

Old Bordenian Association



Website Digest 2015

www.oldbordenians.co.uk

OBA WEBSITE DIGEST 2015

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1. OBA Committee Meeting Minutes - 15 January 2015

The minutes of a committee meeting held at the School on Thursday 15 January, 2015

Members present: P. Lusted (in the chair), A. Snelling, D. Palmer, G. Barnes, B. Gilbert, K. Shea, P. Taylor, M. Pack, S. Caveney, C. Laming

Apologies for absence: The President, N. Hancock, T. Akehurst

A minute's silence was observed in memory of Kenneth Sears who had served the Association for more than 60 years and died in the autumn.

Minutes and matters arising: The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 3 October, 2014, were agreed and signed as a correct record.

A brief report was given about the service of remembrance that had taken place at the School on Saturday 8 November and the excellent talk given by Marc Stewart about OB Harold Locke. G. Barnes reminded the committee about Marc's research and forthcoming publication of his "magnum opus" which will record the lives and service records of all those OBs lost in the world wars and other conflicts. The Association has pledged to support publication of the work in due course.

There were no other matters arising.

Correspondence: An email had been received from member Dave Bowra (66-73) offering to help with website coding but D. Palmer explained that, nice though the offer is, there is no current requirement for such support. The secretary to send a polite note of explanation to thank Mr Bowra.

Treasurer's report: Accounts for years ending 31.7.13 and 31.7.14 were now finalised and had been signed off by accounts examiner, Peter Taylor. Adjustment will need to be made in this year's accounts in respect of our donation of £2,500 to assist with the purchase of a laser cutter that did not proceed. The sum was included in the 2014 accounts as the cheque had been issued. We have recently made a donation to the School of £1,000 in respect of the Hardship Fund. Neil Hancock pointed out that we had not made a cricket bat award in our financial year 2013/2014. Committee decided that our aims would be better served by supporting an alternative cause. A. Snelling suggested that the school be asked to identify a suitable long-term project that we could contribute to over a number of years, perhaps by raising an appeal. Deficit on 2014 dinner inflated by £130 due to deposit of this amount for 2015 dinner having been paid in 2013/2014 accounting period. Current bank balance stands at £3,965.36. A new banking mandate is in place with Barclays. Mike Pack and Peter Taylor were thanked by the committee for their hard work in getting the accounts signed off.

Dinner report: An update was given on arrangements for the annual dinner on Saturday 7 March. This being the first year that email was used to notify members, it was noted that the emailing exercise had run reasonably smoothly and steps had been taken to send invitations by post to 20 or so members whose email addresses had been rejected. Dinner invitations would also be included with the website digests being sent to 20 members. It was decided to attempt to collect the email addresses of all dinner attendees at the dinner. A suggestion to place a website digest at every place setting was considered a good idea but probably not practical due to the costs and workload involved.

Memorial plaque: It was decided to proceed with a proposal to apply for a memorial plaque to be installed at St George's Memorial Church, Ypres, in memory of OBs who gave their lives in the First World War. Peter Taylor and Neil Hancock would take the lead. Arrangements would be made in due course for a dedication ceremony in Ypres involving the OBA and, hopefully, the school. Costs for the plaque would be in the order of £200 with a further £100 to be made by way of a donation to the church where the late Ken Sears was a trustee.

Any other business: Mrs. Christine Ford, widow of John Ford, OB, had been in touch with Peter Taylor about her late husband's subscription to the Association which she had paid after his death. She donated the money for this year but would now stop the direct debit.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

AGM and next Committee Meeting date: Friday 2 October, 2015 at 7.00 pm

Annual dinner: Saturday 7 March, 2015

2. Website Digest 2014

We have produced an easily accessible and printable copy of all the articles posted on the website over the past year, similar to the Maroon publication, which was discontinued in 2009. It includes all material suitable for

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printed format from January 2014 to December 2014 (OK - one was very early January 2015!!). To access the digest, go to: http://old-bordenians.bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk/images/2015/Website_Digest_2014_v1.1.pdf

3. A Farewell to the Old School 1928

When I took on the task of launching a new website in 2008, one of the first series of articles that was published that year was an account of the move of the school from its original premises to its current location in 1928, produced by the late John Macrae, a stalwart of the school and the Association. When we moved the website to be hosted alongside the School website, this article, one of the most popular in the first couple of years of the original website, became unavailable to visitors to the site. I felt this needed to be rectified and have therefore reproduced the article below - I hope you enjoy it.

'VALE' - Words of farewell to the Old School

(from "The Bordenian" December 1928)

"At some time in the not far distant future we shall be deserting the familiar and beloved precincts of our ancient academy – "The old order changeth, yielding place to new" – and shall be exploring our new home. Before we take our departure, however, let us make a rapid survey of our old domicile.

"Starting at the summit of the stately pile we find two classrooms which were one in the dim and distant past. No longer will the treble pipe of "fags" be heard in one, nor the agonised voices of history students in the other. The dormitories, too, with their thick carpet of dust, disturbed only by annual rehearsals, how long will they remain in this state? And that terrible room – shall we call it the Chamber of Horrors? – where so many "Highers" have been taken, what will become of it, with its leaning walls?

"Descending to lower levels we pay a fleeting visit to the French and Geography rooms. All dormitories once, my masters, and the scene of many midnight frolics. And then the east wing, a labyrinth of dusty passages leading to diminutive and dustier cubicles to the walls of which adhere touching portraits and inscriptions – but disturb not the rest (and dust) of these sepulchral chambers and come to earth.

"Here we have much to regard in a very short space of time. A fleeting glimpse of the courtyard and kitchens is sufficient, quite sufficient. The dining hall is the centre of our interest, for here within its ink-marred confines repose our ancestral arms. Then there is the Library, the scene of many "fagly" tortures and joys. Its battle-scarred desks could tell many a tale if only they could speak!

"The Schoolroom next compels our attention, its battered walls tastefully adorned with detention lists and ancient maps, half obscured by a dense pall of dust. Here has many a youthful voice been lost.

"With Hallooing and singing of Anthems"

Small wonder the ceiling is cracked!

"Of the remaining rooms, only those of the Sixth Form and the Prefects are of outstanding interest. The former seems to re-echo with the yells which greet an unwilling victim of a practical joke, and the latter is as it ever was, a chamber of litter, pleasant in summer, but in winter as cold as the polar regions. Many tales could be told of the laboratories, of fire and water, but time and space permit not – it grows dim and we whisper farewell."

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I wondered where the photograph shown below left was taken.



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The text above seems to infer that this was the dining hall with the ancestral arms mounted on the wall at the end of the room. These still exist and now lie in the archive room although I remember them mounted on the wall in the old hall between the Honours Boards. (A recent search in Archives produced only the banner - below right).



Note the similarity of the piano in the dining hall like that in the present one. Apart from this the similarities end. There seemed to be no obvious form of heating unless the large chandeliers hanging from the ceiling provided enough heat as well as the light to illuminate the hall. However, upon recent inspection of the Hall, two fireplaces have been found. They are on the south wall and in white with the initials of William Barrow appearing in black. The modern photograph in the centre above shows the far one better. The fireplaces are positioned under windows so the flues are angled to reach the chimneys in the corners of the hall. Note that now radiators are installed for heating and the fireplaces remain as decoration only. The two chimneys can be seen on the outside photographs of the school on either side of the large central gable - see below.



In the centre of the gable is the school clock. Sadly the hands now remain at 12 o'clock. It is a clock designed to chime the hours and is powered by weights that hang on wires running down inside the walls, again being shifted horizontally to avoid the window openings. It had to be wound by hand. The 2 photos immediately above show the Headmaster's house and garden at the east end of the school with its own lean-to greenhouse.

All the old pictures show the bell tower at the western end of the building, but it had to be removed eventually probably due to over enthusiastic ringing making the brickwork unsafe. To ensure boys were aware of school time there was a second bell at the back of the school facing College Road (the cinder track) to ensure those dawdling up the track in the morning were perfectly aware whether they would be late and have to face the consequences!



