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# The Old Roan Magazine



Roan Girls' School 1878- 1984

Autumn 2019

Issue 10



# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Fellow Old Roans

First, I must apologise for the lateness of the magazine; a combination life and illness prevented me from getting down to organising the magazine. Therefore, this magazine is rather a full one; sadly, many Old Roans have died, and you will see their obituaries in this issue, a celebration of their lives, careers and commitment to their families and wider community. Old Roans contributions are many and varied ranging from Science and the world of space exploration to the spiritual world of Church.

Many of you will have known and been taught by Nigel Ballantyne who died 2nd June 2017. The best part of his professional life was dedicated to the school; probably the last of his generation of teachers who committed themselves to one school and stayed all their professional lives engaging with the many changes, especially for Nigel, in the turbulent changes of the 80's and 90's. You can read the tributes to Nigel who served not only as a teacher and Head of English but also as teacher governor in total for over forty years and continued to teach part time in another school after his retirement from John Roan. He was justly proud of his 50 years of

service to teaching. Our thoughts and good wishes are with Nigel's wife Silvia, his son Martin and his daughter Elisabeth and of course his grandchildren.

We have also just received the very sad news of the death of Alan Weir: Old Roan president, vice president, Life Member of the ORA, member of the John Roan Lodge, and Hope Memorial trustee and treasurer for many years. Obituaries will appear in the next magazine.

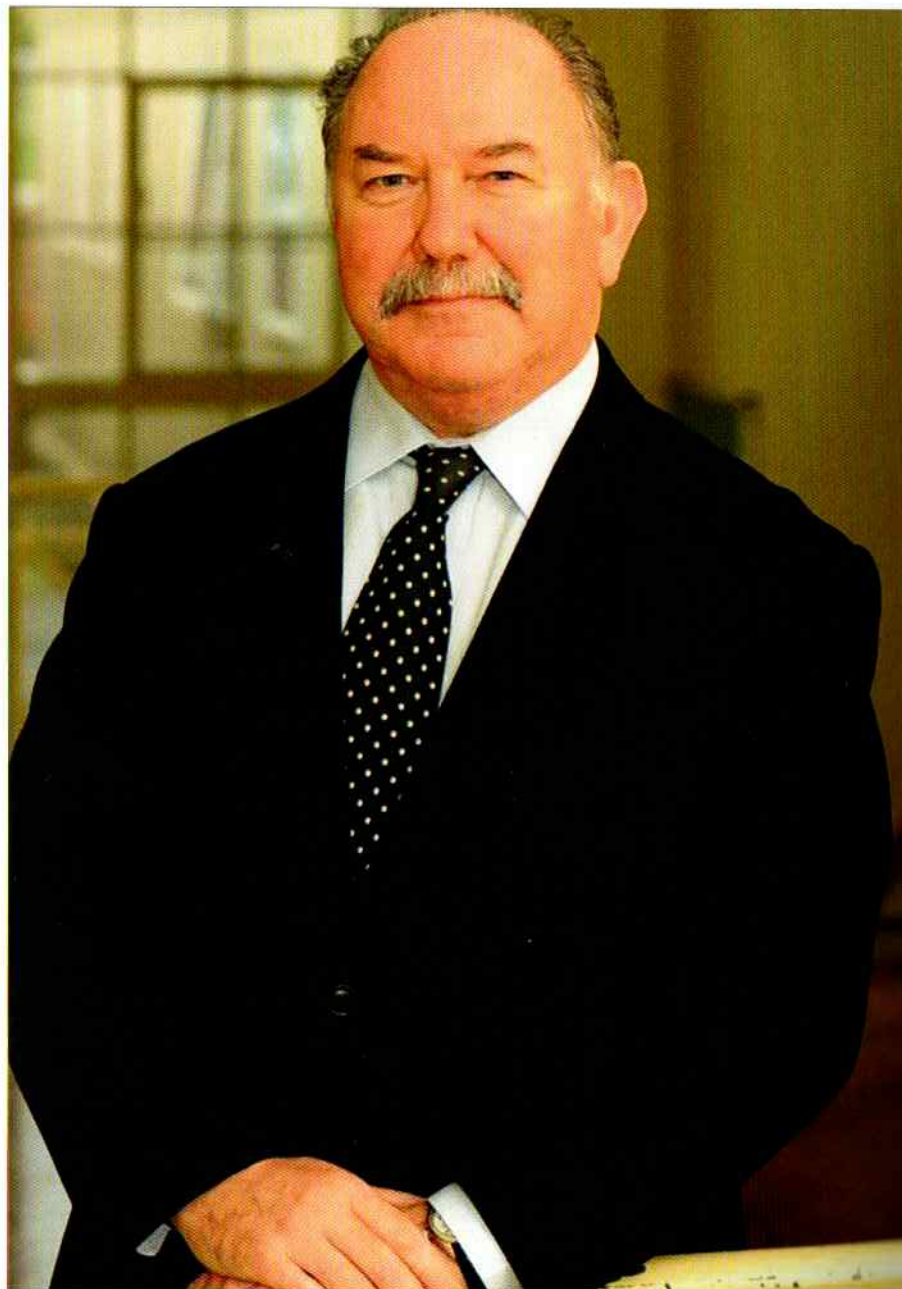
We also have contributions from the Old Roan girls' school at Devonshire Drive and you can also read about the London International Youth Science Forum; the ORA and John Roan Foundation fund a place at the forum for the most outstanding Science student nominated by science staff. We have two reports from 2016 and 2017 (still chasing the 2018/19 reports – too much fun / hard work at University).

This will be my last issue as editor, I have enjoyed reading all your contributions and feel close to the Old Roan community; I am justly proud to call myself an Old Roan.

Best wishes to you all  
Jan Farmer (Staff 1987-2010)



DES MALONE president 2017-2018



JANE HARNDEN president 2016-2017







Claire Flynn ORA President 2019-2020 / Ex Deputy Head The John Roan School



## MESSAGE

From Ron Noakes

Referring to Old Roans mentioned on page 66 of the magazine I was in contact with Derek Kiernan for many years after we left school. We were friends not only as Roan old boys but also, we were both in the Scouts with the 4th Lewisham South troop. Sadly, Derek died about 14 years ago I don't know exactly when. Among many achievements he was always proud of being a top-rated national Squash umpire

He had a good business at one time in picture framing and restoration in partnership with another Old Roan the late Alan Hodge.

Ron Noakes



## MESSAGE

From Peter Walker

I was delighted to see that one of my Old Roan friends had added news about me in the Oct 2016 magazine (love the magazine by the way!).

I did not see it until Rev. Keith Pound pointed out a correction. I live in Hockessin, Delaware, USA rather than Hockenden, Devon which also sounds like a lovely place to spend retirement. Since retiring from DuPont in 1995 I have formed a consulting Company, Technology Leveraging Inc., which has been active in biomedical and imaging fields.

I have been blessed with good health, seven children, thirteen great and grandchildren, and a wonderful wife, Marylou.

I would indeed welcome contact with any class members who recall our times together.

Feel free to share my Email address with them -  
pwalker77@verizon.net or the Gmail address pw15832@gmail.com

Peter Walker

The new magazine editor is Keith Bradbrook (details at the back of the magazine).



# DES MALONE: My Journey

to becoming President of the Old Roan Association

Born and bred in Stoke on Trent in the fifties and sixties my earliest memories are of a hard northern town full of heavy industry. I remember vividly the glow in the sky when they opened the blast furnaces at the steelworks, Mum running out to the garden to get the washing in when the bottle Kilns started to belch out black soot and my Grandad and Uncle coming back from the pit with the coal dust on their eyelashes looking like mascara. I worked at a 'pot bank' one summer holidays with my two aunties and it was the hardest physical work I have ever done, my hands were cut to pieces on the shards of pottery that were left on the edge of the plates after they were fired. There is very little left of those industries now of course.

My Dad was from Dublin and like many Irish immigrants valued education immensely and impressed that on all of us; myself and my two brothers and two sisters. I passed my 11+ and went to the catholic grammar school which was run by the Christian Brothers religious order. The regime was strict but it was there I gained my lifelong passion for rugby and met the friends who would still

be going on rugby tours with me fifty years later, of course to watch now not play. After A levels I went to university in London and got my first degree in Physics, I enjoyed being a student so much I spent most of my twenties doing more degrees, the last two at Goldsmiths. Of course that was when the Government paid you for studying! My first job was working for the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate but soon after that I started teaching in Peckham and I quickly realised that teaching was what I wanted to do for the rest of my professional life. I went to California and taught there for a couple of years but London was too vibrant a city to be away from for long and I returned to become Head of Science in Deptford. I stayed in Deptford for 25 years before becoming Head at John Roan and absolutely loved being at both schools although they were very different.

One of the great advantages of being a teacher is that you are able to travel in the long holidays and I've had many adventures in North America and Mexico, the Middle and Far East, Africa, India and New Zealand although there are plenty of places I still want to experience.

I learned to sail in my thirties and keep my boat in Sardinia now so spend a lot of time out there. After retiring I was immensely proud to be asked to become President firstly, because I have always seen The Old Roan Association as a key part of the John Roan Family and secondly, because not every ex head is asked! It's been a great pleasure to get to know more Old Roans particularly the committee, and of course to attend the Annual Reunion dinner and Founders Day

wearing my great chain of office. I don't think teachers ever lose the joy of transforming young people's lives or the need for friendship especially of old classmates and so, if I could make one wish for the future, it is that we are successful at getting more young Roans involved in the Association. I hope my successor enjoys their year as much as I have.

Des Malone  
President 2017-2018

## DES' JOURNEY: An alternative perspective by Richard Rice (long standing friend(?))

Well, yes. There are of course a number of ways of achieving great things and rising to high position in society; you can make the most of your natural talents by working hard and dedicating yourself to a worthwhile cause or you can use your good looks and masculine wiles to turn the head of the fairer sex or you can simply cruise to high position on the back of the hard work of others.

Over the years Des has shown himself to be the master of all of these techniques but let us first turn to his early years. We met in 1985 when he had recently taken up the post of Head of Science at

Deptford Green and I was a young student teacher. Des taught me many things (he likes to say that he taught me everything I know!) but during our many conversations I did notice a fierce inverse snobbery. If I were to mention anything about my own working-class background Des would immediately regale me with tales of his own, infinitely more impoverished beginnings. There followed a race to the bottom with Des eventually claiming that, in Stoke, he lived in a hole in the ground and walked five miles to school each day barefoot! When one day the conversation in the science department turned to philately Des berated our middle-class posturing



pointing out that he was so poor as a youngster that he had had to make a collection of the labels from food tins. Impoverished beginnings? I think he doth protest too much!

Now let us consider his rise to headship of the John Roan School. It certainly started well enough, Des was appointed as Head of Science in his late twenties, but how exactly was this achieved? Well, time has treated us all cruelly and the Des we see today is not the Des of thirty years ago. That Des was a slim hippped, broad shouldered, tousle haired lothario who drew admiring glances from many a young woman and in particular the young woman who had just vacated the post of Head of Science to take up the post of Deputy Head of Deptford Green. Did this factor in his appointment? You may draw your own conclusion, but I would point out that the woman in question is none other than Des' lifetime partner and now wife, Sue Harry.

Six years later, Des was promoted to Deputy Head and I succeeded him as Head of Science, no hanky panky involved this time around I assure you! Des achieved great things as Deputy Head and was part of the team that achieved transformational change at Deptford Green. Sue went on to become Head of Abbey Wood School, but his own headship was slow in coming. John Roan at the

time was going through a rough patch and the local authority was desperate to appoint a head to turn the school around. Not so desperate as to give the job to Des immediately but they did at least appoint him as acting head.

Des needed to make rapid improvements to the school if he was to progress to the substantive appointment and so it was he started to hone his greatest leadership skill -delegation. Des is, you see, a dreamer, an ideas man, a big picture man, and his senior team, which I joined a few years later, soon became accustomed to hearing Des articulating his vision at some length, before slipping off in his jag (about noon if he had a plane to catch!).

Incredibly, this phlegmatic style of leadership worked and, as at Deptford Green, Des took the school on a fantastic journey of improvement serving eight years as Head before retiring at age sixty-one and subsequently becoming president of the Old Roan Association.

So, there you have it. An upstart from the North who met the right woman and exploited the hard work of others before being given an extraordinary honour at the end of his career!

Richard Rice

# JANE HARNDEN

PRESIDENT 2015-16

## ORA Dinner Speech

This year has seen the publication of a new book on the history of the Roan School buildings by former pupil Tom Davies. I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the new and refurbished buildings at the John Roan School in November 2014 and was very impressed particularly with the restoration of the former boys' school, in which several lost original features have been carefully brought back. But I didn't recognise any of it – and it made me realise that during my schooldays in the 1970s when the 2 schools were separate it was very much a case of 'never the twain shall meet'.

Tom had a lack of pictures and information on the girls' school so I helped him fill some gaps. The building is now flats, which most of us on this table were lucky to see a few years ago. For the first time we were able to visit former 'no go areas', mainly on the top floor. There was a wonderful view of Canary Wharf and the city from the flat roof, which we'd never been allowed on before.

The top floor also used to be the location of the so-called 'sixth-form flat', part of an extension

built in the 1960s, I believe. I have no idea what they were thinking of building an isolated 'flat' for 6th formers, especially during the 60s. By the time we arrived at the school, no-one was allowed up there unless for a lesson, least of all the 6th form, whose common room was now very close to the headmistress's office. If you want to know what the 6th form got up to in their flat, I suggest you ask Linda Nelson some time!

There were other no-go areas.

- One was the staff room – you had to knock and wait outside. When the door opened, a cloud of cigarette smoke used to come out & you might just spot a teacher in the midst of it.
- We were not allowed inside the school at lunchtimes. However, a small group of us broke this rule every Tuesday listening to Johnny Walker on a radio (also banned) announcing the new top 20.
- We weren't allowed outside the school during the day until we reached the 6th form. Once we gained our new-found freedom, we discovered a fantastic bakers



at the bottom of Blackheath Hill. Any girl trying to pop out to buy a snack found herself with an order for dozens of cheese rolls, buttered rolls, Chelsea buns and Belgian buns. And that was just what we ate before lunch!

