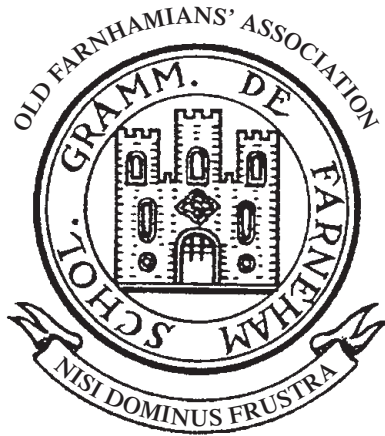


# THE FARNHAMIAN



JUNE 2003

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# THE FARNHAMIAN

June 2003

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE FARNHAMIAN - VOL 10

It is ten years since I first produced the modern version of this magazine and, as many know it has been a labour of love for me in my early years of retirement. I have found that whilst I thought that information would dry up after a few years the opposite has occurred and the problem is that there is so much to fill the pages each time.

This time there is definitely an international flavour to the magazine with input from Canada, Australia, Spain and South Africa. The past 12 months have unearthed a good number of ex-pupils of the School and some have joined the OFA and others will do so shortly. Sadly we have lost a few members, with the most notable being Dudley Backhurst who had been School Captain and President of the Association.

We also include the story of the 'Oldest Living Old Boy' and hope that Ian T Jamieson will continue to hold this position for some time to come. New ground is broken in this edition with the first article from an Old Girl, namely Stella Bolt who is the hard-working secretary of the FGGs Association. One of the main articles this time is from well-known journalist, Graham Collyer, who has provided a piece which I am certain the reader will find most interesting and enjoyable. We are indeed lucky to have such talent contributing to the Farnhamian.

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

JOHN CROTTY

This edition of our magazine is number ten and a good enough reason for me to offer my personal congratulations to our editor, Cyril Trust, for his toil since he brought about its revival. Also to those who have supported it with news, articles and adverts. For all of us it is a regular reminder of our school life and our subsequent fortunes.

Looking through the first number, November 1994, I read that Dennis Phillips, our then President, observed that the constitution guaranteed that 'in the next century' the Association would disappear. This must surely be the case (in the absence of a second coming) but we are today into that century and no-where do I detect a feeling that the end of our particular world is nigh. There is an air of enthusiasm about the General Committee and we have been acquiring a number of young forty year olds to join in our deliberations. The attendance at the Dinner remains around the hundred figure, a number we were pleased to see some thirty years ago. Thanks to medical science and clean living, I don't doubt, a sizeable group of retired Old Boys and staff continue to enjoy our activities. Ian Sergeant's OFA web site is a burgeoning success story, bringing together Old Boys throughout the world. He now has most old magazines on the web and they are open to paying members of the Association.

The low point for me this past year was the death of Dudley Backhurst. There is an obituary elsewhere but I would like to close my brief report by expressing my deep regret at the loss of such a fine man, good friend, and most worthy member of our Association.

## THE ANNUAL DINNER – 2003

(The following was submitted to the Farnham Herald – April 2003)

### THE OLD FARNHAMIANs TURN OUT IN FORCE

Over one hundred ex-pupils and staff of the former Farnham Grammar School filled the hall at Farnham College to celebrate the 71st Annual Dinner of the Old Farnhamians' Association. They had travelled from all parts of the country and some had flown in from overseas to be at this popular annual event. With the old school having closed in 1973 the room was full of 'the greys' and 'the wrinklies' meeting up with old friends and classmates, in some cases after fifty years. Once again it was an evening of nostalgia and the conversation filled the hall as the guests tucked into an excellent meal provided by the College caterers, Pabulum of Fleet.

This year the saying of grace preceding the meal included a few words about those British soldiers serving in the Iraq War as well as a silence to honour those Old Boys who had died in the last year.

This year the toast to the School was proposed by The Rt. Rev. W.J. (Billy) Down who entered the church in his early twenties and has worked with seaman's missions for many years. He had been away from the school for almost two years with illness and thanked the school for welcoming him back into the fold after such a long time. He completed his education at the age of twenty and then discovered Christianity. His work had taken him all over this country and to places like Australia and at one time he had 118 missions under his leadership. He had been the Bishop of Bermuda and was now in the Midlands. He felt that his whole career had stemmed from his days at the Farnham Grammar School.

Former Geography teacher, Tony Moore, had travelled from East Anglia to propose the toast to the Association and recalled many happy times during his seven years at the school. He remembers the opening of the school extension by the Duchess of Gloucester and the plays written and staged by fellow masters, Mike Foster, Doug Leuchars and Alan Fluck. He will always remember another teacher, Don Nicolson, dressed up as a female for a part in one play. He applauded the closeness of the Association and the College and in particular the Farnham Lecture. He also recalls the days spent on the cricket field teaching the boys the 'English Game'. Clearly he enjoyed his time in Farnham and now runs his own school in the east of the country.

John Crotty, the current President, replied to both toasts by paying respects to those Old Boys who had died during the past twelve months. The loss of Dudley Backhurst, a former school captain and a great supporter of the Association over many years, was a blow. There will be a special memorial luncheon in honour of Dudley Backhurst during October at Southampton where he lived most of his life. He felt that the continued increase in membership was a result of the magazine produced by Cyril Trust and the website managed by Ian Sargeant, and hoped that the members would continue to increase.

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## THE ANNUAL DINNER – 2003

He said that the Association continued to support the College and had recently paid to have the original school doors, hung in 1906, cleaned and oiled and rehung. Over the years they had received heavy treatment from the hundreds of boys passing through them. He also mentioned that the 2002 Farnham Lecture had been a great success with over two hundred in the audience. This year the talk would be given by local Member of Parliament, Virginia Bottomley, and would be entitled ‘ Politics, People and Principles’. It was hoped that this would be another popular lecture and there would be a full house. As usual this most popular President sprinkled his reply with several humorous remarks and the audience filled the hall with laughter.

Time had come for the roll call and the passing of the loving cup and the members rose to their feet and clapped in George Baxter, the former head of the School. He began the roll with the oldest member attending and Allan Ryall, who had left the school in 1924 stood up. He was followed by Roy Robins who left in 1926 and someone from every year after these stood until the late 1970s when the school closed as a grammar school. George Baxter said that this was the 49th occasion that he had read the roll call and he hoped to return in 2004 to complete his half-century. This very popular former headmaster is now 89 years of age and he sat next to ex-Chemistry teacher, Leonard Evans, who is now over 90 years old.

The evening was coming to a close and the members stood for the school song. The chorus brought shouts of Massingberd, Childe, Morley, Harding and School as the names of school houses were sung and old rivalries were aroused once again. This song, written by former headmaster, Frank Morgan, tells of the ‘Farnham School of high renown’ and the Old Boys would endorse this totally. Following this came the national anthem and suddenly the 71st Dinner was over. Old Boys would return home and relive the past and wait for next April to meet old pals once again. There are not many schools in the country that retain such levels of camaraderie and it is something special to the town of Farnham.

As usual Peter Clark from Southampton did a first class job as Toastmaster.

### Attending:

P.Ford: W.F.A.Bodkin: C.J.Coombes: M.J.Horner: F.E.Loveless: W.Herrington: G.D.Blunt: S.A.Armstrong: P.Read: G.H.Hewes: R.R.Kirk: J.Chuter: P.Huntingford: J.Bentick: E.Milburn: D.Chitty: J.Bateman: D.Buckell: A.J.Rayer: R.Parker: M.Cox: R.H.Hewes: D.O’Sullivan: J.Munday: A.D.Harland: J.Mitchell: C.D.Trust: J.Travers: B.E.Bone: J.Cockle: E.Grimes: M.E.Jeffreys: T.Tubb: B.Lake: D.Bidwell: J.Cooke: N.Timmins: H.Brindley: J.Falkner: G.V.Hunt: D.Nunn: B.E.Webberley: A.Lovell: G.Le Vey: K.Mentzel: R.D.Edwards: A.Gatfield: D.Pollard: M.Waide: R.Ward: E.Mayne: D.Coakes: P.Mylles: M.Constantine: T.Homewood: J.Edmunds: D.Cutler: D.Lucas: D.Phillips: D.Edgell: D.Poleglaze: R.Phillips: B.R.Williams: W.Walsh: C.Beal: M.Watts: C.Nash: I.Sargeant: A.Tuck: R.Edgell: R.Cleminson: R.Diamond: H.Torode: B.Quinn: R.Moorcroft: M.Rochefort: H.J.Upfold: R.Bennett: D.Grimes: M.Seignot: R.Welland-Jones: M.Mehta: J.Clarke: D.Hughes: S.Pritchard: M.Owen: M.Da Costa: M.Booker: S.Linney: S.J.Owen: A.Moore: L.E.M.Evans: W.J.Down: J.H.Crotty: G.Baxter: R.Robins: A.Ryall: T.Tidd: R.Hack: P.Clark:

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 2003

(Article submitted to the Farnham Herald – February 2003)

### ‘A SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE OLD FARNHAMIANs’

Over thirty ex-pupils from the now defunct Farnham Boys Grammar School attended the 2003 Annual general Meeting at Farnham College and heard from President, John Crotty, that the past year had once again proved successful. Even with the death of several members the actual membership had risen, probably a result of the popular magazine and the ever improving website.

Once again the Annual Dinner and the Southampton Luncheon had proved popular with over 100 at the former and a record 35 at the latter. Unfortunately Dudley Backhurst, who had helped organise the luncheon on the south coast since its inception over forty years ago had just died, but it was decided to continue with the event and have the 2003 luncheon as a memorial to this ex-School Captain.

The Farnham Lecture by Paul Travers from the Eden Project had been the most successful to date and this year local MP Virginia Bottomley had agreed to speak at Farnham College during September. The Lecture is now part of the College and Farnham calendar and attracts excellent speakers and a large audience.

The Association had received a substantial legacy from the estate of Old Boy Gordon Morris and it was decided to use part of this to restore the oak double doors at the school entrance to their original state. The thousands of pupils using the doors since the opening in 1906 had taken its toll and this would be a worthwhile expenditure.

The website continues to grow and there is a huge amount of information available about the old Grammar School and its pupils. This probably explains why the next Farnhamian magazine includes articles from France, Spain, Canada, Australia and South Africa. The network of Old Boys from Farnham is worldwide.

During the year several bursaries had been given by the OFA to students at the College and it planned to increase this help in the future. As we know, student life costs more than ever and the Association will use funds to help wherever possible.

The meeting ended with the election of one or two new members to the General Committee and to the various Trusts within the Association. This year is the 30th anniversary of the closing of the school and the Old Farnhamians continue to keep alive the memory of schooldays when education was not the political football it is today.

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**The 2003 Farnham Lecture will be held on Friday 19th September**

**At Farnham College commencing at 7.30 pm.**

**THE FARNHAMIAN 400 TRUST**

**Presents**

**POLITICS, PEOPLE AND PRINCIPLES**

**Talk by the Rt. Hon. Virginia Bottomley (M.P. for South West Surrey).**

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## THE SOUTHAMPTON LUNCH - 2002-10-26

### THE NEW FOREST BECKONS THE OLD BOYS ONCE AGAIN

The forty first get-together of Old Farnhamians, those ex-pupils from the former Farnham Boys Grammar School, who lived in the Hampshire area was held at a hotel on the edge of the New Forest and attracted a record number of thirty five. This is unlike the formal annual dinner held at the old school in Morley Road and is a much more relaxed event with a cross section of Old Boys from the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. It was the twelfth year that the Busketts Lawn Hotel had been used and clearly the guests approve of this venue.

Dudley Backhurst is the only survivor of the four people who launched this event in 1962 and once again he said a few words after the usual excellent meal. He said how sorry he was to advise the guests that George Baxter, the ex-headmaster, could not attend this year owing to failing health and for once there was no ex-staff in the room. There were many apologies for inability to attend and this is not surprising as the school closed in 1973 and the Old Farnhamians are getting older.

The new President, John Crotty, followed with a short speech and said that in his first year in office they had tracked down the 'oldest Old Boy,' who was Ian T Jamieson from Worthing who had reached 100 years of age in May. The recent Farnham Lecture covering the Eden Project had been the most successful to date with over 200 in the audience and had added to Association funds. The website continues to grow and this enables the Old Boys to keep growing in number as they are located throughout the world.

The next luncheon will be held on 15th October 2003 and it is hoped that even more will attend. This is a most pleasant event as Old Boys from sixty to ninety plus mingle and recall days at school. They may have met in Southampton, but the talk was about Farnham past and present and was an exercise in nostalgia.

Attending; A J Ryall: L R Dowsett: A J Hall: P Huntingford: P B Morice: T Tidd: P J Clark: R Robins: J D Backhurst: I F A Bowler: G D Blunt: R S Short: C Nash: D E Lampard: J H Crotty: J S Mitchell: M J Comben: S A Armstrong: D A Bowtell: P J Ford: B J Daniels: N Timmins: D R Lucas: D J Phillips: K I Mentzel: B E Bone: D O'Sullivan: A D Harland: J Travers: B E Webberley: C D Trust: R G Edgell: C R Beal: D J Blunt: I C Sargeant:

This article was submitted to the Farnham Herald.

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On January 27th 2003 Dudley Backhurst sadly died and one of his last wishes was for the Southampton Luncheon to continue. The General Committee has agreed that this popular event will remain in the OFA programme and this year it will be in memory of Dudley Backhurst, one of the founders of the luncheon. You are welcome to attend:

### THE DUDLEY BACKHURST MEMORIAL SOUTHAMPTON LUNCHEON

(For details please see the announcement on the back cover of the 2003 magazine)

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## THE FARNHAM LECTURE - 2002

The fourteenth Farnham Lecture presented by the Farnhamian 400 Trust, which is a part of the Old Farnhamians' Association, proved to be the most successful to date. Paul Travers, Media Director for the Eden Project, provided an interesting, informative and occasionally funny talk to over 200 people who packed the hall at Farnham College. To hear first hand about one of the most successful projects ever attempted in this country enthralled the audience, and the speaker was an example of a person who was extremely enthusiastic about his work.

