



Old Varndeanian

IN DEO FIDEMUS

MARCH 1997

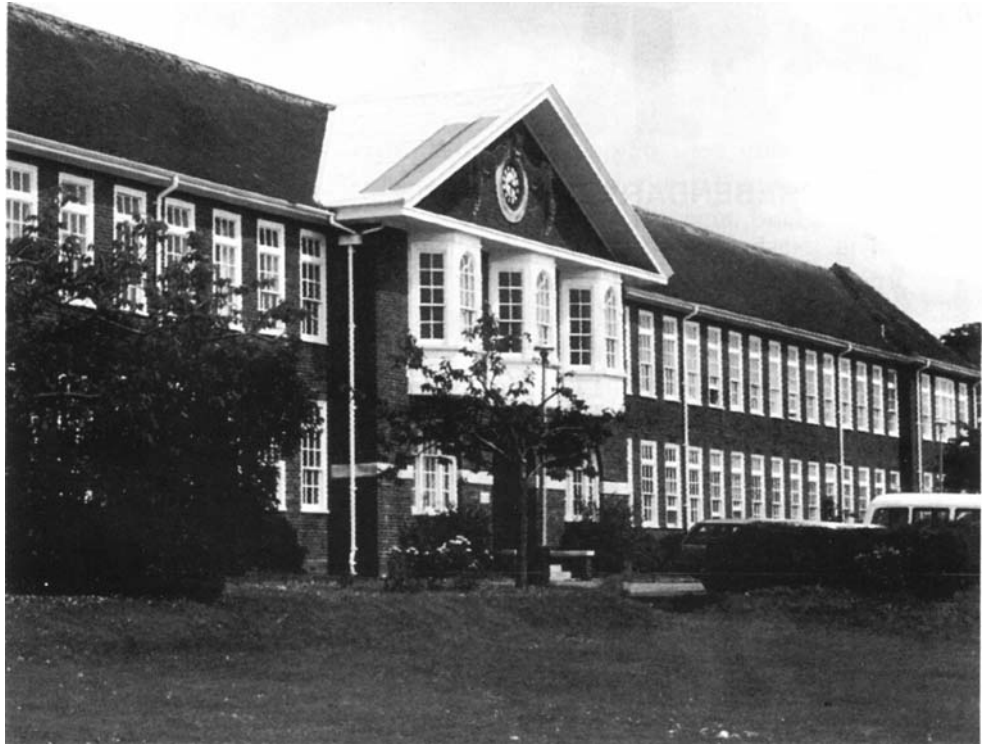
FUNDING ROW OVER VARNDEAN

A funding crisis is threatening Varndean, according to Alan Jenkins, the College Principal. He points to efficiency gains of 24% in the last three years. Student rolls have grown by 30%, while staffing has increased by only 2%. Quality has been maintained and the curriculum has been diversified. Now, he feels, the fat has all been cut away and there is a real threat of damage.

The “fixed” element of College funding from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) reduces progressively by 10% per annum. The increasingly important “marginal” element is based on a formula which calculates “units” from the numbers of students and courses. A proportion of these units are funded at £16.40 each. The College Board have been told that the rate per unit is to be reduced to £12.90.

A third, “demand-led” element has allowed colleges to gain funding for units not covered by the marginal fund. This funding, at £6.50 per unit, is to be withdrawn, costing Varndean £50,000 a year.

Asked about the impact of all this, Alan said: “This could lead to cutting students’ access to staff by increasing group sizes; cutting the range of courses,



including higher-cost courses, such as those for students with special needs; cutting improvements in premises; cutting into staff goodwill, by asking them to do more for less; cutting into the very principle of free education by making students pay significant registration charges.”

He then issued an appeal to Old Varndeanians. “If you would like to join us in lobbying against this, please write to your MP. If you can exert more direct political influence, please do so. Contact me for more information.”

Don't miss the Old Varndeanians'

GALA REUNION DINNER

In The Brighton Thistle Hotel - Renaissance Ballroom.
Details are on the invitation enclosed with this edition.