Rear bell support with the back of the Headmaster's house on the left. The plaque for the clock is located outside the main entrance to the left of the Headmaster's house.

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Another part of the text makes reference to the laboratories, and once again there are a few features that may make even a youthful Old Bordenian feel at home.



Look at the bench on the right. It has one beam balance housed in its glass case and four others. In the middle is a tangent galvanometer just like the ones we used at Borden through the 1960's in Physics. They consisted of a large coil of wire surrounding a small mounted magnet acting as a compass. The interaction of the Earth's magnetic field and that from the coil was used in a variety of experiments at 'A' level up to 1971. Electrical power in those days would have come from wet accumulators. At the far end of the nearer bench rest two calorimeters complete with thermometers providing some experiment on heat measurement. It is possible that they exist and are still being used to this day in Physics.

Note the coal fire and the gas piping and Bunsen burners. I should think this could have been one of the warmest places in the school on a cold winter's day. The heat from the gas lighting and a dozen Bunsens would have made lessons here just that bit more bearable – a fact not lost on me when, during the miners' strikes, we managed to keep the laboratories warmer than most classrooms. [Editor's note - John Macrae started his career at the school as a Physics Master!]

One other thing about this photo is that there does not appear to be anything to sit on, so perhaps lessons took place with everybody standing.

The next photographs show the old school at different times and a little detective work will enable the reader to put them into chronological order (hint - look at the size of the tree at the front of the school). I have tried to take contemporary photographs but much of the school field has been built on to provide private housing taking up the whole corner of the plot bounded by the original road up to the school, Riddles Road and College Road. Hence I was unable to get wide views. At the time of writing, I have not been able to identify any of the internal rooms mentioned in "Vale". I am finding that the more I write, the more there is to investigate. I do not think of time as the enemy but it certainly seems to 'fugit' very rapidly!



S 8762 BORDEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL, SITTINGBOURNE.



The photo on the left above shows the cricket square in good condition but I think the outfield would have caused a bit of a problem!

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The modern photos were taken on 25 March 2008. The buildings are now used as the Sittingbourne Adult Education Centre having previously been the Kent Farm Institute and a Teacher Training College.

And finally the Bordenian of March 1929 has this offering.

“On entering the New School”

At last, after waiting for fifty long years,
A marvellous vision to us now appears;
A spacious new school, done in brick, red and white,
Our jubilant hearts give a leap at the sight.
The great day has come, like the sun through the clouds,
The school to a man in the Dining Hall crowds;
“Let’s feast to the Gov’nors, who’ve turned up some trumps,
And bring us to bliss from our present old dumps.
Come turn out your linings and purchase good wine,
Then solemnly join hands and sing ‘Auld Lang Syne’ “
So heedless of rain and with arms full of books,
Past wurtzel and bungalows, sling we our hooks;
All eyes fixed ahead on the splendid new place,
Sporting a silk flag, all bordered with lace.
“Some brand new idea,” we all nod to ourselves,
And forward we trip like a concourse of elves;
Softly we glide, whispering praise,
Submitting each room to our wondering gaze.
Yet, ‘mid all these splendours, who feels not regret,
For the Borden of memories, dear to us yet? A.W.S.

From “The Bordenian” July 1929

“The first Term in our new building is almost over, and we have settled down to the new routine with the minimum of disturbance, although workmen are still putting finishing touches to the building. The grounds in front of the School have also to be put in order, and the hard tennis courts to be surrounded with netting. The playing fields are, of course, not yet ready for use, and the prolonged drought has made it difficult to get the large field into more than a semblance of order, in spite of the use of a steamroller. Arrangements were made for the use of the ground of the Sittingbourne F.C., for School matches and first eleven practice, and the team is to be congratulated on its excellent record this Term, seeing that no small part of the Term had passed before cricket got going. The position with regard to football next Term is also causing anxiety, but everything possible will be done to provide satisfactory pitches.”

(Note that although the School is thought of as being moved in 1928, and the dates on the drainpipe hoppers say 1928, it actually began formal education on 25 April 1929 for the Summer Term.)

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“This Term Mr. A. C. Howard, B.A., has joined the Staff of the School as French Master, and we offer him a hearty welcome. Mr. Howard is an Old Boy of the School.” (‘Jimmy’ Howard retired and left Borden officially on 31 August 1969 after 40 years – John Macrae.)

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“There are now 180 boys in the School, three having entered and eight left since last Term. There were 158 candidates for Free Place Scholarships at the examination held at the School on May 4th. A list of successful candidates is given elsewhere.”

Reproduced by David Palmer from original material by John Macrae.

4. 2015 Annual Reunion Dinner - Report and Pictures



A total of 54 Old Bordenians gathered for the Association's annual dinner on Saturday 7 March at UK Paper Clubhouse in Sittingbourne.

It was an enjoyable and convivial evening in excellent surroundings, with a first class dinner and an accomplished speaker in old boy Dennis Fowle who told the entertaining story of his career in journalism spanning 60 years. Having received encouragement from headmaster George Hardy, Dennis fulfilled his ambitions by becoming editor of the Kent Messenger at an early age and enjoyed a rewarding career in which his campaigning style eventually led him to start his own newspaper, the Downs Mail, in the east of Maidstone. He told a moving story of how he had cajoled Kent County Council into building a £1.5m footbridge over the A249 at Detling following a tragic road accident in which a young girl and her grandmother had been knocked down and killed. Dennis said it was a perfect example of what could be achieved through the power of the local community and the press – his paper started a fund and persuaded local residents to raise more than £150,000 towards the cost of the bridge. It was a hard fought campaign with a fantastic result that had moved him to tears along the way. By contrast, he had the audience chuckling as he generously shared some of the more comedic errors that had appeared in print over the years in various publications. "We had published a death notice which stated: 'In loving memory of our very dead dad'. They say judge a business on how it deals with complaints. It took me a half-hour to apologise and arrange a correct notice the following week. But it was also a way to win respect and friends. I still see some members of that family around Maidstone – and now we can smile about it."

At the end of his speech Dennis proposed the toast to the Association. Dennis's full speech is at the end of this report.

Vice-president Peter Lusted thanked him warmly and then made a presentation to Neil Hancock who recently retired as Association treasurer after a 13 year stint.

Friends and acquaintances then moved to the bar to continue reminiscing over a few drinks as the evening reached its natural conclusion.

The turnout this year was down 15 per cent on last year and seemed to confirm an established trend which gives cause for concern.

Dinner secretary, Chris Laming, said: "We run the risk of not being able to stage this annual event if the numbers dip much further. It simply won't be financially viable. I'd urge all those who care about the dinner to encourage all Old Boys to attend in 2016 on Saturday 5 March. Please make a note of the date in your diaries."

Dennis Fowle's speech:

Gentlemen, what was the most significant day in your life? I have now reached 80 and there has been time for a little personal reflection.

SCHOOL DAYS

For me it was a bright spring day 70 years ago when a very nervous 10-year-old was ushered in to the study of Borden Grammar School headmaster Mr George Hardy for the oral test of his 11-plus exam. Mr Hardy was not behind his imposing desk – but sat beside me in his chair. All Sittingbourne seemed well primed on all his favourite questions – but I must admit to forgetting most now. When he handed me a pack of 52 cards and wanted 47 returned I knew exactly what to do – and extracted five for myself. It was a kind interview – and I hoped I did ok.

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I was not really aware at that time Mr Hardy was holding my whole future in his hands. He alone would decide if I should benefit from the education and social mobility a grammar school offers.

My parents were so supportive of my education – but it was all down to them. I attended what was regarded as Sittingbourne's toughest school – Holy Trinity, Milton. I was there from 1939 to 1945 – years which may well ring a bell. That school had tough (even brutal) teachers and tough kids. Holy Trinity was never a school with many 11-plus passes. I was so determined to get there. Often I walked a mile or so from Holy Trinity to Borden Grammar to peer over one of those lower field fences. I WANTED TO SEE THE SCHOOL AND WATCH THE BOYS PLAYING SOCCER AND CRICKET ON THE UPPER AND LOWER FIELDS. By that time my great lifelong love of sport was blossoming – and how desperately I wanted some of what Borden offered.

