

Hitchin Boys' School Old Boys' Association

Formerly Hitchin Grammar School Old Boys' Association

Quarterly Bulletin October 2010

A Date for your Diary –

APRIL 2nd 2011 – AGM and Annual Reunion.

General

Welcome to the October edition of the Bulletin.

In the last bulletin, I asked if there were any thoughts on holding more than one reunion each year. The response has been underwhelming ! I shall just concentrate on one per year in future.

As I write this Bulletin, the Commonwealth Games has just got underway and, if you had been watching the debacle in Delhi, prior to the games, you would have seen a lot of Craig Hunter, the Chef de Mission of the England Team. Craig is an Old Boy and is our speaker at the reunion in April next year. This must be an incentive to come along and hear all about his experiences. Get the date into your diary now !!!

I have to announce that the Postage Sponsorship kindly donated by Tony Norgan of Norgans in Hitchin comes to an end with this edition. Is there anyone out there who would like to sponsor the Postage for one year. It will cost approximately £240.00 for the year. Please contact me if you want some 'free' publicity.

I am delighted to inform you that we have a New Head Teacher, Martin Brown. Read all about him in 'School News'. We also have a reprise of Keith Wadsworth, written by Keith Allard, also in the 'School News'.

As I write, it is hopeful that David Stancombe will be standing down as Membership Secretary. We have a willing Old Boy to take on the task and save David having to travel to and from Norfolk on a regular basis. Again, we are tremendously indebted to David for resurrecting the Association and I am sure that we can possibly improve on David's work with some more effort from Old Boys who are willing to come onto the Committee.

It is not an onerous task, four committee meeting each year, usually on a Wednesday evening, starting at 7.30pm, plus the AGM and Annual Reunion in April. Give it some thought and talk to me if you have any questions.

New Members

I am pleased to announce that a number of the leavers this year have become members. We hope that they will be able to give us some insights into the start of their college life or first years at work. Then you will all be able to say 'it wasn't like that in my day !!!'.

Welcome to Ed Farthing, Arron Laverty, Jake Delaney, Christian Warwick, Will Ginson, D C Hankin, Alex Coles, Ollie Lovett.

News from Members

Keith Allard

Just to update you about myself - although I retired at the end of the summer term 2008 I am still working at the school in a part time capacity teaching

GCSE and A level Geography and will be next year as well. Having joined the school in January 1976 I have now clocked up 34 years and two terms!! This year I have participated in field trips to Barton, Dorset, Lake District and Iceland so how can I possibly give it up?! Overall I have been involved in well over 100 field trips of various sorts whilst at HBS with Argentina being the furthest afield. All good fun!



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Bernie Cotton

You can't keep Bernie out of the news! Recently, he was privileged to attend an inaugural dinner for all GB internationals, during a World Cup event in Nottingham. It was to give two members of the 1948 Olympic Hockey team their Bronze Medals. There, Bernie met Denis Carnill for the first time, it was a pity that David Whitaker was not there as well, to make a trio of GB Olympians from the Boys School.

David Ebers(1954)

David has updated us with a picture of himself, Tom Burges, Mike Steward and Johnny Davis, at the Cock Hotel in July 2010. It is the first time they have met for 60 years and David says they will continue to meet every year now, for the next sixty years !(I do have a photo if anyone would like a copy but it is 4mb in size, a bit large to download in the bulletin !)

David Lee

After school I obtained a B.A.(Hons.) in 'political science' from Portsmouth and then became a police officer in the Hertfordshire Constabulary. Initially I was based in Hertford but then transferred to Stevenage which was somewhat livelier! Since then I have been living back in Hitchin.

On leaving the police I started work for the Crown Prosecution Service, dealing with Crown Court case work including those involving Charles Bronson, known as "Britain's most dangerous prisoner" and also the fraud trial of Lord Brockett as well as numerous murders. This was largely in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire but I did deal with a few trials at the Old Bailey as well.

This was followed by a job as an internal auditor with the DTI, based in London. Whilst there, I obtained further qualifications, including a post graduate diploma in 'internal audit and management' and becoming a PIIA (Practitioner of the Institute of Internal Auditors).

I then moved, as an internal auditor, to the 'Big Five Firm' Arthur Andersen (later 'Andersen'). I spent much of my time uncovering and dealing with fraud at clients on top of my routine internal audit role. I then transferred internally onto the 'Fraud and Integrity Risk Team' at Andersen, which was my dream

job. The Enron debacle in the USA led to the global collapse of Andersen and I was made redundant. (Anyone got any similar jobs for me!)