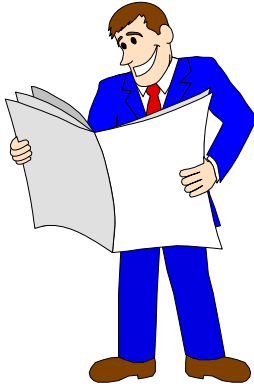
Book now

Friday 25th April 1997

7.15 for 8.00



NEWS OF OLD VARNDEANIANS



PETER S. SHARPE QPM

Peter is Chief Constable of Hertfordshire, having been appointed on 1st August 1994. He lives in Welwyn Garden City, and has been in touch with the Hon Secretary (*or should that be Home Secretary?*) to say how much he enjoys reading *Old Varndeanian*, and to send his best wishes.

Peter was a noted cricketer. I remember, as captain of Nichols cricket team, standing on the steps of Big Field with Peter, the padded-up number 3 batsman, watching our two openers (Dennis Wears and Tony Dale) destroy Hacks in the final. We won by ten wickets: Peter didn't get a bat. [Mac]

REVD. PREBENDARY DAVID NASH

David Nash (1953-61) was installed as a prebendary of St Paul's Cathedral last June 2nd. Roughly the Church's equivalent of OBE, this was in recognition of nearly thirty years of ministry, mostly exercised in the London Diocese. He occupies a prebendal stall which is his whenever he goes to a service in the Cathedral.

He is required to preach once a year in the Cathedral, and to say Psalms 22-26 every day. There are thirty prebendaries and they are required to say all 150 Psalms every day. To be chosen for this honour, out of over 400 clergy in London, was a great thrill for David and his family.

ANON JOINS THE OV's !

The wife of an OV who is approaching his 50th birthday is putting together a "This is Your Life" for him. This includes information assembled by Derek Ashcroft, membership, tie, book and photo.

Welcome to the OVA, whoever you are.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome some new members to the OVA. Michael F.G. Williams (1953-58) is a company director and is living in Anchorage, Alaska; he has joined as a life member. Also joining as a life member is Brian Lock (1947-53) who lives at Cheam, Surrey. John Stewart Foster (1966-72), who is a Chartered Accountant, has re-joined.

OLD VARNDEANIAN OFFICERS

President: Keith Elliott

Hon Secretary: Derek Ashcroft

Editor: Ron McLaren

Millennium Project: Jim Franks

Football: Norman Wright

Cricket: Guy Baigent

FAMOUS OV NAMES COMPETITION



Willie Carson
Desmond Lynam
William Pitt

Norman Conquest
George Sanders
Harold Macmillan
George Marshall

John Lewis
Arthur Miller
Dick Whittington



These are some of the famous names Roy Daughtree has unearthed from the vaults of York Place and Varndean. But one of them is not an OV. Which one? If you think you know, or if you want to make a wild guess, write to the editor. Include some news of yourself or somebody else. Don't forget to include your phone number. The first good entry out of my sack on August 31st wins a rather nice bottle of Australian Wine.

"Good" means having the right answer and including some reasonable news. Delivery is negotiable. Well, what if Michael Williams (see page 2) won it? Don't let that deter you, Michael. Also, my decision is final.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 94th AGM took place at Varndean College on October 31st 1996. A highlight of 1996 has been the Millennium Project under the dynamic leadership of Jim Franks. This has brought many OV's together and given them an active role. Thanks were expressed for the hard work put in by Jim and his team.

The Dinner in April was a huge success: our speaker, Judge Michael McKenzie, was outstanding. Thanks were expressed to Paul Rawlinson, organiser-in-chief.

There were four Council Meetings in 1996 - on Jan 24th, March 24th, July 10th and October 3rd.

Membership applications increased steadily in 1996. Plans are actively in hand for a function in May 1997 to attract new members from those who left Varndean in the first decade of its existence as a Sixth Form College.

