



Quarterly Bulletin



HITCHIN BOYS' SCHOOL OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

FORMERLY HITCHIN GRAMMAR SCHOOL OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER, 2014

I apologise for the length of time between Bulletins this year but I have had nothing reported to me to pass on to you of any great importance. I can only feed on your news. May I be the first to wish you festive greetings and hope that you have a great festive season and a good new year. I look forward to seeing lots of you at the reunion.

School News

Cricket

Unfortunately, the Cricket had to be cancelled, due to the school not being able to raise a team. However, plans are afoot to ensure we do have a fixture next year, before the Old Boys all get too old!!!! Please wait for more information nearer the time.

Postage

I have to thank Jon Hunt for again donating a substantial amount towards the postage of the Bulletin. It is a tremendous help as we can then save towards other projects for the School Donations for School Projects.

It has been suggested that we should put all our donations through a 'Just giving' type of account in order to get Tax concessions. I shall be looking into it and will report in the next Bulletin.

Thomas Pickford

Our archivist has left the school without so much as a goodbye, very sad, as he did a tremendous amount of work for us in the background and always put on a fabulous display for the reunion. We now have two part time librarians at the School who seem keen to continue to help us.

New President

Andrew Parr has kindly agreed to be President for the next few years as from the AGM. Andrew knows a lot of the younger Old Boys due to his long service at the school. I am sure you will join with me in wishing him good luck in his new role.

When We Were There

We have had a request from Eric T Moore's book shop in Hitchin, regarding the above title. Does anyone have a spare copy?

Installation of new astro turf facility at HBS

This summer saw a brand new multi weather sports surface laid at HBS. The school first invested in the facility back in 1991 and this is the third new surface. Designed specifically for Hockey it will help ensure the school retains its prominent county and regional recognition in the sport. The surface is also used outside of school hours by local sports teams and the school's long standing links with blueharts offers a home facility for the towns hockey club currently boasting 6 men's and 4 ladies sides, plus a thriving youth and minis section. None of this would be possible with the surface. We all look forward to another 10 years or so of a wonderful new facility at HBS.

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New Members

I would like to welcome the next batch of Associates who have 'willingly' given their details to Keith Allard. Thank you guys, you are on the 'free' register for 5 years after which I, or my successor will be asking you for a subscription. Keith has now got three years of Associates on board and I hope that he will continue to carry out this helpful exercise for years to come!!

Communications for the Association and memorabilia queries may be sent to the **Hon. Sec. Peter Hollingsworth**.
T: 01462 834854
M: 07758 649721
E: hbsobasec@googlemail.com
8, Baldock Road, Stotfold, Hitchin,
Hertfordshire. SG5 4NZ

Membership matters, please contact **Howard Gregory, the Membership Secretary**.
M: 07876 246122
E: howard.gregory@talktoroger.com

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Ties and School Photos

These are still available, please use the order form on the last page.

Annual Dinner 25th April 2015

Just a quick reminder of the Reunion Date. We have agreed that the meal will be :-

Spring Vegetable Soup

Coq au Vin

Profiteroles

Cheese and Biscuits

Coffe/Tea

Price will be £25.00, still a very good value evening, put it in your 2015 diary now!!!

Headteacher's Report

The Head has written a very detailed report on the School's activities. Here is a synopsis of the areas covered and some highlights :-

EXAM RESULTS: We are delighted to be able to update you on some outstanding examination results again this year.

A-Level: This has been one of our best years ever on most of the measures used to judge success. Once again over 98 % of all grades were A-E, but most significantly over 56% were A*-B grades which is a 13% increase on last year. More students than ever were able to complete the two year course with 3 good grades each - over 90% of all the boys achieved the good grades they required for the next stage in their career. 95% per cent of potential current applicants are going on to university.

One of the other ways in which schools are judged is by Average Point Score (APS) where grades are converted to numbers and then averaged over all results. This year has been our best ever with a score of 769 points per student (the total points divided by the number of students) and 223 per entry (the total points divided by the number of exams taken). For comparison national averages last year were 709 and 212. These results put us well above national levels, are our best-ever and, most importantly, this means that the boys have achieved their targets in greater numbers than ever.

