after the school ceased to exist.

I started by asking if schooldays were the happiest days of your life. In hindsight those did come later with success in both the business and sporting world for me, but they were days filled with a huge amount of fun and enjoyment even if my school mark was more of a minus than a plus. Somehow though, a grounding was made for me to be extremely happy with life following my time at Fosters.

I look back on them with pride in saying I was an Old Fosterian.

**Mike Dunk (1952-59)**

*A 'young' Old boy, **Gary Ireland** wades in with his two' hapenth worth.*

As this appears to be a final opportunity, I thought I'd make up for all the false promises I've made over the past few years to commit some of my memories of "The Foster's Years" to paper. I know everyone's experiences were different, and that 40-year old memories can play tricks on you, but here goes.

The Decision – Autumn 1984: I remember during my last year at County Primary School, a strange pressure and confusion around the Richmond Tests and the Eleven Plus. Which school did I want to go to? Which would be better for me? My Mum had gone to Digby's and my Dad to St Aldhelm's. Both spoke reasonably fondly of their experiences. I knew that many of my closest friends at primary school would be headed to St Aldhelm's. My Mum's brothers and one of my cousins had gone to Fosters and part of me was keen to extend the family links to Dunstan's House. At that time, my Mum played competitive badminton as part of the Fosters School team along with Ken House and Jack Crouch, so many a Tuesday night was spent in the Fosters Sports Hall watching the action, or down in the canteen helping Chips House prepare the evening refreshments. I felt an affinity to the school even then. When I opened the letter notifying me that I'd be headed down Tinney's Lane that September, I remember both parents

saying that they thought that was the right decision, but they hadn't wanted to put pressure on me.

The Preparation – Spring / Summer 1985: Once the decision was made, the preparation started. I remember receiving the uniform list with clear instructions on the items that I needed to procure from Philip and Gordon at Redmans Menswear (formerly Turners) in Cheap Street. The only stockist of approved Foster's uniform. Dark blue blazer with school badge to be sewn on, the famous blue and yellow tie, white shirt, dark grey trousers, rugby shirts (one yellow and one blue), rugby shorts and socks and PE kit just for starters. Mum then painstakingly sewed "GI" onto the rugby kit and "IRELAND" name tapes into everything else, even my grey socks.

During the summer term, along with the rest of the future "scabs" I was invited along one evening for an introductory meeting and tour of the school. I thought I'd walk in and only know the County Primary lads, but fortunately my extra-curricular football, athletics and swimming, combined with 11 years of growing up in the town meant there were many familiar faces from the other feeder schools in the room. Steve Shapland introduced himself as our Year One Form Tutor and talked us through some of the rules and regulations that, amongst other things, saw "Gary" become "Ireland" for the next 7 years.

Whilst most people positively remember the summer of 1985 for Live Aid and the end of the miners' strike, I remember a summer full of nerves and anxiety ahead of the step into "Big School".

Acclimatisation – Autumn 1985: Whilst the school only had 150 students and a dozen classrooms, it seemed massive on that first day. Our form room was room 1, next to the staff room and kept us away from a lot of the madness whilst we acclimatised. We all sat in alphabetical order, with our surnames written on folded card in front of us. I still remember that register over 40 years later. "Ackroyd, Bryant, Budgell, Burt, Cole, Divall, Haines, Hayward, Hole, Ireland, Kershaw, Morey, Noble....." Many came and left across the next 7 years, but that first list of 25 names has stuck with me. I'm sure someone is going to contact me after this is published to point out a name that I've omitted from that opening batch!

Form prefects Ian Brooks and Daren Gapper made an impression—Daren's 500word punishment left me unusually knowledgeable about the Irish Potato Famine.

1st – 5th Form Highlights – 1985-1990: The Eighties at Foster's saw a

transition in the type of teacher and style of teaching deployed across the school. Whilst a traditional “Goodbye Mr Chips” disciplinarian approach was maintained by some of the longer serving teaching staff, new staff adopted a more modern, relaxed approach. I’m sure the staff room must’ve been an interesting place during this time. As for many, my most vivid memories across this period focus on Commoners’ Concerts, sports fixtures, school trips, pranks, the dreaded BCG vaccination and trips up and down Newland for the mixed lessons with our Lord Digby’s peers.

Sport featured heavily for me. Representing the school in football, rugby, cricket, basketball and athletics, it always felt that our strength belied the size of our school in most sports. An exception being rugby, where any enjoyment of participation was outweighed by the abject humiliation of spending a Saturday morning often conceding over 100 points against public school opposition. On one occasion I remember the Queen’s eldest grandson, Peter Phillips, running in 7 tries for Port Regis Prep School against us, despite being 3 years our junior.

When it came to pranks, I remember stink bombs, the misuse of science lab facilities, clay battles in the pottery shed and the locking of a supply teacher inside their own store cupboard. The pottery shed incident was the only example I was directly involved in, which did result in a weekend detention cleaning the clay off the floors, walls and ceiling. I’m sure my brother, Brent may have been involved in the supply teacher incident.

I remember witnessing a “bigger boy” throwing half a sausage roll over a Portakabin classroom, landing on Jack Crouch. The culprit made a clean escape before Jack realised where the missile had come from. Thirty-five years later, I found myself in the Headmaster’s office at my son’s school in Hampshire, where he was handed a 5- day suspension for a very similar incident involving a chocolate brownie. I kept a straight face, reminiscing about Sausage Roll-gate and questioning whether CCTV was a positive introduction or not.

6th Form – 1991-1992: After the excitement of GCSE results, came A Levels. John Burrough made a comment in one of our early A Level maths lessons, that A Levels will be the hardest thing you will ever do academically. I have to say, from my experience, he was right. Maggie Thatcher’s Conservative Government had decided in the mid-eighties that the concept of Grammar schools was to be phased out and in 1987 the announcement was made that Foster’s and Lord Digby’s would be closed in 1992. This meant that after 352 years, we would be the last students to

experience the full 7-year journey under the Foster's School name. During this period, I still had no idea what I wanted to be when I grew up. Upon being selected as Head Boy, I felt the pressure of the oak panel honours boards, on the wall outside the main hall, which listed the higher education or military awards gained by each of my predecessors as Head of School. This drove me to complete the UCAS form and began the application journey which ended with my place at University of Plymouth.

Part of the role of Head of School were speaking parts at a full Sherborne Abbey for Founders Day and Christmas Carol Service, and at the OFA annual dinner at the New Digby Hall. These opportunities have given me a lot of confidence when I've had to undertake similar public speaking tasks in my adult life.

Looking Back: To say I look back fondly on my years at Foster's is a massive understatement. The environment, the staff and my peers all worked together to turn me from a nervous, timid 11-year-old boy, into a confident 18-year-old, ready for what the world had to offer.

I will never forget my time at the school. All of us who benefitted from Richard Foster's vision and generosity were truly fortunate and it's a shame that this was not allowed to continue. Post-School Years - 1992-2026 After graduating from University of Plymouth with a BSc. Hons. in Business Information Management Systems, I moved into the field of Project Management Offices (PMOs). For the past 40 years, I've stayed in that field, working my way along the South Coast from Gillingham, to Poole, to Winchester, finally ending up in Southampton. In Winchester, I started working with Annie. We seemed to get on ok, so decided to marry in 2004 and now have three children and five grandchildren. Our daughters (and grandchildren) all live within a mile of us, whilst our son is in the Parachute Regiment, based wherever the job takes him. My brother, Brent, followed me to Plymouth for his Higher Education after leaving Foster's (well technically Gryphon) in 1993. He earned a BEd. Hons. in Secondary Physical & Outdoor Education. His path was a lot more varied and adventurous than mine, taking in school teaching (including a period of supply work at Gryphon School); a commission as a Physical Education Officer in the Royal Air Force; leading an Outdoor Education Centre in Cornwall; and finally, a long career in Devon & Cornwall Police. As at February 2026, he is currently a Superintendent, living in Plymouth with his wife Nicole and their two children.

For those who know them, my Mum (Gail Rowe 1962-67) and Dad (Keith)

retired to Weymouth shortly before the 2012 Olympics hit the town and have enjoyed a long, peaceful retirement.

**Gary Ireland (1985-1992)**

*One of our older Old Boys, **Stan Love** shares his story*

I started at Fosters in 1946 when the Tinney's Lane building was still quite new. One of my first observations were the trenches dug in the playing fields where the pupils would shelter during the bombing raids of WW2. Fortunately, these would be filled in during my time at Fosters. Not surprising that the Foster's army cadets were well supported (me included). I remember the hiatus of activity in Sherborne immediately before D Day on 6th June 1944 but was too young to really grasp the significance.

Mr Lush was the only headmaster during my time at the school. He had an MBE, but nobody ever knew for what specifically it had been awarded. The pupils back then were approximately one third boarders (mainly service families), one third through the 11+ route and one third paying. This seemed at the time to be the route back in for boys who did not pass the 11+. It did create a wide span of academic levels, but the masters seemed to cope with this. We studied for the school certificate at age 16, before O levels and whatever followed them.