Dennis Leggett presented the accounts for the twenty-fifth year. As on the 24 previous occasions, they were in impeccable order. Dennis has decided to stand down from his role as Hon. Treasurer. Thanks were expressed for his admirable service over 25 years. Thanks were also expressed to Brian Peters for auditing the accounts. Barrie Jerram has taken up the mantle of Hon. Treasurer.

Accounts summary for year ending 5 April 1996.

| Income & Expenditure (£, rounded) | 1996 | 1995 |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Income from annual subscriptions | 776 | 680 |
| Other income * | 891 | 1,529 |
| Total Income | 1,667 | 2,209 |
| Postage & telephone costs | 226 | 238 |
| Printing and stationery costs | 491 | 3178 |
| Other costs | 35 | 30 |
| Total Expenditure | 752 | 586 |
| Excess of Income over Expenditure | 915 | 1623 |
| <i>* 1995 includes sale of Insignia for £905</i> | | |
| Balance Sheet as at 5th April | 1996 | 1995 |
| Assets ... | 6,725 | 5,806 |
| ... consisting of: General funds | 6,026 | 5,112 |
| Samaritan fund | 699 | 694 |

The Samaritan Fund has not been drawn upon. Members are reminded that it exists for OV's in need.

Varndean College has achieved excellent results and has developed its positive relationship with the community. Student numbers are up by over 10% on last year. We offer our congratulations to staff and students for making Varndean a place to be proud of.

OBITUARIES

Jonathan Hall (1955-63) died suddenly of a heart attack on 17th November at Eagle House School, Sandhurst, where he was a Head of English and the longest-serving member of staff, with 25 years' service. He will be greatly missed by his friends and colleagues, who packed Sandhurst Parish Church for a memorial ceremony on November 25th.

Vera Foster, widow of Jimmy Foster, has died in her 90th year. Vera always took a keen interest in Varndean and was an avid reader of the newsletter. The Hon. Secretary attended her funeral.

John Winning (1950-56) died after a heart attack on 2nd January 1997. His funeral took place at The Chilterns Crematorium, Amersham, Buckinghamshire.

William (Bill) E Pretlove (1938-44) died in Watford in August 1996. A member of the Cadet Force at Varndean, he joined the 2nd Frontier Force Rifles of the Indian Army. On demobilisation, he went to Brighton Technical College, where he gained his BSc Econ. Bill had a distinguished career with Andrew Chalmers, tobacco merchants, becoming a Director in 1961. Bill worked in many places, including South America, Australia, the City of London and, especially, East Africa, where he earned the nickname of "Mr Malawi". Bill married Rita Phillips in 1951; they had two sons and two grand-daughters.

In the last edition of **Old Varndeanian** we mentioned the death, on July 1st 1996, of **Eddie Noakes** (1943-48). Eddie had 2 years of National Service and worked in the showrooms of the South Eastern Electricity Board. He qualified as an Electrical Engineer at Brighton Technical College and subsequently became Engineer for the Brighton District. He rose to a senior position with SEEBoard and achieved the status of Chartered Engineer. He retired after 44 years in 1992. He enjoyed bowling, walking and chess. Eddie is sadly missed by his wife, Jackie, his children, Richard and Deborah, and his many colleagues and friends. We are indebted to Jackie for this information about Eddie.

IN DEO FIDEMUS LODGE

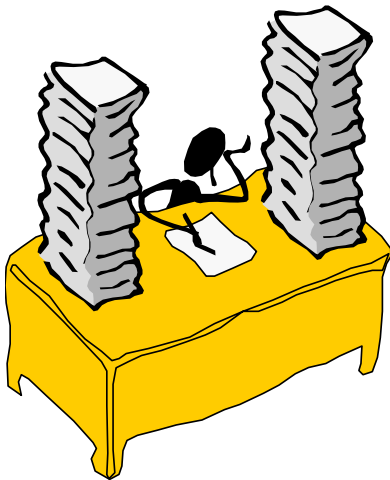
After a successful year as Master Ian Smith has handed over to Stephen Tapp. Enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, Don Osborne, 103 Campden Hill Road, London W8 7TL

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

Were you at Varndean in 1937, 49, 56, 60, 63, 68, 72 or 75? You can have a school photo for £10.