I was not to know that brief visit to Mr Hardy's study was the first of many over the next six years. Not every one of the early visits was as happy and I am embarrassed now I gave him cause to take me to task. I was in awe of this great man but this was to turn to respect and deep admiration as my school years went by.

Mr Hardy knew the importance of competitive sport in the life of a successful school and the support of the staff for cricket, football, hockey, athletics, table-tennis was so significant for all of us who played. I was so proud to represent the school – and later to captain teams. I dedicated myself to school sport and this helped bring me closer to Mr Hardy and some magnificent teachers of that period.

Mr Hardy knew by the end of my 5th year my desire for a career in journalism. He was remarkably supportive. He personally set me writing projects and spent several lunchtimes going through these with me in his study. He even arranged for an Old Boy, then a young Fleet Street journalist, to visit Sittingbourne and take me out to tea at the Carlton Café in the High Street.

He was delighted when early in my 6th year I was guaranteed a junior journalist's job with the Kent Messenger Group. I did not study hard in my only 6th-form year – but I helped the school in many ways. Much was linked to furthering sport and I still cherish my last summer which I devoted to captaining a very talented school cricket team. But I enjoyed helping the school in many other ways – I even spent a couple of weeks helping mark the current 11-plus exam papers. I feel it made me more worldly – and cemented my love for school and staff.

Without Mr Hardy's decision in 1945 – YES, THE MOST IMPORTANT DAY OF MY LIFE – and his personal HELP in 1951 could I have ever had a career in journalism and enjoyed such a fulfilling professional life? I think NOT.

SO TO JOURNALISM.

In September 1951 I became a very junior reporter in Sittingbourne office of the Kent Messenger in Crown Quay Lane. I was there for little more than a year because National Service intervened and for two years I was at Royal Air Force, Sutton Coldfield. When I returned it seemed a very quiet and rather boring small office. But it was this boredom which helped me make a mark with the KM editor. I studied the Kent League football table in depth and found at that time teams were doing better playing away from home (quite unusual). I wrote a story and it clicked with the editor, who put up the headline: 'More at home away.' There was no space that week and he asked me to update it. The story never did appear. But the editor remembered – and within a few months I was offered a vacancy as manager of the Gillingham office. Life can so often turn on little things.

What a change. The Medway Towns were buzzing with the Navy, Army, Dockyard and 250,000 people. And I arrived in the aftermath of the Royal Marines Cadets disaster when more than 20 marching boys were killed by a bus in the dark of Dock Road, Chatham. I really cut my teeth on journalism and editing in five very exciting years.

I was newly married and we bought a house in Lower Gillingham. I earned very good money as a local freelance correspondent for so many London-based national newspapers. After a while I visited head office at Maidstone every Thursday with our Chatham news editor to put the KM's Medway Towns newspaper, the Chatham Observer, to press. We had two lovely daughters – and family life, work, sport and new found prosperity were great. I could even afford a small A30 car – instead of covering the Medway Towns on bicycle.

I can tell the story of a charity football match played one Sunday afternoon between Medway Press and the Show Biz ALL Stars with a crowd of around 5,000. Mike and Bernie Winters were their stars and Tommy Docherty the referee. The press could not find a goalkeeper until a young coloured journalist volunteered. He had never played the game before. In the first minute Docherty awarded a penalty against us, put the ball on the spot and blew his whistle. Our goalkeeper thought this meant it was a race to kick the ball off the penalty spot and he dashed from his line to do the trick. It brought the house down.

They were such happy years – and I was learning very fast at the very sharp end of journalism. Surely this could never end.....

Then, when I was 27, a call came from head office in Maidstone. The proprietor and editor-in-chief, Roy Pratt Boorman, wanted to see me. What had I done wrong? I was mystified. IT WAS TO BE PROBABLY THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT DAY OF MY LIFE. He wanted me to move to Maidstone and take over as Kent

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Messenger editor with a team of around 100 journalists, sub-editors, photographers and more. It meant giving up my cherished life in Gillingham, the substantial income from national newspapers, there was the cost of moving home to Maidstone and taking on so much more responsibility – and he said he would increase my £13 a week salary by £2. BUT IT WAS AN OFFER I JUST COULD NOT REFUSE.

On the first day the four very experienced sub editors invited me to join them for a lunch time drink at the pub. I needed their loyalty and had to go along. With my round that meant five pints of beer in an hour. I also did it on Day 2 - but they were hardened to all this. Like all good journalists I then made my excuses and left.

It was such a different job with many pressures. The Kent Messenger had a circulation of around 100,000 across Kent with about 10 different editions. On top of that there was a mid-weekly and a couple of county glossy magazines. I had to learn lots of things fast, especially management and getting to know the makers and shakers of Maidstone.

Much editor liaison with readers is when things go wrong. I had about 10 members of one family in my office one Friday morning. We had published a death notice which stated: 'In loving memory of our very dead dad.' They say judge a business on how it deals with complaints. It took me half-hour to apologise and arrange a correct notice the following week. But it was also a way to win respect and friends. I still see some members of that family around Maidstone – and now we can smile about it.

In my ninth year we started an evening newspaper in the Medway Towns, the Evening Post. It was probably the biggest challenge of all and a great experience - and it had a very successful launch. But I was getting further away from my real love of journalism and in to complex management and publishing finance and after 10 testing years at Maidstone it was time to move on.

TO LONDON – AND OUR PUBLISHING COMPANY

I went in to business with two journalist colleagues and for about 20 years we published from London personality books mostly with TV tie-ins, magazines and newsletters. It was boom-and bust time in the economy and we reflected all that. Fortunately for us there was a little more boom than bust.

They were exciting years and took me all over the world. We had a tempestuous relationship with singer Dorothy Squires and her former husband Roger Moore. Fortunately she was touring Australia in the 70s and I had to go down there. Guess what? It was exactly the time when Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson were battling away with Colin Cowdrey and Denis Amis in memorable Test matches. That duty took me longer than expected!

Our biggest success was linked to the film JAWS. We bought the rights to a factual book on true shark attacks. It really hit the button world-wide and made us a lot of money. So did the inside story of relationships within the Rolling Stones. Another winner was published within a day or so of the death of John Wayne. I was an author too – and timed just right a book on the 1970s' successes of Kent Cricket Club titled 'Kent - The Glory Years.'

But there were plenty of flops too – but not enough to stop me at the age of 60 to decide I could now afford to retire from all those journeys to London and lead a much more relaxed life. I promised my wife more holidays and plenty of pub lunches with friends. She was delighted I was retiring.

I enjoyed retirement - but only for a couple of months. There were no challenges, no business buzzes, the phone went quiet....

THE DOWNS MAIL

I had always dreamed of running my own small local newspaper and I started to work a few things out. I told my wife I wanted to launch a newspaper centred on the Bearsted area of Maidstone – a monthly I would distribute via Royal Mail's special door-to-door service. My second daughter was now looking for a job as the youngest of her three children had started school and I put to her that her experience selling for the fashion chain Next would be valuable. She liked the idea. So we geared ourselves up to launch a newspaper called the Bearsted Mail in spring of 1997. I would be editor and chairman; she would run advertising sales from the small kitchen of her Bearsted home. I told my wife in would only take a couple of days a week – but she knew me too well and was not convinced.

So about 12,000 copies of the Bearsted Mail hit the houses east of Maidstone. There were some interesting local stories, I played up the really local angles and advertisers responded much better than expected. We were assured of a small profit on the first eight A4-size pages. It was fun for me – and I had no great expectations.