Paul Travers, who was born in Farnham and attended the College, teamed up with old friend Tim Smit in 1996 and at that stage there were only four people involved in the adventure known as the Eden Project. Neither Paul nor Tim knew much about construction or plans but they had a vision and worked hard to sell the idea to the Millennium Commission and the financial institutions. This could not have been easy when all you have to offer for the money is a hole in the ground and a road to get to it. Eventually they were awarded £43 million from both areas and in 1999 began clearing the old china clay pit and installing the various buildings that eventually became the latest 'wonder of the world'.

Paul explained that the Eden Project was a Charitable Trust and was viewed as an educational resort or as some people call it 'living theatre of plants and people'. He paid tribute to the architect and structural engineer who worked so well together and included so many innovative designs in the buildings. He told of moving 1.8 million tons of clay and earth in the first six months and then entering the Guinness Book of Records with the most scaffolding poles ever used on one site. He explained the technology behind the biomes and applauded the 'sky monkeys' who actually erected the frames and then clad them with foil.

It was decided to involve the local St. Austell community by offering them visits to the site letting them see what was happening on their doorstep. The Eden Project was eventually opened in March 2001 and the plan was to attract 650,000 people in the first year growing to 750,000. In fact in the first year 1.65 million visitors came and by the end of 2001 it was the fifth venue in the country in terms of number of visitors.

The site now covered 100 acres and the original four people have grown to over seven hundred. The speaker said that Eden provides a stage for debate about conservation and the planet we live on, it is not intended to lecture to people on what is right or what is wrong. If you walk around the full project you will cover eight and a half miles and along the way you may meet one of 62 actors who are employed to tell the story of what the project stands for. Last year Eden brought into Cornwall an extra £111 million in revenue and tripled all forecasts. This year the new James Bond film has been partly made at Eden and this will promote the project even more throughout the world.

So what of the future? There is another biome under construction and plans include an Education Centre and one or two hotels. The Eden Project is the result of one or two people who 'dared to dream'. Paul Travers brought some of the Eden energy and enthusiasm to Farnham and the audience loved every minute of it.

(Article submitted to the Farnham Herald – September 2002)





### YOUNGER OLD BOYS AT THE SOUTHAMPTON LUNCHEON

Chris Beal; Roger Edgell (Association Secretary); Chris Nash;

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### ASSOCIATION OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR 2003/2004

There has been little variation from last year and the following hold the various offices for this coming year.

PRESIDENT: John Crotty TREASURER: Stephen Pritchard.

SECRETARY: Roger Edgell MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Tony Harland

#### MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE:

Wally Walsh; Bryan Bone; John Travers; Peter Mylles; Maurice Sturt; Chris Slyfield; Brian Daniels; Alan Lovell; Roy Robins; Mike Horner; Bill Luff; David Grimes; Cyril Trust; Ian Sargeant; Graham Blunt; Keith Mentzel; Mike Mehta; Tony Gatfield; Robin Welland-Jones;

#### MEMBERS OF THE FARNHAMIAN 400 TRUST:

Cyril Trust (Chairman); Graham Blunt (Secretary); Stephen Pritchard (Treasurer); John Crotty; Roy Robins; Maurice Sturt; John MacLaughlin; John Dymott;

#### MEMBERS OF THE LEAVING SCHOLARSHIP TRUST:

Roy Robins (Chairman); Ian Sargeant (Treasurer); Bill Luff; Mike Mehta; Chris Nash;

## A VISIT TO FARNHAM FROM SOUTH AFRICA

In July 2002 the editor received a call from Jean Parratt at the Farnham Museum who said that she had a lady and a gentleman from South Africa standing in front of her and they wanted to know how they could find information about the lady's father, who had attended the Farnham Boys' Grammar school before the First World War.

I advised her to take their name and address and some brief details and I would try to research old magazines and send them any details on W.I.C.Shipley who was born in 1906.

I managed to send them the following information, taken from Farnhamian magazines issued in 1921, 1922, 1923 and 1924.

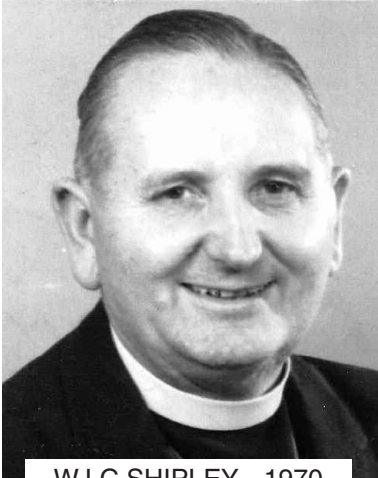
'The first mention of your father is in the July 1921 issue when he ran third in a heat of the Open 100 yards at the School Sports. In March 1922 he is mentioned as being made a Lance Corporal in the School Cadet Force and taking part in the Boxing at the 8stone 7lbs – 9stone 7lbs weight. Although beaten in the first round the bout was judged the best of the tournament. In the July 1922 issue he was promoted to Corporal in the Cadet Force and running for his house – Massingberd – he was part of the winning sprint relay team.

In March 1923 he took part in the Speech Day activities by appearing in a scene from Julius Caesar in front of the school. He acted with a boy called Jack Gwillim who went on to become a well-known actor. He died last year aged 91 years and his obituary appeared in the Daily Telegraph and was re-produced in the 2002 Farnhamian magazine. He also won prizes for Drawing (Senior), Declamation and was 75th in the School Cross Country Run-In July 1923 issue he left the school at the end of the summer term but in the School Sports that year he won the Long Jump, 220 yards sprint and shared the Victor Ludorum. He also ran for the School sprint relay team and played cricket for the School First XI.

In the March 1924 issue he wrote to the magazine saying that he was 'on the threshold of journalism' in the happy service of the Farnham Herald. When he was not proofreading in his den, overlooking the busy thoroughfare of Farnham he was adventurously scouring the neighbouring villages in quest of news'.

These details and a copy of part of his 1923 Declamation, which appeared in the magazine, were posted to South Africa. A reply was received early in August from the daughter of W.I.C.Shipley and from this we now have a first class profile of this former Old Boy.

' Thank you so very much for taking the time to arduously hunt through records to find information. I knew Sport, English and Drawing were my father's strengths, and so you have shown. Your mention of the scene with Jack Gwillim was also no surprise (I did not know this) because he loved being on the stage – monologues mostly in the Victorian style: - were his forte, and his congregations over the years asked and asked for them!



W.I.C.SHIPLEY - 1970

After my father left school he joined the 'Herald' at Farnham as a reporter for I think two years. He had always been a Methodist and during this time he must have had his call into full-time Christian work and for two years he was a lay Evangelist. This led him up to a small town in North Wales not far from Wrexham, and it was here that he met my mother. He responded to a need for ministers in South Africa and as probationers could not marry until they were ordained in those days, my parents became engaged and he left for S.A. on his own and they did not meet again until he sailed home to marry my mother! He set sail for S.A. in 1931, and his first appointment as a young candidate was a small town in East Griqualand called Matatiele. He could not pronounce this and learned only when he arrived! After 6 years training he went to a small church in Durban and then

up to a farming town in Zululand called Empangeni. From here he was ordained and in the November of 1937 set sail again to claim his bride!

In January 1938 they started their first married appointment in a seaside town in Natal called Port Shepstone, South of Durban, and in those days the drive down there in a newly acquired D.K.W. was not easy. No bridges and a good few rivers! Today it takes just about an hour on a highway, then they had to travel inland a fair way and it took hours. My mother remembers the water of one river coming up to the seat of the car, and they were pushed by a team of Zulu men!

I was born in Port Shepstone (the only child) and after three years we moved to a town called Bethlehem in the then Orange Free State for another three years. When we moved to Durban my father became the General Secretary of the Methodist Youth department and worked with this as well as his own church. He grew this so much that he was eventually replaced with a full-time worker for the Youth.

From here, the churches my father served were all City Churches and considered "preaching appointments". Many years in Pietermaritzburg, Germiston, Rosebank Cape Town and finally Pretoria where he was appointed Chairman of the District of the Northern Transvaal, a huge area stretching as far as Mozambique. (the title "Chairman" has now become Bishop). He suffered a coronary in his last days there, which led to him retiring with my mother to the Natal South Coast where he continued preaching, organising pageants, all the things he loved.

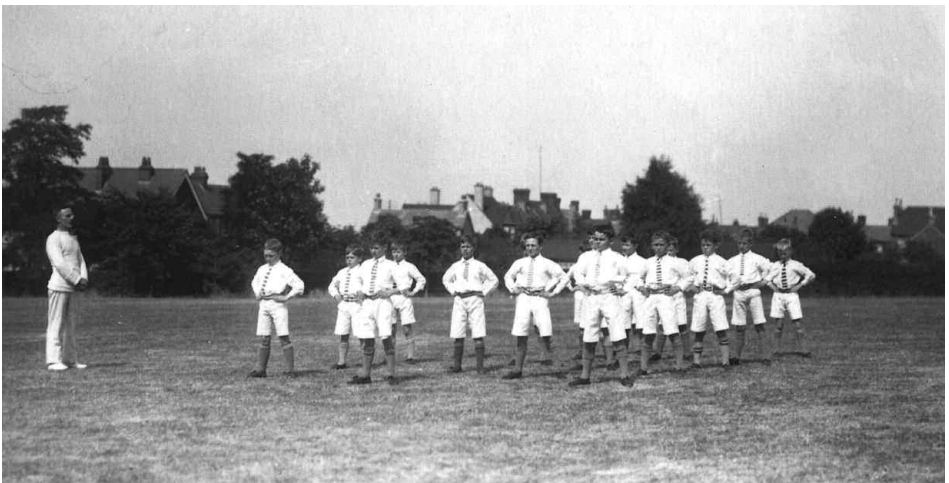
He made use of all his gifts in the ministry, was a prolific reader, and became an armchair sportsman! I was always grateful to him and my mother for opening the world of English Literature to me. He loved what he did and was in the middle of directing a Christmas pageant when he had his final illness, a severe stroke which led to his death in 1980. He was 74 years of age.

## FROM THE FAMILY ALBUM NO.2.

The photographs from the old School continue to come in and at a recent party I met a lady called Sheila Bettin who explained that her maiden name was Sargent and several of her relatives had attended the Farnham Boys' Grammar School. She has kindly supplied me a number of photographs and I have included two of them.



A.M.SARGENT, who was the father of Sheila Bettin, at the Memorial Ground for the School Sports. On the left is a young F.A.MORGAN, the Headmaster and in the middle is LEO BORELLI, who was a well known Governor of the School.



A photograph taken around 1925-26 and shows the Gymnastic Team on the school field. Second boy from the left is IAN O. NEWTON, the uncle of Sheila Bettin.

**BELDHAM'S BAT****GRAHAM COLLYER (1955-1960)**

The story begins in the 18th century when a yeoman farmer's son from Wrecclesham was beginning a career in cricket, and another young man from across the county border in Froyle was learning how to carve out a career in wood. Whether the two ever met is unclear, but it is probable that they did, although not until the second decade of the 19th century.

Now, fast-forward one hundred and seventy-five years and we can pick up the story again. Much, of course, happened during the intervening years, but more of that later.

I had arrived at the school gates in Morley Road via two 11-plus exams and an interview at the Friends' Meeting House in Godalming, which immediately suggests that I had got in by the skin of my teeth. I do not deny this, and for the next five years I suppose I just about held my head above water. I was not academically inclined.

But despite my failure to impress the examiners, I had taken in much of what I was interested in and had made the most of the opportunities that came my way. It was not a wasted five years, for me at any rate, and I quickly walked into a job that was to shape my career for the rest of my life.

I had always liked sport and I could write, and those elements interested L.T.Pope, news editor at the Farnham Herald, and he was willing to recommend to the editor F.O.Meddows-Taylor, that I should be taken on. The latter, perhaps guarding against any future difficulties with his father-in-law, the esteemed founder-proprietor of the Herald, E.W.Langham, ordered me to attend evening class and re-sit English Language. The message was clear: fail and you are out. English Language is my only formal qualification.

Theo Pope was a kindly man who made sure that his young journalists were properly trained. To him, every fact was sacred, every punctuation mark precious. He was an old fashioned local foot soldier who crafted his reports with the utmost care. He expected his staff to do likewise. And there are journalists around the world who will agree with me when I say that I could not have had a better mentor than Theo Pope.

Away from the newsroom, it was cricket that also held a fascination for both of us. His love and knowledge of the great game rubbed off on me (it helped that I had been born into a cricket-mad family), and would steer me along a variety of different paths. His passion for the history of cricket did not excite me at first, but in time provided me with a rich seam of material from which to write a number of books and articles.

Shortly after his death in 1979, and not long after I had returned to the area with my wife and three children, after six years in New Zealand, I was contacted by Mrs. Pope with the invitation to go to her home in Bridgefield, Farnham, where she would ask me to consider accepting her late husband's cricketing memorabilia – scrapbooks, cuttings, photographs, books. I needed no second bidding.

I wrote my first book about cricket for the bicentenary of Farnham Cricket Club in 1982. I decided also to make it a memoir about William 'Silver Billy' Beldham, one of the club's founders and the farmer's son mentioned at the beginning of this piece.

**BELDHAM'S BAT****GRAHAM COLLYER (1955-1960)**

Beldham has held an interest for me since my days at the Herald when I came across his name and his reputation as England's first great all-rounder. He had been born in Wrecclesham, at Yew Tree Cottage in The Street, in 1766, and had died at the grand age of 96, in Oak Cottage, beneath the famous tree on Tilford Green. Stories about Beldham were legion, but having put the Farnham CC book to bed there was one piece of unfinished business that continued to tantalise me. It was the whereabouts of the great cricketer's bat, for I had seen it described as having pride of place above the mantelpiece in Oak Cottage in his final years.

But that was more than 100 years ago, so the prospect of finding it had at best to be remote. Having determined that he had been buried in Tilford churchyard, and not at Farnham as every previous writer on Beldham had supposed, trying to find this outstanding piece of the jigsaw was a prospect that I relished. I knew nothing about the bat; who had made it, when or where. Beldham was described in the national census of 1841 as a 'bat maker', so did he make his own bat? He had played cricket at the highest level until 1821, when, at the age of 55, he appeared at Lord's for the last time. So did he walk out to the middle of the famous ground – the third to be made in London by Thomas Lord – carrying the bat I was now so keen to find?