I remember being at school with Pat Norris from Purse Caundle and Dave Stacy who lived in Wotton Grove (and regularly won the cross country). We played football in winter and cricket in summer, there being no rugby in the pre-Mr Francis era. Tennis was only available to the sixth form. The Commoners Concert was an annual event, albeit there were no girls in the cast back then. The only lady was Mrs Wilkinson who managed the music.

There was only one science laboratory overseen by Mr Welsher. Morning Assembly was compulsory with a hymn (without musical accompaniment), and notices about the day. Achievements on the sports field were called out, normally causing some embarrassment. Towards the end of my time at Fosters the experiment with bringing across Lord Digby School pupils started. They would join a few classes at the older ages. This was at first resented due to the inconvenience of having to work around the girls, especially the toilet arrangements, but the trend was set in motion.

I decided to leave in the fifth form, rather to the dismay of Mr Lush who was trying to build up the sixth form. I obtained an apprenticeship at Westlands one afternoon by cycling over to Yeovil and presenting myself (no

appointment) at the main gate. After a short delay I was sent through unaccompanied into the site to find Personnel, who in turn found an apprentice supervisor to interview me (mainly a chat about football and cricket).

And so started 44 years at Westlands, only interrupted by two years national service. I completed my electrical apprenticeship and then joined up for RAF service. Basic training started at Hednesford in Staffordshire, followed by further training at Compton Basset which enabled me to get back home when permitted. This was a journey of 52 miles each way on my BSA250 motorcycle. My main posting was then to Hong Kong for 18 months, flying out and later sailing back through the Suez Canal. I returned to marry an LDS girl, Brenda Crocker, with fellow old Fosterian Michael Tompkins as my Best Man, and there followed 62 and a half years of happy marriage.

My Westland career took me to the Design Instrumentation Drawing Office (DIDO), and many changes as the Wessex, Sea King, Lynx, WG30 and EH101 came in and out of production. Collaboration with the French meant many trips to Marseille, then more latterly the Italians got involved meaning travel to Milan. Technology moves on and the Yeovil site shrinks in headcount. I was fortunate to take retirement just as computerisation started to bite.

Looking back at my time at Fosters, it prepared me well for the subsequent opportunities of life and provided a solid grounding to progress from an electrical apprenticeship to the drawing office (paper based then) and managing a design team.

**Stan Love 1946 -49**

***Mark Love follows his father to give his Foster's School Reflections.***

The end of a long era beckons. The vast majority of us have been shaped by the school much more than we shaped it. I recognise a lot of the names and sentiments in the preceding Fosterian, so will try to avoid repetition within a few brief memories of my own.

I was interested to see Haydon Wood's fears that school secretary Betty Jones would grass him up after seeing him in a pub. He probably did not know that outside of her very professional persona at the school she was a fun-loving lady who liked a drink herself, and really not the type to grass anyone up for this type of behaviour. She was a lifelong friend of my late

aunt (also Betty) after they met at Lord Digby's school, and was generally known to her friends as Ches after her maiden name of Chester. She lived at the bottom of North Road in a house with a strict 'no alcohol before 18:00 rule', albeit drinks could be prepared in advance so that no time was lost when the clock struck. I am sure she was one of many people who worked effectively (and almost invisibly) behind the scenes to support the success of the school. I certainly believe she helped Crow spend his time where he was most effective, ie with the pupils and staff, by her being a good gatekeeper against administration and timewasters.

One of the masters who influenced my future direction in life was Steve Blowers. He must have joined around 1978 with the mission of launching Business Studies O and A level courses which I took, enjoyed and ultimately launched me off to become an accountant. Looking back, I wonder how his arrival in the Staff Room went down, as he was probably 'on the political left, young and had a beard (long before it became socially acceptable). He was a very good teacher and must have made some 'hard yards' behind the scenes to get Business Studies established as an academic subject. I recall visiting his flat in Yeovil with some fellow Business Studies A level students (definitely Graham Brown - he was the designated driver in those days), where we also got some useful guidance on what life at university would really be like. I think we all applied immediately.

We also had some part time teachers who have been less mentioned, and I will omit the name of this German teacher. In the third year my form seemed to attract negative headlines (in modern speak) and there was some discussion that the third form camp would be cancelled as a punishment. One of our number (and probably the most culpable) took it upon himself to inform the German teacher during a lesson that he would rather miss camp than apologise to her. She rather lost her temper, and set about him with a heavy textbook, beating him round the head with it whilst explaining what an unpleasant boy he was. Finally, exhausted by the effort she ran out. We were in the Red Cross Hut halfway down Tinneys Lane so isolated from the school. We were unsure what to do in this unprecedented situation so just sat there until the end of the period, then filed off to the next lesson. I fear the teacher would have been in trouble in modern times, but back then we all thought the pupil asked for it and got it, so that was that.

I wonder how such a small school managed to offer such an extensive range of activities, especially sporting and extra-curricular. No doubt there

was less red tape and risk assessment to impede initiatives. In the sixth form I played in the Tennis and Badminton teams where transport to away games meant Mr Crouch's car plus whichever player could drive and had access to a vehicle. Concerns about insurance or even roadworthiness never seemed to come up. I also had the good fortune to go on a ski trip to Andorra, Italy, probably Spring 1978. I shared a room with Colin Hodges and over the week learnt the basics of skiing and falling over. The late Jonathan Moyle was also in my beginner's class, but he advanced more quickly than most, being fearless about throwing himself down the mountain. Courage which was to ultimately cost him dear. Ken House and Steve Shapland supervised the trip in a masters / pupil ratio that would never fly today but we all came back largely unharmed.

Joining the OFA always seemed a fun next step as we entered the sixth form, mainly because the annual dinners back then were more lively affairs. They were held at the Post House Hotel (since replaced by a block of 'senior living' apartments) and well attended by the younger teachers who took the opportunity to de-stress. The girls were not invited back then, and some of the behaviour of the teachers fell short of role models. Mr Lynch was often at the heart of the revelry. The Head Boy would be invited, struggling to keep pace with the alcohol consumption of the older diners and frequently end up being carried home.

The last word. It has to go back to my first day at Fosters in Autumn 1975 and the opening comments from Mick Goode to the new First Formers. There were many words of wisdom, but it stands out clearly that he told us how lucky we were to be there. He was right.

**Mark Love (1975-82)**

### ***From Geoffrey Quick***

I trust fellow Old Fosterians might let me indulge in offering my perspective on the impact of Frank Francis aka "CRWF" "HM" and "Crow" coming in as our esteemed Headmaster in 1965.

A little bit of background, if I may. I arrived at our School in the Autumn term as a fourth former in 1964. My academic performance up to then had been in decline, including being bundled through three secondary schools in the previous academic year. I had dropped in to the lower streams of these partially due to not studying Latin (seen then as a precursor to most

University routes.) My father was interviewed as my acceptance in to Foster's had to be endorsed by the then Headmaster, Mr. Sugden.

Father noted the calm and ordered atmosphere within the school and was impressed. Sugden came across as a quiet and calmly spoken individual and my 64/65 academic year as a Fourth Form Fosterian reflected regained stability.

Then our new Headmaster took his first school morning assembly. His Churchillian style of the bible reading was memorable, including the booming phrase "*Know ye that I am God and WILL BE OBEYED!*"

Changes were soon on the way. A fourth House, "School House" was set up under himself with its members plucked from St. Bede's, Dunstan's and Aldhelm's, with many being boarders. Prefectorial status was enhanced with more ceremony and gowns in evidence. The team game structure of two terms of Football and one of Cricket was recast with Rugby replacing Football in one term in the 1965 Year, much to the indignation of many in the "Footie" fraternity. Being hopeless at Football but with some previous Rugger experience I was appointed into the first Foster's XV as Hooker. CRWF took it upon himself to enthusiastically train us, running up and down the side-lines alternatively bellowing advice after blowing a whistle.

"*Quick, you consummate ASS!*" introduced me to a new adjective for my vocabulary.

Scraping into the VIth form I had the experience of him teaching "Ä" level Physical Chemistry to our small set (Me, Steve Trump and Rob Cowley). He was an engrossing and at times theatrical teacher. One exchange with Rob, whose attention was wandering.

"*So then, Cowley. What is the internal structure of an electron?*"

"*Sorry Sir I did know, but I've just forgotten.*"

"*WHAT!!!?. This is a disaster for Science and Mankind! Two beings in the entire Universe who could have answered that question: God, who won't and Cowley, who has **forgotten!***"

On another occasion he put me in the hypothetical position of being a chemist in a plant that has just had three thousand litres of liquid Sodium Hydroxide delivered.

"*What is the first thing you check for?*"

I started mumbling on about molarity, pH et cetera, whilst he looked on with an increasingly pained expression.

*“Quick, the first thing to establish is that three thousand litres were actually delivered!”*

One Parents’ evening, he expressed his concerns about my struggles with Organic Chemistry.

*“I don’t understand it. You can teach that to monkeys up trees.”*

On possible career options.