Contact the Hon. Secretary.

TO THE EDITOR



Hutchins v. Warmington

Dear Mac,

During the very cold weather of February 1938, the House Cross-Country race was run during a snow storm. Conditions during the previous week had not been much better.

I was at that time a prefect and in the Upper Sixth. One afternoon after school, I did a practice run on my own. As I turned down past the end of the Girls' School building to head for the "Far East" football pitches, I found the path to be a sheet of ice. In order to avoid falling, I ran along that edge of the Girls' field closest to the path. When I reached the school, wet and cold, I was summoned to the Head's study. The following conversation then took place.

"I have a complaint from Miss Warmington: you have been running on the Girls' school field."

"Only on the very edge of it, Sir. The path is like a sheet of glass and I should have fallen if I had attempted to use it."

"The edge is still on the Girls' school field. Don't do it again."

"How did Miss Warmington know I was running on the grass, Sir?"

"Go and get changed!"

As I reached the door, the familiar voice called me back and, with a half smile, said: "Colgate, I have no doubt that she was standing on a chair using a pair of binoculars."

I feel that this shows the very human side of the somewhat austere EJH!

Kind regards,

Hugh Colgate (1932-39)

Fruit Picking Camp

Dear Mac,

I remember going to the Fruit Picking Agriculture Camp at Horsted Keynes in 1941. Blackberry picking was difficult and messy. Punnets of fruit were weighed to determine our remuneration. This was minimal, and it was not unknown to add the odd large black slug to the bottom of the punnet as a form of come back and to increase the weight.

For some years afterwards I was very wary of eating blackberry jam produced in Sussex.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Barnes

The Fives Club

Dear Mac,

I think I can offer assistance regarding a member of the group. In the third row, the third lady from the left is Rita Dyke, sister of Gwen Dyke who was the first wife (now deceased) of D.V.Hall.

Derek was at Vardean during the 'thirties. Though not an OVA member; he is a distinguished Old Boy. Now retired, he is a Chartered Architect; was once the Brighton Borough Structural Engineer; has been in Church Service practically all his life; and is currently President of the Brighton District Boys' Brigade Old Boys Association.

Kindest regards,

Terence Langley

Dear Mac,

I was particularly interested to read about the Fives Club in the last issue of The Old Vardeanian. I was very interested to see Dennis Cheesman in the front row. Mr Cheesman (although a Headteacher myself, I cannot be so familiar as to use the title "Dennis") was class teacher in my final year at Carden Junior School and he made a lasting impression on me. I can now recall him telling us children of the time when a chemistry experiment at Vardean went wrong, resulting in a lasting mark on the lab ceiling.

Many OVs came from Carden School. From my year I can recall Mick Marchant (of "Micky and the Diamonds" fame), Harry Andrews and Alan Ray. I would appreciate if you could put me in touch with any of these, especially Dennis Cheesman; there, I've said it now.

Best wishes,

Chris Spicer (1957-64)

A Reference from EJH

Dear Mac,

Your invitation on page 6 of the *Old Varndeanian* of October 1996 reminded me of a post-war visit I made to see Butch, when I hoped that he might provide a reference to ease my return to Civvy Street. In the usual sort of self-deprecatory way that one tends to use on these occasions, I said: "Of course, I wasn't one of your brightest pupils."

To which, in his typically dry way, he replied with a rather deflating: "I know." Needless to add, I got the reference.

Congratulations on the production of *The Old Varndeanian*; more power to your elbow and to your "notebook".

Yours sincerely,

Paul Motte-Harrison (1935-41)

School Plays - 1953 & 1954

Dear Mac,

Thank you for the October newsletter.

The letter from Michael Wylie and the comment regarding school plays reminded me that I still have the programmes for the 1953 and 1954 productions. I am enclosing photocopies which may be of interest to Michael - particularly as he did the make-up!

