# THE OLD ROAN MAGAZINE

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MAY 2022

ISSUE 12

# OLD ROAN ASSOCIATION

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| **Next Annual General Meeting:** | 22 March 2023 |

*Cover: The faces of the Old Roans and those associated with Roan featured in the Magazine.*

# WELCOME

## 'Floreat Roana'

Welcome to the latest issue of the Old Roan Association's Magazine. Since the last one the world has continued to be a pretty scary place what with COVID and now, worrying, international matters. However, as always, here's wishing all Old Roans well wherever you may be.

This issue brings you more news of Old Roans here in the UK and overseas, more memories of schooldays and life-events and reports on the Association's activities. Please keep sending in your contributions.

Following the extended Presidency of Trevor Puddifoot, we say congratulations to his successor Chris Strong - very well-known to many Old Roans and a key figure in both the John Roan Foundation and the Hope Memorial Trust. Chris adds to some Braithwaite news (pages 42-43).

Elsewhere, we have news on progress at The John Roan School, reports on the latest Roan Theatre Company productions - back after lockdown - and the special anniversary football match at the School Field to mark 50 years since Roan won the English Schools cup. In addition, there's reunions, poetry, other sports news, meetings with former teachers plus a look-back at last November's Annual Reunion Dinner and the Painted Hall Centenary Dinner which, amazingly, was ten years ago last year!

A common theme throughout the stories has been how attending Roan was a family thing for so many. Time and time again Roan was the family school to brothers, sisters, mums and dads. My own story even had a ring of this as my Dad's firm was run by three Old Roan brothers - Cecil, Alfred and Leslie Jarvis. Leslie was an avid OR and taught me bits of the School Song in Latin by the time I was eight! So, I was always going to attend Roan if I could.

Sadly, as every time, we note the passing of more Old Roans and those associated with the School. We mourn them of course but remember them well.

My thanks to all those who have helped in this issue's production especially Claire Foley, Bernie Hampton, Monty Smith, Graham Johnson and Jane Harnden.

I hope you enjoy the Magazine, take care and remember, keep your contributions coming! Send to Oldroankgb@gmail.com

KEITH BRADBROOK (1966-73)
EDITOR

# CHRIS STRONG

## Old Roan Association President 2022/23

When I look at the long list of past Old Roan Presidents, I see names of eminent past pupils from both the boy's and girl's school, former teachers and head teachers and leaders in the local community and I feel quite privileged that I have been elected to the post for 2022/23. I am looking forward to attending the Annual Reunion Dinner in November.

*Chris Strong at Roan*

It is hard to believe that in September it will be 58 years since I joined Roan in class IIIE, with Mr Evans as my new form master. I must say I did not sleep well the night before worrying about the day ahead and how I would fit in and would I remember everything I had to take. But in some ways I was lucky in that my elder brother Mike (Mick) was a year ahead of me and I walked to the school with him from our house behind Greenwich Station, through Greenwich Park to Maze Hill. I need not have worried as the School made us new boys very welcome and I went home happy after my first day clutching my timetable and new school hymn book.

Looking back, I did enjoy my life at Roan and the many opportunities it offered. I went on several school journeys, including a sailing camp to the Norfolk Broads where, as the 'bilge boy', I got all the grotty jobs and for disobeying captain's orders I got imprisoned in the forward locker and fed an occasional biscuit through a hole in the door. I also joined various clubs and societies and was in Drake house debating team and the school review.

Back in those days we were fortunate in being allowed into Greenwich Park at lunch times, and we either played football or just wandered around. I remember one incident when pipes were being laid in the park. With a few other boys, I was jumping over the trench and the clay pipes on the other side. As I did this I didn't quite clear the pipes and I fell backwards into the ditch with some of the pipes hitting me on the head. I went back to the school looking quite groggy and my form master sent me to Mr Garstang's office. He decided I needed to go down to St Alfege's hospital and asked a 6th former, Ian (Chick) Poulter, to drive me down in his red

MG. I was checked over, the doctor found no serious injuries and Ian drove me back to school.

I was not a particularly talented sportsman. I enjoyed football but was more enthusiastic than skilled, but I did just about get into Drake's house teams and Fred Spink's second eleven when I was in the 6th form. I was however not a bad runner and for many years was one of Nigel Ballantyne's cross country runners, winning various team trophies in Kent and South East London. This set me on the road to running six subsequent London Marathons in reasonably quick times.

When we reached the Upper 6th, we had our own common room and were allowed to play bridge during the lunch hour. If we had a free period immediately afterwards, we would sometimes continue playing. John Hutley, our School Captain, would strongly disapprove of this, telling those still playing it was 'A Level suicide'.

Our family have a longstanding connection with the School. When I was in the Upper 6th, my father, Bill Strong, a Greenwich Councillor for 45 years, was appointed as a Governor, a post he held until his death in 2002. He was also for many years the Chair of the John Roan Foundation and, when he died, I took his place on the Foundation as a Greenwich Borough Council appointed Trustee. I am currently the Vice Chair of the Foundation. In 2011, I became a Foundation Governor and held the post until an Interim Executive Board replaced the Governing body in late 2018, following the unsatisfactory Ofsted report and the Department of Education's Academy Order. I am also the Old Roan Association rep on the Hope Memorial Trust.

I left Roan in 1971 and, after a year out, studied to become a Chartered Surveyor, initially working for the Government. My career has taken me to many interesting places as I have worked almost exclusively in estate management overseas. This has included three and a half years on secondment to the Governments of the Republic of Zambia, based in Lusaka. My duties as a Valuation Officer gave me the opportunity to see many parts of the country and appreciate the local cultures. One particularly interesting assignment was when I had to value a safari camp in the South Luangwa National Park. I flew up from Lusaka in a light aircraft and landed on a dirt strip near the camp. I carried out my inspections in the morning and as the plane was not due to pick me up until later that afternoon, I had lunch and then spent several hours relaxing in the shade by the Luangwa River watching the hippos and crocodiles. Back then life for a young surveyor was tough!

On return to the UK. I joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office managing the diplomatic estate in Europe and Africa. After the FCO, I undertook similar roles for several large US multi-nationals.

I am married with two children and two granddaughters. Despite now living in Sussex, I am still a supporter of Kent CCC and Charlton Athletic.

CHRIS STRONG (1965-71)



# PRESIDENTIAL REFLECTIONS

## Trevor Puddifoot looks back on his longer than usual term.

Well it was a different one. COVID took care of that. The presidency, which normally lasts a single year for each of us became mired in a tangle of lockdowns, laws, regulations, Scotch Eggs and all sorts of other stuff in its first year. It was no surprise, then, when the Annual Reunion Dinner came a cropper in 2020.

I think we were social distancing at the time, and the idea of giving the presidential speech in semaphore didn't really appeal.

So, when I was asked if I would run for a second year I was happy to accept. That started with a bit more of the pandemic malarkey but eventually things settled down.

It has been a great privilege to have held the presidency and to have been able to do so during the 50th anniversary of the School's first English Schools Cup win in 1971. We celebrated that with a get-together at the River Ale House in Greenwich (shameless advert alert) on 17 May (the day we won the cup) which magically was also the very first day that we were allowed to drink inside a pub for a while. A good number of Old Roans from 70/71 came along and we all had a quick word with Barry Thomas (Chiefy), our football team manager, on a telephone video link to his house in Norfolk. A great day.


*Trevor with son Joe and grandson Harry at the President's match*

Also on the football front, we had a presidential match at the School Field in February involving many players and supporters from 1971 and 1977/78, plus some sons and grandsons, followed by a gathering in the bar and a buffet lunch. Another great day.

I managed to fit in the Centenary cricket match at the field and visits to see Roan Dramatic society plays at The Bob Hope and Greenwich Theatres.

The (no flags) Reunion Dinner last November was another opportunity to meet up with lots of old friends and a chance to stand back and appreciate what a precious thing the Roan School journey has been for me.

Thank you for the honour to serve, and now back to normality!

TREVOR PUDDIFOOT

# A TOAST TO ’71!

Toasting the ’71 win! Players, team contemporaries and others raising a glass to Roan’s break-through English Schools cup victory.

Trevor and players Glenn Aitken and John Girdwood also re-enacted a legendary ’71 winners’ changing room photo.

*7 (top to bottom): Bernie Hampton, Brian Hamer, Chris Strong, Terry Thurley, Dan Calnan, Joe Puddifoot, Viv Lawrence, Glenn Aitken, Bryan Marsh, Keith Bradbrook, Mike Titheridge, Monty Smith*

*1 (top to bottom): John Girdwood, Trevor Puddifoot, Glenn Aitken and John Hutley together, Steve Nelson, Phil Snaith, John Girdwood, John Hutley*

# THE BIG MATCH!

## 50 Years On – 1971 v 1977/78
## Roan’s English Schools Cup Winners Battle It Out

Half a century on and this year’s Roan President’s Football Match was a contest of the ‘Winners’ – including the President Trevor Puddifoot himself, a member of Roan’s magnificent 1971 English Schools’ cup team.

Of course, 2022 is 51 years since that victory but COVID got in the way in 2021 and anyway when you’re dealing with Roan footballing legends, who cares?

At the School Field on a gloriously sunny 27 February, the winners of ’71 quite appropriately took on Roan’s similarly legendary English School’s cup winners of 1977 and ’78 for the bragging rights.

Although, especially for the ’71 ‘team’, as the players weren’t exactly the same who lined-up to take those National honours years ago, any Lording it is best forgotten. Many former winners did turn out though – a little heavier and more leggy than in their prime but their footballing minds still as sharp as ever.

Helping the older ones out – again more for the ’71 team than their ’77/’78 opponents - was a plethora of younger players, mostly sons and grandchildren, all eager to exhibit their skills in such illustrious company.

*Captains Trevor and Mick Smith with Referee Brian Hamer*

*Trevor on the attack!*

*The '71 team: Back Row (l-r): John Hardy, Brian West, Chris Strong, Steve Nelson, Harry Strachan, Will Dennis, John Hutley, John Dennis, Ian Daniels, Keith Bradbrook, Robin Faithorn, Elliot Bradbrook, Mick Smith. Front Row (l-r): Matt Nelson, Charlie Nelson, Zac Hutley, James Hutley, Trevor Puddifoot, John Girdwood*

For the record, it was 3-2 to the '71-ers. John Hutley, like Trevor one of the original team members, bringing it all back with what turned out to be the winner – '77/'78 hitting back with two after going three down and making the last few minutes a nail-biter.

Apart from the football, it was a great Old Roan day all round. Lots of familiar OR faces there to cheer the teams on, many with their families, and a wonderful atmosphere in the club afterwards with a buffet, musical

*The '77/'78 team: Back row (l-r): Alex McGuinness, Hollie Dixson, Dan Dixson, Phil Savage, Jeff Lake, Mike Heselden, Simon Ditchfield, Andy Daniels, Mike McGuinness, Neville Gaunt, David Sears, Bernie Turner (Manager), Phil Coleman, Nick Coleman, Harley Coleman. Front row (l-r): Stephen Dixson (Goalkeeper) Paul Cook, Ryley Walsh, Mick Smith (Captain), Gary Micklewhite, Guy Wilkins, Joe Wilkins, Ben Wilkins. (NB: Jamie Sears: not in picture)*



# ROAN'S WINNERS!


*1978*

*1971*

*1977*

*Well played!*

entertainment by Steve Nelson who, somehow, had the energy after playing for the '71-ers and a rousing rendition of the School Song. Thanks especially to ex-President Mick Smith, a '77/'78 winner, for organising the day.

President, '71 legend and winning Captain on the day, Trevor Puddifoot thanked everyone for taking part and all who had come to support such a grand occasion.

*John Hutley (l) and Terry Thurley*

*Alistair 'Mitch' Mitchell (l), Monty Smith (c) and Bryan Marsh*

*Steve Nelson sings!*

# OLD ROAN ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

If you would like to become a member of the Old Roan Association, or indeed re-join, then please contact the Secretary, Bernie Hampton - berniehampton@btinternet.com

Contact the Secretary also to notify the Association of any change of address, contacts or other member circumstances.

For Old Roan Magazine enquiries and to send contributions, contact: Keith Bradbrook (Editor) – Oldroankgb@gmail.com



# THE JOHN ROAN SCHOOL

## The Maze Hill building is now the Sixth Form Centre

From Principal Cath Smith

We started this Academic Year with some big changes. After a number of years with Years 7 & 8 (the younger ones) based in the iconic Maze Hill building and the other students in the modern new build on Westcombe Park (with the Sixth Form moving between both sites), we have converted the Maze Hill site into a Sixth Form Centre. This means that the Westcombe Park site is now our 'main' building, housing all of the students from years 7 through to 11 and our growing Sixth Form has a dedicated building to provide them with dedicated learning spaces.

This change has been especially timely since our recruitment into the Sixth Form has been significantly more successful than over the past few years. Our year 12 group (what used to be called the Lower Sixth) is now 100-strong and we are hopeful for at least a similar sized group coming through in September 2022. Although initially anxious about how we would fit 960 students into the Westcombe Park building, not only is there plenty of space, but it has also been a great way to unify the staff and allow subject departments to have more time together to share good practice ad build better team spirit.

Another real bonus this year has been the gradual release from


*Cath Smith*

COVID restrictions which is now allowing us to run trips and visits again and to have more moments where we can invite families in to school. Although we have been necessarily cautious about what we are planning, it was fabulous in the autumn to take all of Year 7 (180 students) to see 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' at the Globe Theatre. London is such a fabulous resource and is really under-used by many of our students so we were keen to show them what is on their doorstep. Other theatre visits this year have included the somewhat more modern 'Wicked' and I know that the music department are busily looking for an opportunity to get to the opera this year.

We have also developed strong links with Trinity Laban (the music conservatoire at the Old Naval

College) and this has included hosting their jazz band at the school who performed to Year 10, with special 'invited guest musicians' from within our year 10 GCSE Music group.

Very excitingly, after two summers of cancellations, we are expecting to take students up to Braithwaite again this year. With so many years of no visits, we decided to run a training weekend for some staff in February to showcase the facilities and provide the support and guidance to enable us to have staff who are able to lead the visits. Our fingers are all crossed for a COVID-free few months so that John Roan Students can once again be seen walking the fells, scrambling the ghylls and enjoying the beautiful Lake District in June.

We are also planning the return of the School Show. The Drama Team are busy rehearsing for 'High School Musical' which is booked to be on stage in the Maze Hill hall in April this year. Founder's Day in July this year will be marking 345 years of the school and I am hoping to learn from the experiences of last year to widen the participation of the school community in this important event. Last year, we were fortunate to have an ex-parent volunteer to provide equipment, expertise and time to live record and broadcast the Founder's Day concert from St Alfege's Church up to the school where everyone was able to watch. The recording was then shared with parents and the wider school community, thus involving so many more people than we have been able to in the past.

*Basketball Academy – a John Roan School success story*

*John Roan students at the Globe Theatre*

Attached to our Sixth Form is a Basketball Academy. Only students studying at the school can be a part of this, and the growing reputation of the squad is generating healthy competition for places. A recruitment day run during the February half-term holiday attracted 45 hopefuls who are competing for a maximum of 20 places – and this year included a number of girls meaning that we now need to give serious consideration to the possible extension of the academy to include a girls squad. Hugely exciting. Although the school meets the costs of the coach, the John Roan Foundation is key in providing the funding for an attractive package that includes training and match kit as well as membership of a local gym for the fitness training.

Also on the 'back to usual' calendar is, of course, the formal exam period. We are all very positive about this and the ability to have fully validated results for our students. The Year 13 (Upper Sixth) students did not take GCSEs two years ago and are very keen to take their A Levels this year. With over 50% of them now holding offers for Russell Group Universities, they are all working very hard and with great determination. The Year 11 GCSE cohort is also working hard and internal assessments show that they have made huge progress even just since their end of Year 10 exams. We wish them all the very best in their endeavours, and thank the staff who are working tirelessly to provide great lessons, additional support and lots of pastoral care to see them all through this period.

# JOHN ROAN'S VISION

## Founder's Day full of music and meaning

John Roan's vision to educate children in Greenwich was marked by a Founder's Day celebration in July 2021 at St Alfege Church – another slimmed-down occasion due to COVID but which was relayed to the School and via You Tube.

The church rang to the sound of talented students on saxophone, piano, guitar and much more plus others singing solo and in choirs. A group of students acted out a silent play to Martin Luther King's famous voice and guest speaker, ex-pupil Joshua Fasuyi, now a junior doctor, spoke of his debt to his education at Roan and how it has opened doors to control his life.

Principal Cath Smith paid tribute to the history of the Roan schools' tradition and emphasised John Roan's faith in education.

Looking back on the school since 1677, Cath said there had been many changes but the purpose had remained the same – education.

'John Roan was ahead of his time. He placed a value on educating people who would otherwise not have had a chance to go to school – and his legacy has been well looked after.

'Over the last 344 years, many thousands of children have attended the school and benefitted from his vision of education. The thread that keeps us together – the thread that runs continuously from 1677 until today - is that all students still do what he requested in his will – they wear the John Roan crest with pride.

'We are educating the children of Greenwich and we are providing fantastic opportunities for thousands of children to really grow and develop and make something of their futures.'

It is hoped Founder's Day 2022 will once again be a held at a full St Alfege Church.

• Founder's Day 2021 can still be seen on You Tube – search Roan Founder's Day

*Founder's Day*

*Founder's Day starts*

*Joshua Fasuyi*

*A dramatic moment*

*In the band!*

*A girls choir*

# A LIFETIME OF NATURE

Now 91, John Burton (1946-48) is one of a group of Roan boys who, at that time, shared an intense interest in nature and who has gone on to spend his whole life deeply involved in it. So much so that the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) recently published a pictorial article in its magazine *Nature's Home* to pay tribute to his eminent career in nature and his decades of support.

Here, John writes about his life from those Roan years and shares his memories of his Roan contemporaries who also went on to have senior careers in many areas of nature.

Sadly, a number of those close Roan friends have passed away, including two – Geoffrey Budd (1945-50) and Dr Alan Showler (1942-49) – whose deaths were announced in the last Old Roan Magazine. John also pays tribute here to Alan and another Roan nature-lover in the group, Keith Hyatt (1939-49), who died in February 2021.

*John Burton (1946-48)*

# Roan School Naturalists

## by John F. Burton (1946-48)

It was with sadness that I read in the last Old Roan Magazine Mrs Hazel Budd's obituary note about her late husband Geoffrey (Geoff) Budd (1945-50) and also the death of Dr. Alan John Showler (1942-49), both contemporaries and friends of mine at Roan. Now has come the equally sad news of the death in hospital of another contemporary and close friend, Keith Hotson Hyatt (1939-49), on 23 February 2021.

Their passing prompts me to write some additional notes to those published in Issue 7 (2012) of the Magazine about this generation of Roan School boys who shared with me a deep interest in natural history. Others were Professor Denis F. (Frank) Owen and his younger brother John E. Owen (1944-49), and Harry D. Scammell (1946-48).

All are mentioned in my book Grey Daggers and Minotaurs in Greenwich Park: Memories of a London Schoolboy Naturalist in the 1940s (Clio Publishing, 2014), a copy of which I gave the then headmaster, Des Malone, for the school library during a visit I made to the school in 2014.

As Hazel Budd wrote, I visited Geoff and her at their home in Tunbridge Wells with my German wife, Wega (pronounced Veegar), in March 2013. Although he wasn't well, nevertheless Geoff enjoyed recalling our memories of field excursions, especially in school lunch breaks on Blackheath (wilder then than now) and in Greenwich Park, for birds, butterflies and moths with our other naturalist friends at Roan. I had hoped to visit him again but increasing old age and associated health issues prevented me from doing so.

Alan Showler became well known as a botanist and an entomologist, and I kept in touch with him for many years after we left school.

John Owen, I'm glad to report, is still very much alive and active and I keep in regular contact with him, as I did with Keith. He also joined the Natural History Museum in South Kensington on leaving school, working in the Palaeobotany Department, but decided not to return after completing his National Service and switched instead to a successful business career. He now lives in retirement with his wife Margaret on Romney Marsh in Kent, where, having never lost his interest in natural history, he runs several moth traps and has become very well known in entomological circles. He sends me annual reports on his many captures, which have included several first records of moth species for Britain and many first records for the county. Since 1998, he spends a few days a week doing scientific work as a volunteer in the Natural History Museum in London's Department of Entomology.

John Owen's older brother, Denis, was a very special friend. Through him, I became interested in entomology and he in ornithology through me, and we became professionals in both subjects. Denis, in fact, had become by the time of his untimely death in 1996 a very distinguished zoologist with an international reputation, as reported in his obituary in such national newspapers as *The Times* and *The Guardian*.

Neither of us particularly distinguished ourselves academically at Roan - partly because, I must confess, our enthusiasm for natural history fieldwork took up so much of our time. Both of us were already serving during our later years at school on specialist committees of the London Natural History Society and the national committee of the Junior Bird Recorders Club, and in 1947 I was invited by Sir (later Lord) Cyril Hurcomb, Chairman of the Royal Parks Bird Sanctuaries Committee, to become an Official Observer for Greenwich Park. My letter of appointment was actually signed by the then Minister of

Works. After they left Roan, both Denis Owen and Keith Hyatt were also appointed Official Observers for Greenwich Park.

