



Old Varndeanian

IN DEO FIDEMUS

MARCH 1996

WHERE ARE THEY?

The Varndean Millennium Project

A Who's Who of Pupils and Staff

About 14,000 people went to York Place and Varndean. Thousands are still out there in the wide world ... in all walks of life ... from Brighton to Bangkok ... wherever they are, whatever they are doing, we want to find them!



Jim Franks

Jim Franks (1938/44) is leading a working party to carry out this ambitious project. The objective is nothing less than to track down all former pupils and staff. The team's starting point is the County Records Office in Lewes, which contains all the records of admission from 1884 until 1975. That gives a set of names and dates, but Jim and his group want more than that. The idea is to find out where all those people are and what they have been doing with their lives.

We hope to get support and funding from various sources: a Who's Who of Varndean will be a significant social document, describing the achievements of up to 14,000 people who attended the same school over a period of 91 years. The first step is to find them. That will be quite an exercise, possibly lasting until the year 2000. To do this, the Varndean Millennium team plans to use the press, radio stations, TV, magazines, and, of course, **YOU**.

This newsletter comes to you with copies of a form. Do you know Old Varndeanians who don't read the newsletter? If so, we would like you to send them copies of the form, asking them to return their completed copies to the Millennium team. This is not a recruiting drive for new members: we are trying to assemble a unique record, of which all former pupils and staff can be a part. You will find full details on page 2 of this issue of *The Old Varndeanian*.

Please read on: you can contribute to **The Old Varndeanians (1884 - 1975) - a Who's Who of Pupils and Staff**.



THE OLD VARNDEANIANS (1884 - 1975)

Jim Franks writes ...

Since the first mention of the Who's Who in Autumn 1995, much progress has been made. Several members of the OVA are already actively involved in collecting and recording entries for the Who's Who. Now we are preparing for the media launch outlined below. But first to essentials - collecting the particulars to enter in the Who's Who.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY ARE? WE NEED YOUR HELP

The Who's Who is **OUR** project: it needs the help of all members. We need you to complete one of the forms which comes with this newsletter and pass all the others to OVs who are not members of the OVA. Each one can complete a form and return it to you or to me. Our second hope (this project is steeped in hope) is that you and your friends know the whereabouts of at least four other OVs, or that you will complete a form for deceased OVs. Quite a number of OVs are no longer with us: we must be into the "fourth generation" by now. If your contacts are interested in membership, please ask them to contact Derek Ashcroft, the OVA Secretary.

If each of you found four contacts who completed the form we would locate 2,400 people. - a goodly number of entries. If the 2,400 ... A geometric progression! I haven't calculated one since leaving Varndean.

THE FORM

We have done our best with the form, but the perfect one has yet to be invented. One OV wrote "watch this space" under heading 6: we can take updates later.

Please complete the form as best you can and return it to the address at the foot of the page. If heading 5 presents difficulty leave it blank and come back when inspiration flashes, or whatever your inspiration does. Tony Paine, who puts the data on to computer, is not too bothered about how you complete your form.

Also, if you will help with organising the network or by undertaking a specific job, please contact me. There is plenty to do!

THE MEDIA LAUNCH

To locate "lost" OVs we are going to the media. Thanks to Alan Jenkins, the Principal of Varndean College, we have access to the media in the Sussex area but we would welcome help elsewhere. Would you write to your local press? Get a mention on local radio? Vernon Hopwood is looking after The Times and The Telegraph. The inset "Media Message" explains our purpose. This is not just about the great and good: we are after a broad picture of all alumni and staff. If you can help in any way, please contact me.

THE SECOND STAGE

Collecting the data will take three or four years. During that time we must decide whether to publish the information or simply to keep it as an archive.

Then we can start Stage 2 which will "explore the collective contribution of Old Varndeanians to society, industry, commerce, the professions, et al in the context of the school's foundation". Roger Holman understands the research methodology (one of his books is on the subject) and has contacts to help expedite the necessary analysis.