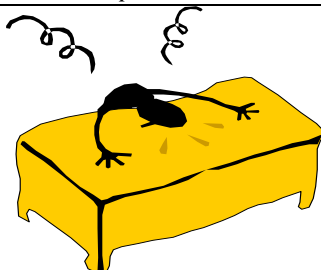
As you will see, some of the cast have signed the programmes. I wonder where they are now?

Yours sincerely,

Ian Nunn - "Joey" - (1950-55)

[Thanks for the photocopies, Joey. I will send one to Michael Wylie. I'm afraid they are a bit too big to reproduce here. Mac]

*Please send your letters to me at the address shown at the foot of the final page of **The Old Varndeanian**. They may be shortened or otherwise edited for publication. If you send something which you would like returned, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. Mac.*



FROM THE EDITOR



Thank you for your letters. Please keep them coming, and don't be shy about those articles. There is bound to be something which other people would find interesting.

This edition of **Old Varndeanian** is something of a College Issue, with a sizeable article from Alan Jenkins, news about Big Field and a summary of the difficult funding regime which Alan and his staff have to cope with.

If you look hard, you will also find an invitation to visit Varndean for an informal social event next October. I hope to see you there. There will be more details in the October edition of **Old Varndeanian**.

Please send in an entry for the prize competition. Roy Daughtree devised it after many hours researching the names of Old Varndeanians.

In the October **Old Varndeanian** I want to have more photographs. I must thank the few people who sent photos this time. Unfortunately, some of the photos would not have reproduced well, while others told no real story.

One of them, however, deserves a mention. We have what looks like an old ('20s?) school photo engraved on a copper plate. Chuck Thrower believes it is not Varndean: one reason is that the photo shows a light-coloured patch on the top of the caps. Geoff Pride, on the other hand, says that caps had a red patch on top, and that the film used at the time would have made it look pale in a photo. He concludes that it was a photo of York Place School, though taken on the playing fields at Varndean in 1923. If I can find a way of making a good quality print from the copper, it may be possible to fit a portion of it into the October edition.

Now then, you are coming to the Gala Reunion Dinner, aren't you? Just the thing to cheer you up after a long winter, but before the summer drought sets in. Not too formal, not too informal. Don't forget to book the 25th April 1997.

I'll see you there.

Mac

MILLENNIUM PROJECT

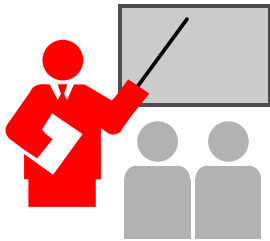
THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY UP

We now have information about three hundred and fifty OV's. Thanks to all those who have responded. Please forgive us for not acknowledging receipt of each one.

THE OV INDEX

Thanks to Roy Daughtree's efforts on the computer, we now have a list of by year of entry of all the pupils in the school between 1884 and 1975. This will be fascinating for OV's wanting to recall who they were at school with.

STAFF ENTRIES



David Williams has prepared a list of Vardean staff, which is complete as far as he knows. However, some earlier staff may be missing. Do you know of "ancient staff"? Pick up the phone!

FIRST FORTY-EIGHT

Thanks to H.Colgate, K.Culbert, J.Evans, K.Gilbert, D.G.Hardman, T.Langley, A.J.Lloyd, and D.Nash we have news of ten of the first forty-eight. If you know of them (see the list in the last Edition of Old Vardeanian), please contact us.



John Evans wrote as follows about W. K. Meldrum.

"He assisted Theo Tully with the lighting for Romeo and Juliet (Schofield's Juliet). Theo's control board was an unknown quantity to all but himself. On the opening night, an hour before curtain up, Theo fell and cut his neck on some wiring in the balcony. He was sent to hospital and poor Meldrum had to learn by trial and error how to operate the board - but Tulley was back in time to handle the tricky bits."