Unlike the boys' school, we did not have houses, but we did have our own informal groups: the naughty group, the snob's group and several smaller giggly groups. There are representatives from all here tonight – but I bet you can't tell who belonged to which! Although I can reveal there is a particularly good turnout from the giggly groups. In fact, we were all naughty occasionally – but I like to think only in a very creative way.

Looking back, the school was a rather extreme mix of very trendy and incredibly old-fashioned. As older teachers retired and were replaced by younger incumbents there was often a dramatic change. No more noticeable than in Housecraft. After the long-standing teacher retired, we went from spending 2 double (90 min) periods in 2 consecutive weeks learning how to boil and rinse flannels – the first session learning how and the 2nd actually doing it (except that the teacher did the boiling both times) – to having to learn AND make a proper Swiss roll type sponge – probably one of

the trickiest types of cake you can make – in one period.

On the trendy side, we did modern maths, the Cambridge Latin course and Nuffield Chemistry. However, these curriculum innovations did not always seem to be well conceived. After 5 years of matrices, set theory and probability, we swapped to traditional maths for A level and promptly needed remedial training for algebra as we had never used it before. As for Cambridge Latin (those coloured books featuring Caecilians, Metella and Cerberus the dog), it was great not having to learn the grammar off by heart, but nowadays I wish I had. When I try to translate Latin inscriptions my husband David (who learnt the whole *amo amas amat* way) teases me as mine are always a bit vague – I can't quite work out whether it's he or they, past or present, of or from. Not exactly Mary Beard!

The school was also prone to being rather 'women's libby' – we were generally pushed more towards science when it came to choosing subjects at A level. And thereby hangs a tale, at least in my case.

The fact is I had no trouble with academic subjects but on the practical side I was and still am a disaster.

This brings me to what I didn't get from school.

Despite 3 years of needlework, I still have no idea how to use a sewing machine. I'd never seen one before I started at Roan but the teacher just assumed we knew how to use them. The 1st year of 'lessons' must have been nearly over before I found out there was a bobbin inside (this is probably news to most of tonight's audience as well). This discovery suddenly explained why I got the threads in a tangle every time I tried to use the machine. When this happened most 'non-sewers' in the class tried quietly to ask one of the more able pupils to sort it out. But if the teacher got wind you were trying to get help from someone else she'd be furious and come at you with a pair of scissors, with which she'd hack around inside the machine while it was still plugged into the electricity supply.

The first thing we had to make in needlework was our PE skirt. I developed a technique of sitting at the desk, fiddling with the half-made skirt until she popped out of the classroom, then finding someone obliging to get the machining done while she was out of the way. This took nearly a year, which was rather annoying as until our PE skirts were ready we had to run around doing sport in huge

green knickers.

The boys school had an excellent reputation for sport, especially football, during our time at the school. This was not necessarily the case for the girls' school and I for one did not develop any expertise in sport, other than a long list of ways to get out of it.

The scariest game was hockey – 'bully off' with that extremely hard ball said it all. My strategy was to play in a wing position, so I was confined to the edge of the pitch, then when I saw the ball heading my way run in the opposite direction. Everyone would just assume I was a poor player and better off out of the way and they'd be right.

In athletics, the long jump or throwing the javelin seemed the safest (at least for the person throwing). Volunteering to rake the sand was a great way of getting out of the long jump. And by constantly moving to the back of the queue I managed NEVER to do the high jump.

School failed to make me realise that I was no good at practical work. This was because we generally worked in 3s. In our A-level Chemistry group, one girl did all the running around while I sat with another chatting then





ORA dinner 2017 Jane Harnden, Lesley Tickder, Alison Chumley-Towner and Hillary Haslam

wrote the results & conclusion.

Looking back, I should have realised when my so-called 'multi-stage' synthesis blew up that I wasn't cut out for practical science. It was stage 1 of making nylon. I'd set up the Bunsen burner to boil a flask of liquid with a long reflux tube on the top. A small drop of chemical was mildly irritating my skin so I was at the sink rinsing my hand. Meanwhile the Bunsen was on full blast. For too long. The boiling hot contents – which at that stage resembled a dye – shot out over the top spreading far and wide, to the teacher's skirt among other items. I was about the only person

or thing to remain unscathed.

The school cut short my nascent acting career. For the annual 6th form charity appeal, we put on a pantomime. We went to town adapting Cinderella to incorporate some of the favourite TV and film characters of the 1970s. Just to give you a flavour, Buttons was played as Frank Spencer from *Some Mothers Do Ave Em*, John Noakes was in the palace kitchen with Shep the dog making Halifax Ham Toppers for the ball – including several stages 'he had prepared earlier'.

I was wearing tights and a cape

but instead of the usual Prince Charming, I was Batman. Most of my lines were corny platitudes on the subject of fighting crime. So when the girl playing the King did not learn her lines but made them up as she went along I was completely thrown by the absence of the expected cue and there was a stony silence. The prompt hadn't been paying attention so was rustling the pages for ages before a loud whisper set me back on track.

Other people had to improvise on the day of the panto. Gaynor Phillips forgot to bring 'Shep' in (it was going to be her baby sister's toy dog on wheels) so she resorted to playing the part on all fours with an afghan coat thrown over her back and a squeeze bottle of water for those moments when Shep needed to relieve himself – on the audience.

So what did I get from school?

Probably like many of us here, I was the first person in my family to go to university. Interestingly in view of the current political debate, I would say Roan was a working class grammar school – not for the privileged. The number of professional parents in our year could be counted on the fingers of one hand and most of them had studied for their qualifications at evening classes. In fact, most of

our parents had to leave school and start work at 14.

Ignoring the early warning signs on my experimental technique, I ended up studying Chemistry at Manchester University. I loved the university but wasn't so keen on the Chemistry. I was shocked to find I had to do whole afternoons of practical work on my own. Somehow, I got through it and then did a more writing-based MSc in Industrial Sociology and Economics at Imperial College. The combination of the two helped me get into my chosen career of journalism, specialising in the pharmaceutical business.

I got a boost in confidence and an all-round education that inspired interests – such as history, theatre and cooking – and has enabled me to branch out to other subjects later in life – such as languages and singing. I learnt Spanish (helped by school Latin) at evening classes and ended up using it in my work, interviewing people in Latin America about their health systems and pharmaceutical markets. About 9 years ago, I joined a choir for the first time in my life – I never sang at school – and all the musical notation Mrs Leach taught me came flooding back.

I got my lovely friends. We have been through a lot together. Some



of us see each other every week or so. Even if we don't see each other from one Christmas to the next, we get on like a house on fire as soon as we meet again. No-one else can get a word in edgeways. It's lovely to be all together on this table tonight.

I've had lots of good times over the years from being a member of the Old Roan Association and coming to this clubhouse. We started coming to the Club on Thursday nights when we were still at school - finally an opportunity to meet some of the boys! Then in 1977, the year we left, the 2 schools merged with Charlton Boys to become The John Roan and the 2 alumni associations also merged. The boys made us welcome from the start. I can remember late nights playing sardines, coming to the hilarious Christmas Eve pantos and attending many ORA dinners. From the early days, we got to know more 'old boys' than 'old girls'. I remember Tony Slaney with particular affection: we all miss him very much and thank him for his generous legacy, which is funding the wine this evening among much else.

We still come regularly to the Club for quiz nights (which I thoroughly recommend) and other events - some of the highlights from recent years being Glen Tilbrook

of Squeeze and Arthur Smith. We also see most of the Roan Theatre Company plays, which are of a very high standard.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Old Roan members for inviting me to be President of the Association this year - it's a great honour.

I hope that some of the current John Roan pupils and staff will see the appeal of this association and club and join us when the time is right. I was very impressed with the pupils who showed us round during the school opening in 2014 and delighted to see the new uniform, which is very similar to the one we wore at the girls' school.

On that note, Ladies and Gentlemen I would like you all to join me in a toast to our guests here tonight.

Jane Harnden

# ROAN SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Devonshire Drive SE10 - An Architects View

Former school. Built to the designs of Thomas Dinwiddy in 1877-8 in Gothic style with additions to the east of 1906-7 designed by Alfred Roberts and on the west of 1936-7 by Percy B Darnatt. Built of red brick with stone dressings and slate roof. Comprises central portion with link blocks and gabled wings. Central block of 2 storeys is surmounted by an octagonal bell-cote with spire and metal weathervane. Gable ended with stone coping with kneelers. Brick Lombardic frieze and beneath a stone band with the legend "ROAN GIRLS SCHOOL". 1st floor has elaborate 4-light central bay with dogtooth cornice, quatrefoil mullions and engaged columns. This is flanked by trifoliated lancets. Stone band. Arched doorcase with cable moulding and engaged columns. Ground floor has Caernarvon arched windows. Each side has a lower 2 storey brick link block with 3:2 Caernarvon arched windows to left and 2:2 similar to right. Left gable has stone coping. 1st floor 3-light window with quatrefoil and ground floor 4-light mullioned and transomed window. Right gable similar but also has the foundation stone. Attached to the right-hand side is Alfred Robert's

extension of 1906-7, 2 storeys red brick with 3 sashes. To the rear is a further extension of 1906-7 in red brick with flat roof with cast iron balustrading and piers. Sash windows some cambered on the ground floor with buttresses between. Built on to the left-hand side is the 1936-7 extension by Percy B Darnatt of red brick in Flemish bond with mansard slate roof, 5 metal casement and some 4-light windows with some ogee heads and Cinquefoil mouldings. Attached to the front is red brick wall with 7 octagonal brick and stone gate piers with trefoil ornament and pointed caps with cable moulding. There has been John Roan schools in Greenwich since 1677 but this is the most elaborate of the 2 surviving old Roan schools, for boys and girls. They were amongst the earliest purpose-built secondary schools in South East London and were built on the Prussian System.

See 'The Architect' 28 November 1874





Roan School for girls Devonshire drive

# A TRIP TO GREENWICH

& the Roan Schools (Devonshire Drive) - Deidre Ruth

April in England! I was recently in London on a business trip and, as the daughter of an Old Roan girl, I wanted to explore Greenwich – the place where my grandparents met and were married, a place where my mother attended school, and a place so rich in English history.

My mother was a Roan girl from 1935 to 1940. When she died in April 2014, age 92, my brothers and sisters and I rediscovered her collection of Roan Gazettes from that time, as well as more recent Roan Magazines that she had received over the years. Oh, she kept her Roan memories very much alive! When I informed the ORA of my mother's death, I also mentioned my desire to one day see the school buildings, now converted into flats. And last April, an Old Roan girl kindly came to the rescue!

On Friday 15th April 2016, I met Jane Harnden at Waterloo Station and we quickly became acquainted despite not knowing each other before this trip.

Exiting the rail station and turning left down Greenwich High Road, we walked to St Alfege Church,

the place where my grandparents were married in 1920. (My mother was always very pleased at the fact that her parents were married in the same church as Bella Wilfer of *Our Mutual Friend*!) The height of the church façade on Greenwich Church Street was impressive, and we stopped to admire the plaque on the left that was erected in 1854 in honour of John Roan. Going round the church to the west side, where the entrance is located, Jane pointed out the building across the lawn that was once the Greenwich National School of Education and Industry for Girls, instituted 1814.

In my mother's book, *Royal Greenwich* (1969), the building is described as "a pre-Dickensian attempt to deal with the problem of poor children. It was built on the site of an old workhouse, and within several months of opening it catered for some 170 pupils who were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, plain and fine needlework, and given virtually all their own clothes.

Inside St Alfege's, we were struck by the quiet beauty of the woodwork everywhere and by the trompe l'oeil above the altar



(painted by Sir James Thornhill, an artist we would encounter again later). Turning to look back, I was intrigued by the royal coat of arms above the door: I had not known that Queen Anne had played such an important role in the building of churches in the early 1700s. Approaching the altar and its admirable wrought iron communion rail, we observed a moment of silence next to the stone marking the martyrdom of St Alfege.

In the side aisles of the church, there were many discoveries: the organ and stained glass window in honour of Thomas Tallis, Master of the King's Music at Greenwich Palace and acknowledged father of English church music; and the other stained glass windows commemorating the baptism of Henry VIII, the marriage of Princess Mary Tudor, the baptism of General Gordon, and the death of General James Wolfe, who attended school in Greenwich and is buried in the church.

After leaving St Alfege's, we crossed Greenwich Church Street as a soft rain began to fall. Jane's infallible sense of orientation took us down the very quaint Turnpin Lane and past the recently renovated Greenwich Market. We then turned left into King William Walk for a splendid view of the Cutty Sark. I was thrilled to see

the ship that had so inspired my grandfather: he had seen the tea clipper itself arriving in England after one of its "runs" and now there it was, "as large as life". Jane and I admired it from the outside as we walked down to the waterfront and the brick rotunda that marks the entrance to the foot tunnel under the river. The Thames! I felt the life of the city as my gaze followed the sweep of the from river, from the Isle of Dogs, downriver, and round to the buildings of Royal Greenwich itself.

Devonshire Drive was our destination, now converted into flats. About 20 feet along, on the right, there was a plaque on Number 60A/60B:

**The Roan School for Girls  
This stone was laid July 30th 1877  
by  
Prior Purvis M.D. Lond.  
Chairman of the Governors**

While we were reading, a young woman walked out of the automated gate to the carpark of the Roan Courtyard flats. We asked if we could go in for a quick look but then decided against it, as we would not be sure of finding someone to let us out again! Instead Jane and I walked along to the adjacent extension which also had a plaque, including the crest:

### **Roan School for Girls 1937 Honore et Labore**

We then crossed the street to study the buildings as a whole and a young girl walked by in uniform! She kindly stopped when we asked and showed us her Roan School tie. It was nice to know that, even if the school was no longer in those

## MRS HARRIS

& other Teachers at the Roan School for Girls  
Krista Partridge recollects the Roan school for girls

I was a pupil at Roan Girls from 1958-1965, and I remember Miss Wilson, and her retirement!

Another member of staff remarked that she had not married until she retired because, as a young girl, she was at the beck and call of her brothers, and vowed that as a grownup she would not suffer the same fate.

