



Aldenhamiana

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Aldenham School's Firefly "ffalloutt 3013" rounding the buoy in a leading position at the 1967 National Firefly Championships in Torquay. **Simon Finch (K62-67)** is helming and **Ramsay Farran (K62-67)** is the crew.

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

In my October 2003 letter, I outlined some of the important and innovative improvements made to the Society's affairs during recent years. Your Committee regularly monitors and validates these improvements, to ensure that the intended benefits are indeed being realised and that the Society continues to move forward in step with changing times. I also emphasised that the next few years would be an exciting and challenging period for Aldenham and asked that OAs should give the School their strong support.

I have been delighted that, in recent months, there have been several events which have demonstrated the continuing strength and commitment of OAs, both to the Society and to the School. First, a series of OA regional lunches, organised by John McAllister and Molly Barton of the Development Office. This initiative capitalised on the great success of the Gaudy event at OA Day, with a lunch held on 8th October at Hove attended by some 30 OAs and their guests. The next regional lunch is planned for Wednesday 19th May and will be held in Diss, Norfolk - please contact the OA Office for further details, which will also appear on the Website in due course. Next, the Canada and USA OA Dinners, which were held on 24th and 25th October in Toronto and New York respectively. Both of these events were "firsts" of their kind and were once again initiatives by the Development Office team. By all accounts, both were hugely successful and enjoyable evenings.

The most recent major event has been the annual OA Dinner at the Royal Air Force Club on 25th November, with some 70 OAs, wives, partners and guests attending. It was an excellent evening, with entertaining and thought-provoking speeches from both the Headmaster, Richard Harman, and our principal guest, Peter Jones, Chairman of the Horserace Totalisator Board. It was also a tribute to the many who managed to arrive on time despite the several unexpected nearby street closures prior to the State Opening of Parliament the following morning! I am extremely grateful to Ian Luetchford for his impeccable organisation of the evening and to Ambrose Barber for yet again arranging for the Society to have the use of the RAF Club. This year's Dinner should be similarly well attended, and full details will be published in the Summer.

Looking to the future, I hope that many of you will be able to support the events planned for this year, including the Society's Annual General Meeting which will be held at the School on 16th March at 6.30 pm. In particular, OA Day on 27th June will focus on those who left the School between the years of 1960 and 1969 and, if the 2003 event was anything to go by, it will attract a similarly large attendance - so it will be all the more important to send your applications in just as soon as possible, please, if you wish to attend the Gaudy lunch.

Finally, for my first year as President of the Society, my thanks must go to all the members of the Committee for their invaluable assistance. I am especially grateful to Mark Jordan for his continuing commitment in updating, developing and overseeing

the OA Website, which has quickly become an increasingly important method of communication with our membership both here and abroad. Next, to William Rouse and Richard Peart, as Secretary and Treasurer respectively, who - together with the Development Office team - keep the routine business of the Society on track. Also to Trevor Barton, who continues to mastermind the production of *Aldenhamiana* and maintain its high quality. And, not least, my gratitude extends to the Headmaster, Richard Harman, together with his academic and support team, without whose assistance and unfailing cooperation the Committee's role would be unachievable.

Mike Taylor

EDITOR'S NOTES

The *Aldenhamiana* Editorial Desk (aka the Bartons' kitchen table) has been rather less cluttered than usual with contributions from you, so this Edition is a touch thinner than has been the case recently. Sadly this is not reflected in your Editor, who took your good wishes for enjoying Christmas literally and is now faced with a battle both physical and mental to prepare for the Eros Run. Speaking of which, please note "Dates for your Diary" below, where a number of special events are listed.

We hope you will find this edition interesting - we have some excellent reports on last year's events, a number of photographs to jog memories around the world, another review of a book by an OA author, further reports from our stalwart footballers, a perspective of Letchmore Heath like no other and some moving obituaries for members of the OA family who have sadly died.

My particular thanks to those who sent Christmas cards to the OA office. We wish you all a very happy 2004, and hope that you will find a few minutes to write to us with your news, views and reminiscences.

Letters, emails oas@aldenham.com and photographs will be gratefully received and your contributions will, I can assure you, be read with interest - customer satisfaction is high!

I hope you enjoy this *Aldenhamiana*.

Trevor Barton

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

As I write we are in the midst of preparations for the official opening of the Prep School on 30th January, with our Guests of Honour Neil Durden-Smith OA and Judith Chalmers. The building, a two-storey extension to Martineau's, is now in use and is a wonderful asset. It is very exciting to see plans that have been on the drawing board for a little while becoming reality. Work is about to begin on "Phase 2" of the overall project, the new classroom block next to the Memorial Library and the refurbishment of the Near and Far Old Blocks to house the relocated Martineau's next year as the Prep School grows.

We are also preparing to welcome our first co-educational intake at 11+ in September of this year and the level of registrations is very encouraging. There is plenty, then, to keep us busy in the months ahead. Karin and I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting an increasing number of OAs in 2003, both in this country and abroad, and we look forward to doing the same this year. OAs are always welcome to come and visit the School to see for themselves the new developments as well as to re-visit some old familiar haunts.

May I take this opportunity to wish all OAs and their families a very happy, healthy and prosperous 2004.

Richard Harman

TREASURER'S REPORT

The last reminder seems to have paid off! We now have 98 standing orders, promising a total of £1373 per annum, together with 15 one-off donations, totalling £350. Very many thanks to all of you who have responded to our appeal for a voluntary subscription. I can't help feeling that there may still be a few of you who have put it aside into the box of good intentions. Perhaps the new year is a good time to try again, and so the form is once more printed in this magazine. We look forward to hearing from you.

Richard Peart

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 16th March

OA Society AGM and Buffet Supper at the School

Wednesday 19th May

Regional OA Lunch in Diss for OAs living in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. (Separate invitations will follow)

Sunday 27th June

OA Day Gaudy for OAs from the 1960s

Thursday 8th July

Eros Run followed by Runners' Breakfast

July

Australian OA Dinner in Melbourne

Tuesday 28th September

OAs vs School Sailing Match and Dinner

Tuesday 30th November

OA Society Annual Dinner at the RAF Club, Picadilly

Reality History

Following the production of *Platt Revisited*, a collation of reminiscences from OAs of the 1920s and 1930s much enjoyed by pupils and fellow subscribers alike, the School's History Department would like to unite OAs who attended the School or experienced the war first hand between 1939 and 1945 to share their experiences with present-day Aldenhamians.

This is very much in line with a national policy focussing on reality History. If any OAs would like to share their memories, memorabilia (on loan naturally) etc. with our GCSE candidates we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact John McAllister of the Development Office at the School on 01923 851614 or development@aldenham.com

MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL LIBRARIAN

Thank you very much to all those OAs who responded for the request for copies of *Schoolboy Rising*. There are now copies available for loan in the School Library.

REQUEST FOR WORK EXPERIENCE

Melissa James (B00-02), who is currently a student at Bristol, UWE completing her second year studying surveying, is looking for work experience during her year out. Ideally she would like work with a building surveyor in the Bristol or London area. If you can help her please contact the OA Office.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

If you would like to join the OA Society Committee (and volunteers would be warmly received) please contact the Honorary Secretary, William Rouse, whose details appear at the back of *Aldenhamiana*.

OLD ALDENHAMIAN SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND BUFFET SUPPER

In the Whitbread Room at Aldenham School
Tuesday 16th March 2004 at 6.30 pm prompt

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 11th March 2003
3. Election of Officers
4. President's Report
5. Headmaster's Report
6. Secretary's Report
7. Treasurer's Report
8. OA Website Report
9. The Friends of Aldenham School
10. Aldenham War Memorial Educational Fund
11. OA Day - 27th June 2004
12. OA Society Dinner - 30th November 2004
13. Election of Honorary Members
14. Any Other Business
15. Date of Next Meeting

Followed by a Buffet Supper at 7. 45 pm.

Tickets for the Supper cost £10.00 per head including wine, and all guests (particularly wives, husbands and partners) are welcome. Guests are invited to join a tour of the School while the AGM is in progress.

If you are unable to attend the meeting you are welcome to attend the Supper only

Please complete and return this form together with your cheque made payable to "Old Aldenhamian Society"
to: **W Rouse, 36 Savoy Court, 245 Cromwell Road, Earls Court, London SW5 0UA**

Name, house and dates at Aldenham: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code _____

Telephone No: _____ e-mail address: _____

I shall attend the AGM / Supper / both, and would like _____ tickets for the Supper at £10 per ticket and
enclose a cheque for £ _____

Full name of each guest please: _____

(Please indicate if you have any special dietary requirements)

CLUB REPORTS

OA GOLFING SOCIETY

The dates of our meetings in 2004 are:

Thursday/Friday **Halford Hewitt**

1/2 April 1st Round at Deal or Sandwich

Tuesday **Spring Meeting and AGM**

Late April West Hill

Wednesday **O AFC Golf Meeting**

Late April Hanbury Manor

Sunday **Grafton Morrish Qualifier**

9 May Royal Ashdown Forest

Tuesday **Match v Old Leysians**

25 May Brookmans Park

Tuesday **Match v Littlehampton**

8 June Littlehampton

Wednesday **Over 30's v Under 30's**

Late June Porters Park

We are always keen to welcome new members - golfing ability, age and beauty are not always assessed! If you are interested, contact the Hon Secretary whose details appear at the back of *Aldenhamiana*.