Media Message

The Old Varndeanian Association is compiling a Who's (Was) Who of pupils and staff, living and dead, undistinguished and distinguished, at home and abroad, who were at the school between 1884 when it was founded and 1975 when it ceased to be a Grammar School. Former pupils, staff and people with knowledge of them are invited to record particulars for an entry in the Who's Who.

OVER TO YOU

Keith Elliott, OVA President, is seeking National Lottery funds for publication. That's going to be quite a task. You should see *their* forms!

That is it. OVA Council believes we have the makings of a work which will complement Onward & Upward, providing a unique record of a unique school which has a worthy successor in Varndean College.

Please send your completed form to me...

Jim Franks

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 93rd AGM was held at the College on 2nd November. There had been four Council Meetings in 1995 - on January 24th, March 21st, July 6th and October 12th.

The council acknowledged the contributions made by Cyril Shelley and Eric Reeves. Cyril was Mr O.V.A. and Eric endeared himself to us all: his work as Editor of the Newsletter was first class. They will be sadly missed.

Although we have had a steady stream of OV's joining us, it was felt that we should forge a closer association with the College if our association is to thrive.

Some discussion took place about this. The sad deaths of several members during 1995 remind us that there is not an on-going supply of new members. It was agreed that efforts should be made to find new ways of working with the current student body of Varndean College.

Finances are in a healthy state: income exceeded expenditure by £1,623, thanks to a steady increase in membership, sales of **Onward and Upward** and the purchase of the Varndean house insignia by **Keith Bankes (1955/60)**. We enter the new year with a balance of £5,111, and with £964 in the Samaritan's Fund. This has not been drawn upon but it is there to help OV's who may be in need.

The 1995 Dinner was a great success (in spite of the speaker). We have decided to go back to the Brighton Thistle again in 1996. (See the display on page 3.)

Finally, new Council members are always welcome. Note that the Hon Treasurer and Hon Secretary would like to relinquish their posts at the end of this year. We need volunteers.

ONWARD AND UPWARD

The History of the School, from the founding of York Place in 1884 to the final year of Varndean Grammar School in 1975, has been a very successful book. Written by Tony Allt and Brian Robson, and with a foreword by Paul Scofield, the book is still available from Derek Ashcroft.

KEEP THE STAMPS COMING

Sincere thanks to all those Old Varndeanians who have helped charity by sending used postage stamps to Derek Ashcroft over the last year. The stamps are sold in aid of Hamilton House, the local centre for those with cerebral palsy.

Please keep the stamps coming.

COLLEGE NEWS

Varndean College has had an excellent year. The School Inspectors praised the standard of teaching, the courses available, the guidance given to students and the management of the school.

A-level results underlined this: with 89% passes Varndean is 5% above the national average. **Varndean College Exclusive**, the College's very professional newsletter, shows a great range of social and cultural activities, with close links to other schools in the Brighton area.

College Principal, Alan Jenkins writes ...

We are very pleased that Oxford and Cambridge have recognised the qualities of our students and have made offers to thirteen of the many who will go to University this year. My colleagues have worked hard and will continue to do so for all our students.

Looking ahead, the drama and dance programme looks excellent, including: Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, directed by Paul Skinner (March 27th-29th in the Scofield Studio at the College); *Footsteps* (April 29th), a showcase for the dance students, who incidentally hosted dancers from the Ukraine in February prior to a return visit in the summer; Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, directed by Sean McEvoy is in the studio (May 1st, 2nd, 7th, 9th and 10th), in repertory with; *Cross Purpose* by Albert Camus (April 30th, May 3rd, 8th), directed by student Jamie Martin who's awaiting the outcome of drama school auditions.

All of these start at 7.30 pm. Tickets are on sale a fortnight before each event from the College office.