*“Your son is not clever enough to be a Doctor. Has he considered being a Vet?”*

My parents joined him in his car monitoring the School’s Sherborne to Shaftsbury and return charity walk in 1967. He would accelerate up to 70 mph then coast down to around 35 mph and repeat. He explained that he had developed this technique in Tanzania when he taught at Morogoro. Appropriate (perhaps) when driving across “MAMObA” (Miles and Miles of Bloody Africa) but a bit disconcerting for other road users on the A30 in Northern Dorset I would suggest.

There were also some interesting encounters with some of the LDS girls coming across for some lessons. A classic was when a group of their third formers were stuck in the corridor waiting for the classroom to open. Inevitably the chattering noise level grew bringing CRWF, gown flapping, on to the scene. He demanded of one pupil an explanation. The poor lass dissolved into nervous giggling.

*“Stop TITTING Girl!!!!!!”*

Well, Sixth form and “Ä” Levels came and went and the last of our batch of Fosterians went out into the Cold Old World.

But the story does not end there. Frank wrote to me with warmth and encouragement and I dropped in to say hello at school. Indeed he gave me lunch and was delighted to have me speak to one VIth Form group. He explained that it was the school’s ongoing Academic record that protected its identity.

The Old Fosterians annual dinners were joyful occasions, not least because of his witty and commanding chairmanship. I only attended one after his departure. The wind had changed.

I thank all at Foster's during my time for years of comradeship, advice and fun under THE Headmaster.

**Geoff Quick**

P.S. CRWF in 1966 – “*Once Africa gets in your blood it never, NEVER, gets out*” - YUP! (*I can wholeheartedly agree with this – Editor!*)

***Robin Stone brings us his memories of life at Fosters'***

***Boarding School routine:*** We were woken up by a 6th former, who rang a bell in the stairwell of the old boarding house. The dorms were freezing cold in winter (I don't think they were heated at all!). A glass of water next to my bed would freeze overnight. Breakfast was followed by a short walk to Tinneys Lane, past the cottage where Wilf the caretaker lived.

Does anyone remember free milk? Supplied in 1/3rd pint bottles, it was a treat to drink the cream off the top. If extra bottles were available, they were quickly consumed. Somebody hid one in the hedge at the back of the school to see what would happen. It turned a bilious shade of green!

We returned to the Boarding House after any sports activities in the late afternoon. I was also a member of the School printing society. As a small group, we spent many hours (sometimes on weekends) preparing the year books, sports days and other printed matter (posters etc) for the school. There was a small radio in the printing hut, and we listened to “*I'm sorry I'll read that again*” with Tim Brooke Taylor, John Cleese, David Hatch, and others. Printing type and ink was supplied by the Western Gazette in Yeovil.

In the evenings at the Boarding House there were 3 sessions of “prep”. One hour each, one before dinner and 2 afterwards. Years 1-3 went to bed after the second session which ended with prayers conducted by the Headmaster. The third session was for years 4 to upper sixth. After this, Year 4 went to bed and years 5 and 6 were allowed to watch the evening news before bed.

On the weekends, there was sport on Saturday mornings. I was hooker in the School first fifteen of Rugby, and we often travelled to other schools for matches. I remember one other team member was Phil Oatley. At 6ft 8, he was very useful in the lineouts! Afternoons and evenings were free time. Occasionally, I would catch the bus to Yeovil to use the indoor swimming pool.

During any free time at the Boarding House, we originally had the use of two common rooms. The junior common room boasted a wind-up gramophone with what was even then an ancient collection of 78's. A third 6th form room was created in the attic of the oldest part of the house, before it was moved to a new facility built in the garage block roof.

Every Sunday after breakfast, we all attended the service at the Abbey. A treat before lunch was the "5 Boys" chocolate vending machine on the wall outside what is now the museum. One shilling bought you a small bar of milk chocolate.

On Sunday afternoons you had to go out, whatever the weather. This usually involved walking around the town, or over towards the Castle. You were allowed back in at 4pm.

The White Hart pub used to have an off-licence window. Some of the sixth formers would send a volunteer with an empty bottle and get it filled with rough cider. There was a double wall in the yard outside the Boarding House and the gap was used to dispose of the evidence. I often wonder if someone had to take the wall down, how many of these would have been found!

Whilst in the 6th form, I became the proud owner of a BSA Bantam, which I later upgraded to a Yamaha YDS6. Clive Sherwood was the only boarder then who had a car, a very shiny bright red Vauxhall Viva, which he used to call his "power machine".

We also had a quarter size snooker table and a table tennis table and many hours were spent on these. Ian McLenahan was the best table tennis player and I never managed to beat him.

*Life at the School:* Some of the teachers that I remember include Brian Davis who taught Physics, who also coached the Rugby teams. Brian's nickname with the students used to be Barney Rubble, after the Flintstones character. I got on really well with Brian and enjoyed his lessons very much.

He developed a heart condition which curtailed his sporting activities. I became friends with him and stayed in touch after I left school. He and his wife invited me to their home for dinner on a few occasions. At that time I had digs in Yeovil, on my first sandwich year with SEB. After a while, he

mentioned that his health had improved and invited me to a game of squash at the courts in Kings School. It is to my constant great regret that I accepted, because he suffered a fatal heart attack during the game. Of course, I also remember Ken House and others like Edgar Maltby ("Sid") the art master, Jack Crouch the woodwork master, Mr Miller (Mick), Mathematics.

During my time at Fosters', a new Terrapin Building was erected outside the Chemistry labs, which became a Sixth Form common room. Illicit card games frequently took place there with a small amount of gambling. A radio played in the background. Now, every time Rod Stewart' " Maggie May" comes on, it takes me back to that common room. It's funny how music can trigger such strong images of the past.

I hope John Burrough doesn't mind me mentioning some of his habits! He used to keep a small tin which he kept filled up with Polo mints. On removing one, he would tap it on the tin, as if it were a roll-up cigarette, before sucking it down to the nub!

He also founded a resistance group called the Somerset Freedom Fighters, due to the school being in Dorset and his home in Somerset. Any mention of the county town of Somerset (Taunton) required members of SFF to nod their heads in tribute. This caused much confusion in class whenever the town was mentioned!

A new band called "The Sherriffs" has recently made a mark in the area where I now live, by singing Adge Cutler songs in a country and western style. Their signature song reminded me of a school talent show where we also sang "The Sherriff of Midsomer Norton", but with some modified words.

I did take part in a number of school plays including "The Importance of Being Ernest". Mostly though, I kept to backstage roles.

In my first year at school, I managed to dislocate my right knee whilst playing football. It was on the sloping field which was never much fun to play on. I was taken to Sherborne Cottage Hospital and put under a general anaesthetic whilst they reset my knee. I must have said something funny as the anaesthetic wore off, because everyone standing around me was laughing! The knee healed well as you would expect for a 13 year old but it has continued to trouble me to this day.

It is sad to see the association winding up, especially as I have only recently taken an interest, but I do hope that the informal contact list will enable us to stay in touch. My thanks go to John Burrough for his company on the get together and also for his ongoing messages.

**Robin Stone** (1966-71)

***David Evans elucidates on his Boarding House memories.***

I was at Fosters from 1953 to 1960 and for my first 3 years was a boarder in Hound Street where I achieved the distinction of being the most frequently “slipperd” junior. At that time there were two main dormitories, side by side, each with 10 beds and with a connecting door between the two rooms. The main door was at the end where the wash basins were and the most senior boys in each of the dormitories had their beds at the opposite end, so one started one’s school life near the wash basins in the junior dorm and moved up to the far end before beginning the process again in the senior dorm. There was also a small room that had two boys in it and, for a few years at least, a couple of boys stayed in a house in town. I even think there was a time when a couple stayed in a flat above the then Headmaster, Mr Lush’s, garage which was detached from the main building.

Our boarding experience was, I think, fairly unusual because we were so few in number. Most boarding schools are organised around the life of the boarders, and the day boys have to fit in with their arrangements whereas Fosters was very much a day school. I can recall only two activities that were specifically designed for the boarders. On weeknights we returned to the school after tea for one hour’s prep, (one and a half hours for senior boys) supervised by a teacher, and on Sunday mornings we went as a group to the Abbey, or one of two other Anglican churches on a rota. For the rest of the time, we were to all intents and purposes on our own but under the supervision of the senior boys which was fairly benign. We had to undertake a certain amount of “fagging” such as cleaning the shoes of senior boys, one of whom insisted that the leather part between the heel and sole had also to be polished to protect it against wet weather. One poor fresher was persuaded to “restore” a senior’s much loved 45 record that had worn itself grey by giving it a coat of black shoe polish, which was the sort of thing that brought retribution.

My offences were ones of ‘messaging about’. My first arose shortly after lights out when I sat up in bed and silently kept bowing my head and arms in

praise of the moon which was very visible through the sash windows which had no curtains and were always kept at least partly open whatever the temperature. Some boys began to laugh and the door between the dormitories opened, and they were asked what was going on. My claim that I was engaged in a religious act was rejected and I was told to report to the seniors in the morning.