Ian Luetchford (B48-51) the OA Dinner organiser would like to thank **Robin** and Carolyn **Chaventre (M49-52)** for all their hard work organising two tables of OA Golfing Society members to attend the OA Dinner.

FOOTBALL

Martyn Berg (B89-94) writes:-

OA 1st XI - Season Of Promise

"After a blistering end to the 2002/3 season (6 wins out of 7), the Old Aldenhamian 1st XI were expected to start the 2003/4 season strongly.

"The stage was set, with the first game being against a team that the OA 1sts had beaten for the last 3 years - Old Wykehamists (Winchester). However, it was not to be. Discipline was bad and tempers flared. Despite having a strong team on paper, the OAs lacked the discipline and cohesion which had seen them sweep past this same team 5 months earlier, and lost at home 3-0. Not the start that was hoped for.

"The next game was against a new team and the OAs were hopeful that they could get past the disappointment of the Wykehamists game and thrash Old Tonbridgians into next week. Now, trying to get 12 OA 1st team players to Tonbridge at 10am is no mean feat, but all but one player, who turned up at half time, made it. A dominant OA team could however not find the final touch, and Tonbridge snatched one on the break.

"Two games, two defeats - not the start the OA 1sts were looking forward to.

"Next up the old foe, the local derby - Haberdashers. Always going to be a tough game. A great performance by all in the team - notably the defence of Chris Potts, Andrew Berg, Zack Berman and Paul Clemow, meant Aldenham would go in to the break 1-0 up after a through ball from Martyn Berg set up a great finish from Mark Herbert. The second half was more of the same and the OAs could have scored another 3 or 4, but Mark Herbert got his and Aldenham's second after a Dominic Daley pass on 60 mins and although Habs got one back against the run of play, the OAs finished comfortable winners.

"Habs again, this time away. 60 mins into the game and Aldenham are 3-0 up with goals from Guy Morgan, Mark Herbert and John Preston - what a performance. But final scoreline 3-3!! The defence crumbled, the players let themselves down....and they knew it.

"Repton next. A team that were expected to win the League and go back up to the Premier League from whence they came. Due to a domestic and a flat tyre, Aldenham started this game with 8 players, soon to be down to 7 after an injury. The 7 man defence battled and battled and kept the Reptonians at bay. Eventually, after 25 mins, the 3 missing men turned up, one of which, Andrew Berg, was to come on the pitch and score a header with his first touch of the ball. It was time to shut up shop, which was done and the OA 1st XI finished with a 1-0 victory - A Truly Great Battle was won!!

"Big Thanks to all the players and to Simon Hunt, Hanif Moledina, Andrew Carroll and the rest of the Committee for their hard work."

RESULTS TO DATE:

Vs. Old Wykehamists (H) Lost 0-3

Vs. Old Tonbridgians (A) Lost 0-1

Vs. Old Haberdashers (H) Won 2-1

Vs. Old Haberdashers (A) Drew 3-3

Vs. Old Reptonians (H) Won 1-0

Simon Hunt (L90-95) OA 2nd XI, writes:-

"The 2nd XI, under the ever enthusiastic guidance of their captain Nick Baker, were also expected to start the season strongly. With the increase in the number of players in the club we have been able to draw on the expertise of the old (some very old....Scotty !) and the new (namely recent School leavers Daniel Shipton, Matt Miel and Daniel Shafron).

"We started well with a 4-0 drumming of Forest at Aldenham. This excellent vein of form continued with draws against both Repton and Harrow, followed by a 3-0 whopping of Brentwood in their own backyard. Constant solid performances from Toby Jenner, our very own 'fox in the box', who manages to send a shiver down everyone's spine whenever he strikes the ball (even in front of an open goal....something to do with contact lenses falling out apparently !), Scotty Goodfellow, who holds up the heart of the defence and manages to score vital goals from nowhere every now and again, with Andy Carroll, Matt Miel, Dan Marsh and Dan Shipton forever supporting him. Ken Aina, Nick Baker and Jesper Anderson have been a major strength in midfield, assisted by Matt Butcher when he has not been playing for the 1st XI.

"The team suffered slightly over the period of 'Rugby World Cup frenzy', when a number of the side decided to abandon ship for the delights of Sydney !! (which we still haven't heard the end of !!). This at least is our excuse for losing a game against Bradfield. However, when the heart of the side returned for our last game before Christmas we battled an excellent draw against a tough, referee assisted Forest side away at Forest.

"Overall, it has been a superb start to the season, not seen since the Division winning season of 98-99. We are genuine contenders to win the Division and get promoted again.

"Thanks must go to everyone who has given so much effort so far this season, especially Nick Baker for his tireless efforts as Captain / Manager, to Roger Sugarman for 'refereeing' at short notice on more than one occasion, and finally a big congratulations to Jesper Anderson who recently entered the realm of fatherhood !!.....the question is who is going to be next ???

"The OA's have had an excellent season in general so far and we have more registered players this year than we have had for about 6 years, although we could do with a few goalkeepers ! Training takes place every Tuesday evening on the Astro turf at Aldenham. If you fancy a kick-about please feel free to join us, friends are more than welcome."

OA Veterans' Football Club Match Report - Veterans Cup 1st Round Date:

Date: Sunday 23rd November, 2003

Venue: Aldenham School

Referee: Eddie Carter

1. John BAUGH
2. Andy MAYSON
3. Roger SUGARMAN
4. Alan CINNAMOND
5. Rob HADRILL
6. Andy CLARE
7. Ant SELWYN

8. Nigel MARKS
9. Nigel FENN (Captain)
10. Alex HENCHLEY
11. Phil KERR

SUBS:

12. Neil DAVIES - Came on for Alex Henschley
13. Paul STENNING - Came on for Nigel Fenn
14. Richard BANNISTER
15. Tony COCOZZA

Aldenhamians 0 Cholmeleians 1

"So near, but yet so far.

"The Cholms arrived early, all present & correct in the changing rooms by 10am, bolstered by four new players from last season's game! They were looking for revenge after last season. They went down to warm up half an hour before kick-off.

"They have also played three games in the AFA Veterans Cup, which has seen them progress through to the quarter finals. No mean feat for an Arthurian side. The OA team were strong although we were missing Matt Wender through an injury picked up in the Harrow friendly and Scott Goodfellow, Mark Cox and Mark Deverell on the other side of the world with tickets for the World Cup Final. But the OAs have been fortunate to have the services of Fenn, Sugarman, Marks and Cinnamon for the first time this year.

"Fortunately, we were again granted the use of the Upper pitch. Many thanks again are extended to David Mead and his team as it was in excellent condition. The game on most pitches would have been postponed due to waterlogging, as it had rained continually for 36 hours.

"Once the game got underway, the Cholms started brightly and the OAs sluggishly. In the first twenty minutes, the OAs could have quite conceivably been 3-0 down, except for an exceptional save from John Baugh with his feet (similar to Oliver Kahn's (the German No.1 for the uninitiated) "feet" blocks), and an Andy Mayson sliding tackle block on the six yard box. Instead, we found ourselves 1-0 down, after some good football from Sugarman left him out of position. The Cholms exploited the space with a long ball down the right and a neat pass inside which was dummied. A first time shot beat John Baugh, low & hard into the corner of the net.

"The Cholms played the game mainly on the break. The OAs dominated possession for the majority of the game, and created some good chances towards the end of each half.

"In the first half, Ant Selwyn, Beckham-like, from at least 25 yards, placed a direct free kick against the bar with the goalkeeper beaten. There then followed the OAs' most intense pressure of the game. Four chances were narrowly thwarted in the space of five minutes.

"Dick Marks got on the end of a fine corner from Alan Cinnamon, leaving his marker for dead, but unfortunately made too good a connection and the ball went narrowly over the bar. Nigel Fenn then worked himself an opening after a cross from Alan Cinnamon, but the effort was blocked by both defender and goalkeeper throwing themselves at the ball.

"Phil Kerr then crossed from the left, the ball was taken down by Alex Henschley, but his shot was saved by the onrushing keeper. Some neat interplay by Marks & Sugarman set up a chance for Phil Kerr arriving late on the edge of the box. Phil's chip eluded the keeper, but was headed off the penalty spot by a defender again with the keeper beaten. The OAs did not want the half to end.

"It did, and the momentum was lost. It took the introduction of Neil Davies, in place of Alex Henschley, and some balls down the flank for Nigel Fenn to increase the pressure in the final fifteen minutes. Up until that point, the Cholms had some breakaways, but were kept to some long range efforts by the experience and central defensive partnership of Clare & Hadrill. Throughout the game, Clare had marshalled the defence admirably and certainly did not look his 48 years.

"Nigel Fenn suddenly started to take the defence on and make chances for others. Firstly, after some constant pressure, Phil Kerr had a shot from the edge of the area, which curled against the post. The best chance fell to Neil Davies with five minutes to go. Nigel Fenn outstripped the Cholms defence and centred for Neil, who found himself a yard short, and his shot was skewed wide with the goalkeeper to beat.