The search continued off and on during 1982 and into 1983, but without a lead that gave me much encouragement. One suggestion that it had been seen in Birmingham in the 1930s seemed unlikely, but was stored away for future reference. Then, while on a weekend course designed to hone my editor's potential, I met a fellow journalist who, like me, did not wish to go into the West End on the Saturday evening to see the musical, *Evita*. It was to be one of those once-in-a-lifetime moments that no scriptwriter could ever dream up.

As we walked and talked in Kensington Gardens on a warm May evening, the conversation turned to cricket. Easy for me, not so easy, perhaps, for a female companion with no obvious interest in the sport and a dedicated angler for a husband. I mentioned my own obsession. She said her aged mother-in-law had an old cricket bat at her home in Malvern. I produced more information. She said she thought a famous cricketer with a funny nickname had once owned the bat. My pulse began to race. Silver Billy? I ventured. Yes, she replied.

I filled in the story and my new friend said she would contact her mother-in-law on her return home. By the end of the next week, a colleague and I were in Malvern, by invitation, and holding Beldham's bat. The accompanying documentation showed that Charles Clapshaw in Downing Street in Farnham had made it for Beldham in 1815. Clapshaw was the young man from Froyle at the top of this piece. He had learnt his craft from his father Aquila, and, more likely, was working in one of the Church Lanes off Downing Street when he made a bat for a man who, at the age of 49, was still the greatest cricketer in the country.

Beldham clearly treasured the piece of pine (no willow in those days) and is shown holding it in the only known photograph of him, taken in 1850, which hangs in the Long Room at Lord's. What happened to the bat after he died is unknown. His widow lived on in Oak Cottage for seven years, until she died in 1869, so perhaps it remained

**BELDHAM'S BAT****GRAHAM COLLYER (1955 – 1960)**

with her. After that? Beldham was the father of nine children, eight with his second wife (his first wife and child died soon after the birth), and the bat must surely have stayed in the family.

No one knows, but what I do know is that the woman whom I visited in Malvern had known of it since she was a child in the early years of the 20th century. And it rested in the display box that had been in her house in Worcestershire since she and her late mother had been bombed out of Birmingham during the Second World War. She had nothing to do with Beldham or his family. She was a Cleave, and her family of bat makers in the Midlands had merged with the Clapshaws before being taken over by Slazenger between the wars.

I suggested the bat should be in a cricket museum, such as at Lord's, but this was greeted with a swift riposte: 'I want you to have it, I want it to go back home.' I protested, but left Malvern with a unique piece of cricketing history, which remains with me and will be left to the Museum of Farnham, where it will join a gingerbread mould, made for Beldham by his first coach, the Farnham baker Henry Hall, which I secured at auction during the MCC bicentenary sale at Lord's.

**THE OLDEST OLD FARNHAMIAN**

In the 2002 edition of the magazine we gave news that after some searching we had uncovered the oldest living Old Boy, or ex-pupil of Farnham Boys' Grammar School.

IAN T. JAMIESON was living in Worthing and waiting to celebrate his one-hundredth birthday in early May and perhaps readers wondered whether he had reached this date or not. The answer is yes and the following appeared in the Worthing Herald, complete with the picture of Ian.

'When Ian Jamieson celebrated his 100th birthday on 2nd May 2002, he had actually been 100 for a week. A bit like royalty, the former missionary, now a Worthing resident, has two birthdays a year. Born on 25th April 1902, Ian's mother died of thrombosis three weeks later. When his grief-stricken father registered his son's birth he got his dates mixed up and 2nd May is the official date, which appears on Ian's birth certificate.

"I didn't find out I had two birthdays until my first job interview," says Ian. "It's been a bit like the Queen having two birthdays every year".

The Mayor of Worthing joined the celebrations and the supervisor at the home where Ian lives says, "He is a gentleman. He greets everyone at the door, writes thank you notes by hand and until recently helped wash up the supper dishes". IAN T. JAMIESON seems to me to be a very suitable Oldest Old Farnhamian.

**ATHLETICS**  
**(GRAHAM SANDS CHALLENGE CUP FOR HALF MILE FLAT)**



1929;	L.S.SMITH.	1947;	E.B.THOMAS.
1930;	N.F.LOWRY.	1948;	P.G.D.NAYLOR.
1931;	D.MURPH.	1949;	.D.B.SHAKESHAFT.
1932;	W.S.L.SMALLMAN.	1950;	V.D.J.WYATT.
1933;	W.S.L.SMALLMAN.	1951;	J.T.LEGG.
1934;	P.E.HUCKIN.	1952;	A.J.TULL.
1935;	D.A.LITTLE.	1953;	M.DOYLE.
1936;	D.A.LITTLE.	1954;	A.J.TULL.
1937;	H. de B.BROCK.	1955;	K.H.S.MORRIS.
1938;	H. de B.BROCK.	1956;	M.H.HALL.
1939;	M.C.COLWILL.	1957;	B.D.J.WILLIAMS.
1940;	M.C.COLWILL.	1958;	P.J.FRANCIS.
1941;	M.C.COLWILL.	1959;	P.J.CRANSWICK.
1942;	M.C.COLWILL.	1960;	J.R.MATTHEWS.
1943;	G.A.BREHAUT.	1961;	D.J.BLUNT.
1944;	G.A.BREHAUT.	1962;	A.R.MATTHEWS.
1945;	P.W.VENTHAM.	1963;	C.R.J.BEAL.
1946;	P.W.VENTHAM.	1964;	T.REES-ROBERTS.



## INTER HOUSE CROSS COUNTRY – JUNIOR TEAMS



1925;	MORLEY.	1949;	CHILDE.
1927;	MASSINGBERD.	1950;	CHILDE.
1928;	MORLEY.	1951;	MORLEY.
1929;	CHILDE.	1952;	MORLEY.
1930;	CHILDE.	1953;	CHILDE.
1931;	CHILDE.	1954;	HARDING.
1932;	MASSINGBERD.	1955;	MORLEY.
1933;	CHILDE.	1956;	MASSINGBERD.
1934;	SCHOOL	1957;	HARDING.
1935;	SCHOOL	1958;	HARDING.
1936;	MORLEY.	1959;	CHILDE.
1937;	MASSINGBERD.	1960;	CHILDE.
1938;	SCHOOL.	1961;	CHILDE.
1939;	MASSINGBERD.	1962;	MASSINGBERD.
1940;	SCHOOL.	1963;	MASSINGBERD.
1941;	SCHOOL.	1964;	CHILDE.
1942;	CHILDE.	1965;	MASSINGBERD.
1943;	MASSINGBERD.	1966;	CHILDE.
1944;	MASSINGBERD.	1967;	MASSINGBERD.
1945;	HARDING.	1968;	MASSINGBERD.
1946;	HARDING.	1969;	CHILDE.
1947;	HARDING.	1970;	MORLEY.
1948;	SCHOOL.	1971;	HARDING

## THEN AND NOW

## RONALD HACK (1932 – 1937)



Ron Hack was born in what is now Copse Way Wrecclesham in 1920 and from 1926-27 he was a pupil at Wrecclesham Infants (Council) School and even recalls that Miss Lee was his teacher. From 1927-32 he attended Wrecclesham 'Big' (C of E) School under a Mike Parish.

Owing to not winning a rare scholarship Ron moved to the Boys' Grammar School as a fee paying student. He managed to get an excellent General School Certificate, but no Matriculation owing to a weakness with languages.

Whilst at the school and on leaving he was a keen tennis player with Wrecclesham Tennis Club. He was also a founder member of Wrecclesham Youth Club. In 1937 he began work as an apprentice pharmacist with Boots the chemists in Farnham and remained there until 1941. In 1938 he joined the St. John Ambulance Brigade and hence became a First Aid volunteer for the ARP who had various bases around Farnham. From 1940-44 he was in the Home Guard and rose to the rank of corporal. In 1941 he attended Guildford Technical College to study Pharmacy (Intermediate) and in 1942 he moved to Chelsea Polytechnic to try and qualify as a pharmaceutical chemist. Anticipating call-up for the Armed Forces he filled in time at Thos.Christy & Co, who were then at Hale. In 1945, and just prior to joining the Royal Navy, Ron married a Boots librarian who was then serving in the ATS at Aldershot. His son was born in 1946.

From 1945-47 he served in the Royal Navy on HMS Royal Arthur (Butlins, Skegness), then trained as a Radar Mechanic on HMS Collingwood. On passing out he was posted to Govan, Glasgow to return to HMS Collingwood, as an instructor, from where he was demobbed having spent no time at sea.

In 1947 he re-entered Chelsea Polytechnic and qualified as a Pharmaceutical Chemist (Ph.C). Later designated a 'Fellow' and then as 'Royal' was added carries the title F.R.Pharm.S. During the 1960's he also acquired membership of the Royal Society of Health, adding the appendage MRSH, the first pharmacist to be so admitted it appears.

It was now 1947 and, married and with a family, a job was a matter of urgency, but the right one in pharmacy did not materialise. Ron not wishing to continue in retail declined a position in Tilley's of West Street. Ron was a contemporary of Mr Tilley's son (nicknamed 'Bimbo') at the Grammar School, who unfortunately was killed while serving in the RAF. Ron was living in Castle Street with his in-laws and home was above Watney's Depot Off Licence and he decided to take a position with Watney, Combe & Reid in Pimlico, butting on to the Victoria Palace Theatre. It was intended that the position was temporary. In 1949 Ron decided to live nearer to London because of the shift work and the family moved to Worcester Park, where he still lives. In 1959 the company amalgamated with Mann, Crossman & Paulin and Ron moved to Whitechapel as chief chemist. A position

**THEN AND NOW****RONALD HACK (1932-1937)**

that he held for some twenty years. Such promotion made changing jobs very difficult.

Ron Hack had left school intending never to work in London or sit behind a desk!

His original intention was to become an architect, but it was not to be. However, he still retained his interest in drawing and design and as a sideline he designed assorted laboratories for his employers. His final effort for them was his second group research laboratory covering 12,000 square feet.

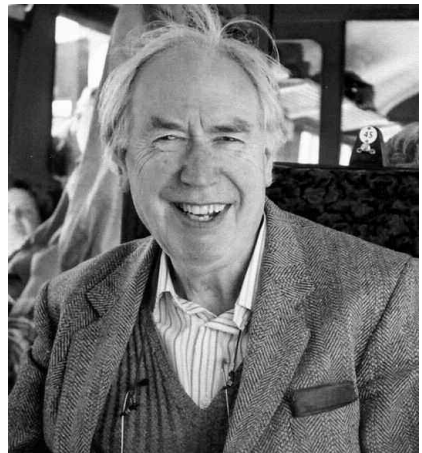
In 1980 the company decided to get out of international research and Ron was at the top of the list for redundancy. He left in May 1981 on a reduced pension and with a bitter taste in his mouth. In 1981 his marriage failed and he became interested in exploring Scotland.

In 1985 he took up archaeology via a part-time 3-year course in Field Archaeology. He added a fourth year to obtain his Diploma as well as his Certificate and completed the course aged seventy. He enjoyed a variety of 'digs' each year and became involved in Historic Landscape Survey, where one explores on a compass bearing. Age caught up on the latter at the end of 2000, not before some eighteen months doing the Hindhead Commons for the National Trust and he feels that there is still much to be discovered in Britain.

He became Warden of Warren Farm, Ewell looking after 54 acres of potential wild meadow for the Woodland Trust until 2002. Since 1998 he has been a steward for the National Trust at Ham House, Richmond.

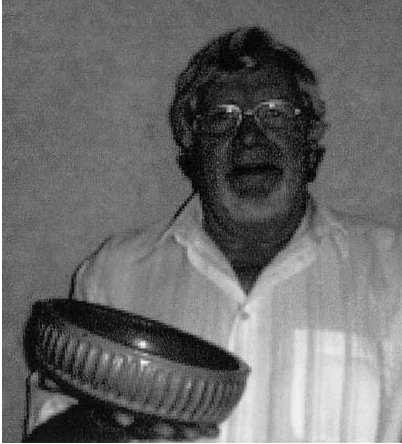
From 1986-1994 he was a volunteer driver for Queen Mary's Childrens Hospital, Carshalton. Here cars were used in preference to ambulances. He gave up when suffering from double cataracts, now dealt with.

In 2001 Ron Hack became involved in model railways and is something of a fanatic. He feels that at the age of 82 it must have been his second childhood coming on. He joined the Old Farnhamians' Lodge in 1954 and some years later became Master of the Lodge and then served a number of years as their Secretary (He observes that G.H.Bacon had been the Founder-Secretary). Ron Hack is a regular at the Annual Dinner of the Association. With his details he provided me with two membership bar charts showing the spread of ages of the members at 2001.



## THEN AND NOW

## JULIAN BENTICK (1939-1942)



So where do we start. Born 1926. Went to “the School” as a fee paying ‘day boy’. This defines where you are in the pecking order. Not bright enough to have obtained a scholarship but with parents who have faith in your ability – I know not why!

I must have been one of the last groups to go to Guernsey for a summer camp with Francis Crute (1939). What freedom. What a wonderful experience. One of the student assistants would take on five or six of us simultaneously and beat us all at chess.

He, the student, had some sort of altercation with another student and a knife was used – nothing

changes! Each tent was given an old issue of the London Telephone Directory to use as lavatory paper. One boy in my tent (named withheld for legal reasons) filled his trousers and we all decided the best thing to do was post them home to mum!

I left the school in 1942 and started work at the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE), Farnborough as a Laboratory Assistant. I was 15 and left school from the 4th Form without any academic qualifications but keen to contribute to the war effort. Those actually fighting the war at RAE were far too busy to concern themselves with a lad with no qualifications and a year or so later I joined the RAF: they were prepared to train me as a RADAR Mechanic following which they sent me to the Canal Zone in Egypt for two and a half years during which time I learnt to sail and took a small boat through part of the Suez Canal.

The law demanded that those who joined the Services were re-instated in the job they held prior to recruitment. Following release (release No 70), I rejoined RAE, Radio Department in 1948 as – a Laboratory Assistant. After seven years of evening classes at Farnborough Grammar School, Guildford Technical College and Farnborough Technical College I got some qualifications and at the end of my career reached the level of Senior Scientific Officer.