I remember the assembly (I'd guess I was Lower VIth by then, September 1963) where a letter was read out by Miss Chamberlain, who was headmistress by then (Miss Barnsdale when I arrived), thanking us for our gifts and kind wishes on her retirement

buildings, yet the Roan School still exists, and the Roan legacy continues.

Indeed, though I am not a Roan girl myself, I treasure the Roan heritage. I have discovered so much about Greenwich I'm sure I will return.

the previous July, and signing off under her married name of Mrs Harris!

Graceless teenagers that we were, this provoked smothered giggles; the concept of a teacher having a life outside school was beyond us.

How little we knew.....

John Wyndham was one of John Harris' pen-names, and I already had a good selection of his novels on my bookshelves, with no inkling of the connection to my English teacher. Years later, I was galvanised to see a picture of my former teacher come up on the screen, during a biography of John Wyndham! The first picture



was a much younger person, not recognizable at all, but the second one was unmistakably the silver-haired lady I knew.

It transpired that they had known one another for more than twenty years before tying the knot, both being residents in separate rooms at the Penn Club.

For some reason, when she retired, they felt it incumbent on them to regularize the position, and moved into a house freshly equipped from Harrods, both having spent their adult lives leaving domestic detail to others.

It was just before the time that electric lawnmowers came into common use, and for her husband the unaccustomed exertion of mowing the lawn brought on a fatal heart attack in 1969.

I myself retired from teaching in 2007; I'm sure my many charges similarly thought that, at the end of the school day, I probably tucked myself into a cupboard until lessons began the next day.

The staff must have known what was going on, but never a word reached the girls.

Married teachers were becoming more common by the time I was there, but there were still many

of the generation who had lost fiancés during the war, and we benefitted greatly from truly dedicated teachers.

I also remember Miss Wrett-Smith; her ambidextrous trick was mesmerizing. She'd centre herself in front of the board, start writing with her left hand, then, calmly announcing that she didn't believe in wasting energy, she'd pass the chalk over to her right - and the handwriting remained identical! A great trick to keep the class watching.....

I was very involved in the musical life of the school, and Founder's Day in St. Alfeges left a lasting impression. Because Thomas Tallis was buried there, we always sang music from that period, which had a lasting impact; still an early music geek to this day. As well as my initial teacher training, I later studied part-time to gain a Music degree, and ended up teaching music.

Mrs Lister was our Music teacher; she left at the same time as we did, for another school. But she recognized my potential and gave me the running of the Recorder Club. (my mother used to say how fascinating Parents' Evenings were; I didn't change as I went through the school, but "bossy and argumentative" morphed into

"articulate with good organizing ability").

I'm still involved in the Beckenham Festival, and you can guess which section I'm involved in.

I'm astonished to hear the tale of Miss Marsh being reduced to tears - I was scared stiff of her!

I realise now what a great sense of humour Miss Barnsdale must have had. At my interview, aged

ten, she asked me why I wanted to come to the Roan; as my horrified parents cringed, I explained that I realised that I couldn't go to St Trinian's.

And finally; now it can be told - I'm sorry, Miss Tilstone, it was me that tampered with the positive phototropism experiment. Karma came back to me in the form of many naughty classes later.

Krista Partridge (58-65)



# THE MYSTERY

of the Jewellery box – can you help?

Here we have two pictures of a jewellery box sent by Hilary Haslam who was contacted by someone who owns the box now but has no connection to Roan. She googled Roan and found that there is a school and managed to get Hilary's contact details. The jewellery box is very beautiful and made of walnut and inlaid with mother of pearl and velvet. On the top of the box is an inscription 'ROAN PRIZE 1890 E.A.P.' We have no idea about the box and why it was given as a prize to E.A.P. or if it was any connection to the school. If you have any information or ideas about the box, please let us know. I've consulted Tom Davies who wrote the latest book on the Roan School buildings and he has replied that he has not come across anything of this nature in the Metropolitan archives.

Please contact Hilary Haslam if you have any ideas or information at [nealhaslam@btinternet.com](mailto:nealhaslam@btinternet.com)



# 2016 - A GREAT YEAR

for the classes of 1965 – 1972!

2016 was something of a milestone year for those Old – Roans who attended the school from 1965 to 1972. To celebrate the fact that it was fifty years since we started at Roan (well, fifty one actually) a reunion was planned for both boys and girls on Saturday May 14th, 2016. Previously, this group had enjoyed a reunion in 1990, being the 25th anniversary of the year that they started at The Roan Schools.

The event took place at the Old Roan Clubhouse, Kidbrooke, and kicked off with a splendid buffet, kindly organised by Jim and Lyndsay Love.

I myself was delighted to organise a quiz with questions on News, Sport, Products, Fashions and Music in the 1970's. Lest we forget, I am proud to remind you that the quiz team who won first prize was one that included the masterminds of Mitch, Spot, Steve Gillman and their respective partners, Lindsay, Lesley and Angie.

The evening progressed with a humorous vote of thanks from Messieurs Alan Willson and Trevor Talbot with strong overtones of Peter Cook and Dudley Moore!

At 9.30 our live band 'Stardust' took

to the stage playing mostly hits from the 1960's and 1970's. Thanks again to the group for providing music of both quality and nostalgia.

A great night out was enjoyed by many! Thanks to all who attended and also to those who could not attend but who still sent us their best wishes. Thanks also to the two ex-members of staff who were able to attend – Nigel Ballantyne and Graham Lawrence.

With apologies to those people who attended but are not in the photo below!



**Back Row:** Barry Bartlett and partner Fiona, Bobby 'Valentino' Beckingham and partner Marie, Alistair (Mitch) Mitchell, Bob Jenkins, Mitch's partner Lindsay. **Next row from back:** Trevor Talbot, Annette Talbot (nee Chuter), Daryl Bradbrook (nee Hayes), Keith Bradbrook, Angie and Steve Gillman. **Seated:** Martin Mills, Cheryl Mason (nee Thorogood), Hilary Lawrence (nee Riley), Graham Lawrence, Lesley Hughes. **Kneeling:** Boris Haynes, Laurence 'Spot' Hughes.



## FINAL LIST OF OLD ROANS WHO ATTENDED OUR REUNION ON 14.5.16

**Girls:** Lyn Hayward, Daryl Bradbrook (nee Hayes), Veronica Davies (nee Hills), Veronica's sister Valerie Cordina (nee Hills), Maxine Davis, Gill Croxon (nee Shaw), Hilary Lawrance (nee Riley), Judy Lyons (nee Howell), Linda Friar (nee Lewis), Cheryl Mason (nee Thorogood), Diane Worthy, Karen Brohier (nee Enifer), Lesley Kirby (nee Robson), Janet Livermore (nee Bell), Jean Marsh (nee Learmouth), Annette Talbot (nee Chuter).

**Boys:** Trevor Talbot, Martin Mills, Neil Harvey, Alan Willson, Alistair 'Mitch' Mitchell, Bobby 'Valentino' Beckingham, Laurence 'Spot' Hughes, Barry Bartlett, Steve Gillman, Ian Maxwell, Boris Haynes, Bob Jenkins.

**Staff:** Nigel Ballantyne, Graham Lawrance.

## 2016 – BRIGHTON BASH FOR 1965 – 1972 BOYS!

Following the success of our reunion in May, a group of boys (1965 – 1972) decided to meet up again on October 15th, 2016.

The venue was Brighton and we all enjoyed a fantastic meal together at the Côte restaurant in the city centre. After which most of the group took a flight on British Airways i360 to enjoy some fantastic aerial views of the city.

Left to Right: Alan Willson (OBE), Alistair 'Mitch' Mitchell, Stephen Swann, Martin Mills, Laurence 'Spot' Hughes, and Neil Harvey.

It was also good that Adrian Oatley

was able to join us for lunch and that Bobby 'Valentino' Beckingham was able to join us in the pub later on that night. Sincere thanks to Alan Willson for organising such a memorable day out.

Martin Mills  
martin-mills@sky.com



## AKORN REUNION 2017



So just to let you know that 14th December saw another Christmas lunch for the AKORN crew (Alf Knott Old Roan Nosh - up) The worthies - those who left the Roan School before the seventies - came from across the channel (Dave Bryden and Barry Chenery) across the Atlantic (Pete Motton) across the Thames (Adrian Buckle); also there were the Men of Kent - John Bruce, John Hester, Richard Humphrey and Reg Hodge. Suburban London offered Bill Whyte and Terry Whitton; also, there again were Dave Bryant, Mike Wilkins and down from Manchester, Mike Hansford. This lunch took place during the first of the winter's snow storms and several regulars were prevented from attending especially Des Grimble who spent the time we were eating and drinking stuck at Lyons airport waiting for a 'plane that never came.

Café Rouge in Greenwich doesn't claim to serve gourmet grub but this year, our 28th reunion, they offered a choice

of Duck, Turkey, or steak with various vegs and breads. Also more to the point were copious bottles of white and red French wine along with assorted funny hats and crackers.

We adjourned at 16.30h to the Richard II and continued catching up with each other's news; after thoroughly examining Chaucer, Reg has now begun research in to Charles Dickens; Dave Bryden continues his academic work at Rollancourt Agricultural College and Barry is thinking of coming back to England from Central France. Additions to offspring in the form of Grandchildren were counted and between us all there is a very healthy number of them.

Toasts were offered to the memory of Alf Knott, to absent friends and those of departed merit since our last lunch. So next December we hope to all meet up for the 29th AKORN and if you qualify and appreciated Alf's unique teaching skills and personality, contact John Bruce and join us. Floreat Roana!



# IMPRESSIVE TURNOUT FOR BOY'S CLASS OF '66-'73 REUNION

Old Roan Club, Saturday 3rd September 2016

Almost to the day, 50 years on from when the first year intake of 1966 first set foot inside the gates of the Roan School, Maze Hill, almost one third of that intake met again, many of them for the first time since leaving school in 1973. Our Reunion was held in the Pavilion of the playing fields and, for many of us, the lead up to the event held the same mix of anticipation, nervousness and the hope that "all would be well on the night" that we all had before starting school.

As it turned out, any doubts were unfounded and we can truly say a good time was had by all, sharing those common reminiscences that we always do: about the teachers; the classes; the expulsion; the setting alight of the grass on the heath; the pranks; the liaisons with the girls of Roan and St Ursula's; the sporting successes; and, of course, each other. Some memories were corrected; records were put straight; and even some ghosts were laid to rest. And, naturally, tongues were suitably loosened by the usual alcohol consumption ...

"Almost one third" attendance

is only slight exaggeration: amazingly, twenty-six "boys" turned up, with another two due but unable to attend on the night, plus we had the wonderful bonus of having two former masters, both close to our hearts and memories, Nigel Ballantyne and Terry Hall, grace us with their presence (and no detention cards or flying chalk on this occasion). Best wishes were also received from people far and wide with whom we'd managed to make contact but who unfortunately had to decline the invitation. As a result of the technology that did not exist (apart from the huge computer terminal we had linked up to SELTEC) in 1966 to 1973 but which we now take for granted, communications continue even with those we did not get to see.

Assisting us with our recollections (we are all in our sixties, after all) was a huge array of memorabilia in the form of Stag Lists, School Reports (good and bad), early copies of Roan Magazine, Prize Giving programmes, original school ties and scarves, and so on. In the lead up to the Reunion, old photos of football teams and Braithwaite trips had been shared

as email attachments but it was better now to see them in hard copy. Stuart Horsburgh brought and showed a DVD – see him later for copies not to be further distributed – and maybe the highlight of the evening was to see the old cine films that Terry Hall had taken of Braithwaite and other school trips. A short while before the Reunion, Terry expressed doubt that the films – standard 8 vintage – could be shown because his projector had broken down. However, a replacement was sourced and everyone attending contributed for it to be given to Terry with fondness and grateful thanks. A copy of the book "The History of the Roan School" published in 1929 was also presented to Nigel to express or gratitude to him.

Or was the highlight of the evening seeing Gary Rimmer? Gary had failed to answer any number of emails over the previous twelve months, to see if we could track him down and secure his attendance or not, but he turned up in his glory and delivered a speech penned by our Head Boy and, probably, the most famous pupil of our year, Brian Arthur Smith (Floreat Roana!). And then led us all into an impromptu (but it has to be done, doesn't it?) rendition of an unaccompanied (Stuart couldn't get the joanna

unlocked in time!) School Song.

We're biased, of course, but let this sample of feedback be testament to the fact – we all had a great time and much look forward to the next! It's gotta be down the Plume ...

"What a great evening it was at the Club House – and a particular pleasure for me to see members of my old class and from the wider year group; many of whom I hadn't met for over 43 years." – Terry Hall

"Thank you so much for a really great time last night. You made me feel so very welcome and it was great to meet so many of you after all those years." – Nigel Ballantyne

"What a great evening – which bought back some very happy memories" – Terry Thurley

"I really enjoyed myself and meeting up with people that I haven't seen for such a long time. I stated out being a bit unsure of quite what to expect but I really am glad I came." – Gary Dowsett

"Wow, what a night! It was wonderful to see so many after so long and an added bonus to meet Terry, Val and Nigel again. As Keith (Bradbrook) says the night was indeed a very special occasion



## ROAN SCHOOL FOR BOYS

## CLASS OF '66-'73 REUNION

3rd September 2016, School Field, Kidbrooke Park Road

## PEN PICTURES

(in alphabetical order)

## STEVE ARMSTRONG

Left Roan after year 1 of A levels- far too difficult for me to understand.

Married Lesley (Petal) in 1975 and still together 3 Children, Dianne (39), Debbie (38) & Lee (30) total of 6 Grandchildren. Lived in Welling since 1991 after moving to Gillingham in 1975 and then back to Charlton. Joined the Post Office/ BT in 1972 and stayed there for 30 years before taking voluntary redundancy in 2002. Set up my own company carrying out house repairs and refurbs until 2008, when I became Secretary of Sidcup Golf Club. Moved on to Mid Kent Golf Club in 2015 (Gravesend). (Could we get a golf Society going???) and plan to retire in 4 years' time. Played football for various teams and for the Old Roans for about four years in the 90's but sadly now not able to run at all (could never run very fast anyway).