"All in all it was a creditable performance against a decent side, but disappointing as the OA side reached the final last year with a team with less natural talent than the present one.

"BUT

"It is not yet all over!

"There is now a Plate competition, with the 1st round to be played on 18th January 2004."

OA WEBSITE

Mark Jordan, the Website Manager, would be grateful to hear from any OAs who could help by inputting data, etc. Also, if you have any photos of School life suitable for the Website or *Aldenhamiana*, let us know on oas@aldenham.com

Your most recent copy of *The Aldenhamian* had inserted in it a postcard to be returned if you wished to continue receiving the magazine. If you meant to do so but forgot, please send the postcard to the OA Office in the next month or so - or email the OA Office.

This in no way affects this publication *Aldenhamiana* or the arrangements for supplying it to OAs.

BUTTONS

Tom Rook, not an OA, has written to us with an unusual request, but there may be an OA who can help him. He has been collecting uniform buttons since he retired. He wonders if there were ever specific Aldenham School buttons - perhaps blazer buttons, or uniform buttons from the OTC / CCF? If so, and if you have one or more buttons which you may be prepared to let Mr Rook have, perhaps you could contact the OA office who would be pleased to put you in touch with him.

EROS TO EROS 2004

It is an Olympic year, and those of you intending to peak in time for Athens will wish to use the second most famous foot race in the world as a final test of form. Yes, the countdown to Eros has started again, and all over the country the Winter blues are being put to one side, trainers retrieved from cupboards, and squeeze tubes of "Deep Heat" liberally applied to pallid thighs. OAs tall and short, male and female, fast and slow are invited to fulfil a lifetime's ambition on 8th July. Contact the Editor, Trevor Barton, via the OA Office.

AHOY THERE, SAILORS!

The present members of the Aldenham School Sailing Club wish to challenge OA sailors (ie those who sailed at School or have since become enthusiastic) to a sailing match to be held in the afternoon of Tuesday 28th September 2004 on Aldenham Reservoir.



ffalloutt will be on display on the day of the Dinner.

The sailing match will be followed by the Sailing Club's Annual Dinner, which will take place in the evening of the same day at the School. All OA sailors, whether or not they take part in the sailing match, are warmly invited to the Dinner, for which there will only be a nominal charge. Wives, husbands or partners are also invited to the Dinner. A letter with details will follow when we have a better idea of numbers.

Space (and boats!) are limited, so please reply, using this form, as soon as possible to: **The OA Office, Aldenham School, Elstree, Herts WD6 3AJ.** If the match is over-subscribed, it may be necessary to draw names from a sou'wester.

We are sure this will be a wonderful evening and we hope you will give it serious consideration.

Name

House and Dates at Aldenham

Sailing experience at Aldenham / otherwise

.....
.....

*Please consider me for the OA team for the sailing match, but I cannot make the Dinner.

*I do not wish to sail, but I would like to come to the Dinner, and will be accompanied by:

.....

*Please consider me for the match, and please put me down for the Dinner accompanied by

.....

*Please complete or delete as appropriate.

Tim Sheeres (P42-45), who very kindly offered the use of his Club and helped organise the OA Dinner held in Toronto this autumn, sent the following report of the Dinner:-

CANADIAN OA REUNION - FRIDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2003

I was delighted to receive John McAllister's letter at the end of May advising Canadian OAs that a Reunion Dinner in Toronto was being planned for October 24th, 2003. I immediately responded that my wife and I would be delighted to be a part of this first ever reunion and that I would be most happy to put my membership of the Granite Club at the School's disposal if that would be of interest. With the Headmaster's approval the Granite Club was chosen as the site for the Reunion.

For the next little while Molly Barton from the School and myself were involved in settling the logistics for the occasion including selection of the menu and, most importantly, selection of the wines!

When October 24th rolled around there were 29 guests expected including the Headmaster and Mrs Harman. A reception was held in the Crystal Room from 6.30 pm at which time there was set up a wealth of memorabilia which the OA guests had been asked to bring along with them.

Dinner was served at 7.30 pm. The Headmaster welcomed everyone to the first ever reunion of Canadian OAs after which I, with help from the other OAs, stumbled through the 'Benedic Domine Nobis...' Grace! The preselected choice of entrée was either prime rib of Alberta beef (no comment on BSE please!) or Atlantic Salmon fillet and the choice of wines was either Sauvignon Blanc Pelee Island or Merlot Pelee Island, both very drinkable Niagara wines. Over coffee the Headmaster gave us a most informative update on developments at the School, both as to academic challenges and "bricks and mortar" construction.

A lively interest in the Headmaster's comments was shown by the guests who were unanimous in suggesting that a similar reunion be held before another several centuries slip by! The Headmaster asked if all those attending who wished to be involved in another such Reunion would please direct their expression of interest to John McAllister at the School.

The evening ended with a hearty vote of thanks to the Headmaster and all others who had been involved in making the arrangements for such a stimulating 'family gathering'. In all we had a 'baker's dozen' OAs, 12 male and one female, who spanned years at the School from 1935 to 1989, over half a century Not Out!

Below is a list of OAs who attended the Dinner.

Mrs S N Beler K(84-86)

Mr M A Hossain P(86-89)

Dr D M Bond K(64-68)

Mr N Hyatt S(55-59)

Mr S J Fountaine S(70-74)

Mr M E Manley-Casimir B(53-58)

Mr H G Fraser B(53-57)

Mr M R Rowe S(52-57)

Mr M E Furber S(62-67)

Mr T G Sheeres P(42-45)

Mr T Greville-Smith P(66-69)

Mr R M Wingfield S(35-39)

Mr T Hilderley S(59-62)

Mr A A L Wright S(53-58)



USA OA DINNER - SATURDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2003

At the end of October 2003, and only 24 hours after a similar function in Toronto, a gathering of OAs was held in New York - the first ever such event.

At the instigation of the School's Development Office and by generous invitation of the Headmaster, nearly 40 OAs, with wives and partners in many cases, met for an evening of memories, good company, good fare and good cheer. The venue for wonderful evening was Rossinis, in Manhattan, having gathered initially for a Drinks Reception in an apartment overlooking the Empire State Building.

Manhattan by starlight was followed by Mamma's favourite pasta and as the assembled crowd descended on the sumptuous buffet, they were serenaded, operatic style, by many familiar melodies. Indeed the OA accompaniment to Jerusalem and Land of Hope and Glory was received with great delight by our fellow diners.

The Headmaster gave a spirited speech and welcomed the renewed links with a span of OAs from the 1930s to the late 1990s. It was also very nice to welcome a number of former ESU scholars and their presence merely confirmed the very special transatlantic friendship that exists.

It is to be hoped that the event will become at least a biennial fixture and that in between the many OAs who were reunited on this wonderful evening will make every effort to sustain and enhance the links that were forged in Rossinis.

Peter Shaerf, who played a major part in the organisation of the Dinner, would be happy to hear from any OAs who would like to hear of future plans, and pending the establishment of a more permanent line of communication he can be reached through John McAllister, also a guest, in the School Development Office.

A list of OAs who attended the Dinner is below.

Mr J A Allen B93-97	Mr S C Nathwani S81-83
Mr K Appenteng S70-75	Mr D R Noyes K67-68
Mr J Brett M63-68	Miss D E Payne B94-96
Mr D G Chalton S63-67	Miss N N Ramnath B94-95
Miss S P Daver B93-95	Mr P M Rice P87-88
Mr E J Dyson S50-55	Mr R Y Richards M63-68
Mr K J Grassick K71-77	Mr T J Scopes S65-70
Professor C Hunter S47-52	Mr P S Shaerf P67-71
Miss C A Ibarra B93-95	Dr S Sutterwala K84-88
Mr J S Kaplan B82-87	Mr B J Uttam B58-61
Rt Reverend P W Leach-Lewis M51-55	
Mr E M Wormser S36-38	Mr I Mayo-Smith P38-42
Mr M J Wurtz S75-80	Mr P L Mooney S75-79



GAUDY 2003 FOR OAs FROM THE 1940s AND 1950s MARRIAGES

The OA Office has received several requests to publish a list of OAs who attended the 2003 Gaudy.