This was my first experience of the ritual involved. Unlike other mornings no boys got washed and dressed early. All waited until I was summoned to the seniors where I walked past everyone still in their beds to the far end where I was sentenced by the head of the dorm, Ken House as I recall, to six whacks of the slipper. For this the beater remained in his bed and I lay across his legs for the punishment.

It was, of course, painful but so, in its own way, was both the delayed anticipation from the night before and the fact that everyone was waiting to see how you would react before, during and after your slipping. As I say I did what the Americans call the “perp” walk more than other boys, but it was not a frequent occurrence and most boys never got the slipper at all. I don’t know when the practice came to an end. It was certainly known about in my early years. My skin was unusually sensitive and showed slaps and the like in remarkable detail. On one morning, after a PE lesson we all went into the shower and Mr Critchley asked why my bottom had pink markings and various boys took great delight in explaining that I was still showing the imprint of the slipper.

School prefects punished by demanding lines or essays. I remember having to write 4 pages on India for Head boy Peter Perry. Someone said prefects never read what one wrote but simply looked at the first and last paragraphs. I tested this theory and followed my opening paragraph about India’s Independence Day ceremonies by saying that it had happened when I was too young to remember it. I then wrote some pages about my birthday presents before finishing with a bit about India. Alas, I had been misinformed and Perry made me write another 4 pages.

I lived 10 miles away from Sherborne and outside the school’s catchment area so was always a bit of an outsider and unfortunately my parents moved away to Wales during my first year at London University. This cut me off from easy contact with the school and I then spent a lot of my life abroad. I was a VSO teacher in Rajasthan in India and later joined the British Council

and worked in Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Turkey, Germany, America and India and had various postings in Cardiff and London. I now live in York and only wish I had made more effort to attend Fosterian events.

**David Evans** (1953-60)

*Our Editor gives a few of his highlights...*

Quite to my surprise, the envelope contents declared I had passed my 11+ and this naïve country boy was destined for Foster's School. My first introduction was the pre-start open evening, the only bit I remember being CRWF asking if I thought I was going to enjoy my time there. To my positive reply, he declared "We'll soon change that then!".

I have no intention of giving a blow-by-blow account of my 7 years secondary education, instead, I will relate some more memorable events. I started in September 1971, along with 30 or so other pre-pubescent boys, in Mike Goode's Form 1. It was, in all honesty, quite scary, but friendships developed, many lasting to this day. Those first years proved I was hopeless at sport. You will recall we had three pitches, one to the left of the Cadet hut, the second on the right that doubled up as the Cricket oval and between these, by the Tennis courts, pitch no. three, uneven, unkept and the resting place of all us hopeless boys for whom kicking leather balls did not come easily.

Academically, I had more leaning to the sciences, enjoying Biology the most, which meant of course the walk along Newland to Lord Digby's, with the clamber up the outside staircase to the laboratory. To this day, I can still picture the stuffed birds that lined one wall. I could never warm to the Physics lab and never partook of the trapdoor trick, favoured by the more adventurous. The more modern Chemistry lab was better, rows of chemicals and lab equipment. Yes, we fiddled with the gas taps – who wouldn't? Crowding round the fume cupboard as 'Bounce' Charles poured glycerol onto a pile of potassium permanganate giving the resultant 'volcano'. Watching in awe as we dropped flecks of potassium metal onto water. Boys will be boys of course and one day, one aspiring chemist collected up liquid residues of the lesson's chemicals, poured them into a stopped flask, labelling it quite authentically "1,2 di-methyl polygobbleoxide". Popping it into a cupboard at the back of the lab, it was still there when I left some years later!

Our Art lessons were a chance to relax. Sid Maltby never pushed you, but

he recognised talent and nurtured it as necessary. Besides teaching Art, Sid would also regale us with tales of old and it was from him that I learned one could get through France with five words – “*Du pain et du vin*”! Many of us remember the Art room with its fantastic pupil painted mural of events through the years. But do you remember the other smaller mural, outside the Geography room, of Dorset, with intricate depictions of the main towns and villages. This mural required a little restoration, for which Alec Thorne and myself volunteered. Work progressed well until we came to Holwell, when the re-touching went a little awry. With no ability to reclaim the original, we painted in a grand deciduous wood, obliterating the village completely. Taking a cue partly from the wood depicted north of Bishops Caundle – Holt Wood – and partly from Sid himself (who knew nothing of this artistic licence), we named this arboreal masterpiece ‘Malt Wood’. I do not believe anyone noticed and I believe it stayed that way until the school was demolished.

By the 5<sup>th</sup> Form, we had, of course, ‘grown up’, a fact confirmed by Form Master Jack Crouch on our first day with the statement “Aah, you’re Men now Boys”. As that year progressed bringing with it O-Levels, so we became a little more gung-ho to relieve tension. Walking in the form room one morning before assembly, major removals were in hand to turn the room the other way round. Desks were parted and the Master’s Desk was transported to the back of the room, whilst our individual desks were turned round – we did not go to the lengths of moving ourselves to the standard alphabetical practice. With Assembly over, we returned to the room to await Jack. I recall he did stop at the door to take in the reversed scene, then decided the best way forward was go along with the jape leaving soon after with a gentle request to return it back pronto.

I further recall on the last full day of term we piled all the desks, three or four high in one back corner. Jack was less tolerant of this, but of course, could not inflict any punishment as it was the last day. I think he realised that spirits were high and as many of the boys were leaving for good, he simply asked us to return it to normal by breaktime.

I went into the 6<sup>th</sup> Form – two years when I enjoyed school life even if I flunked my A-Levels at the end. By now of course, we were allowed to liaise more freely with the girls ‘up the road’ and many friendships were formed. This did not detract from everyday school life of course. I enjoyed singing and was in the choir. But in addition, Alec Thorne formed the group

“Harmony Four” as a Barber’s shop style singing group. For one Commoners Concert, we were to perform Flanders and Swan “A Song of Patriotic Prejudice”, with Alec Thorne, Tristan Molloy, Bill Niven and myself dressed as archetypical English, Irish, Welsh and Scots men. By this time, a young Kevin Morgan was shining as an exemplary pianist and we thought it would be good if he could accompany us on the ivories. But the piano, of course, was a Grand and moving it from the hall to the stage was not possible.

However, we discovered an old Upright in the projector room at the top of the stairs to the Library. Enquiries confirmed we could use it which was why any visitor on one particular day could see four teenagers bouncing an Upright piano down the staircase, trundling it up past the Canteen and somehow, up the short flight of stairs outside the Art room which by now was a Stage in preparation for the Concert. To add flair, we then set about painting a Union Jack over it’s front, even ensuring that when the key lid was lifted for playing, the flag pattern painted on the inside maintained the effect. Kevin Morgan did us proud and as I recall, our performance was appreciated.

So there we have it – a few of my memories, not forgetting the Lockers in the hall for Form 2, the immaculately polished Hall floor, the Noticeboards outside the Lower Sixth room, the Gym (and the showers), the privilege of the Drying room as the 6<sup>th</sup> Form cloakroom, the Prefects Robe (yes – I was lucky enough to have one), Lessons in the Tin Hut down Tinneys Lane, waking across Town to the King’s School swimming pool – memories that remain with me.

Did I enjoy it? – mostly yes. It was a privilege attending such an ancient school, giving me the confidence to face the world when I was finally set free in July 1978. Thank you Foster’s.

**Kevin Parsons 1971-78**

## **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024**

Date: 11 th October 2025 Location: Thornford Village Hall

Chair: Philip Dolbear

*Apologies:* Geoff Quick left 68, David Merchant 57-64, Simon Easton, Stuart Went 89-92, Mike Dunk 52-59, Stuart Wood 66–70, Matt Day,

James Allright, Mark Love, Oliver Chisholm, Kevin Parsons,  
Rob Dolbear, Nick Golding,

*Attendees:* Bernard Sparkes, Graham Bunter 60–64,  
Phil Crabtree, Staff, 82–2000, Mike Pheysey, Tim Ashmore,  
Gary Ireland 85–92, David Noble 85-92, John Inch 1939-42,  
James Stafford 61–64, Howard Prince 59–64, Robin Ackroyd 89–92,  
Robert Sanders, Paul Tackley 1976–82, Niall Munro 63–68,  
John House 49–54, John Burrough 1965–72 and 1985–92 (Staff)  
Robin Stone 66–71, Pete Holden 70–77, Ian Maun, Staff 77–86.  
Alec Thorne — 71–78

*Agenda*

1. Status of OFA and future direction
2. Magazine content and viability
3. Membership register and data handling
4. Financial statement
5. Appreciation for committees

*Discussion Points*

Premise: The main topic was whether to wind up the OFA.

Volunteers: A request for volunteers to continue the association received no responses.

Informal Continuation: Jenni Goode (sent apologies) organized the informal Folke event and expressed interest in continuing activities informally.

Magazine: There is almost no content available for the magazine.

Alex Thorne's View: It is not possible to continue in the current form.