I've met with Terry H, Nigel B (Neighbour of Mum's) Phil Hills, Keith, Ron and Peter Cox recently

and still hold a season ticket at Charlton. School memories: Football both at the school and in the holidays on the heath or in the park, Maths with Morey & Bowerman, Economics with Brooksy, PE with Westmorland and being forced to run around Greenwich Park in the freezing cold. Obviously, Physics and English were always enjoyable!!! may have one of those panoramic school photos' still. Member of the Old Roan Association.

Love Holidays, Golf and taking the Grand kids to Charlton. Oh yes and I love Petal as well!

## KEITH BANKS

Worked in commodities in various guises, shipping, trading and broking, from 1973 to 2015, when I retired. Highlights, travelling around the world at other people's expense, adventures in S. America, China, Malaysia and Russia. In 2001 formed partnership with two colleagues based in Paris. Worked from home and lived in Paris one week a month. Lowlights, being nice to people for 42 years. Married Jane in 1978. No children. Moved to Essex in 1988 and now live near Colchester

and will live in my memory for as long as I have one." – Peter Horn

"It was very nice to walk down some memory lanes especially with the films and photos. Wonderful to see Terry/Val and Nigel again and the footy clips from Stuart was a bonus!" – Keith Bradbrook

"Fantastic to see everyone on Saturday night." – Dennis Church

"What can I say that hasn't already been said. Brilliant evening and thanks for all your hard work

putting it together. Thanks too to Nigel and Terry for a) being there and b) being very nice about all our mangled memories and anecdotes. What must have been a sea of spotty faces to you, spread over decades, was extremely significant to us." – Jeremy Novis

"Great to meet everyone again and share memories (and be reminded of some things long forgotten)." – Andy Strong

"A most excellent evening, it was great to reconnect with all of you." – Phil Lenoir





in a small village, opposite a pub. School memories English classes with Nigel and Alfie, Geography with Barry Thomas. Braithwaite. Football matches on Saturday mornings and athletics on Friday evenings. Rambles with Terry. The Plume of Feathers.

Played football for the Old Roans from 1971-1988. Captained 5th/6th and 7th teams, ended up playing for the Veterans. When we moved to Essex, played again for local team in 1991 and finally retired from football in 1993. Lapsed Charlton supporter.

Current interests, Wine tasting, holidays, gardening, photography, music (late convert to C and W), Theatre

#### KEITH BRADBROOK

Married to Daryle (Roan girl) for 36 years, with two sons Elliot and Thomas, one grandchild Tommy, and we've recently moved to a Thameside apartment at Greenhithe after 23 years in Wilmington.

66-73 so 6th form at Roan then was a regional/national journalist before charity communications work with the Red Cross (with a stint in Pakistan/Afghanistan) and the NSPCC. Headed up comms for London Docklands when Canary Wharf was going up then Essex

County Council before going back to the NSPCC for the FULL STOP campaign in '98. Retired last year to write more - two novels finished and looking for an agent!

Football's always dominated - played semi-pro and both my boys have, including Dartford where Elliot is still captain. Love walking, mainly in the Lake District and usually stay in Braithwaite 3 or 4 times a year. Looking forward to doing so a lot more now!

Seen a few Roan boys over the years - Keith and Ron etc sometimes at Charlton games - and played football with many others. Terry Thurley was my Best Man and I was his! Usually go to the Old Roan reunion dinner in the Autumn.

#### MALCOLM BROWN

After graduating from University in 76, qualified as an actuary and spent 25 years working for 2 companies in the Financial Services Industry (Colonial FS & Lloyds Bank). Moved into academia at the beginning of 2001 for what I thought would be a slower pace of life but life as a university Professor can be even more hectic than working in industry at times.

Married Penny in 81, have a son and daughter and now we're enjoying life as grandparents. Have lived in

Canterbury since 88 and continue to play some sport (including 5 a side football) and support Charlton (and Montrose) whenever I can. However, I'm now looking forward to retirement, which is only 32 days away at the time of writing. They say that time accelerates as you get older and I agree - it doesn't seem that long ago when we boys in Drake were giving the Nelson, Rodney and Wolfe boys a whipping at football (if only!!).

#### GEOFF CARR

I studied at King's College London for a B.Sc. in Plant Sciences, followed by a Ph.D. for research on the beneficial effects of soil microorganisms on plant growth. Post-doctorate opportunities followed enabling me to live in Canada, France and Brazil. Returning to London, I joined the Crown Prosecution Service, thinking crime would provide a steadier career than that offered by short term research funding.

My interest in biological science remained. I gained a postgraduate diploma in the Public Understanding of Science from Birkbeck College, which came in handy when drafting CPS guidance on DNA fingerprinting and Female Genital Mutilation. I received awards for my work on sexual and racial equality. And as an active trade unionist

I work have worked to improve employment relations the CPS.

Outside of work I have been a research ethicist for University Hospital Lewisham and NHS London, a keen family historian, and until recently a carer for my elderly parents.

I recall XX unrolling a condom he'd bought in Woolwich market and putting it on the piano keyboard in the music room for the music teacher to find. When he opened it he picked up the condom in a piece of A4 paper (not the easiest of things to do) and asked the class "Who put this disgusting thing here?" Not sure if he was shaking more because of his anger or if he was just having a bad day. Everybody was silent, except for someone at the back of the class (possibly XX) who said that some of the boys from the year above had been in the music room over the break (it was their form room) and it may have been one of them. Nothing got resolved.

#### DAVE CHANTRY

Spent 4 years in Edinburgh, leaving with a degree in Biological Science. Stayed in Edinburgh for a further year while toying with the idea of doing a Masters. Decided instead to move onto the real world and fell into a career in retail management



with Sainsburys. Now with Asda via B&Q! Married Kate in 1979, divorced in 2001. 3 children Neil, Sue and Gavin. 3 Grandchildren - so far. Now sort of single, living in Epsom - having lived in Wembley, Hayes, Charlton, North Cheam, Worcester Park and Sutton! Go to the valley when work allows! Spend my hard-earned cash on holidays in the sun. Cycle and walk to keep fit.

School memories - Braithwaite, Terry's theatre trips, Plume of Feathers, Coledale Inn (there's a theme here), Football on the heath, Football in the park....and many more.

#### DENNIS CHURCH

I was at Leeds Uni (two spells) until I joined the real world in 1982, swapping geochemistry for a career in computer programming (as it was then, we're software engineers now). Seven years later, two colleagues and I set up our own software consultancy, and we're still going strong having grown to a mighty 20 staff in our office just off Tower Bridge Road.

Married Penny in 1991, living very happily in Streatham Hill with Adam (20) and Jonny (18).

I bump into Brian Smith in Balham from time to time, Gary Rimmer ditto until he moved to Brighton,

and by the sound of it, many of you down The Valley and elsewhere (Colchester away this year anyone?), although we haven't recognised each other. Many fond memories - but a trip to Braithwaite is up there. Were we 16? Geoff pretended he'd never seen a sheep before, and Andy E-S, Nobbs and me snuck off on day 2 to climb Scafell Pike, with a few packets of glucose for sustenance.

#### GEOFF COE

Having already sorted out my articles for a firm of CAs whilst still at school, I did not need to go to University - just a one-year course at City Poly sufficed. Whilst there, I started voluntary work at Guy's Hospital where I was a presenter on the Hospital Radio Station for ten years. The examiners at ICAEW obviously liked my scripts as they kept asking for more until I became "time barred". In 1984 I resigned from Guy's, got married and sought my fame and fortune in "the outside world".

Have had various senior management/accountant positions since, but last month decided the time had come to call it a day. Guess I made the right decision as am writing this from a cardio ward at St Thomas' Hospital, where I have been for over a week now - so it looks as though I will not be there with you all on Saturday.

My stay in hospital has meant that I have had to miss two Millwall home matches in the past week! Have followed them through thick (FA Cup Final, Play Off Finals, Europe) and thin (umpteenth relegations, Luton etc) over all these years - and am now looking forward to 8th October!!!!

Divorced in 1991 and married for second time in 2013 to Josephine who is as fervent supporter as me! Still living in Bermondsey, but via Sidcup, Orpington, Dover & Ashford.

Memories from school days: Representing the school at EBU Earls Court in Daily Mail Bridge Tournament; running TWICE for the cross country team; being in the lead at The Dips/Gulley and then finishing last in the House Race; introducing Michael Palin & Graham Chapman as my guests at Aristotelian Society - plus so many more great times.

#### GARY DOWSETT

Left Roan before I could trouble the 6th form teachers and therefore did not go to uni. Joined the Post Office as it was called to do an apprenticeship in telecoms. Only then did I find out that I had to achieve a certain level to keep my job. So off to college I went. Married Jane in 81 still with her and two girls. One lives in London the

other still at home (not for much longer he says hopefully). Despite worldwide financial meltdowns the bank of mum and dad is always open and meets all stress tests. Now live in Nuneaton via various places still support Charlton probably one of the few season ticket holders.

Retired now and enjoying every minute of it. The girls are (or should be) sorted so it's great telling them that we are spending their inheritance.

#### RON EDWORTHY

Left Roan in 1973 to go straight into a job in reinsurance found for me by Gordon Brooks; it was the only interview I had! Married to Mandy since 1979; three kids Chris (33), Andrew (25) and Samantha (24). Currently living in Hythe, Kent having previously lived in Shooters Hill Road (with Peter Cox), then Gravesend, then Reading, then Sidcup, Snodland, Folkestone, New Eltham, Sidcup again, and then Ashford! Retired in 2013 after almost unbroken career in reinsurance since that first job. Still a Charlton supporter...

Best school memory: Carol singing en masse around the Cator Estate, followed by drinking down the Plume of Feathers.



## ANDY EMENY-SMITH

Married to Marian (Plumstead Manor Head Girl) for 41 years, with one son, 2 daughters and two grandchildren. Still living in Sidcup with spells living in California and Brussels. 66-73 Roan 6th form, took a gap year and ended up with a job at IBM as an engineer. Set up the 2nd Apple shop in the UK in 1980 and from there on worked in the IT industry, now a senior data network design engineer.

Played football at various levels, one season at Dartford, until mid-thirties. Then took up rock climbing, best achievement Cemetery Gates and Cenotaph Corner in Llanberis pass.

Spent 12 years in the Air Training Corps becoming a range and weapons officer, Assault Course and rock-climbing instructor.

Still see Jeremy Novis, John Titcombe and Pete Wise. Usually go to the OR dinner where I meet a few others.

## STEVE HARDING

I did stay on for the first year of 'A' levels but soon realised that my certificates in coming second to Steve Smith in the 200metres and third in the 400mtrs would not set me for any meaningful career.

Being a Millwall supporter it will come as no surprise to you all that my life turned to alcohol and offending. Thankfully this was in a professional capacity. From school I joined a wine merchants that had many wine bars and pubs mostly around the city of London. I stayed with the company for 27 years but after that time felt that I needed a change and possibly to give my liver a break from all the chardonnays and merlots and those vintage ports that had been consumed over those many years.

My wife Ren encouraged me to take a short break before I ventured into a new career, but she soon got fed up with me sitting on the sofa watching daytime programmes like Groundforce with Alan Titchmarsh. As she is that type of person, she volunteered my services to some of the elderly folk at church to help with their gardens. People then started giving me money for my labours and so I decided to do it properly and take my RHS exam and to start up my own business. Did this for 7yrs before we moved away from Bexleyheath to Rainham Kent.

This move was enforced on me as my wife had decided to do a degree in Theology just for fun, which then led on to her becoming a vicar. I did try to be the perfect vicar's spouse and baked cakes and made cucumber sandwiches for

the congregation, but it was never going to be fulfilling. Somehow my career took a complete change and I ended up working with young people who hated school and had similar qualifications to myself. This work then led me to working with young people in the criminal justice system. With our two children married off (Gary D and Malcolm B were their godparents) any spare energy is given to our grandson and to his unborn brother who is due anytime now. If you don't see me on Saturday, then I will be literally 'be holding the baby'. We are now living in the Vicarage in Joydens Wood, Bexley so now back on our home territory and able to get down to my beloved Millwall.

## PETER HORN

June and I have been together since 1978 and have three kids – Sarah, Jon and Anna – all in their twenties. Two have left home and the youngest is about to. Home is in Paddock Wood, Kent.

Following 6th form I went to the London School of Economics after which I worked in a local social security office for four years before joining the civil service proper – Department of Health. After working with the NHS for several years, in 92 I started a career in the NHS where I undertook several management roles at local, regional and national

level. I went full circle and was back in the Department of Health by the time I packed up full time work in 2010.

Current activities include chairing Medway Community Healthcare, a social enterprise, helping to run a small social enterprise providing mentoring support to people working in mental health services and acting as a volunteer mediator for Maidstone Mediation.

June and I like to get out and about in the motorhome or on our recently acquired allotment.

## STUART HORSBURGH

Left Roan early, in 1971, to live in Tadcaster, W. Yorkshire. Then a business degree in Sheffield because I couldn't do jazz music at Leeds.

I didn't have the nerve to live in America after coaching tennis and football in summer camps, so started 32 years of teaching music (and sport, economics, sociology etc.) in high schools, boy's grammar and private independent schools around the Canterbury area whilst living in the village of Monkton. Played football for local league teams and non-club tennis for fun – supporting Burnley from afar and glancing at the Charlton



result. I enjoyed creating various music ensembles in school and took wind bands, choirs and jazz orchestras (and football teams) on tours abroad to Europe and the USA.

Married Rachel in 1985, a trumpeter, who took a geography degree and successfully brought up Laura, Rebecca, Eleanor and Samuel who have all more or less 'flown the nest,' probably sick and tired of hearing me say: "He (Brian/Arthur Smith) was in my class at Roan" every time his voice is heard on TV and radio!

I retired early, in 2010, and have started to play keyboards and sax in a rock covers band "D.N.A." with Suzi Quatro's hit drummer, Dave Neal; also in "60's Vibes" (speaks for itself); a couple of trad jazz bands on piano, drums, bass, clarinet, saxes or trombone - whatever is required on the night; and play the church organ for weddings; and 30+ years of voluntary Sunday morning services at the village church.