But within a few days there was an unexpected and very pleasing buzz. People liked their new newspaper which was FREE with FREE delivery. I was surprised but delighted. It encouraged me to think we could try a few more issues.

Very soon we had to grow to 12 and then 16 pages, take on sales help for my daughter and open a small office just off Bearsted Green. We even did a deal for Bearsted Parish Council to sponsor a full page of its news – and I attended every council meeting to write it. Soon Boxley and Thurnham parish councils followed suit. We

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needed to look at expanding the distribution area and included four or five big villages to Maidstone's eastern boundary.

Distribution was now 18,000. But we had to change name from Bearsted Mail to Downs Mail to reflect the wider area we covered. I had to accept that my hobby newspaper was growing in to something much more serious both as a publication and a business. My wife was watching all the signs.

By now the staff had grown to four – and to secure the business we had to expand. We looked at repeating the formula in the 16 villages south of Maidstone and so the Weald edition was born with a circulation of 15,000. It took a year to settle – but advertisers had confidence and within a year it was doing well. We appointed an edition editor and more sales staff.

The next big challenge was launching a Maidstone Town edition with a distribution well over 30,000. This meant taking on the Kent Messenger in its real home town. But we were very different newspapers and I thought there was room for both.

Again, it took a year to settle but around this time Maidstone Council liked what was going on and sponsored its own regular newspaper to be published in the centre of all three editions of the Downs Mail. So we had a newspaper coming out three weeks of every month – and a staff of about 12 doing the work. By now it was more than a full-time job for me – but I really enjoyed the life as an Editor in my own local community. My wife and I may not have had the pub lunches with friends – but the social life of a local newspaper editor and his lady can be very interesting and exciting.

I have always seen a good local newspaper as vital to a community, especially if it can campaign for improvements. I think what really made the Downs Mail a success was its vigorous campaigns.

The biggest followed an appalling road accident in the village of Detling. An eight-year-old Jade and her gran were trying to cross the busy A249 to buy sweets in the village shop on a Saturday afternoon just before Christmas. Both were killed.

We had been carrying stories about the dangers of this very fast road which split the village. Within three days I was sitting with the parents in a dimmed lounge with a Christmas tree and the girl's presents underneath. It was the most harrowing two hours of my journalistic career. The couple were part of the campaign for a proper village crossing. As I left I stood by the side of that hectic road in tears. How could we expect those villagers to cross the two lanes of what is really a motorway. I thought the Downs Mail could do something about that. I spent Christmas Eve with a friendly local solicitor – and Boxing Day with the chairmen of three parish councils closely concerned. Within a week or so the Downs Mail was published with a savage attack on Kent County Council for allowing the situation and an appeal to our readers to donate to a new crossing. Detling was very active in the campaign – so were the parents. The Downs Mail kept the attacks going for two months. Then one morning my wife answered a phone call. It was Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, Leader of Kent County Council and he wanted me to visit him. After such attacks, what was he going to say?

We sat in his room and after 10 minutes of chat he said: "You have got your bridge." That was emotional too. The Downs Mail fund raised more than £100,000 towards the £1.5m project. Within a year or so the bridge was up. I suspect most of you have driven under it and seen the dancing Jade on the sign. It was a high-profile campaign – and I believe this was the time when the Downs Mail really grew up as a significant newspaper in Maidstone. It won us the Shepherd Neame award for the outstanding newspaper campaign. And it was also the start of a valued friendship with another great man in Sandy Bruce-Lockhart.

There have been other campaigns since – probably only matching Detling in significance. We are in a period of hospitals losing some of their local services under NHS reconfiguration policies. I was very concerned with the plan to remove emergency and orthopaedic surgery from Maidstone to a new hospital at Tunbridge Wells. So were many people in Maidstone.

We formed an organisation called Maidstone Action for Services in Hospital (appropriately known as MASH) and I am the current chairman. We ran a major local campaign with help of local MPs, councillors, surgeons and doctors. But we lost a Government decision. Soon afterwards the NHS decided that women's and children's services, including maternities, should be transferred too. If the first reconfiguration was emotional – this was doubly so with women in labour expected to travel up to an hour on a poor road system between the two towns. By this time I had been appointed chairman of MASH and Helen Grant was the new MP for Maidstone and The Weald. We worked so hard together to persuade the Secretary of State for Health not to go ahead and many highly emotional meetings were held. We won several battles, many of them very helpful to Maidstone today, but not the main war. We helped ensure Maidstone retains an excellent hospital – especially after the horrors of seven or eight years ago when almost 100 patients died in an appalling outbreak of the C-difficile infections.

Now MASH works gently and well with our local hospital and administrators, hopefully to the benefit of all.

The Downs Mail continues to grow. We have launched a Malling edition and we reach around 90,000 households in Maidstone area. I retired about five years ago as full-time editor and chairman but still contribute a few hours a week one way or another. There is even time now for a few pub lunchtimes with my wife and friends.

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I am, of course, proud of the Downs Mail. But of one thing I am sure – it would never have been launched without the background of Borden Grammar School and that wonderful headmaster Mr George Hardy. Yes – it WAS all his fault.

I am also a proud supporter of the grammar school system in general and Borden Grammar School in particular. I am sure all here tonight share that pride and I ask you to join me in the toast to our: OLD BORDENIAN ASSOCIATION.



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5. BGS Prefects 1974-75

This year celebrates (!?) 40 years since the class of 1968 - 1975 left the school. I have been sent a picture of the prefects of that final year; this is reproduced below. I note that, to comply with the ruling at the time on the length of hair being above the collar, hairstyles grew high and wide!!



Top row left to right

Graeme Steady, John Davies, Martin Smith, Mark 'Chiz' Beach, Matthew Sharman, Gary Oriss, Robert Webb, Simon Rouse, Andrew 'Bert' Lane, Christopher Willson, Julian Bore, David Milas, Laurence Clemons

Bottom Row left to right

Nigel Dickson, Paul Fletcher, Paul Dutnall, Malcolm Lucas, Terry Veal, Bryan Short, John Weekes, Michael Ainsworth, John Greaves, Matthew Homan, David Connor

6. Memorial Plaque at Ypres

As many of you may know, Ken Sears (who died last autumn) was very closely involved with St. George's Memorial Church at Ypres; he was a Friend of St George's, edited their monthly magazine and led many annual pilgrimages there. As a tribute to him and because we felt it was a worthy thing to do anyway, the Association has arranged for the erection of a brass plaque in the Church commemorating those Old Bordenians who were killed in WW1. (Editor's note – see next article.)

This will be dedicated in a service at the Church at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday 6th May - and a number of Old Bordenians are hoping to attend. Travel arrangements are being finalised and anyone interested in joining in should contact the OBA secretary Chris Laming as soon as possible either by email at Chris.Laming@POferries.com or by phone at 07711 118196.

7. OBA Ypres Memorial Plaque - Dedication



A delegation of Old Bordenian Association committee members visited Ypres in Belgium for the dedication of a new plaque commemorating the 37 old boys of Borden Grammar School who lost their lives in WW1.

The plaque is on the wall of St George's Memorial Church in Elverdingestraat near the town centre, an Anglican church built after WW1 as permanent memorial to the dead and as a meeting place for visiting relatives. There are dozens of school plaques in situ along with scores of military memorials. Old Bordenian Kenneth Sears was the chairman of the Friends of the church at the time of his death in the autumn of 2014 and he is

also commemorated there with a separate plaque which was recently installed.

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A short service of dedication for the OBA plaque was conducted by the Rev Fr Brian Llewellyn on Wednesday 6 May, 2015, with Old Bordenians Graham Barnes, Peter Taylor and Chris Laming in attendance.

Graham Barnes said it was a significant occasion, allowing a memorial to former Borden pupils to rank alongside those of many of the UK's leading schools. This had been made possible due to the tremendous amount of research undertaken by Old Bordenian Marc Stewart whose work had only recently shed light on the scale of Borden's losses in WW1.

8. Old Bordenian Spurs fan - duped by his local optician!!

Old Bordenian Alan Snelling submitted this photo....