I R S Abington	S T Adams	J D Apthorp
C E Arkell	R P G Ashby	T E B Bateman
C R Beale	L A Birn	J D Blackwell
M W Blake	R C Bolt	W Bradley-Bryan
D P Brice	C R Brown	F E Burlingham-Johnson
J A Cadisch	M C Capon	P A E Carr
R C Chaventre	A P Choppen	G A Clarke
J R Collis	R J Coombes	R M Craig
C Creelman	A R David	A R Day
D W Dewes	A Dey	G Dunn
J R Edwards	I J Evans	S J D Fawcus
M O A Fisher	J L W Flood	K H Fowler
W H Gamble	R M S Gardiner	J H Gardner
F B Gibberd	J R Glazier	T E Glazier
M B Goodman	J J Goodwin	R M K Greig
J S M Hailey	I R Hamilton-Hill	J E Handcock
M G Handcock	P W Harvey	C F Hemming
M J Hirst	D W L Hubble	A N Hunt
T B Jackson	D J James	J W Jarrett
M A Jeens	N W Jephcott	J E Kendall
T J Kendall	W H Kennedy	J E Kentish
C J Kershaw	J Knight	E J Lane
T J Law	G H Lawton	P K Leaver
P Llewelyn-Jones	M A Logan	G Luetchford
J M McLeod	T D Marcuson	A D Massey
I G Mclean	D I Miller	P M Q Mobsby
R K Montgomery	C J Moore	A G Morgan
J B R Morris	P D Morrison	I R Muir
S J Murray	P R Nelson	P A Osmond
J M Page	H D Redmayne	P G Richfield
J D Rimer	A R Roberts	H R M Roberts
P D H Robins	B Robson	C S Rogerson
M R Rowe	G T Rushton	J N Sainsbury
J E Saxby	N Schollick	D I Scott
C R Shaw	M W Sheeres	G B Smethurst
R G Southerst	J T Spurgen	M J A St Aubyn
A J G Sturgeon	J A Tanner	M G Taylor
J M Threshie	W T Turner	C E Upton
J M Venner	M R Weatherhead	M N Wells
P N K Wells	J A Westcott	E S White
N R W Whitling	R F Willmott	R W Wilson
P J L Wingfield	A T J Wurtz	R L Wynne-Jones

ENGAGEMENTS

The engagement is announced between **Russ Barker (P86-91)** and Amanda King.

The engagement is announced between **Julian Swanne (B87-92)** and Louise Gleave.

On 8th November 2003 at St Mary's Church, East Barnet **Malcolm Yull (P89-94)** to Elizabeth Copeman.

DEATHS

P M Blunt	K66-69	2 October 2003
C R Clarke	S31-34	9 October 2003
J Farrington	S35-40	2003
E H Fielder	S28-30	11 December 2003
A R F Martin	M28-33	28 September 2003
P G McCormick	S33-36	29 June 2002
E D Mercer	M33-36	24 October 2003
Rev C R Stagg	CR58-64	17 December 2003

OBITUARIES AND TRIBUTES

We reprint with acknowledgements the following obituary of **Ronald Walker (B35-37)**, which appeared in *The Times*: "Ron Walker - Wartime bomber pilot who took part in the "Long March" of PoWs after four years in captivity.



"Shot down over Germany during a raid on Düsseldorf in May 1941, Ron Walker spent the remaining four years of the war in captivity, very largely at Stalag Luft III, at Sagan in Silesia. There, in the bitter early months of 1945 he took part in what has become known as the "Long March" of PoWs from the eastern territories of the Third Reich to camps farther west.

"In the summer of 1944, with the Soviet Army already encroaching upon the eastern marches of Germany, there were upwards of 200,000 RAF, army and naval PoWs in camps dotted throughout the Third Reich and the occupied territories - besides thousands of Americans. Many of these lay in the east of the country, in the path of the advancing Russians. To prevent their being "liberated" by the Red Army, Hitler ordered that these prisoners should be marched westwards out of the reach of the Russians.

"In Stalag Luft III - scene of the Great Escape of March 1944, in which 76 PoWs had escaped and 50 had been shot on Hitler's express orders after being recaptured - the sombre new year of 1945 opened with the awful certainty that the expulsion from the camp into the freezing weather outside might well begin before January was out. Prisoners, many of whom had become weakened by the long years of captivity, desperately attempted to get themselves fit for the coming ordeal by running or walking the perimeter track of each compound.

"Walker kept a diary of the grim months that ensued, a document which formed a valuable source for the book *The Last Escape* by John Nichol and Tony Rennell, published last year. In it, the dreadful ordeal of thousands of PoWs is described, as they shuffled their way westwards in temperatures often 20 degrees below zero, in the worst winter Germany had experienced for half a century. More than 10 per cent of those who set out on it are estimated to have perished on the Long March.

"Born in Hampstead in 1921, Ronald Walker was educated at Aldenham School, from where he embarked on an engineering apprenticeship at CAV (Lucas). At the same time he joined the London Gliding Club at Dunstable, Bedfordshire, gaining his international "C" soaring badge in 1939.

"When war came in September 1939, he volunteered for the RAF, was commissioned and, after qualifying as a bomber pilot, joined a squadron of Hampden bombers in No 5 Group, based in Lincolnshire. After the dreadful losses sustained in the early daylight sorties of Bomber Command, by 1941 its aircraft had switched to night operations, even choosing "dirty" weather, which gave its aircraft greater protection (and obscured targets).

"It was in such conditions that early in May 1941 Walker returned to base with his bomb load, only to be reprimanded for risking a landing with it. On a further occasion when an electrical fault prevented his releasing his bombs it was represented to him that he ought to have ditched, rather than attempting a landing. His retort was that this would very likely have led to the loss of aircraft and, quite possibly, crew, too, ditching - so often so glibly spoken of - being actually a most hazardous proceeding in the unquiet waters of the North Sea, especially by night.

"Finally, later in the month, his luck ran out when his Hampden was attacked by a Messerschmitt Me 110 nightfighter as he returned from a raid on Düsseldorf. Baling out, he came to earth in a cabbage field near Maastricht, and was subsequently taken prisoner.

"In the four years that lay ahead Walker learnt German - always likely to be useful in the climate of escape attempts that was so robust in Stalag Luft III - and some Russian. His familiarity with this was likewise to be of service as the Red Army approached.

"After a period of suspense, on January 27, 1945, with the Russians still 60 miles away on the River Oder, the order "Raus,

raus!" was suddenly given by the prison camp guards, rushing from hut to hut. "We could take with us only what we could carry. A feeling of terrible desperation came over me." Walker recorded in his diary.

"He was among the last to leave Stalag Luft III, in the group of prisoners who had been there the longest, and were therefore the least fit. They were the most vulnerable to the bitter cold and the diseases - deadly dysentery the chief - that afflicted the PoWs' retreat.

"The destination was Stalag IIIA, at Luckenwalde, south of Berlin. Soon, more than 10,000 prisoners, including Polish civilian workers, were crowding into the place, shortly afterwards to be supplemented by more than 5,000 Americans who had been captured during the Battle of the Bulge. Walker's unsparingly graphic accounts of the sanitary arrangements at the camp scarcely bear the reading. "If we're still here in the summer, God forbid, I believe a typhus epidemic is a certainty," he concluded.

"Nevertheless, as he noted in his diary, there were lighter moments. In the hiatus between the Germans leaving and the arrival of Red Army units, Walker came across a hangar guarded by mere boys, while out on a foraging detail. In it there were eight gliders. Overcome by the desire to get into the air, he obtained the help of its youthful, but co-operative custodians to obtain for himself a winch launch, and had a short but heady soar over the local countryside before returning to earth. It had occurred to him during this flip that there were certain dangers in being airborne over a Germany whose skies were full of marauding and trigger-happy fighter pilots.

"There was a return to a sterner reality towards the end of April 1945, when the Russians arrived. They were "an incredible mixture", as Walker's diary recorded, "some with immaculate uniforms covered in decorations. . . others more ragged than we were, but all looking as tough as hell". And the women in the Russian ranks were, as Walker and his fellow PoWs soon found out, as tough as the men. One straddled a German guard with drawn bayonet, inviting British captives to give the word for her to slit his throat.

"Walker's abilities in Russian were invaluable in smoothing over misunderstandings, of which there were many. For example the British senior officer narrowly avoided being shot for not staying at the salute while addressing a Russian general - a tradition in the Red Army. Walker found himself interpreting for the numerous alcoholic toasts to the British that the Russians deemed necessary in the circumstances.

"But the initial feelings of camaraderie between liberators and liberated declined towards suspicion as the Russian soldiers began to reflect the deteriorating trust between the Soviet leadership and the Western Allies. Though news reached the camp of the junction of American and Soviet forces at Torgau on the Elbe on April 25, freedom for the Stalag IIIA prisoners

seemed no nearer, and Walker confessed himself "very concerned about the political situation". Far from feeling liberated, the PoWs now sensed that they were hostages.

"By the first week of May many prisoners were in no mood to wait for the conclusions of international wrangling, and took the law into their own hands. With four friends, Walker slipped under a section of the wire that had been damaged by Russian tanks when they first broke into the camp, and legged it for the shelter of nearby woods. Diving into ditches whenever Russians vehicles came along the road, they eventually spotted an American convoy heading westwards. A lorry picked them up and at last they were on the way to the Elbe and genuine freedom. As Walker recorded:

"Crossing it was the greatest moment of my life. The nightmare was over." The date was May 8 - VE Day.

"Repatriated to England, Walker resumed his career in the motor manufacturing industry, intercalating a couple of years managing a pub on the edge of Dartmoor. Thereafter he rejoined Lucas where he worked as an area manager until he retired. He devoted his spare time to gliding at Lasham in Hampshire, and was airborne on his 80th birthday. He was also a keen small-boat sailor.

"Walker was three times married and widowed. He is survived by a daughter and son."