I'm always proud of being an Old Roan, and regret having to leave before the 6th Form (pubs and girls I'm told!) I often thought of poor 'Gel' Elliot whilst teaching a difficult Year 9 class (3rd Form in old money!); thank Bill Ellis for the jazz band that inspired me with Chamberlain's (year above us) trumpet solo in "A String of Pearls";

and a 'last-gasp' place in the football team, perhaps because of a 'famous bullet header goal' from 2 yards when Ollie Horsford crossed from the right wing on the Quaggy pitch -startling when only 4 foot tall ("Tich").

## PHIL LENOIR

Married to Anne for 38 years; 2 children, Jennifer and David, and 4 grandchildren, Catey, Rowan, Peyton and Kellan. I emigrated to Ontario in Canada 20 years ago and live on a large conservation property in the countryside about an hour west of Toronto.

I have had more careers than I care to mention, retiring last year as a software developer for a conservation organization. I love music and have a sizeable and eclectic music collection and 4 decent guitars. One claim to fame is that I was a bassist in a group that made an album in the early 70s. I love nature and animals and I own 2 dogs.

I was a volunteer director for a humane society, and I've fostered and undertaken rehabilitation training for many dogs.

## School Memories:

Blowing up the chemistry lab (twice) with Ian Pullen and "Fred" Titcombe. My nickname of Frog,

which I've always believed to be good-natured ribbing of my surname rather than a vicious commentary on my features.

## OR post school contacts:

I unfortunately introduced Bob to my lovely sister-in-law, Sally - unfortunate for Bob as he's stuck with me in the family and must occasionally feed me lunch. I was Bob's Best Man; copies of my speech are available at 25p each unless Bob coughs up a fiver to keep them from surfacing.

I introduced Pete Horn to my wife's friend, June. It struck me that I might set up a rival website to match.com as even they aren't batting 100%. Pete and June are my dearest friends (he was my Best Man and I've already slipped him a fiver). Our families are all very close and Pete's daughter Anna is adored by my grandchildren.

Andy Strong played in my group, we gigged twice but every time we achieved quality somebody would leave! As Andy mentioned we set up a real ale off licence chain around Bristol (fun until it wasn't, eh, Andy?) I may have also influenced another career choice when he saw me in my elegant bus conductor's uniform and my slick one-handed ticket machine technique (oh, the glamour!) I didn't introduce him to Maria, but I still may invite myself to

the occasional lunch.

Geoff Coe did a brief stint singing in my group. His Buddy Holly style rendering of Where Have All the Flowers Gone was a big hit. He also helped Andy and I set up the accounts for our booze business.

I dropped in to see Ian and Linda Pullen a number of years ago in their Surrey home. I hope that I was in no way responsible for the "unmarrying" Ian; I know that my freeloadng is sometimes traumatic for the victims.

## Sport:

Sport was never really my thing (too busy committing acts of science block terror), although I traded "Frog" for "Gibbon" for my unorthodox but effective ten-pin bowling stance. I had to renounce football on taking up Canadian citizenship and was forced to watch hockey (ice hockey as opposed to the game where I knocked Roger Mepstead out at school). The local big team, the Maple Leafs, has a worse record than Charlton, so I empathise with their ever-optimistic fans. Hockey does have the benefit of in-game fighting to relieve the ennui, which is rare in football unless you're a Millwall fan.

## BOB LIGHTWING

I did poorly in my 'A' levels, and then



went through a succession of jobs before working as a technician in an office equipment repair company in the late eighties, and then in the School of Engineering at a well-known former polytechnic in south east London. During this time, I also went back to college to get an HNC in electrical and electronic engineering. From 2003 I worked as a fire alarm engineer until being made redundant 10 years later.

Now semi-retired, I work part-time testing and repairing tools and equipment at a hire firm in Chislehurst, have several holidays each year around the country in our little 2 berth caravan, and I'm also a trustee at my local church.

I moved from Rotherhithe to New Eltham in the late 70s, then to Thamesmead in the early 90s, and then to St Paul's Cray in the late 90s.

I was introduced to my lovely wife, Sally, in 1978, by the excellent Phil Lenoir, she was his wife's younger sister, and we've been married since 1982. We have four children, Owen, Sam, Jessica and Megan-Rose, three of whom are married, and we have four gorgeous (not biased, what?) grandchildren.

Chief memories of Roan were the Braithwaite camps, getting sent off playing for the school football team (my last appearance, that one!), and

giving Mr Geddes' farewell address, contrasting considerably with Adrian Carlton-Oatley's address for Mr Witten, and of course, drinking at the Plume of Feathers.

### JEREMY NOVIS

I think apart from getting married, Roan in general and Braithwaite in particular have been the biggest influences on my life. Great mates with Andy E-S (footballer extraordinaire, in his own words), John (Fred) Titcombe and Pete (hair down to his waist) Wise, plus still friends with several ORs from 2/3 years above who also got the Braithwaite bug years ago.

For anyone who remembers the beck in Braithwaite down to the stone bridge, unfortunately Storm Desmond last December wrecked the whole area and they're still repairing it even now. Why did they start naming storms? It only encouraged them.

So what's happened in the intervening 43 years... Left school, instead of university I became something in the City. Lazy I think, as my (lack of) career path seems to conclude. Insurance broking. Then, fully adopting the aphorism that those who can do, do and those that can't teach, I became a trainer for my company and now herd the young and innocent along the

winding path to fulfilment that is insurance. Been doing it for 10 years and it's been great fun. Have now got the deepest respect for anyone in the teaching profession. Apart from M Briquet that is, sorry sir but never got on with you.

Married late in life to Lesley, no children but she has one from a previous. Living in Welling and now contemplating where to spend retirement days hopefully in 3/4 years. Manage to get the most of the OR annual dinners and hopefully a good turn out this year too from the 66-73ers?

Still have some photos from school days which I'm looking for. They're in an album somewhere. How many conversations start there and end in an argument?? Braithwaite of course, plus I know I've got some from the trip to La Rochelle in 1967 and have dug up two, both on the cross-channel ferry to France, including Stephen Hoy, Phil Lenoir, Malcolm Brown (I think) and others. All very smartly dressed in full school uniform too. Question - can anyone help me here? On the way back to the UK, did the staff really give us a packed lunch on arrival at Paris, tell us to meet again at the Gare du Nord that evening and then just let us go loose and wild in Paris for a few hours? Times are different now.

Am stuck re the football loyalties.

Charlton by proximity and loyalty to long-suffering friends. Millwall as I married one. Although Lesley is starting to get a bit bored with the "LOVE" and "HATE" tattooed on the knuckles joke. Got good mileage from it though.

### PHIL PROSSER

Went to Cardiff Uni to study maths straight from school, dropped out after first year, hated university level maths but did enjoy the student life. Worked as an OT Aide in a sub-normality hospital for a few years and then moved to Norfolk with my partner who was going to UEA. Ended up working in children's homes as a residential social worker, became deputy in charge of the last one. Somewhere in there we got married and had a daughter, Bethan. Then went back to university to study Sociology & Social Policy at Durham whilst my wife was studying at Gateshead. As there was no child care for mature students, set up a day nursery so I could study in peace. Graduated in 1987 and moved to York and started work at York Uni as their first Welfare Officer. And again, helped set up and run the campus nursery!

Son born in 1991, Huw who went to the nursery. Dragged over to work in the Accommodation Office when they were short staffed and never left, ended up being 2nd in charge



for many years and running the booking software. Finally became Accommodation Officer until I took early retirement and pension at 55. Found that it was all becoming far too business like and I never got to deal with the students anymore. I still take an active role in one of the colleges and take groups of students out walking on the North York Moors.

I pottered for a bit, got bored so worked on the 2011 Census for 4 months which was great fun. Then joined a temp agency who sent me along to Alcoholics Anonymous, still there as Literature Administrator, basically packing up books all day and sending them out to members and other organisations who use the same 12 step programme. It is a nice little job, doesn't pay very well but keeps me active humping boxes around all day.

Got divorced a few years back just drifted apart. I spend my spare time in pubs listening to live music and putting on various fundraising events for refugees, food-banks etc. My son lives in York and is a Sous Chef in a very good bistro/deli and my daughter lives in Brighton, I go down as often as I can as she plays in a folk/punk band and is always out gigging.

My memories of Roan are varied, I got more out of the extra-

curricular activities than the teaching I feel, apart from the black eye, Braithwaite (and a lady in a caravan on the last night!), trips to the Greenwich Theatre with Terry Hall and other things like walks on the downs and a caravan park in Deal! Going to the BBC to watch the Pythons, the Goodies, Michael Bentines Potty Time etc. Volunteering with Task Force - that was mainly to pick up girls. And of course, the Plume of Feathers, dipping our ties in cider and then sucking them during afternoon lessons, I ended up working there when I turned 18 for a few months.

#### IAN PULLEN

After Roan School, went to the University of Kent at Canterbury (same as Peter Wise and Malcolm Brown). Graduated in Electronics then stayed on to do a PhD, and finally worked at the university for 5 years. After that joined the BBC Research Department at Kingswood, Surrey. Helped invent things like radio data (RDS), Nicam, digital telly etc. Left there after 22 years (voluntary redundancy) and joined Ofcom for about 3 years, Redundant again! Did consultancy for 2 years. Now semi-retired. Married Linda in 1993, got "unmarried" in 2004. No kids. Live in Surbiton, but thinking of retiring to Sandwich, Kent

I'm a lifelong supporter of lost causes (i.e. Charlton). Not sure who is beating us on Saturday!! Although they have actually won some games at last. I also follow my local team, AFC Wimbledon. Went to Wembley to see them beat Plymouth in the league 2 playoff final.

#### GARY RIMMER

Mine has been a 'portfolio' career. Degrees in pharmacology and microbiology. Ethnopharmacologist with the WHO. Unwritten PhD spiked by politics. Segued into management consultancy in the city for a few years; even started my own agency - work for Pepsi, Levis, Disney, Jeep. Hated it.

Gave it up to become a freelance television journalist/producer. Lately been making Dispatches and Panoramas. You can see my latest effort on Panorama, Monday week: 'Why are gambling machines so addictive?'. My deepest sympathies if you are. (The stats suggest at least one of us on Saturday may have this problem).

What else? Was house futurist for Readers Digest magazine (picture by-line) for 5 years. Have written 5 (published) quirky non-fiction books. Won several awards as a writer of short films - including a Silver Hugo for a drama for the British Army on how to get out of a minefield.

(Very, very slowly in case you ever wondered ...) Lousy fee but I had a company of foot at my command. Likewise, a film on how to board a smuggler's ship for the Navy (Yo ho ho I kid you not.) Nominated for RTS journalism award. No plans to stop, I shall die in harness. Or maybe I'll move to Spain instead ...

Along the way travelled worldwide. Still healthy and active. Memorable moments include sitting in a cab discussing chimp rights with Jane Goodall (a giant in small sandals) coming second to Hugh Grant in a beauty contest (!) tracking down a murderer and bearding him on camera (scumbag) proving a crime against humanity by a Big Pharma multinational (corporate scumbags) officially insulting the people and country of Greece (so they said) and being threatened with a gun in anger (twice). Meeting a room full of people, I haven't seen for 40 years? Piece of cake. Gulp ...

School? Wandering about the Cutty Sark at lunchtimes. Chasing the girls from St Ursula's. Late prefecting with Graham Bennett (cushy). Moving from a green blazer to black. Simon Wimshurst and his big boots shamed (as if) on stage. Terence Rigden. Bill Savage. Dennis Palmer visiting from the army. Steve Hewitt's beard. Not grasping Latin. 'Granny' Wood and how he liberated Italy in a tank. Technical drawing



and other pre-internet skills. That teacher with Parkinsons ... Smoking on the corner. Then getting caught smoking in the dip (thanks to the heath fire incident). That mass brawl in the park. Roan girls (anyone know Diane Twigg?) Getting my tie tagged on our first day as 'turds' ... Sharing the one computer terminal in the borough. (God, I was bored.) Distilling cider in chemistry after the GCEs. Watching the moon landing on TV in the physics lab. Being in Wolfe house. Terry's awaydays. And yes Braithwaite, particularly with the girls from Streatham High. Ding. Dong. Scouts with Skip Evans and Nigel. Visiting Madiera on the SS Uganda. Gordon Read's puns. Glenda Jackson.

The lessons? They all blend into one. But all in all, school was overwhelmingly a pleasure - but a huge sense of relief the day it all ended. (The very next morning I headed off to be a barman at a holiday camp, wherein to pop my cherry and learn my lifetime mantra: it's Friday night, I've got a tenner in my pocket and I'm still not in prison ...) Still see Brian Arthur (or 'crater-face-from-the-pit' as he was then) used to see Pud, more often Dennis Church, Pete Wise for a while. Bumped into detective sergeant Paul Groom at the Drury Lane magistrates' court once (don't ask). He invited me, "To go for a sherbert sometime". But I never

did. Too late now ... Oh and Dave Garnsworthy who I met once in Dublin (he now lives in Galway with his young wife and 2 small kids) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dR5QnWhfByl&feature=youtu.be>. And Gareth Toogood. He went up north to start an agrochemicals business. Saw an article in a northern paper a few years back about a man named Toogood prosecuted for fly tipping chemicals. No idea if it was him ... Terry's Xmas cards ... Finally, who was it who joined the merchant navy? We used to go drinking when he landed in the UK. Now I can't even remember his name. The years take their toll. (Get well soon Geoff.)

I live in Brighton. Was married for 18 years. Until ex-wife came out. Very Brighton. Now happily single (and looking). Happily? Delightedly. Single parent. Two kids. Son Sam just off to Cambridge to read history. Daughter Ruby aspiring to be a pop singer. She does have an astonishing voice.

Colour me Guardianista and Bremaier. Still could not give a \*\*\*\* about football (sorry). But I have written a book about it. Now THAT's irony.

#### ANDY STRONG

My potted life story ..... left Roan in 1973 and worked for London

Transport for 9 years. Then moved out to Bristol to run a real-ale off-licence chain with Phil Lenoir. Then got a job in local government and still there after 28 years, dealing with public transport - including bus passes for pensioners.

Been married for 37 years, got 3 married daughters (one of whom lives in Charlton) and 5 grandchildren. Living in a village in the Mendip Hills in Somerset that has no shop but 2 pubs and beautiful countryside.

Still playing guitar and/or bass in various bands with friends, at local social events and at church. The nearest I can get to a claim to fame is that a demo tape of a song I co-wrote, sang and played on got an airing on Radio Bristol in 1996.