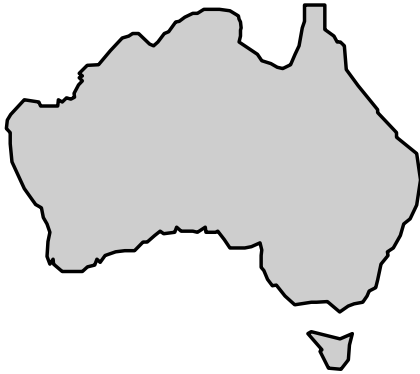
Derek Ashcroft continues to do sterling work as a College Governor, providing a helpful link with the OVA and with his many other areas of interest.

In February we elected a new Chairman of Governors, Graham Spicer (1969/75), who is also a parent of one former and two prospective students. Since 1983 Graham has been Managing Director of his own company, Application Consulting Group, which has gone from strength to strength. Graham also finds time for work as a high-level information technology consultant. At the College we look forward to working with Graham - and to his membership of the OVA?

Are you interested in becoming a Governor? Can you make a commitment to lend expertise - legal, financial, premises, personnel or even educational? There are vacancies from time to time, so please contact me at the college if you are ready, willing and able.

Alan Jenkins

MORE NEWS FROM DOWN UNDER



We have heard from **Brian Tulley (1950-1954)** who has recently had a visit from **Mike Watkins (same vintage)**. Mike was very interested in the report in the October *Old Vardeanian*. It referred to the Queensland Chapter of the OV's as the XXXX branch. Mike thought this highly appropriate.¹

Mike visited Australia while on National Service in the Royal Navy, then emigrated in 1962. After a career in sales with the Nestlé company, he retired in 1992 and has moved from Brisbane to a delightful spot a few miles up the Sunshine Coast.

Brian reports that he has visited Queensland himself and expects a growing number of entrants to the XXXX Branch.

Mike remembers Roy Daughtree and Peter Clark, and would like to hear from any others who recognise his name.

Peter Arthur Thomas Clark (1954/58) is also living in Australia. Peter Joined the RAAF in 1960 as an engineering apprentice. He left in 1968, then got a Certificate of Mechanical Engineering in New South Wales in 1974. He has since worked in industrial sales for two multinational engineering companies in Newcastle NSW, Sydney and (since 1977) in Brisbane. Peter is married with three children. He visited the school in 1993.

... AND NEW ZEALAND

Roger Barnard writes to tell us that he is moving to New Zealand. The Hon Sec has put him in touch with R.L.Perry (Auckland) and D.R.Yates (Marton). Do those names ring any bells?

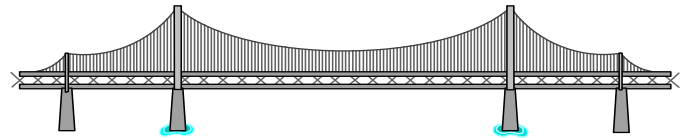
MEANWHILE, IN BARNES...

Robert Jolliffe (1973-1979) is living within walking distance of the boat race. He works in the City as a

¹ *Aussie beer is good on a hot day, but I suggest you try the wine. Get a bottle of McLaren Vale down you! Mac.*

Banker, having spent three years at Oxford studying modern history.

EDMUND JUPP



Edmund W Jupp has written to say that he is involved in Civil Engineering at Exeter University. He has a particular interest in bridges and has even published some information on the Internet. If you know what that means and understand the jargon, you can find his fascinating guide to types of bridge construction at this World Wide Web address: <http://dcs.ex.ac.uk/~masoud/yazdani/projects/bridges/bridges.htm>

KEN GUNNELL - ANOTHER BOOK

Old Vardeanian Ken Gunnell (1929/33) has his third book in print. With the chatty title of *Lethal Maiden*, it is an unusual tale - once one gets into it - set to a large extent in Brighton and France at the outbreak of the Second World War. It tells of a youthful romance disturbed by the hostilities and leads to a curious murder - with a slight difference. Ken intrigues the reader with his knowledge of Intelligence life in the Army (together with the red tape involved) and his representation of the sexes. His males are subservient while his females are very strong and dominating. There is a touch of Patrick Hamilton about Ken's style: wordy without being boring, laced with a trace of simplicity and spice. If you can breach the opening, this is a fascinating read and recommended to most Modern Fiction buffs. Do not be put off by the cover.