9. BGS School Photo 1973

Old Bordenian Mark Catchlove has provided a copy of the 1973 school photo. Unfortunately, it is not possible to reproduce the photo within this digest, but this can be seen on the website at the following address:

http://old-bordenians.bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk/images/2015/BGS_School_Photo_1973.jpg

10. BGS Continue To Remember

Borden Grammar School continue to remember Old Boys who gave their lives during the First World War. Here is an extract from a recent Sittingbourne News Extra newspaper, reporting the boys visit to Ypres and the recently unveiled Memorial Plaque.



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The school, being aware of the 37 Old Bordenians who died in the First World War, are looking at ways that they can commemorate them during the centenary years. They started by finding the graves or memorials of about 7 of them whilst in Ypres and the Somme and also located one of them in Sittingbourne Cemetery recently (see pictures below) whilst being filmed by a company making a film for Swale Council to mark the 30,000th last post ceremony which takes place in Ypres in July. Students of the school also attended a last post ceremony held in Sittingbourne - again, it was being recorded for the Swale council film.



11. Old Bordenian Hockey Club - an update!



I notice that the last report filed by me on OBHC appeared in 2009, so I had better come out from behind that rock and start writing!

All sports evolve in their respective strategies, playing skills and techniques, equipment, fitness levels and the rules of the sport, but few, I would suggest, have evolved to such an extent as has hockey. The days of

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turning up for a game with the dregs of a pint in one hand, a fag in the other, and the stick still in the changing room are long gone.

No trees are felled these days in order to provide our hockey sticks: carbon fibre is the base component of sticks now. I remember well the revolutionary change in the shape of the head of the stick from the long English head to the shorter Indian head, the first major advance in the sport in my playing career, and how modern and professional we felt when Borden took delivery of its first batch of Indian-head sticks! [Editor's note - the old English head version of the hockey stick still exists in some households. Peter Lusted, Old Bordenian 1962-69, provided these pictures of his stick.]



The shorter head has speeded up the game and offers increased opportunities for high-skilled players in dribbling and ball retention. Protective equipment has greatly improved, and needed to do so given the vastly increased pace of the game and of the ball in particular. Outfield players now have the protection of face masks at short corners and of a glove to protect the leading hand on the stick: goalkeeping equipment has evolved far beyond the dual-use of a pair of cricket pads.

The coaching of hockey is now a profession in its own right and most top level teams will have a staff which comprises a lead coach, an assistant coach, a video analyst, a physiotherapist, a fitness coach and a manager.

The greatest change in hockey has to be the introduction of artificial grass surfaces. First used in a major international competition in 1988, at the Seoul Olympics, the use of artificial grass pitches has transformed the sport in so many ways: the game is played at a much faster pace, fitness levels are, of necessity, much higher, the use of drag-flicks at short corners has demanded new strategies from both the attacking and the defending team and the ball is transferred around the pitch at a much more rapid pace than used to be the case on grass. I am not aware of any grass hockey being played currently.

There is now much more, and much better, television coverage of international hockey matches and competitions. For many years, viewers of the rather limited amount of hockey available on television were frustrated by the not inconsiderable problem of not being able to see the ball when it moved at speed. These days, the quality is as good as it is for other ball sports.

So what about Old Boys? Have we evolved and are we keeping up with the times? We certainly are. Twelve years ago, in partnership with the School, we raised just over £1 million and built the floodlit pitch and pavilion, a big step forwards in the provision of hockey for the Club and the School, and the creation of a major community sport facility in Swale.



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Shortly after the completion of the pitch and pavilion, OBHC merged with Rodmersham Ladies HC and has expanded even further since then. Currently, we run six men's teams, two ladies teams and junior teams at under-14, under-16 and under-18 age groups. The pitch is in use by the Club on six days of the week for coaching, training and matches and, in addition, OBHC runs the Swale Junior Hockey Development Centre on behalf of Kent Hockey Association and hosts and manages the Kent Under-13 Boys Junior Academy Centre. The Pavilion provides not only shower and changing facilities, but is also a social centre for all ages in the Club, from age five through to members in their seventies, and it has the very considerable benefit of being right beside the pitch (see pictures above).

Our junior coaching syllabus is of the best, having been written exclusively for the Club by Andrew Wilson, a former Old Boy, who is now a member of the coaching staff for the full Spain ladies team; he also coaches hockey at Club Egara, one of Spain's leading clubs, is Assistant Coach for the Province of Catalunya and Assistant Coach for the Spain under-21 ladies. The quality of our club coaching is clearly paying dividends as OBHC members were the captains of Kent Under-16s and Under-13s in the 2013/14 season, and the captains of the Kent Under-13s and Under-14s in the 2014/15 season. For our men's 1st X1, we have secured the coaching services of Ross Gilham-Jones, a former GB under-21 captain and our ladies are coached by Sunjit Atwal, a club member who is a Level 2 Kent County coach and, last year, was on the staff of BGS.

OBHC has England Hockey ClubsFirst accreditation which we have held for ten years. This is recognition on the part of England Hockey and Sport England that the Club maintains high standards in child protection, junior coaching and the general provision of hockey for junior members.

We play our part in the local community in many ways and, in particular, in partnership with BGS and Swale Borough Council, we fund the post of Swale Community Hockey Coach, through which we take our junior coaching into local schools.

A final word on our pitch. I have extolled the virtues and advantages which modern pitches confer on the sport and these are many and varied. One very great problem which they bring, however, is the cost of the renewal of the playing surface. Pitch carpets typically last for around ten to twelve years, and ours is nearing the point at which we need to replace and upgrade it and this comes at an extremely high cost – around £200,000. If any Old Bordenians can point us in the direction of a benefactor, we would be very grateful.



The quest for success on the part of some clubs has meant the sacrifice, to varying degrees, of their club spirit and ethos. I am pleased to be able to report that this does not apply to Old Bordenian Hockey Club. The club spirit has never been stronger.

Alan Wilson

12. News of Old Boys - Steve Piper

We recently heard news of an Old Boy, Steve Piper, who was at Borden in the 1980/90's. He is a director/writer/producer of a British independent film company, and rather than repeat what is on their website, please use the following link - <http://www.coffeefilms.com/> to read about them. Steve's own biography is also available (<http://www.coffeefilms.com/biosp.html>).

13. OBA Annual General Meeting Minutes - 2 October 2015

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the School on Friday 2 October, 2015

Members present: A. Snelling (in the chair), S. Caveney, D. Palmer, B. Gilbert, K. Shea, P. Taylor, M. Pack, C. Laming

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Apologies for absence: N. Hancock, T. Akehurst, D. Jarrett, G. Barnes, P. Lusted

Minutes and matters arising: The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 3 October, 2014, were agreed and signed as a correct record.

The secretary was asked to re-confirm to the school that the Association would offer a £50 annual school prize, to be awarded in the field of information technology studies. He was also asked to suggest to the head teacher that the Association might be prepared to offer a £1,000 annual bursary to a Y13 leaver, subject to the head teacher's agreement.

There was a general concern that the traditional strong links between the Association and School are not what they once were and that the Association was working in somewhat of a vacuum due to the lack of interaction with the school. It was suggested that the head teacher or his deputy be asked to provide a school report that could be read out at next year's annual dinner and that next year's AGM could take place at the school during a working school day in order to encourage attendance by the head or his deputy. In this way the Association could be kept abreast of school developments.

There were no other matters arising.

The 2015 officers and committee were elected as follows:

President: J. Hopkins

Vice-President: P. Lusted

Hon. Secretary: C. Laming

Hon. Treasurer: M. Pack

Membership secretary: K. Shea

Dinner Secretary: C. Laming

Website representative: D. Palmer

Website advertising: K. Shea

OBA governor: A. Wilson

Football rep: K. Shea

Hockey rep: D. Palmer

Committee: N. Hancock, P. Taylor, S. Caveney, T. Akehurst, G. Barnes, M. Stewart, D. Jarrett, B. Gilbert, A Snelling

Accounts examiner: P. Taylor

The election of officers and committee en bloc was unanimously approved, having been proposed by S. Caveney and seconded by P. Taylor.