I worked for a couple of years for my own company, providing fraud risk and fraud investigation services to various public and private sector clients. During this time I also became a CFE (Certified Fraud Examiner of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners).

My next job was as a Fraud Team Leader at ParkHill Audit Agency, managing a team which provided counter fraud services to a number of NHS clients across London and Essex.

My current job is as the 'Fraud Prevention Manager' at Transport for London and I am still studying, most recently obtaining the Diploma in Financial Crime Prevention from the International Compliance Association. As for the future? Watch this space.

Outside work I have tried various past times, including parachuting, some time in the T.A. (which unfortunately came to an end when I moved to Arthur Andersen and an increased work load) and I also used to do a lot of road running, including running the London Marathon seven times – and once helping out as a marshal. I expect my school games teachers may find that hard to imagine. Unfortunately an arthritic knee has put an end to most of this. I used to spend a lot of time combining my two favourite past times – travel and running. I run with the 'hash house harriers' which is mainly off road (better for the knees) and non competitive. I also often travel to south east Asia, where I have many friends (and now family), to run with hash house harrier groups out there. In that part of the world I have run 'hashes' in Indonesia [Bali and Sumatra, dodging the tigers in the jungle and running up - and down- a couple of active volcanoes], Thailand, India, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Hong Kong, China, Peninsular Malaysia (notably Kuala Lumpur where hashing was founded in 1938 by British expats), Malaysian Borneo, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos! Circumstances have slowed me down a bit now as almost three years ago I finally got married to my wonderful wife Pae (who is Thai) and now have an eight year old step daughter (known as 'Bam') and an eighteen month old daughter, Samantha.

Work and a young family keeps me busy these days, though I do find time to sit on the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Worshipful Company of Security Professionals (<http://www.wcosp.com/>), of which I am a

liveryman, and attend a number of their events. I am looking forward to their annual dinner being held in the Mansion House in October.

I am still in touch with a number of old boys and, with some of them, attended the centenary old boys' dinner (even though I am not listed on the site as an attendee!) and hope to attend more in future.

Steve Dingley

6th form pupil 1968-70 (Moved from Buckhurst Hill GS, Loughton, Essex)

Lived in Great Offley where my Mum & Dad ran the village store for several years.

A-levels obtained Economics, Geography, Maths

Known Associates – Marek Malarowski, Brian Soulsby, Martin Baxter

Credited for – Being caught in the Highlander public house during school time and restricted to the library during free periods. This offence resulted in a general clampdown on free period activities for the other members of the 6th form and thus made me very popular for a while. I was not the only culprit!

Memories of Hitchin – Frequenting the 'Hermitage' Ballroom to see local rock group 'Stray'

What happened when I left school? I got a part-time job working at 'Brookers' hardware store and worked as a driver doing deliveries. I started a 'proper' job working in the local Estate Agents, Auctioneers & Surveyors 'George Jackson & Son' for a few months. By a sheer fluke I took a Computer aptitude test at ICL (International Computers Ltd) and started work as a Computer Operator in Stevenage. I then got married and moved to Letchworth where I continued working for ICL at their HQ in the 'Broadway'. Since then I have had a long and varied career in I.T. working for Anglian Water in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire and some small I.T. companies being based in Sandy, Beds for many years and moving on to Oxfordshire.

In 2003 I emigrated to Arizona, USA where I have been for the last 7 years working as a Software Developer, Technical Consultant and Product Manager. The president of the Company turned out to be an ex-pat originating from St. Neots. I have an elder daughter living in Miami, Florida and a younger daughter living in Cambridge – 3 grand-children at the last count.

I stumbled on the Hitchin Boys School website, and was intrigued to see that Marek was listed as a member. I would very much like to get in touch with him

(and anyone else of that era) and to relive some happy memories. I will endeavour to dig out some photos from that era. Here is a photo of me taken at age 25.



Jonathan Lomas – (Article prepared by Richard Whitmore)

Old Boy Wins Canada's Highest Civilian Honour



Professor Jonathan Lomas, a pupil at our school in the 1960s has been awarded Canada's highest civilian honour – Officer of the Order of Canada.