Lethal Maiden by Ken Gunnell © and (P) 1996. Published at £4.99 in softback by New Millennium, 310 Kennington Road, London, SE11 4LD

Terence Langley

PHILIP LEGGETT

Philip Leggett (1962/69) receives our congratulations, having been appointed Chief Officer of Planning and Development for South Northamptonshire.

1954-1961 BRIGADE

Your Editor has had contact or information in recent years with a few people of this vintage. Peter Ridgewell is living in Iceland: he is a Professor of English at the University of Reykjavik. David Schärer is now living in Cheshire. Peter James was in Papua New Guinea a couple of years ago. Bob Parry is at Reading University. [See also "OV Irregulars"]

ADDRESSES

Andrew L.S. and Pat Mills have written to say that they have moved from Wish Road, Hove to Seaton Carew, near Hartlepool. Andrew (1957/63) is Head of Risk Management at Hartlepool and Peterlee Hospitals NHS Trust.

M. Collins (1975/78) has moved from Southiam Road, Portslade to Trumansburg, New York.

John Patrick Beavis (1951/59) has been in touch to let us know that he is living in Rochester, Kent. John is a surgeon.

A. M. Clarkson (1963/73) has moved from Diss in Norfolk to Chelsea. [I wonder if he had any contact with Peter Knight, who taught physics at Varndean and left to go to the Grammar School in Diss? Ed]

K. W. Wotherspoon, who used to live in Oaklands Avenue, Saltdean, has moved to Surlingham, Norwich.

THANKS FROM IRIS REEVES

Iris Reeves has written to thank all those who expressed their sympathy at Eric's death. Iris, Valerie and Colin were overwhelmed by the kind expressions of so many Old Varndeanians. The British Diabetic Association and St Catherine's Hospice benefited by £972 as a result of the generous donations to Eric's memory.

IN DEO FIDEMUS LODGE

The Lodge was founded in 1919, with membership originally restricted to past pupils and staff. With the advent of the co-educational College this rule was relaxed, but Old Varndeanians still constitute over half the current membership of about sixty.

The present Master is Ian Smith (an Old Grammarian!) and we have recently welcomed a new member, Ken Dewhirst, who was in Chris Strick's class in 1944.

Enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, Don Osborne.

OBITUARIES

David Saunders (- 1949) died in November. His death was reported in Design Week, because David had made a substantial impact in the world of design, being responsible, among other things, for the interiors of the Triumph Herald and the Triumph Spitfire.

Frederick James Taylor Page MBE B.Sc. died in Hospital on November 9th. Frederick was 86 years old and had been living in Penrith. He was a dynamic personality who will be remembered as a superb teacher - always full of energy and ideas.

William Gerald Harper died in Edinburgh on 14th September 1995. Born on 22nd December 1915, he joined the Meteorological Office soon after graduating from Imperial College, London. His late brother Stanley, another OV, also studied there. William served in Bermuda during the war, then remained in the Met. Office for the rest of his career, during which he had postings to Shetland, England, Aden and Germany. He retired in 1977, then devoting much of his time to ornithology: he was Librarian of the Scottish Ornithologists Club for 18 years.

Mary Allt. With great regret we have to tell you of the death of Mary Allt, widow of Tony Allt, who played such a great part in our activities in post-war years. Mary will be remembered as a teacher at Varndean and as a very welcoming hostess to those OVs who called at Friar Road. Many members of both School and College paid their respects at her funeral in January.

Cath Symes. Friends of both Len and Peter Symes will be sad to hear of the death of Cath, Len's wife and Peter's mother, who died on New Year's Eve after a long illness. Varndean was represented at her funeral.