We also reprint with acknowledgments the main part of the obituary of **Bob Grant (B45-48)**, Actor, which appeared in *The Times*:



"Bob Grant was known mainly for his portrayal of the chirpy bus conductor Jack Harper in the 1970s television comedy *On the Buses*. He was the Casanova of the back platform, a lecherous but good hearted type always on the lookout for a bit of 'crumpet'. With his driver, Stan Butler (Reg Varney), he endeavoured to spend as little time as possible working, concentrating his efforts instead on taunting his miserable, moustachioed boss, Blakey (Stephen Lewis) or getting his way with busty "birds" in short skirts.

"The programme was cheap and cheerful fare, and the British public warmed to its fun-loving, unpretentious protagonists, who took nothing seriously and feared only getting the sack. Yet its combination of bawdy, seaside humour and lowbrow vulgarity hardly endeared it to the critics. It was repetitive in form - the toothy, cheeky Jack chats up "clippies" (female bus conductors), Stan says "Cor blimey!" and Blakey shakes his fist, declaring "I 'ate you, Butler!". Most lines were delivered at excessive decibel level and the show became increasingly lewd with each series. In retrospect, too, the programme is reminiscent of much that was unappealing about the early 1970s: its sexism, its strikes and its culture of shirking in the workplace.

"Not that its shortcomings diminished its appeal. By 1971 it commanded a global audience of 22 million, and when a big screen version of the show was released that year it proved a bigger box-office hit than the James Bond film *Diamonds Are Forever*. The programme was sold to 38 countries and in the 1970s enjoyed the distinction of being the most popular comedy show in Yugoslavia.

"Bob Grant was born in Hammersmith, West London, and trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art before taking work on the rep circuit. Between artistic stints he worked as a frozen food salesman and a real-life bus conductor. He served in the Royal Artillery during National Service, and in 1961 appeared in *Big Soft Nellie* at the Theatre Royal in Stratford East, and then took his first leading role in Lionel Bart's *Blitz* at the Adelphi.

"He returned to Stratford where he featured in the Cockney musical *Sparrers Can't Sing* and then *Instant Marriage* - for which he did the dialogue and lyrics - and in 1968 played George Brown in *Mrs Wilson's Diary* at the Criterion. Grant's bacchanalian portrayal of the Foreign Secretary - singing *You Can't Keep a Good Man Down* after helping himself to Harold Wilson's tonic wine - prompted LWT to cancel plans to screen Richard Ingrams's and John Wells's play.

"Later that year he won the role which made him famous, in London Weekend Television's *On The Buses*, which had previously been rejected by the BBC. From 1969 to 1975, in 74 episodes and three films, audiences were treated to the exploits of Stan and Jack on the Number 11 green double-decker service for the Luxton and District Traction Company. Hundreds of fans of the show came to attend Grant's wedding to Kim Benwell in 1971, where Stephen "Blakey" Lewis was the best man, and in which the newlyweds hired a Rolls-Royce for themselves and a double-decker bus for their guests.

"Grant subsequently returned to the stage, appearing with David Jason in *Darling Mr London*, which he co-wrote, and in various pantomimes. He also wrote the comedies *Home is Where Your Clothes Are* and *No Room for Love*, and toured in Australia with *No Sex Please We're British*.

"Returning to live in Leicestershire and then Gloucestershire, he became something of a recluse as work gradually dried up.

"He is survived by his third wife, Kim, and two children."

We reprint with acknowledgements the following obituary of **Major Jim Davies (SH27-32)**, which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*:- "Major Jim Davies, who has died aged 89, was a Special Operations Executive officer whose efforts against the Germans in the Peloponnese were complicated by the approaching civil war in Greece.

"In October 1943 he was parachuted in to work with ELAS - the Communist-led, and largest, branch of the Greek Resistance - when a series of attacks on enemy airfields was planned as part of the ill-starred Dodecanese campaign. The attacks were designed to prepare for "Noah's Ark", which was aimed at harassing the eventual German withdrawal from Greece; but by then ELAS's priority was to combat any possible rivals.

"A tense stand-off between SOE and ELAS resulted. Davies recalled one meeting with the Greeks, when his mission leader, Lt-Col John Stevens, became so exasperated that he got up to throw open a window and exclaim loudly in Greek: "It stinks in here." Despite the strain, Davies continued his work of receiving demolition targets.

"By June 1944, however, ELAS had made conditions so difficult that Stevens withdrew the main body of the mission, though not before Davies had demolished part of the main road and railway along the north coast.

"As Davies and his party withdrew on mules up the mountainside at dawn, they saw a German light aircraft flying low past them to photograph the damage.

"James Thomas Mann Davies was born on January 1 1914 at Bushey, Hertfordshire. When he was seven his parents bought a hotel at Villars in Switzerland, where he became a first-class skier.



"After Aldenham, young Jim went up to Pembroke, Oxford, where he studied Forestry and obtained a half-Blue for skiing. He then joined the Bombay Burma Trading Corporation to work in the Gangor teak forest of north-west Burma. It was an isolated life, in which he found himself with a superior who would drink plenty of whisky, then pull out boxing gloves and invite Davies to spar with him.

"In 1937 Davies was sent to the Siam border to receive a herd of some 30 elephants which was needed to drag logs to rivers for floating downstream. This involved coaxing them on to a raft, on which they were shackled for the crossing of the Salween river, an operation which took three days.

"After a year Davies was sent to Shwebo, where he worked with Lt-Col J H Williams, author of the bestseller *Elephant Bill*. Williams recorded how Davies was sleeping with his two dogs in a jungle hut which was raised 10 ft off the ground on stilts, when he was woken by a yelp: he saw a leopard disappearing with his labrador in its mouth.

"Davies leapt out of bed and fired his revolver, to no avail; but his brindle bull terrier set off in hot pursuit, and attacked the cat so ferociously that it dropped its prey and vanished into the scrub; unfortunately, the labrador was so badly mauled that it had to be destroyed.

"When war broke out Davies found himself in a reserved occupation, since teak was considered as important as steel. However, after the Japanese entered the war in 1941 he was transferred to government service to help supervise the building of a road into Manipur along which the British could retreat to India. Davies helped run a vaccination programme during a cholera outbreak, then returned home after being stricken with malaria and dysentery.

"He was treated on board ship by the drug Atebrin, which cured him of malaria for life; but he was not to return to a tropical climate. Commissioned into the Royal Engineers, Davies was serving as a sapper platoon commander with the 52nd (Lowland) Division when he met an officer on a troop train to Scotland who recruited him into SOE. He was then posted to Cairo as an expert demolitions officer.

"After his work in Greece, for which he was appointed MBE (Mil), Davies and Charles Holland, who had also been in the Peloponnese, were snapped up by SOE's Italian unit, No 1 Special Force. They were briefed to drop an Italian parachute battalion behind enemy lines in the Central Apennines, ahead of the American 5th Army which was advancing towards the Gothic Line.

"Davies and Holland went in as members of an advance party, but soon found that the enemy, alerted by the supply drops of arms, had launched an element of the Hermann Goering Panzer Division to clear the area; Davies managed to get the main drop

cancelled just hours before take-off. Together with a British radio operator, he and Holland headed west to set up a new mission with partisans in Parma. Davies was then recalled to base, after six men were lost in a surprise attack on his mission.

"His report, one of the first by a British liaison officer in the field in Italy, received a wide circulation. It included a timely and balanced military and political assessment of the current state of partisan formations.

"After spending Christmas 1945 with his widowed mother in Switzerland, Davies was dropped by day into the province of Modena to prepare the partisans to aid the Allies' Spring offensive.

"On the night of April 20/21 he rode down from the mountains on a parachuted motor-cycle, a prototype for the post-war Italian Vespa, and entered the city of Modena, which was already under Resistance control ahead of the entry of the first American column. Forty-two years later, he was to return as an official guest at their Liberation Day celebrations.

"When No 1 Special Force was run down, Davies, who was awarded an MC, served as Allied Military Governor of Rho in Piedmont, then ended his military service in Austria. He next embarked on a post-war career with ICI, representing the company in Dublin, South Africa, Belgium and Switzerland.

"In 1951 Jim Davies married Wendy Gillbanks, who died in 1995, after which he went to live in Switzerland. He died there on February 28, and is survived by their three children."

Our thanks to **Michael Hetherington (CR59-94)** who wrote to advise that Roy Stagg - the **Rev. C.R.Stagg** - died on 17th December 2003, aged 85: "He was on the Aldenham Staff from 1958 to 1964 and was Chaplain from 1959 to 1964. He went on to be Headmaster of Kenton College in Nairobi from 1966 to 1980 - a successful and very highly regarded East African Prep. school."

Michael subsequently wrote to us to tell us that he attended Roy Stagg's Memorial Service, where he met **PG Mason (Headmaster 49-61)**. Michael reports that Mr Mason is still looking very hale and hearty and was looking forward to celebrating his 90th birthday on 22nd February. On behalf of all OAs we wish Mr Mason many happy returns.

BOOK REVIEW - *Discovering England's Smallest Churches* by John Kinross (M47-52), published 2003 by the Windrush Press, ISBN 1 84212 728 4.