MEDIA LAUNCH



Don't be surprised if your local press, radio or TV mention Vardean. Our network of Media Managers is spreading and may cover your area.

Even if you are in Australia.

If you have contacts in the media, we would like to hear from you. In particular, do you subscribe to a paper or magazine? Professional, trade, industrial, academic...? Would you be prepared to write a letter to its editor to help the search for OV's? We will happily provide a form of words.

FIRST, LAST AND YOUNGEST

The first pupil at York Place was Albert Horace Hards, born 16/6/1871, admitted 8/9/1884. The first female student was Jacqueline Ann Ball, born 10/12/1960, admitted 7/9/1972. The last pupil of the Grammar School was Martin L. Van Gent, born 9/4/1959, admitted 10/11/1975. The youngest pupil was Reginald Finch McNamara, born 10/7/1897, admitted 7/9/1903, aged 6 years and 59 days! There were more than 20 who were 6 or 7 when they first registered.

In the first year (1884) there were two students from Australia and two from India - what a hell of a journey to go to school! I bet they got free bus tickets.

Thanks to Roy Daughtree. for those snippets.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Send in your form! Haven't got one? Contact ...

Millennium Project

Jim Franks

FROM SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

by Alan Jenkins. Principal, Varndean College

When did you last see Varndean? You would recognise the buildings, of course, but what else? Much that happens inside has changed.

STUDENTS NOT PUPILS?

Most of our people come in as 16 year old pupils and leave as 18 year old students. Our job is to help ensure a smooth transition to a young adult who takes responsibility for study and makes a positive contribution to society. The transition must be based on achievement of whatever qualification courses are involved.

We currently have **900** full time 16-19 year olds, 52% of whom are female; **100** full-time adults taking a one-year "Access to Higher Education" course; **700** part-time mature students mainly on evening courses at Varndean and, in a joint programme, at Longhill School in Rottingdean; **25** women from the refugee community, doing language courses run in partnership with Brighton Friends' Centre; and **40** employees of local companies on our Business Seminars Programme

A BROADER CURRICULUM

The programme for our full-time 16-19 years olds contains: work on their main courses, including independent study; sport, music and drama; something of a social experience; and guidance from their personal tutor. Most students have part-time jobs.

Their choice of courses is made from:; **38** A-Level subjects including many that barely existed in the days of the Grammar School.; **15** GCSE subjects, or their equivalents; **6** General National Vocational Qualification full-time courses at Advanced or Intermediate levels; **100** extension courses; **5** Access options; **75** evening courses, especially languages, Information Technology, fitness and counselling

QUALITY AND QUANTITY

Our 1996 A-Level entry alone saw over 300 students take over 800 exams, with almost 90% passing and 58% gaining A-C grades. Varndean is the top college in East Sussex, is in the top ten in the South of England and is in the top 40 of almost 500 colleges nationally. Four of our students were in the top three in the country in their subjects.

In addition, we put on six College drama productions; run over 20 sports including continuing prominence for teams and individuals in the traditional areas, male and female; and much more.

WHO PAYS?

Since 1993, the College has not been under Local Authority control, but is funded by the Further Education Funding Council. Technically I am the Chief Executive of the Varndean Corporation, responsible to its Board for the efficient use of our resources - physical (buildings and grounds), human (my 140 colleagues) and financial (the £3 Million budget).

A TRADITION MAINTAINED

Despite sizeable changes, the links with the past remain (including the cold winter corridors). In my Open Evening talk I can say:

"A few years ago in May I sat down to watch the Cup Final and was pleased to see it was being refereed by Alan Gunn - an Old Varndeanian. After the half-time summary, which was led by Desmond Lynam - an Old Varndeanian, I switched to BBC2 which was showing "A Man for All Seasons", starring the Oscar-winning Paul Scofield - an Old Varndeanian. Having seen and enjoyed the film many times before, I switched to the international athletics on Channel 4, to find that the commentator was Olympic gold medallist Steve Ovett - an Old Varndeanian. You young people here tonight - male and female - are their successors. Varndean is here to support you in developing your talents to the full, so that you can make your mark on society, maybe not in the same way as those I've mentioned, but equally positively."