Saw Phil L a few months ago and saw Bob Lightwing 25? years ago. When I was working as a bus conductor in London, Gordon Brooks (Economics teacher) and Stephen Hoy got on my bus (on separate occasions). Don't think I've seen any other ORs since leaving school.

My memories of Roan are selling my packed lunches to Ron E, playing pop band hangman in Mr White's English lessons with Phil L and planning the overthrow of the capitalist military/industrial

complex with Andrew Weir.

#### COLIN STUBBINGS

Married Phil Hill's sister, Julie, in 1978 and had 3 sons. We divorced in 2000 and I have not seen Phil since. All the boys have their own lives; my eldest has 2 girls and my middle son 2 boys. For 31 years I worked in banking (Barclays and Credits Agricole and Lyonnaise). Mostly in corporate banking focusing on distressed companies and companies in the Nordic Region, ran Barclays Stockholm office on an interim basis. Travelled widely including 6 trips to Oz on a major court case.

Spent last 11 years as a Business Analyst at the Pensions Regulator in Brighton, commuting from West Wickham. Didn't go to university but got my bankers exams, MBA from the Open University and a certificate in Gestalt Counselling.

Outside work and family, I ran football teams for all 3 boys, as badly as I played so much that my middle son took up rugby. Have been a volunteer tutor in adult basic literacy, trustee of a charity for learning disabled adults and Tree Africa. Spent 3 weeks in Tanzania in 2008 teaching waking in the shadow of Kilimanjaro. Try to keep fit running a couple of times a week, completing my third marathon in



playing around with computers nowadays!).

I have been working for the last ten years for a company based in Canary Wharf providing IT service to the financial market companies... how I love financial traders!... such caring understanding people! Prior to that I have worked in IT for all of my life for an assortment of companies, local government, central government, banking, etc.

I currently live in Sidcup, with my wife Karen, whom I married in 1988. We have one daughter Joanne, who is mad about horses. As a result we have a horse called Moneypit, ...oops!...sorry, no the horse is called Badger, but Badger is the money pit!

I have kept in regular touch with 'Nobs', (Jeremy), Novis, Pete Wise and Andy Emeny-Smith and have regularly attended the Old Roan Reunion Dinners in October at the club where we generally meet up with Ron. Here's another memory I have I have from 1966. It's the 1K register/dinner money list, called out every morning by the late (I believe!) Gordon Read, whom I worked with for a couple of years back in 1970s!

Palmer AP Palmer DA Pendergast Penny Prosser Pullen Read Rigden Rimmer Roberts Savage Shea

to enjoy cooking – I think I have cooked a good meal if my guests don't end up in A&E.

Best memories of school being part of the team that won the English Schools Individual Cup, trips to Braithwaite (Barbara came from Lancaster, so we often popped into to Braithwaite, whilst we were up in the Lakes).

I am sure that like most of you at the time we did not appreciate it, but the Roan gave us a great education and a strong foundation for life and I think we all owe the Masters (Wally Garstang, Sam Beal, Shag Witten, Snooze, Alfie Knott, Morley, Gell, Gordon Brooks, Barry Thomas, Terry Hall, Nigel Ballantyne, Eric Geddes plus so many more who I have forgotten) an enormous debt of gratitude for giving us the life skills and education to make a positive contribution to our world

## JOHN TITCOMBE

A memory I have from Roan is getting to school before 8:00 to access the computer terminal in Room 19 to 'play' online before the connection rate increased to an extortionate £6 per hour terminal time after 09:00!...a lot of dosh in 1972. This actually set me up on a 40 year plus career in IT, (Data processing, Computing or whatever the current marketing term is for

the various Financial Services Regulators (FIMBRA, PIA, FSA) before becoming a Compliance Consultant for mainly Discretionary Portfolio Managers for the last 6 years of my working life.

I married Barbara in 1987 and moved to Flitwick in Bedfordshire (near Junction 12 (Toddington Services) of the M1). We did not have any children of our own, but Barbara had a daughter from her previous marriage. Sadly, Barbara passed away (Ovarian Cancer) last August, so I have been on my own for the last year – not recommended. I gave up work to look after Barbara some three years ago. I currently occupy myself with helping at our local church, and the Hospice where Barbara spent the last 17 days of her life. I am also an active Freemason and have bumped into several Old Roans, whilst visiting various Lodges. Before Barbara was ill, I used to do quite a lot of diving – she loved the turquoise sea and white beaches, I loved being under the water sharing the world of beautiful corals and colourful fishes. During her illness we did not go away on holiday, so I had not dived for 5 years, but as mentioned above I have just got back from my first diving holiday for 5 years and I hope to take up diving again. I also enjoy gardening and now that I have to cook for myself, I am starting

April, running a couple of halves a year, knees willing! Love the theatre and have happy memories of trips to Greenwich Theatre. Bit of a fair weather addict, but as I have been twice already this year let's hope we are set fair.

Am writing my first novel but have been stuck on 29000 words for a couple of years. I understand writers block! Read Arfur's autobiography My name is Daphne Fairfax.

## TERRY THURLEY

As some of you may recall my mum died during my A Levels – we were living in Herne Bay Kent at the time and I was commuting to Blackheath on a daily basis – Mad or What!!!!!!

I was offered a place at Lancaster University, but decided not to take it and to stay at home with my recently bereaved dad. So, I enrolled in a Fundamentals of Accountancy course, at North East London Poly, based in Barking Essex, which was the first step to becoming a Chartered Accountant. Never quite managed to pass all the exams together, but I enjoyed being an accountant. Like many I drifted into Financial Services and spent the next 8 or so years working as an accountant/tax/financial adviser. In 1987 I joined one of the newly formed Financial Services Regulators – FIMBRA. I spend some 22 years working for



Simmonds Simpson Smith B  
Smith S Strong Stubbings Thurley  
Titcombe.....Thats me! Toogood  
Trafford Vaughan Webb Wier West  
White Wimshurst Wise ...and one of  
the two Wybrews..(John or Paul)

### TONY TRAFFORD

I went from Roan to Marconi's in Chelmsford for a sandwich course with the filling at Southampton Uni, where I met the love of my life, Teresa at the Teachers training college. After completing the course, I moved to Marconi at Portsmouth. This meant I could live in Gosport where Teresa was teaching, and I could cycle to work. Teresa & I married in '78. In 1983 we fancied a move west and got as far as Poole. I got a job with Plessey as a software engineer, which went to GPT and then back to Marconi's all without moving, but in 2001 Marconi went bust, and redundancy followed. With two children at university to support I got a job with Thales where I still am, still writing code. Our 2 children, Barney and Mary are grown up with children of their own now, we have four grandchildren. When not working or commuting I spend most of my time gardening.

I have happy memories of Roan, from getting lost on Helvelyn at Braithwaite or going to double chemistry after sinking several

whisky and ginger ales at the pub at lunch time.

### PETE WISE

Single, living in Abbey Wood on the Welling border, no kids that I know of!

After graduating in 1976 from University of Kent at Canterbury with a degree in Chemistry, I "dabbled" in music (bass guitar) for a little while.

Joined Tate & Lyle in 1978, in process development, control and troubleshooting, then Energy & Utilities Manager. Left T&L in 2002 after 25 years and have been fully retired since! (Note - single, no kids or grandkids)

I joined Freemasonry in 1981, which became a serious hobby, and since 2002 have been a "Full-time Freemason" which has taken me all around the UK & Europe, USA, India, Singapore, and I am involved with Masonic bodies in Malta, Cyprus, the Seychelles and even Slovenia. Still interested in music, but these days "I only play with myself!!!"; I do have a small collection of Bass Guitars.

Have been in regular contact with Andy Emeny-Smith, John Titcombe & Nobs over the years, and have attend several ORA Dinners.

## POEMS BY PH ANGUS

Some poems written by Paul Henry Angus (PH Angus 1966-72) recollecting times at Roan. He writes 'I still live in Modena, Italy, where I teach at the Music School. A magazine used to appear for sports day. I last submitted some poems in 1993'

### Ante litteram

for Stanley Beal, with gratitude

I was often late, and Sam done good  
To put me in the sin-bin. My excuses -  
You wait and wait and then three London buses  
Show up - could not pass muster. Barry Wood,  
The boy next door could make the morning bell  
So why not me? Checkmate. It would be better  
To nip this in the bud. A week of litter  
Duty after school (thought Mister Beal)

Should do the trick. It did. I'm fifty-eight  
And being psychoanalysed because  
I still can't manage not to turn up late  
For practically everything. Vita brevis.  
(Omnibus - right, Sir?). I have spent the better  
Part of manhood picking up litter.

### Sweeping

I sweep the floor again, coaxing the dust  
from under chairs and tables into piles  
for scooping. My small repertoire of thrust  
and nudge across the terracotta tiles  
is off the front foot - Dexter facing spin,  
forward defensive. Where (I ask myself)  
does it all come from? Haven't I just run  
the Hoover over, dusted down that shelf?  
So why does dust gang up on me, a field  
set to surprise a snick, punish an edge  
when all I wanted was a private room



### Serious-fraud squad stuff for Alfie Knott

Mine's been a life of stealing moments when their backs were turned. You taught me with your tanned forehead bent over a notebook, your red pen encrypting messages, your nervous hand twitching above the page, a hazel branch dowsing below ground for those silent springs which rise in me now, seated on a bench were junkies leave syringes by the swings.

You'd let us read when you needed to write, an act of petty theft which, multiplied by forms and terms and school years, now amounts to serious fraud squad stuff. But I now write in your defence. Look how those stolen moments injected me with being, beauty, light.

### Acteon the hunter turned into a stag and killed by his own dogs

We tell him not to look, but does he listen? something otherworldly stops his ears; he spies on her as nymphs begin to loosen the fibula that clasps the cloth she wears to mask her purity. And this is how he loses it. He sees Diana place now her left foot in the water, now her right. The rest is metamorphosis.

Hunt, Hunter, Huntley ... a role call of boys – stag heads embroidered neatly on the breast pocket of their blazers. We were all warned not to look, but did – like Acteon, hounded by archetypes. How come I flee from dogs (and gods) that bite relentlessly?

for clouting silence round in. It's a broom that I have learned to play with on a pitch that's taking spin, and daily I must wield.

### Tied for Alfie, in memoriam

I tied a granny:  
nothing wrong with that  
except the reef lied flat.  
One among many

errors Sir (i.e. Alf)  
corrected. A dab hand  
at hitches with round  
turns (how come half?).

England (Beryl too  
who got knotted for  
good) expects, while Sir  
jotted songs for a review.

Lunchtimes he'd recruit  
for barber-shop quartets  
or syncopate Fats  
in a three-piece suit.

He called us bright kids  
Brainbox. At the Brook  
Kidron, brought to book,  
reffed into Davids.

A life of galleys  
proofread Prufrocks  
from quays, docks,  
black walls, back alleys.

Quizz: who sliced what  
at Gordium? Smart Alecs  
in mid-1960s specs  
knew it was knot.



## LIYSF 2016 REPORT

Report of the London International Youth Science Forum LIYSF conference 2016 (Funded by the Old Roan Association and the John Roan Foundation to an outstanding Science 6th form student)

Over the summer I had the opportunity to go to the 58th annual London International Youth Science Forum (LIYSF). The theme of the forum was 'Great Scientific Discoveries'. There were a lot of things I discovered about myself and science during LIYSF. For 2 weeks I stayed in a hotel that mimicked university housing, this definitely took me out of my comfort zone, especially due to the fact that I had to share a room with 5 girls I had never met before! These other girls went to school in Belgium and Macclesfield. I learnt to make friendships very quickly and to interact with many people of different ages and backgrounds. My experience at LIYSF went beyond my expectations as it also exposed me to amazing scientists, like the Nobel Prize winning, Ada Yonath, who at our last lecture encouraged young women to pursue science whilst keeping in touch with our families.

During LIYSF I went on a variety of scientific visits. I first visited Imperial College's Department of Materials and looked at their use of biomaterials in regenerative medicine. The visit gave me an insight

into the research that was trying to overcome the difficulty of culturing heart cells and the future of drug delivery. At visits to the John Innes Centre and the Earlham Institute, we had talks given by Dr Jonathan Clarke, Tony Maxwell and Dr. Graham Etherlington. Dr Clarke spoke briefly on how understanding genetics and epigenetics can help businesses and the role of genetics in the future of sustainable agriculture. Maxwell spoke on how the future of antibiotics for resistant strains of bacteria lies in microorganisms and plants. Dr. Etherlington, a computational biologist, talked about the importance of sequencing DNA. After that we were visited the labs and saw the sequencing machines they used and learnt about the prominence next generation sequencing by Alumina and their new minion sequencer and its potential in the field. I also visited the Wellcome Genome Campus and was able to see where data from gene sequencing was stored.

One message that resonated with me amongst many during LIYSF was from Professor Monica Grady, "we may speak different languages but we all speak science and engineering".

## BEATING THE BOUNDS 2017

As you might realise 'Beating the Bounds' does not happen very often but there is a tried and tested script from many years which traces all the significant venues associated with John Roan and the Roan Schools. Some might call this a 'pub crawl' but it just so happens that a great many places we are required to visit are pubs! We start off at the Mitre where John Roan is reputed to be buried close by and from there, we visit St Alfege's where the photo you see is taken underneath the plaque commemorating John Roan and his legacy to educate the children of Greenwich. The whole trail would end up at the Maze Hill site but by the Eastney street building, the evening was growing dark and the hill steeper than we remembered and so a stately retreat to Greenwich was the favoured route. Our group consisted of Old Roans (pupils, teachers, governors, trustees and parents) named below from left to right in the photo: Bennett Spong, Jan Farmer, Linda Nelson, Sally Spong, Chris Strong, Viv Lawrence, Hillary Haslam, Patrick Cooper. We all look forward to another 'beating the bounds' to keep the memories alive.





# LIYSF 2017 REPORT

London International Youth Science Forum – 2017

Science has been shown to continually connect people of different backgrounds. Regardless of race, religion, and culture, the fundamental passion and interest shared for the subject are what enable such cooperation, which I was fortunate enough to have been a part of at the 59th London International Youth Science Forum. Inviting 475 students from 67 different countries, the 2 memorable weeks I spent at LIYSF provided me with an educated outlook on the benefits of international collaboration, a more focused vision of my future ambitions and friends all around the world.