Constitutional changes: None

Correspondence: None.

Treasurer's report: There has been very modest financial activity in the last 12 months and the one aspect requiring some explanation is the ' Donations to BGS '.

During the financial period ending 31/7/14 we gave £8,500 to the School including £2,500 to assist with the purchase of a laser cutter. Although the accounts for last year reflected this donation (including the closing bank balance of £2,575), the cheque was never presented as the acquisition of the equipment was shelved. The true position was therefore that donations to the School totalled £6,000, our deficit for the year was £2,342 and our closing bank balance was £5,075.

This year's figures show the writing back of the £2,500, which has the effect of inflating the surplus to £4,484 rather than the more accurate reality of £1,984. We are now seeing our surplus/deficit each year determined fairly much by the difference between subscriptions/donations to the School.

On the subject of subscriptions, this year shows a further annual fall of £245 (24 members). Only 4 years ago (y/e 31/7/11) the income from this source was £4,094.

The loss on the dinner was reduced due to paying last year's speaker £100 for expenses, while the only postage/printing costs now relate to the printing of the Digest by the School

Membership report: We have 392 (last year 408) 'paid up' members this year. This total includes 2 honorary members and 7 life members exempt from paying a subscription, on the other hand it also includes 1 honorary member and 13 other life members who choose to pay a subscription.

On top of that we have 21 (18) members who paid £200.00 subscriptions last year but have not paid so far this year. 17 of those members pay by standing order and, as observed in last year's membership report, this is not a good sign as the cancellation of a standing order is a predetermined act rather than an oversight so it means that the standing order has been cancelled for a reason.

I will issue reminders over the next few weeks to those that haven't renewed. I did that last year and a few members did renew, so it is an exercise that is worth doing.

The table below shows the actual amount paid by all members so far. You will see that a few members pay more than the current subscription of £10, whilst others continue to pay a lesser amount reflecting previous

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subscription rates. Some payments are made in advance but I have only included the proportion of those advance payments attributable to this current year.

OBA subscriptions received 1/6/15 - 31/5/16		
Number of members	Amount paid £:p	Total of subscriptions received (£:p)
9	0.00	£0.00
1	1.00	£1.00
4	1.50	£6.00
49	5.00	£245.00
2	6.50	£13.00
314	10.00	£3140.00
1	11.50	£11.50
6	15.00	£90.00
7	20.00	£140.00
Total No = 392		
Grand total =		£3646.50

So this year we have received £3,646.50 against last year's reported £3691.50. This year's total includes two mysterious £10 subscriptions from one member who does not appear on my records. We continue to receive subscriptions for 6 (7) members who have died and I should write to the families concerned to ensure that this is not an oversight on their part. Sadly since the last AGM we have been made aware of the deaths of Roy Brunsdon (52 – 58) and Ken Sears who left the school in 1945. Two new members have joined the Association and they are Lee Richards (85-90) and Paul Dawkins (64-70). The membership total is 16 fewer than at the last AGM although the income has not suffered greatly but hopefully the reminders may bolster that income. Further progress has been made with capturing email addresses and we now have 226 (212) addresses on the database for the 392 members. Keith Shea was warmly thanked for his work as membership secretary, particularly for the way in which he has completely reorganised the administration of the Association's membership records since taking charge.

AGM and Committee Meeting date: Friday 7 October, 2016 at 3.00 pm (subject to confirmation by the head teacher)

Annual dinner: Saturday 5 March, 2016

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.14 pm..

14. OBA Committee Meeting Minutes - 2 October 2015

The minutes of a committee meeting held at the School on Friday 2 October, 2015

Members present: A. Snelling (in the chair), S. Caveney, D. Palmer, B. Gilbert, K. Shea, P. Taylor, M. Pack, C. Laming

Apologies for absence: N. Hancock, T. Akehurst, D. Jarrett, G. Barnes, P. Lusted

Minutes and matters arising: The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 15 January, 2015, were agreed and signed as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

Correspondence: The secretary read a letter from Graham Barnes who was at home recovering from recent surgery. The committee signed a card wishing him a speedy recovery.

Football report: The 2015/2016 Sittingbourne indoor 5 a side season is underway but is no longer played on Thursdays at the Sittingbourne Community College (formerly St John's). The league celebrated its 40th anniversary last season, in fact two of our current squad first played there 38 years ago, however the facilities have apparently been sold to Westlands School and all bookings were terminated.

So the league moved quickly to hire the sports hall at The New House Youth Centre in Chalkwell Road but the only time available was Wednesday evenings between 9 and 10.30pm when normally our team would be in slippers and cocoa mode.

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The hall is slightly bigger and the goals are slightly higher but considerably narrower which should make for much closer scorelines. So we lost the first game 5-0.

I should point out that this was entirely due to the goalkeeper taking a summer break of 3 months and 6 minutes so we played the first half with an injured outfield player in goal and were 5-0 down by half time. However, the keeper arrived for the second half and once we had put down the cocoa and changed out of our slippers we managed to draw the second half. It does look as though goals will be hard to come by with only 7 being scored in 6 games last week.

The season is only two weeks old but we are already 3rd from bottom which is a massive improvement on the last two seasons. Generally we improve as the season progresses so we're aiming to finish higher than last year's 4th place.

Last season and for the third in a row, we won more silverware. This time it was two runners up trophies, the first in the Consolation Shield (a best of the losers competition) and the other was the Knock Out Cup, the League's main cup competition and which we had won for the previous two seasons. Both were close matches and could have gone either way.

Last year I reported that we had mislaid but had then found the Knock Out Cup. I failed to tell you that it turned up in Peter Thomson's trophy cabinet. I didn't think that I knew anyone with their own trophy cabinet but life is full of surprises.

The squad this season is largely the same but we have lost one of our better players because of the change from Thursday to Wednesday so we are on the hunt for a fit, prolific goal scorer with a penchant for post match cocoa. If that's you and you have your own slippers contact me: toshea@live.co.uk

Keith Shea - Football Representative

Hockey report: Old Bordenians Hockey Club have 6 men's teams and 2 ladies teams, as well as junior hockey (11+) and mini hockey (5+). The final 2014/15 league positions of the respective teams are as follows:

Men's 1st XI – Kent / Sussex Regional League Division 1 – 9th

Men's 2nd XI – Kent Area League Division 2 – 2nd (**promoted to Kent Area League Division 1**)

Men's 3rd XI – Kent Open Premier A – 2nd (**promoted to Kent Area League Division 2**)

Men's 4th XI - Kent Open Premier C – 11th

Men's 5th XI – Kent Open Division 2 – 8th

Men's 6th XI – Kent Open Division 3 – 5th

Ladies 1st XI – Kent Women's Premier Division – 4th

Ladies 2nd XI – Kent Women's Division 4 – 2nd (**promoted to Kent Women's Division 3**)

Those teams not gaining promotion will remain in their existing league for the new season.

Two of OBHC's junior players, Adam Klucznik and Josh Willis, captained Kent at their respective age groups during the season and are a credit to the club.

Through the summer the club have been working on securing additional suppliers to the bar in the clubhouse and as a result will now be selling San Miguel on tap and Incubus, a locally produced real ale. The club has also been able to reduce the prices of many of our products behind the bar as a result. However this will only remain possible if we can increase our overall sales and all members support the bar on Saturdays and in particular our social events. On the 18th September 2015, the club will be having (or, if you are reading this at the AGM, held) an opening night of the new bar to coincide with the opening ceremony and first game of the Rugby World Cup, England v Fiji.

David Palmer - OBA Hockey Representative

Dinner report: Arrangements were in hand for the annual dinner at UK Paper on Saturday 5 March, 2016. The speaker is Steve Bedelle, RN Retd. The ticket price would be limited to £20.