While still at school, I was sometimes invited to give talks on natural history to local schools such as Eltham High School for Girls and the Headmaster, Gus Gilbert, got quite used to allowing me time off in school hours to do so. Nevertheless, he didn't hold out many hopes of Denis and me having successful careers once we left school. Yet, in fact, both of us, and Keith Hyatt and Harry Scammell as well, were offered jobs on the scientific staff of London's Natural History Museum immediately we left Roan. It was not simply a case of who you know but who knows you know what you know! In other words, endeavour to get known in your chosen field of interest while still at school or soon after - a lesson I've often impressed on younger people.

Keith's whole working life was spent at the Museum, but Harry left in 1963 to take up an appointment as Head Librarian of Yale University's Davenport College in the United States, where he was much esteemed and very popular. After his early death at the age of fifty, the College published a memorial booklet in his honour, to which I contributed my memories of him.

After National Service in the Army, Denis and I were both head-hunted for posts in Oxford: Denis to undertake research at the University's Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology and myself to become the Assistant Secretary (= deputy director) of the British Trust for Ornithology. This widened our contacts in our chosen subjects enormously. We spent several very happy years in Oxford, sharing a flat at No. 2 Park Town (subsequently featured in the Inspector Morse television programmes), and both of us were afforded a belated opportunity to read for a zoology degree at Oxford University.

After finishing, our ways parted for some years, although we always kept in contact. Denis married a fellow graduate, Jennifer (who also became a distinguished zoologist), and moved to the United States to take up teaching posts at the University of Michigan. I was fortunate in being invited to join the BBC Natural History Unit in Bristol, where I remained until retirement in 1988, having enjoyed working with Sir David Attenborough, Sir Peter Scott and many other delightful colleagues.

The Secretary of the British Trust for Ornithology, Dr. Bruce Campbell, was a regular broadcaster with BBC Radio and television, and through him I also began to participate in BBC radio wildlife programmes. Actually, before we left university, Denis and I took part together in a BBC radio programme talking about our mutual studies of Herons in the British Isles. Altogether, I have now broadcasted on natural history programmes on German, Czech and Russian (Radio Moscow) radio stations.

Eventually, Denis Owen returned to the UK after spells holding professorships at universities in Sierra Leone, Uganda and Sweden, and we then saw a lot more of each other. As a radio producer, I was able to involve him as a speaker in some of my programmes and those of colleagues. For one of my programmes for BBC Radio 4 in 1983 called 'Back down the Old Kent Road', we re-visited Greenwich and compared the wildlife we found in Greenwich Park, around Blackheath and at Shooters Hill with what we observed there in the 1940s/50s.

Denis finally became a Professor and Principal Lecturer in Biology at Oxford Brookes University. Sadly, he died of lung cancer in 1996 at the relatively early age of 65. We had been co-operating on various projects and I still miss him a lot. He has an African hawkmoth, Owen's Redwing Phylloxiphia oweni, and a whole genus of parasitic ichneumon wasps Owenus named after him, is the author of ten books and around 280 academic papers and articles. Some of the latter we co-authored. Denis's book, What is Ecology? (Oxford University Press, 1974), became an international best-seller and has been translated into several languages.

At the age of 91, I still keep busy writing and am currently the author of five books and more than 350 academic articles and papers, plus several published recordings of BBC radio programmes and collections of wildlife sound recordings. An active conservationist, I am a founder member and a Vice-President of Butterfly Conservation, of which Sir David Attenborough is President. I'm also a passionate supporter of the European Union.

*John Burton with the late HRH Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands with wildlife recordings after a BBC interview near Amsterdam 1980*

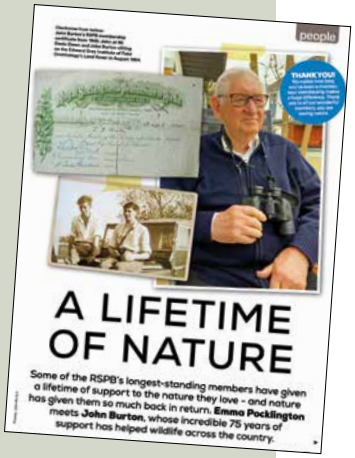
Although I still retain a flat in Bristol, Wega and I live much of the time nowadays near Heidelberg in Germany, a city once visited by a party from Roan in 1946, when I was a new pupil. And, I'm still resilient enough to continue supporting Charlton Athletic ever since I first saw them play at the Valley in 1943. I've even seen them play a few times in recent years. My local German second division (Bundesliga 2) club, F.C. Sandhausen, are just as frustrating to support!

# RSPB ACCLAIMS JOHN BURTON'S LIFE IN NATURE

The RSPB's magazine, *Nature's Home*, has paid a fitting tribute to John's life-long passion for nature, especially birds, and his 75 years of support for the organisation.

It charts John's deep interest as a young boy covering his activities in Greenwich and surrounding areas while he was at Roan.

When John's family moved to Greenwich in 1943, he told the magazine: 'I was depressed at finding myself in a more urban environment. But I soon discovered that the parks around Charlton, including Greenwich Park, and the open expanse of Blackheath, were only a short walk away.


people

THANK YOU

A LIFETIME OF NATURE

Some of the RSPB's longest-standing members have given a lifetime of support to the nature they love – and nature has given them so much back in return. **Emma Pocklington** meets **John Burton**, whose incredible 75 years of support has helped wildlife across the country.

*The RSPB's magazine article on John Burton's lifetime in nature*

'My birding was a lonely pursuit in those early years, and I never met another child, or indeed an adult, interested in birds or any other wildlife until I was 13.'

In the article, John looks back with some sadness over what has happened to the natural world during his lifetime and hopes the future holds better outcomes.

'In the course of my life I have been saddened to see so much needless destruction wrought by humans on our planet. Since I was a child I've seen a lot of valuable places for wildlife that I knew well destroyed or severely damaged by human activities.

'I hope for the sake of present and future generations, as well as those other species that share the planet with us, that destruction of the Earth's ecosystems will not continue, and that humans will learn to live in harmony with nature.

'In the Britain in which I grew up too many people seemed to believe we were no longer part of the natural world and humans could do what they liked with it. This just has to change, and I'm glad that it now seems to be happening at last.'


people

"My concern for nature conservation and admiration of the magnificent work of the society is undiminished."

*With thanks to the RSPB & Nature's Home Magazine*



# FRIENDS IN NATURE

*John Burton pays tribute to two of his late Roan school-friends, who like him, spent a life-time in nature.*

**KEITH HYATT F.L.S. (1939-49)**

It was with great sadness that I learned of the death of my lifelong friend and fellow naturalist Keith Hotson Hyatt in hospital from COVID-19 and pneumonia following a fall at his home in Rhandirmwyn, Carmarthenshire, on 23 February 2021, a month before his 89th birthday. He was born at Woolwich in South East London on 23 March 1932 and spent his early years at Grove Park before his family moved to Blackheath.

I first met Keith when I joined Roan in the spring of 1946. He had started at the school in 1939 and was one of a group of us there who were interested in natural history. Besides him and myself, Denis (D.F.) Owen shared our particular enthusiasm for entomology and ornithology.

Together, on our bicycles, we roamed the wildlife habitats of South East London and North West Kent, especially the Thames-side marshes and the North Downs, sometimes accompanied by one or more of our other naturalist school-mates.

I particularly remember happy days with him and Denis in the wonderful summer of 1947, when immigrant Lepidoptera, such as Clouded Yellows and Humming-bird Hawkmoths, flooded in and we saw them crowding the flower-beds in Greenwich Park, as well as swarming on the chalk downs around Eynsford and Shoreham in Kent. Halcyon days with the recent horrors of the Second World War simply a memory. I have always associated those hot, sunny days and the abundance of butterflies with Keith and Denis.

Similar enjoyable excursions together followed from 1948 until 1953, in which year Denis and I moved to Oxford. Keith gave up collecting Lepidoptera in the early 1950s and I believe the best of his collection was donated to Denis Owen and the Natural History Museum.

All three of us joined the RSPB and its junior branch, the Junior Bird Recorders' Club, and eventually became members of the club's committee. In 1947, we all joined the London Natural History Society (LNHS) and soon found ourselves serving on one or more of its various committees.

Keith continued to serve the LNHS devotedly and loyally in various capacities, including those of President and editor of its journal, *The London Naturalist*, throughout his long life, even in retirement in North Wales. He only relinquished his distinguished editorship in 2014 after 35 years. From 1952-1954, he succeeded me as one of the Official Observers in Greenwich Park for the Royal Parks Bird

Please send submissions to oldroankgb@gmail.com

Sanctuaries Committee, and he was subsequently elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society.

Like Denis Owen and myself, immediately on leaving school, Keith joined the staff of the Natural History Museum in South Kensington, in his case the Department of Zoology in 1949, where he specialized in mites and ticks, on which he became a leading authority. There he met his wife Eira Jenkins whom he married in March 1964 with me as Best Man. They divorced in 1992 but remained good friends.

After National Service (Keith spent his in the RAF from 1950-52), Denis and I moved to Oxford to pursue a zoological career, but Keith stayed on the staff of the Musuem until he took voluntary retirement on 31 January 1989, having attained the rank of Senior Scientific Officer. While at the Natural History Museum, he took part in its collecting expeditions to Nepal in 1954, 1961, where he spent almost an entire year, and 1974.

In 1957, Keith and his Museum friend and colleague Rosemary Parslow and her husband John spent several weeks on St. Agnes in the Isles of Scilly establishing a bird observatory to monitor the bird migrants that appeared there, including the remarkable numbers of American migrants, especially in the autumn. Subsequently, Keith visited the observatory almost every year for the rest of his life and was on speaking terms with pretty well the entire

*Keith Hyatt and Eira*

population of the island. His son, Lewis, remembers spending many happy family holidays there in his childhood.

I kept in touch with Keith, always exchanging Christmas cards, and in 1963 I stayed with him and Eira at their then home in Kenley, Surrey, for a couple of weeks. Keith had arranged for me to show a BBC wildlife film at a general meeting of the LNHS, and I took them to meet amateur astronomer Sir Patrick Moore and look at the night sky through the telescopes in his garden.

Keith was a delightful even-tempered person with a distinctive, rather dry sense of humour, whom I never remember seeing in bad humour or upset about anything. I've never forgotten his humour. He was one of the nicest people I've ever met.

Keith was survived by his former wife Eira and his sons Lewis and Gavin.

*Dr Alan Showler's death was noted in the last issue of the Magazine but John Burton has written a full tribute.*

**DR ALAN SHOWLER (1942-49)**

Alan was one of a group of us at Roan who met in the 1940s and discovered we all shared an enthusiasm for natural history; the others being the late Prof. Denis F. Owen, his younger brother John E. Owen, the late Keith H. Hyatt (see John's tribute to him here), the late Harry D. Scammell and the late Geoffrey Budd. All of us, except for Harry Scammell, whose subjects were archaeology and geology, were especially keen on entomology. Alan was, incidentally, a very fine table tennis player and captained the school team.

In our schooldays, Alan lived at Abbey Wood and concentrated his fieldwork, which also included botany, at Lessness Abbey Wood and Joyden's Wood, Bexley, as well as on the nearby parts of the North Downs. Keith Hyatt and I and the two Owens often used to meet him at Joyden's Wood, nowadays much less extensive and wilder than it was as a result of the felling of much of it to make way for a golf course, riding schools and a housing estate.

Alan was a modest, quiet and very likeable character and I wish that I had been able to keep in contact with him much more than I did. He was a good photographer and in the late 1970s joined a small wildlife photograph agency I operated, so we corresponded fairly regularly until I discontinued it on retiring in 1988. The last time I met him was sometime in the 1960s when he invited me to give a talk to his students at Buckinghamshire New University where he taught, and I afterwards enjoyed his and his charming wife Joyce's hospitality at their home in the Hughenden Valley at High Wycombe where they lived for many years.

Alan was an occasional contributor to nature journals and an active member and former Director of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). He died on 12 September 2019 at the age of 88 in the Gracewell Nursing Home at Ascot and is survived by Joyce, a daughter Lynne and a son David.

*Other obituaries of Old Roans and others associated with the School are on page 71. They include tributes to Val Pollock, a much-loved teacher at the Girls School and a former Boys School Captain, Ray Stone.*

# A Rhyming Tribute to Roan

## By Anna Kirk (1970-77)

Ex-pupils of the Roan Girls School, especially those who were there in the 1970s, will enjoy this rhyming tribute but the boys and the Old Roan Club also get a mention. Anna wrote the poem for her special guest speech at the ORA Annual Dinner on 21 October 2016 when her ex-classmate Jane Harnden was President.

1970. September. A beautiful summer's day.
Brand new bottle green school uniform, hated green beret!

Roan School for Girls, Devonshire Drive, Greenwich SE10.
That day would change my life forever, though I didn't know that then.

The building was old, the stairs were worn, it welcomed us into the fold,
For the next seven years it would shape us, and stay with us until we're old.

The atmosphere was gentle, encouraging, secure,
The friendships and bonds that formed - priceless ever more.

No thousands of kids to contend with, only 60 girls to a year,
No bullying to speak of, no Internet to fear.

*The Class of 1970-75/77, left to right: Lesley Finney (née Bailey), Phillipa Jeal, Lesley Tricker (née Ferguson), Susan Johnson, Susan Anderson-Rutt (née Anderson), Jane Harnden (née Sackett), Anna Kirk, Alison Chumley-Towner (née Chumley), Irene Rea (née Wells).*

Though there was an old school tale of terror - 'Twas the legend of Nelly Noakes,
Our resident ghost, we all believed it, I guess there's nowt so queer as folk?

Certain places were no-go areas, where only the brave would venture,
Where we knew for certain if you went alone - Nelly Noakes would getcha!

Sports at the field - in knickers, at first we had no skirt,
Because we had to make that - with Mrs Poore, in Needlework.

In Housecraft, importantly, we were taught to - boil a flannel,
Then we washed a hairbrush and learned to scrub enamel !

In Physics we were naughty, we once left the Lab soaking wet,
'Cos a hose from a Bunsen burner, on a tap, makes a great water jet!

Chemistry - Mrs Newnham, at her censure we would baulk,
And to this day I am sure, that a line by the door is 'One person thick and DOES NOT TALK!'

Biology – Miss Riddle.  At A Level we dissected a rat
It was slimy inside and quite smelly, none of us enjoyed that!

Geography - Mrs Jeffery, she brought the World into view
With her inimitable catchphrase – "And I would say to You".

French – Miss Constance. CSE. Zut Alors!
We never managed to get her, with that box of chalk above the door.

R.E. – Mrs Byron. Religious Education.
Through pain, taught flat on her back from the desk, a strange situation …

History – Miss Vincent. Fizzing with energy, such zest,
But woe betide anyone who failed a History test!

English – Mrs Pollock. A waft of musk as she drew near,
Ethereal, soft spoken – bringing life to Keats and Shakespeare.

Our Head was Mrs Barber, we could not have asked for more,
But you really didn't want to find yourself outside her door!

She took Latin one day, unexpectedly, when we'd planned something big,
Enter late Rowena – high heels, fishnet stockings, red lipstick, full bouffant wig!

Mrs Barber was not impressed, her reaction was dire.
She made Rowena sit in the corridor, in full Glam attire.

We staged a Sixth Form Panto, emulating the Club supreme
Our production was Cinderella, as she'd never before been seen.

She had a fairy 'Godfather', his henchmen at the ball in tow,
Liberace played piano, Oh – and Mrs. Mills had a go.

A fight broke out, a shoe was left -
someone's feet were throbbing,
The 'Prince' that night was
'Batman'.  So who did the shoe fit?
– Robin.

By Sixth Form we'd discovered the
Club, Thursday was the night to
come,
We were gallantly taught, by
the older members, to drink for
England - and then some.

We became extremely proficient!
Really - very able.
Gaynor once drank Malcolm quite
literally under the table.

One Friday morning - Dogfish
dissection, we'd been at the Club
the night before,
Hangovers scuppered a few of us,
one girl threw up and ran for the
door!

Romance blossomed, Gill Rodwell,
Jimmy Russon, Paul Petty and
Jenny,
Gaynor Phillips, Mark Squires -
these are just a few of many.

I'd like to take this opportunity, to
express our appreciation,
For all that's been done, for so
many years, by our Old Roan
Association

To those who tirelessly maintain
this - our Social Hub
From all of us, our thanks tonight,
to them, for this, our Roan, our
Club.

Now here we all are, so many years
on,

Some we have loved are, sadly, now
gone,

Paul Petty, Colin, Tony Slaney – or
should I say 'Jacques',
Remembered so fondly when we
each look back.

Most of those here – of our
generation,
Had the very, very best of State
Education.

I loved our school, I'm eternally
grateful,
But for some the old system could
be really quite hateful.

Late 70's - Roan became
Comprehensive
Some ups, some downs, but its
successes extensive.

To go to Roan before then, we had
to pass 11 Plus
So – what if we'd failed?
Should we bring back Grammar? -
Discuss.

*Anna Kirk at the OR Reunion Dinner*

# THE ROAN THEATRE COMPANY IS BACK! - TWO NEW PRODUCTIONS

For most of 2020 and 2021 The Roan Theatre Company went 'dark' with no new productions possible due to COVID since 'Atrocity' in early 2020 (reviewed in the last issue of the Magazine).

But with the easing of restrictions, the RTC has bounced back with two new plays – first Tom Stoppard's 'Arcadia' at the Bob Hope Theatre in Eltham in December last year and recently at the Greenwich Studio, Greenwich Theatre with 'Weekend Breaks', a dramatic comedy by John Godber.

Both productions attracted welcome audiences who were treated to performances of high calibre in the true Roan dramatic tradition.

As of April 2022, RTC are planning their next production at the Bob Hope in November – so keep your diaries clear for more information.

**ARCADIA**

Some say you need an advanced degree in physics and a deep understanding of Quantum Theory to truly understand Tom Stoppard's 1990s critically acclaimed play, Arcadia.  Well, reading the RTC's programme for the show, they are probably right – you have to be dubious when it quotes Fermat's last theorem, Fractuals, Chaos Theory and the various laws of Thermodynamics.

But, the success of the whole cast and production team at the Bob Hope Theatre, Eltham from 1- 4 December 2021, was how they didn't allow the science to get in the way of a thoroughly entertaining performance.


Yes, you had to just go with the physics and the theories sometimes, but the characters were always in control and the quality of the production shone through enabling the drama to unfold.

Arcadia, set in a stately home, switches back and forth between the early 1800s and the 1990s exploring the nature of truth and time, the classical and the present day. It is a complex script calling for keen acting skills and adept direction and the RTC should be congratulated on its achievement.

Praise goes to all the players, especially the leading roles by Callum Rice (Septimus Hodge), Kirstine Brett (Thomasina Coverly), John Adcock (Richard Noakes), Helena Houghton (Lady Croom), Sarah Coleman (Hannah Jarvis), Stuart Mitchell-Smith (Bernard

Nightingale) and Jack Woolf (Valentine Coverly) – plus Richard Rickson (Jellaby), Walter Linge (Richard Noakes), Myles Ballisat (Captain Edward Brice, RN) and Charlotte Smith (Chloe Coverly).

Full praise to Director Simon Clifton and his team – Stage Manager Glynis Watson, ASM Will Hawkes, Lighting and Sound Lisa Tidy, Front of House Graham Johnson and Brian Tidy for the Set.

It took the RTC nearly two years to get the show into the theatre, initially rehearsing back in February 2020. Apart from the science, as the programme also said, thanks to all involved for 'their dedication, humour and fortitude' in winning through. All very 'human' qualities!

**WEEKEND BREAKS**

According to recent past-President Trevor Puddifoot – and who argues with him! – Weekend Breaks at the Greenwich Studio, Greenwich Theatre across four nights in early February this year must be 'right up there' with the very best shows in the history of Roan dramatics.


Great praise... and going by the belly-laughs all through the production, the packed audiences also thought so too!

*Director Teresa Wilkins*

Weekend Breaks was a 'smash' and the cast, led by just three players – Joe Wilkins (Martin Dawson), Glynis Watson (Joan Dawson) and Graham Johnson (Len Dawson), with Director Teresa Wilkins, fully deserve all the plaudits for a great show.

The dramatic comedy by John Godber takes place in the Lake District – the hilarious twists and turns of family life revolving around a comedy routine.

National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA) reviewer Robin Kelly noted: 'Whilst it may be 25 years since the first production of Weekend Breaks, its themes of intergenerational conflict and the working/middle class divide still strike a chord today. It was also a play well-suited to the intimacy of the Greenwich Theatre Studio. At the same time, as a three hander, it also imposed significant demands on the cast, there being no hiding place for any weakness.

'Teresa Wilkins clearly had a great feel for character motivations, personalities, themes and tensions within the play. There was some excellent interplay between actors, with dialogue and action moving at pace. Joe Wilkins moved confidently and comfortably between his role as stand-up comedian... and replays of conversations with his parents. He came across as likeable, presenting the understandable frustrations of dealing with aging parents whose values and interests he found increasingly narrow.