Now aged 57 Jonathan recently retired from the post of Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Health Service Research Foundation. According to the citation, he received his award “for promoting and advancing the role and impact of research evidence in Canada’s health sector.” A resident of Ottawa, he remains a consultant to several government departments in the USA, Australia and Britain and also advises the World Health Organisation.

Jonathan is the younger son of the late Roy Lomas, for many years editor of the Hitchin based *Hertfordshire Express*, which he built up into the largest-selling newspaper in North Hertfordshire. The paper was later acquired by the company that now owns *The Comet*. Jonathan’s mother Margaret now lives in Surrey. His elder brother, Tudor, is also an Old Boy who, for some years worked as a BBC correspondent and today remains in broadcasting, working from his home in The Netherlands.

Jonathan had also considered journalism as a career – a fact he touched on five years ago when he was interviewed by the Canadian magazine *Healthcare Quarterly*. Here is part of what he had to say:

“When I finished university in Britain in the early 1970s, I faced a clear “fork in the road” – an internship with the Independent Television Network in London and become a journalist, or a Commonwealth Scholarship to go to “the other London” in Canada and be a graduate student in psychology.

With a newspaper editor father and a BBC journalist brother, the family gene was certainly strong and beckoning. Nevertheless, the allure of the colonies and the dismal state of Britain’s 1970s economy drew me to Canada, graduate school and eventually the challenge of organizing the un-organisable – health policy.

To this day, however, I find very attractive the task of taking complex and sometimes esoteric issues and accurately simplifying them for broader access. To the extent that health policy relies on the accurate translation of complex research into useable knowledge, I do a kind of journalism with our work at the

Canadian Health Services Research Foundation. The communication part of knowledge transfer is, after all, just glorified science journalism.

But I also suffer from a short attention span. Thus, I look with some envy on journalism's deadline imperative and its immediate feedback loop – write it today, and see it broadcast or published tomorrow. This excitement stands in sharp contrast to the months or, more commonly, years that under-pin the publication cycle of academia or the policy cycle of governments.

I have flirted with the field as an amateur journalist, doing occasional pieces for newspapers or interviews for broadcast media. On each occasion, I am struck by the discipline demanded by this kind of discourse. In less than the time it takes to drink a cup of coffee, you must make what you believe in compelling to a large and varied audience, and even motivate them to action. For all its shortcomings – and there are many – journalism remains the backbone of society's most effective tool of public engagement – great storytelling.”

Anthony Brown (1967)

Thank you for confirming my life membership of the Association.

I am afraid I can offer little information for the bulletin. I took early retirement at the age of 50 in Jun 2000 from Royal Mail, where I had worked since 1967, after a brief stint at Luton Co-op grocery department. I spent my entire Royal Mail career in the basic clerical grade, ending as a Letters Administrator 1 at Bedford, after spending most of my career at Luton.

My brother Peter (1959 intake-left 1966) now lives in Rugby. A contemporary of mine, Raymond Douglas Hodgson, appears to be missing from your 'year groups online'. He was in the 1961 intake into form 1b. I lost track of him when he went to university in, I think, Sheffield. Two other contemporaries of mine are keen Hitchin Town FC supporters, Harry Wright (who lives in Scotland) and Richard Bunyan. At Fishponds Road another regular is Allan Hughes (1966 or 1967 intake?). The premature death last year of Alan Sexton (1964 intake), once secretary of the Canaries, was a great loss to all who knew him.

ED :- I have also heard from many other old boys, usually those who have forgotten the User Name and Passwords for the web site !!

Please keep in touch, through me, to tell your old friends where you are and what you are doing now. Then arrange to meet up for the reunion on April 2nd 2011.

School News

As I said earlier in the Bulletin, we have a new Head teacher, Martin Brown.



‘Originally from Manchester, Martin has been in Senior Leadership of schools in Inner London for over 9 years.

Educated at William Hulme’s Grammar School for Boys in Manchester, Mr Brown studied German and English at Royal Holloway College, University of London.

Now married with two children and living in St. Albans, he says he is “delighted, proud and privileged” to have become Head at Hitchin Boys’ in September 2010.

He was until recently Deputy Head at Wembley High Technology College which is one of the most improved schools in the country. In 2004 exam results were struggling around the 40% of students achieving 5 GCSEs at A-C. In 2010 Mr Brown was proud to be leaving Wembley High with a figure of well over 90% of students achieving 5 A*-C.*

This turnaround was achieved through teamwork, rigorous focus on monitoring student progress, high expectations and thorough systems at all levels of the school.