Working at RAE provided opportunities to play ‘boys games’. Flying as a Flight Observer in a wide variety of aircraft, including – Hudson, Anson, Lancaster, Canberra, Meteor (NF11), Comet 2, BAC 1-11, Andover, Nimrod and a variety of helicopters including the Sea King 5. Half of my career involved long range navigation research using radio frequencies below 16Khz that travel all around the world; the other half was spent providing both the RAF and Navy with tools to locate submarines.

The work on long-range navigation research led to me travelling the world from Thule in Greenland to Johannesburg and Singapore to Vancouver. This work was undertaken throughout the 1960’s and was a very exciting period in my life.

## THEN AND NOW

## JULIAN BENTICK (1939-1942)

Research on Anti Submarine Warfare found me flying very, very low over the sea in aircraft especially equipped for launching sonobuoys into the sea as well as going to sea in a variety of small ships equipped for underwater acoustic research. This commonly involved RAE aircraft and a submarine loaned by the Royal Navy to undertake what the Navy called 'clockwork mousing'.

In the meantime I married Pat Goater and we had three daughters and now have five grandchildren. I was instrumental in reviving the Farnham Swimming Club (1949) and served as Secretary, Chairman and more importantly, a teacher of swimming. I am a founder member and past chairman of the Farnham Geological Society and a Life Member of both FGS and FSC. At one time I was Chairman of four local organisations. I am a regular user of the Farnham Conservative Club.

For the past twenty years I have been a part-time student of pottery; first, provided by the Surrey Institute of Art and Design (previously known as Farnham Art School) and latterly under the umbrella of the West Street Potters, which was spawned from the SIAD classes, and operates at what was Harris's Pottery in Wrecclesham. For a while I was Chairman of WSP. I have my own pottery equipment and still make pots.

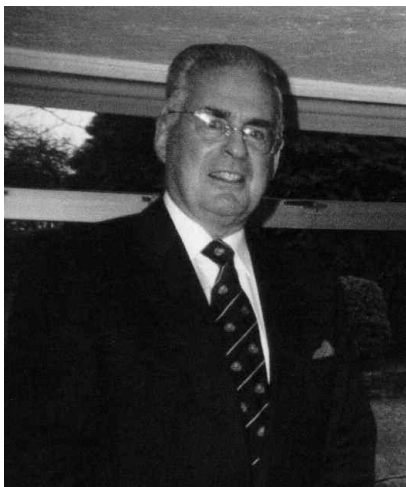
For ten years following my retirement I worked voluntarily with the Medical Director, Dr.Carey Morris of the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice, in designing the registration and recording system for all patients who have had reason to use any aspect of the Hospice's palliative care. I was able to employ my computer programming skills, learnt at RAE, in what proved to be the largest software programme that I ever designed. It is still in use a decade on – very satisfying. My worse period was waiting for the change to the year 2000. The registration system employed a lot of date arithmetic and was very vulnerable to the 'Millennium Bug'. I am glad to report there was no crash on the 1st January 2000.

To be continued!

Julian Bentick was already an excellent swimmer when he arrived at the School and his record is worth showing in full:

1941:	200 Yards	Open	FIRST.
	66 Yards	Open	FIRST.
	Diving	Open	THIRD.
	Relay (3x66 Yards)	Harding	FIRST.
	Relay (2x66 Yards)	Harding	FIRST.
	Team Diving	Harding	SECOND.
	Awarded School Swimming Colours.		
1942:	200 Yards	Open	FIRST.
	66 Yards	Open	FIRST.
	66 Yards Breast Stroke		SECOND.
	Relay (3x66 Yards)	Harding	FIRST.
	Relay (2x66 Yards)	Harding	FIRST.
	Team Diving	Harding	SECOND.
	School Swimming Vice-Captain.		

## THEN AND NOW



## MAURICE JEFFREYS (1948-1953)

Maurice Jeffreys was born in Seale, in Surrey and was brought up in the early days on the estate of Sir Richard Thornton, the Lord Lieutenant of the County, where his father worked as a gardener. He initially attended Seale, and later Tongham C of E School, and at the age of 11 took the Eleven Plus Exam, and passed to take a place at Farnham Boys' Grammar School.

Maurice had several miles to travel to the school and was soon one of the "Guildford Brigade" who made the tedious journey by the number 31 bus over the Hogs Back each day. He can still recall those journeys and others on the bus, including the popular David "Nobby" Clarke.

Joining the Grammar School, Maurice became a member of Massingberd House and soon became

involved in the sporting activities of the school in particular. He played soccer for his House, but his real strengths were in cricket, where he was a successful opening bowler in the School 2nd XI, and small bore rifle shooting, for which he gained his house colours. The Massingberd shooting team at that time were dominant and Maurice played a leading role in their success, retaining even to this day, his great love of the sport. Old records show that he was also a strong discus thrower and shot putter, events which he represented the School at the Farnham and District Schools' Athletics meetings. Overall one could say that he was an all round sportsman. He also took an active part in the school Combined Cadet Force.

In 1953 he left the School and after completing National Service with the RAF at Headquarters Fighter Command, he began to commute to London from his Surrey home to begin a career in insurance broking with a company called A W Bain & Sons. Maurice liked the London lifestyle and soon began to rent a small flat in Cromwell Road, South Kensington. Life was good and the career was progressing well until a routine visit to a mass X-Ray unit revealed that he had contracted TB, and was forced to spend several months in a sanatorium at nearby Milford.

It was not long after making a full recovery and moving back to London, that he met his future wife Margaret, who was a trainee nurse at the Royal Masonic Hospital in Hammersmith. After she had qualified as a SRN, they married at her home village in Devon, and the editor of this magazine was honoured to be their best man. The newly weds set up home in Tonbridge, Kent and were soon the proud parents of their first child, Richard.

In 1966 Maurice was offered an appointment with a large overseas company and after much thought the Jeffreys family moved to Hong Kong, where he began a career with Jardine Matheson as Head Office Marine Underwriter of the Lombard Insurance Co. Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Jardines. The years in the Far East produced two more children in Susie and Beverley, and Maurice's career really began to take off in this new environment. He was a permanent member of the Marine Insurance Association of Hong Kong, becoming

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**THEN AND NOW****MAURICE JEFFREYS (1948-1953)**

Chairman in 1970. He was also a Committee member of the Hong Kong Development Council involved in promoting the Colony's exports. Not only did the work prove successful, but also the standard of living and life-style of Hong Kong was extremely attractive and the Jeffreys family flourished.

However, in 1972 the attraction of the old country became too strong and Maurice decided to make a career move back to London, where he had been offered a position as Director of Marine Insurance with a reputable Lloyd's insurance broker. This time they set up the family home at Camberley, Surrey, and once again he began to commute to the capital. Maurice was soon back in the swing of things, although it was quite a different lifestyle from the heady days across the other side of the world. Old friends were contacted, friendships rekindled and the family became an important part of the local community. Whilst he progressed his career, his wife became heavily involved in the Girl Guide movement, and in time became the Division Commissioner for Surrey West.

Maurice had become a Freemason during his time in Hong Kong and now joined the Lloyd's Lodge in 1981. In time he became Master of the Lodge, and enjoyed a wonderful year in one of the more well known London Lodges.

Time came when an opportunity arose for Maurice to join up with two well-known colleagues and start their own company of insurance brokers. So began the company of Hall Harford Jeffreys Ltd., Lloyd's brokers, operating out of the City of London, with Maurice heading up the Marine Division. With his new partners he formed another Lloyd's company, Hall Harford Jeffreys Langdale Ltd., which operated as a Lloyd's Members Agency company, introducing wealthy clients as Underwriting Members of Lloyd's. The companies prospered and Maurice became an Underwriting Member of Lloyd's himself, underwriting business on 15 Syndicates. They were well known in the Lloyd's market, and the future was looking good. In 1985, Maurice received an invitation from the Chairman of Lloyd's to join the Board of Trustees of the Lloyd's Superannuation Fund, which administered the multi million pound pension schemes of many Lloyd's Syndicates, Lloyd's Brokers and the Corporation of Lloyd's.

Although now over 50, Maurice still retained his old ambition of running his own company and after several years his partners decided to retire, leaving Maurice as sole owner of the company, which he renamed Jeffreys Coates & Associates Ltd. Eventually, looking ahead to retirement, he sold his company to Lambert Bros. Insurance Brokers Ltd., and gave up the joys of owning his own company for a very good service Contract with a plc. After retiring in 1996, he was retained by the company as a Marine Consultant, and has now almost let go of the reins.

On retiring he decided to move, with Margaret, to her home village of Chagford, on the edge of Dartmoor in Devon, where they have a lovely home overlooking a valley to the Dartmoor countryside. Initially, he commuted to the office two days a week and stayed overnight in London, but this came to an end in 2000, and he now operates his business interests via the home computer. If you visit the Jeffreys', their life is idyllic, being surrounded by family

## THEN AND NOW

## MAURICE JEFFREYS (1948-1953)

and many old friends. Margaret is a Parish Councillor, as well as being a Governor of the local school. Maurice is heavily involved in Probus, an organisation for retired businessmen, and was the Chairman of the Okehampton branch during their Silver Jubilee Anniversary year in 2000. He is a member of the local Parochial Church Council and has become a playing member of Okehampton Golf Club, as well as taking up Lawn Bowls by becoming a member of Chagford Bowling Club. He has also returned to rifle shooting and is a member of the local rifle club, of which he is Secretary.

Maurice and Margaret travel a great deal and still have a home in the South of France, on the outskirts of Marseille. Son Richard has a very successful career as a Chartered Accountant, and works for an American company in New York. Daughter Beverley is married to a French businessman and lives in Toronto, Canada, and was recently head hunted to work in a major French bank there. Susie lives happily with her husband and three children in Kingston on Thames, Surrey.

So here is one Old Boy who has carved out quite a career for himself after humble beginnings that were not easy. He has travelled round the world twice and is still looking for places to see. He has a fine family and six grandchildren, who all visit the Devon home regularly. Maurice is a regular at the Annual Dinner, and the journey from the West Country does not deter him from coming to Farnham to meet old classmates and reacquaint himself with the school, which gave him such a great start in life.



FARNHAM LECTURE-2002 – THE EDEN PROJECT

L to R: Roy Robins, Sally Francis, Maurice Sturt, Paul Travers (Speaker), John Crotty, George Baxter, John McLaughlin, Dudley Backhurst, Cyril Trust.



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**WAR MEMORIES****LEN SALTMARSH. DFC & bar.**

My father was a Naval Chief Petty Officer in the First World War and his ship was sunk in the North Sea leaving him adrift on a Carley raft for eight days in thick fog. He was one of four survivors. The others froze to death. Maybe this was an indicator that others in the Saltmarsh family would have a Guardian Angel.

I was educated at Farnham Grammar School, but my achievements there were far from brilliant. The people in charge were very strict and looking back I think rather cruel. I rebelled against the 'fag' system. I was good at sport, a good sprinter and a dubious record achievement was setting a record for throwing the cricket ball, which I understand was not beaten in my school days. I was never beaten at my weight in the boxing ring. My name appears on the Roll of Honour in the old School Hall.

When I left school there was a lot of unemployment and I craved for adventure. I had a short spell in a solicitor's office but did not last very long. I was a loner and felt different to other people around me. I looked for a job at the steamship companies and the only position I could get was with the Union Castle Line as a stoker on a coal burning vessel named The Balmoral Castle. I told them that I had worked on a farm and was used to hard work, but I did not realise how hard it was going to be. I was just turned 18 years of age. The stokers were tough, but surprisingly they had strict rules of conduct and quite a few of them were very good people, with some being religious. At the end of the return voyage from Cape Town you could challenge the chief stoker to a bare-fist fight and if you won you took his job for the next trip, which was worth another thirty shillings a month. My wage was six pounds a month. Although it was a new environment for me I got on well with the men. I suppose I was a strange person to them because I came from another background and some of the men could not read or write. In fact one told me he had never been to school. Two of them got me to write letters home for them.

I made friends of Jock Graham, who later went down with the battleship, The Hood, when it was sunk by the Bismark. He was an officer's steward so I had food from the officer's table, which was quite sumptuous compared with ours. Our food was very basic, but by law we had to receive four pounds of meat each week. This law was made for the navvies who worked in constructing the railways in Victorian times and we needed this to give us strength, as stoking was severe test of stamina, especially in the tropical heat. The hard work built me up and gave me a great deal of mental and physical stamina, which later enabled me to succeed in situations that may have defeated many people. After a couple of trips I was the equal of the rest of the men. In those days The Cape Docks were quite dangerous and we always carried a short length of chain with us when we went ashore. I was stopped on one occasion, but a chain whipped across the face settled the argument. We heard of crews from other ships being knifed and usually went ashore in twos or threes for safety.

The war came along and gave me the chance to get away from what had become a very boring and negative existence. I joined the Royal Air Force as a voluntary Reserve Officer Cadet. I had dreamed of going to Cambridge and rowing in the Boat Race, but that was not meant to be, but I got to Cambridge in the end by a remarkable coincidence when I was posted to Trinity College for my navigational course. I felt that I was doing something really worthwhile and passed out with no trouble. I suddenly realised that I was not as dim as I

**WAR MEMORIES. (continued).****LEN SALTMARSH. DFC & bar.**

had thought. I needed the right environment and now there was no stopping me.

The next thing I knew I was aboard the liner Queen Elizabeth and on my way to Canada. Arriving in New York we took the train to Halifax in eastern Canada and then by Trans Pacific Railway to Calgary at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, where I did my flying training on Tiger Moth aircraft. I loved the flying and I took four hours only before taking my first solo flight. About fifty percent of the pupils failed the course and were sent on other duties. I then graduated to the single-seater Harvard which was a much more advanced plane. On one occasion I had a forced landing miles from anywhere and we had been told to stay with our plane if this happened. I stayed with my plane all that night and was not picked up until the following evening. There was a lot of dried brush and I managed to light a very large fire, which kept me from freezing. Unfortunately we did not carry a radio.