W (Bill) Sladen, not a member of the OVA, but well-known to many in this area, died of cancer on 20th November.

Dr Barrie Denis Simmons (1963-70) died suddenly on 27th November, aged 43; he was formerly director of W. E. Baxter of Lewes.

Laurie H. Jones (1910/14) died on November 19th, aged 96. Laurie was formerly with Greater London Council and was our oldest member.

R. W. Towner (1933/40) died in May 1995. We heard this from his widow, just too late to include it in the last newsletter.

DON'T MISS THE GALA DINNER!



LAST YEAR'S NEW-STYLE DINNER WAS A GREAT SUCCESS

140 people turned out for the best dinner in many years. Old friendships were renewed and new ones struck up. Many people remained until the function bar closed at midnight. Some of those staying at the hotel repaired to the main bar for a night-cap (by 4 am it was more of a dawn-cap!!).

This year we are going to do even better!

We have decided to return to the Brighton Thistle: the food is good and the hotel is very convenient for parking and taxis. We will have an additional cheese course whilst keeping the same ticket price of £19.50.

Special Offer

A free ticket to anyone organising a table for 10 or more.

Bring more friends

Please think of any Old Varndeanians who were not there last year and persuade them to come. I'm sure we all know some, whether they are OVA members or not. It was a splendid event with 140 people - just imagine how it would be with 200!

Stay the Night!



We have arranged a special room rate for those of you who are going to stay: £80 for a double and £60 for a single, including full breakfast.

Raffle - Bring a prize



To add to the fun we are going to have a raffle with lots of prizes. **So please bring a prize!** What sort of prize? Well, the sort of thing *you* would like to win as a raffle prize of course!

Send off the enclosed form now.

Don't forget to bring a raffle prize

See you there!

Brighton Thistle Hotel

Friday 26th April

7.15 for 8 pm

NatWest Jazz Band



The NatWest Jazz band will be giving a concert at Varndean College on Saturday 28th September to raise funds for Coppercliff Hospice, Brighton.

Led by Old Varndeanian Stephen Davies, the band, now in its 19th year, travels extensively up and down the country and abroad. It undertakes many promotional activities on behalf of the bank as well as a considerable number of charity performances.

This concert marks Stephen's return to the stage where, more than 40 years ago, he first introduced jazz into the school annual music festival. He hopes that Old Varndeanians will support this concert for such a worthy cause.

Tickets priced at £5 can be purchased in advance from Coppercliff Hospice Fund Raising Co-ordinator Peter Field, from Coppercliff Charity Shops, Brighton, or from Varndean College.

If you need a jazz band, contact Stephen J Davies

OV IRREGULARS

This informal group (not all members of the OVA) is apt to meet for a dinner in Brighton shortly before Christmas. Their vintages tend to be late 1950s and just into the 1960s. This year the jamboree was held at the Gastronomer in Hampton Place, Brighton.

We had a splendid meal, let off our party poppers, and talked for hours. At the end there were thanks for the organisers and special thanks and a present for the hard-working Carol O'Connor (Carol was at Varndean Grammar School for Girls).

The irregulars present included Paul & Lya Bristoll (Netherlands), Tony & Pam Dale (Oxford), Pat Dale (Brighton), Robert & Janet Ducharme (Houston), Patricia & Peter Fagiano (Burgess Hill), Ron & Hilary Fowler (Brighton), Doug & Diane Hillman (Hove), Mike & Peggy McKenzie (Cross in Hand), Ron McLaren

(Wokingham), Carol & Frank O'Connor (Brighton), Bill Smith & Jos Borgholz (Hove), Maggie William (Brighton), John & Jane Wills (Bexley), John & Monika Woode (Brighton).

Do you remember any of these OV's?

If you played football you may well remember Bill Smith, a highly effective defender and Paul Bristoll, our ace centre forward. Peter Fagiano also has a claim to footballing fame. During a school game - possibly a house match - he was involved in a tackle with your editor, as a result of which Peter fell, injuring his arm. He played for the rest of the match, but then admitted that his arm was broken and went off to have it seen to.