Website report: Due to a change in personal circumstances, I have been unable to spend much time chasing up new articles or uploading articles from historical documents such as old Maroon magazines, old School yearbooks, previous exam papers, etc. However, the website has continued to upload and make available any items submitted for publication in a reasonable timeframe.

As always, it would be helpful if committee members consider either producing or commissioning something of interest to post on the website.

The website continues to be stable. There was a short period during Spring when uploading articles was a little problematical, although was possible with perseverance. This was resolved by the School's IT administrator (who hosts the site) in early June when I reported the problem to him and has behaved normally since that time.

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A Website Digest, containing all articles published in 2014 was produced and posted to those OBA members that registered to receive one when the Maroon ceased publication. The Digest, as usual, was made available to all members on the Website for download and printing.

The cost of maintaining the OBA website remains at less than £20 a year. This covers the cost of the registration of the .co.uk and .com website addresses.

The OBA email addresses, admin@oldbordenians.co.uk and webmaster@oldbordenians.co.uk are publicised in the "Contact Us" section of the website and available for use by all members. Any emails sent to these addresses are automatically forwarded to the 3 website committee members for action.

Contact points for the website committee continue to be David Palmer at DavidPalmer@blueyonder.co.uk, Peter Lusted at bowerlanders@icloud.com or Alan Snelling at alan@uftoncompany.co.uk
David Palmer; Peter Lusted; Alan Snelling - OBA Website Committee

Remembrance: Peter Taylor and Chris Laming gave a brief report of their visit to Ypres with Graham Barnes on 6 May for the dedication of a memorial plaque at St George's Memorial Church, to the OBs who gave their lives in the First World War. They had also paid their respects to the late OB Ken Sears, whose role as a trustee of the church is also recorded on a separate plaque at St George's.

This year's annual service of remembrance will take place at the school on Saturday 7 November. Neil Hancock is making the arrangements and organising the event.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.34 pm.

15. BGS School Photo 1978

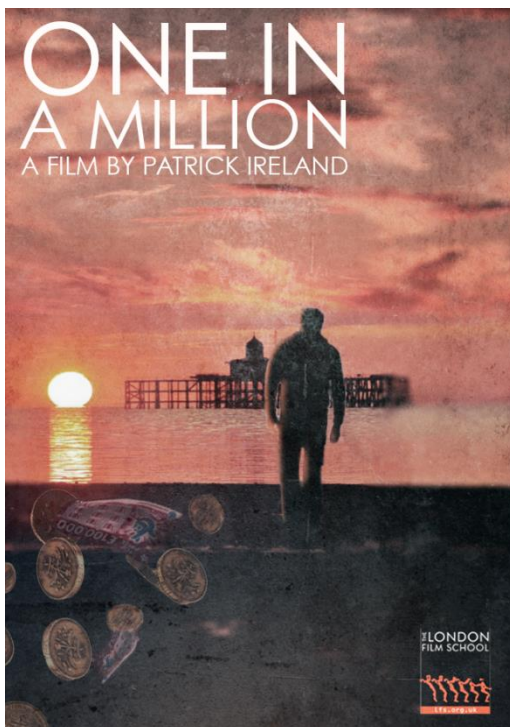
Prompted by the publication of the 1973 school photo, Paddy O'Reilly (BGS 1973-1981) has submitted the 1978 version, taken in the school's centenary year. As with the 1973 photo, it is not possible to reproduce the photo within this digest, but this can be seen on the website at the following address:

http://old-bordenians.bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk/images/2015/school_photo_-1978.jpg

16. Old Bordenian at the London Film School

Patrick Ireland, an Old Bordenian from 2001 to 2008, has contacted us with an update on his latest film venture. His story

My name is Patrick Ireland and I am a student at the London Film School. I grew up in Herne Bay and attended Borden Grammar School from 2001 - 2008. I very much enjoyed my experience at Borden and was heavily involved in drama & filmmaking whilst at the school.



I am currently working on my graduation project from the London Film School; a short film entitled 'One in a Million' which will be photographed in my hometown of Herne Bay, Kent. The plot focuses on Kevin, an orphan and autistic teenager, obsessed with winning the lottery and escaping the shackles of his seaside hometown. Go to this web address for an overview of the film: http://old-bordenians.bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk/images/One_in_a_Million_-_Overview.pdf

To make the film, I will collaborate with the most talented young people working in film and media today. Matteo Bergamini, the founder of the independent youth news network 'Shout Out UK', will produce the film alongside Ken Rowles - a veteran of the film industry and director of the Kent Film Awards. I have attached an overview of the film if you want to learn more about it.

Just to give you a little background information on myself: I was born and raised in Herne Bay. In 2008, whilst I was still at school, I was awarded the Young Filmmaker's Award at the Swale Film Festival for my first short film, 'Catch 21'. Since then I have continued to write and direct short films which have been screened at festivals across the country. In 2014, after completing university, I enrolled on the MA Filmmaking

programme at the London Film School after being offered an academic scholarship which covered the majority of

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my fees. In 2015 I finished directing a short documentary entitled 'Anonymous: A Million Men' which was sold to 'Shorts International Ltd' – an offshoot of the AMC Network – for worldwide distribution and later that year I worked alongside Channel 4 and ITN Productions in producing the Youth Leaders Debate which was streamed on All 4 on the 28th of April 2015. eo Bergamini, the founder of the independent youth news network 'Shout Out UK', will produce the film alongside Ken Rowles - a veteran of the film industry and director of the Kent Film Awards. I have attached an overview of the film if you want to learn more about it.

I am currently in the midst of fundraising for the film. I need to raise a final £3, 000 in order to make the film a reality! As such, I am relying on the kindness and generosity of others in order to make the film. I was wondering if the Old Bordenian Association - or Borden Grammar School in general - might be interested in sponsoring the film by contributing a certain amount to its production. If not would you be able to help me promote my fundraising efforts via social media and on your website? You can visit the Indie Go Go page through this link: <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/one-in-a-million-my-graduation-film/x/11482436#/story>.

I feel like this is an important film to make as it deals with my experiences growing up as a teenager in Herne Bay (and the surrounding area). It is unique in that regard. I feel like contemporary films do not portray this part of the country and wanted to create characters and a story which felt unique to the South East in general.

This film will not only showcase Herne Bay but will also (hopefully) encourage young artists living in the area to pursue their dreams.

Thanks for your time,
Patrick Ireland (BGS 2001-2008)

17.Apprenticeship opportunity for Old Bordenians aged 18-24

We have received the following employment opportunity for recent Old Bordenians from a local Insurance Broker.

The Insurance Broker contacted us back in 2013 with a similar opportunity and subsequently offered an apprenticeship to Sean Tapsell an ex-pupil of Borden Grammar School. Neil Barlow, director of the company, now has a further opportunity for two Old Bordenians, with positions to be filled by the start of the New Year. He has written to the School and the Association with the following offer:

"Sean completed his apprenticeship with the company last year and remained in our employment in the position of "Account Executive". Sean has now decided to further his career in insurance with a major insurance organisation in Maidstone and is leaving the company's employ this week.

I now wish to create 2 apprenticeship roles within the company and would be grateful if you could offer the opportunity to 2 of your pupils or ex-pupils to fill these positions.

The roles are available to candidates who have taken "A" Levels and are between 18 to 24 years of age.

As a parent of 3 children graduates from university in recent years, I am very conscious of the enormous financial strain to both students and parents [or guardians] of attending university. Worse still, currently, there are very many graduates who after 3 or 4 years of study find themselves with a low status of employment or no employment at all. Indeed, my daughter has decided to go back to studying a part time 2 year MA course at Falmouth University whilst working behind a deli counter, after finding that she had been paying all her earnings in the big wide world on rent and living costs, 2 years after graduating from Norwich University College of Arts with a "First" in Illustration [if you need a new Art tutor in a couple of years' time – please let me know].