In that aim, there is little distinction between the College now and the School as it was, although my means of achieving it for the young people and adults who come to Varndean may be very different from those of Hutchins and my other illustrious predecessors. **A.J.**

"Big Field" Decision in Varndean's Favour

You will be delighted to hear that The Secretary of State for Education and Employment has decided that Big Field is owned by Varndean College, and not by East Sussex County Council. This dispute has lasted for **five years**. The interests of other nearby schools who use the field are, of course, protected. **A.J.**

When *DID* You Last See Varndean?

Keep your diary free on 22nd October this year. It is your opportunity to come to an OVA social event at Varndean College. You can see what the old place looks like now, meet some of the staff and have a snack and a drink. The AGM will take place on the same evening.

OLD VARNDEANIAN SPORTS REPORTS

OV FOOTBALL CLUB



This season is following a very similar pattern to last season's. The first team is still in contention in the Premier Division of the Brighton League, while the Reserves are acquitting themselves well against stronger opposition since their promotion. Both teams are enjoying extended runs in Cup competitions.

With respectively seven and six league matches to go, the teams' positions at the middle of February are:

| Premier Div | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|-------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Patcham 1903 | 14 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 47 | 15 | 32 |
| AFC Falcons | 13 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 28 | 18 | 27 |
| Old Varndeanians | 13 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 44 | 19 | 25 |

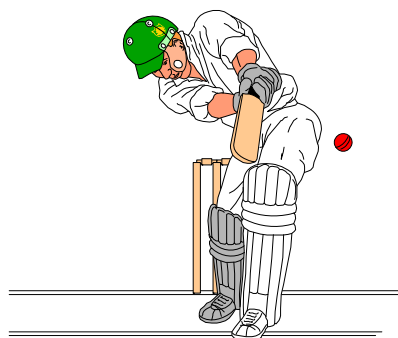
| Division Three | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Rottingdean Res. | 16 | 12 | 1 | 3 | 68 | 22 | 37 |
| AC Gardeners | 14 | 10 | 3 | 1 | 44 | 24 | 33 |
| Prima | 13 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 56 | 24 | 29 |
| Montpelier Res. | 15 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 40 | 24 | 29 |
| Old Varndeanians Res. | 14 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 30 | 17 | 26 |

The leading goal scorer for the Club is Dave Bridges, with 19 goals for the First Team in 17 games, including three hat-tricks. Remarkably, he has failed to score in 9 of those matches: when he does hit the net it seems to inspire him to even greater heights! In one match for the Reserves in the Sussex Junior Cup, he hit 9 goals.

The Club has nearly fifty members at present, but there is always room for new players. Our playing and social facilities at Coral Sports and Leisure Centre in Hove, and our training ground at Portslade are excellent. If you are interested, please call me.

Norman Wright, Hon Sec

OV CRICKET CLUB



Last season was not one of our best! We played 11 of which we won 2, lost 6 and drew 3. At least the weather claimed only one fixture. However, there were some bright moments. John Moore made his first two centuries for the club - the first against Rudgwick on the opening day of the season, the second against Brighton and Hove Crescent.

Martin Watts took five wickets on two occasions - against Waldron and Balcombe. John and Martin have been awarded the batting and bowling cups for their endeavours.

As ever, we are looking for any bright talent, whether young or old, to enjoy games that are by and large played in attractive country settings. The first match is in early May. If you would like to play then please contact John Moore or myself.

Guy Baigent

VARNDEAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



Did you, your mother, your sister, your aunt or any of your friends attend Varndean Grammar School for Girls?

If so, you might like to know that a register of Old Girls is being compiled for the purpose of arranging reunions, etc.

If you or anyone you know would like to be contacted when a reunion is planned, please write to . . .

Mrs Hilary Ball, Bursar, c/o Varndean School

. . . giving your name, maiden name, address, telephone number and your years at the school.