After completing the course successfully I returned to England by sea. I then went to an advanced flying school where I flew different planes, Wellingtons, Stirlings, Halifax's and the lovely Lancaster. I was then posted to 514 Squadron at Waterbeach, Cambridge. The first sortie I did was with an experienced crew just across the Channel to the French coast where we dropped our bombs on a railway siding. There was a little light flak and that was my introduction to active operations although it hardly prepared me for what was to come. We survived our first tour of thirty sorties, which gave me a mental stability and hardness, which helped me overcome the jitters of the early operations. I had gained in confidence and I really enjoyed being in charge of the Lancaster and with the excellent crew I had with me until the end of the war. When we volunteered for the Pathfinder Force we were about to enter the most exciting phase of the war. We were posted to 7 Squadron Oakington, Cambridge. All my crew having proved themselves in operation with their courage and expertise were now accepted into the Elite Pathfinder Force for special duties of a high standard. We had come through our 'baptism of fire' and we were proud of this.

I was classed as an 'A' Category Pilot and Crew. Some of our trips were without too much trouble, but never dull. There was always the threat of night-fighters and there were often big problems with the weather, especially icing conditions, which could cause some nasty moments. Once on returning to base and approaching the runway, preparing to land, the aircraft in front of us was attacked by a German fighter. It managed to land, but two of the crew were killed. I felt that my 'Guardian Angel' was there to protect me and had many near escapes whilst other crews bought it after a few sorties. They called me 'Lucky Salty', and I certainly was! We did receive many fighter attacks, which often resulted in severe damage, but we always managed to get back to base. I had one of my crew killed and only one of them injured. We sometimes received engine damage and flew a number of times on three engines and once on two and once we flew home on one, which reduced our altitude to less than one thousand feet. On this occasion we crossed the North Sea and on arriving over our coastline we were fired on by our own coastal batteries. They possibly thought that we were a German fighter plane trying to sneak in under our radar screen. A piece of shrapnel made a hole in the side window just above my head and severed some cables which put out the lights.

**WAR MEMORIES. (continued).****LEN SALTMARSH. DFC & bar.**

It would have been ironic if we had been shot down by our own guns after just managing to reach England.

We were asked for volunteers for a special target in the far North of Germany, near the Russian border. There were only six aircraft needed and my crew agreed that we should volunteer, which we did. But when we were made aware of the extreme distance, we almost wished we had not done so. It was at the extreme range of our plane and it would require precise navigation and we realised that if we had adverse winds we would not get home. It turned out to be a flight of eight hours twenty minutes duration, directly across France and Germany on a straight track, which increased the danger when one could not divert. Remarkably we made it there and returned without fighter attacks and anti-aircraft guns had no interest in us at all. We were over France on the return trip and about 150 miles from base when we realised that we had very little fuel left. For economy reasons I cut the two outer motors and reduced height to less than 2,000 feet, and when we crossed the French coast we did not get any flak. We were now at our stations for ditching in the sea. My Guardian Angel was aboard that night and right on the nose was an airstrip with the lights on and we managed to land. All our petrol gauges were showing empty and we were told later that we only had forty gallons left. Only one other plane returned home.

Fighter attacks were rather scary but if we saw the fighter before it was committed to the attack, the Lancaster was so light on the controls and manoeuvrable, that we usually could avoid being hit. They were afraid of our firepower and although our guns were small bore Brownings they could spray the path of an attacking fighter in a cone and fire six cwt. Of bullets per minute, about 4,000 rounds. On moonlight nights we often saw a fighter plane standing off out of range apparently reluctant to come in and attack us.

We were chosen for reserve crew for the Dam raids. This involved a lot of low-level training over water, but much to our disappointment, and perhaps relief, we were not required. On the Dam raids seven planes were lost with all their crews. The massive bombing of the German cities was, we felt, retribution for the bombing of our own cities and of course the memory of the bombing of the undefended city of Amsterdam was still remembered. I saw the damage to Portsmouth and the London Docks after the German raids and that rather hardened our resolve in support of doing likewise.

'D' Day came with increased activity for us. We often flew three or four sorties mainly in daytime. We were bombing the Panzer tanks that were moving towards the landings, but mainly the railway junctions. Later when the Falais concentration developed we made very heavy raids on troop and gun positions there. I think the most testing time for me was when the Germans attempted to reach Brussels through the Ardennes gap. I flew four sorties in twenty-four hours in the most atrocious weather. Taking off was no joke in the thick fog, and to say the least it was very scary indeed. We heard that nine aircraft had crashed on take off at other station airfields.

My last major operation was the bombing of Dresden. We were the second aircraft in to drop our red markers with extreme accuracy. This lovely mediaeval city was destroyed in a few hours. Nearly 2,000 tons of bombs and incendiaries were dropped with an enormous loss of

**WAR MEMORIES. (continued).****LEN SALTMARSH. DFC & bar.**

life. I often think about it with regret and wonder what it was all about. When the war in Europe was over I was asked to form a Squadron for the continuation of hostilities against Japan. We were briefed to fly to Butterfield airstrip in Malaya, but the atom bomb was dropped and the war came to an end.

I was then posted to Palam, Delhi in India in preparation for their Independence. There was great unrest and religion plus extreme poverty that prevailed was an excuse for rioting and looting. I flew a light aircraft and reported where the rioters were and in which direction they were heading. This was in the countryside around New Delhi, the capital. It was interesting, but to me India was a country of disease and decay. The bullock carts would go around the old city and pick up the dead who had died on the pavements during the night. Hundreds slept on the pavements because they had nothing, and nowhere to go.

I obtained my Civil Pilot's licence and had an interview with Tartar Airlines, who had just started the line with 10 Dakotas, ex-American Army planes. They eventually became Indian Airways and I was offered the job of Chief Pilot when I left the RAF, but circumstances that arose later dictated that this was not to be. I was invited to dinner with one of the Tartar family and later I often went to the races with Serena, one of the daughters. I would put a few rupees on a horse and invariably it would lose, whilst Serena would back in a thousand rupees or more. She came to England, staying at the Dorchester Hotel, and I met her quite often. She was out of my league and I had little money, whilst she was from one of the richest families in India. The day before Independence I travelled by the Mail Train from Delhi to Bombay. The day after the same train was derailed and many passengers massacred. My Guardian Angel was still around!

I returned to England and was discharged from the Services. When I handed in my kit for the last time and walked out of the demobilisation centre it was the most traumatic and devastating day of my life. I was a lost soul in an alien world. I made for my old club in Berkeley Square in London and got very drunk. How could I exist in this new world with no excitement and with my crew dispersed? Perhaps I am a warrior type and peacetime is not for me. The RAF alone lost 54,000 aircrew, killed in the war, and I have often thought why was I a survivor, and for what?

I managed to get a job in the aircraft factory of Vickers Armstrong, but this was not for me and I left after a short spell. I had farming experience and answered an advert for a position as a farm manager for Maristow, which was owned by Lord Roberer. I did not hit it off well with his Lordship and left after four rather negative years. I was not allowed to use my initiative and the farm was run on medieval lines. The workers were the slaves, which was very much against what I had been fighting for.

I have no recriminations as I have had a far better life than most, even though I did not rise to great heights, and I at least have a good family around me. I am blessed in many ways. Peacetime came with all its problems and I tried farming and dabbled in various properties and managed to survive financially.

This is my story, but not yet the END...

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## FARNHAM GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL –OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

Cyril Trust has asked me to write something about the Old Girls for the magazine. Hopefully having a husband, two brothers, a brother-in-law and numerous cousins, their partners and off-spring all attending Farnham Boys' Grammar School as well as my father being 'honorary' FGS, by playing for the Masters v The School at cricket, is sufficient qualifications for a spot in the Farnhamian?

Cyril suggested mentioning the number of marriages between former FGS and FGGS pupils but I think that would be impossible. There must have been so many. Rita Stone, the OGA secretary I took over from in 1969, when they immigrated to Australia, is married to Peter Downham an Old Farnhamian\*. No doubt simply going through the list of secretaries would produce even more OFA/OGA marriages so imagine the result from comparing membership lists.

One wedding we are particularly pleased about, though, reunited two former 'best friends'. The FGS husband of an Old Girl writing to tell us the sad news of her death mentioned other former FGGS pupils in his letter and wondered where they were now. Reading this later, in our Newsletter, the niece of one of them told her aunt who immediately got in touch with him. They have now been happily married to each other for nine years. An OGA success. Another has been re-discovering five friends who had lost touch with each other. Known for their high spirits and exuberance as the 'Famous Five' they are spread around the world, living in Italy, Ibiza, London and two in America, so a particularly satisfying achievement for us.

Our school was founded in 1901 and although there are references to an Old Girls' Association, in magazines before the First World War, our present OGA records only go back to 1919. Membership stands at about 730 which includes the new category of Associate Membership for those who are interested in the OGA but do not qualify for full membership but being former pupils or Members of Staff. Attendance at the two events held each year is good. Our Spring party is open to all friends and relations and we have been pleased to regularly welcome a number of Old Farnhamians to South Farnham School, Menin Way.

Response to letters, especially from those too far away to come to meetings, is very pleasing and helps to provide information for our annual Newsletters. Certainly encouragement of different year groups, to find their contemporaries and meet at an OGA gathering, has boosted numbers. It is seen as a good way to keep in touch and have news of everyone. For those searching it is a very rewarding experience too. Girls often change their surnames and some even more than once so it is quite a challenge to find former classmates. The further removed they are from their leaving year the more difficult it becomes, as the chance of relatives still living in the family home gets more remote even assuming that the address is known in the first place. The excitement when the group finally meets up after a gap of many years is really great.

Bringing old friends together again and maintaining the memories and history of a school that no longer exists is surely what Old Girls is all about.

Stella David (now Bolt): Secretary FGGS OGA

\* There is an article from Peter Downham later in this magazine.

## NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS

The Old Boys website appears to have sparked off a great deal of activity across the world in Australia with messages passing regularly between old friends. JOHN STRATFORD says that he now corresponds regularly with ROD PAINE, who lives in Perth, South Australia, and KEITH MORTIMER is in contact with both of them from the UK. Rod has also been in touch with FRANK RAGGETT, who lives in Sydney, and is the brother of LARRY RAGGETT. John wished everyone an enjoyable 70th OFA Annual Dinner. Perhaps one day there may be an 'Aussie' lunch similar to the Southampton event!

To anyone researching the history of the old School the name STROUD will mean a great deal, as the influence of this family was evident for over 150 years. Whilst the 2002 magazine was being posted to members, an article appeared in the Farnham Herald telling the story of VICTORIA STROUD who had just reached her 105th birthday. She was a member of the Stroud dynasty and a descendant of William IV, who entered the Stroud family by marrying JACK STROUD, the son of WILLIAM STROUD, in 1925. William Stroud was the brother of CHARLES STROUD, who was the headmaster of the School for most of the second half of the 19th century, and also became head for a short time after his brother died. The Herald said that it had regularly reported items regarding the family since the 1920's including a piece on Gwendoline, the daughter of Charles Stroud, who obtained a first class honours degree, opened a prep school in Farnham in West Street called Beavers House and played in the London Symphony Orchestra. It also recalled reporting the death of a RICHARD STROUD, son of Charles, who was killed by a sniper while flying over the Khyber Pass in 1930 and another RICHARD STROUD, the son of Jack and Victoria, who was killed in an accident in Farnham in 1942. Many readers will remember members of the Stroud family connected with the School even in more recent years.

Via our increasingly active website we have heard from BOB TINGLEY, who is living in Fareham on the south coast. Bob says that he has little or no contact with school since leaving about sixty years ago, having spent 22 years in the Fleet Air Arm finishing in 1969 as a Chief Radio Electrician followed by 20 years at what is now the National Statistical Office. In the late fifties he was stationed with PETER PURVIS BEM who had been at the School a few years earlier. They remained in contact fairly regularly until Peter left the Navy and went as the Chief Steward at the Royal Yacht Squadron at Cowes, where he often appeared on TV firing the starting guns for the races. They have now lost contact, although Bob knows that Peter is still well and living on the Isle of Wight. At the time of writing Bob was having chemotherapy and we wish him a return to good health. He now has the 2002 magazine to read and hopefully we have yet another new member. \* (SEE OBITUARIES)

As usual we have sent copies of the last magazine to several relatives of old masters and old boys and thank you letters or telephone calls have arrived from Peggy Lewis-Jones (daughter of Stanley Lock), Julia Wilson (daughter of Harold Beeken), Violet Dowse (daughter of Nick Ridout and sister of Ronald Ridout), Elaine Aylwin (widow of John Aylwin) and of course BARBARA WILLS (widow of John Wills). The latter recalls Geoff Crawte, Roger Downham, Dave Hanks and Pat Chandler who have all passed away. She also remembers having SYLVIA MORGAN to stay and taking her to Monmouth for a day out.

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## NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS

As they parked they bumped into HUGH and RITA BATCHELOR, who were parked nearby. She comments on the photograph of the presentation of the keyboard to David Victor-Smith at the College and remembers all the Old Boys involved and says that they have all 'worn well'. Barbara is 82 and it is good to keep these links with the past through relatives of Old Boys and old masters.

In the search for more of the 'Class of 1948' we are very pleased to have found a popular member of that class in **MICHAEL PRENTICE (1948-53)**, who has made contact with us from his home in Canada. For many years after leaving the School Michael worked for Reuters and in 1976 he emigrated to Canada and settled in a suburb of Ottawa, the capital city. He joined a local newspaper named the Ottawa Citizen as a reporter some 24 years ago and is still with them with a particular interest in the area of consumer affairs. In 1993 he married Marie-Louise, a Dutch lady, with the ceremony being in the Netherlands. Michael will be forced to retire at the end of 2002 but plans to continue in journalism as a freelance. I am sure that now we have made contact we will hear more from yet another old Boy who has settled in Canada.

(Michael Prentice has now sent in his story 'Reporting From Ottawa' and it is printed in its entirety later in this magazine).

If one walks into the old entrance to the school they will see several honours boards facing them at the bottom of the stairs. One of the first names shown is that of **CYRIL FORSTER GARBETT (1885-1886)** and it is probable that not many of us know that this ex-pupil became the Lord Archbishop of York and Primate of England from 1947 until 1955. The editor has recently been given a copy of a history of the Garbett family taken from 'A Surrey Village and its Church St. Paul's-in-Tongham.'