*Options considered:*

Merge with Digby's group (declined by them).

Change the purpose of the group (historically little interest).

Engaging Younger Members: Discussion on involving younger people;

Gryphon currently has no related activities.

Proposals: Wind up the OFA after the final magazine issue Agreed.

Close accounts and lodge remaining funds with Gryphon (Newland Trust) to support the Richard Foster Award, aligning with the original charter.

Alternative: Donate funds to the Hub for children outside Sherborne schools.

Review charity aims for alignment; if suitable, transfer all funds to them.

### *Membership Register*

Email members to ask if they want their details carried over; database will then be closed. Include notice in the Fosterian publication.  
Financial Statement Distributed to attendees. Excludes lunch costs.

### *Acknowledgment*

Appreciation expressed for current and past committees.

---

## **REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE – 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

Armistice Day at the Gryphon School was again marked with a service of reflection and silence. Pupils of the School Council, those with parents in the armed forces and those involved in uniform groups were invited to attend. Old Fosterians Association attending represented the 41 young men from Fosters School who served and lost their lives across the First and Second World Wars. The service was led by



Reverend Jim Edie, School Chaplain. Wing Commander Ashleigh Philpin, a former pupil of the Gryphon School, gave the address reflecting on his experience and times of remembrance throughout his service in the Royal Airforce.

Pupils of the school read prayers plus other appropriate texts; both the Last Post and Reveille were played by a student on a bugle. Six Old Fosterians participated in the service, including reading the Role of Honour and laying a wreath at the Honours Boards. Old Fosterians/LDS Old Girls taking part this year were Alec Thorne, John House, Kevin Waterfall, Steve Joyce, Stan Love and Jeni Goode.

Before the service Jim Gower, Head Teacher, invited us into his office for tea and coffee and we chatted about the school today, some of the successes and some of the work in progress. This is one of the valuable links that remain between our old schools and the new.

---

## **OLD FOSTERIANS' REUNION LUNCH 2024**



## HON TREASURER'S REPORT

The balances of the OFA accounts are as stated below for the year end 2025. (As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025)

### Assets at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

NatWest Reserve A/c	£1461.90	(£1445.77 Dec 2024)
NatWest Current A/c	£3394.87	(£3622.75 Dec 2024)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4856.77</b>	(down £211.75 v Dec 2024)

**Subscriptions and donations** received from members in 2025 totalled £1026 down £42.00 on 2024.

### Expenditure at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025

Donation to Sherborne Douzelage	Nil	(Nil 2024)
Magazine printing / posting	£813.60	(£560.35 2024)
Founders Day Church Expenses	N/A	(£187.50 2024)
Lunch Postal Comms.	£ 37.64	(Nil 2024)
Lunch Guest of Honour & costs	N/A	(N/A 2024)
AGM / Lunch Hall Hire	£160.00	(Nil 2024)
AGM Tea & Coffee	£ 11.00	(Nil 2024)
Poppy wreaths	£250.00	(£25.00 2024)
Memorial Donations	Nil	(Nil 2024)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1272.24</b>	(up £499.39 on 2024)

I have not received any claims by members of the committee for any expenses incurred by them for calendar year 2025.

### Old Fosterian Magazine - 2025

Printing cost was	£470.00	(£350.00 in 2024 / £373.00 in 2023)
Postal charges were	£343.60	(£210.35 in 2024 / £209.02 in 2023)

### AGM and Final Reunion Lunch

Additional costs were incurred over previous years. Postal costs to ensure that all members were aware of this final event. Venue hire costs of £160 to accommodate the excellent turnout of seventy members and guests. Tea and coffee for the AGM. As in previous years the meal income fully covered dining cost including a tip.

One very generous member (anonymously) donated £500 to cover the

bar costs, which surprisingly was not completely imbibed! The remainder was used towards hall hire costs.

### Appeal for Funds

There were two significant donations in 2025. One of £50.00 in April and one of £100.00 in October. Thank you to all who have contributed.

2025		2024		2023	
Jan	£69.50	Jan	£74.50	Jan	£79.50
Feb	£82.50	Feb	£84.50	Feb	£89.50
Mar	£92.50	Mar	£109.50	Mar	£229.50
Apr	£167.50	Apr	£169.50	Apr	£119.50
May	£92.50	May	£114.50	May	£119.50
Jun	£54.50	Jun	£61.50	Jun	£66.50
July	£27.50	July	£34.50	July	£39.50
Aug	£17.50	Aug	£24.50	Aug	£29.50
Sep	£53.50	Sep	£55.50	Sep	£59.50
Oct	£192.50	Oct	£128.50	Oct	£128.50
Nov	£157.50	Nov	£184.50	Nov	£210.50
Dec	£18.50	Dec	£26.50	Dec	£30.50

### Final Accounts / Closure

The sum of £250 against Poppy Wreaths is not a typo. The Committee approved this sum to be paid to the Royal British Legion to provide a wreath in perpetuity for the School Honour Boards at The Gryphon.

The last expenditure for the Association will be the final Fosterian Magazine. This is normally paid for in late March / early April and is likely to be around £900 due to page count and postal costs. Given our normal income of approximately £400 January – April, there is likely to be a residual balance of approaching £4500. As previously reported, this will be donated to The Gryphon. The mechanism by which this will happen is a letter from myself to NatWest jointly signed by me and Philip Dolbear, as we are the current two signatories on the accounts. It is anticipated that the funds will be credited by NatWest direct to an account nominated by The Gryphon. I will keep the bank account records for five years and then they will be destroyed.

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** 26/1/2026

## THIS AND THAT

### *Musings of a surely-not-really-that- Old Boy*

I've scribbled down one or two pieces for The Fosterian over the years, and it saddens me to think that this will be my last. I had hoped that the OFA (and it's bright yellow clarion) would still be around in my dotage and particularly for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Foster's School...but even if they are not, it's not actually *that* far away now, so many of us will still be the better side of the daisies in 2040. So what better reason to get together then and raise a glass to the memories, friendships and happy times of a school founded so long ago (oh, and not forgetting the characterful teachers & wonderful education of course!).

We are the very last of so many generations...just imagine, those very first Old Fosterians would've perhaps, over a flagon or two, shared thoughts and tales of the "last" King of England, progress of the still-young American colony, the popularity (or not) of the Lord Protector and maybe memories of how the Old Castle looked before its destruction. And in terms of the School centenaries, I don't imagine there was much celebration at the last one given folk had rather a lot of other, more pressing matters on their minds, like coping with rations, conscription and the threat of an imminent jack-booted invasion.

So we will be the last Old Boys to be able to celebrate the centenary of Richard Foster's creation - assuming cryogenic suspension doesn't work and that fountain of youth remains undiscovered! And it *must* be our pleasurable duty to do so, before we too slip into the mists of time (or, perhaps even, off this mortal coil – thanks Mr Edwards ("Spud"), not to mention WS!). So ready your flagons for just 14 years' time, and "Old Fosterians, Assemble!!"

Oh, before closing I suppose I'd better give a little update on me for posterity, given it's the last Fosterian magazine: just about to commence my 14<sup>th</sup> season running Dorset Day Trips sightseeing tours around the Jurassic Coast, from the comfort of my classic VW camper, having happily left behind my days working in finance for (mostly) Barclays. Plus I do much walking/hiking (a joy of living by the coast), but virtually no cycling since 2018 when I simply gave it up, having suffered the latest cracked rib from yet another of one-too-many run-ins with a car.

Health, happiness and all the very best to you all and hope to see some of you in 2040 (if not before!).

**Daren Gapper (1980-87)**

*I cannot recall where I saw this following missive. It relates to our compatriots up the road at Lord Digby's School at a time when skirts were 'on the rise'.*

"Dear Parent,

1. I wrote to you about a year ago asking if you would kindly make sure that every item of your daughter's school uniform was marked clearly and permanently. We find however, that several girls are still wearing clothes which are not marked, and, which sometimes they do not even seem to recognise as their own. This means that possessions are frequently lost and a great deal of time is wasted in looking for them.

2. There are a few girls who try to wear garments that are not according to the school uniform list which is given to all parents before their daughters come into the school. During illness or very cold weather I sometimes give permission for a girl coming by 'bus to wear a warm coat which is not according to our pattern, but-this permission is exceptional and I would point out that the uniform list gives a navy blue overcoat and/or raincoat: duffle coats, of course, do not come into this category. Last year we added to the list as an optional item a thick navy blue sweater (made according to Pattern Robin 1061 and with wool obtainable only from Winifreds, Cheap Street, Sherborne). Extra jerseys can, if necessary, be worn under this.

3. Skirts must be long enough to cover the knee, ie must touch the floor when a girl is kneeling.

4. We have been very conscious lately that girls seem to take little pride in their school uniform. Some are wearing clothes which are obviously worn out and other's skirts and blazers which can only be described as dirty. This is most frequently the case in the middle school where the girls are quite old enough to look after their own clothes. Now we are sending all clothes home at half term, so would you be so kind as to see that they are in order and at the same time make sure that your daughter has not picked up someone else's garments in mistake for her own! At the moment a navy blue pullover and a pair of gym shoes cannot be found. I am sure you all agree with me that it is important that the girls should take a pride in their personal appearance in uniform.