'Glynis Watson was wonderfully infuriating with her attention seeking hypochondria, small mindedness, sense of humour bypass and self-righteousness. On the face of it, this was a character extremely difficult to like but somehow Glynis succeeded in maintaining a glimmer of likeability despite her apparent inability to smile.

'Graham Johnson gave very little away apart from fleeting eye movements indicating he was taking everything in and choosing his moment to contribute (usually when his wife drew breath)... This just added to the comic and dramatic moment in which he revealed to his son that he had had more than one affair in his younger days... Graham has impeccable timing which was especially evident in this role.'

*Joe Wilkins as Martin Dawson*

Weekend Breaks: Leonard Quaife (Voice), Dave Townsend (Set Design), Simon Ward, Ian Stuart (Lighting/Sound), Leonard Quaife, Duncan Watson (Rehearsal Prompt), Ben Wilkins (Programme/flyer Design), aviewforaroom.co.uk (Production Photography), Guy Wilkins (Production Assistant), Helena Houghton, Trevor Talbot (Front of House).

*Graham Johnson and Glynis Watson*

# FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS!

Roan victors - Bromley and South London Alliance Premier Division

*Manager Tom Lawrance reports:*
With the frustrations of the previous season still fresh (voided due to COVID with us top of the league), we worried last season may face the same fate. Yet after a four-month mid-season gap, we returned to action with seven league games to play – the league deciding again to scrap cup football due to lack of available weeks between April and the end of the season.

With all our nearest challengers still to play, it was going to be a tough ask. But with a never-say-die attitude and a togetherness and team spirit matching or bettering anything I've seen at Roan, win after win followed over the following weeks. Our talisman, Pat Brennan, was again key to our ongoing success, with important goals in all the big matches. He ended up with 27 goals in 13 games in an injury-hit season.

We went on to win all seven games, clinching the title on a stunning May afternoon at Kidbrooke with a resounding 4-1 victory over 3rd placed Bermondsey Town. A victory sadly marred by a bad leg-break for club stalwart Ryan Stockman, who was playing his last game for the club. He along with James Brown, who have both since left the team, had both played for the club for ten years giving great service, rightly earning the respect of the boys for everything they did

*Roan Champions – with the trophy at the School Field*

both on and off the pitch. They along with the entire squad were there to receive the trophy after our last game and we celebrated in style late into the night at the clubhouse.

The current season is nearing its completion and at the time of writing (March), we have unfortunately lost our crown but will still finish runners-up. We are in two cup semi-finals, so we are still very optimistic of at least bringing some silverware back.

We are very pleased to have another former Roan student in our ranks in Charlie Cole, who has been phenomenal this season for us. His addition meant that in a game shortly after Christmas we fielded a team with seven ex pupils in it, which is fantastic. We are really hoping the trend of former students playing, as well as on-field success, continues for Roan in the coming years!



# OLD ROAN GOLF SOCIETY

The Old Roan Golf Society enjoyed two more very enjoyable Society days in 2021 under the esteemed Captaincy of John Girdwood. The Summer event was played at Kings Hill and Winter at Addington Palace which, again, proved a very tough day with only seven scores over 30pts from a field of 36 players.

Once again, many thanks to Tony Nuttall for all his hard work organising the two successful days. The results for both were:

***2021 Captain***: John Girdwood

***Summer:*** Kings Hill
***Individual 1st:*** 40 pts, Robin Brown (handicap 31)
***Individual 2nd:*** 38 pts, Gary Watson (17)
***Individual 3rd:*** 37 pts, Tony Nuttall (12)
***Nearest the pin 6th:*** Mick Gibbins (23)
***Team 1st:*** 94 pts, Garry Watson (17), Robin Faithorn (14), Alex Hatzidakis (28), Mark Matthews (6)
***Team 2nd:*** 87 pts, Tony Sproul (7), Jim Douglas (17), Wayne Hunt (11), Jeff Matthews (20)

*Summer Individual Winner – Robin Brown*

***Winter:*** Addington Palace
***Individual 1st:*** 40 pts, Alex Hatzidakis (handicap 28)
***Individual 2nd:*** 37 pts, Jeff Matthews (20)
***Individual 3rd:*** 34 pts, Richard Thomas (18)
***Individual guest:*** 32 pts, Rick Melbourne (16)
***Nearest the pin 7th:*** Tony Sproul (7)
***Nearest the pin in 2 15th:*** Tony Sproul (7)
***Team 1st:*** 83 pts, Wayne Hunt (11), Jeff Matthews (20), Jim Douglas (17) and Tony Sproul (7)
***Team 2nd:*** 82 pts, Gary Watson (18), Robin Faithorn (15), Alex Hatzidakis (28) and Mark Matthews (6)

*Winter Individual Winner - Alex Hatzidakis*

# ‘A ROUND WITH …’

*With due thanks to the late TV golf commentator Peter Alliss, the OR Magazine took a swing at one of his popular former programmes and pitched up with its very own… ‘A Round With…’ and the featured Old Roan legends of the fairways were those long-devoted doyens of the OR Golf Society, Bryan Marsh, John Dennis and John Girdwood.*

The Magazine caught up with the trio on the tees at a Golf Society day, watched them hit their birdies and miss their pars, then adjourned to the clubhouse for a pint or two afterwards.

Such a pleasure to accompany three Old Roan ‘Masters’ around the course with the two Johns later sharing some stories of their golfing and Old Roan days.

*Mr Marsh*

**THE TWO JOHNS REMEMBER…**

**Did you play golf while at school - or when did you start?**

**JG:** I started playing golf at the age of 15, whilst at Roan. I had always liked going on putting greens as long as I can remember and later moved on to pitch and putt, often with a group of lads from our year which sometimes included Brian West at places like Danson Park and Barnehurst. Three years of too much golf and not enough work at college, and I emerged with a low handicap and the girl who is still my wife.

**JD:** I can only remember a few golf excursions - the first being with my brothers at Lullingstone Golf Course where I struck a ball to within nine inches on a downhill Par 3. I was led astray by a friend when I took early retirement, got the golf bug pretty quickly and it has not left me.

*Mr Girdwood*

**What’s your top memory of Roan days?**

**JG:** Have plenty including the Maze Hill building itself, playing footie at lunchtime and after school in Greenwich Park and Blackheath and the wide variety of good people I met there. The absolute top memory is being part of the 1971 football team and playing every minute of every match during the successful ESFA Cup run.

**JD:** Very difficult to choose one. Chislehurst & Sidcup when I scored and took wickets. The plays and reviews were fabulous. 1066 and all that. I remember the nervousness coming on to sing very early in one review. Then, of course, the glory of the ESFA cup in 1971. A substitute in both legs of the final, warming up at The Valley and then getting the coach to the second leg just after my physics practical exam. Such joy and a big life lesson about a team being so much more than the sum of its parts.

**Who was your favourite teacher - and why?**

**JG:** During my early years - Nigel Ballantyne, who started at Roan on the same day as our year intake. Nigel seemed so enthusiastic and made English seem so interesting. The picture in my mind is of Nigel speeding down the corridor at great speed, black gown flowing behind and really warranting his ‘Batman’ nickname.

*Mr Dennis*

*Masters… Bryan and the two Johns*

**JD:** Alfie Knott. A fellow Old Roan who gave so much to the school and the boys it served. A multi-talented polymath who earned the respect of most, not least through his legendary sports reports at Mondays’ Assembly. I will never forget him accompanying me with such skill in a solo song at a school review.

**What do you remember about playing sport at Roan?**

**JG:** Always a pleasure - whether a kickabout in the Park, organised games, for my House (Nelson) or

*In the clubhouse (l-r) John Girdwood, John Dennis and Bryan Marsh*

for the school. I made the Year football team from the first week, playing behind Jimmy Hardy and Brian West. Later, I played for Old Roan, mainly the 2nd XI, plus Simon Perry's Sunday team, Fairyhill Athletic. I finally made the School 1st X1 in 1970/71. I loved cricket in the Junior team including once against Shooters Hill standing at one end while no less than 'Boggy' Marsh knocked 46 not out for the win. I finished as the stand-in First X1 Captain when Brian West had to cry off with an injury. I also played for all the Old Roan cricket teams at various times and went on four or five Isle of Wight Tours.

**JD:** Generally being top of the 2nd X1 rather than first team. Developing a love of badminton with John Malpas who spent quite a bit of time sending me running around the court. Of all the sports I learned at school it was the last sport I gave up.

**Name your top sportsman or woman from the Old Roan - and why.**

**JG:** Joe Broadfoot and Terry Barry were both great at football and cricket. But I choose Johnny Leach. When I was playing, John had already been a skilful, dynamic and energetic midfielder for the OR 1st XI for many years, and continued to be so for many more years. A lovely guy.

**JD:** Keith Mexter, who seemed able to turn his hand to any sport with ease, and he excelled so often. At the same time, he always acted with the true Corinthian spirit of fair play and was good to be with.

**What's your top Old Roan moment of all time?**

**JG:** Easy. My debut for the Sunday 2nd XI Cricket Team at the Field in July 1970 in an all-day match versus Carshalton, when I scored my one and only century - 101 not out.

**JD:** Think it has to be the Memorial Dinner in the Painted Hall where I met several Old Roans from my own cohort, 1964-71, not seen since school days. And Bill Ellis too! Such a glorious event, under the Presidential eye of Tony Slaney, celebrating the wonderful start in life that the Roan schools gave to us. Here's to old John Roan!

*Bryan Marsh (l) and John Girdwood assess the course*



# CHARLIE WILLIAMS' MEMORIAL CRICKET MATCH

*Ian Daniels reports:* The second memorial match for much-missed Charlie Williams was held at the School Field on August Bank Holiday Monday 2021 with a Select XI against a Club XI led by Len Sales and including several Sales and former and current players.

The club team posted a competitive total in the region of 180 despite some overly aggressive bowling from Morgan, some tight medium pace from Raj and some loopy left arm from the Dutch master De Hoog.

The target proved too much from an early stage as several early batters failed to trouble the scorer - even shot of the day from the Ditch (Dave Ditchfield) left too much to do for those remaining. However, the CW select X1 held on for a draw!

Hopefully the fixture will return next season with date to be confirmed.

The Charlie Williams Select XI consisting of ten Old Roans, three ex-Presidents, four from Reggie Hoare's class of 1974 and a wicketkeeper in too much gear! Back row: (l-r) Les de Hoog, Fraser Lochtie, Pete Manners, Lucien Howlett, Raj Prabhaker, Tony Sproul, Andy Daniels: Front Row: (l-r) Dave Ditchfield, Spot Hughes, Ian Daniels, Sam Morgan.

# I DON'T LIKE CRICKET...

*Laurence 'Spot' Hughes (1965-72) shares his Old Roan cricket memories.*

I cannot remember a time when I wasn't a cricket lover.

My earliest memories include vague black and white images of Hall and Griffiths, Truman, Sobers and others - Test matches being live on BBC TV then. I was also, apparently, taken by my family to watch some friendlies played by a team run by an East End church social club they'd been members of before slum clearance gave us a chance to move south of the river.

Obviously, I enjoyed watching cricket enough to spend a lot of my pocket money on entrance to a Cavalier's game one Sunday at the Rectory Field, Blackheath - a Kent County Ground then - in either 1965 or 1967 (Sobers got a fifty at the game in both years, so I am not sure which, probably the latter). Either way, I remember lining up to pay a half crown (lots of money to me) to get Sobers' autograph (long since lost).

Although I didn't play for the school team, I played in the street, on the beach, holiday and the estate I lived on (yes, there were council estates in Blackheath then) with a walled and fenced concrete square with stumps painted at either end. At school, I ran cross country just about good enough to be last pick on the school team and my only brush with school cricket was lining up in the playground at Maze Hill, probably after school one day, to have a bowl in the nets and bowling Jim Russon, I think then the school cricket captain.

After leaving school, I joined the Old Roan Association and took up regular weekend sport. Joining the cricket club back in the early 70s, from those days, amongst many others, I remember 'Uncle Peter' Williams and Bryan 'Bumble' Endersbee. I went on to play well over twenty years for the club, often playing twice a weekend and 'doing' the Isle of Wight and Kent tours regularly - never having much talent, of course (although I like to think I got better as I learnt my limitations), but always, always keen and willing to play. Ultimately, I played a considerable number of games taking many wickets (best 7-56) and becoming a captain etc.

I remember playing ten days on the trot for the Old Roan once. First, a Saturday game, then a Kent tour starting on the Sunday at Addington, then Sibton Park, Broadstairs, Sandwich, Hythe and Folkestone, then another weekend and an extra game on the Bank Holiday Monday. Goodness knows what my kit was like after that lot!

The annual tour to the Isle of Wight back in the 70s was before I learnt to get the most from my game, so I went to 'open the fielding' but I was still a regular. One year, I remember travelling to the Island with my mate, Steve Gilman, who was driving a big, pink Jag - owned, I believe, by Joe Broadfoot (perhaps it was actually a Daimler). Either way, it would have suited Lady Penelope more that it suited us.


*'Spot' Hughes (Back row, 2nd left) on the 1991 OR Kent cricket tour at Hythe.*

I am sure there are many stories that come from every IoW tour, what with the cricket and afterwards the drinking games and rude songs ('Please, rearrange this into a well-known phrase or saying - Off... - well, you can guess the rest).

One incident is worth recalling, at Arreton, a small club somewhere near the centre of the Island. They had a coconut matting wicket and, if memory serves, little in the way of facilities. We were in the field and, out of the blue, their umpire, a very small, older bloke with all the kit including a shoulder bag, calls from square leg, 'NO BALL'. When we questioned him, he pulled the law book out of his bag and showed us, actually underlined in his book - the law about the wicket keeper cannot have anything in front of the line of the stumps as the ball is delivered. 'Stanno' was keeping and, apparently, part of his beer belly had encroached! Quite how much complaining there was at the time with this 'letter rather than the spirit of the law decision' I can't remember but I expect we laughed about it in the pub later.

Lesley and I moved our young family way down into Kent in 2000 when in my forties but not yet ready to give up my cricket - sadly, the Old Roan was a good hour's travelling away. Although I went to Canterbury occasionally to watch, I have always preferred playing to watching so I joined the village team where I lived. Unfortunately, they didn't really need another bowler and were a bit 'cliquey'. Although once I got bowling figures of 2 overs, 1 maiden, 2 runs and 4 wickets to pull a win out of the hat (I was brought on as the game was coming to its end just to give me a bowl), I was mostly used as a 'cannon fodder' opener to try and take the shine off the new ball. I got a couple of fifties though and I think I won the duck cup in the few seasons I played for them.

I knew what I was good at and this wasn't really it, so I contemplated the unthinkable and considered retirement. Then, in a strange coincidence, Lesley, my wife (an osteopath), mentioned that one of her patients had told her about a local team looking for players and a fellow staff member at the school I taught at encouraged me to join the same team. It was the next village down the hill where they play on a lovely village green, in front of the pub. So, I gave it a go and to cut a long story short, Boughton and Eastwell CC have become a huge part of my life.

I played for them up to 2019 - in my last game, they told me later, I took my 300th wicket for them - and I did my turn as captain, umpire, their chairman and (my current role) their secretary. We have over seventy colts coming through, have planning permission for a new 400k clubhouse and are one of the seemingly few local clubs that's not struggling to fulfil fixtures. The fact that we are over 300 years old brings me back to the 2020 Old Roan centenary match which was a lovely day with so many my old friends at the School Field.

So, we come full circle. Recently, BBC TV showed live cricket for the first time this century, probably only because the pandemic had scuppered other things and it was a T20 rather than a Test match but beggars can't be choosers...

... I LOVE IT! (with thanks to 10cc)

# TO 'SIRS' WITH LOVE....

Barry Thomas, Gordon Brooks and Terry Hall... Geography, Economics and Physics... three well-loved former Roan teachers and all very familiar to the Association.

*Gordon Brooks (l) & Barry Thomas in Norfolk*

The Magazine caught up with them recently - Barry and past-OR President (1981-82) Gordon in Norfolk and Terry in Wiltshire - to say hello and share a few memories. Each sent their best wishes to all Old Roans, each remembering great times and a not a few funny moments during their times at the school from the late 1960s into the 70s.

Barry and Gordon, who have both faced difficult health problems, have lived around Fakenham for many years. Both went on to teach at schools in the county after their Roan days before retiring.

Last year was special for Barry – the 50th anniversary of the School's

*Barry & Gordon at the School Field in the 70s*

1971 cup win in the English Schools Football Trophy (see other articles in the Magazine). Barry, who is suffering from cancer, remembered every game well and spoke yet again of how proud he was to have managed such a successful side. He was rightly remembered with a toast at November's Annual Reunion Dinner by cup-winner President Trevor Puddifoot.

Gordon, who has sadly lost part of a leg due to illness, still retained that wonderful sparkle of humour which always entertained. His keen wit not lost on the various foibles - good and bad - of Roan pupils and teachers alike.

Barry and Gordon spoke affectionately of Dr Taylor who was their Headmaster during their years. Sometimes, they said, the 'Doc's' apparent but deceiving aloofness belied his kindness and supportive nature especially to young teachers trying to make their way as the 'old guard' of masters were in their twi-light.

Terry Hall and his wife Val live in a small village outside Trowbridge where they moved after Terry left Roan to take a job in a local school. The pandemic has meant they have not seen two of their four children and their families – one in the USA, another in Ireland – for long periods. However, they both lead very active lives and see a great deal of other grandchildren. Terry, always known at Roan for his keen interest in music – plenty of boys will remember singing Gilbert and Sullivan in school reviews - is part of the village choir.

Being a Physics teacher, Terry was sure a lot of the experiments he used to carry out at Roan and elsewhere in his career, wouldn't be allowed now for 'elf and 'safety reasons. He recalled quite a few near misses with some equipment. Terry also still has his old work-books in which he kept meticulous notes on those he taught and especially his Form Master classes.

All three much-loved teachers – Barry, Gordon and Terry – had no reservation in saying their Roan days were some of the most rewarding of their careers. And If they have special memories of the School then it is certain very many Old Roans today share many of them and have still more of their own.

*Terry Hall*

# OLD ROAN CENTENARY

## Painted Hall Night – 10 Years On!

Incredible as it seems, last 24 September was a decade since one of the greatest nights in Old Roan history – the Centenary celebration dinner at the Royal Naval College's Painted Hall.

Everyone who was there that evening would certainly not forget such a momentous occasion – a very special event marking 100 years of the Association taking place in the most magical and fitting of Greenwich settings.

As the then President Tony Slaney stated in his address: 'In the Painted Hall, we are nearer the school's origins than almost anywhere else as the first school was built at the corner of Romney Road and King William Walk...'

Tony also said it shouldn't be forgotten that the Old Roan Girls' Association had been founded in 1894 although there are few records. The two Associations merged in 1980 at the same time as the schools.

Sadly, of course, some of our fellow Old Roans who attended that glorious 2011 night are now no longer with us. We mourn their passing but celebrate their lives and their Roan days. As the School Song reminds us...

*'We were born in days of passion, we were reared in days of pride...'*

*Magical setting*

*Celebrating in the Painted Hall*

*What a night!*

*Trevor Talbot*

*Centenary President Tony Slaney*

*A school choir*

*Simon Perry, Graham Johnson and the late Dr Peter Traffrord (r-l)*

*Celebrating by candlelight*

# BRAITHWAITE NEWS

*Brian Hoy, Chair of the Hope Memorial Trust, writes of some new land at the camp and its upcoming centenary in 2023.*

I recently received an e-mail from the mother of a student (not from John Roan) who, on returning from a stay at the Hope Memorial Camp, informed her that it used to be a 'Concentration Camp'. She was asking if this was correct and I replied that her son had probably been looking at the photographs of the original huts that are on display! This got me thinking that maybe I should update the world and the ORA on the current wellbeing of the Camp.

Since the rebuilding in 1989, there have been extensions in 1993 and 2016 and much maintaining, redecorating, renovation and improvement.

- Full-sized drying room with a commercial dehumidifier which can dry thirty-two sets of outdoor clothes and boots overnight
- Air source heat-pump central heating
- Unvented hot water system (plus all plumbing below ceiling level)
- Aluminium-framed double glazing
- Sewage treatment plant

The sleeping capacity has remained at thirty-two but has been reconfigured to include single, double, four and six-bed rooms. There is WiFi in the common room and USB charging sockets throughout.

In 2019, we were able to acquire some additional land which takes the total area to 38 acres (approx.). This parcel of land was only accessible via the Hope Memorial Camp holding and had never been in our ownership or, more importantly, control.

Usage of the Camp is currently: schools (including TJRS), youth clubs and organisations, Search and Rescue, JR Foundation, church, walking and community groups and families.

The past two years have been a challenge due to COVID but we have been fortunate to have received grants via local government. Our current challenge is to deal with the self-seeded trees on the southern boundary. These slow-growing oak trees can present a hazard in autumn storm conditions and indeed one fell onto the road last October taking another three with it.