GCSE: As you will have heard via national news, there were serious concerns this year about potential "volatility" in the system and indeed I had warned in advance that predicting outcomes this year would be more prone to error than usual. However I am delighted to report that our GCSE examination results have maintained their exceptional levels with this year's results exceeding expectations and probably placing us amongst the top 100 comprehensive schools in the country for the third year in succession.

At present our analysis shows 83% of GCSE students achieving the standard of 5 GCSEs at A*-C including English and Maths (5ACEM). The national figure for 5ACEM is around 53%

However as a school we expect to perform better than national levels, so the more pleasing fact is that our whole school target was around 81% and hence these boys have personally achieved or done better than their aspirational targets in the vast majority of cases.

1 out of every 3 grades was an A* or A grade and 27% (42) had five or more passes at the highest level with well over 60% achieving at least 1 A*/A grade in at least one subject. As always there were boys who achieved five or more GCSE passes at A*-G which represented reward for much hard work, despite finding work a real challenge throughout their school years.

Nationally English pass rates have dropped significantly this year (by 2.1%), but I am very glad to report that our English Department have bucked that trend by maintaining around 90% achieving the standard. With Maths results at around 90% as well and in both subjects well over 80% of boys making or exceeding expected progress along with hugely successful outcomes in many other subjects, there is a huge amount to celebrate.

Under the surface of these numbers individual teachers have demonstrated great professionalism, ignoring the media hype about difficult exams and just working incredibly hard to stretch, challenge and support each and every boy. Similarly these results are evidence of the effort and hard work put in by the boys both over time and in the run up to the exams and they have a lot to be proud of. In the end these are young people, not statistics and these results represent improved life chances for these boys. As a community, we can be proud of and congratulate all the boys on their individual successes.

Sport: The school continues to enjoy considerable success, on the field and court in a growing variety of sports including the usual range of school games but also some more esoteric forms such as trampolining and even skiing !

We have a large number of boys, far too many to mention, who have individual success at County and National level. However, we must (**Cont. on Page 3**)

(**Cont. from Page 2**) single out the outstanding performance of the Intermediate Boys Athletics team (Year 9/10). The squad reached the National School Finals – a first for Hitchin Boys’ and a rarity for Hertfordshire and state schools in general. Most of the other 9 schools at the finals were selective or independent often with far better facilities for athletics. Nonetheless our boys were ranked 6th going into the finals, came out 4th overall and were only a couple of points from 2nd in the whole of England. Special mention for George Marvell who is the England Schools second hammer thrower.

In swimming, as well as District Champions at Junior, Intermediate and Senior, Eastern Region Champions at Intermediate level, we also reached the National Schools Finals at Intermediate age coming out 8th in the country.

In Rugby our Under 12s (U12) won the Hertfordshire Schools 15-a-side Tournament, in Tennis under 13s became Hertfordshire Schools County Doubles Champions and in Hockey we were U13 Hertfordshire Schools Plate Winners, County Finalist and U18 2nd Round National Cup.

Our boys were also District Champions in Badminton (U14,U16), Basketball (U12, U14, Senior), Cross Country (All levels), Cricket (U12), Indoor Athletics (U12, U13), Athletics (All levels), Table Tennis (U13, U16, U19), while in Trampolining three teams became Eastern Region Champions (U19, U15, U13) and both the U19 and U13 boys went to the English Schools national finals with U13 placed 3rd and U19 runners up.

Most significantly over 500 boys have represented the school in some form of sport this year. This was most noticeable in the last rugby match of the season, when on a cold and wet December Saturday morning almost 200 boys (10 teams plus substitutes) and 11 members of staff turned out home and away to play Haberdasher’s Aske’s, one of the fee-paying schools in Hertfordshire (and we won 7 out of the 10 games as well !)

Charitable Events: This year we held three main charity events – one in each term. In the autumn we supported a local charity Herts Air Ambulance, in Spring we supported Sport Relief and in Summer we supported ShelterBox (providing shelter and the means to survive for refugees from natural disasters and civil wars). We held a number of events throughout the year including best Christmas jumpers, traditional sports events like egg and spoon races, bake sales and splat the teachers. During the year the boys raised over £ 6,000 for charity.

