

OLD VARNDEANIAN

Newsletter

Archive re-issue

SEPTEMBER 1989



MR. W.J. STAINER HEADMASTER(1902-32)
Whose great achievement was Varndean.

A DIAMOND JUBILEE

The laying of the Foundation Stone of the new School on July 9th, 1929 was the first stage in the transfer from York Place to Varndean. There had been long and frustrating delays. The Girls' School had moved in May 1926 but their case was more urgent in that not all pupils had been able to return to York Place after the war. In a memorandum of November, 1926 Mr. Stainer put forward his ideas for the development of the site, mostly carried out except for the tennis courts and staff housing in the Spinney. In the autumn of 1928 he and a sub-committee of the LEA visited several newly-built schools and made detailed notes. He had reservations about the laboratory and art provision but was in general impressed by the design. The basic contemporary pattern of two quadrangles and open cloisters for maximum light was adapted to suit the lie of the land. The school was to hold 550 pupils. With hindsight two disadvantages have emerged: Access to the Hall gallery is awkward and the north cloisters are wide open to the elements. The most obvious benefit of the new site was that the games fields would be at the door and on LEA property, thus ending the constant search for a field to buy or rent and to trek there and back. Finally, in the spring of 1929 the "Dolphin" announced that the Brighton Council was going ahead with the new building, to be known as Varndean School for Boys.

There must be over thirty members of the OVA who were present at the ceremony of laying the Foundation Stone. If any care to recall this experience, their memories will be prompted by our "From the Archives" section. The editor will be pleased to hear from any of them.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Our Newsletter for May, 1979 described how Varndean celebrated the 50th Anniversary. On this Diamond Jubilee we recall the day itself from the "Dolphin" for autumn 1929.

By a fortunate coincidence an Old Boy, Alderman H.J. Galliers (1894) was Mayor of Brighton when the Foundation Stone was laid in the main entrance on July 9th 1929. Furthermore, Councillor H. Hone, Chairman of the Education Committee, had been on the staff of York Place in 1887 and he presided over the gathering. Alderman 8_

N. Southall, who, as Chairman of the Governors from 1927-31 was actively engaged in the whole enterprise, asked the Mayor to lay the Foundation Stone "of what we hope will be one of the finest Secondary Schools of the country". (The mallet and trowel he used are now among Varndean treasures). HIS Worship did all and more than was expected of him getting two days' holiday for the boys and the girls, who also attended the ceremony. A prayer by the Rev. Canon W.R. Dawson, Headmaster of Brighton College, concluded the proceedings.

A contemporary account describes the scene:

"Fragrant hayfields and a summer sky, clouded only towards the horizon, saw the laying of the Foundation Stone of the new School. Never before had we realised the extreme peacefulness of the proposed site, elevated well above the town, and bounded by grassy silences which lost themselves in the distance. The setting is in every way worthy of the noble building which shall shortly occupy it, and of a School of which Brighton has every reason to be proud. On this particular afternoon the panorama of mingled cloudland and downland lent a peculiar beauty and grandeur to the proceedings.

Especially indicative of good will and good fellowship was the fact that the girls from Varndean School took part in the ceremony, and two silent squadrons, one a splash of red and the other a mass of blue arid white, stood in the background of a temporary platform, and listened to the speeches broadcast by means of amplifiers."

(They stood where the quadrangles now are. Were they really that good or is this poetic licence?)

O.V.A.

"What do they mean?" someone may say,
 "Those letters? What is 'O.V.A.'?"
 Mere letters to some, they may well be,
 But something more to you and me;
 Links with the past, when we look back
 To when we wore the red-and-black -
 To when we wore the cap and tie
 And made our first appearance, by
 The gateway in Surrenden Road,
 Viewing with awe our new abode.
 An age ago, it seems, that day -
 Or was it only yesterday?

Memory plays familiar games,
 Provides the faces, not the names -
 Though there are some which come with ease -
 Surely you must remember these -
 Trustram, Witcomb, Hills and Gibbs,
 Hodder, Atkinson and 'his Nibs' -
 "Hutch", of course, the Head of yore;
 We could go on, remembering more,
 And how an audience applauds
 As young Paul Scofield treads the boards
 Appearing - we recall it yet -
 In "Romeo and Juliet".

The recollections never end,
 We summon up each boyhood friend -
 Though some, alas, evade recall ...
 Their names carved on the Board in Hall.
 Take all the names, and all the faces,
 Add some memories of places:
 The Gym, the Library, The Hall,
 The Art Room, with its windows tall,
 The playing Fields where we had fun,
 The Cloisters ("Walk, boy! Do not run!")
 Take the mixture, add to that
 The sound of leather ball on bat,
 The sound of clear young voices singing
 "Onward and Upward!" the words were ringing ...