*The Camp at Braithwaite looking serene in the snow*

*Improvement works at the Camp*

The Trust has been extremely fortunate to receive bequests and donations from Old Roan students in the past few years (Tony Slaney, Trevor Cradduck, Robert Jarrams and others) and the Trustees are proposing to raise funds for a public defibrillator and some more tree planting which may tie in with next year's centenary. On 26 March 2023, it will 100 years since AH Hope purchased the land at Braithwaite.


*A plaque in honour of Tony Slaney's generosity to Braithwaite*

## Braithwaite Annual Service of Remembrance

*New Old Roan President Chris Strong (1964-71), Old Roan representative on the Hope Memorial Trust, reports on last year's moving Braithwaite Annual Service of Remembrance.*

Each year the Hope Memorial Trust holds its AGM on the Saturday of the Remembrance weekend and the following day a number of the Trustees join the local congregation to attend the open-air service of Remembrance at the Braithwaite War Memorial. This is located just off the A66 with the fells as a stunning backdrop.

*A moving scene at the Braithwaite Annual Service of Remembrance led by the Rev. Robert Canham*

The service goes ahead come rain or shine and over the years there has been some very wet services but last November it was a crisp bright day with patches of blue sky. The service was led by the Rev. Robert Canham (see photo) and I always find it very moving, particularly when the Kohima Epitaph is said: 'When you go home tell them of us and say for your tomorrow we gave our today.'

One of the long-standing traditions is that two members of Hope Trustees each lay a wreath on the memorial, one by the Head of the School and one laid on behalf of the Old Roan Association. After the service, teas and coffees are usually served from the back of one of the parishioner's cars. Last year this did not happen due to concerns with COVID, but a few years ago, a lady spoke to me after the service to say how much she appreciated the continuing link with the Roan School, particularly as Arthur Hope used to lodge with her mother in the early days when he came up to Braithwaite.

# OLD ROAN REUNION DINNER 2021

The annual Old Roan Reunion Dinner – sadly COVID-cancelled in 2020 – was held with a packed turn-out at the School Field Pavilion on 19 November in 2021.

President Trevor Puddifoot hosted proceedings with his guest table festooned with school friends and team-mates from the 1971 English Schools football cup winning side in which Trevor played. Heroes such as Jimmy Russon, John Hutley, Glenn Aitken and John Girdwood.

The President's Guest of Honour and legendary speaker Graham Johnson had the room in hysterics with a fast wig-changing routine looking back to Founder John Roan's times and school Principal Cath Smith gave Old Roans an update on the school's progress and how it had overcome the many challenges the pandemic had thrown in its way.

*President Trevor Puddifoot in full rock mode*

In his (long!) speech, Trevor, famous for his love of music, took the assembled Old Roans through a year by year run-down of everything great in rock and pop through his school days and more.

*A toast!*

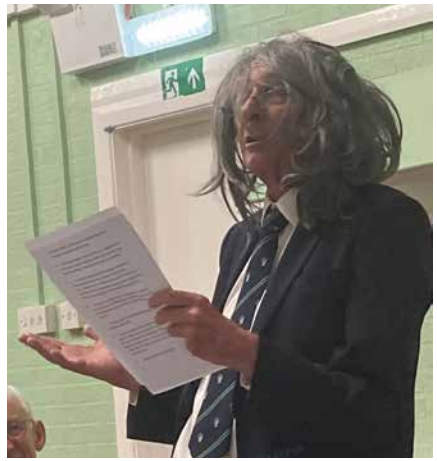
*John Hutley*

No President will have ever rattled off more bands and artists in any reunion address.

The 1971 win was hailed by Trevor as an unforgettable key moment in his life and paying tribute to all his guests and the team-mates not present – especially Captain Paul Petty who tragically died in the 1980s – he also toasted the side's Manager, teacher Barry Thomas, unable to attend due to ill-health, and coach Joe Broadfoot, who was there on the night.

Another great occasion rounded off with the traditional singing of the school song accompanied on the piano this year by Stuart Horsburgh (1966-73).

*A packed School Pavilion*



*Wig changer extraordinary Graham Johnson*

*Principal Cath Smith*

# 1956 ROAN GIRLS REUNIONS

*Anne Bristow (née Warren) writes.*

Pupils who started at the Roan School for Girls in 1956 held reunions to celebrate their 50, 60, 65 and 70 birthdays. It was then decided that it would be nice to meet up every year and as we were delighted with our venue - The Bromley Court Hotel - we would continue to be 'ladies who lunch'. Therefore, in May every year from 2016 to 2019 we have met up and thoroughly enjoyed eating good food and catching up on all our news.

The numbers attending have ranged between fifteen and twenty with a large proportion attending every reunion. It is disappointing that due to COVID regulations we were unable to meet up in 2020 and 2021. We have however booked our next reunion for May 2022 when there will be even more to talk about.

In the meantime, as always, I am still trying to contact other girls who started at the school in 1956 - for example Carol Harris, Jackie and Jill Gibson and Heather Wardell. If anyone has any information about these or other girls from our year then please contact me - Tel 020 8311 4958, Email annepbristow@gmail.com.

*Former 1956 pupils attending a reunion were:*
*Back row: Pamela Parker, Christine Stenning, Linda Kyte, Brenda Marshall, Olivia Varley, Norma Alston, Sandra Harrison, Chris Stephens, Jen Stephens, Pat Smith*
*Middle row: Anne Warren. Jacky Bunce, Jean Hardy, Brenda Cavender, Janet Short*
*Front row: Vera Beer, Janet Pratt, Linda Bedden, Carmen Roiz da Sa*



# MEMORIES AND MINES!

*Dr Iain Wells (1960 – 67) shares memories of his Roan days and his international career in the mining and minerals industry.*

*Iain Wells with potential mining investors with the helicopter at Ulaanbaatar in 2011*

I started at Roan in 1960 with Ben Fenton as form master and remember Chris Wyton and Pete Young from my first year as they sat next to me (we were alphabetical order in those days). However, my father was the first family member to attend Roan (1934-39) having passed the Entrance Examination and been awarded a free place. He left just before the outbreak of WW2 to study civil and structural engineering at Northampton Engineering College. My younger brother, James, also attended Roan from 1962-67.

After completing O and A levels, I went up to Birmingham University in 1967 to read Minerals Engineering and following graduation went on to undertake research at the same department. After graduation with a PhD in 1973, I joined a local company specialising in the development, manufacture and sale of equipment for mineral processing, where I remained for twenty-seven years, the last eleven as a director.

I formed an independent consultancy in 2000 to provide advice to the mineral processing industry, specialising in the processing of the ores of iron, tin, titanium, tungsten, tantalum and rare earth metals amongst others eventually retiring in 2017. During my career, I visited over seventy different countries including some of the more far-flung ones such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bolivia, Iran, Kazakhstan and Mongolia. The picture above depicts me at Ulaanbaatar airport in 2011 with the potential investors to the Ervei Khushuu iron mine in Sukhbaatar province (Mongolia) in front of our chartered helicopter.

Roan teachers I remember include 'Bounce' Martin, who inspired my interest in chemistry which indirectly led to a career in the mining industry, and whose spectacular end-of-term demonstration of the ignition of the appropriate proportions of hydrogen and oxygen resulted in a loud explosion (and some water). However, on one memorable occasion, the gas jar he was holding shattered and cut his wrist badly so he took himself off to hospital although not before setting us homework!

Our form master and geography

teacher in the 5th, Mr Hankinson, had a novel way of recalling places in Southern England by reference to a local pub; little did I know then that I too would develop a taste for real ale and find myself on the organising committee of the local beer festival many years later (see photo). Other teachers remembered are Mr Lock (woodwork), Messrs Hoare (who taught my father) and Corney (French), Mr Binnie (history) and 'Snoz' Westmarland (geography). I am still in touch with David Leeming from my year with whom we attended the Centenary Dinner in 2011. Also, Roland Alcock, now in Canada, who taught me to play bridge whilst in the sixth form. I

*Iain at the 2019 Solihull Beer Festival*

bumped into him twenty years later in a Birmingham pub (where else?) when a colleague from Severn Trent Water, now his wife, introduced him to us. Imagine the surprise to our assembled friends when we recognised each other!

# THE SMELL OF ORANGES...
## and whistling the school song

*Right Reverend Gavin Reid (1945-53) was prompted to share his Roan memories after reading the last issue of the Magazine.*

The Magazine put me in mind of my times at Maze Hill, not least some of the staff.

Mr Trott, the Music master, had a key purse that acted like a guided missile in variably hitting the pupil who was trying to read a comic under the desk lid. Mr Hankinson, a bluff and cheery teacher who taught geography and enthused me to do the subject at university when I was really far better at history. Mr Beale taught Latin and could not stand the smell of oranges in the classroom. When I had to take up O level Latin in the sixth form because I would need it for university, he tried his best only for me to fail at my first attempt – along with another boy. We both took the re-takes at Christmas and when we learnt we had succeeded we both broke into his class at Registration. 'We've both passed' we cried! He looked quizzically at me and said, meaningfully: 'Both?'

Mr Binnie was a delightful man who taught history and led the School Scout Troop – so he saw a lot of me. He always struck me as a really good man. Years later, I saw him across the road in Chislehurst. I wasn't quite sure as I had left over fifteen years earlier so I whistled the school song. He stopped, looked across and instantly remembered me.

Then there was Mr Witten who taught English – a great character who produced St Joan for the school play one year. It has a mega part for Joan (played by Aldrick Brown, I remember) and several medium length parts. One of them was a thick English priest called De Stogumber and I was given that role (prophetic!). Mr Witten would come up to me in the corridor and tell me that I had the second most important part. The trouble was that he was saying that to at least two others in the cast. All the same, after I had left, the dear old man made the effort to come and see me in my first college play.

I will always be grateful to Mr Locke who taught woodwork but who taught me geology at high speed in the sixth form when I realised, late as ever, that I did not have a science subject and needed one to get into university.

One of my lasting Roan memories was running as a senior in the school cross country. We did two laps of the course in Greenwich Park and I was so far behind the rest on the first lap that spectators though I was leading the field on the second! As I had to stay on for a third year in the sixth form they school decided to make me a Vice-Captain and I suppose I have been dealing with vice ever since!

Good days with good people.

*Gavin Reid in 1951 with a Blackheath High School girl, Mary Smith, rehearsing a school sketch on being a married couple. Eight years later the two actually did marry – and they are still together after 62 years!*

# ROAN WAS A FAMILY THING

*Jean Nicholls, née Saker (1954-60) writes:*

I have very fond memories of my time at Roan (1954-60), although as I moved away from the area, I have, sadly, no contact with any of my peers. My mother (maiden name Hilda Stocken) was a Roan girl in the 1920s and she kept in touch with two friends all her life - Clarice Smith and Hazel Morris, both now departed. As a result, when I passed my Eleven Plus, I applied to go to the Roan Girls School in Devonshire Drive.

*Old Roans together – Jean Nicholls' mother, Hilda, her sister Maureen and Jean in the early 90s*

My good English led me into administration work at the BBC and when I married in 1966 I moved to Huntingdonshire - from my family's reaction it could have been the other side of the world!

I settled very happily, raised two great sons and now have four adorable grandchildren. I worked at Hinchingbrooke School for fifteen years and then was Committee Administrator for Huntingdon Town Council prior to retirement. I can't remember my English teacher's name, but am very grateful for the excellent instruction I received at school!

My sister, Maureen Gamson, née Saker (1956-62), followed me to Roan two years later and did her nurses' training at Kings College Hospital. She was moved to Derbyshire to be near her son and is currently in a dementia nursing home.

I look forward to receiving future magazines and news of a great school which formed a strong base for my life.

# ROB'S MOMENTS & MEMORIES
## 50 Years On

*Rob Andrew, aka 'Little Doss' (1964-71), writes:*

*Rob Andrew*

2021 was the 50th Anniversary of my leaving Roan School and I was reflecting on the people I had known there and my experiences at the school and beyond. Then, to my surprise, the last edition of the Old Roan Magazine was delivered with Trevor Puddifoot's smiling face 'introducing' himself as President. So, I thought I'd commit some of my memories to paper.

I joined the school from Greenacres Primary School on the Coldharbour Estate near Mottingham. Two other lads from the school also joined that year – Martin Alcock and Paul Casselman. I also think that Martin's twin sister, Rhona, may have joined the Girls School at the same time.

School study felt like a pretty low-key affair. It was just a case of staying focused and doing your best with few histrionics from the pupils or the teachers. For me, the main motivation in 1964 was to get into the school football team! I'd been pretty successful in school sport at primary school but the step up in quality was shocking. So many lads had played for their District or were part of recognised coaching setups.

On the first games afternoon, we were divided into 'pitches' according to our football resumes and I found myself on the 2nd or 3rd pitch – probably twenty plus places below any consideration for the First Year team. And, with a match coming up the next weekend, it was to get even worse. Within five minutes of my game starting, I got clogged on the right ankle by Steve Dunbar. Steve went on to be promoted almost immediately to the 1st pitch and actually made the school team that weekend – I think playing right wing. I had chipped a bone in my ankle and had to rest up for a few weeks which I used to learn how to kick a ball left footed!

Each week, the team sheet for the Saturday game would be posted in the hallway by the downstairs toilets. I studied that sheet every week and got my Dad to take me to every match, Home and Away. Eventually my ankle recovered and, although I wasn't in the team or even reserve, I'd take my kit just in case a couple of players didn't turn up. Of course, it never happened, but it must have got me noticed. Eventually, I got promoted to the 1st pitch at games afternoon and finally got selected to play left half for the First Year team. We played Tulse Hill on the Quaggy pitch in my first match and won 3-2. I'm not one to dwell on the past but that was a defining moment in my school career. To swap my yellow and black Wolfe House shirt for the green and black school shirt felt like I was on the map and playing alongside some amazing footballers.

I was always a pretty small guy and everyone else was starting to grow like crazy. So, when the 2nd Year started, I was back on the fringes of the team with a few games in the forward line. The 3rd Year was the best for me having been moved to left wing. It was a great team in '66/67 (I think we were undefeated) and provided the bulk of the team which eventually won the English Schools Trophy in 1971 – players like Don Henning, Phil Pearce, Tim Fish, John Hutley, Dave Atkins, John Warner, Steve Dunbar, Trevor Puddifoot, Jim Russon, Glenn Aitken and me. That was the highlight of my personal Roan football career although I did play in a couple of 2nd Eleven matches in the 6th Form.

I was also a keen cricketer early on but one day in a House match I took a beamer or bouncer (still don't remember!) from Mickey Royal full on the nose, got knocked out and hardly played again. That led to another sport which I still play today and one which has served me really well during my life – tennis.

Reasonable O level results led to Maths and Science-based A levels along with the likes of Terry Shephard, Phil Snaith, Jim Russon, Stuart Plunkett and others and I went on to study Chemistry at King's College, London. Tennis was now at the forefront and I eventually captained London University. Later on, I represented Kent at every level and still play for the Kent Over-65 tennis team. We were National Vets Champions in 2019!

In the early 1970s, the world was in economic shock driven by ten-fold increases in oil prices and industrial unrest in the UK. We had a three-day working week imposed because of energy shortages and there were few jobs for university graduates when I graduated in 1974. So, I was really lucky to join an 'insignificant' UK chemical company in Croydon (Rohm and Haas) as a Trainee Accountant. I reckoned that even when things go bust you still need an accountant!



I hated being in finance and studying for more exams was tough, but eventually qualified five years later. What I hadn't realised was that my company was actually part of something bigger – a US multinational headquartered in Philadelphia – and I was transferred to the USA where I became involved in various marketing roles. That led eventually to business leadership positions back in Europe and then to roles running global businesses from the UK which involved crazy amounts of worldwide travel.

*Rob Andrew with Drake school football shirt*

Along the way I got married, in 1976, to a wonderfully tolerant wife, Gill, had three great children and now have four grandchildren. I've been lucky but reached the limit of my professional capabilities in my early fifties and was able to retire to a life in East Sussex of golf, tennis, country walks, community and family activity.

My interactions with Old Roans have been limited to one reunion in the 1990s, an occasional tennis match with the likes of David Horsburgh and Steve Bailey-Kennedy and, very sadly, Dave Hutley's funeral (Dave having done great stuff as a tennis playing friend at my tennis club in Orpington). I consider myself very fortunate to have been born in the 1950s, to have had a supportive family throughout, free education, an enjoyable career with many travel opportunities and a great start at the Roan School.

The school song certainly was a visionary piece of work...
*'Here's to old John Roan, sing him loud, sing him low,*
*He it was who placed us on the road that we shall go'.*

With apologies to those whose names I have taken in vain, omitted or just plain forgot with the ravages of time.

The professionalism, dedication and competence of the Roan teachers should not be underestimated. I have to pay tribute to: 'Jumbo' Edwards (French), 'Chalky' White and 'Shag' Witten (English), Mr Elliott (French), Sam Beale (Latin), Mr Hankinson and 'Snoz' Westmarland (Geography), Jim Bowman (Maths), Mr Matthews (Physics), Mr Elliot (Chemistry) and Bill Elliott for Saturday team football. Thank you to them and all who taught at the Roan School.

# Schoolfriends, Teachers and a Guinea-pig Dental patient

*David Hamblen, CBE (1945-52) writes of his Roan days and how woodworking lessons may have helped his career... as an orthopaedic surgeon!*

The arrival of the last Magazine and a phone call from my contemporary Derek Carter (1945-52) has stimulated me to send a news update. As usual, I had started reading the Magazine from the back, to get to the news of Old Roans first, but was then taken aback by the sad news of the problems that were facing the current school. At the time of our Centenary celebrations in 2011, when I last visited Greenwich, it had all seemed very positive but hopefully things will get better again.

The news of Old Roans from my era is inevitably getting sadder with the loss of more people I knew. I was aware that another close friend, Alan Burgess, had died - he had helped me with the organisation of 6th Form dances and the welcome visit of potential partners from the Girl's School. Sadly, another of our close friends, Brian Davis, had lost his lovely wife Pamela Cross (1946-51), whom he first met at one of these very social occasions. I do remember that we were closely supervised from the Hall balcony by one of the Masters allocated to the task and that all the classroom doors were locked to prevent any hidden romantic activity.

The Magazine also reported the death of Geoff Budd (1945-50) whom I also remember well as we were both at the London Hospital Medical and Dental School at the same time. He lives on in my mouth as I was one of his 'guinea pig patients' during his practical training and he inserted four gold inlay fillings instead of the common alloy fillings. They have survived and are admired by all the dentists I have visited since.

By coincidence, another member of my Year, Alistair Thomson, was also trained at the London Hospital. We remained in contact through our annual digital reunions of the Medical School class. After qualification, he had worked with one of the big pharmaceutical companies, but then moved to Scotland as a GP in Braemar until he died in 2017.

Like many Old Roans, I remember the majority of my teachers with great affection and reading their names brings back memories of their behaviour and idiosyncrasies. I suppose learning the fundamentals of woodworking tools from Messrs Locke and Pye may have helped me in my chosen career as an orthopaedic (bone & joint) surgeon, which involved a certain amount of hammering and chiselling.

Having lived and worked in Glasgow for more than fifty years, I have become accustomed to the very wet weather. It resonates with a quotation often used by Mr Hankinson who taught us Geography from the Dudley Stamp textbook. The West of Scotland experiences 'warm, wet, westerly winds in Winter' - it certainly does!

The Magazine's brief note from Harry Flack (1945-52) mentions the four Roan House names. When I first started there were eight, involving a large number of coloured cap buttons. Within a year or so they were amalgamated into four, so that my light green Raleigh button was changed to the dark green of Drake. I am less certain of the other combinations, but I think they were Nelson/Grenville, Rodney/Blake and Wolfe/Collingwood.

# TWO ROANS

*Every Old Roan's school days are different – for some they and the teachers were great, for others their school reality was decidedly different. Denis Priest (1945-51), who lives in Australia and sadly in recent times has become very ill, remembers his two Roans – the good and the not so...*

Nothing so sharpens a man's mind as knowing he is to hang in a week. Recently, my mind was sharpened by a mirthless neurosurgeon advising of my impending demise.

More to the point, on several of my self-indulgent trips to the UK from Australia, I ventured to the Old Roan Club in Kidbrooke Park Road invariably on a Friday night where I enjoyed the company of Tony Slaney, Monty Smith and other Old Roan luminaries. And on more than one occasion, I variously promised or perhaps threatened, to pen my somewhat turbulent school years, if only because of the gushingly fulsome praise lavished on some of the teaching staff whom I crossed swords with and which were quite disparate from my experiences.

It seemed that there were two Roan schools for boys in parallel universe – one to that I experienced where the teachers seemed (with one or two notable exceptions) wearied beyond their years – the other where the teaching staff were positively inspirational.

However, to put my school experiences into perspective and to explain yes, two expulsions, I must begin at the beginning.

I was equally loathed and detested by teachers and fellow school children

alike in that I was obnoxiously precocious when I first went to school in 1937. In the two years I spent at Sandhurst Road School, the only words I remember are: 'There he is, let's get him!'