Are there other Irregular groups out there? Would they like to be members? We would certainly like to hear about them. Let us know.

THE K IN TAYLOR ...



Do you remember the late Russell Taylor (R.W.K.Taylor) who taught music at Varndean from 1948? A correspondent asked in a recent newsletter what the K stood for. John Clapperton who lives in Edinburgh has cleared this up for us. Russell's entry in the Musical Who's Who (1937) is as follows.

RUSSELL WILLIAM KENNARD TAYLOR FRCO

b. Dulwich 1904 educ E.T.Cook (Southwark Cathedral). Posts: Sub-organist Southwark '24-'34; St Luke's Ch. Kew '32-; Dulwich College Prep School '28-; Dulwich College '35-. Recreations: Gardening, Golf, Motoring.

About 1939 to 1940 he taught at Sherborne School, coming to Varndean in 1948.

FIRST DAY AT VARNDEAN

Terence Langley has sent his reminiscences of "Getting to grips with Varndean" which I plan to use in a future newsletter. This could be a theme which many of you will relate to.

Do you have any particular memories of those first few days? I would like to hear about them.

Editor

OLD VARNDEANIANS FOOTBALL CLUB

This season has seen further improvements from both teams. By mid-February the First team was fifth in Brighton League Premier Division with seven matches left to play and games in hand. We are also in the semi-finals of both the President's and College Cups.



Not to be outdone, the Reserve team is currently third in Division Four with four matches left to play. The Reserves are also in the quarter-finals of the Coronation Cup and the semi-finals of the Gentry Bowl.

The most noteworthy victory so far has been the Reserves' 19-1 romp against Brighton Sports Reserves in Division Four. Centre-forward Bryn Dingwall took 11 goals on that occasion. Is this a goal-scoring record for the club? Perhaps newsletter readers know. Those eleven goals took Bryn's tally this season to 27 - an average of nearly two goals per game.

Strong as we are, there is always room for new players. We offer excellent playing and social facilities at Coral Sports and Leisure Club at Hove, while the training facilities at Portslade Sports centre are equally impressive. If you would like to join, contact me and I will be pleased to supply further details.

Norman Wright Hon Sec OVFC

OLD VARNDEANIANS CRICKET CLUB

The 1995 season yielded mixed results: the weather claimed four wins, the club three, the opposition one, the remaining seven matches being drawn.



Veteran John Moore had another outstanding season, topping both the batting (77.30) and bowling (8.30) statistics.

Bruce Fryer received two Centurion ties for excellent knocks versus Brighton & Hove Crescent and Rudgwick, the former being in an unbeaten opening partnership of 195 with John Moore.

Guy Baigent was the only bowler to take five wickets in an innings - in a rain-affected match against W.G.Gracefully. Guy also achieved the distinction of robbing Adrian Heft of a maiden half century by running him out for 31 against Milland, while acting as his runner!

Most of our matches are played in very attractive country settings: cricket as it was meant to be. If you would like to take part, please call Guy Baigent or John Moore.

Guy Baigent

HELLO FROM YOUR NEW EDITOR

Let me introduce myself: **Ron McLaren, 1954-1961**. It is a pleasure to be your new Newsletter Editor.

My aim is to follow Eric Reeve's example by bringing you an interesting newsletter which will help you keep in touch with what is going on in the world of Old Varndeanians.

Contributions, compliments and complaints are all equally welcome, though contributions are probably more equal than the others. Please let me know about anything interesting, even if it is simply renewed contact with an OV. You can get in touch with me by phone (you'll find that easier in the evenings), post or E-Mail.

Please get those pens and telephones working!

Ron McLaren



This newsletter was compiled, edited and typeset by Ron McLaren, and was printed by K P Litho Ltd, 38 Gloucester Road, Brighton, BN1 4AQ for The Old Varndeanians Association. Secretary: Derek Ashcroft