Each of us has a picture dear
 Of schooldays of yesteryear -
 Twenties or thirties, whichever era
 - Fifties or Sixties, or even nearer,
 School, or College, whate'er the name
 Our sentiments are still the same.
 Remember the past? Indeed, we ought,
 But, look to the future; with our support
 This School of ours will always thrive
 And "Onward and Upward" long survive.
 Tell the curious, met by the way,
 This is the meaning of "O. V. A." !

K.H.B. 28.iv.1989

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 87th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the ASSOCIATION will be held at VARNDEAN on FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20th, 1989 at 7.30 pm. A list of the Association's officers may be found on the front page of the Newsletter for March,

1989. We hope to see many more members at this meeting and in this connection our President writes:

It is a little sad that, although this is the annual opportunity for members to have a say in the affairs of the Association, the attendance in recent years has been small. (Perhaps I might not have been elected as your President if it had been otherwise!!)

Nevertheless, it would be heartening for your Council - and for me personally -to see a better attendance at this year's -and subsequent A.G.M.s. So please note the date and I hope to see you there. If you live in the neighbourhood please make an effort to come.

Ken Brown

President

THE ANNUAL DINNER

This occurred on April 28th, 1989, at the Imperial Hotel, Hove and proved to be a very pleasant evening for 84 OV's. Many of these were regulars, but several enjoyed the experience for the first time - but not for the last we hope! The presence of Mr. Alan Jenkins, the new Principal of the College, was warmly welcomed and the occasion gave an opportunity for mutual acquaintance between Old Varndeanians and himself.

The highlight of the evening was the President's poem, written by him for the occasion and read by the author. In the confident expectation that other OV's will join in the appreciation universally expressed at the Dinner, it is printed here.

Preliminary notice is now given that next year's DINNER will again be held at the Imperial Hotel, 1st Avenue, Hove, on FRIDAY, 20th APRIL, 1990. Please note the date. Full details will be given in the March newsletter.

NEWS OF OV'S

Obituaries. We regret to announce the death of the following OV's: G.F.BALL (1929-35) in August 1988, who worked for Allen West on leaving School. He joined the R.E. at the outbreak of war but captured in May, 1940 and spent the war as a POW until freed by the Russians in February, 1945. He married in 1948; J.BEEDLE (1931-36) who died on April 6th 1989, had an outstanding career in aviation. Trained as an RAF aircraft apprentice, he served with 43 Squadron in the war and was mentioned in despatches at the Anzio beachhead. In peace time he worked as a development engineer for Bristol Siddeley Engines and Rolls Royce,

including the RR Olympus engine for Concorde. In Sussex he is best remembered as a founder and administrator of the Tangmere Military Aviation Museum which he expanded from one to the present three exhibition halls; J.N.F. BRADLEY (1925-30) in February last and so did not see the entry under his name in our March issue about his educational work; F.W. KEFFORD (1925-30) died suddenly on August 27th. He was a past President of the OVA and former Master of the In Deo Fidemus Lodge. His working life was in the Borough Treasurer's Office; R.W. SMITH (1930-33) died in July. We have also had news of the death of Mr. G.I. THOMAS. LRAM who was on the staff from 1938-46 in charge on Music. He left Varndean for Bognor Training College.

We send our sympathy to the bereaved wives and families.

Congratulations. Belated, but none the less hearty congratulations to Ken GUNNELL (1929-33) and his wife Jean, on conquering new worlds in the form of the DTI's qualifying exams as Marine Radio Officers. Because there is no convenient course centre in Cornwall the work had to be done on a DIY basis at home, which makes their success, in June, 1988, all the more praiseworthy;

To Peter PACKHAM (1946-54) on passing the final exam of the Institute of Actuaries last May (see below); To Dr. Douglas C. PITT (1954-61) who was reader in Administration at the University of Strathclyde and has been appointed Professor from 1st March, 1989; To Rev. Eric WOODS (1962-69) Vicar of Wroughton, nr. Swindon, on his appointment as Rural Dean in the summer of 1988. The delay in congratulations does not detract from their sincerity.

Felicitations to Crispin (1968-75) and Clementina ELEY on the birth of their son Pascual Daniel George on June 8th. Crispin has lived in California for several years now; To Geoffrey (1915-19) and Ethel VIRGO on their recent diamond wedding anniversary, we send especial congratulations.