Yours Sincerely

H C Thompson, Headmistress"

## OLD BOYS' NEWS

*News from John Austin (1967 to 1974)*

To my great shame, it's almost 30 years since I last sent copy into 'The Fosterian' magazine, and having now passed another landmark in life (retirement), I thought it might be a last chance to repeat the process with updated information. So here goes.....

Immediately after leaving Foster's School in 1974, I spent a brief period on a BEd course at (what was then) Rolle College at Exmouth in Devon. (Rolle College was subsequently integrated into Plymouth University in 2008. The old college site was then vacated and is now a housing estate.) Having fairly quickly decided that teaching wasn't for me after all, various makeshift jobs followed for a couple of years, until I joined Haynes Publishing in 1977 in their Editorial Department.

Haynes has been well-known for its extensive range of 'DIY' car and motorcycle repair manuals, although it always published non-car/bike manual 'general interest' books as well, initially mainly for those with an automotive interest – in motor sport, historical motoring titles, etc – but later branching out into entirely non-automotive titles on a huge range of subjects, from how to look after cats, how skyscrapers are designed and built, to dealing with retirement. I worked my way up the ladder over nearly 44 years – a rarity in employment terms today, where short term contracts and an ever-mobile workforce make it an unlikely scenario in today's world – to hold the post of UK Managing Editor for the 'printed/consumer products' part of the Haynes empire, responsible directly to (variously) the Managing Director and the Chairman of the Haynes group. By this time, Haynes had very much branched out into the professional automotive arena, providing technical data and other services to the motor trade via digital means, and was operational in North America, Europe, Australia and beyond.

During the majority of my time at Haynes, I managed the UK Editorial department on a day-to-day basis, with a staff of anywhere between a dozen and 30 personnel, depending on the era we're looking at over those 44 years. Occasional overseas 'liaison' trips to California and The Netherlands took place during my tenure. I finally left Haynes in the summer of 2020, just after the Covid pandemic had taken hold. Why stay so long? Because to be entirely frank, I loved virtually every day working in an industry which greatly interested me, gave me some considerable challenges over the years, all with a fantastic bunch of people. Why would I even consider leaving!!

Since retiring in 2020, I have spent almost five years completely renovating the house that my wife and I bought the year prior to my retirement. And now, fast approaching 70 years old, I'm hopefully going to have time to reignite some of the various interests I put on hold many years ago through lack of time to devote to them. One area I've managed to keep alive over the years is travelling the world on some memorable holidays – with a great many taken in the USA and Canada, some in summer, others whilst skiing in some great ski resorts. Whilst we put a hold on the skiing upon the arrival of Covid, and subsequently whilst I was in 'house renovation' mode, I'm still hopeful of getting back on the skis again soon, most likely with my son and his wife, who are partial to a bit of snowboarding from time to time.

I am married to Caroline, having been together now for over 20 years, and we each have one offspring from previous marriages. My son is the Project Director of a steel fabrication company, and my stepdaughter works in a technical support role in the aviation industry. My son is also a pilot (of light aircraft), so I'm privileged enough to secure free flights from time to time over southern England. For a short time, many years ago, I was a member of a local gliding club, who attempted to teach me how to pilot gliders. But recently, I've decided I prefer to be chauffeured!

My brother, **David (Austin)** – who attended Foster's School from 1973 to 1980, ending up as Head Boy – worked for over thirty years at the BBC in London as an editor of television programmes, initially on videotape, but later on the new computer-based editing systems. He worked on the full range of BBC TV programming; documentary, factual, children's, schools and sport, including trips abroad for some major sports events, notably the Commonwealth Games New Zealand (1990) and Barcelona Olympics (1992). Latterly he specialised mostly in light entertainment TV programming. He is now also retired.

I maintain occasional contact with **Mike Challoner** (1970 to 1974) and regular contact with **Roger Cowley** (1967 to 1974), both of whom are now also retired. I still remember the 'Class of '74' reunion at the Plume of Feathers in Sherborne in April 1995 organised by Mike. With the late, great **Mike Goode** also in attendance, several of us turned up that night, including **Phil Banfield, Glenn Read, Pete Hancock, John Scard, Andrew West, Jon Dyer, Ian Stewart, Martin Smith, Chris Maidment, Steve Shapland, Roger Cowley**, myself, and of course, **Mike Challoner**. I

occasionally bump into some of the above who still live locally, in or near Sherborne, but often wonder where the others are now. I also wondered if anyone has been in contact with **Richard Partridge** (1967 to 1974), who lived in Yetminster whilst we attended Foster's School, and later studied at Bath University?

Well, I hope that my very small contribution to this edition of The Fosterian may prompt others who attended Foster's School around the same period as myself to provide their own accounts of how life has progressed for them over the years. Like many of us Old Fosterians, I'm always interested to see what happened to others who were also privileged to receive that great foundation for life through education at Foster's School.

**John Austin** (1967-74)

**Stuart Went**, has been living in Melbourne, Australia since January 2009. Married to Ilona, they have a daughter, Isabella. He is still in touch with his friends from the Foster's community.

**Chris Fort** writes...

I was at school from 1966 joining in the third year & left in 1969, spending three years at Westland Aircraft trying to be an accountant. Leaving Westlands in 1972, I went to Barclays Bank until 1983, this was in the days when a bank did banking instead of saying 'no you have to do it on line' or 'no we can't do that'.

Next went into insurance broking with the family business back in Sherborne where I have lived ever since. Strange but all my jobs have involved mathematics and at school it took me four attempts to pass my O level. During this time as a Broker, clients included CRWF.

I sold the business in 2013 and have been happily retired ever since - several people said I was born to retire. I married Eileen in 1978 so not far off 50 years together with two daughters and four grandchildren.

For about 20 years I have met up with ex school pals including Andrew Stewart his brother Ian & sister Carol, Andrew Peters, Simon Ralph, Chris Harrison, Martin Eastment and Tony Orchard. We meet twice a year - once in Sherborne and once in London. Also occasionally catch up with Leon Nettley, Geoff Trevett and Joth Lewis. Tim Lawes use to be in our gang

until his sad death two years ago. Tim's sister Sue is now also an honourable chap.

Old Fostorian's Association - rest in peace.

**Chris Fort** 1966-69

***Paul Foster pens a few lines***

I was at Fosters from 1984 until 1991. I worked for Barclays Bank Plc from 1991 until 2003 and ended up working in the agricultural department as direct competition to you in NatWest.

I joined Battens Solicitors in 2004 and stayed within the legal industry until 2023 when I became a postie in Yeovil working for Royal Mail. I lasted 6 months and then returned to legal profession where I now work for Amicus Law in Yeovil in their conveyancing department.

I am married with 2 boys aged 21 and 18 and still live in the Yeovil area.

Please feel free to share this within the magazine if you would like to. Please also feel free to publish my Email address as it would be good to catch up with some of my former fellow students.

Kind regards,

[paulfoster01@sky.com](mailto:paulfoster01@sky.com)

***Robert Sanders give us an update on his life after school:***

Family: Married to Frances for 36 years, we have 2 children Oliver and Kathryn both married. Oliver has two children Emilia 9 and Harry 6. They live near Maidstone Kent and Kathryn is expecting a baby in March 2026 and lives seven minutes' walk away from us.

*Home:* Lived the last 33 years in Alresford (home of the Watercress Steam Railway) near Winchester on the edge of the South Downs a beautiful place with a great community that I have been pleased to contribute towards. As a member of a local charity activities have included helping putting up and taking down 180 Christmas Trees in the town centre each year, helping with the arrival of Father Christmas in the town who arrives via various means, usually dressing up, once I was Doctor Who! I have previously lived in every county on the south coast (apart from Cornwall), and also Essex and Warwickshire during the first few years after leaving Dorset.

*Hobbies:* Water sports mainly sailing included trips around the English Channel as far as the Isles of Scilly, a trip to Gibraltar and last summer

sailed a few legs of friend's trip round the UK, and flotilla holidays in Greece. I had own boat for 40 years until it became too time consuming and expensive to maintain. I also sailed on large clipper sailing yachts from Venice to Athens and Athens to Malta.

I enjoy walking on holidays and locally on the south downs and in Devon. Other exercise includes Swimming, Badminton and Squash at various times, now more golf. Holidays have included the Seychelles, New Zealand, Australia, USA, Canada, Alaska and Europe.

*Work:* I obtained a Degree in Business Studies at Plymouth Polytechnic, with a sandwich year at Northshore Yacht Yards.

Professional – Fellow of Chartered Management Accountants. Trained at, then had my first few years of work at Reed International (now RELX) moving round subsidiaries. Followed by three years at Redland looking after several brick and tile factories, then did a roofing course and enjoyed getting involved in the development and build of a new state-of-the-art clay roof tile factory.