The outbreak of the Second World War provided a relief from the bullying but more followed at village schools during two periods of evacuation – first at Rye and subsequently at Ewhurst. I was segregated from other children and became quite adept at knitting, raffia work and gluing bits of cardboard together.

In February 1943, I suffered a serious knee injury and spent two years in hospital. On 5 June 1944, the 40-bed orthopaedic ward I was in had all of its patients except me relocated. When I awoke on 6 June having been heavily sedated, the ward was now again full; not only all the beds but two rows of stretchers filled the aisle space between the two 20-bed rows. The ward had been requisitioned for wounded resulting from D-Day.

When I left hospital in March 1945, I had an exhaustive repertoire of dirty jokes, smutty songs and unsavoury poems. As a parting gift, a naval lieutenant gave me six rather careworn postcards of scantily dressed young ladies doing rather odd things on bicycles.

In August 1945, the War Damage Commission had repaired our house in Hither Green and we were allowed to return. I was enrolled in the Roan School and recommenced my formal education in Shell in September. With my pronounced limp, I was obviously going to be subject to the unwanted comment, if not physical abuse from classmates, but I had formulated my approach to the likely problems ahead of me... if you can't beat them join them, or even better let them join you.

I was well prepared with my unsavoury repertoire to attract the interest of some of my classmates. I soon had reliable bodyguards, principally Peter Curnick, Alan Huntley and Terence Tobin and a captive audience seemingly eager to titillate their burgeoning imagination. All went well for nearly two years but inevitably the Sword of Damocles was about to fall and cut off the serpent's head.

The sword came in form of the grandmother of one of my classmates who had been unwise enough to commit to paper a rather descriptive ditty attributed to Noel Coward which begins with: 'The portions of a woman's anatomy that appeals to man's depravity...'. She was evidently appalled.

Retribution quickly followed. Headmaster Gilbert gave a wonderful performance worthy of Irving - I had contaminated the whole school with my filth. After delivering the analogy of the rotten apple in the barrel, he had to be satisfied with a caning and immediate expulsion.



My mother was disturbed and father incensed. The headmaster and board of school governors had clearly not taken into consideration the circumstances of my hospitalisation in what was in effect a military ward. After some heated words from my father, the expulsion was rescinded and I reappeared for the beginning of another school year. I was now on some sort of form pedestal, much like Lazarus. I had, so to speak, risen from the dead, was held in some sort of awe by my classmates.

In the eyes of Mr Westmarland, who lorded it in the gym, I was beyond the Pale. I couldn't run, jump or kneel or for that matter undertake any activity likely to aggravate my injury. Westmarland did his best but I felt his heart wasn't in it. He had a disturbing penchant for driving the obviously less physically able to achieve the impossible. I recall Dubbey clinging like a dead gecko to the lowermost rungs of the parallel bars and being instructed to climb to the top. It may well have been Mt Everest as far as Dubbey was concerned.

Herr Winters, an amiable and cultured Austrian whose impeccable manners were redolent of pre-war café society Vienna, taught German and Music. Some years after I had let school, Dan, as he was affectionately called, was sitting opposite me in the Seniors Refectory at Imperial College. He leaned forward and said there was an immense feeling of relief in the staff common room when I had finally left school.

George 'Shag' Witten valiantly tried to stimulate our interest in English literature and had the habit of warming his backside on a radiator during the colder months. I surreptitiously made some nitrogen tri-iodide and it was placed beside the radiator. True to form, he made a beeline to his favourite position and was greeted with a series of sharp cracks. He shifted further along the radiator and hit the mother lode which went off with a loud bang. He was momentarily enveloped in a cloud of vaporised iodine much like Banquo's ghost.

There were the three Bs – Beale, Berry and Binnie. Beale, decidedly tweedy, sporting brown outfits and brown brogues, taught Latin and Greek and was rumoured to be a genius. If that was so, I remember thinking what on Earth was he doing at the Roan School?

Lionel John Berry to give him his full name was the stand-out teacher at Roan - by far and away the best I have experienced. Berry taught Chemistry, skilfully guiding us. His timing, and delivery were like his blackboard presentation, quite faultless - skills he put to good use in the school's amateur dramatics.

Ken Binnie, who taught English and History, was a kindly almost fatherly figure but his teaching was an excellent cure for insomnia.

Chips Carpenter, my first form master had the responsibility for Maths and

Religious Instruction. In the former, he plodded through the curriculum like a man in prison crossing off the days to his release. RI was quite enjoyable giving me the opportunity to continue reading Bram Stoker's Dracula - the Bible and Dracula being similar in size and colour. Dalzell was the art master, encouraging and helpful, and had the good sense to resign and take up a far more rewarding career with the BBC and later in the film industry.

Rote learning was Headmaster Gilbert's approach and woe betide any of us called upon to correctly quote some mundane law of physics and found wanting. On one occasion Tobin unfortunately gave a mangled rendering of Boyle's law and Gilbert was beside himself.

Two Scotsmen, Scruff Milne and Bill Peddie, the former I endured, the latter I avoided, whose English I found difficult to comprehend, taught French. Milne told me that I would come to no good. In this he was right but it has taken me nigh on 90 years to get there.

Hankinson and Holt respectively taught geography and biology. Both were from Yorkshire and had the characteristic bluff good humour of the county. Hankinson was a past master at distributing text books then the instruction to read a specific chapter while he filled in his football pools.

Gruff and grumpy, Pye taught manual instruction, though goodness knows why that was in the curriculum. A First Aid box was prominently displayed as a cautionary move.

Subsequent to my expulsion and reinstatement, my desk was repeatedly searched for any evidence of immorality. This went on for over two years, only stopping when I left a note asking for the books to be put back in the order in which they were found.

No account of my school years would be complete without mentioning school dinners, initially at sevenpence per dinner and upped to ninepence by 1950. One of the most lethal kitchen efforts was the meat stews, artfully contrived from animals that appeared to consist solely of bone, gristle and fat. I was excused school dinners having discovered a seedy café in Greenwich where the speciality was a doorstep sausage sandwich for fourpence giving me threepence a day for a pint of cider and a packet of crisps on a Friday ensconced in the snug of the Plume of Feathers.

Periodically, I was summoned to the Headmaster's study. Gilbert always asked the same question: 'Do you still entertain vile and salacious thoughts?' I, of course, lied and gave the standard response: 'Oh, no Headmaster', trying to sound earnest when I was itching to say: 'Yes, and they're getting worse'. He and I played out this charade for three years.

In due course, I was expelled, but no letter of my expulsion materialised.



# DOUG'S ROAN DAYS,
## a Clockwise Story... and More!

*Douglas 'Doug' Castle (1953-60) writes about his time at Roan and his subsequent career in agriculture. He also dug out an old press cutting about a Roan link to the John Cleese film, Clockwise, and recalls some names mentioned in the last edition of the Magazine.*

*Doug Castle at 17*

I think I chose Roan because my primary school, Brampton Road CPS, Bexleyheath, had a Drake house football shirt which the goalkeeper wore for inter-school football matches. My father's family had come from East Greenwich so the name of the area was familiar to me.

I recall my interview with the Headmaster, H W Gilbert, in the spring of 1953 after I had applied to go to Roan. My Mother took me along and we went into his study, Mother sitting back as I sat in front of his desk fully aware of the cane over in the corner by the window! He asked me if I knew what I wanted to do after leaving school and I quite innocently said that I wished to go into agriculture. The Old Man looked quite taken aback and managed to say that, as far as he knew, no one from Roan had ever gone to work on a farm.

My intake of some 110 boys were born in 1941/42 in the middle of WW2 so we had experienced the shrill noise of air-raid sirens and spent nights in Anderson or Morrison air-raid shelters. We lived near derelict and over-grown bomb sites that would not be cleared for a decade or more. A few classmates had lost their fathers on active service and some had fathers who were mentally and/or physically scarred for life.

In those days, boys wore short trousers throughout their infant years and had to continue wearing them for the first two years at Roan, until we were about 13/14 years old. Few of us had more than two sets of clothes, so shirts and often underwear, had to last for seven days. Blazers, trousers and pullovers in Roan colours had to last at least the school year and most of us wore items that were either too big or too small. We also had to wear a school cap with the 'stag' sewn on the

front and the house button on the top at all times. New pupils did not know that older pupils took great delight in banging you on the head with resulting pain and bruising.

We travelled to and from school on public transport, the nearest bus stops being by the bus shelter at the memorial on Blackheath or walking up Maze Hill from Trafalgar Road. We accepted the cold, wet days as part of life, our gaberdine coats soaking up the rain rather than repelling it.

With the winter ice, we created slides all over the playground. We could walk on the local ponds and I recall the speed skating on Danson Park Lake in Bexleyheath over several winters. If a friend slipped and broke a limb we all signed the plaster.

Our generation accepted the strict discipline instilled upon us at home and expected in places of learning, at work and in church. We had to respect our elders and those in authority. In school, we addressed the masters, who always wore their gowns, as 'Sir'. They were not referred to as teachers and we did not dare use their forename or nickname to their face. There was no familiarity as they called us by our surname and even with nearly 600 boys in the school they seemed able to recognise each of us from any angle and distance. Anyone going too fast, or being a bit boisterous, along the corridor soon heard their name called out or received a detention card later in the day. The cane was used for serious breaches of discipline, some of which would now be regarded as rather minor.

Every morning started with Assembly in the hall with a hymn, a prayer and the duty prefect reading from the Bible before the Vice-Master read out the day's notices. If you were a Roman Catholic you could sit out and afterwards it was back to classrooms for lessons.

Vivid in my memory is the state of textbooks which were handed out for every subject at the start of each school year. They were from the 1920s, with many past pupils' names in them, very badly worn, falling to pieces and we had to lick a lot of brown sticky tape to try and hold them together for another year whilst also putting a new brown paper cover on each one. Yes, 1920s teaching was still used in the 1950s.

Textbooks were rigidly followed chapter by chapter, homework often being to read the next chapter with an explanation in the next lesson in 2-3 days' time. Most lessons were spent copying notes from the blackboard, teachers usually able to write legibly with chalk – yes, it did screech at times giving us a spine-tingling sensation.

We were mainly taught by rote because 'it was in the syllabus'. I always wondered what on Earth some topics would be used for when I left school, everything seemed to be very much theory without any explanation as its to possible practical use or benefit. Subjects were taught in complete isolation without any link to other subjects being studied. (These days pupils have projects linking Maths, History and Geography and so learning is more interesting and relevant to everyday life.)

At mid-morning break we went into the hall for a 1/3rd pint (190cc) of full cream milk; I think it was only for our first three years. Then we were out into the playground for a short time whatever the weather, the toilets were outside anyway.

We could go out at lunchtime and there was time to walk down Maze Hill to the chippy in Trafalgar Road before going out to the wharves to have a smoke and see the tugs and shipping on the smelly, oily river. Greenwich Park was also a favourite walk for fresh air. School dinners cost 9d (4p) and later 1/- (5p) and were not very appetising but reflected meals in general for this era - a scoop of mashed potato, cabbage or carrots with a stew, a spam or corned beef fritter, sometimes dry toad-in-the-hole. Dessert was one of the many types of milk pudding or spotted dick with cold lumpy custard and thick skin!

I went on a two-week trip to Switzerland and Italy in 1957 by coach and trains which cost £21. We stayed in Youth Hostels near Lugano and Thun, we visited Milan and the wonderful Cathedral, Como and viewed the Alpine scenery from above the snowline near Grindelwald.

During my seven years at Roan, I was involved with the Scout Troop meeting every Friday evening at the School Playing Field. We had an annual camp at the start of the summer holidays going off in the back of a hired lorry for ten days or so somewhere in Southern England. The tents and equipment were very pre-war, but we enjoyed ourselves. As a senior troop member, I could have a District Commissioner's permit to take a few scouts for a weekend camp at the permanent camp site at Downe.

In 1958, you could leave school the day after you were fifteen and some did before taking their GCE O Levels. One friend became a bus conductor and another a second-hand car salesman having had a Saturday job there for a few years.

We were only allowed to sit six subjects in one sitting for GCE O Levels, our results being given as the mark and not graded. About twenty of the original intake for my year stayed on for the sixth forms, Maths 6th, 6th Modern and Biology 6th intending to apply for university entrance. By 1960, GCE A Levels results were alphabetical and to enter university you had to offer 'As and Bs' - a 'C' in one or more subjects meant that you either stayed on for a third year in the sixth form to re-sit or gave up the idea of attending university. To go to university with 'D' & 'E' grades was unheard of, consequently few pupils went from school to university. Some would get there by another route, as I did, a few years later.

As we entered the sixth form most of us became a prefect. Prefects had for many years been presented with a different cap, much smarter, and I longed to have one but the wearing of caps was stopped in 1958 so I did not get my wish. Our perk was to be able to enter the building by the front door along with staff members. No one was allowed to cross the grass and wander through the Memorial Trees at the front; that was definitely out-of-bounds.

We took turns in lunch-time duty, checking lateness at the school gate, taking forms to Assembly if the form-master was late or absent. My main role was escorting pupils who had had an accident down to Greenwich Hospital in the ambulance, giving the nursing staff the details and waiting until a parent arrived, often after they had finished work. I then had to walk back to school and collect my belongings and travel home rather late. I was awarded the John Roan Lodge Prize for Service to the School, worth one guinea, £1.1.0 (£1.05) towards the cost of a book. I chose a textbook on agriculture which cost £1.15.0 (£1.75) and had to make up the difference myself!

I have to admit that I struggled throughout my school days and did not obtain results for entry to university. I was glad to leave with adequate results to go to the Royal Agricultural College (RAC), Cirencester; but first I was going to work on a farm for at least a year!

My weekly wage was £4.7.6 (£4.37) for 50 hours manual work and £5.10.0 (£5.50) when I did the weekend milking. As I happily milked cows by myself at 5am on a dark, cold, wet winter's day or fed and mucked out some 200 pigs, little did I ever think that within the next twenty years I, a near failure at school, would study at Cirencester, try and sell animal feeds for three years, join the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food (MAFF) as a Field Drainage Adviser and study at three universities (Reading, Cranfield and the Agricultural University in The Netherlands).

I was seconded from MAFF to return to Cranfield University to lecture on the postgraduate course for four years (1978-82). I was the author of a textbook before moving into applied research as Head of a MAFF Research Centre and have several papers published in peer-reviewed International Journals! I was a very late developer; totally unbelievable.

I took early retirement in 1994 having been for my final ten years the Head of the Soil & Water Research Centre at Trumpington, Cambridge mainly researching water movement through soils and the leaching of solutes - to everyone else that meant nitrates, but there were other chemicals being leached and monitored.

I was, perhaps, the only scholar from Roan to go into agriculture and work on a farm at Aldington, near Ashford, Kent for a year after leaving - the happiest year of my life having wanted to work on a farm since I was four-years-old. In July 1961 Derek Evans brought the Scouts to camp on the farm courtesy of the farmer.

Why did I want a career in agriculture? My maternal grandmother came from a farming family on The Lizard Peninsular, Cornwall and gave me a toy farm when I was a toddler; it fostered my interest.

With my wife, Janet, we have lived in Helston, Cornwall for the last twenty years enjoying the beauty of the area and places which my grandmother grew up in. Our eldest daughter and her family live nearby. I have my maternal grandfather's 1938 Austin Big Seven on the road as a member of the Cornwall Austin Seven Club for which I run the website. Like many people, I have done my family trees, back when it was visiting record offices not believing everything from online sites! I also have an extensive collection of GB stamps and postal history.

Nearing 80 later this year, we remain active and in good health, still enjoying holidays around the UK with a local coach company rather than travelling abroad. We did the far-flung places over the years but now wish to see more of the UK in our later years.

*Doug Castle with the Austin*

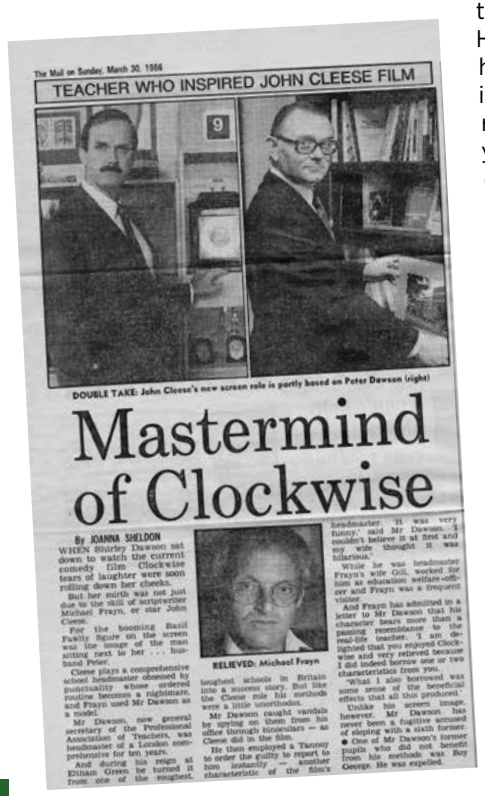
# CLOCKWISE!

## Doug Castle uncovers a Roan link to the film

In 1986 The Mail on Sunday reported that Monty Python's John Cleese had part-modelled his role in the then current movie 'Clockwise' on a former teacher at Roan in the '50s, Peter Dawson. Cleese played a school headmaster obsessed by punctuality and screenwriter Michael Frayn later wrote to Peter admitting he had used one or two of the ex-Roan man's characteristics for the role.

Having a sort out of years of collecting and keeping items which might one day be useful, Doug Castle, found the cutting tucked into an old book.

'Peter Dawson arrived at Roan in 1953 as I started. He taught, in the loosest sense, Religious Instruction – nothing other than taking it in turns around the room to read a verse. After a while, he explained what it meant. It was very Church of England and anyone who was Roman Catholic was allowed to sit out and went to the gallery in the Hall until the next lesson. We did not have pupils from other ethnic groups in those days so did not learn of other religions in the world. It was a first-year subject and not examined at the end of Christmas Term or end of year.



The Mail on Sunday, March 30, 1986

TEACHER WHO INSPIRED JOHN CLEESE FILM

DOUBLE TAKE: John Cleese's new screen role is partly based on Peter Dawson (right)

Mastermind of Clockwise

By JOANNA SHELDON

WHEN Shirley Dawson sat down to watch the current comedy film Clockwise tears of laughter were soon rolling down her cheeks.

But her mirth was not just due to the skill of scriptwriter Michael Frayn, or star John Cleese.

For the booming Basil Fawlty figure on the screen was the image of the man sitting next to her . . . husband Peter.

Cleese plays a comprehensive school headmaster obsessed by punctuality whose ordered routine becomes a nightmare, and Frayn used Mr Dawson as a model.

Mr Dawson, now general secretary of the Professional Association of Teachers, was headmaster of a London comprehensive for ten years.

And during his reign at Eltham Green he turned it from one of the roughest, toughest schools in Britain into a success story. But like the Cleese role his methods were a little unorthodox.

Mr Dawson caught vandals by spying on them from his office through binoculars — as Cleese did in the film.

He then employed a Tannoy to order the guilty to report to him instantly — another characteristic of the film's headmaster. "It was very funny," said Mr Dawson. "I couldn't believe it at first and my wife thought it was hilarious."

While he was headmaster Frayn's wife Gill, worked for him as education welfare officer and Frayn was a frequent visitor.

And Frayn has admitted in a letter to Mr Dawson that his character bears more than a passing resemblance to the real-life teacher. "I am delighted that you enjoyed Clockwise and very relieved because I did indeed borrow one or two characteristics from you.

"What I also borrowed was some sense of the beneficial effects that all this produced.

Unlike his screen image, however, Mr Dawson has never been a fugitive accused of eloping with a sixth former.

● One of Mr Dawson's former pupils who did not benefit from his methods was Boy George. He was expelled.

RELIEVED: Michael Frayn

'About 1955 or '56, he with Peter Bolton, assisted Derek Evans with the School Scout Troop when they took over from Ken Binney and Lionel Morey who had run the Friday after-school meeting and summer camp for many years. Peter Dawson was a character!'

Doug's Roan memories were sparked by reading the last Magazine.

'I noted the death of Colin G Cooper (1953-61). 'Jock' as he was known at school was the only classmate I met after leaving. He stayed on for a 3rd year Sixth form to retake physics as we had all failed the exam in 1960 – we could not answer the questions about 'Radio' which I do not recall we were ever taught about. He always called me 'Tich' - I was a little bit shorter than him!

'I started at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester in Oct 1961 as Jock had recently joined the RAF and was stationed at South Cerney for his six months basic training. We found each other in The Black Horse pub in Cirencester, the drinking hole for the RAF Cadets and RAC students as the bar maid at the time was more than rather attractive!

'We did not keep in touch but by pure chance we met in one of London's streets several years later. By then Jock had been dismissed from the RAF having downed two jets in the North Sea and ejected to safety. We never met again. In fact, I never kept in contact with any old school friends.

'I recall a few other names mentioned in the Magazine. I was a Prefect when Ron Clatworthy was School Captain and also recall his younger brother, Ian. Graham Fletcher is a regular name in past issues and we were often on dinner duty together ending up eating many surplus puddings! Another good friend in my school years was Mike Watson as we were both heavily involved in the Scout Troop.'