NEWS OF OTHER MEMBERS

M.E. BERRY (1944-49) joined the Brighton branch of the Royal Insurance Group and by way of the City Head Office and the UK Head Office in Liverpool is now General Manager / Director. Julie Salmon, the young Sussex tennis player of Wimbledon, Whiteman Cup and Federation Cup fame, is his niece.

A.M. CLARKSON (1966-73) has recently moved to a new job as Assistant Director, Mergers and Acquisitions, Bank of Tokyo International. We wish him all success.

Canon R.F.S. EKE (1931-36) has returned to Brighton, attached in his retirement to the Church of the Good Shepherd in Dyke Road. He left Varndean with a Bursary in Theology to King's College, London and has had a varied career in the church, ranging from the London suburbs to Nevis in the West Indies and the Vicarage of St. Lawrence, Alton for the last seventeen years, where

he was also Rural Dean. He is chairman of the Diocesan Association. As a boy he moved around Sussex and must be unique in having won a scholarship to the rival institution in Dyke Road and come to Varndean via Lewes G.S. He became an Hon. Canon of Winchester in 1982 and is now Canon Emeritus.

T.J.S. ELEY (1974-80) has worked in Switzerland for a number of years but has now returned to Brighton and is considering a career in catering.

G. FALCONER (1960-67) took a degree at Manchester Poly and a Diploma in Management Studies and entered the computer industry. He held various positions with Plessey, Burroughs and Norsk Data Ltd. where he was UK Sales Manager, Strategy Manager and Director of software houses in Edinburgh, London and Aylesbury. He is now an independent consultant.

D.J. FENTON (1965-73) is Consumer Research Manager for Whitbread's and responsible for Market Research in various associated brands and companies. These busy activities do not prevent him playing regularly for a local Essex cricket club.

P.W. GOODMAN (1960-66) is Training Manager for Bristol Myers Pharmaceutical Ltd. He is now at their HQ near Uxbridge, which involves much mileage on the M25.

C. KNIGHT RWS ROI ATD (1913-18) is now in a nursing home in Hassocks. There is to be an Exhibition of selected works from his studio at the Ditchling Gallery from September 23rd to October 14th.

M.K. LEE (1971-78) has recently been appointed to the firm of Freeth, Cartwright, Nottingham solicitors. We wish him well.

P.J. PACKHAM (1946-54) is still with NEL Britannia in Dorking having survived take-over re-organisation. He leads the NEL Christian Fellowship and his four children are spread between post-graduate and GCSE stages, with a distinct musical bias.

M.P. POWELL (1951-57) left School to work for a few years with the music publishers Novello & Co. National Service in the Pay Corps became 22 years service. He is now in the Colonial Mutual Group as a financial consultant. He sends good wishes to all his old friends.

G.A. RAWLINSON (1966-74) claims, with good reason, to hold the record for the highest place on Earth reached by any OV. He spent a month trekking to the base camp, over 17,000 feet high, of K2 the second highest mountain. Well done that man!

R.J. SKILTON (1967-74) is Assistant Manager of the Nat West bank's Burgess Hill branch.

P. WHEELER (1965-70) went into the printing trade as a compositor on leaving School but was a victim of computerisation in 1983. He then went into the Post Office and from postman is now Acting Postal Executive in Lewes sorting office.

R. YOUNG (1945-52) worked for Babcock's in Rochdale but the firm moved to Ashford in 1987 and was taken over by FKI. As a result of re-organisation he is now at the helm of a new company, BWE Ltd., making and exporting extrusion machinery and cold welding

machines, which means a good deal of world travel, much of it in the Far East.

RECENT NEW MEMBERS

M.E. BERRY (1944-49) P.I. FRANCIS (1969-77)
 Canon R.F.S. EKE (1931-36) C.V. PITT (1953-58)
 G. FALCONER (1960-67) R.M. RYMAN (1965-72)
 P. WHEELER (1965-70)

THE CRICKET CLUB

The Club has nearly completed a happy and reasonably successful season under the captaincy of Richard POUNTNEY (1966-73). The first game at Rudgwick was cancelled because of bad weather and with games at Waldron and Turner's Hill to come the Club's score is Won 9, Drawn 4 and Lost 4. Both Bank Holiday matches were cancelled. Once again the Club had had to rely on many "Guest Players" to complete the team, 18 having made 70 appearances as against 18 OV's making 114. Three played only in the annual College match. We hope that in 1990 more OV cricketers will play for the Club and we ask students leaving College as well as others for their support. Please contact, Graham OSBORNE (1966-75). Once again we express our warm thanks to our President, Cyril SHELLEY (1916-20) for acting as scorer.