Ed. - I very much enjoyed reading this book, kindly supplied for review by the author. County by County, John writes just the right amount about more than a hundred small churches, and a varied selection of photographs and illustrations completes the enjoyment. The foreword is by **Rt Revd Colin James (S40-44)**,

who captures the spirit of the book in his words 'The author's sense of history, his knowledge of architecture, and his whimsical sense of humour make him an engaging companion as well as a reliable guide'. I agree. John skilfully balances the wealth of architectural detail and historical reference with the human moments which keep a good book alive.

Of St Leonard, Speeton: 'The coffins used to be carried all the way to Bridlington Priory and the pall-bearers refreshed themselves at the Nag's Head'

Of St John the Baptist, Slitting Mill: 'The building is very welcoming. I was given a cup of tea and invited to the 9.00 am service. The organist, it seems, was usually the last to arrive and has the longest journey so the first hymn is often well under way before the organ gets going'.

Of Keele University Chapel: 'This is an ugly building, very modern in style' - but John then tells us how three spaces (originally intended for Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Free Church to worship separately) are now merged into one. 'In reality they all seem to come together happily for at least one service a day.'

Of St Mary, Little Washbourne: 'I stopped at the Hobnails Inn, near [the church], which was fortunate as they keep the key (marked "I love Florida" on the ring label)'

If your appetite to obtain a copy of this affectionate, amiable book is whetted, that is good. As the author clearly wishes, I hope you will then feel inspired, as I do, to visit some of the churches he has found and written about so eloquently.

OA NEWS, HOME AND ABROAD

D N Barnes (B59-64) wasted no time after he received his copy of *Aldenhamiana 27* to write: "I have found this edition extremely interesting, with entries from many names from the past, which made me feel I ought to do my bit. **Paul Cushman (P & K 59-64)** was an exact contemporary of mine, and in answer to his and the Ed's question, yes, the Bruce Alexander in *A Touch of Frost* is the very same. We both entered Beevor's together, and in fact he was the first boy I ever saw when I arrived in trepidation on the first day for New Boys' Tea. I can also name every member of the Beevor's Hockey team included in the article by **Robert Wright (B60-65)**. This is despite not having seen any of them for about 30 years!

"I see the OA Day on June 27th 2004 is a Gaudy for OAs who left between 1960-69. I have already made a note in my diary, and hope that many of my old colleagues will make the effort to attend.

"Best wishes."

OLD ALDENHAMIAN DAY

Sunday 27th June 2004

10.30 am OAs from the 1960s gather in their Houses for coffee

11.30 am Chapel

12.00 noon Cricket Match

12.30 pm Drinks Reception on the School House Lawn

1.00 pm Lunch

Lunch in the School Dining Hall hosted by the School for those who left the School in the years from 1960 to 1969. (Separate invitations will follow). OA Day Lunch for those not involved in the Gaudy will also be in the Dining Hall. The cost is £10.00 per person.

Please return the reply slip if you intend to have lunch

Alternatively you may wish to bring your own picnic and, weather permitting, enjoy it on the edge of the Main Field.

2.00 pm Lunchtime Barbecue for cricketers and spectators by the Cricket Pavilion. The cost is £7.00 per person.

Please return the reply slip if you would like to have a barbecue lunch

3.30 pm Cup of tea in the School Dining Hall and carriages.

Please come for all or part of the Day and bring your wife / husband / partner

Please complete and return this form by **1st June 2004** if you are not an OA from the 1960's (you will receive a separate invitation) and if you want to attend the OA Lunch or Barbecue to: **The OA Office, Aldenham School, Elstree, Herts WD6 3AJ. Cheques should be made payable to "Aldenham School"**

Name, House and dates at Aldenham:

Address:

..... Post Code:

Telephone No: email address:

I would like tickets for OA Day Lunch and enclose a cheque for £.....

I would like tickets for the Barbecue Lunch and enclose a cheque for £.....

I will bring a guest whose name is:

Please indicate if you or your guest have any special dietary requirements

.....

Michael Goodman (M44-48) kindly sent the following entertaining resume of his meetings with his friends from the School over the years, entitled "5.55 on 5.5.55"

"For some of us from McGill's (formerly Cox's), the delightful OA Day Gaudy in June 2003 was not the first time we had been reunited as a group since leaving School.

"As reported some years ago by Bryan Keatley in an issue of *The Aldenhamian*, a number of us who left Aldenham in 1948 felt it would be a shame if we lost touch and so determined to meet again a few years thereafter to see how we were all getting on.

"We hit on the Comet at Hatfield as a good watering hole, and, to ensure we did not forget the date and time, Bryan suggested we should meet five minutes before opening time on May 5th 1955, in other words at 5.55 on 5.5.55! In fact a goodly number turned up including Brian Cox (the son of Sam Cox, our Housemaster up to 1946), who had come all the way from Ireland for the occasion. Some of us who had not seen each other since leaving School had a lot of catching up to do! We met again, not always all of us, at the Comet at 6.6 on 6.6.66 and at 7.7. on 7.7.77., regular attenders (in addition to Brian) being John 'Sos' Sainsbury, Nigel 'Nippy' Schollick, 'Charlie' Moore, Keith Frew, Derek 'Jimmy' James, David Chaventre, David 'Tert' Harris ('Tertius' as he was the third Harris at School at the time), Bryan Keatley and Michael 'Benny' Goodman. Bryan had nobly taken on the task of organising our gatherings and chivvying us to attend.

"By now beer and sandwiches at the Comet did not seem to be quite what we wanted so at 8.8 on 8.8.88 we met for dinner, together with our other halves, at the home of Tim Law, (who had now joined our number), in very charming and convivial surroundings where he and his wife Joan lived near Godalming. David Harris flew in from America for the occasion.

"When the time came to fix the venue for 9.9 on 9.9.99, Derek James suggested we made a night of it and stayed at his Club, the RAC at Epsom. And so we did, in a delightful setting when about 18 were present including wives, Nigel having chased us up on this occasion. I had the pleasure of proposing the School's good health and referred to the excellent progress being made by the 400 odd boys and girls who now made up its number, about whom we had recently read in the Quatercentenary Edition of *The Aldenhamian*. It was difficult to believe that it was now more than 50 years since we had left but, as I noted "we are still going strong, with the assistance of hip replacements, umbrellas in our hearts and improvements in our nether regions which speaks volumes for the lifestyle we acquired at School or our wives' cooking"! The following morning we were able to reminisce a bit more and even play a little croquet! We also decided to send our best wishes to our old housemaster Bill Kennedy from 1946-1948, from whom Nigel had received a long letter saying how well he remembered us and how sorry he was he could not be there. However, those of us who were at this year's Gaudy were delighted to see Bill who, as *Aldenhamiana* shows, posed for a photograph just outside the old school office.

"We also had some talk about when to meet next, 10.10 on 10.10.10 being a long way ahead and also being nearly after closing time! So we are hoping to bridge the gap by meeting again in 2004 or 2005, especially as we wish to avoid the ignominy of being pushed there in Bath chairs by our fitter wives! We hope to agree on some easy to remember date and go for, say, a weekend on the Riviera, or we might take the Eurostar to Paris! Nothing has been decided yet and you must await an item in *Aldenhamiana* in a year or two's time to hear of our latest exploit!"



Bahar Uttam (B58-61), who some of you may remember contributed to the last *Aldenhamiana*, attended the OA Dinner in New York and subsequently sent the following:

"On reflecting on the list of OAs attending the event, I was mildly disappointed that none of my contemporaries would be present. But, much to my surprise, and unknown to me, **Jonathan Brett (M63-68)** is the brother of my dearest friend at Aldenham - **Nick Brett (B57-61)** and I were very close at the School. My last memory of Nick in person is playing Table Tennis with him at the University of London Union on November 22nd 1962 when President Kennedy was assassinated. Nick was out of sight but not out of mind for all these years!

"As a result of meeting with Jonathan on Saturday, Nick and I had the opportunity this afternoon to catch up on the forty years that have gone by. He lives in Bristol and we have promised to get together again soon. It was a treat!"

We were very pleased to receive an email from **John Hodge (B52-55)**: "Retired and glad to be away from farming! Would like to hear from contemporaries"

Ed. - please remember that the OA Office would be pleased to pass on contact details, if we have them, for old friends you would like to contact.

Paul Griffin (Headmaster 62-74) writes:-

"Dear OAs

"I have just read Sir Michael Kerr's autobiography '*As Far As I Remember*'. I am very much out of the swim, and it may be that this has received due notice at Aldenham. Anyway, may I add a little?

"Michael was a friendly Governor in my time, a modest, wise, quiet man, of impressive intelligence, and clearly an eminent lawyer. He was of my own generation, but our upbringings had been startlingly different. That a young non-English-speaking German boy of good and well-off family could, with his parents, be reduced to complete and utter penury by Hitler, come to England just in time to save himself from the concentration camps, and finish as a univerrally respected High Court Judge, argues that somewhere he must have found considerable help and support. That help and support, in two words, came from Aldenham School. George Riding, then headmaster, gave him a free boarding place, ensured him a Cambridge Scholarship, employed him briefly later as a teacher, and got him, an enemy alien, into the R.A.F. Those of you who have an occasional grumble at George would do well to weigh that in the balance of his account.