I believe that taking an Apprenticeship is an ideal way of starting a career and avoiding the financial burden of going to university with, possibly, no likely job prospects after graduating. The proof is there with our own Sean Tapsell.

For the information of any potential applicants –

The UK insurance profession is the largest in Europe and the third largest in the world. It plays an essential part in the UK's economic strength, managing investments of £ 1.8 trillion, the equivalent of 25% of the UK's total net worth. It pays nearly £ 12 billion in taxes to the Government. It employs around 315,000 people with up to 2/3rds of this figure employed in the broking sector. [source the Association of British Insurers 2014].

Copperwheat Barlow is the leading independent farm and estates insurance broker in Kent. It also specialises in marine insurance and handles various types of commercial general insurance. Opportunities have now arisen in the company for two apprenticeship roles. Each apprenticeship will last for a minimum of 12 months. The position entails dealing with clients and underwriters on all aspects of the company's insurance portfolio including presentations and back up to the director and insurance manager at the firm. Good basic mathematics, computer and English skills are essential.

The successful applicants will be required to complete the Chartered Insurance Institute level 2 Award in Insurance, Legal & Regulatory matters. The company will provide both apprentices with all the necessary support to achieve this. On completion of the apprenticeships, the company hopes to provide a permanent position of

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employment. The company expects the successful applicants to continue with the Chartered Insurance Institute's qualifications to higher levels of status.

I would be grateful if you could promote the apprenticeships to your pupils or ex-pupils. Any interested individuals should telephone or write to Mr A Campbell, Insurance Manager at the below address.

Kindest regards

Neil R J Barlow A.C.I.I.

Chartered Insurance Broker

Director

Copperwheat Barlow

Woodgate Farm Oast

Oad Street

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Kent ME9 8JX

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W: <http://www.copperwheatbarlow.co.uk> "

18. Robin Bush (BGS 1944-50)

We sadly have to report the passing away of Robin Bush. Our thoughts are with his family. A highly-talented Sittingbourne sportsman, Robin Bush, has died aged 82 after suffering a severe stroke 11 months ago. Robin, a member of a prominent sporting family, excelled at cricket, football and hockey at Borden Grammar School (1944-50). He was selected in his youth to play representative cricket for Kent teams and came close to joining the Kent CCC staff. He played for Bobbing Court CC (then Halfway House) and later had many successful seasons as an accurate swing bowler for Gore Court's top Kent League side. He was employed as a draftsman by Bowaters (Sittingbourne) for about 30 years before moving to Crowborough (Sussex). He is survived by his second wife Wendy, two daughters and a son.

Dennis Fowle

19. Annual Reunion Dinner - 5th March 2016

The 2016 Annual Reunion Dinner will be held on Saturday 5 March at UK Paper Clubhouse, Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne. The Bar opens at 6.00 pm, dinner at 7.00 pm.

The cost is £20 per head to include dinner and coffee. Phone Chris Laming on 07736 728744 to book your place now.

Guest speaker: Steve Bedelle

We are delighted that Steve has agreed to speak at the 2016 dinner. He has enjoyed a long and illustrious career in the Royal Navy and in the Royal Canadian Navy and will entertain us with tales of globe-trotting, the Falklands Conflict and general derring-do:

Lieutenant Commander (Royal Canadian Navy) Stephen Bedelle joined Borden Grammar School in 1969 and left after 'O' levels in summer 1974. He joined the Royal Navy in January 1975, aged 16, as a Junior Electrical Mechanic, and after a year of training joined his first ship, HMS Euryalus, a Plymouth based Leander class frigate. Having only ever been abroad once before joining the Navy (a day trip to Ostende), his first trip abroad with the good ship Euryalus was of course, to Ostende. A Caribbean deployment late in 1976 more than made up for this somewhat disappointing start to his globetrotting adventures, with visits to several tropical islands and two trips to Rio de Janeiro.

Further sea time in HM ships Cardiff and Avenger, which included service in the Falklands Conflict in 1982, was followed by extensive training courses, then two more years of sea time in HMS Scylla and promotion to Chief Petty Officer Weapon Engineering Artificer in 1986.

After promotion from the ranks to Sub Lieutenant in 1990, another two years at sea beckoned, this time in HMS London, a Plymouth based frigate, which included trips to the States, Russia, the Gulf of Oman and Singapore

Various shore appointments in the Portsmouth area culminated in promotion to Lieutenant Commander in 2003 and a final golden goodbye posting in 2005 to Halifax, Nova Scotia, on exchange with the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) for three years, ending a 34 year career in August 2008. However, the opportunity to remain in Canada and continue serving, only this time with the RCN, was too good to pass up and he has served a further seven and a half years with the RCN in Canada's capital city, Ottawa.

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Stephen has been married to Kim for 31 years and they have a 29-year-old daughter, Emma, who lives in Toronto.

20. Old Bordenian awarded MBE in New Year Honours List



Malcolm Bradshaw, an Old Bordenian who left the school in the 1960s, has been awarded an MBE in the 2016 New Year Honours List. The formal citation states:

Malcolm McNeille BRADSHAW

Senior Chaplain, Anglican Church in Greece. For services to interfaith understanding and community charities in Greece.

The Diocese in Europe website provides further details of Malcolm's work and the award:

<http://europe.anglican.org/news/news/post/1008-minister-among-migrants-awarded-mbe>.

Stephen Lynas, who alerted us to the award, says "There was an article about Malcom's work in Athens with refugees in the Church of England newspaper a couple of weeks ago (see below). Malcolm was a prefect when I was in the lower forms (c. 1964, I would guess). His father was a wonderfully bearded parish priest - Rector of (I think) Hartlip or Upchurch."

By Malcolm Bradshaw
Senior Anglican Chaplain, Athens

In November 2014 it began. A group of 200 Syrians were encamped on the central square opposite the Parliament buildings. This was the first sign of something that could not have been imagined – the greatest humanitarian crisis to hit Europe since the Second World War.

By October of this year the average rate of refugees entering Greece was 6,600 per day. Most travel from Turkey to the Greek islands (the shortest route being 7.5 miles) in overcrowded dinghies holding 50 people (40 per cent being women and children). They pay smugglers over £727 per person.

The greater percentage are middle class Syrians seeking protection from violence in Syria. They are not from the two million Syrians in refugee camps in Turkey.

Among them are Iraqis, Afghans and others. It is not a safe passage. Families witness

the drowning of loved ones. None wish to stay in Greece. They move on into central and northern Europe. The Anglican Chaplaincy in Athens, finding itself in the eye of the storm, gave a priority to 'getting the story out'. As a result, it has hosted four delegations from church-based organisations in the UK.

It's Chaplain, the Rev Canon Malcolm Bradshaw, spoke at a fringe meeting during the November General Synod.

Furthermore, a link has been forged with Us (formerly USPG) to help administer donations received by the Chaplaincy for the needs of refugees. Us is drawing from the Chaplaincy for its own appeal focused on the refugees. It has also financed a 'Facilitator' to assist the chaplaincy in its response locally. As a result the chaplaincy has already checked out and directed funding to 'Lighthouse' – an NGO that awaits the arrivals of the dinghies on Lesbos; to MedIn – an NGO that provides much-needed medical care to refugees on

Samos; and to Apostoli (the welfare organisation of the Orthodox Archbishop of Athens) that distributes primary care (food, toiletries, medicine, clothing) on three of the islands and at a huge refugee reception centre in Athens.

Of late the chaplaincy has been the catalyst for different Churches and church organizations coming together to co-ordinate our responses and provide mutual support. This may be timely because the focus of the crisis is moving away from the islands to Athens.

National borders are closing, refugees are turned back and sent to Athens, while others continue to arrive daily from the islands. Many are now 'stuck'. Athens is fast becoming the refugee hub of Europe. Yet, it is the capital of a country that can't feed its own population because of austerity.

Over 10,000 meals are given out daily by the Orthodox Church to the local population – a programme that the chaplaincy is also identified with.