Hosted by Imperial College London, the accommodations were based around South Kensington in multiple hotels; soon after I checked in, I eagerly went on to meet my roommates. Finding out they were from countries like China, Italy, and Romania, I considered this an opportunity to gain an insight of their different cultures and practices, such as the emphasis held upon traditional medicine in China. This experience really highlighted that learning at LIYSF was not just limited to science alone.

Following the opening ceremony where all the participants gathered in the Ondaatje Theatre at the Royal Geographical Society, we began our lectures. At LIYSF, you observe both plenary and specialist lectures. Plenary lectures consisted of a whole host of different scientific topics, ranging from "CERN: The Higgs Boson – and beyond" to "Cybersecurity: It's so much more than just 1's and 0's" to "Vision Impossible". Specialist lectures, however, are chosen prior to attending the forum, with my personal favourite being given by Dr. Matthew Sinclair, a post-doctoral researcher at Imperial, who gave a lecture on machine learning in medical analysis as well as AI's impact on diagnosis in hospitals.

Soon to become a medical student when I was attending the forum, I had chosen "The secrets to a virus' success" as one of my specialist lectures. Dr. Lucy Thorne, an Oxford Biochemistry graduate and current researcher of immune system interactions at UCL, introduced a whole host of concepts. We were taught of the reproductive mechanisms of influenza, as well as unique viral qualities that

I honestly believed I would not enjoy the lecture as I'm generally more interested in Biology. However, her talk 'Landing on a comet: The story of Rosetta and Philae' was about perseverance, resilience and the importance of scientific collaboration.

On the 1st of August, I had a lecture on 'Life: Messing up is the best thing ever' given by Dr. Mary O'Connell. Dr. O'Connell spoke on several mass extinctions, including the one that is happening today. She focused on the preservation of these species and the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration. However, she mentioned that after every mass extinction there is an emergence of new species. Later on that day we had a lecture by Dervilla Mitchell, who gave us an insight on her work as an engineer. She believed in looking at the bigger picture; her lecture taught me not to see constraints and challenges as negatives as they will eventually enable creativity.

During the specialist study day, I attended a lecture given by Dr. Lucy Thorne on the 'Secrets to a Virus' Success'. Dr. Thorne spoke on her experience travelling to work at the heart of the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone. At the end of our lecture on Ebola and the two bucket disease (picture it!), we broke up into groups and tried to find a way to communicate what we had learnt. With other members of my group

I spoke in front of the other 500 students about the topic I had just learnt. This was challenging for me but I found working with my group and writing a script to simplify the science rewarding.

LIYSF provided opportunities to meet new people from all the around the world; at the beginning and the end of the forum there were parties at the Chelsea Old Town Hall and we were encouraged to explore South Kensington during the crossword treasure hunt. At the science forum I met people who I hope will be lifelong friends from Malaysia, Turkey, New Zealand, Australia and Belgium and I am excited to see what the future holds for us all.

The science forum has definitely encouraged me to go after my dreams and even consider a job in research. LIYSF showed me how collaborative science is and I look forward to science giving me the opportunity to meet new people. After the specialists' visits and lectures I have become more interested in the different paths that science can give me.

I am grateful to the Old Roan Association and the John Roan Foundation for giving me opportunity of a lifetime by funding me to attend the conference, thank you

Elizabeth Famosa 13J, 2016



enable their high efficiency in transmission. In particular, I found myself most captivated by the human norovirus- more commonly referred to as the "winter bug". This virus is relatively common and causes gastroenteritis, where symptoms include: nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and abdominal cramps. Learning of the intelligent mechanisms stimulated by the virus was very intriguing.

Along with lectures, I had scientific visits that were also chosen before attending. In Norwich, I visited the John Innes Centre where we were given a brief introduction to genetic modification, given a tour around the research facility and looked at various historical books about botany. The books were incredible. Some dated up to 500 years ago, with them being present in a room with very specific conditions to retain the quality of the books. In addition, I also visited the Wellcome Genome Campus that highlighted the importance and relevance of gene sequencing- particularly in aiding disease treatment.

During other days, optional visits were available! As expected, many international participants took this opportunity with open arms, but there certainly were a fair number of English students joining them too. Visit locations included:

Theatre Shows, The London Eye, Buckingham Palace, Oxford/ Cambridge, Tower of London and even the prehistoric Stonehenge. Of course, visits around London were not limited to these group events, but they were definitely a great opportunity to make some new friends.

Although the lectures and visits were fantastic, the most memorable and enlightening aspect of the whole programme was the project bazaar at the Royal Geographical Society. I walked around the venue for roughly 4 hours, observing the inspiring projects that were being conducted all around the world and speaking to the participants presenting them. For instance, there was a student from China that had developed a machine that shifts the body into very specific positions in response to environmental stimuli, using a detector. Amazingly enough, he constructed this machine to support his father who was suffering from sleep apnoea. Another student from the USA had created an inexpensive diagnosis and prognosis kit for leukaemia, for use all around the world in developed and undeveloped countries alike. Other interesting projects included: reducing hepatic cancer spread, the environmental effects on autism

and the possibility of creating a space settlement to aid Earth's recovery from the issues caused by our rapidly increasing population. Seeing all these different students present the projects they were passionate about and worked hard on was truly motivational.

Personally, that's what I believe LIYSF was all about. To have your horizons broadened, and your passion for science rekindled by like-minded individuals across the globe. The forum also helped guide

my future ambitions. Following the 2-week period, the possibility to work abroad with other incredible scientists, both as a doctor in hospitals and to undergo research, had become an incredibly exciting prospect. Ultimately, having now completed the programme, I have no doubt that the new memories, experiences, and knowledge I've gained from the 59th annual LIYSF will be life-changing for me.

Amin Daud - The John Roan School





# LIEUTENANT CH SEWELL VC

Lieutenant Cecil Harold Sewell VC (Roan pupil 1903-7)

Cecil Sewell VC was commemorated 100 years from the day he was killed in action on 29th August 1917 by the laying of a plaque near where he was born in Royal Hill Greenwich in 1895. He was only 19 when he died in an act of conspicuous bravery; the citation is documented in Marian Darragh's account of the Great War and John Roan 1917-20 which you can read in this magazine.

As you are aware, each recipient of a VC from WW1 is being given the honour of a plaque being laid in the pavement near to their place of birth. Family and dignitaries assembled on 29th August 2017 to commemorate his bravery and sacrifice. The

Sewell family also lost two other sons, all three were Roan boys and are commemorated on the marble plaque at the entrance to the Maze Hill building.

Marian was invited to attend the commemoration as she had spent many hours researching the Roan boys who died in the war, even visiting graves in France and Belgium on many occasions to discover where each boy is buried (or named on a plaque) of course some fought in Mesopotamia and the site of their burial is inaccessible given the political situation in the Middle East.

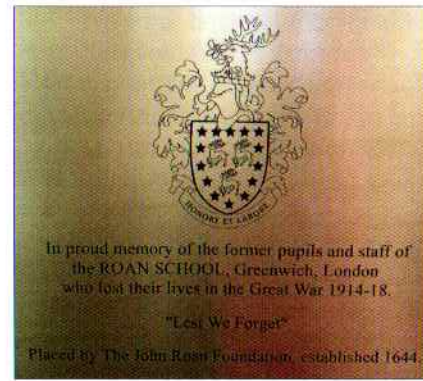


## Memorial plaque laid in St Georges Memorial church Ypres

Marian also spearheaded the move to place a memorial plaque to the Roan Boys in St Georges Memorial Church in Ypres which was funded by the John Roan Foundation. The memorial service which took place on 12th October 2018 was attended by ex- Roan teachers Marian Darragh, Mike Sayers Linda Karlsen (also Foundation governor) and Jan Farmer (also John Roan Foundation Trustee). The Old Roan was well represented by Steve Nelson and his wife Shirley. Wreaths were laid, poems were read; the service was conducted by the church's lay

preacher. It was a moving ceremony and fitting that the sacrifice of the Roan boys who died in that terrible war is recognised 100 years later.

### Lest we forget





# THE GREAT WAR & ROAN

The Great War & John Roan Part 3. August 1916-July 1917

August 1916 was the start of the third year of the Great War, which was supposed to be over by Christmas 1914. Many Old Roans had already lost their lives, and doubtless many more were suffering as a result of terrible injuries.

At the start of this third year, the first to die was Leslie Charles Simpson (1911-13), age 19, on August 15th. On the 23rd, 21 year old Frank Edward Heaseman (1908-11) died.

Richard George Chave (1903-6) lost his life on September 15th. He was 25 years old. Also on the 15th, Harold Bernard Dowdell (1905-9), age 20, (brother to Ernest George, who was to die in 1918) was killed during the Battle of Flers Courcellette, a stage of the Battle of the Somme. Battalion records show only 150 men reached the objective.

The third casualty, on the 15th September was Reginald Charles Hickman (1906-10). He fought with the Canadian Infantry and was 21 years old. He had gone to Canada to learn farming.

Six more deaths occurred in October. On the 1st, James Carpenter Crawford (1908-10), age 20, an active member of the Old Roan Association, and on the 3rd, Albert Cyrus Bond, age 22. Albert was a chemical Laboratory technician at the school. He was awarded a DCM, and died of wounds in France.

The Citation for his DCM reads – "For conspicuous gallantry in action. He assumed command of his platoon, cleared the enemy trench and captured 30 prisoners, displaying great courage and determination throughout" (14/11/1916).

There were two more deaths on the 7th – Donald James Vivian Knott (1903-5) was 25 years old. He was prominent in athletic circles, and was a member of Blackheath Harriers; and Bernard Arthur Purver (1902-6), age 27. Bernard was a married man. His Battalion attacked a position called the Girdlines on the Somme, and their attack was halted by heavy machine gun fire. Of the 16 officers and 465 other ranks that went into action, only 4 officers and 100 men survived. Bernard was a Captain,

so he was one of the 12 officers who lost their lives.

Graham Charles Hine Bulford (1907-11) was another Canadian Infantryman. He was 21 years old.

The last to die in October was Herbert George Perry (1909-14). He was another 19 year old. In the admissions books, it says he "went to Africa" on leaving school.

November, and another 2 years of war ahead, but no-one knew that at the time. Robert O'Donoghue (1907-12), age 20 was killed by a shell explosion while fighting with the Royal Munster Fusiliers on the 2nd. On the 5th, Percival Robert Sands (1909-11), a Royal Engineer died, age 22.

The last casualty of 1916 was Herbert Victor Sewell (1897-1905). He was a Barrister at Law, 27 years old, and died at Beaumont-Hamel during the Battle of Ancre at the end of the battle of the Somme. It is not the last time we hear of the Sewell family. Three sons were to die in the Great War, and they are all Roan Old Boys. Herbert was featured in a TV programme in November 2016, entitled "Last Heroes of the Somme".

1917 began with two more losses – on the 29th of January, Cecil

Noakes (1902-10) age 23. His brother, Stanley, had been a casualty in July 1916. On the 30th Ivo Nixon Nicholls (1897-1900), age 32.

Cecil Hubert Baxter (1903-06), age 26/7 died on February 1st. He is commemorated on the Basra Memorial, Iraq. Then, on the 11th February, Gillies MacKirdy (1893-1902), aged 31. Captain MacKirdy was unusual in that he was over 6 feet tall.

Only one Old Boy from March 2017 is on the Memorial – Cyril Hambley Panther (1911-12), age 19. Cyril was a Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve aboard HMPMS "Duchess of Montrose". She was a paddle steamer that was commandeered by the Admiralty. Initially a troopship, she was converted to a minesweeper. While operating off the coast of Dunkirk, she struck a mine which had been laid by a German U boat. She broke in two and sank in less than a minute. Thirty-one crew were reported as having been saved, but 13 men, including Cyril were lost.

Only one casualty in March, but there were seven in April. On the 11th, a Seaforth Highlander, Alan Robert McClure (1905-9). He was 20 years old, and was killed by a shell while he was asleep in a dugout.



The next day, the 12th, 2nd Lieutenant Robert Harry Groves (1902-9) died of wounds received during the action for which he was awarded the MC. The citation reads – "For gallantry and devotion to duty on the night of 3 April 1917. This officer brought his company up under heavy machine gun fire, and set a high example to all ranks. He succeeded, through constantly exposing himself, in getting his men into position with slight casualties, he also brought in the body of an officer under heavy machine-gun fire". And he was only 21 years old.

There is a Memorial plaque to him in St. Alfege Church, Greenwich.

Roy Smith (1899-1906), who was 27 years old, was poisoned by gas at Ypres, and wounded at Hullock prior to his death on 14th April. He had made arrangements to get married on his return home. His brother, Owen was also to die in 1918.

Alfred Septimus Bartlett (1901-06), a Trooper with the Australian Light Horse lost his life on the 21st of April, aged 27. He had gone to Australia when he was 22. He is buried in Israel.

Royal Fusilier John William Charles Bushell (1908-12) was only 19 when he died on April 23rd, and

on the 24th, Percy (Percival) Knight (1906-11) died at the age of 22.

The last casualty in April was William Topley Barratt (1888-91). He died of wounds and is buried in Karasouli Military Cemetery, Greece. Aged 40 he was one of the first members of the Blackheath Volunteer Reserve.

And so to May 1917. On the 6th, Walter Arthur Chamberlin, who was at the school for only a short time in 1895, but nevertheless, earned his place on the Memorial. He was 32, and a gunner with the Canadian Field Artillery. He had a wife back home in Toronto, but was originally from Woolwich.

Francis George Oliver Colebrook (1910-17) is buried in Plumstead Cemetery. He was taken ill during training in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve at a depot in Crystal Palace, and died three days later at the age of 18.

Five more deaths in June 1917. On the 3rd, Frederick James Machen (1905-11), who was one of the few left of the original battalion when he was killed at the age of 23. He had volunteered at the outbreak of war in August 1914.