"George was not alone in acting as he did. I remember my own headmaster acting similarly, though not with the same sort of result. They were strange times. Michael's personal relations with George were not always easy, but he was inevitably and deeply grateful to him, and was determined to give back to the School what he had taken from it. His work, his football and tennis, and his years as a Governor did that, I suppose.

"'*As Far As I Remember*' would repay being read by anybody who has been at Aldenham. Outside judicial judgments, Michael did not write easily, and orginally intended to write only for his family. He wrote this version of the book late in life, and died before it was published; but like his life it is an astonishing achievement. It brings home to generations who did not know, or have forgotten, what life was like in mid-twentieth century Europe. It stirs wonder about the nature of a man who could move with complete success across cultures and work at a career so singlemindedly. It moves one to question oneself about the nature and purpose of life, all the more perhaps because it skirts the most personal side, and admits to no religious belief.

"I have a particular interest in men who look back on their schooldays, saying "I loved/hated school" or retailing highly suspect stories about the cruelties, kindnesses, sayings, inadequacies, an eccentricities of their mentors. Fun, some of it, but often more revealing about the man than the school. Michael claimed to be looking back as a conformist, as more of us were in those days; but I am not sure he had always been one. Thanks

perhaps to the violence of events, somewhere in his makeup grew a fatalist, saying in every situation "Che sera, sera". The difference between a fatalist and a conformist is pretty subtle, and deserves thought. Fatalism is a sort of religion, conformism can be very materialistic. Anyway, Michael's produced good results.

"My regret is that he is not alive to talk to me about his book, partly because unknown to either of us we had a good friend in common, but mainly because in my beakish way I should have liked to talk and understand more fully.

"With best wishes to all O.A.s".

Happy New Year to all at Aldenham from **Mat Baroudi (B74-77)**, who says he would like to keep receiving all the publications: "It seems like such a long time ago that I was ever there. Receiving the publications always jolts me back and floods my memories with fond times, as well as keeping me informed how things have changed there.

"I have lived in Las Vegas for the past 5 years with my wife and 6 year old son. I have been in sales for a yellow pages company for the past several years. I bought a 4 bedroom house relatively quickly after settling here and starting from scratch. It's been a long slog, but well rewarding. I now VIP host at some of the night clubs here. I also broker for a few companies in marketing and selling their products. I am also in the process of becoming a publisher. I am putting together an entertainment guide for the Vegas area. That plus my music production and family keeps me pretty busy. Any OA's that visit should look me up as I am fairly well connected now.

"I just wanted to express my sadness at hearing that Ken Barnard had passed away. He was my Housemaster at Beevor's. He was a great teacher and Housemaster and I remember him with fondness. Luckily I never had to get punished by him at any time. He knew that all of us would do things we weren't supposed to, but he let us get away with a lot.

"I remember one night, my dorm was raiding another and giving them a good beating with pillows etc. How we ever thought we could do this quietly still amazes me. When Ken walked in mid fight, everyone froze instantly! I think I had my hands up in the air with a pillow ready to deliver the next blow to my hapless victim... Ken sent us back to our rooms after making us clean the dorm up. That was it, no punishment.

"On another occasion, Paddy Young was walking up the path outside Beevor's on his way to the main school buildings. I was sitting on the window sill in the lower 6th form. I nailed him with an orange that I had for some strange reason. Paddy picked it up and decided to exact some revenge. I told him that if he threw it, I would shut the window. He didn't take me at my word. End result, he threw, I shut the window and the orange blew out a pane of glass. I laughed so hard as he had to go and explain to Ken that he had broken a window.

"One hour later, I was in the house library eating an apple and reading a book. Paddy walked in and I nailed him again with my half eaten apple. He grabs the apple and throws it at me but misses. Instead, he takes out another pane of glass in the library. To this day, I still laugh so hard thinking about him having to explain to Ken how he had broken another window with a different piece of fruit. I can't remember what happened to him, but he never threw anything again!

"My fondest memory was when we had a school play with each House having to do something themed on the Bible. Beevor's had chosen to do the Three Kings delivering gifts to the manger. I played King Balzar delivering incense and myrrh. I asked our producer for props and he promised to get them in good time. That never happened. Fast forward to play night, I'm waiting to go on from the music room at the back of the stage. I don't have a prop for my gifts. searching desperately around the room, I spy the only thing I think will do. I thought to myself that no one would really see it as they would be too far back. So I get out there, say my lines and put my improvised prop on stage. There was a hush for about 10 seconds, then the whole school just burst out laughing. This went on for a good 10 minutes. I had found and used a bottle of "Old Spice" as my prop! They could see it all the way to the back of the hall. Mr Arkell apparently nearly had a heart attack from laughing so hard. At evening assembly, Ken was still laughing and he seemed to have a sort of pride in my comedic ability. I will always remember him, rugged outdoors man, pipe smoke trailing over his head, teacher and friend."

Ed. - I recall a similar audience reaction when my House, Kennedy's, did the last Act of *Cyrano de Bergerac* for our Senior House Play in about 1974. Not only was our man "in the gods" over-enthusiastic with the leaves (the stage directions were for the occasional leaf to drift earthwards, adding to the dramatic atmosphere, not for handfuls to rain down on us), but the sight of so many Kennedy's men in tights proved too much for our contemporaries in other Houses.

We've received a letter from an OA who has been missing his regular *Aldenhamiana*. He writes as follows:-

"I do hope that you will be able to help me. I got divorced a few years ago, gave the ex wife the house and everything etc and it has only just occurred to me that she has not been sending on my *Aldenhamiana*. To lose your wife, house, contents and the odd million is nothing compared to the *Aldenhamiana*!"

We have put his new address details on our database and are ensuring that he receives copies of any back issues which he's missing.

Return of the Cuckoos

Ed. - Molly and I recently attended an unusual film show in Letchmore Heath War Memorial Hall. We reprint with acknowledgements an article from *The Guardian*, written by Mark Burman.

"Once again, a small Hertfordshire village is visited by the children that terrified a generation.

"Letchmore Heath was, almost notoriously, a place where things did not happen. And, but for the events of winter 1959, it would have slumbered on in quiet English anonymity. Just another neat and tidy Hertfordshire village. But that was before the coming of the unearthly Cuckoos, before the invasion, before Letchmore Heath became the *Village of the Damned*.

"Initially released in 1960, never issued on video in the UK and unavailable on DVD anywhere, MGM's *Village of the Damned* has achieved its deserved cult status, ironically, via repeated television screenings throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Forget the risible remake; this quiet, understated adaptation of John Wyndham's novel *The Midwich Cuckoos* has succeeded in burning itself into the bad dreams of millions.

"And now, decades later, the Cuckoos are back in the village they once ruled with their terrible staring eyes. Then, they were unknown, blond-haired, identical alien offspring - the result of a bit of extra-terrestrial how's-your-father that put the good folk of Midwich to sleep and all the women up the junction.

"These Cuckoos nearly took over the world, or at least Macmillan's England, until good old George Sanders stopped them in their neat little tracks by merely thinking really hard about a brick wall. Well, that and a few dozen sticks of gelignite. Sanders, that cad of the movies, starts out as the perfect English eccentric but ends up a suicide bomber engaged in an act of mass infanticide that includes his own "son".

"Now the Cuckoos are middle-aged and a variety of shapes, sizes and professions; caravan salesman (Peter Preidel), theatrical agent (Howard Knight), exotic nightclub owner (Carlo Cura), actor (Teri Scoble) and architect (Martin Stephens). But once they were blond, beautiful and the most terrifying children in England. Which is why broadcaster Alan Dein is grinning gleefully as they, actor Barbara Shelly and director Wolf Rilla all assemble on the picture-perfect village green.

"It has taken months to track all these little devils down for a BBC Radio 4 documentary that is, effectively, the first ever biography of the elusive John Wyndham. Wyndham believed his novel utterly unfilmable and was quietly delighted with the results that Dein and his generation found so disturbing.

"I grew up watching Disney and the Children's Film Foundation," says Dein. "Children were your friends, they were fun and the grown-ups were the enemy. But not this lot. This was the first time any of us had ever seen scary children, really bad seeds, and he was the scariest of the lot. That boy gave me nightmares."

"That boy' is Martin Stephens, the baddest seed of them all. Something of a child star in his own right in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Stephens went on to essay another subtle portrait of childish menace in Jack Clayton's *The Innocents*. Even now, there is an aura of otherworldliness about him.

"I knew it was an unusual part. I quietly liked it... having these very adult qualities and having control over the adult. Imagine having that power - and I could taste a bit of that. You realise how powerless you are as a child. I don't think I found it too much of a stretch, that part!"

"Stephens laughs and sweeps his hand across the green to point out the little lane and the brick wall that still bears the impact scars from the car and driver that he and his little gang sent hurtling to oblivion, courtesy of an intense group stare.

"Wyndham's book first appeared in 1957, and this year marks the centenary of his birth. Not that anyone, apart from Radio 4, remembered in the rush to cherish Orwell. Even Penguin, who still keep all of Wyndham's titles in print, managed to forget the man who put the genetically modified Triffids in our gardens and our lexicon.