It reads: Charles Garbett returned from India in 1868. His first wife died on the voyage back to England. He was inducted Vicar of Tongham on 4th April 1869. Charles Garbett's long service in India, with the Honourable East India Company, is possibly the link, when he returned to England, with his appointment to the living of the new Parish of Tongham.

On 28th April 1874 Charles Garbett at the age of 60, remarried. His wife, 30 years his junior, was Susan Charlotte Forster. She was born on 3rd June 1843, the daughter of Lieut. -General Thomas Bowes Forster of the Madras Army and the granddaughter of General Sir Peregrine Maitland. The wedding took place on 28th April 1874, at St. Paul's Church, Tongham, and is recorded as the 31st entry in the Marriage Register, the service being conducted by the Rev. Brownlow Maitland.

The Rev. Charles and Susan Garbett lived at the new Vicarage, built 1869, in Poyle Road. They had five children (Cyril, Basil, Clement, Leonard and Elsie) the eldest of whom; Cyril Forster Garbett became Lord Archbishop of York and Primate of England 1947-55. Charles Garbett died in 1895 from influenza and his wife Susan died in 1934, at the time that her eldest son was 90th Bishop of Winchester (1932-42).

## NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS

A newspaper cutting from the Farnborough Courier headlined Old Boy, **PETER DADSON**, who left the School in 1938 and his considerable success in winning two first prizes for his garden displays in the 2002 Rushmoor in Bloom competition. It said that his eye-catching flower arrangements caught the imagination of the judges who presented him with first prizes for most unusual planted container, and best Golden Jubilee display. Peter had made the container from recyclable materials in the shape of a crown, with multi-coloured bottle tops as a substitute for jewels. This was filled with an array of flowers, including marigolds, which also featured in the Golden Jubilee display. Rows of red, white and blue flowers completed the Jubilee garden with mini flags on the wall behind. Peter said ‘ This is the first time that I have won a prize for Rushmoor in Bloom. I have entered for eight or nine years now and I am really pleased.’ There are many Old Boys who enjoy their garden, but without this level of success!

We have also heard from **F.H.C. (Freddie) WIMBLEDON** who attended the school from 1922 to 1927 and as you can imagine is one of our ‘senior Old Boys’. Of his time at Morley Road he says that his housemaster, George Bacon, said that he was an “enthusiastic” member of Harding House. Unfortunately, although he tried, he was not much good on the playing fields, although later in life he enjoyed playing tennis, squash, badminton and golf. Even today though he does not watch soccer on television. He adds that he did manage to beat S.N.Wiltshire once in the annual boxing tournament!

On leaving FGS he went into insurance, not from choice. Starting work was difficult in those days of the General Strike, the Recession and mass unemployment. In 1940 he managed to unshackle himself from ‘reserved occupation’ and join the RAF. He went into Flying Control as it was then known and here he found the life that he enjoyed and decided to remain in the RAF when the war ended. The Second World War ended and the Cold War began and Freddie specialised by joining the Fighter Control Branch, which was expanding rapidly. Here he spent three years instructing and followed this by joining an Examining Team checking on the operational units within the Branch. He also did two years as a British Liaison Officer with the Luftwaffe after it had reformed.

Freddie says that his life has been interesting, eventful and so far healthy. He thinks one of the great disappointments is the disappearance of FGS and he said this when speaking at one of the Annual Dinners. Guildford Grammar School survived because Guildford and its environs pulled out every stop to make its Grammar School independent, and succeeded. Alas poor FGS!

Freddie says although he did not achieve a lot he feels that he did not let down FGS and Harding House.

*One reason for contacting Freddie Wimbledon was the story that he was one of a few people who had some involvement with UFO's. I asked him to relate the details for this magazine and on the next page you can read about “ The Lakenheath Incident.”*



## THE LAKENHEATH INCIDENT      FREDDIE WIMBLEDON (1922-27)

I was the Chief Controller on duty at Neatishead in Norfolk on the night of 13th/14th August 1956. My function was to monitor the radar picture on my scope and if something unauthorised or behaving erratically was observed to scramble aircraft from the Quick Alert Squadron on duty twenty-four hours a day to investigate.

I must mention that this was the period of the Cold War and Russian aircraft were testing our air defences very frequently and being intercepted. Never before had one been seen so far South. Moreover we knew the performance of the Russian aircraft, and the performance of what ever it was that we were seeing was so fantastic. It was capable of stopping without any deceleration, moving off instantly, changing direction and we were puzzled and at first thought something was wrong with our radar. Lakenheath, a United States Air Force base, had also been watching and were seeing the same picture and reported that a bright light was 'buzzing' their airfield.

I decided to scramble a Venom Night Fighter, which took off and was taken over by one of my interception controllers who vectored it towards the target. The Navigator/ Radar Operator in the Venom reported seeing the target on his own airborne radar. The target stopped suddenly and we could see from the radar responses that our Venom had passed underneath it. In the meantime a second Venom was scrambled and vectored towards the target. The first Venom was now manoeuvred to get behind the target, but it seemed to sense what was happening. Suddenly it seemed to get tired of playing around and shot upwards at a terrific rate and was soon out of our radar range. Meanwhile HQ Fighter Command had received our commentary and a very senior officer who told us we must not discuss the incident with anyone visited us next day.

It was not for some years that the story came out and then by a USAF NCO who had seen the whole thing on his own radar. Since then quite a number of reporters have ferreted out various facets and found my name and how I was involved. Also both lots of aircrew have been found and the usual number of people not involved, but who claim to know so much. Although I have given lectures officially in Service circles I have refrained from writing a book!

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**REPORTING FROM OTTAWA (Canada). MICHAEL PRENTICE (1948-54)**

What a pleasure it was to hear from Ian Sargeant and then from Cyril Trust, after Ian had tracked me down to my home of the past 26 years in Canada! I was delighted to hear that the old boys' network is flourishing, and to receive news from Ian and Cyril, and then from the magazine, of so many of my class of '48. Lord Lea of Crondall? Well, congratulations, Dave! I had no idea. My 91-year-old mother, who is alive and well and living in Eastbourne, usually keeps me up on such intelligence, but this news must not have received much prominence in The Daily Telegraph. It was nice to learn, too, that Cyril Payne made it as a professional classical musician.

Cyril Trust kindly asked me to send news of myself for the magazine. I have two claims to fame, admittedly both dubious: For a year, I was the youngest boy in the school. And now I am one of the few survivors of the Class of '48 who are still working for a living. Not that I would call it work, exactly, being a reporter, which is what I have been for all but a few of the past 50 years. More like a hobby, most of the time. I imagine Cyril Payne would say the same. I tried my hand at editing, without success, too hot-tempered, too impatient, too impetuous and too much of a desire to shine, as Curly Carroll once aptly summed me up on an end-of-term report. To which F.A.Morgan added: "Harder work, please."

As an example of work as a hobby, I started by covering Aldershot football club for the Farnham Herald (competing against Guy Bellamy, who was doing the same thing for the Surrey & Hants News). I moved from sports to news in the mid-1960s, a few years after joining Reuters, but still drew a few memorable sports assignments, including The Rumble in the Jungle between Muhammad Ali and George Foreman in the middle of the night in the middle of Africa. It was the highlight of my career. I ate oysters with Angelo Dundee one evening before the fight. If there were a Guinness Book of Records award for the world's most expensive phone call, it would probably belong to me. I was on the phone to Reuters' New York office from one hour before the fight to at least one hour afterwards. I never knew how much the call cost. Among other things, I had to call a winner for each round. I chickened out on the first round by calling it even (thinking I might be showing my bias if I called it for Ali). But I got all the other rounds right, all for Ali. I was one of only two reporters to follow Ali to the airport after the fight, and still have the tape of the interview in which Ali thanks ME. What a man!

I was ordered out of the Glasgow Celtic dressing room in Lisbon after they became the first British team to win the European Cup. Jock Stein, the Celtic manager, had wrongly inferred that a question I asked suggested Celtic were lucky to win. I was there when England lost the World Cup in Mexico, relinquishing a two-goal lead to West Germany, and was surprised by the backlash from many of those watching on TV in England. As Jimmy Sirrell once said: "That's fitba'."

I covered the White House for Reuters for a few years in Nixon's time, but was reassigned to Egypt before the final chapter of Watergate. The biggest scoop I nearly had was in the Azores, where Nixon announced a devaluation of the dollar (big news in those days). It was in the days before live coverage of White House briefings. White House rules said no journalist could leave a briefing until it formally ended. I didn't think the rules applied outside the United States, and ducked out, unseen, immediately I heard of the devaluation.

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**REPORTING FROM OTTAWA (Canada). MICHAEL PRENTICE (1948-54)**

I dashed 100 yards down the street to the phone and cable office. But it took them more than 10 minutes to get me a connection to London or New York, and my advantage was gone.

After 16 years with Reuters, I settled in Ottawa, Canada's capital, 26 years ago, the first two years with the Ottawa Journal, the last 24 with the Ottawa Citizen. I had fun with Reuters, but I've had more fun working for newspapers and getting involved in the community. What me, editorialising? I met the Queen in Ottawa and had a long chat with her during a reception for journalists, at which we were not allowed to report the chitchat. She felt her horse had been unlucky not to win the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe at Longchamps a few weeks earlier. "We was robbed, Liz says of Arc debacle," was the head I would have put on the story I could not write.

I was runner-up once for the Queen's award for meritorious service in Canadian journalism for a ho-hum series of stories about government conflict of interest. But I like to recall the human stories, like my scoop on Margaret Trudeau's decision to divorce her husband, the prime minister.

Or my interview with Yousuk Karsh, the world's greatest photographer, who also made Ottawa his home. It was three years before his death this year, and he said at the time it would be the last he would ever give. He kept his word, even turning down CBS's 60 Minutes, the most prestigious news show on North American TV.

My first wife Clare, with whom I am on good terms, lives in Esher, Surrey. I am Dutch by marriage to my second wife, Marie-Louise, with whom I live happily in our "dream home" in the Ottawa suburbs, where we sometimes see wild deer from the living room window.



Michael Prentice in his school days.

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**NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS**

Another new Life member to the Association is JOHN BARRY (1953-1959) who recently visited Farnham from his home in Leamington Spa and decided that he would like to hear more of his old classmates. He says that after leaving the School he commenced articles with a Guildford and London firm of chartered accountants, but had to transfer to a Leamington company when his father had a career move to the Midlands. He subsequently worked for a number of professional and commercial enterprises in that area before opening his own practice in 1978. This he still runs on a part-time basis.

Since leaving school he has continued to play as much sport as possible, including cricket, football, tennis, badminton, table tennis. He has represented both Leamington and Warwick at tennis.

## NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS

He says that the trouble living in the Midlands is that he rarely, if ever, comes across another Old Farnhamian and it is quite an event to meet someone from the fine county of Surrey. He recalls school days when he supported Aldershot FC and still looks for their results. (Although he was an Arsenal fan!). He also remembers opening the innings for the School Second XI with his great friend **BRIAN COCKELL**, who was the Marcus Trescothick of his day, whilst John closed down the other end.

John feels that he was fortunate to have George Baxter as his Headmaster, with them both starting on the same day. Meeting George in the corridors he explained that he was completely lost and could not find the room for his next lesson. The reply was "Never mind Barry, I am a new boy as well and I cannot understand that wretched timetable." He recalls Mike Foster and Brian Varey, with one introducing him to William Shakespeare and the other to Sherlock Holmes. Also he was among a crowd of boys at the railway station watching Alan Fluck meet his cousin Diana Dors, the 'blonde bombshell.' He was playing cricket on the top field when the school flag came crashing down across the wicket, struck by lightning. He also remembers the irony of Mike Hawthorn, World Champion Racing Driver, coming to the School to speak on road safety and being killed a fortnight later on the Guildford By-Pass.

He finishes by saying that whilst at school there were two exceptional School Captains; The first was **BILL WALLIS**, who seemed to run everything. When he was not acting (his first love) he ran the Cadet Force and when doing neither he was working hard (especially with his swimming) to ensure that Harding House became Cock-House. Following on came **DAVID MILFORD**, who was a superb sportsman and spent time with those not so gifted. After leaving school he went to the College of Estate management in Liverpool where he became friends with England winger Alan A'Court. David played a number of games for Liverpool FC.

John Barry has great memories of FGS and he is a welcome new member to the OFA.

Another Old Boy from the 1948 intake is **DAVID BIDWELL** who left in 1953 to begin a career in the Army. Many of his classmates wondered how he progressed and now he has written and joined the Association. After leaving the School he entered Welbeck College, the Army's sixth form school, where he managed to get sufficient 'A' Levels to qualify for university entrance. David says he enjoyed Welbeck which is now essentially a boarding school for boys and girls who aspire to a career as officers in the Services. He then spent a hard two years at the RMA Sandhurst where he was prepared for life as a military officer. The course is now much shorter and offers better preparation for practical soldiering.

The next three years were spent at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, where he gained an external London University degree in electrical engineering. This was a hard slog made tolerable during the last year by marriage to Sheila, now his wife of 43 years. Their early time together was spent with a unit in Germany, then in the UK where he completed graduate engineering training in Bordon and AEI Manchester. It does not seem that long ago, but the very few computers then available were either mechanical, or huge electronic valve driven beasts. Transistors were rare devices found mainly in research laboratories.

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## NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS

The next few years were spent with the REME and formation HQ in Germany before they returned to the UK, where David attended the Army Staff College “to prepare for senior command and staff appointments”. By this time David and Sheila had acquired three children, the first of which, Caroline, will soon be in her fortieth year and is an ophthalmic optician of high regard living in her own house in Stamford. The eldest son, Adrian, is married with one son and manages a group of sports centres in the Reading area, whilst Stuart, the youngest, is an accountant and management consultant living in Sydney with his Australian wife. There are two grandchildren and David keeps in contact via Internet, digital photographs and long telephone calls.

In all David spent 34 years in the army, mostly in Germany and the UK, and only managed a short trip to Nepal and a month in California “seeing the world”. He reached the status of Corporate Engineer (MIEE) and obtained a Fellowship of the Institute of Management because his role became more managerial. He realised his military ambition of “red hat” status as a Colonel and acting Brigadier, but enjoyed his time as a Lieutenant Colonel the most. His final military work was as “Managing Director” of an Engineering Workshop employing 1200 civilian staff and 200 military personnel, with an annual budget of £28M. His subsequent years as a civilian and up to retirement age were spent as a Logistic Computer System consultant in Andover.