# WHO IS IN THE PICTURE?

*John Hills (1951-56) sent in this class photo – who is who?*

Please find attached a photo of my class at Roan, taken at the Kidbrooke School Field. I figure it was taken c1954/55 and our form was Third or Remove Alpha. I am unable to name all my class-mates, much water has passed under the bridge, but the names Sayers, Bob Clifford, Jezzard, Beardsley and Humphreys come to mind.

Of those I can identify are myself, John Hills (back row, 2nd right), Joe Broadfoot (middle row, 2nd right) - we were buddies at the time - and Robert Hall (2nd row, 3rd left). It would be most gratifying to shed more light on any others in the photo.

# BERYL'S ROAN YEARS

*Beryl Haisman-Baker née Haisman (1953-60), one of four sisters who went to Roan Girls, shares her school memories.*

My father, suited and booted, and myself attired in the compulsory school uniform (oversized garments for 'growing into'), mounted the steps of the main entrance of the Roan School for Girls. My first day and the only occasion I remember being taken by car. After introductions to Miss Barnsdale, Headteacher, he turned and left, leaving me to be taken to the hall to join the other new girls and to be put into forms 1R, 1G, or 1S – Roan Girls School.

I was the third of the four girls in my family to become a Roan girl. Not uncommon – there were others in my form with siblings going before and after them, as well as having brothers at the boys' school – the Cooper, Henning, Holland and Bruce families. My eldest sister Brenda started in 1942 and Berenice in 1944. Brenda entered the endowed grammar school as a fee payer until the 1944 Education Act abolished school fees and the school later became a voluntary aided grammar school. I started in 1953 and my younger sister Bernadette in 1955, admission dependent upon passing the common entrance exam (11+) and a successful applicant's interview.

The compulsory uniform for lower school consisted of green gymslips, cream blouses, school tie, black or brown outdoor shoes, brown indoor or 'house' shoes, black plimsolls and fawn socks. We had to wear dreadful, thick bottle green knickers and wear a purse on a strap across our chests. Uniforms could only be purchased at Pyne's in New Cross. Berets with an enamel school badge had to be worn at all times outside of school as were the velour hats introduced two years later; to be caught not wearing your hat by a prefect landed you in detention, as did not relinquishing your seat to an adult on a standing room only bus.

My first bus journey into Catford saw the grammar school brigade disperse in opposite directions – St. Dunstan's College and Dulwich College boys (caps worn on back of head) off in the opposite direction to the Prendergast girls who walked to their school, while the Colfe's boys and Roan girls caught a second bus through to Lewisham. Colfe's boys disembarked for their school on Lewisham Way while we continued on to South Street, Greenwich.

Timid first formers turned into St. Trinian's tyrants by the third and fourth years. The jostling queue at the Almhouses' bus stop at the end of the school day saw buses come in convoys of three such was the terror we struck. Invariably, the conductor would ring the bell as the bus slowed down and a horde of girls clutching velour hats would chase

*Prefects 1959-60 – Beryl – 3rd r, front row*

after the accelerating vehicle trying to jump onto the open platforms.

We sniffed out weak teachers like bloodhounds – Miss Cherry in her chemistry lab trying to quell the hysterical laughter when she announced with anguish that only five people had passed the science exam, not surprising when none of her experiments worked. Miss Clegg's English lessons were delivered to a background cacophony of nail files and rulers twanged under desk lids. And Miss Whitehead's ordeal of having to take the whole year group for singing on a Friday afternoon regularly reduced her to pleading

*Prefects 1961-62 – Bernadette Haisman - r, end of 3rd row*

'Don't do this to me girls!'. A well-orchestrated and, on the surface, well-behaved sea of girls seated on canvas backed tubular chairs had an appointed conductor in the front row. On the command of a set of coughs, as one, we would move to the right, to the back, left and then forward.

A choice of Latin or German in addition to French was given to the more academic at the end of the first year. Those less able were given the addition of practical subjects instead - domestic science and needlework.

Miss Barnsdale, Headteacher, was certainly a feminist before the term came into vogue. She instilled the message in assemblies that we were as capable as any male and in our chosen careers we should expect to be treated on equal terms. She introduced the house system in the autumn of 1955 to drum up competition – Queen's, Vanbrugh, Chesterfield and Dartmouth, named after historic houses in Greenwich. I

was in Queen's House, now part of the National Maritime Museum and opposite the Old Royal Naval College.

Our Founder's Day services were held in the beautiful chapel there until the bomb damage to St. Alfege's Church had been repaired. The seating arrangements at both venues remained the same each year – sixth formers were seated near first formers from the boys' school and vice versa. Difficult to comprehend now that the Roan is mixed. Staff would wear gowns and we would extoll John Roan's love of learning, his service to the King in his Palace of Placentia and give thanks for his bequest of the John Roan Foundation for the children of Greenwich (boys only until the 1870 Education Act when girls were deemed educable). After the service we were given the rest of the day off, many girls following the boys up to the heath – our only annual contact with them, albeit from a distance.

*Beryl Haisman-Baker*

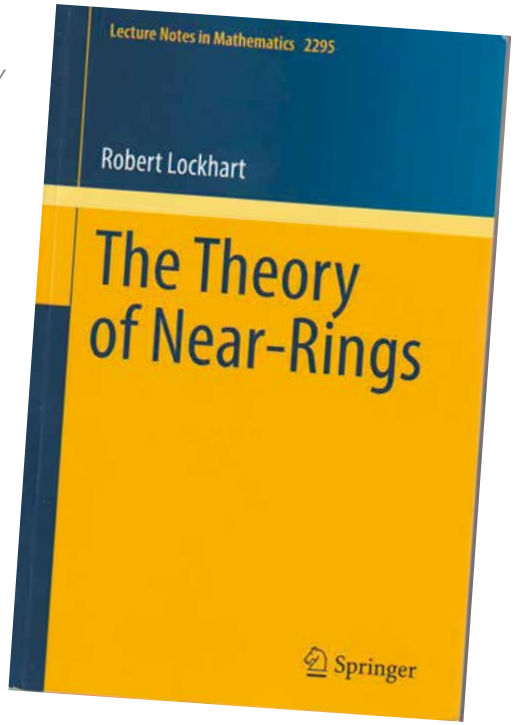
From the fifth form skirts replaced gymslips and the sixth formers were marked out by pale blue braid edging on blazers. The sixth form dance was M.C.'d by Charlie, groundsman at the Kidbrooke School Playing Field (upper school had to bus themselves there once a week for hockey and tennis). We gained entrance to the dance in the hall via the main front door and had to introduce any male escort to the head and deputy in the vestibule.

I thoroughly enjoyed my years at Roan, excelling on the netball court (leather netballs which were so heavy when wet) and becoming house sports captain, vice house captain and school hockey captain as well as a prefect. I went on to Bristol University's Institute of Education and began my career teaching secondary science at Sydenham County Girls' School. I changed to primary education, later becoming a primary school headteacher and, before retiring, was a Professional Tutor in the Education Faculty at Anglia Ruskin University. A rewarding career built on the solid foundation of a Roan School education, the quality of which, although not realised at the time, was very good if you were prepared to work. My three sisters were also primary school teachers.



# THE THEORY OF NEAR-RINGS

*Dr Robert Lockhart (1962-69) has worked in mathematics at universities in London, Nigeria, New Guinea, Brunei, Milton Keynes and Oxford. He has enjoyed a parallel career in computing as one of the original programmer-designers for the multi award-winning British Telecom Prestel project, as part of a research project funded by the European Union, and at the Atlas laboratory for the Rutherford–Appleton laboratory. Bob has published research papers on algebra, conservation biology, and modern computing. For the past twenty years he has worked mainly in distance and online education. Throughout his career he has been a regular contributor to near-ring conferences and a member of the London Mathematical Society.*




*His Roan contemporary, David Horsburgh (also 1962-69), asked his old school-mate's friend and fellow mathematician, David Kilroy, to review Bob's recent book, The Theory of Near-Rings, in an attempt to help us non-maths mortals understand an incredibly complex subject. Here goes...*

Attending Roan from 1962-69, Bob continued to the University of Kent to take a degree in Mathematics. He went on to Nottingham University to do a PhD, writing a thesis on The Near-Rings on a Class of Groups, and went on to an academic career in mathematics and IT. He taught at several universities including the University of Lagos, and latterly at Oxford University. He lives near Oxford with his wife, Suzie.

The set of integers **Z = {0, ± 1, ± 2, ± 3, ...}** together with the operators **+** and **x** form what mathematicians call a Ring. If you add or multiply

two integers, you get another integer, another member of the set **Z**. But consider division. **1/3 = 0.3333...** , for example, is not an integer: it is not a member of **Z**. If you want to stay in **Z**, division is not allowed. In mathematical terms, 3 has no multiplicative inverse: there is no integer that you can multiply 3 by to get 1.

Mathematicians investigate sets like these to develop generalised theories that can be applied to all sorts of mathematical structures with similar characteristics. Ring Theory is formalised by a set of axioms or rules where you only have addition and multiplication, where every element has an additive inverse **(a + (-a) = 0)**, but there is no multiplicative inverse element **b** such that **a x b = 1** (other than 1 itself).

Bob has spent many years researching a branch of Ring theory called the theory of Near-Rings. This imposes a further axiom where the sequence of multiplication is constrained. Anyone familiar with Rubik's Cube will know that a forward twist plus a sideways twist followed by a horizontal twist is not the same as doing the horizontal twist first. For the mathematicians amongst you, the extra axiom in Near-Ring theory is formalised as **(a + b) x c = ac + bc**, but **c x (a + b) ≠ ca + cb**. Such a Ring is called a Right Near-Ring. These are exotic beasts, and, unfortunately, there are no simple examples.

The Theory of Near-Rings, published by Springer, is Bob Lockhart's magnum opus, detailing much of the background and theory of Near-Rings, and publishing many new results. It is warmly endorsed in the Foreword by the leading authority in the field, Professor G nter Pilz of the Johannes Kepler University, Linz.

What is the purpose of such research, you may ask. In the 18th Century, Leonhard Euler produced many results in Number Theory which were only of interest to academics until the 21st Century: the encryption used to secure your bank account details over the Internet is entirely dependent on Euler's maths. Alan Turing's proof of Hilbert's Undecidability Conjecture led directly to the digital computer. Who knows what applications Near-Ring theory will have in future years? We must applaud our theoretical mathematicians.  Congratulations Bob.

*Thanks to Bob's wife, Suzie, for his biographical details.*



# OBITUARIES

## VAL POLLOCK – ROAN GIRLS SCHOOL TEACHER

*There was an extraordinary outpouring of tributes when it was announced on the Old Roan Association Facebook page that former Roan Girls School English teacher Val Pollock had sadly died. Here, in addition to a look-back on Val's life, are appreciations from former pupils and colleagues, plus a round-up of the numerous posts on the Facebook page confirming in what high regard Val was held.*

*Val Pollock at a Girls School Open Day 1980*

Val Pollock, who taught English at Roan Girls in the 1970s-90s, died on 13 August 2020.  Our condolences to her family and thanks to her daughter, Polly (who Val would often talk of), who has kindly contributed details of her mother's life and career.

On leaving school, Val went to Manchester University, but dropped out during her first year. In 1964, after working in the buying offices at the John Lewis Partnership, a brief stint at the Inland Revenue and having a baby - Polly - Val returned to University, at Goldsmiths to study English.

After completing her degree, her first teaching job was at St Michael's School in Bermondsey and after a year or two she moved to Roan School for Girls, where she became Head of English. She stayed at Roan/John Roan until she fully retired.  During the latter years of her teaching, she also taught part-time at Woolwich Polytechnic and Christ the King Sixth Form College.

Among the outstanding achievements of Val's teaching career was as one of the instigators and organisers of the Sixth Form Summer Schools, run across the sixth form consortium of schools including the John Roan, Blackheath Bluecoats and Kidbrooke.

These were pioneering and highly successful events from which sixth form students studying English benefitted enormously - made up of lectures and workshops, including some run by well-known facilitators such as writer Farrukh Dhondy and actor Helen Mirren. Catering for the summer schools was done by Polly and her friend,

*Val (l) with Ruth Bowen, SEN teacher*

Caroline Lakin, also an ex-Roan Girl. Val was very fond of Caroline, whom she helped a lot together with Val's close colleague Muriel Dilly, who was also a member of the English department.

Val was still living in Greenwich with her partner, John Williams, who taught Maths at Roan Girls, which is where they met. They had been together for 46 years. Val also had twin granddaughters, Petra and Ruby.

*From Roan students Jane Harnden (née Sackett) and Cheryl Smith (née Nicks), both 1970-77:*
Val was a really inspirational teacher - she was also great fun and had such an individual style about her. Both Manchester and Goldsmiths were among the few universities for which Anglo Saxon was part of the English course (indeed, Polly remembers whole summer holidays being taken up with her mother translating Beowulf). We benefited from this with occasional lessons on the history of the English language, which we always loved. Her choice of reading material and trips to the Bankside Globe Cinema expanded our reading choices and instilled a lifelong love of theatre in many of us.

She was one of the younger teachers at the school during the 1970s and we always felt she was very artistic and 'with it' and were delighted to have her as our form teacher in the second year. Val always wore the most wonderful exotic perfume, reflecting what we saw as her rather bohemian style. We found out it was Mitsouko (Guerlain), rushed out and bought some and wore it ourselves for years – a small illustration of our high regard. Also part of her memorable attire were long flowing skirts and cardigans, coloured woolly tights (in the days when most women wore American tan nylons) and character shoes – another item of clothing some of us copied as soon as we found out where to buy them (Anello & Davide or Freed's in St Martin's Lane).

*From Sue Collier (English teacher 1977-83):*
I started working with Val in 1977 when I was appointed to teach English and Drama at the Girls' School. This was my first teaching post and Val was my first Head of English. At the time, the school was only two form entry, and the department comprised Val Pollock and Muriel Dilly, with Jill Mallinson working part-time. I made the fourth staff member, with Pat Richards joining two years later as the school expanded. We taught in the three rooms on the lower corridor next to the staff room. This was convenient for Val, who was a smoker at a time before cigarettes were banned in staff rooms.

Val was a somewhat bohemian figure, in her dark tights, pinafore dresses and thick bobbed hair, (some may remember her long plaits, before she cut her hair). She always wore Guerlain Mitsouko - a very distinctive fragrance that wafted down the corridors behind her.

Val was a great reader and her home in Greenwich South Street was lined with books. She was an inspiring teacher and her love of literature was infectious. She encouraged so many of the students to read more and to study English beyond school. She also enjoyed the theatre and she and I organised several theatre trips for O-level/GCSE groups.

In 1980, Val wrote the script for 'Alice Through the Looking Glass', which we co-produced in July. It starred Julie Cordrey from Year 8 as Alice, understudied by Julia Dalton. Other cast members included Joanna Mays, who later followed an acting career. The wonderful sets were made by Head of Art, Patsy Selves. Music teacher Daphne Leach co-ordinated the music. The production ran for three nights and on the final evening, the cast presented Val and me with bouquets of flowers (see photo). Following the production, the staff retired to 'The Tolley' (Richard I) in Greenwich - a pub that was a great favourite with Val - to celebrate.

We kept in touch for many years after I left teaching at Roan and became a Head of English myself. We would occasionally meet at Davy's Wine bar in Greenwich for a catch up. She was always good company with tales of her daughter Polly to recount.

Roan Girls, and Val in particular, gave me a wonderful start to my teaching career. I will always remember her for her calm mentorship, her book recommendations, and her Mitsuko perfume!

*From Alison Melly (PE Teacher, 1980s):*
Val was a fabulous fun colleague. She was there when I joined the staff in 1985. I used to collect elderflowers for her while the kids were changing at the playing fields so she could make her elderflower

*Val (l) on stage with Sue Collier*

syrup. Sorry to hear she has passed away. Very fond memories of her. Condolences to all who knew her.

A selection of the very many tributes paid to Val on Facebook:
*Karen Callow:* She was one of the best teachers!
*Anne Smith:* I remember her well. What a beautiful flower.
*Jill Dudley:* She was an inspirational teacher with great style.
*Jane Rackley:* She was one of my favourite teachers.
*Tracy Woodward:* She was lovely!
*Jane Healy:* She was a great teacher.
*Ann Foreman:* Brilliant English teacher.
*Catherine Julie:* Fond memories... our Form tutor for two years. Remembering a lot of laughing in her fun lessons.
*Hilary Haslam:* She certainly was an inspiration and never got cross.
*Lesley-Ann Avis:* So sad to hear of Val's death. On first reading Vanity Fair for A level I really didn't like it, but having then studied it with Val it became, and still is, my favourite book.
*Irene Rea:* She was such a lovely lady.
*Lesley Rumbold:* I remember her making rhymes about everybody in the class.
*Maureen Sheppard:* Val was a terrific teacher and colleague.
*Jane Aitch:* She introduced me to the theatre - a passion I still have.
*Glen Willis:* Could never forget her. Great lady.
*Claire Elsdon:* She was without doubt my all-time favourite teacher – encouraging, nurturing, funny and inspirational.
*Lesley Rumbold:* She is someone I will never forget – an amazing lady.
*Kerry Dexter*: I loved her lessons and her calm style.
*Denise Yarwood:* She always encouraged me to write and I still think of her often.
*Laura Hester:* She encouraged my love of reading and loaned me some of her daughter's books.
*Georgina Johnson:* A lovely teacher.
*Michelle Clohessy:* My favourite teacher during my time at Roan.

Other tributes were paid by: Hayley Yandle, Catherine Mathieson, Sue Collier, Allison Rance, Frances Lord, Liz Gill, Elke Passon, Amanda Livermore, Cherry Johnson, Ruth McGregor, Melanie Fielder, Gurinder Garcha, Karen Redmond-Smith Sam Thomas, Tina Donovan, Claire Watts Williams, Jackie Edge, Anita Mana, Wendy Hutcheson, Jane Le Grice, Kerry Harrowven, Tracy Willis, Renee Ahluwalia, Michelle Stickings, Phillippa Nichols, Katie Malcher, Philip Rodwell, Kazza Bexx and more.

**RAY STONE (1959-67)**

*The sad death early last year of Ray Stone, former School Captain at Roan and a great stalwart of Roan dramatics, was mourned by many. Here, his friend and fellow Roan Theatre Company legend, Graham Johnson, pays Ray a fitting tribute.*

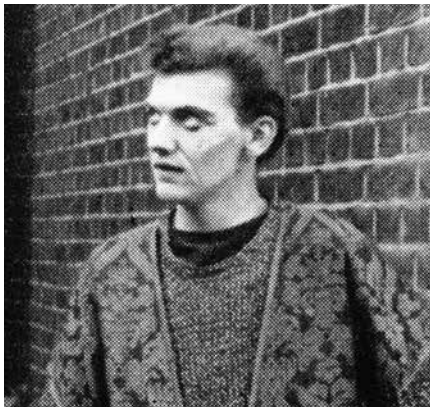
I first got to know Ray Stone well during my time in the first year sixth form at Roan. The school play for that year was 'Macbeth', and I was fortunate enough to have played the part of Malcolm. Under George Witten's direction, we had, as I recall, a strong cast, and the production was well received by the audiences. The biggest asset for George was having Ray at his disposal to play the eponymous tyrant. This part requires the actor to command the stage throughout, and Ray achieved this convincingly. I remember how well he captured the doubts and guilt, the insecurities of the character, as well as his descent into madness and the belief in his invincibility. Ray told me that the head of Macbeth, triumphantly brought on stage by Macduff at the end of the play, looked even more gruesome one night because the boy in charge of it backstage had suffered a nose bleed over it!

The following year, Ray took the lead again, this time as Mark Antony, and the famous speech to the crowd was an emphatic reaffirmation of his acting skills: the speech was controlled at first, almost conversational, and then gradually increased in tempo and volume until you were convinced Antony had the baying crowd in the palm of his hand. These memories of Ray's craft as an actor have stayed with me all these years.

After leaving Roan school, I saw Ray from time to time at the Old Roan Club, but not on stage until many years later. The catalyst

*Graham Johnson (l) and Ray Stone at school*

for this was the funeral of Tony Slaney which we both attended. We got chatting after the service, and Ray enthusiastically said he would like to join our theatre group; a silver lining from a sad day indeed. Enthusiasm was a word to associate with Ray, and for an all too brief period, he willingly travelled up from Southend to rehearse, direct and act for the group, always humbly apologising if he was five minutes late! His contribution was enormous, not only from an acting perspective, but also with the technical knowledge he had gained over many years as manager/director of The Palace Theatre, Westcliff; The Mercury Theatre, Colchester; The Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch; and The Dolman Theatre, Newport. Prior to these appointments, Ray had been a drama teacher as well as managing a pub in Southend. Some might say those two jobs require the same skills to control a crowd! I knew his Antony would hold him in good stead!