"Wyndham wrote science fiction for those who really didn't want to read it. Indeed, he hated the term, preferring "logical fantasy" for a genre that was still seen by many as either cranky or little better than porn. He fiendishly reinvented and refracted a nation's experience of the Second World War: a shattered landscape where fire had rained down from skies criss-crossed by deadly rockets, where unspeakable things had happened and Britain had emerged victorious.

"His series of logical fantasies began sensationally enough in 1951 with *The Day of the Triffids*. It made Wyndham an overnight success at 47. All his years of pulp struggle and a hated stint in advertising were swept away. *The Kraken Wakes* followed, melting our icecaps in the process, while *The Chrysalids* pondered a world of genetic imperfection. But *The Midwich Cuckoos* was to be his most immaculate and fiendish conception.

"Wyndham had spent years chafing under the demands of the US pulp magazines he had written for under the name John Beynon. They always seemed to want sex with their rocket ships, something he had resisted vigorously. But with *Midwich* he unleashed many dark, libidinous nightmares.

"Shaking off the dead hand of HG Wells's Martians, he delivered a new invasion from outer space: an invisible act of mass extra-terrestrial rape that turns the lives of all those in ordinary, boring *Midwich* upside down. The women awake from the mysterious "dayout" and find themselves pregnant.

"Their alien offspring grow terribly quickly, seek no love and begin to bend their adult charges to their will when still in nappies. It is a hive mind of little tyrants who, despite their penchant for gobstoppers, can shred minds at will and have mankind on their list. Hardly surprising, then, that the Catholic Legion of Decency

objected to attempts to film the book, with all its blasphemous implications, on American shores. MGM duly relocated the film to England, assigned an under-contract George Sanders and gave him relative newcomer Barbara Shelley as his screen wife. The studio considered it a quota quickie with a budget of just over £80,000 and a shooting schedule of only six weeks.

"Enter director Wolf Rilla. He and his family had left Hitler's Germany in 1934, and he had abandoned a promising career at the BBC for the lure of film-making. *Village of the Damned* remains the one true success of a career he abandoned to become a hotelier in France. He says: "What interested me was not to make a fantastic film but a film that was very real. To take an ordinary situation and inject extraordinary events into it."

"Wyndham, with his yearning for logical fantasy, ought to have approved. He had always thought *Midwich* unfilmable with its gaggle of superchildren. But Rilla devised an ingeniously simple solution, slashing their number down from 58 to a dozen and giving them all identical blond wigs. "Now who remembers having their head clamped?" asks Rilla somewhat disturbingly of his Cuckoos, now plump and mature.

"We have all just finished watching *Village of the Damned* in the very same hall that appears in an inquest scene in the film. The clamps, by the way, had been necessary to hold young heads in place for close-up sequences relying on the film's sole optical effect, those haunting, glowing eyes, deleted from the initial UK release by the censor.

"Rilla chuckles. "People always ask how did I get such good performances out of you lot. Simple - I asked you to do nothing except be still and stare. Children fidget and are never still, and I wanted you all to be absolutely still and steady and just stare. Very unchildlike, and, of course, very unsettling."

"Wolf and his murderous brood have come full circle on this afternoon in Letchmore Heath. It is the first time they have ever seen the film together since they took their wigs off. An A certificate put paid to any of the children seeing their impact on the public.

"I don't think any of us were aware of it then," says Rilla, "but of course now they remind you of the Hitler youth, blond-haired Aryan children and all that. I'm convinced that was an unintentional subtext; after all, the war was still fresh in our memories. But none of us had any idea of the impact it would make."

"MGM certainly didn't. The Cuckoos were almost still-born. Not scary or sensational enough thought the front office; they stuck the film on the shelf. But a gap in the release schedule saw *Village of the Damned* slip out unnoticed and unheralded. There was not even a press show. But by the end of the week, queues were forming around the one West End cinema showing it. By the time of the film's US release, MGM had spent three times the initial budget on a lurid publicity campaign that warned us to "Beware the Stare that Paralyzes!"

"Rilla draws himself to his feet; the projector is being packed away and the Cuckoos are starting to file out. Almost wistfully, he says: 'I've made 27 films and this is the only one people remember.'" But how many directors can claim to have terrified an entire generation?"

Your Editor, born in the late 1950s, spent his childhood in Letchmore Heath. Enough said.

Raymond May (M37-39) kindly wrote: "I have found a very old book on *'H.M.S. Aldenham - the Last Destroyer'* - in which I served for about two years until the ship went on to take part in the Sicily landings and later to be sunk in 1944 in the Aegean by a mine. It had a lot of action in the Eastern Mediterranean. It just might be of interest to a few persons, particularly anyone alive today who has 39-45 wartime memories. The sinking description details are gruesome. I will make a note to send the book on to you for examination if interested. I located it on the Internet. At the moment it is on loan to my brother who was also in the R. N. E-mail me if you would like to see this copy. A Peaceful and Happy New Year to you too." Ed - I have asked to borrow the book and, with Raymond's permission, will lend it on to any other OA who may be interested in reading it.

John Moxon (M41-45), who says he has not been in touch with the School since he left, was prompted by the request to return the postcard about The Aldenhamian to send the following:- "I left Aldenham in the last year of WWII to start at St Thomas's Hospital Medical School, which was much bomb damaged. After further post-graduate training I became a junior partner in a six doctor practice in the market town of Frome, Somerset. Servicing a 24-hour Casualty Service, Maternity, several surgeons and gynaecologists at the adjoining Cottage Hospital, also a geriatric hospital and a large hospital for the severely mentally handicapped, duty police surgeon work, school medical officers, Factory Act doctors, dental anaesthetists, a town practice also stretching up to eight miles into the country..... our practice provided its partners with the chance to practice total medicine!

"By the time I retired after 14 years as senior partner, we had grown to twelve partners, fully computerised, and I had been involved in the Bath District Management Team and later, the Health Authority. The day I retired, I was appointed to the Wiltshire Ambulance Trust where for five years I experienced another aspect of the NHS. With three children long grown my wife Ann and I are enjoying our grandchildren. I am standing down after 35 years as a governor of Warminster School, which has a lot in common with Aldenham. Still very active in Rotary, and Chairman of the Friends of the Hospital who have just raised £500,000 towards special equipment for the new replacement of our Victorian hospital, gardening, potting and writing, I keep busy."

Anthony Choppen (P53-57) who kindly supplied some of the photos of the Gaudy in *Aldenhamiana 27* also sent the two snapshots below.



Of the first he says: "Not a member of staff but **MA Prosser (P52-57)**. I was not there at the time (1956) as I was in the USA but I understand Anthony was asked by the Paull's House tutor **W E Wightman (CR52-57)** to take his books and scholastic robe back to the House, whilst he returned to attend to some urgent chore. Anthony seized a rare opportunity to masquerade as WEW and immediately donned the garb and flagrantly posed, with WEW's umbrella for a quick photo, standing outside the study block! Anthony tells me he still has the same real tortoise shell glasses and uses them. Also reminded me that WEW's favourite phrase was 'Simmer down, boys!' followed, if necessary with a strident 'That will DO!!'

"The second photo is a group of boys at the Fisherman's Pub (Elstree Reservoir). This is more sinister. I think it must have been the summer of 1957 as some, including me, are dressed in Vith form jackets. I think that we were about to leave so had gone across country to order a round of beers.



Top Row (who led the way and should have know better than to fraternise with juniors) from left to right are: **MA Prosser (P52-57)**(smoking), **TR Whitmarsh (B53-58)**, ? , **A P Choppen (P52-57)** (smoking); **P R E Goodchild (B52-57)**, **N J L Mustoe (S52-57)**

Bottom Row **T P Barrett (P55-60)**, **Robin Glasson (P55-59)** (now **Danvers-Glasson**), ? , **D J Morris (P53-57)**, ?

"Whilst I have long ago given up smoking, happily I still enjoy my beer."

LOST OAs

Aldenhamiana 26 was sent to the OAs listed below and subsequently returned marked "unknown at this address". If any OA reading this knows the whereabouts of any of them please could they let the OA office know or ask the OA concerned to contact the OA office or to visit the OA website and update their contact details there.

T D	Drew	P81-85
C H H	Edmonds	P74-76
S C D	Farr	S54-68
Z	Ford	B83-85
S R	Forster	P78-83
C P	Kennedy	B96-01
C J	Law	L92-97
O H	Lewis	K95-98
J M	Norris	K83-88
S C	Percy	B77-79
B A	Perry	R89-92
J D	Ransome	B49-52
M J	Ruddy	S86-91
P D	Stannard	B46-51
J W	Thrale	B56-61
M R	Watts	M76-81

FREEMASONRY

The Old Aldenhamian Lodge, No. 4884 (founded 1926)

Master: **F E Burlingham Johnson**

The Old Aldenhamian Lodge, which exists primarily for past members of Aldenham School, its Governors and its teaching staff, present and past, meets at 10 Duke Street, St James's, London SW1 on the second Wednesday in January, the first Wednesday in March, and the third Wednesday in June and October.

Full particulars of the Lodge can be obtained from the Secretary:-

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STANDING ORDER AUTHORITY - Old Aldenhamian Society, Voluntary Membership Subscription

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Name Old Aldenhamian Society
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Amount of First Payment Date of first Payment/...../.....
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