Then I had a decade each in the following:

*Smiths Industries* from Senior Management Accountant to Finance Director of a division of companies. Starting with a company making engine controls for the Harrier jump jet and others in the fly by wire revolution in airplane controls which took me to Rolls Royce where I saw engines in testing. I moved onto looking after a division of companies that provided wiring conduits and hydraulic hoses for aircraft, boats, military and domestic vehicles, houses and factories, using patented products and production techniques, so got involved in rolling out new products, buying production equipment, moving factories and acquiring new businesses around the world.

*Hampshire Cosmetics* as Financial Director a company developing and manufacturing cosmetics for the Body Shop and many other brands. Had "The Apprentice" TV show teams come to develop cosmetics on one occasion to pitch to Lord Sugar.

*Blade Dynamics Ltd* as Financial Director/CFO– initially an independent company designing developing and testing wind turbine blades for onshore and offshore wind, then acquired by General Electric (GE). This took me to many locations around the world seeing these huge (now over 100m) structures being developed, made and tested.

Now retired initially caring for elderly parents and sorting affairs after they sadly died but life freeing up now.

**Robin Sanders** (1974-81)

***Andrew Stewart*** brings us up to date with his life since leaving school.

I was at St Mary's primary school in Bradford Abbas when I took my 11+, we hadn't long moved into the village where my parents had bought their first home. Previously we had moved around the country following my father who was in the Fleet Air Arm and my primary education was a bit disjointed. At the time I had no idea of the impact of getting a place at Fosters would have on my life. Fortunately, my father who was an ex-Grammar school kid, did understand and I was encouraged to do some extra cramming. I only just scraped through on the day.

The first three years at Fosters were not particularly memorable, I was a competent student but struggled in a year group that was packed with some seriously clever young men. Just before the start of the fourth year my parents moved into Sherborne, my brother, Ian joined me at Fosters and my Sister, Carole made it into Digby's. The move into the "metropolis" that was Sherborne town improved my social life considerably, no longer the drudgery and bullying on the school bus leading to isolation in the villages.

I did well with O levels and decided to stay to do A levels in the Sciences. That didn't work out too well, but I had a great time socially and a social group started to emerge. I was allocated a place at Southampton Poly for an HND in Marine Engineering with the objective of spending my life travelling the world. But at the very last minute I decided I would be happier doing Catering - drawing on my experience behind the bar at The George, in the kitchen at The Eastbury and The Berni Inn in Yeovil. I completed an HND in Hotel and Catering Management at Oxford Poly. The course required very little effort on my part. It involved lots of practical work and two terms working in industry which was spent at the Old Course Hotel in St Andrews. Catering students were never short of opportunities to earn extra cash but I fast concluded that it always involved working when others were having fun. A notice advertising for a student to help at a small firm providing catering design and management consultancy over the winter vacation of my last year appeared on the Poly notice board and I grabbed at the chance because it meant I didn't have to work in a hotel or restaurant over Christmas. It transpired that the Directors liked me and I enjoyed the

work, so I stayed on and worked there for the next 7 years learning and developing all the time.

During that time I worked occasionally as a relief chef. One day I was at a small upmarket retirement home and met with a young Japanese lady who was working there as a way of funding her English language studies. Four years later and after a couple of trips to Japan we were married in Sendai and moved back to the UK to start our life and family. Both our daughters went to a grammar school in Essex where we made our home - again the Grammar School system produced great results. Hannah our eldest lives in London and is Marketing Director for software company. Yuki is a specialist pediatric dentist. She lives in Bristol but runs special clinics in Yeovil General Hospital from time to time.

In the early 80's together with three colleagues we started our own consultancy company and I stayed there for the next 35+ years. I was the last of Founders to leave in 2016 having weathered the ups and downs of various financial crises. By the time I left we had grown the company to nearly 50 employees with offices in London and Dubai designing foodservice facilities in government buildings, convention centres, hotels, restaurants, stadia, offices, factories, hospitals, visitor attractions, cruise ships, oil fields etc etc. The work was interesting and varied and involved lots of travelling. I passed my share of Tricon to the management team nearly ten years ago and have enjoyed my retirement so far. Still doing the travelling - I write this in a small hotel in the back street of Mexico City where Yoko and I are on a tour through the southern part of the country. Part of my exit deal is that the Management Team must take me out to lunch twice a year and tell me what they are doing - it is really nice to see the company growing and prospering .... without me!

So ..... What part did Fosters play in this journey? Firstly it gave me the confidence, communication skills and the general common sense to survive and prosper in both my business and social life. The HND at Oxford Poly was easy only because I already understood the principles of science and maths. I applied my knowledge of technical drawing learned in "Jack's" lessons and the engineering and electrical principles in "Barney's" physics lab in my design career. My relationship with Mr Francis was not great - I was even suspended for a while - but when it came to finding me a last-minute place to do the Catering HND he was a hero. In the days before the

internet, he personally rang all the colleges offering the course to find one with places left and arranged for the head of department to interview me.

However, the most enduring impact of Fosters is not a “memory”, it is very much in the present. It is more than 60 years since I first met my “classmates”; over the time some of my year group have kept in touch. We meet at least twice a year as a group to swap stories, opinions and experiences and give advice. Tim Lawes and Stephen Hopkins are sadly now missing but Simon Ralph, Andrew Peters, Chris Fort, Martin Eastment, Tony Orchard, Chris Harrison and Geoff Trevett will be a tick in the register when we get together in Sherborne on May 7th. My brother Ian, my sister Carole and Tim’s sister Sue are “honorary” members of our year group and will be joining. Others are welcome to contact me on [andrew\\_stewart1@outlook.com](mailto:andrew_stewart1@outlook.com).

Though the official Old Fosterian’s may have come to an end I am looking forward to many years more of friendship.

**Andrew Stewart (1964-71)**

*...and from **Mark Hoppe***

When I left – or more appropriately slipped out of the Foster’s circle in 1986 having made a hash of my A levels, it probably wasn’t so apparent in my thinking just how important Fosters had been to me in my life. I now realise 40 years after leaving what a key foundation the school and its community was to me.

When I left school in 1986 – employment beckoned, and I found myself as a lab technician working for a family business in Gillingham – Sherman Chemicals gave me 9 years of incredible learning and development as a manager of people and I remember fondly so much of what we achieved at Shermans and how much fun work life was back in the late 80’s and early 90’s.

When the core production activities of the company were going to be taken to Biggleswade, I was offered a role, but I wasn’t keen to leave the locality so declined and headed into by new role at Wincanton Engineering in Sherborne with new challenges. My 26 years with the company in multiple roles culminated in 9 challenging and rewarding years as the Factory Manager, where my team transformed the business into a World Class organisation under the ownership of Tetra Pak. The biggest disappointment

in my working life was the organisations financially driven decision to remove 80+ years of skills and knowledge in Sherborne to Poland to a new super factory. Thus, this magnificent chapter in my life came to an end.

Slightly disillusioned with the corporate control, I was offered a varied and interesting role with ex Fosterian (80-87) Brent Mitchell's Events Crew Organisation. I learnt a lot and taking the lead for the organisation for Pack Monday Fair for 2 years was one of the highlights. After a couple years, I found myself wanting a new challenge and headed to a transport and contract lifting business, where I am managing operations and involved with crane lifts nationwide. I am enjoying life and hope to retire in a couple years or so.....but let's see.

Away from working life, there has been two real constants in my life. My wonderful wife, Michelle, an ex Digby's girl – we met in 1982, married in 1992, became parents in 2000. Michelle has always been there, whilst carving out her own successful career in HSBC for 25 years. Before stepping out of the commercial world to work in the admin of a care home for 10 years, before retiring (to look after our aging parents). And me!

The other constant is motorsport – many will remember from schooldays – cars and motorsport were my go-to hobby and since becoming involved in 1980 when my father (Colin) another ex-Foster's boy, was racing bangers. I first raced in 1982 and have not missed a season of competing in Autoglass – 1982-2014, Car Trials and autotests 2013-current, since.

I have had countless cars over the years and currently have a fleet of 3 cars which keeps me busy competing in National Car Trials – where I have been lucky enough to win 4 British Championships and 3 National Gold Stars. I am about to have a foray into Sprints and Hillclimb – having a hankering to go fast again. We will find out if I am too long in the tooth!

My nature is to always contribute, and during my involvement I have been a committee member of multiple motorsport organisations, as well as a commentator at many events. I even commentated at Mendips Raceway-run by Old Fosterian Graham Bunter. During this time, I recently travelled to France to spectate at a hillclimb, where I was invited by Mark Hayward (79-86) who as a French resident, is part of the organising team.

I still live in Sherborne and see other ex-pupils from time to time – I worked

with Graham Orchard and Tony Emm – both 76-82? I do reflect fondly on my time and what it did to make me the person I am today. Thank you Fosters School.

**Mark Hoppe (1979-1986)**

*Our Chariman, **Philip Dolbear**, finishes off this section...*

After years nagging others for Magazine contributions, I thought I better take this last opportunity for an update for the few whom may be interested. A quick spin through the last 45 years!

