

Hitchin Boys' School Old Boys' Association

Formerly Hitchin Grammar School Old Boys' Association

Quarterly Bulletin June 2010

A Date for your Diary –

APRIL 2nd 2011 – AGM and Annual Reunion.

General

Welcome to the June edition of the Bulletin.

The AGM went well and Tony Buckland has now taken over from Richard Whitmore as our President for two years, good luck Tony !!!



We also bade farewell to David Simmonds, after a half century of service to the Old Boys' Committee. Richard presented him with a scroll and a quill pen to help him with his hobby of calligraphy.

The Reunion Dinner was attended by 66 Old Boys, it could have been 70 but there was some fall out on the day, unfortunately.

Next year, you have no excuse, the date is at the top of the Bulletin and also on the web site.

It will be 18 months since you last saw your peers, so I am sure you will have a lot to catch up on.

Now, do any of you have younger, or older, siblings who went to the school and are not Old Boys ? We are looking for those who left in the 1980's and 1990's. Please get them on board, so that we can broaden the scope of the Association, as well as getting a younger element involved. Contact details are at the end of the Bulletin.

When I left school, in the 1830's we used to have three reunions a year, Rugby in November, Hockey, AGM and Dinner in April and Cricket and Tennis in June. At one stage I think there was a chess match as well. Is there a chance of any resurrection of these events ? Please send me your comments.



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New Members

Bernard Cotton MBE (1963)

Bernie Cotton has had the rare privilege of twice being asked to address the Old Boy's Reunion Dinner. This has prompted him to, at last, become a member !! Bernie left the school in 1963, moving to Northampton Grammar School. From there he went to Cambridge, to read Geography. On leaving Cambridge he became a master at Bishops Stortford College and managed his time well enough to be a long standing member of the GB hockey team, attending the Munich Olympic Games in 1972 and, but for the official boycott, he would also have attended the Moscow Games in 1980. He later managed the side with great success. He married and has two sons.

Due, in part to his previous Olympic experiences he has now been 'rescued' from teaching to become an Olympic Performance Manager at the British Olympic Association. He is currently working in support of Team GB's preparations for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

News from Members

Roger Sexton (1965).

I attended Hitchin Grammar School from 1959 to 1966, and I did take out life membership of the Old Boys. While I was still working as a Law Lecturer at Nottingham Trent University, I used to receive regular e-mail updates, but I retired in September 2007.

(Hon sec) – I remember Roger as a very meticulous scorer for the cricket teams and he also did some for Hitchin Cricket Club. It was no wonder he finished up in the legal profession, as he used to be able to recite bus timetable to get us anywhere in the area !! Roger also did a bit of Train spotting with our Society at school.... Whatever happened to the HGS Ferrequinological Society ??? Any memories ? I have a photo of Peter M Thomas, Brian Leadley and Tim Hailes at Luton station circa 1959.

David Ebers(1954)

David has written to David S saying that he made several requests to update his membership but has not had anything back.

(Hon Sec) - It is difficult for David to tell whether anyone who left a long time ago is a paid up member. We have to rely on your honour to say what level of membership you have

Paul Linford (1981)

Paul said he didn't get a notification of the reunion this year, but admitted he might have changed his e-mail address !!!

NOW let this be a lesson to all of you !!!! Remember to tell me when you change your e-mail address !!!

Steve Smithers (1974)

Steve is still a local lad and last year he was appointed Performance Director of Rhythms of the world. This year the dates are Saturday 24th & Sun 25th July in the grounds of Hitchin Priory. It gets bigger and better every year. Please put it in your diary now.

Ticket outlets are: Hitchin Initiative, Harvest Moon, Merryfield's Club 85, Eric T Moore Books, The Victoria Pub, David's Music in Letchworth, Coda Music in Stevenage, or visit www.rotw.org.uk

In memoriam

Reg Bonfield (1910 – 2009)

Since reporting the death in his 100th year of our oldest Old Boy **Reg Bonfield**, our Centenary President Richard Whitmore has received this photograph of Reg with his mother, taken in the 1960s after they moved from Hitchin to the West Country.



Ironically for a man who lived to such a great age (he was 99 years and four months old when he died last November) Reg had suffered poor health as a small boy. However, after persevering as a scholar at what was then called the Sacred Heart High School in Nightingale Road he was awarded a scholarship to Hitchin Boys' Grammar School.

As a draughtsman in the electronics industry during World War II he was involved in developing Britain's first early-warning RADAR system.

Although he left Hitchin in 1953 Reg kept a close interest in his home town and made a number of visits to the school. During the last ten years of his life he became a regular contributor to Hitchin Historical Society's newsletter, recalling childhood memories of the town and its characters in the early 20th Century.

John Foreman.

John died last year and his son has kindly forwarded a book on The History of Hitchin Grammar School, written by Reginald Hine and Published in 1931. The book is now with the memorabilia in the School Library. The book is interesting in the fact that the printing seems to have been on rough parchment. I am sure the printers amongst you will give me the correct detail.

Philip Day (1939)

From John Stutely (19564). I had known Philip Day, who died last year, aged 89, for about 50 years, through business. He was a great friend and one of the most generous and honest people I had ever known.

Philip entered the School in 1933 and excelled at academic studies, cricket and tennis. He was 'called up' into the Army in January 1940, joining the Herts and Beds Regiment. He saw active service in France, Germany and the Mediterranean area. Philip was later commissioned into the Northumberland Fusiliers. He left the Army in 1947 and took over the family building business, Francis Newton, which he successfully ran until he retired in 1985.

Philip was a committee member of HBGSOBA for many years and was a prominent Rotarian, being President of Hitchin Rotary and being awarded the highest honour in the Rotary movement, the Paul Harris Award. He was also a fellow of the Institute of Builders and a founder Director of the Herts and Beds Building Society, serving it until it was taken over.

His son Matthew and his two grandsons followed him into the school.

School News

Keith Wadsworth's replacement has been appointed and he starts on 1st September. His name is Martin Brown and he comes from the Technology College in Wembley. His appointment was verified by a 'Star Chamber' of Prefects, who questioned the three candidates for about an hour each.

I think Keith was quietly very proud of the way the boys handled the situation and gave the new Head a good idea of what a fantastic school he is inheriting.

The school was fully staffed for next year and the entry was 162. The Sixth form entry will be between 120 and 130, the biggest ever.

There had been a major flood in the Pavilion. It was now fixed and the insurance had covered the costs. (Hon Sec – does anyone else remember helping Mr Dolden building it ??)

KW bade the Committee farewell at the last meeting and thanked everyone for their great support over his tenure. The Committee wished him good luck in his retirement and thanked him for his support of The Association during his time as Headteacher.

Memorabilia Sales

We had a very good Sales pitch at the annual reunion and Stuart and David managed to sell most of our stock. If you want any of our memorabilia, I am willing to 'do a deal' for what ever part or whole you would like. I only have small quantities of each left.

I have listened to the Concert CD in the car, it really is very good and to think that all that glorious sound comes from Old Boys of the School. What a credit to their talent and the School's music department !

******* Special Offer – All three items for £10.00, including p&p !!!**

All prices include postage and packing.

Centenary Badge - £5.00



Print of school view – signed and numbered - £5.00

CD of centenary concert + programme - £5.00

ORDER FORM

Item(s) required :-

Name:

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Cheques made payable to HBSOBA and sent to Peter Hollingsworth – contact details are at the end of the bulletin.

Contact Addresses for HBSOBA

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