At Hitchin Boys’ School, Martin intends to maintain the great traditions which we have all cherished in our time at the school, while at the same time bringing innovation to teaching and learning, monitoring systems and continued high expectations of all the boys.

Hitchin Boys’ School stands for great attitudes, great achievements and a great community. With a vision of excellence for all as the primary aim we hope the school can go on to even greater things in the future.’

We are all looking forward to working with Martin for many years to come.

However, we must not forget Keith Wadsworth and here is a memory of his achievements over his years at the school. This was provided by Keith Allard,

who recently semi-retired (See Old Boy's News above) after a distinguished career at the school

'Keith became Headteacher of Hitchin Boys' in September 1999 and retired at the end of August 2010 having completed eleven years at the helm.

Keith has built on the strengths and traditions of the school moving it forward so that the best of the new is blended with the best of the old. Along the way there have been significant achievements.

The gaining of Technology College status and the commitment to use this across the school so that all students and staff have been able to benefit from technology in the classroom has been a huge step forward. The success of the school has been such that it now has a second specialism, Modern Foreign Languages, an achievement which only a small number of schools can claim. Standing next to the pavilion is another notable sign of Keith's time as Headteacher of which he can be very proud – the new Sixth Form Centre. The difference this has made to the ever growing Sixth Form at the school cannot be over estimated – the move from the old Bancroft buildings on the edge of the school site to a purpose built centre in the heart of the school has given staff and students a superb environment in which to work, not least for the panoramic view up the school field. The time, care and thought that Keith put into this project to ensure that the school got the best facility it could for the money available is a reflection of the commitment he has put in to the school and its students and staff on a daily basis.

At the heart of Keith's approach and philosophy has been the importance of the individual student, and at a time when everything seems to be measured and targets set it can be easy to lose sight of this. Keith has ensured that the right balance has been kept, using data to inform and take relevant action, but never forgetting the fact that students are individuals, who develop and progress at different rates.

Keith has continued the tradition of a school with a low annual turnover of staff and this is a tribute to the happy working atmosphere which he has fostered. His style has been to set, through discussion, the path forward for the school and to have the confidence in the staff to go out and deliver this vision whilst always offering his support and guidance. This approach has enabled many

staff to develop their experience and skills in a supportive ethos and thus enhance the learning environment for the students. The range of activities available for students at the school is a tribute to the environment which Keith has created.'

He has a genuine interest in and care for others and this has underpinned all his work with students and staff. As a teacher he is consistent, and has that precious knack of being able to have fun with the students as well as doing the more disciplinary aspects of the job. His obvious pleasure in the success of students at Hitchin Boys' is clear for all to see and watching him interacting with students at the end of year concert summarises in so many ways why he has been such a good head for HBS.

In the book 'We Were There' published to celebrate the centenary of The Old Boys' Association, Patrick Stockbridge (Head Boy 2007/8) wrote 'I think my favourite characteristic of what I can now call my "old school" is that it has the ability not to take itself too seriously, providing a thriving learning environment without losing the ability to have fun.' This is a fitting tribute to Keith – under his leadership the school has been very successful academically and in so many other ways, but it has always been achieved in a good humoured and caring way.

We thank Keith for his hard work and his commitment to the school and wish him and his wife Heather a long and happy retirement.'

The School's GCSE results were the best ever. with 80% of pupils getting 5A* to C grades. Keith Wadsworth stated that 'by any criteria it was the best results the school had ever had. Half the boys have got 10 or more A* to C passes and nearly three quarters have got at least one A or A* grade. We are absolutely thrilled

HBS attained a 98% pass rate, with around 40% of students achieving Grades B and above.

Keith said we know that around half got their first pick at university. We are also pleased with boys who aren't at the highest academic level who got 2 A levels. We also have a student who didn't get his university place last year, despite the fact that he got four A's and a B. He then came back and got an A* and is going this year.

The end of an era has been signalled, with the Scouts moving to the Cricket Pavilion, as the Scout hut has passed beyond the repair and fix stage. The kitchens have had to have a major Health and Safety revamp, which has stopped a number of other projects being started. However, there has been a lot of redecoration and renovation carried out during the Summer.

Memorabilia Sales

My special offer of the last bulletin only sold two sets, very disappointing !!

Offer is still open.

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Contact Addresses for HBSOBA

Communications for the Association and memorabilia queries may be sent to the **Hon. Sec. Peter Hollingsworth**

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