After attaining a Degree in Agriculture at Reading, I worked as a Farm Consultant for the Ministry of Agriculture in Somerset and North Wales, the latter where I met my wife, Rebecca, now of 37 years and mother of our 3 children. I then joined Midland, then HSBC Bank as an Agriculture Manager where I reached the lofty status of 'RAM', Regional Agriculture Manager, for the South West, living close to Sherborne roots at Thornford. After 20 years of that, still from Thornford, I took on a Knowledge Exchange Manager Role leading the South West in the arable sector for an outfit called The Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board, a government quango.

I was lucky enough to be able to retire at the tender age of 60, moving initially and temporarily for 2 years in The Yorkshire Dales, but now permanently in The Peak District between Ashbourne and Buxton in a village called Hartington.

I lead an active life walking many miles, playing squash and badminton, dry stone walling and helping on a local Charity Care Farm. In between the above, I am catching up on not having a traditional post Uni gap year. Love the Scottish Islands and further afield, trips to Germany (visiting my 'O' Level exchange partner), France (World Cup Rugby), Croatia, Java and India.

A full and happy life from a humble background and a sound Grammar School education into which, apparently, I only just scraped in! Thank you, Fosters School, and all it was.

**Philip Dolbear 1974-81**

## **VALETE**

**Peter Johns (1973-1980)** recently passed away. His funeral was at Salisbury crematorium and after at the Royal Chase Hotel in Shaftesbury. RIP Peter. (See photo on the penultimate page.)

**Jeffrey Hugh Jenkins.** Jeff was born in Wales on 28th of July 1958. He was very proud to be Welsh and was a Welsh socialist through and through. He moved to Sherborne with the family when he was 13 and attended Fosters from 1971 until 1976 when he was accepted into Imperial College London where he studied Material Science and became a member of the royal College of Mines.



Depending on when you met him, he was either called Hugh or Jeff. He had decided that he preferred Jeff, but was still called Hugh by his sister and nephews.

While at Fosters he always participated in school drama productions and music. Later on he became very involved in the school archives and through this was able to keep in touch with many of his old classmates. He was a computer buff through and through as well as a music fanatic. He played many instruments and sang whenever he could.

Jeff sadly passed on July 28th 2025 after a brief and unexpected illness. He is sadly missed by his wife Helen, his mother Margaret Jenkins (who still lives in Sherborne), sister Brenda who lives in California and all the other members of family and friends.

**Terry Chubb.** Muriel Chubb informs us that that Old Fosterian **Terry Chubb** (1945-53) died in May 2025. He had been battling with dementia for a few years. He died peacefully having reached the good age of 90.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

Saturday 11th October was the O F A's AGM and annual lunch. A good attendance of about 70 turned up, lunch time we were sat in age at Foster's school groups and I was sat next to **John Inch** who was at Foster's in 1939, 10 years before me, but not surprisingly there was nobody else in his year group,

It was John's 96<sup>th</sup> birthday the day before, he lives in Yorkshire and came by train and stayed at the Britannia Inn in Sherborne which his parents were the landlords of when he went to Fosters.

He told me that the day he started at Fosters Tinney lane, it was delayed for a month to allow the builders to complete the job, he made a point of going to school early and was the first boy to enter the school when it was newly built. He was also there in 1940 when the German bombers dropped their bombs on Sherborne, he and other boys still at school after 4.00pm had to leave the buildings and go out into the trenches that had been dug in the playing fields. He reckons that the trenches would not have protected them had a bomb fell on the school as they all stood up in the trenches and watched the German planes dropping their bombs.

He also brought with him his School term reports (autumn 1939 onwards), some school bills his parents had to pay, his sports day programmes, certificates for winning the 100 yard and 220 yard races for the under 12's, swimming competition programmes and Commoners concert program. Some of this I have now delivered for him to Sherborne museum together with his sports day cups and some I have taken to the Dorset history centre in Dorchester and what they could not take I have posted back to John.

Some of his teachers were Bert Lush (headmaster), Pat Miller, Earnest Hulme, Pat Hewlett and George Wlikins. I took him back from Thornford Hall to the Britannia later that day via a cottage he lived in later at North Wootton and two places he could remember - Child's garage and Baxter's Brewery in Long Street (Both now converted to houses).

What an interesting day by just attending an old boy's (and LDS Girls.) function.

**John House** 1949 - 54.

That interesting and inspirational character, **John Inch**, started School in 1939 and brought along some personal Fosters memorabilia that is worth reproducing. We will start off with a School photo of 1940 when the 300th Anniversary was celebrated.

Have a peek. I think it was taken outside the Abbey, but I remain to be corrected. John is in the second row behind the Headmaster.



### **A Dining Experience**

I reproduce this photo for several reasons beside the people present – do you remember that main hall with its panelled walls, tall windows and ‘the clock’.

Bangers and mash are food of the day served in that ubiquitous aluminium tableware beloved of Dorset County Council (as was then) for it’s school canteens. Clearly, all were asked to raise a sausage for the benefit of the camera.

Of the people, I am unable to identify anyone, except, of course, our beloved Brian “Barney” Davis. I am not sure of the date, but remembering Brian as I do, I would say the early 1970’s.

A lovely poised, but somehow, natural, shot of daily school life.



### **The 1978 Cricket Team**

I include this in memory of Peter Johns, the Team Scorer.



Front Row L-R: Monty Latif, Les Hillman, Alan Dodge, Kevin Harvey, Tim Davis. Back Row L-R: Peter Johns, Andy Marks, Richard Green, Rob Carroll, Alan Fazakerley, Dave Hellier, Mark Morley.

...and here, again from the archives of John Inch receipts for John's first term tuition fees and his 'Milk Bill', (you might need a magnifying glass to read it!)

FOSTER'S SCHOOL  
SHERBORNE.

*Short Summer term, 1940*  
*Mr Inch*

Dr. to THE HEAD MASTER.

	£	s.	d.
Magazine ... ..	:	:	:
Evening Gymnastic Class ... ..	:	:	:
Elocution ... ..	:	:	:
Travelling Expenses ... ..	:	:	:
Dinners ... ..	:	:	:
Milk ... ..	:	:	6
Hot Drinks ... ..	:	:	:
Damages ... ..	:	:	:
<i>Paid with thanks</i> <i>23/8/40 H. Hutchings</i>			£ : : 6

Please pay this account to the Head Master.

No. 593

**DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE.**

**Foster's School, Sherborne.**

TUITION FEES, &c.

Term, 19.....

RECEIVED of

Parent's Name *J. Inch*

The sum of £ *4-10/-*

for the Dorset County Council.

*Charles H. Boy.*

Dated.....

  


...*"And now, the end is near, and so I face the final curtain..."*

Well as far as the Fosterian is concerned, Frank Sinatra's words (let's gloss over the fact that Paul Anka wrote them!) seem appropriate. As I said at the start of this issue, I have enjoyed reading about everyone's school experience and more so, what we went on to achieve.

In the Fosterian of Summer 1952, the Speech Day report included the following passage from Professor W, Beare,; Chairman of the Governors;

*"We of Foster's School were fortunate to be members of a foundation that had flourished through three centuries of English History; from the past we could retain what was vital and adapt it to present day requirements. Tradition was of great value: achievement was to be respected .... But there were qualities even more worthy of honour; of such were courage and endurance – things which could not be taught in school, for could only grow with the passage of many years."*

To me, after reading of your lives, these words resonate. Foster's school set us up to face the world. How we used that privilege throughout life varied of course, but for most of us, it made us who we are.

Yes, we will maintain contact with each other, reminisce, and look forward to what lives we have ahead of us. In it all, I am certain none of us will forget the legacy of Richard Foster.

So we won't say "Goodbye", just "Au revoir".



## <FOSTERSDIGBYS.CO.UK> website update

Some of you will have realised our website had disappeared over recent months. The sudden, sad and untimely passing of Jeff Jenkins had left us in a bit of a pickle over website arrangements. Jeff had masterminded this for many years and held all the licences, passwords etc. Alas, he and we did not have a backup! We are much indebted to Old Fosterian Steve Congrave who has 'stepped up' to resolve matters - well beyond my IT skills! We should be even more indebted to Jeff's sister and wife with whom we have been liaising at this difficult time for them. Thank you.

As I write the position is as follows. Steve managed to get the domain transferred to his name and renewed. However the web content was hosted on an old cloud server which had been deleted. Luckily our website had been scanned in Spring 2025 by the Internet Archive and Steve found someone who could recover most of the content from there and migrate it onto the Wordpress hosting account which Steve has set up on his server.

The website is now 'back up' . We know there are some Magazine issues missing which Steve is trying to remedy as far as he can; also many of the pictures which were never annexed by Archive.org so unlikely to be recovered unfortunately. If you can't see something you did before or would like to see something, please let me know and we will endeavour to see if the information can be recovered from elsewhere to put it back on the site.

Thank you Steve!

On social media the two Facebook Accounts will remain (see inside cover page for details). I will post updates on the website there.

**Philip Dolbear.**