*Ray Stone in the school production of Macbeth*

Ray's first encounter with cancer was in 2017, and he underwent chemotherapy which was initially successful in combating the disease. There he was again at rehearsals cheerfully having negotiated the traffic on the A13, and still apologising if he was late! What a trouper! His last involvement with us was in assisting Teresa Wilkins and me for our production of 'Atrocity"'at Greenwich Theatre (reviewed in the December 2020 issue of the Old Roan Magazine).

It goes without saying he is sorely missed by all of us associated with Roan Theatre Company. I was honoured to have been asked to say a few words at his funeral, and I should like to sum up here as I did then: that Ray had left the stage for the last time, but, like all great acts, he left not only our applause, but also our wanting more. Thanks, dear friend, for all the memories.

Graham Johnson

Other Old Roans payed tribute to Ray on the Old Roan Association's facebook page.

'Ray was School Captain and was for many years a driving force in The Old Roan Dramatic Group. We lost contact for many years but thankfully got our friendship back on track through Friends Reunited some 20 years ago. He and his partner Kevin visited us in Australia twice in recent years, and Jackie and I were lucky enough to have lunch with them both in February last year before the travel barriers came down. Ray was a very special friend and human being whose sense of humour was unsurpassed. May he now rest in peace.'

Terry Marshgreen (1959-65)

'Very sad news. Ray was Head Boy during my time at Roan and I knew him through my cousin, Bob Burton, although they were five years ahead of me. The year I left school I went camping in the Lake District with Ray, Bob and Tony Slaney. RIP Ray.'

Alan Patterson (1964-69)

*Ray Stone (back row, 5th left), Terry Marshgreen (2nd row, seated, 2nd left) and David Clifton, 3rd row, Ist left) in Mr Hoare's class.*

'Ray was a lovely man with a great sense of humour. He was my director in a few Roan productions. His commitment was incredible. My thoughts are with Kevin and their families. I'm so proud to have known Ray.'

Rosalind Fogden

'RIP Ray.'

Phil Colman (1972-77)

'Such sad news. Ray, Terry (Marshgreen) and I were in the same class together.'

David Clifton (1959-65)

**CHRIS DEANE – John Roan School Headteacher 1991-2002**

*Chris Deane, Headmaster at the John Roan School between 1991 until he retired in 2002, died in 2021. Old Roan Association Past President and former Deputy Head of the school, Claire Flynn, sums up the huge contribution Chris made to the school over many years:*

Christopher Deane was a true 'Sarf-East London' boy. Born in the early post-war years, he was one of eight siblings living in Catford. His father died when Chris was a teenager and this certainly impacted on him. He attended South-East London Technical School (later becoming South-East London Boys), and went on to gain a degree in Sociology at Kingston University and then an MA at the University of Sussex.

Chris came to the John Roan School in 1988 from Holland Park

*Chris Deane, ORA President 2004-05*

School as Deputy Head to Ann Tonkin and when she retired in 1991 he became Headteacher. He was very approachable and encouraged both staff and students to talk to him about anything that concerned them. His open-door policy drove his PA Marian to distraction as she would make appointments for him only to discover him meeting with someone else! However, it was Chris's ability to communicate that made him so popular and improved the school's reputation in the community. He was also an outstanding teacher of History and Government and Politics and ensured that he kept a teaching timetable throughout his time as Headteacher.

Chris had the students' best interests at the heart of everything he did. A fierce advocate of the benefits of Braithwaite, he was

determined that all students (and staff) would have the opportunity to stay at the camp during their time at John Roan. He also championed the arts and was instrumental (!!) in ensuring that any student could have free music tuition with Music soon becoming a strength of the school. He even appeared in a school production as the Tin Man - although, based on his performance, perhaps the wooden man would have been more appropriate! When Chris retired in 2003, he left a school that was much-improved and consequently, over-subscribed year on year.

Chris's commitment to the school and his involvement in improving the lives of disadvantaged students continued. He worked on a variety of projects for Greenwich was on the Roan Foundation, President of the Old Roan Association and a trustee for the Hope Memorial Trust. When he moved to Kent, he focused his energy on politics as a very active member of his local Labour Party. Chris had always been skilled politically and he used this and his breadth of experience to benefit others, always championing those who did not have their own voice.

Chris was a good man and a popular headteacher. He may have induced admiration and frustration in equal measures to those who worked with him but no one could ever doubt his commitment to comprehensive education and improving the life chances of children and young people in London. He leaves an important legacy.

*Chris Deane's obituary in The Guardian said of him:*
'Chris Deane was an inspirational teacher and headteacher before taking up an active role in local politics after he retired.

He began his career as a social studies teacher at Spencer Park boys' school in Wandsworth in 1970, moving to Holland Park school as head of social education in 1974.

He became the headteacher at John Roan in 1991. Chris prioritised music, sports, drama and other activities. His leadership was recognised when John Roan featured in the top 100 most improved schools in the country. It was also the most oversubscribed school in Greenwich.

His analytical approach made him an admired mentor to other headteachers. On retirement from John Roan in 2002, he became a tutor for the National Professional Qualification for Headship until he retired in 2008.

Chris met Nicky Dyer when both were headteachers in London. They married in 2007 and in 2011 moved to Hythe, Kent. They joined the local Labour constituency party and Chris became a Labour candidate in the Kent county council and Hythe town council elections.'

With thanks to The Guardian

*Bryan Endersbee (back row, 2nd left) in the Old Roan 1st X1, 1959, v Metrogas*

**BRYAN ENDERSBEE (1944-49)**

*Bryan Endersbee, a very popular member of the Association, especially through the Cricket Club, sadly died earlier this year. Bryan will be known and deeply-respected by many Old Roans including cricket team-mates who joined him over the years on the field. Here are some of them:*

Bryan's recent death reduces further the number of Old Roans who played cricket for the club during the 1950s and 60s, regarded by those involved as something of a halcyon period.

Bryan's early life was set in Heather Road between Lee and Grove Park, an unpretentious suburban road of semi's but his Reithian yet perfectly natural and modulated oration would have befitted his origins as emanating from high aristocracy. His whole persona exuded refined elegance. Even facing national service, his manner convinced the RAF that he was best suited to an office job at the air ministry which allowed him weekends off to play cricket and hockey for City of London College.

Bryan qualified as an accountant taking up several appointments with large accounting firms. I had begun work as very junior clerk in the finance department with the Port of London Authority (PLA) which was a very large quasi-governmental organisation with a huge estate of docks etc and a large staff. Bryan advised me that he was applying, successfully as

it happened, for a senior job at the head office in Trinity Square where I was also employed. Despite the hierarchical nature of the organisation, Bryan would not allow any difference in our relationship in the working environment despite the fact that I was little more than an inkwell filler with a Millwall supporter's vocabulary and he was a very senior officer with an unknown salary.

I think it is fair to say that Bryan was not the most naturally gifted ball player but he was prepared to work hard at his sports. Close to Bryan's family home was Coopers Lane School, a secondary modern which had a very keen sports master, George Pope. He encouraged after school cricket coaching which Bryan attended along with Alan Spencer (Worcestershire), David Constant (Kent and Leicestershire) and Tom Sheppard (Lords ground staff). Bryan flourished in such company to become a competent allrounder at club cricket First X1 level.

Since Bryan lived fairly close to me in Lee, he often volunteered lifts. In the early years, it involved clambering onto the back of his elderly underpowered motorbikes, a Velocette 'Noddy' bike and a 98cc Sun. These machines with two adults and cricket bags got us around the local circuit even as far as Tonbridge until Bryan's progress in the financial world allowed cars of ever-increasing affluence.

Bryan was a unique contributor to the Old Roan Club and Association and his passing is a sad loss to us all. I, and all who came into close contact with him, are indeed privileged to have had the opportunity to count him as a friend, team-mate or colleague.

John Huntley (1951-56)

I have fond memories of Bryan in the Sunday 2nds. As someone from a Deptford council estate, he seemed to me as someone from another world! He played cricket with the right attitude and his worldly advice on the ladies was always a bonus!

Fred Spink (1964-71)

A solid bat and a great chap!

Steve Rider (1961-68)

In his later years Bryan also played for Brasted Chart. They were one of our most eagerly awaited fixtures and always delivered excellent cricket, super teas, and a memorable evening in the local hostelry.

One memory sticks in the mind. First game of the season v Old Wilsonians, Bryan breezes into the dressing room with a new cricket bag. 'Have you seen my new bag', he inquires of nobody in particular. Quick as a flash came a Graham Johnson reply, 'No, have you lost it'.

Bryan was one of a group of older players who were the backbone of the 2nd XI when I first started playing in the early 1960s. The others were Martin Hooker, Del Baxter and Geoff Thomas. They brought reliability and stability to our matches (as well as much-needed transport) and were, I believe, a considerable influence on how we approached the game. Whereas Martin tended to back away to square leg when facing the quickies, Bryan always played perfectly straight. Most batters would show some annoyance/ regret on being dismissed - there was never a flicker from Bryan.

Fritz Henning (1956-63)

Bryan was one of life's true gentlemen. Always kind and encouraging. I played with him not only for Old Roan but also Croydon Pawnbrokers, a midweek travelling side. I was doing shift work at the time, so could slip away on Wednesday afternoons. They were a talented but ageing team and I think they wanted me not for my batting but to do all the running around. I'm not sure how old Bryan was but, at that time, was probably about 40 and he already had the bearing of the senior pro. He was universally liked, respected and admired.

Roger Dale (1961-68)

**ROY JACOBS (1945-51)**

Born in Greenwich, Roy was evacuated with his eldest brother Leslie in 1939 first to St. Leonards on Sea and then to Wales. He took his 11 plus in 1944 in Wales and was given a place at Roan, taking it up in Spring 1945.

Roy enjoyed his time at Roan and played for the school football team. Team-mate Peter Walker remembers him as a remarkable player and an important part of the side, always with a friendly smile and words of encouragement. Roy kept a lot of his school friends throughout his life - David Beadle, Glen Pullen, Harry McSoley, Maurice George and Peter Walker, although, sadly, a lot are no longer with us.

Until COVID locked everyone down, Roy still met a dwindling band of old Roan boys in Greenwich Park to reminisce about their days at the school and how it had shaped their lives.

At Roan, Roy found a love of mathematics at which he excelled and after leaving school he attended Woolwich Polytechnic gaining a B.Sc. in mathematics from the University of London. Between September 1954 and September 1956, National Service called and his Commanding Officer's testimonial cited that Roy had a special


*Roy Jacobs (front row, 2nd from right) in the 1950-51 Roan football 1st X1*

aptitude with figures, wished to be a statistician, had good powers of concentration, a keen sense of duty and humour and would be an asset to any company.

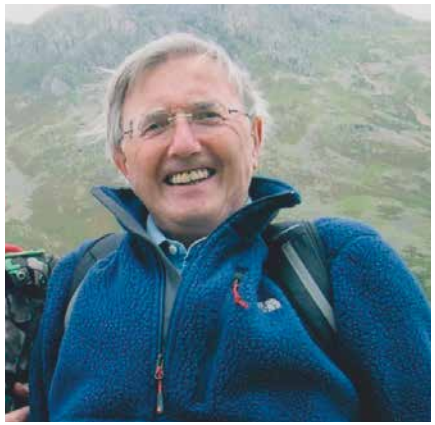
Starting as an Assistant Statistician at the Admiralty, Roy had a variety of jobs over the years and first got into computing at Ford's Dagenham, where he was a Computer Systems Analyst. He worked for Arthur Andersen as a consultant, OCL, Hertz Europe Management Systems Division and his final job was for J P Morgan where he was Head of the Computer Systems Division.

Roy retired in 1992, began travelling the world and also enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren in Yorkshire. He always looked back fondly at his time at Roan and felt it had put him on a good path to having a happy and rewarding life.

From Roy's wife Margaret Jacobs

**DAVID BROWN (1950-58)**

David Brown, who died on 16 July 2020, was the youngest of five children. His father, the engineering shop manager at Harvey's Engineering works, SE3, died when David was just 14 and he seized every opportunity at Roan, becoming Vice-Captain and Captain of the cricket First X1. He won a State scholarship to Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge to read modern languages, French and Spanish, followed by a PGCE –



*David Brown*

and Cambridge was where he met Tess, his future wife, too.

David was an outstanding teacher of Spanish at Westminster School, subsequently an innovative Headmaster of St John's School, Leatherhead. He then became Administrator of the Linbury Trust, a Sainsbury's Family Charitable Trust, developing new approaches to literacy and mentoring for young people at risk, particularly young offenders. Trailblazers, aiming to rehabilitate teenagers at Feltham and Aylesbury, is in part his legacy.

David died of cancer, parrying the disease for over a decade with humour and dignity. Instead of complaining, he bought a big red jaguar and went on singing in choirs. He leaves Tess, their three children and four grand-children.

With thanks to David's wife Tess

David's school friends John Bull and Inigo Kilborn remember him:

David and I were in the same school year at Roan, entering in 1950 in parallel classes and coming together through elective subject classes such as Latin and Spanish as we moved towards the V1 form. In the Remove year, David had his first encounter with Spanish which was later to prove one of the great loves of his life – and mine, something frequently reflected in our e mail exchanges in more recent years.

Throughout the seventy odd years that I knew David, he always wore a broad welcoming smile, radiating cordiality and friendship. He was blessed with the warmest of personalities and commanding presence. I never knew him to speak harshly of anybody, and he was always ready to engage with others.

David and I played football together, in the front line of attack in the school Second X1, though we sometimes lost him to the First X1. Being very tall, David was able

*School Prefects - David Brown (front, r), John Bull (2nd row, 3rd l) and Inigo Kilhorn (front l)*

to use his physical dominance to stretch his long legs and boot to places where lesser mortals could not reach, often scoring decisive goals.

Living then almost within the shadow of Charlton Athletic's stadium, David was often with us as a group of V1 formers on the terraces behind the goal – in those days Charlton was a First Division club. On one remarkable occasion we were fortunate to witness our heroes losing 1-5 at half time and with just 10-men going on to win 7-6 (the famous Charlton v Huddersfield match - see News of Old Roans).

Leaving Roan in 1958, David, won his State scholarship which paid for him to stay the summer in Spain. My eldest brother, two years ahead of me at Roan, and I met up with him at Malaga, where he showed us the sights, and this turned out to be a landmark first of countless subsequent return visits to Spain for us both.

John Bull (1950-58)

I knew Dave throughout our time at Roan but knew little of him until the fifth and six forms. He always appeared cheerful, made off-the-cuff jokes, often at his own expense, and laughed readily at ours. We sang in the school choir together, even taking part along with several other school choirs in a performance of Hayden's 'Creation' ay Westminster Hall and Bach's 'Christmas Oratorio' (or was it the Festival Hall?).

Dave played soccer in various school teams over the years and was latterly made Captain of the First Cricket X1. His batting was a little hit and miss, but his deadly slow left-arm bowling and tactical skills won us plenty of victories. In our annual match against the staff team, however, we were out-manoeuvred by their canny chief – a certain Mr Hopwood – and were narrowly defeated.

Dave always had talent for picking up modern languages – French and Spanish mastered with ease - and when he visited Rome he seemed to become fluent in Italian after his relatively short stay. He also breezily acquired a more than working knowledge of Portuguese!

He and I, along with Dan Davis and several others, were members of a small, informal and every-changing confrèrerie which went to hear local jazz bands at the Tiger's Head in Lee Green, played tennis (on the same public court where Antonioni later filmed the last scenes of Blowup), congregated in one another's homes, engaged in long discussions about things of great (and lesser) importance and, after everything closed for the night at 10.30pm as it did in the 1950s, we would visit 'the Dog Stall', the only late-night oasis along the whole length of Lewisham High Street.

In early September 1958, just before most of us were about to go to various different universities, several of us flew to Paris (£8 return on a Skyways Dakota!), partly of course to see Paris, but also to go to jazz clubs which at that time featured famous American musicians who were not allowed to perform in England. Dave was not with us, he had spent the summer in Malaga in southern Spain. On his way home, he had to change trains in Paris and we met him at the Gare de Lyon. He dipped into his case and with a broad grin produced a large glass bonbon of amber Malaga wine. I don't remember that there was much left of it when we waved him off at the Gare du Nord a few hours later.

During our university years, mine in London and Dave's at Cambridge, we met only rarely, during vacations and afterwards lost contact completely until a few years ago. Having lived in Southern France for several years, it was a surprise to learn that Dave and Tess had a holiday second home, a flat on the coast not far from us. It was a delight to meet up again and renew a friendship which gave so many happy times together and leave us all with memories of *un amigo simpatico*.

Inigo Kilborn (1950-58)

**BILL BROOKS – Roan School pupil (1933-42) and teacher (1949-54)**

John Huntley (1951-56) writes:
Bill Brooks was well into his 90s when he died. When I joined the school in 1951 he was a physics master and also shared PE with 'Snoz' Westmarland.

*Bill Brooks (2nd left) in the 1954 Old Roan Dramatic Society production of Hawk Island.*

He left education during my time at school and later took a senior job with the Central Electricity Board (CEGB). When he left Roan there was a tribute in the Magazine which suggested that the replacement job vacancy should advertise for an accomplished wicket-keeper batsman and fearsome 'stopper' centre half - some slight acquaintance with physics and mathematics would be preferred but not essential!

I played a lot of football and cricket with Bill. He had played cricket for Blackheath in their first team but returned to the OR in his twilight years where he kept wicket and batted in the middle order for some years. In the football club, he was the First X1 Captain and central pivot of the defence for many seasons including during my few years in the first team. Bill packed his Hillman Minx with players or met us at whichever London station was the conduit for our trips to all parts of Greater London in The Southern Olympian League. I attended the Braithwaite camp in 1955 and Bill was one of the masters exercising their shepherding of the unruly 15-16-year-olds.

When I started work, I often travelled with Bill from Lee Station on the grossly overcrowded cattle truck Dartford Loop line. His penchant for hacking down and trampling on opposition forwards was instrumental in gaining access to the train. For several years Bill held end of season parties with his wife Jackie at their large house in Winn Road in Lee for the football club. When he finally packed up football, the club arranged a tribute dinner at a restaurant in Chislehurst at which I had the privilege of speaking.

FROM ROAN MAGAZINE, DECEMBER 1954

MR W H F BROOKS
When Mr Brooks leaves at the end of this term to take up his appointment as Senior Physics master at Sir Walter St John's School, Battersea, he will take with

him the best wishes of the School and Staff for he has endeared himself to both.

His interests range over a very wide field. His enthusiasm for the stage obviously infected those who worked with him while plays were in preparation, and both boys and staff will miss his appearances on the football and cricket fields. It has been said, not unkindly, that the Headmaster ought to have advertised for an accomplished centre-half with some slight acquaintance with Physics (wicket-keepers considered).

As an active Old Roan, he is unlikely to lose touch with the School and, while we congratulate him on obtaining the post to which he now goes, we regret the loss of his company.

**ALAN PALMER (1958-64)**

**COLIN PALMER (1963-70)**, who wrote to us here of the death of his brother, Alan, in 2020, also sadly died last year.

I am very sad to report the passing of my brother Alan on 22 December 2020. His funeral was at Eltham Crematorium.

Alan was a regular attendee at the Old Roan Club and functions in the 60-80s and was a keen co-organiser of the Old Roan Braithwaite Camp with Tony Slaney.

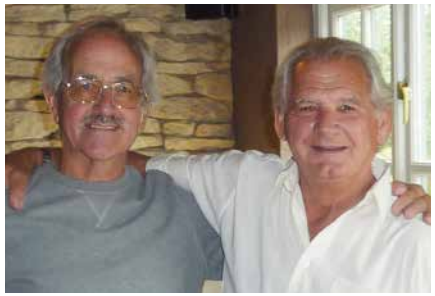
He spent a long career in banking and served several years prior to retirement working for Ofsted. Outside this, he ran a twitter feed, facebook page and a website entitled Greenwich Guide which attracted interest from all parts of the world.

**RON NOAKES (1946-51)**

Ted Brading (1946-52) writes:
My very good friend, Ron Noakes, passed away on 9 November 2021 after battling with leukemia for a couple of years.

After leaving school, Ron worked for General Steam for a while and then joined the Midland Bank where he became a director. That directorship continued when the Midland became HSBC and, at retirement in 1995, he was an Assistant General Manager.

Ron's great leisure time passion in his hometown of Tonbridge was amateur dramatics. This largely included musical productions in which he often played the lead, such as Fiddler On The Roof and Guys And Dolls. He had a fine, powerful tenor voice.



*Ted Brading with Ron Noakes (r), taken a few years ago after meeting up again after 50 years!*

In his later years, Ron became increasingly involved in the game of bridge although that activity was seriously hampered by the COVID situation.

Leaving his wife, Kay, their daughters, Linda and Sharon and four grandchildren, Ron will be greatly missed by many people.

**ALBERT BERRY (1946-50)**

Nick Berry (1969-74) writes:
Albert John William Berry passed away in hospital on 4 January this year having had a fall at home.

Dad and I were at Roan almost twenty years apart but quite a few teachers who had long careers at the school taught both Dad and myself. These included George Witten, Mr Hopwood, Mr Geddes.