David now keeps active as a Magistrate and in Local Government. He is the chairman of King’s Somborne Parish Council and the Test Valley Association of Parish Councils. He regularly meets Old Boy, **ALAN LOVELL**, during meetings of the executive committee of the Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils. His current crusade is to bring some of his expertise to bear by breathing vibrant life into Hampshire Parish Councils.

One of the major articles for this magazine comes from well-known journalist **GRAHAM COLLYER (1955-60)**. Graham began his career in journalism at the Farnham herald in 1960, and subsequently worked in Canterbury, Aldershot, Poole, Watford and Hemel Hempstead before emigrating to New Zealand in 1972, where he worked on a daily newspaper in the South Island. On his return, he was briefly in Poole again before joining the Surrey Advertiser (then a daily) in 1979 as sports editor. He became deputy editor in 1982, editor in 1986 and group editorial director in 1997. He vacated the editor’s chair in 2001. He has been a member of the Press Complaints Commission. Away from journalism, he was secretary of the I’Anson Cup Cricket Competition from 1980-2002, during which the league grew from 12 clubs to 30 in five divisions. He is the author of 12 books. He and his wife now live in South Devon.

We have received an update from **CHRIS SLYFIELD (1955-62)** who seems to be as busy as ever in local politics. In May 2001 he was elected to Surrey County Council, representing Godalming North. He took the seat for the Liberal Democrats from Danny Denningberg (the long standing Labour Councillor for that area), and has since been elected Vice Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee. He is spokesman for the Liberal Democrats on Pensions (currently a very important area).

## NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS

CHRIS SLYFIELD (continued): Chris has been Leader of the Liberal Democrats' Group on Waverley Borough Council since the Local elections in 1999 and has served as Chairman of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee ever since the current government introduced the Modernising Agenda and Waverley opted for the Cabinet/Executive system.

In 2002 Godalming Town Council launched his Mobile Motor Project, which had raised nearly £13,000 during his year as Godalming Town Mayor in 1996/97. It is to benefit young people in the Waverley area who want to learn automotive skills and should help the police in combating car crime. It is currently proving so successful, visiting schools and youth facilities, that many Surrey schools and youth clubs are hiring the Van and Instructor. It is called GT CARS (Godalming Town Council Automotive Resource).

During the late 1950s and 1960s the name of Tyrell was well known at the School with Michael, David and Jeremy all travelling to Morley Road from the family home at Frimley Green. Via the OFA website we have heard from **JEREMY TYRELL** who left in 1957 and still lives at Frimley. He put us in touch with **DAVID TYRELL** who left in 1953 to join the Royal Navy and served for almost thirty years in the service. On leaving he worked for Social Services and then retired after two heart attacks. He lives at Fareham and has been running an obedience school for Dobermans. He advises that elder brother **MICHAEL TYRELL** has also retired and now lives in Worcestershire. It is hoped that in our next issue we may have more news of these ex-pupils.

Another new member is **LES PHILLIPS (1937-44)** who says that he was a 'train boy' catching the Ash Rattler from Ash Vale. His specific memory of the old steam service (from Ascot to Guildford via Aldershot) was the carriages in use in the earlier years. They had iron swing gates instead of doors, more like cattle trucks. Another recollection was being chased up the hill from the station to school by the train prefect, caps on (I became a train prefect later and could never outrun the other boys).

Lunchtimes at school involved seconds or even thirds of 'spotted dog'. I was once one of the boys who was given the plate of a sixth former/prefect and save them a place at the head of the queue for lunch. These older boys would sit at the head table and all of us would come under the exceedingly watchful eye of 'Pussy' Varey. He would signal when the charge for seconds could begin, table by table. Happy memories!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following were sponsors for the various advertisements appearing in this issue:

John Hirst, Ray Kirk, Cyril Trust, John Crotty, Alan Lovell, Stephen Pritchard, Chris Hone, Ian Sargeant, Bryan Bone, Michael Horner, Simon Granville-Jones.

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## NEWS OF AN OLD BOY DOWN UNDER

Through the Internet we have made contact with PETER DOWNHAM, who left the School in 1947 and moved to Australia in 1969 with his family. The following are his own words and many Old Boys will recall this popular ex-pupil:

'In 1969 we, as a family, made the decision to emigrate to Australia and were accepted, after an interview at Australia House. Our daughter Vanessa was 15 and son Gary was 12. Despite being advised, by disillusioned people who had returned, not to go, we flew to South Australia in October 1969. The four of us have never regretted that decision. We spent three months in a hostel whilst looking for work and schools for the children. We were lucky as Old Boy MICK BARHAM and his wife Molly had arrived a few weeks before and lived close by and the three months in the hostel was relieved considerably by being able to spend time with them. Six month's later my wife Rita's cousin and family arrived and we see each other often and get together for a barbecue when we have visitors from the UK.

The South Australia Housing Trust (a large version of council housing) took me on as a Sales Officer responsible for the sale of 'Trust' houses in the 'Steel City' of Whyalla. This was at a time when immigrants were still coming there in large numbers. After seven years I was transferred to Adelaide to take up the position of County Sales Officer and one officer and I covered the State outside of the greater metropolitan area. I was responsible for the area between Mount Gambier and Ceduna, including Whyalla. If you look at a map of South Australia you will see that Britain would fit into this several times. Finally, as Credit Officer I dealt with the repossession of properties, granting of mortgages and assistance loans. The latter were for purchasers in crisis, such as enabling a deserted partner with custody of a child or children to retain the family home. I was commissioned as a Justice of the Peace in 1985. I retired in 1991 after 21 years with the 'Trust'.

My childhood sweetheart, Rita, and I celebrated our 49th wedding anniversary in June 2002. She is a member of the Farnham Old Girls' Association and still keeps in contact with her contemporaries. Rita retired in 1987 from the Royal Adelaide Hospital, where she was a Receptionist. We have seen more members of our families, especially the young ones, than we would have seen by staying in Farnham. My cousin's daughter, who was twenty, came over on a backpacking holiday and as she was interested in photography our son-in-law introduced her to a neighbour's son, who has a similar interest. They married, have a daughter, and now live two miles away so my cousin and his wife are regular visitors now. They are members of our Farnham get-together group, which also includes LEONARD EVANS' daughter, Deborah, who emigrated out here some years back and now lives in South Australia.

Our daughter Vanessa has been married twenty-eight years and has three sons. She teaches at our Lutheran Primary School and her husband Harry is Dean of Students at Tatachilla Lutheran College. Son Gary is Senior Plant Maintenance Engineer for Worsley Alumina and lives with his wife of twenty years, and son, in Bunbury, Western Australia. I follow the family tradition of playing Lawn Bowls and have played for 25 years. I am currently Immediate Past President of the Justices Bowling Club and have been involved in bowls administration for many years. In fact we have our own website;

[www.users.bigpond.com/petrita/](http://www.users.bigpond.com/petrita/)

## NEWS OF AN OLD BOY DOWN UNDER (continued)

We have been members of the Lutheran Church for 30 years and as a Lay-Preacher I take a monthly service at a large local nursing home. I have given well over 100 services so far. On retiring we purchased, together with our daughter and son-in-law, a large house with a 'granny flat'. It is wonderful to see our daughter and her family every day. Apart from becoming a diabetic in 1988 I am keeping healthy and fit and enjoy the sunshine. South Australia has more hours of sunshine than any other State'.

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Yet another sign that the Old Boys (Australian Section) is still growing!

The editor was recently asked to help with information about the Vanner family and after some research the following was unearthed. Apparently generations of the Vanner family lived in their Wrecclesham farm from 1660 until 1911 and in the early part of last century three brothers, REGINALD, RICHARD & PATRICK VANNER all attended the Grammar School. They were all excellent sportsmen and all three played at one time for Farnham United Breweries, well known locally as 'The Bungs'. Richard went on to play in the Football League for Tottenham Hotspur for five years, then for Leyton Orient FC and Aldershot FC. He was a very speedy winger and his sprinting ability also enabled him to become a champion in the RAF. Both Reg and Patrick played soccer and cricket for the School First XI. Reg emigrated to New Zealand and on the boat out he became friends with a Francis Chichester and many years later greeted his friend at New Plymouth, New Zealand when he arrived in his yacht Gypsy Moth IV on the historic voyage around the world. Richard worked for many years with the Aldershot & District Traction Co. and Patrick supplied motor body parts to garages. The latter was also captain of the Old Farnhamians' First XI for many years.

The younger members of the family are looking for more information about the history of the Vanner family and the editor was pleased to be able to fill in details of their days at Morley Road.

Friends of **ALAN FLUCK**, founder of the Farnham Festival whose influence and work in encouraging young people's music both nationally and internationally spread far beyond Farnham, have given a digital piano in his memory to St. Andrew's Parish Church in the town. Alan Fluck died in 1997 at the age of 71 years. The multi-faceted piano was dedicated at the morning service of parish communion, attended by his executors Charles Cockbill and Michael Chui, president of the Festival, Dennis Stone, artistic director, Julia Wilson, hon. Treasurer, Bob West and former headmaster of Farnham Grammar School, George Baxter. As most know Alan was music teacher at the school during the 1950s and 1960s.

Another Old Boy, the Rector **ANDREW TUCK** quoted Raymond Krish, with Alan Fluck a co-founder of the Farnham Festival, who wrote: 'The sheer scale of the enterprise – 2000 plus children performing a week of concert giving plus the glamour of specially commissioned works – obscured Alan's original motivation for the Festival. For Alan, music simply wasn't one of the arts: it was rooted in the humanities. The beacon which he lit here in Farnham has spread across the country and beyond.'



**MEMORIES FROM MADRID****NICHOLAS MILLER (1966-1969)**

One of the highlights of the immediate post school experience was a school cruise on the S.S. Nevassa to the Caribbean in December 1969. The only way my dad said I would go was if I paid for myself. So I started saving up for it from the 4th Form, but because I left school in June '69 after taking 'O' Levels, it wasn't really a school cruise for me, more a wonderful holiday. There were only about a dozen lads from FGS, which meant there was not an accompanying teacher to keep an eye on us-we had to tag along with a school from Birmingham. It was an incredible experience, the whole of December '69 on board ship visiting Madeira, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, St Lucia, Antigua, Guadeloupe and coming back via Lisbon.

I joined the Metropolitan Police Cadets at Hendon in January 1970 aged 17 but quickly discovered that most of it was schoolwork, which I had left school to get away from. We only had one lesson of 'police work' a week. After 5 months I got fed up and with a mate who felt the same we both left and soon had jobs as porters at the Central Middlesex Hospital. We rented a flat and lived it up all summer.

However, I soon realised that I could never do that job for very long and began looking around for something better. In the Met, I remembered the stories by another cadet who had been in the Norwegian Merchant Navy and thought I would give it a try. My intention was always to go to sea, earn a bit of money, see the world, and then rejoin the Met at 19 to do the 13 week course. Of course that never happened. I went down to the British Shipping Federation where there was a shipping company recruiting people to do apprenticeships as Navigating Officers. I was swayed by the exotic pictures of foreign places and officers in bright white uniforms on the bridge of a ship, and I was only 17! Let's face it I was impressionable! This looked like the life for me and I signed on the dotted line and was 'shanghaied' into the Merchant Navy.

I went off to Liverpool to start training and was soon at sea on my first ship. The training consisted of alternative periods at sea gaining practical experience, plus time at college for 4 years. I must admit I had a great time visiting foreign places and gaining experience in all sorts of different subjects. I eventually got my Second Mate's Ticket and ONC in Nautical Science after 4 years and later on my First Mate's Ticket. I travelled all over the world mainly on bulk carriers, carrying anything from grain to coal and from iron to cement. It was extremely interesting and I gained a lot of experience, not just of the job but life in general. Being at sea and visiting far-flung places meant that I saw and experienced many things that other people never have the chance to do or see.

I met Linda in 1974 and we married the following year and two days after the wedding we were at sea together. She came with me for most of the next five years and we had a great time seeing the world and saving for our first house. I changed company at that time and worked for Fyffe's Line, the banana people. We spent most of the three years with them shipping bananas from Central America to Europe or the USA. We would lay out in the sun on the bridge deck off the coast of Mexico, cruising up to Los Angeles, and say to each other, 'All this and money too!!' We bought our first house in 1978 in Lincolnshire.

**MEMORIES FROM MADRID (cont) NICHOLAS MILLER (1966-1969)**

It all came to an end for me in 1980 in Kawasaki when my right elbow was crushed under a hatch wheel. I almost lost my life as well as my arm but the Japanese were pioneering microsurgery at the time and an expert surgeon came down from Yokohama to operate. After three weeks in a Japanese hospital my arm was saved, but I still have pins and screws and limited movement. Still it hasn't stopped me from leading a normal life. I had to leave the Navy and spend a year recovering. We moved down to London as we felt that I would be unable to get work where we were in the Fens.

In 1981 I joined Selfridges as a Fireman (Fire Prevention Officer) and spent the next four years there. In the same year our daughter Natalie was born. In 1983 we moved to the Essex coast at Frinton-on-Sea and I commuted to Selfridges. We worked fire brigade 12-hour shifts – 2 days and 2 nights, followed by 4 days off. During my time off I became interested in DIY, doing jobs around the house and garden. Neighbours asked if I would do the same for them and paid me for the work and I soon had a reputation. The work as a fireman did not stretch me mentally and I was bored and I wondered whether I could make a success as a self-employed painter and decorator.

In 1985 I received some compensation from the accident and I left Selfridges and I became self-employed. I thoroughly enjoyed the work, meeting local people and earning a living doing a good job for them. We moved from outside Frinton to a large house in the town which required a lot of work doing. Over the next few years we improved the house and the business was progressing well. Natalie was attending a lovely little private school; we loved where we lived, with the sea close on one side and the countryside on the other, and only 80 miles from London.

It was around this time that we started attending church and getting more involved in church activities. After a number of years we felt that there was more to life than what we were doing and felt that we would like to work more fully, and devote all our time to Christian work. So in 1989 I gave up decorating and we moved to Birmingham to attend a Bible Seminary for three years.