The Annual Match with the College was played on July 4th, on a sunny day but with an increasing wind. The Club was in good form and Neil MARCHANT's (1978-84) 117 greatly contributed to their declaration at 300 for 7. The final result was never really in doubt and Guy BAIGENT's (1965-72) bowling - 4 for 27 - seemed to hasten the inevitable end. However Alex HISLOP's 45 and Niall SMITH's 25, in a last wicket College partnership revived interest and the total had reached a respectable 205 before Hislop's wicket fell. All in all a good day's cricket.

A few welcome OV's did come to see the game, but it was a pity there were not more, especially from the ranks of those who have retired.

THE FOOTBALL CLUB

Both teams had a happy but somewhat disappointing 1988-9 season, finishing about halfway in their respective divisions of the Brighton league. The First XI unfortunately lost 2-1 to Lancing in the semi-final of the Wentworth Cup, which they had high hopes of winning. Training facilities have been very difficult to obtain and this did not help. Perhaps the College can do something. The Club would welcome supporters, and anyone interested in playing should apply to the Hon. Secretary, George M. WHEELER (1951-54).

IN DEO FIDEMUS LODGE

Our Senior Vice-President, Don OSBORNE (1944-52) is currently Worshipful Master. There was a good attendance at the April meeting at Varndean. Ladies' Night will be held at The Old Ship on Saturday, October 21st. Past students wishing to know more about the Lodge are invited to contact the Lodge Secretary Ray DODD (1951-56). We regret to record in our obituary the death of Frank KEFFORD (1925-30), a Past Master of the Lodge, on August 27th.

WHAT'S YOUR VINTAGE?

This issue features the 1960's

Williams, A.E .	1960-62	Clarkson, A.M.	1966-73
Patterson, G.I:	1960-64	Colley, N.V.	1966-73
Wort, G.T.	1960-64	Creed, R.J.	1966-73
Haines, B.L.	1960-65	Eppel, J.B .	1966-73
Dartnell, M.H.	1960-66	Fenton, A.R.	1966-73
Goodman, P.W.	1960-66	Heather, M.T.	1966-73
Newman, C.J.	1960-66	Leggett, N.T.	1966-73
Andrew, R.	1960-67	McKay, C.N.	1966-73
Emery, O.	1960-67	Nutley, P.G.	1966-73
Falconer, G.	1960-67	Osborne, G.N.	1966-73
Robinson, P.J.	1960-67	Pountney, R.J.	1966-73
Trott, P.M.	1960-67	Tullett, P.J.	1966-73
Yates, D.R.	1960-68	Webb, P.G.	1966-73
Phillips, Dr. R.P.	1961-67	Rawlinson, G.A.	1966-74
Smith, C.A.	1961-67	Brown, A.J.	1967-72
Allen, S.M.	1961-68	Forster, J.F.S.	1967-72
English, B.G.	1961-68	Hart, P.	1967-72
Godden, B.J.	1961-68	Niblett, A.I.	1967-72
Robertson, A.J.	1962-65	Bullivant, C.N.	1967-74
Covey, D.G.	1962-67	Ewens, S.M.	1967-74
Syms, C.J.	1962-68	Homewood, G.J.	1967-74
Webb, D.C.	1962-68	Oliver-Minos, P.J.	1967-74
Birch, D.E.	1962-69	Reynolds, T.M.	1967-74
Farley, N.R.	1962-69	Skilton, R.J.	1967-74
Latham, A.L.	1962-69	Slade, C.T.	1967-74
Leggett, P.D.	1962-69	Stockham, B.D.	1967-74
Woods, Rev. E.J.	1962-69	Young, R.E.	1967-74
Burrough, P.D.	1963-68	Button, K.E.	1967-75
Adams, G.R.	1963-69	Muspratt, G.E.A.	1968-73
Shields, R.C.	1963-69	Pook, G.	1968-73
Winton, R.E .	1963-69	Ragbourne, P.A.	1968-73
Massey, M.	1963-70	Balchin, M.N.	1968-74
Smith R.A.	1963-70	Dunkerley, S.M.	1968-74
Head, Dr. A.C.	1963-71	Hughes, L.K.	1968-74
Yates, T.R.	1963-71	Ashcroft, D.G.H.	1968-75
Bailey, J.D.	1964-68	Baigent, M.W.	1968-75
Carden, D.A.	1964-69	Butler, R.D.L.	1968-75
Bintliffe, C.R. .	1964-70	Childs, G.R.	1968-75
Brown, C.D.	1964-71	Dawtre, G.K.	1968-75
English, C.N.	1964-71	Fowler, M.P.	1968-75
Hobden, A.N.	1964-71	Goodwin, P.	1968-75
John, S.A.	1964-71	Jasper, K.R.	1968-75
Owen, S.J.	1964-71	Lillywhite, S.P.	1968-75
Watts, S.A.	1964-71	Meeres, K.	1968-75
Wiltshire, G.J.	1964-71	O'Neill, M.J.	1968-75
Fryer, B.	1965-70	Page, M.S.	1968-75
Trangmar, J.E.	1965-70	Smart, D.C.	1968-75
Wheeler, P.	1965-70	Tessier, G.R.	1968-75
Ascough, J.M.	1965-72	Tobin, S.N.	1968-75
Baigent, G.H.	1965-72	Dwyer, A.P.	1968-76
Bennett, M.J.	1965-72	Crowdy, P.	1969-71
Clamp, G.J.	1965-72	Holden, N.	1969-71
Donno, K.A.	1965-72	Kearsley-Brown, P.R.	1969-71
Goodacre, R.N.	1965-72	Kirby, T.C.	1969-75
Lee, P.G.	1965-72	Dry, R.D.	1969-76
Osborne, M.D.	1965-72	Gill, S.W.	1969-76
Ryman, R.N.	1965-72	Haslam, Dr. N.P.	1969-76
Silvester, K.C.	1965-72	Heft, A.P.	1969-76
Bolton, P.J.	1965-73	Kirkham, S.P.J.	1969-76
Fenton, D.J.	1965-73	Tunbridge, C.J.	1969-76
Stringer, G.W.P.	1965-73	Watson, T.	1969-76
Clarke, P.H.	1966-70	Willis, M.J.	1969-76
Cozens, G.H.	1966-71	Winnard, S.J.	1969-76
Fill, M.S.	1966-71	Baker, N.R.	1969-77
Hall, J.R.	1966-71	Francis, P.I.	1969-77
Bowles, N.P.	1966-73	Rawlinson, P.A.	1969-77