Other Extra-Curricular Activities: School Trips: It would be difficult to provide an exhaustive list of the trips offered to the boys this year. Most were curriculum-related and local or national. Several theatre, museum and art gallery trips and visits to places of worship took place. For Geography students went to study Barton Hills, Hitchin Town Centre, Dorset, the Lake District, Liverpool and even China. Trips to Belgium, France, Spain, Germany and Poland have helped with languages and history. Once again all the Year 7 went to Kingswood for an activity week and we had the annual Year 7 team-building “Action Day” in September.

World Challenge Expeditions: This year 40 boys went on the world challenge trip to Malaysia where they experienced another culture in depth and also helped build a lake irrigation project.

Duke of Edinburgh Award: The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme is now fully up and running. Around 40 boys took part in the final expedition last weekend which involves the challenge of route-finding and self-sufficient overnight camping. Once they have completed the Bronze Award we aim to begin the Gold Award which involves significant staff training so as to operate a more demanding expedition. We also now have 97 new boys in Year 10 & 11 signed up to start the Bronze Award.

The vast majority of these trips and extra-curricular activities take place out of school hours, during evenings, weekends and holiday times and it is a further testament to the dedication of staff (teaching and non-teaching) who voluntarily give up their own time to plan, organise and run these events.

House Events: One of the ways that almost all the boys can feel a part of the history of HBS is through the House system. With 165 boys in each year not everyone, even with talent, can be picked for school teams. And not everyone excels at (or particularly enjoys) team sport. The House competitions provide a chance for many boys to compete both in sports and many other events. In the past year we have held House competitions in all three major sports (Rugby, Hockey, Cricket) as well as Cross-Country, Athletics, Basketball, Volleyball, Table Tennis, Swimming, Badminton and even Trampolining.

However, there were also House competitions in many non-sporting events such as Scrabble, Chess, General Knowledge Quiz, Debating, Graphic Design, Music and this year for the first time, Drama.

Throughout the year the boys were in competition with each other for behaviour or “Merit” points, which are rewards for good attitude, commitment, effort and contribution to the school. The competition culminated on the last day of term when the winning house (Pierson) was revealed in a colourful display of balloons in the sunshine on the Quad. The House Captain took possession of the much-prized Times Shield for the year and as ever the House winners of the Times Shield have first place in the lunch queue every Friday for the year!

Old Boys

Eric Bailey - *Letter from Jon Bailey*

‘I am writing with regards to an old boy of Hitchin Grammar School who was killed in WW1. He was Eric HP Bailey, my great-uncle, and he is commemorated on the stained-glass window in the school library.

I have written a biography of his short life from his childhood to when he died as an RAF pilot in 1918, aged 20. I live in New Zealand but was in the UK a few weeks ago and presented a copy of the book to the school library. You and other members of your association might be interested in having a read. It’s titled ‘Uncle Eric’, as he is known in the family, and I left it with the librarian.’

ED: I shall look out the book and make sure it is available for inspection at the reunion.

In Memoriam

Ian Hare

Ian unfortunately died in February this year. He was a stalwart of the Reunion and could be seen each year walking round the school in the afternoon in his off white suit. He was a man who spoke his mind freely and who had some entertaining stories to tell.

Last year we had a conversation and he said ‘when I pop my clogs, I want the school to have my Butterfly collection’. I only found out when his lady friend got in touch and the cabinet was found. It is a proper entomological cabinet, made by a reputable manufacturer and has 42 drawers for specimens. It seems that Ian did travel far and wide to collect his specimens and the Head has agreed that it should be placed in the school. I have now collected it and it has been placed on the ‘Bridge’, which for us golden oldies is the bridge over the exit to the North Court, past the old Music room. I am arranging for Ian’s Friend to come down to the School and place a photo of Ian on the Cabinet.

There are some very nice specimens in the Cabinet, it is only half used, as there are 42 drawers in it!!!! I will have some photos for the next Bulletin.

Order Form for Tie, CD and/or Photo

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The CDs contain all the years mentioned and can be loaded onto your computer if you have a CD/DVD drive.

Please send, with remittance, (Cheques made payable to HBSOBA) to:-

Peter Hollingsworth
8 Baldock Road
Stotfold
Hitchin
Herts
SG5 4NZ

Alternatively, you can e-mail the form to me:- hbsobasec@gmail.com and send the remittance by EFT to :-

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