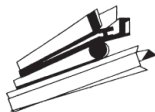
In 1993 this eventually led to a position at a church in Madrid, Spain, where we have been living and working ever since. We feel very happy and contented where we are and where life has led us. Natalie, our daughter, is now back in the UK studying Business Studies at de Montfort University in Leicester and is in her final year.

*NB. Nick Miller visited the College in 2002 and I was lucky enough to meet him there. As a result we have made contact and this article should be of interest to his old classmates no doubt, as well as readers in general... The Editor.*

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## THE OLD FARNHAMIANs' MASONIC LODGE – NO: 7282

In 1953 a new Masonic Lodge was launched in Farnham with the intention of it having a membership of Old Boys from Farnham Grammar School. One of the main instigators of this new venture was English master George Bacon, who at the time was a member, and past Master, of the Farnham St. Andrew's Lodge.

George Bacon asked the then Headmaster, Frank Morgan, if he would also join the new Lodge, but he felt that his commitments to the school, town and church, prevented him from doing so until his retirement. Regrettably Frank Morgan was not able to join the Lodge as he died within a short time of his retirement from the school. The Lodge was therefore consecrated on 21st September 1953 and the first Master of the Lodge was A.B.Cole (1902-1907).

For most of the 50 years that it has been active it has had a Master from former pupils of the Grammar School, but this has become more difficult in recent times. It is now more common to have a member elected as Master who has no actual connection with the School. The Lodge meets at the Masonic Hall in Castle Street, where some ex-pupils will recall that they used for some lessons, owing to lack of space at the school.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Lodge the members plan to publish a book of their history and the magazine editor has been asked to assist in making sure that certain historical facts are available. The following list could prove of interest.

### PAST MASTERS OF THE LODGE WHO WERE ALSO EX-PUPILS OF FGS.

1953/54	A.B.Cole	(1902-1907)	1955	R.B.Loveless	(1904-1909)
1956	G.F.Till	(1926-1928)	1957	E.W.Hunt	(1921-1923)
1958	G.C.Watkins	(1917-1921)	1959	G.W.S.Morris	(1928-1930)
1960	J.B.Marks	(1902-1907)	1961	L.F.G.Wright	(1925-1927)
1962	G.H.Bacon	(1919-1949)	1963	B.W.A.Brookes	(1918-1920)
1964	P.A.Vanner	(1918-1920)	1965	L.V.Russell	(1916-1922)
1966	B.C.N.Giles	(1906-1916)	1967	M.E.P.Jump	(1928-1937)
1968	A.E.Clifton	(1924-1929)	1969	S.J.Kimber	(1925-1928)
1970	R.F.Symes	(1929-1934)	1971	A.J.Barter	(1936-1944)
1972	H.G.Hopkins	(1926-1931)	1973	E.F.Hunt	(1936-1942)
1974	J.S.Mitchell	(1942-1947)	1975	G.M.Elphick	(1927-1935)
1976	M.J.Comben	(1944-1951)	1977	R.E.Hack	(1950-1954)
1978	G.D.Hone	(1950-1954)	1979	C.J.Hone	(1954-1961)
1980	B.M.Hayes	(1945-1950)	1981	G.J.Woods	(1954-1959)
1982	A.Fordham	(Staff)	1983	A.J.C.Clark	(1939-1945)
1984	G.W.Martin	(1954-1960)	1985	P.E.Linney	(1931-1936)
1986	L.F.G.Wright	(1925-1927)	1987	C.S.Alden	(1943-1948)
1988	G.V.Hunt	(1943-1949)	1993	P.J.Howell	(1956-1963)
1997	G.W.S.Morris	(1928-1930)	1999	J.S.Mitchell	(1942-1947)
2000	J.S.Mitchell	(1942-1947)			

The newly elected Master of the Lodge from March 2003 until March 2004 will be David Gould. If you are interested in membership please contact John Mitchell on 01252 722485 or at 1 Bishop Summer Drive, Upper Hale, Farnham GU9 0HQ

## OBITUARIES

Whilst the 2002 magazine was at the printers we received the sad news that one of our younger Old Boys had died. His lifetime friend Roger Edgell has written this appreciation about **BRIAN MILLS (1957-62)**.

'I first met Brian Mills in January 1952 when at the age of six I entered Ash Walsh Memorial Primary School and the teacher, Mrs Quirk, asked Brian Mills and Brian Morrow to look after me. It was the beginning of a lifetime friendship with both. It was not long before Brian moved to Tongham Primary School and we played football against each other with Ash Memorial usually on top, as they were a far larger school.

Brian and I were reunited at Farnham Grammar School in September 1957 under the charge of R.B.Varey with Brian in Childe House and myself in Harding House. Once again we were pitted against each other on the soccer field. In time Brian became captain of the class team. Our paths crossed infrequently academically but we did spend time together in the Chemistry class of L.E.M.Evans. Brian travelled to school with Doug Ellis, who was a good athlete, and he was schooled at sports for Childe House by teachers, Mike Foster and Peter Larby. In those days he became an excellent hurdler and showed signs of being a first class all round sportsman.

Brian left the School in 1962 having gained 2 'O' Levels and was accepted to train as a GPO Engineer along with former classmate Bob Gibbs. While progressing his career he played soccer locally and was an excellent defender for Guildford & Godalming in the Surrey Senior League. He later played for Hale in the Aldershot League. As a soccer follower, his first love was Wolverhampton Wanderers, and then for twenty years it was Crystal Palace FC. On occasion we would meet on the soccer field with him playing for the White Hart, Tongham and me playing for The Cannon, Ash.

During these years Brian had married and set up home in Badshot Lea. They regularly visited France and Brian spoke the language fluently and developed a love for Fitou wine. We would meet at the Annual Dinner and he was always engaging and would offer an informed view on any subject that would crop up. I was particularly delighted to see him at the Millennium Dinner in April 2000, for he had been diagnosed with Non Hodgkins Lymphoma in June 1998. After taking early retirement from his position of Installation Manager at BT in 1996 and working rapidly through the ranks of NTL for a few months, this was a bitter blow to Brian's family and friends.

Brian fought the illness with cheerfulness and dignity until his strength finally failed him on 15th May 2002 at the then family home in St. Johns Road, Farnham. Family and friends said their goodbyes to Brian at a full to overflowing St. Thomas on the Bourne a week later.

Brian is survived by his wife Linda, three daughters, Sophie, Catherine and Amy and his son David. I understand that Linda has reserved a plot at Fitou in France and on behalf of the Association I send her our warmest wishes to the family for the future – I will all so sadly miss my pal Brian Mills – the most gentle of men.'

(With warm thanks to Brian Morrow and Linda Mills)

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## OBITUARIES

It is hoped that this coming year the number included in this section of the magazine is lower than 2002. Unfortunately in early July we heard of the death of **PETER J HOWELL (1956-63)**, who spent his last days at Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice after suffering from motor neurone disease. The records show that Peter did well at Mathematics at school and had a career as an accountant. For some time he worked for the Ben Turner Group at West Byfleet but after the group was taken over he moved to London to work for a company called ABC Limited who rented photocopiers etc. As his illness progressed he worked at home more. He was a member of the OFA Masonic Lodge in Castle Street and was the Master of the Lodge in 1993. Peter lived in Boundstone on the outskirts of Farnham.

In late July we received a message via our website from **Dr. DEREK POLLARD OBE**, who is the Vice-Chancellors Adviser for The Open University, saying that **CYRIL JOHNSON**, who left the school in 1957, but was not an OFA member), had died after a stroke. He died on 25th June and was buried on 3rd July. Cyril had a career in Chemistry, mainly with Aspro Nicholas, and after retirement lived close to the Silent Pool at Albury. He took a serious interest in dogs and goats and was Chief Goat Steward for the Surrey County Show. He leaves a widow Karen and son Paul.

Many readers will have read in the press about the disappearance of former pupil **TIM ELLWOOD (1963-70)** and correspondence received from old friend **PAUL BLOWFIELD** and Tim's father give details of the tragic end of this Old Boy. In January 2001 Tim visited a local pub in Salisbury and at around 8.00 pm left to catch a train to London. He was not seen alive again. His body was recovered from the river in May 2001 about 8 miles downstream from Salisbury and there has been some speculation regarding his death. In January there was extensive flooding in the area and he could have lost his balance and fell into the river. Tim's funeral was held at Aldershot Crematorium and Paul Blowfield was asked to give an appreciation at the service. Clearly from Paul's notes it shows that Tim was a unique character with a love for ale, curry, flying and horses. Something of an enigmatic man. He spent time in the RAF and then began a career in banking that took him abroad a great deal. His father writes that he packed a great deal into his relatively short life and will always be remembered by most people as a kind and gentle man.

As the year 2002 came to a close we heard that **CYRIL S. ALDEN (1943-1948)** had died. At school he took part in the Cross-Country, Boxing and Athletics for Morley

House. He passed his Civil Service Exam and joined the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough. He was a member of the Old Boys' Masonic Lodge and Master of the Lodge in 1987. In the late 1970s he was a surveyor of Customs and Excise at Woking.

In 1980 he moved to Southampton to take charge of The Customs Training School. He later moved to London as Surveyor in the Valuation Division of the Customs & Excise and retired in 1993. From 1954 to 1998 he was part time as the Car Park Manager at Ascot Race Course.

The 5th January 2003 saw the passing of **ERNIE PARRATT (1920-28)** who lived in Shortheath Road, Farnham which is very close to the School. We also hear of the passing of **J.M.HUTCHINGS (1932-41)** who often attended the Southampton Lunch.

## OBITUARIES

January 2003 brought the sad news that one of our greatest Old Farnhamians had died from cancer after a short illness. **DUDLEY BACKHURST(1943-1951)** was an outstanding scholar and sportsman whilst at the School and many will recall him as the School Captain from 1949 until 1951. He obtained first class results at University and began a distinguished career with British American Tobacco. In 1984 he became Secretary for the Tobacco Advisory Council and was heavily involved in discussions regarding the Health and Safety aspects of smoking. The work involved issues arising within the European Community as well as here in the UK. He finally retired in 1989.

Dudley was always a supporter of the Association and became President in 1990/1992 period. He belonged to the General Committee for many years and sat on the Farnhamian 400 Trust Committee. He was a regular at the Annual Dinner and offered one of the toasts at the Millennium Dinner at Farnham Castle.



Dudley Backhurst was one of the four original members to launch the Southampton Dinner, which is now the highly successful Luncheon. In 2002 there were 35 members attending and almost certainly many Old Boys will want this event to continue. Dudley leaves his wife Sylvia and children Merilyn and Graham.

He was a great Old Farnhamian and a fine human being!  
A sad loss to many people.

Under the heading of News of the Old Boys is an article about **BOB TINGLEY** who had made contact with us after many years. When received in 2002 Bob was recovering from cancer, and it is sad that we have recently heard that he lost the battle and died this year. Hopefully, in the short time available, he renewed some old friendships from his days at the School.

As we go to press we have been advised of the death of **DAVID MORGAN (1935-1940)**. David's brother Alan has sent to us a copy of the tribute given at the cremation and it is well worth including in the magazine. It is therefore planned that this tribute will be included in the next issue of The Farnhamian.

We have also been advised that **MICHAEL PAWLEY(1940-1945)** has recently died. Michael, a member of School House, spent most of his working life in the aircraft industry and much of that time on the development of the Concorde. He then became a hotelier with a business in Frome, followed by another in Cardiff. He was a life member of the Association and for a number of years a regular visitor to the Dinner.

Finally we are sad to announce the latest Old Boy to die. In March **EDWARD BEVAN WAIDE OBE (1947-1954)** died at the age of 66. A regular at the Annual Dinner and a good friend of many members of the Association.

The advertisements in this magazine require sponsorship to assist with the cost of producing the 'Farnhamian'. Each advert carries a sponsorship of £30 and we hope members will be generous and consider contributing via the Editor:

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from

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*Landscape Contractors  
to the Construction Industry  
Design Consultants  
Private and Commercial  
Contracts*

Alexandra House  
1 Waverley Lane  
Farnham, Surrey

GU9 8BB

Telephone: 01252 721167

Fax: 01252 726490

**WOODLARKS**  
*is a sheltered workshop  
for physically disabled people  
in beautiful countryside  
near Farnham in Surrey.*



*If you would like to know  
more about  
Woodlarks Workshop  
please contact:*

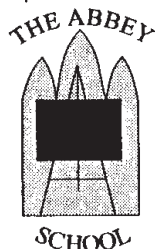
Administrator,  
Woodlarks Workshop,  
Lodge Hill Road,  
Farnham, Surrey. GU10 3RB.  
Tel : 01252 714041

We welcome any  
help towards our  
horticulture project

**LEONARD CHESHIRE** 

105-106 West Street,  
Farnham, Surrey.  
Tel: 01252 715185

The **ABBEY SCHOOL** at  
Farnham  
for pupils with Moderate Learning  
Difficulties in South West  
Surrey



The Abbey School  
Menin Way  
Farnham  
Surrey GU9 8DY  
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## **MENZIES**

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**We've joined forces to serve you better!**

With a total of 8 offices, 2 offices based in the Farnham area, Menzies have a great local knowledge of business needs and a wealth of experience and services in all areas of business finance and planning, tax and accountancy. We take great pride in providing a first rate professional service and in the strong relationships we enjoy with our clients.

We'd be delighted to help you achieve your business goals - to find out what we have to offer, contact a partner at your nearest office for a free initial consultation;

<b>Office</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Farnborough	Stephen Pritchard	01252 541244	sritchard@menzies.co.uk
Farnham	Michael McAleenan	01252 716434	mmcaleenan@menzies.co.uk

*For more information on our full range of services and on various topical issues  
visit our website at*

**[www.menzies.co.uk](http://www.menzies.co.uk)**

Registered to carry out audit work and authorised to carry on investment business by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

### **Invitation**

Old Farnhamians' Association

## **Southampton Luncheon 2003**

Wednesday 15th October, 2003

At Busketts Lawn Hotel,  
Woodlands, Nr. Southampton

*For details please contact*

Cyril Trust

Telephone: 01252 723352

### **Invitation**

Old Farnhamians' Association

## **Annual Dinner 2004**

Saturday 27th March, 2004

At Farnham College,  
Morley Road, Farnham

*For details please contact*

Roger Edgell

Telephone: 01264 332766