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Hon. Treasurer is still wrestling with the tail-enders – to mix a metaphor – whose Banker's Orders are not up to date with the present subscription of £2 per annum due on April 1st last. Please check that you are not guilty. Many have changed to Life Membership at £15 which certainly solves any present or future payment problems. If members make changes to their methods of payment or Banker's Orders will they please tell the Hon. Treasurer so that he can keep his records accurate.

OVA TIES

Available from A.H. ALLT, price £3.50.

COLLEGE NEWS

It was just on a century ago that the original York Place School became too small for its intake. Varndean is now in a like case and much practical adaptation is needed to accommodate the 600 or so students due this term and the 9 new staff to teach them the extended curriculum. Under the new Education Act the Principal has greater responsibility for the finance and equipment of the College, and sponsorship is expected to provide much of this. The Alliance & Leicester has given the Business Studies room; the Parents' Association raised £500 by an Auction of Promises and the OVA Council voted an initial £700 towards topping up the LEA grant for a new pottery kiln, for which Mr. Jenkins has asked that his warm thanks to members be expressed. The work of the Governors has considerably increased and sub-committees have been set up to deal with the various aspects of it. OV's may rest content that the Honours Boards will survive the new-look lobby and refectory, but not necessarily in the same position. But the Houses, having died these 20 years, will remain enshrined only in the hearts of the faithful.

Prize-giving took place on April 11th, when Mr. Turner did the honours, this time as a guest. The simultaneous Art Exhibition was again an outstanding achievement. Academically, the College flourishes: it has been the best year for exam results, with 82% passing at 'A' Level and 60% in GCSE, both well above the national average. Six students go to Cambridge in October. Three members of staff who have retired this summer are: Mr. E.A. Griffith, the Head of Modern Languages, who came in 1964 and has thus seen 25 years service here; Mrs. M. Bunting who has taught Mathematics for 14 years at Varndean and Dr. A. Weir, who came to us from Sussex University in 1982 to teach Physics.

The College did well in the Brighton, Hove and Portslade Athletic Sports, the Boys coming third and the Girls second. The Cricket XI had a good season largely thanks to the batting of Eddie SANDRY and Nick THORNELEY and the steady bowling of James TAYLOR. But as is described elsewhere, the OV XI

proved too much for them. Results: Played 13, Won 5, Drawn 3, Lost 5.

Preliminary notice is now given that the College Play is to be Ben Jonson's "Volpone", performed on December 7-9th inclusive. Tickets obtainable at the office. Do give it your support when the time comes.

The original issue of this newsletter was prepared by A.H. Allt, of Varndean College, Brighton.
This Archive Edition was prepared and edited by Ron McLaren
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