Dad emigrated with his family to Perth, Western Australia in 1974 where we have had a very happy life. He enjoyed a long retirement seeing his children and grandchildren thrive – his interests included attending concerts and shows with his wide circle of friends and also listening to music from the 40s, 50s and 60s. He always retained a great interest in the UK and its current affairs, returning several times for holidays when he could catch up with family and friends.

**CYNTHIA SUGGIT née CATHERSIDES (1947-53)**

Cynthia's husband Robert informs us that, sadly, Cynthia passed away on 5 November 2019 at home after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's and after a few years of failing memory.

Cynthia was very proud of her time at Roan and was pleased to receive the Old Roan Magazine. She always spoke about her time at the school with great affection. On her and Robert's visits to the Old Naval College, Greenwich, she would point out the Great Hall where some school events were held.

Cynthia and Robert met in 1979 on a two-year, day release training course for teachers in FE held in Brighton after both of them had decided on a change of direction. Cynthia was teaching at West Kent College in Tonbridge and Robert teaching construction at Lewes Technical College. They were married in 1985 and set up home in Crowborough which was mid-way between their two places of work. After both retiring in the mid 70s, they spent happy years travelling and activities in the USA, plus, enjoying the pleasures of grandchildren on both sides of the family.

**TONY GODDARD (1951-56)**

Brian Goddard (1961-67) writes:
It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of my eldest brother, Anthony John Goddard, known by all friends and family as Tony, on 2nd

December, 2019 at the age of 79, following a very swift decline in his health.

Tony was the first of the four Plumstead Goddard boys to attend Roan and mixed at school with current Old Roans such as Mike Titheridge and Joe Broadfoot. Tony did not overachieve academically but he was good at sport and was very proud of the fact that he was the Victor Ludorum for his age group on Sports Day once.

Despite his lack of A Levels, he had a very successful and productive career in business. He started off in the City with Guardian Insurance, where he passed all the necessary exams and became a full member of the Chartered Insurance Institute. He then spent the longest part of his career at Standard Chartered Bank, where he passed all his banking exams and was proud to be a member of the CIOB and head of their African business.

Tony leaves a widow and two daughters, two stepsons and three grandchildren. He was surely the best big brother that one could have had and, if it hadn't been for him getting into Roan, I may not have gone there myself and made so many good and lasting friends. I owe him a great deal and I miss him.

**PHILIP MOORE (1958-65)**

Back in 2018, I was contacted on facebook by Philip, an Old Roan who was several years below me at school. I did not recall him from those heady days, but he remembered me as a prefect with a reputation for being an 'easy touch'.

Philip was living in Rye at the time and we struck up an online friendship. Although I never got to meet him, he was an entertaining chap and we corresponded on a regular basis. His posts were always witty and varied.

Quite suddenly, in the summer of last year, I ceased to get replies to my posts. I was then contacted, in June, by a lady, whom I understood to be his partner. She informed me that Philip had sadly and suddenly passed away after a short illness.

Bill White (1955-62)

**SIMON GREEN (1955-64)**

Simon's sister Carol has informed us of his death in April 2020. Carol also told us her father, Ralph Green, also a former Roan pupil (dates unknown) died in 2001.

**CHRISTOPHER COVE (1959-64)**
Christopher's sister, Glynis Haynes née Cove (1961-66) posted on Facebook news of Christopher's death on 8 March this year. He was a veteran of the Royal Army Corps.

**ALISON BRIDLE NÉE WISE**
Alison, who attended Roan Girls in the early 1980's, sadly died on 14 February 2021 just a few days after her 50th birthday.

**MARTIN CALLOW (1969-76)**
Martin, aged 63, sadly died in Lewisham Hospital on March 2021 from pneumonia.



# NEWS OF OLD ROANS

**DAVE BRYDEN (1954-61)**
After receiving the last OR Magazine, Dave wrote to us from France: 'It was, and always is, sad to read of the death of so many people I knew. With COVID, life may have changed for ever. Here in France, in our little village, my home since 2003, we seem less affected. My farmhouse has a huge garden/field and my chums and I can sit outside, two metres apart, and put the word to rights and argue why Brexit was such a ludicrous idea - surely Buffoon Boris should at least have kept you in the single market and customs union to avoid all the hold ups between EU and GB. All best wishes from sunny France.'

**JOHN HUNTLEY (1951-56)**
Says he was gratified to see some reference in the last Magazine to his 'dubious contributions to OR sporting history'. He added: 'By subterfuge and bribery, I was elected Form Captain in my first year and as a result of the few administrative demands I can still recite in alphabetical order the entire class. I remember Ian Brown (now Dr. Ian Brown), who had an article on his distinguished career. He was not part of my rebellious clique who were mainly there for athletic pursuits and inventing exaggerated reasons why homework wasn't done. However, I do agree with his assessment of Binney's history lessons as being tedious and enveloping the class in a state of ennui. Other history masters galvanised the subject sufficiently to allow me to achieve a comfortable O level pass and I still enjoy the subject having had the opportunity to visit many of the great historical sights of the world.'

**RICHARD STANLEY DRENNAN (1936-40)**
Richard's son, John, contacted us about his father. 'My Dad signed up with the Ox and Bucks 1st Battalion and was sent to Caen ahead of the D Day Landings. Unfortunately, his unit was ambushed by the SS and he was shot in the spine and was very close to death before his rescue. He remained paralysed until his death in 1957 aged 32. He was hospitalised at Stoke Mandeville Spinal Injuries Ward and was under the famous Dr. Guttman - the man who started what is now the Paralympics. My Mum was a young nurse who looked after him. They fell in love and married in 1948 producing two children before he succumbed to his injuries. His elder brother John flew in Lancasters as part of Bomber Command and was sadly was killed in action in 1943.'

**NORMAN SMITH (1950-56)**
Norman informs us he has lived on the Continent for many years, first in France but now in Belgium, only 300 meters from the French border and not far from Lille, capital of Northern France, where

he is still working and active in many organisations. Norman says his school friend, **Kenneth Miller (1951-56)**, now living in Folkestone, wanted to join the Association.

**HARRY TUFFILL (1947-54)**
Harry was reading through the last Magazine when someone asked: 'Who was the woodwork master c 1946-47?' He reveals it was Mr Pye.

**DEREK CARTER (1945-52)**
Derek also recalled the woodwork teacher. 'It was H.H.Pye - quite old and very personable. Hoppy Hopewell was Mr Pye's sidekick at that time. I could have consulted my term reports to get that info as I have all of them bar one - somewhere!' Derek also congratulated **Trevor Puddifoot** on 'assuming the mantle of our venerable Association's President', complimented the last Magazine '... not because I had a mention in it!' and corrected the picture of the OR Facebook entry on him. 'I was not at Roan during WWII. I entered Roan in September 1945.'

**JIM WARDELL (1951-58)**
Jim wrote to ask, 'I just wonder how many students from 1951-1958 are still active in the ORs? Living in Aberdeen without cause to visit London often means it's a very rare visit to see the School and the club-house these days.'

**PIP WEDGE (1938-44)**
Pip responded about his article in the last issue. 'How surprised and then delighted I was to get the last Magazine with the lengthy piece about my brother Bill, and my doodlebug article - do I detect David Horsburgh's hand in that, as a former editor and still (I hope) friend? Certainly, someone must have done quite a bit of research to provide more info about my career than I can ever recall providing to David or anyone else in the past! All good wishes, and Hi to David.'

And **DAVID HORSBURGH (1962-69)** has a Pip Wedge memory to share!
'I visited Toronto on business in December 1990 and agreed to meet Pip for a pre-theatre cocktail at a top hotel. Picking me up in his car, the boot had his cricket bag as he played for a local team, and he was involved in setting up an exhibition match for the West Indies cricket team at the main city sports stadium with an all-weather roof. We had an agreeable drink in a very busy bar lounge when he suddenly and unexpectedly rose to his feet and sang the Roan School song – Latin version. I have retained a wariness and affection for Pip ever since.'

**FRANK BROOKS (1936-41)**
Frank's son Chris contacted us to say his Dad, 96, and his wife Jean, 92, have moved into a home in Stourport on Severn. Frank still loves getting the OR Magazine and has recently re-read the history of the School. He has just been interviewed by Hoover as the vacuum cleaner he and Jean were given for their wedding – 70 years


*Frank Brooks and his wife, Jean*

ago in July – has only just packed up! Frank went to Roan in 1936 sharing only a year with his older brothers Ron and Ken. Ron was killed in November 1940 and the first tree walking into the Maze Hill gates had his name on it. Ken died two years ago.

**WENDY BENNET NÉE BROWN (1953-56)**
Wendy Writes: 'I was intrigued by the article (on the OR cricket club's centenary) in the magazine as I remember helping prepare the teas for the Sunday 2nd X1 in the post war years when my father (Bill Brown) was Captain. This was before the present clubhouse was built and the 'pavilion' was pretty basic! The wives/girlfriends or (as in my case) daughters would gather together and it was regarded as a social outing - we rarely knew what was happening on the cricket pitch, or even who the opponents were! My brother (Colin Brown 1948-53) was scorer. My Dad organised tours to Sussex that preceded those to the Isle of Wight, but anyone wishing to take part had to play at least once for the 2nd X1. From those early days in the late forties, I remember Ginger Carter, Chick Laywood, Frank Barnes, Val Lovell, Alan Weir, Del Baxter and Jim Barry (? Terry Barry's father). Later in my teens, I remember the cricket club dances in the 50s in the new clubhouse when I was introduced to the Williams brothers, Colin Trew, Graham and Anne Chambers, and my brother's form mates Johnny Cramp, Alan Dawe, Derek Dreher, Robin Dolder and Alan Huntley et al. I believe my father played cricket for the Old Roans before the war and probably football too, but that was before my time!'

**RON EDWORTHY (1966-73)**
Ron writes: 'I was fortunate enough to have been able to retire in September 2013 and, boy, was I glad I did. Although financially secure in my job, and doing much the same things as I had done throughout my career (in reinsurance), I reached a point where I decided enough was enough ... So, I quit!

My wife Mandy had retired a few years earlier. We had a lovely yellow Labrador, Max, who is still with us and our three kids had flown the nest. So, we have been able to take many more holidays/ breaks when and where it suits us. Absolute bliss.

We also took the opportunity to 'downsize'. In 2016, we moved from Ashford, where we had been

for fifteen years, to a chalet-style house in Saltwood/Hythe. A lovely area, close to the sea, plenty of countryside walks, woods and so on - and still only five minutes to the motorway.

We now have two grandsons, children to our eldest son Chris and his wife Jo, and we take out the eldest of the two, George, for trips out and he stays with us from time to time to give mum and dad a break.

I keep in regular touch with Keith Banks, Pete Cox and Keith Bradbrook. Plus, when the Reunion Dinners are on, I usually sit also with others - John Titcombe, Andy Emeny-Smith, Jeremy 'Nobbs' Novis and Pete Wise. At the last Dinner, Stuart Horsburgh and Steve Armstrong were also on our table. A great turnout for our year and wonderful to see them all.

*Ron (l) and Keith Banks outside the Maze Hill school*

For my sins, I remain a season ticket holder at Charlton, and usually get the coach up from Hythe. However, I have had to stop going for the last little while. In October, I was diagnosed as having a bowel tumour (thank heavens for those NHS poo tests!) and had surgery in December. The prognosis is very good – op was successful – but I am currently having chemo as belt and braces follow-up. Another good reason to be grateful for that early retirement!'

**CHRISTINE FISHER NÉE ORANGE (1957-64) AND DAVID FISHER (1956-63)**

Christine, who was Head Girl in 1963-4, tells us she and husband, David, are still in regular contact with many of their peers from their Roan years and says maybe the time has come to put down some memories in writing for the magazine! (Yes please, Ed). The Fishers who live in Australia have now moved to Kalamunda.

**TED BRADING (1946-52) AND BRIAN MAUNDER**

Elsewhere in the Magazine, Ted pays tribute to his late schoolmate, Ron Noakes (1946-51). And he also reminded us of this 1948 photo of Form 4b – with Ron (seated, front, 3rd left), Ted (middle row, 3rd left) and Brian Maunder (back, 5th left). Ted says, 'I'm still in touch with four of the chaps in the photograph: Brian, John Hazell, Les Wybourn and Ken Quinn. It would be interesting to hear from anyone

*Roan 4b, 1948*

who is in touch with Michael Parkhouse (2nd right, front row). He went on to become a celebrity in the Californian medical world.'

Brian sent the sad news from his home in Canada of the death of his wife of 63 years in July last year. He said he still lives in the town house they downsized to 27 years ago. 'At that time, we were planning to downsize again to an apartment after ten years - obviously my arithmetic has never improved!' Brian, now 87, says he is blessed to have two children (mid to late 50s) living nearby who check on him.

**GARRY PENDERGAST (1963-70)**

Via Facebook Garry says: 'I have just re-read the last Old Roan Magazine and saw Andy Page's article about a trip Nigel Ballantyne made to Ripley for a road race. I did run in a road race in Ripley and Nigel drove us there and back in a day. It was a relay race and Dave Lynes was one of the runners then. I left Roan in 1970 so I probably did not run in Andy's race unless he thinks otherwise! I have moved to Vancouver Island in Canada and recently had a message from Ray(mond) Yenkana, who I think joined Roan in 1963. I hope to meet with him soon.'

**LINDA KARLSEN**

Linda, former Deputy Headteacher at The John Roan School, updates us on her article in the last issue about her Whitstable art show paintings. She has created a new series based on a train journey in Norway and been working on a re-imaging of Hogarth's Rake's Progress set in current times - Jeffrey Epstein being the Rake!

*One of Linda's new images – Lake Mjøsa, Norway*

**OLIVE BALLARD NÉE GILBERT (1944-50)**

Olive was delighted to receive a momento of the past following her article in the last issue about her Roan years. **Beryl Haisman-Baker née Haisman (1953-60)**, who shares her own Roan memories elsewhere in this Magazine, very kindly sent Olive a copy of the 1951 School prize-giving programme which records her being awarded the Certificater of the Lycée Francais and Prix d'Exellence.

# 7-6... THE CHARLTON STORY CONTINUES...

If ever there was an 'I was there' football match then the famous 7-6 Charlton Athletic win over Huddersfield in December 1957 was it. Charlton, 1-5 down with 28 minutes to play, only 10-men, storming back to win 7-6! Huddersfield, managed by Liverpool legend-to-be Bill Shankly, and playing 1966 World Cup winner Ray Wilson.

A host of Old Roans were indeed there at The Valley that day as a fascinating e mail trail sighted by the Magazine revealed. **Mike Smith (1971-78)** was asking ORs for extra info for an article by someone else on the game for the Charlton fanzine Voice of the Valley.

Twelve-year-old **Terry Barry (1956-63)** was there adding: 'One of my best friends Dick Monteith's father was the team doctor for Huddersfield Town and over the years we've been to Charlton and Huddersfield in the hope of a repeat 7-6 epic.' Terry remembers fans leaving at 1-5.

**Don Boon (1956-62)** was there – aged 13 standing at the front of the enormous old East Stand. 'When Buck Ryan scored the last-minute winner my school friend **Dave Appleyard** threw my school cap onto the pitch and I never saw it again! The most incredible game of football I have ever seen.'


**Brian Cowans** was there, adding the crowd that day was 12,535. **Keith Hedges (1960-67)**, only eight at the time, was there with his elder brother **Roger (1958-65)** also a Roan boy. He says his primary school teacher saw him at the game and said he was the only one not cheering!

And **Simon Perry (1956-60)** was there too with his Dad on the small terrace beside the old wooden stand. He remembers Ryan's winning goal and still has this Charlton shirt commemorating the famous win.

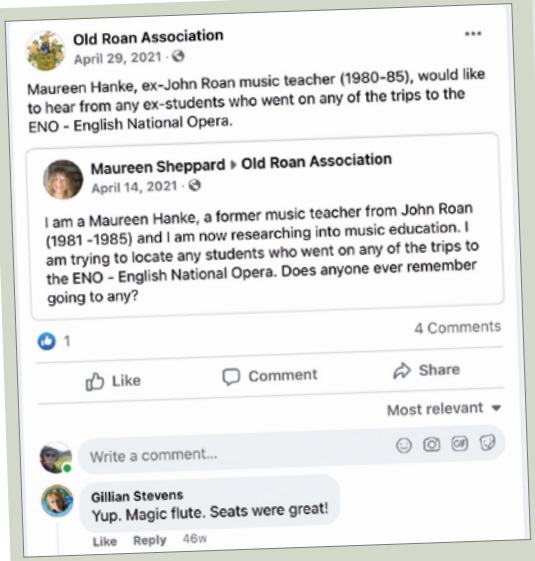
# FACEBOOK NEWS OF OLD ROANS

*The Old Roan Association's Facebook page proves a great way for Old Roans to keep in touch, rediscover old school friends and share their Roan experiences. Just search for Old Roan Association and join in the conversation.*

*Old Roans posting items are often avalanched with replies from the UK and abroad. Here's a selection of entries:*

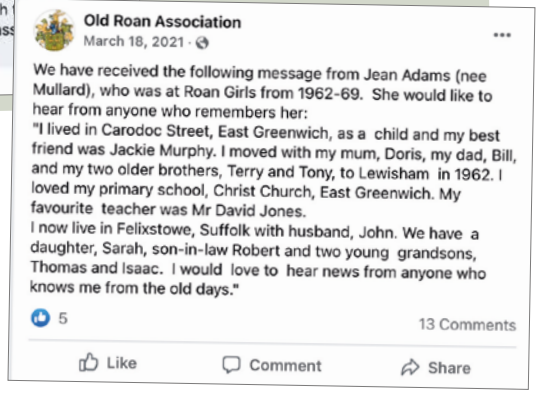

Janice Perkin replied recognising Gill. 'Did you wear glasses and have shoulder-length dark hair and were you good at needlework...?' Julie Andrews replied remembering Mrs Poore for needlework then Gill came back saying she did wear glasses and was hopeless at needlework!

Other replies came in from Joan Shannon née Palmer who worked in London then went to university in Coleraine in 1968 and has been in NI ever since. Jenny Whitley née Ford posted saying she is now retired and lives in Hampshire, Lyn Howard replied saying she left Roan to join the Navy and later moved to Singapore. She now lives in Sussex, has three sons and six grandchildren but was sadly widowed at 49.



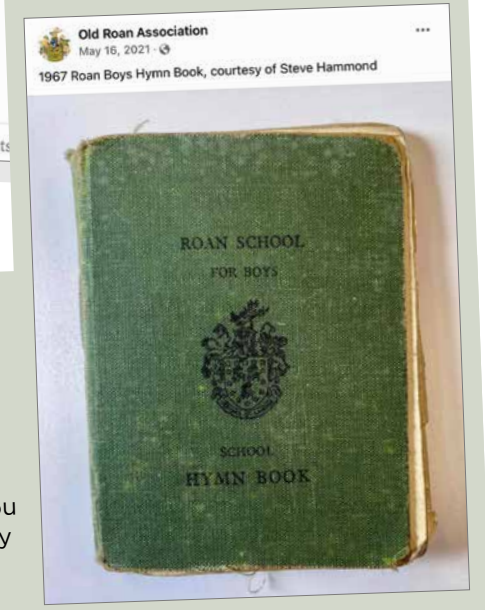

Gillian Stevens replied remembering The Magic Flute... 'Seats were great!'


Gillian Broome posted photos of the Roan Girls prospectus from 1958 and got many responses including this from Jan Hill. 'Interesting! That was the year I started at Roan. I've just read the bit where it says the school phone must not be used to send messages to pupils. I remember my brother-in-law rang the secretary to pass me a message when my sister gave birth to her eldest in 1958. The secretary came to the classroom to give me the message... 'It's a boy!''





Ex-OR President Mick Smith replied to say he went on a couple of trips to Abergavenny and went back a couple of years ago to retrace his steps! Neil Carter remembered his school trip to Inverliever, David Jones went on the first trip to Abergavenny and Bob Dellar reckoned there was a cloning lab knocking out cool, down with the kids male teachers with a moustache and/or perm, most of whom looked like David Bedford!




When Steve Hammond posted a photo of his 1967 School hymn book, Terry Hodder did the same with his 1963 version which inside had a scrap of paper with the ranking order of poker hands tucked between "Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer' and 'Hail The Day That Sees Him Rise'!


Marianne Ukiah replied to say she had lost touch with everyone. Her friends were Marion Baldwin, Kathleen Ryder, Hazel ? and said Ann Crawford, who emigrated to Australia in about the 2nd year at Roan, is on Facebook. Ann Hill née Freeman posted to say that Jeanette Crouch died about five years ago and Pam Kearley née Davey was saddened at this news. Liz Gregg posted to say she was Elizabeth Slawson then and is in touch with Hilary Peters (now Oakman). Liz, who now lives in Cornwall and was widowed over four years ago, remembered Jean Saker (see earlier item in the Magazine), Pat Tate, Sandra Magneson and Georgie Philpot.


# FROM THE ARCHIVES

## Roan Girls School in the 1920s...

*1921 – Miss Massingham's Class*


*1926 – Roan Girls tour to Calais (identified are Miss Richardson, seated, & Phyllis Elliott, front)*

*Back Cover: More Roan faces from the Magazine.*