Another Old Boy who enlisted at the start of the war was Cecil Wallace Ayling (1909-11). On

enlistment, he was only 16 years and 10 months old. He died at the age of only 19. His brother, Leslie was to die later in the same year. Three brothers enlisted – 2 died and the other, Edward Wallace was severely wounded during the retreat from Mons in 1914.

John Walter Grummitt also had a brother who was to die later in the war. John Walter (1910-11) died 18th June, aged 22. Prior to his death he had suffered from trench fever and shell-shock.

Reginald Arthur Mines (1902-7) was a Company Sergeant Major with the Royal Fusiliers. He had enlisted in September 1914, and was 26 years old when he died.

Arthur Turner ((1901-2) enlisted in November 1914. He was killed in a night raid by an aerial dart after only a few weeks' service in France at the age of 31.

The third year of the war was drawing to a close, but still the casualties continued. In July there were three more losses. On the 1st, Harold George Payne (1898-1903) died of wounds, aged 29. Ralph Ewart Gordon Smith (1908-9) was a driver with the Royal Field Artillery. He had two brothers, Leslie and Frank, who also fought, and were both wounded. Leslie was a Prisoner of War. Frank was

in the Army Cyclist Corps. Ralph was 23 years old at his death.

The last to die in this third year was Frederick Merrett. He died on July 30th of malarial fever, at the age of approx. 46. He is also commemorated on the Basra Memorial in Iraq.

Altogether 36 names which appear on the memorial belong to those who died in 1917. More would follow as the war dragged on into its fourth year.

Marian Darragh (Staff 2003-11).

Dates in brackets refer to the years attending the school.

Sources:  
CWGC records.  
"Old Roan" magazines.  
School admission books.  
Local newspapers.  
Australian Roll of Honour  
Canadian Virtual War Memorial.  
De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour.



(1911-13) was killed in action, and on the 26th, Ernest Edward Shaw (1902-03), a Sub-Lt. with the Royal Naval Reserve lost his life when his ship, "Lady Cory Wright" was the victim of a torpedo. All the crew died, bar one, who was found (reportedly) clinging to a floating mine! Frank's body was never found, and he is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial. Finally, in March, Cyril Basnett Martin (1898-1903) of the London Regiment died on the 30th. He was shot through the head by a sniper in Palestine, and is buried in Damascus War Cemetery. (His brother was to die later in the year – in October).

On the 4th April, Edwin Barley (1908-12) lost his life, followed by Arthur Thomas Rawlings Hudson (1899-1906) on the 11th. He was a married man and had served in the West Kent Yeomanry in 1914 and as a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps. One of two brothers, Archibald Claude Grummitt (1910-11) was known as Pip. He enlisted early in the war, and had been invalided home 3 times – shell-shock, trench feet and wounds received at Ypres. His brother, John Walter (1910-11) had died in 1917.

The last casualty in April was Cecil Walter Cooney (1907-11). His father was a boot retailer, and he died on the 24th.

the 8th. He is buried in Jerusalem. The last to die in 1917, was Joseph Basil Prosser (1909-12), on December 14th. He was only 19 years old.

The war dragged on into the final year, which was to see 37 names added to our Memorial.

One casualty in January – on the 19th, Charles Dudley Chapman (1908), a 2nd Lieutenant with the Royal Flying Corps was killed in a flying accident in Hampshire. He is buried in Brockley (Deptford) Cemetery. Only one also in February – Charles Chapman's cousin, Herbert Graham Donaldson (1904-07). Herbert was also a 2nd Lieutenant with the RFC, and also killed in a flying accident. He too is buried in Brockley (Deptford) Cemetery.

More deaths in March – 4 in all. On the 22nd, Ernest George Dowdell MC (1905-09). His MC was gazetted 17th April 1917, and was awarded "For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty after passing through a very heavy enemy barrage on two occasions and obtaining most valuable information. He was wounded whilst carrying out these actions." His brother, Harold Bernard (1908-11) had died in September 1916.

On the 24th, Frank Edgar Endean

few casualties." (London Gazette 18/6/1917).

There were no casualties as far as I know in September, but in October, there were three. On the 9th, Wilfred Edgar Cole (1910-13). Wilfred fought for the Australian Army, having gone to Australia aged 16, presumably as he left school. He had a brother, Frank Henry who died on October 4th which was the day that Wilfred was injured. As far as I can ascertain, Frank was not a member of the school. On the same day (9th), Frank Goodbody (1907-11), was killed in action. On the 12th, Ronald Walter Bone (1903-07), was also killed in action.

Again, as far as I can tell, there were no casualties in November 1917, and again there were three in December. Leslie Wallace Ayling (1906-7), was a Lewis Gunner. He died on the 7th, six months to the day after his brother, Cecil Wallace (1909-11) had died. (A third brother, Edward Wallace was severely injured at Mons in 1914. He recovered, and survived the war). William Gordon Marsden (1907-09), served with the Egyptian expeditionary Force, and died on

# THE GREAT WAR & ROAN

## The Great War & John Roan Part 4. August 1917-1920

The final year of the war saw the largest number of losses for ex-members of the school.

On the eighth of August, William Frederick Brown (1910-12), a wireless operator in 7th squadron of the Royal Flying Corps had the dubious honour of being the first casualty of the last year of combat. He was followed on the 20th by Harry Kemp Sewell (1894-1901). Harry was a brother of Herbert Victor Sewell (1897-1905), who had lost his life in November 1916. Harry served in Mesopotamia and was invalided home, eventually dying of his wounds. He is buried in Charlton Cemetery. The final death in August was of Frederick Sidney Marr (1904-07), on the 30th. He was awarded a Military Cross for action in 1917 – "For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He has repeatedly done good and valuable work in going forward in front of the firing line and obtaining most useful information. On a later occasion he led his battery to its' forward position through an intense barrage, and it was largely due to his fine example and cool judgement that the battalion reached its' position with only a



destroyed five enemy machines. He showed great courage and skill, and by his keenness and dash set a fine example to all." The citation for the DFC reads, "This officer has carried out numerous offensive patrols, displaying the most marked bravery and determination. His boldness in attack and utter disregard of personal danger affords a most inspiring example to his brother pilots. Since June last he has destroyed eleven enemy aeroplanes." Siffy was originally stated as missing, his death later confirmed. He was the highest scoring Ace in his squadron, having shot down thirty aircraft before he was killed.

Finally, another medal recipient, John Henry Clayton (1911-14) received a Military Medal (the MM was the equivalent to an MC, and was given to non-officers). He was killed while carrying a wounded man on the 30th. He was with the Royal Army Medical Corps, attached to a Field Ambulance Division.

October 1918 had the greatest losses for the school of any month in the entire war—eleven in all. The first was Eric SB Martin (1910-11), on the 2nd (brother to Cyril who died in March). Eric was originally on HMS "Virginian. The ship was torpedoed and he was

of dressing his wounded driver. During the whole of this period he was within full view and short range of the enemy machine guns and rifle-pits, and throughout, by his prompt and heroic action, showed an utter disregard for his own personal safety." London Gazette 29th October 1918.

His medals and even his Whippet Tank are on display in The Tank Museum at Bovington, Dorset. He is buried in Vaulx Hill Cemetery, France, next to his Gunner.

Frederick Vincent Bussey (1900-02), died of wounds at a Casualty Clearing Station in France on August 31st.

During the first part of September there do not seem to have been any losses, but the last 10 days of the month saw four. On the 20th, Sydney John Ady Crouch (1899-1903), married with a son; on the 21st, William Gladstone Edwards (1912-14), and on the 27th, Samuel Frederick Henry Thompson (I haven't yet been able to find his dates). Samuel was known as "Siffy". He was a Captain with the Royal Flying Corps, an "Ace", and awarded the Military Cross and Distinguished Flying Medals. His MC was given "For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty as a fighting pilot. During recent operations he

youngest on the Memorial.

Then on the 29th, our Victoria Cross recipient, Cecil Harold Sewell (1903-07). Cecil was the third Sewell OR to be killed. He was studying for the Law before the war, and was known as "Joe". He was a Lieutenant in the Tank Corps, Light Tank Battalion. His VC was awarded for the action in which he was killed – "When in command of a section of Whippet Light Tanks in action this officer displayed most conspicuous bravery and initiative in getting out of his own Tank and crossing open ground under heavy shell and machine-gun fire to rescue the crew of another Whippet of his section which had side slipped into a large shell-hole, overturned and taken fire. The door of the Tank having become jammed against the side of the shell-hole, Lt. Sewell by his own unaided efforts, dug away the entrance to the door and released the crew. In doing so, he undoubtedly saved the lives of the officer and men inside the Tank as they could not have got out without his assistance. After having extricated the crew, seeing one of his own crew lying wounded behind his Tank, he again dashed across the open ground to his assistance. He was hit in doing so, but succeeded in reaching the Tank when a few minutes later he was again hit, fatally, in the act

May saw only one from the Memorial – Alfred Sidney Delaney (1910-15). He was killed in action on the 19th, aged 19.

In June, Nelson Bert Corp (1904-07 & 1908-10) died on the 1st. He had joined the Territorials in June 1913, and went out to France in 1917. Also on the 1st, George Herbert Kemp (1908-12). He was a 2nd Lieutenant with the Royal Air Force, and was shot through the heart during a fight with a number of enemy aircraft. The inscription on his headstone in Longuenesse Souvenir Cemetery, St. Omer, France, reads "To a cheery, loving, loyal son, brother, friend. Let this bear tribute."

Finally in June, on the 5th, Frederick Harold Norman Sessions (1910-15), also with the RAF was killed in a flying accident in Norfolk. He lived in Dublin and is buried in a cemetery there.

There was only one death in July. This was William Harold Peters (1897-1900). He had been taken prisoner on March 28th, and died a POW from illness contracted at the camp on 23rd July.

As August came along, and the war crept into a 5th year, the deaths continued. On the 26th, Frank William Jennings (1912-14) who was only 18 years old, and the



invalided out in January 1918 as permanently unfit. When he heard of the death of his brother, he went out to Canada to re-join in the Canadian Engineers. He died of pneumonia at Montreal, and is buried there.

Frederick Percival Clarke (1908-12), was awarded the Belgian Croix de Guerre. He was a pilot with the RAF, and the award was probably given to his unit or squadron as a group. He died on the 3rd. Also on the 3rd, Walter John Hocknell (1910-15), aged 19 lost his life. On the 6th, Arthur Graham Jackson (1893-1906) who had arrived in France in January 1916, died, and as his body was never found, or was lost in subsequent fighting, is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing in France. John Cecil George Drummond (1908-11), another 2nd Lieutenant in the RAF was killed on the 8th October. His machine was attacked by seven enemy aircraft, and he was driven down out of control. He and his Observer were killed instantly. He is commemorated on the Arras Flying Memorial, also in France. Arthur Frederick Gray (1904-06), was drowned when the ship he was on - RMS "Leinster" was torpedoed and sank on 10th October. He was with the Suffolk Yeomanry, so I guess that maybe he was being shipped back to England, maybe injured. He is

commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton. John Heskett (1909-14), was 21 years old, and a Corporal with the Royal Fusiliers. During his war, he had fought at the battles of the Somme, Messine Ridge, Polygon Wood and Ypres - all major battles. He had survived them all, but his luck ran out when he was killed on 14th October. He is buried in Ledeghem Military Cemetery in Belgium. This is only a small cemetery, and many of those buried there died on or around the same day as John. So near the end of hostilities, but still they died.

On the 23rd, Edgar Harry Barfoot (1907), died of pneumonia following influenza. He enlisted at the start of the war in 1914, and was in the Army Service Corps. He had been twice mentioned in despatches by General Haig, and was awarded the MSM [Meritorious Service Medal]. A great many men died of disease during the 'flu epidemic of 1918.

Leonard Alexandra Street (1895-99), was married with two children, and also died on the 23rd. Another victim of the influenza epidemic while on active service was John Cecil George Dumper (1903-06). He too, died of pneumonia following 'flu on the 26th. Lastly in October, Owen Smith (1895-1901), also a married

man, with one child, died on the 29th. His brother, Roy (1899-1906) had died in April 1917.

There were only a few weeks left of conflict after this, but November continued to produce names for our Memorial. On the 7th, Charles Henry Parkes (1907-8) died from pneumonia following a gun-shot wound, and on the 9th, Arthur Trevor Owen (1910-11), who had served in Salonika, Egypt, Palestine and France also died of influenza.

The Armistice was signed on the eleventh hour of the eleventh month in 1918. Men still died from their wounds, accident or disease. On the 20th, Stanley William Barnes (1910-14) of the Royal Engineers died of broncho-pneumonia. He had trained as a Chemist when he left school, and was attached to a special unit which dealt with the disposal of gas canisters. No doubt this dangerous work contributed to weakening his lungs. He was only 21.

On December 15th, Charles O. Roland Nugent (1909-12), died from burns when a paraffin stove exploded. He was Leading Telegraphist on HMS "Duke", and is buried in Cyprus.

In 1919, Arthur Willis (1903-06),

died of an illness contracted while on active service in Egypt. He was invalided home but died in Maida Vale Hospital on March 21st. He is buried in Charlton Cemetery. In May 1919, Herbert John Weaver (1912-14), a Lieutenant with the RAF was killed in a flying accident. He enlisted at the age of 17, and commissioned into the Royal West Kent Regiment in 1916. He served with the Infantry in France before joining the RAF. In September 1919, Tom Wilfred George Howard (1906), died on the 29th. He had served for three years and three months, been wounded (not seriously) twice and suffered two illnesses "brought on by the hardships of field services". He seemed fit on demobilisation, but fell ill very suddenly and died three days later. His name is not on the Memorial, but he was a victim of the war nonetheless.

The last Old Boy to die is the first name on the Memorial. Stanley Theodore Anderson (1912-15), was 19, when he died on June 24th 1920. His age is stated as 20, which means he was too young to have served. Apparently he enlisted in 1917, but was transferred to the Army Pay Corps in January 1918, maybe because his age was discovered? He died of "gangrenous appendix", but made it onto the Memorial anyway!



There are 123 names on the Memorial. I have found a few more not recorded there. I have already mentioned JM Hicks, TWG Howard and AG Hatcher. In addition, George Samuel Marchant (1908-09), died 26th May 1915. He was the secretary of Eltham Association Football Club. Bernard Frederick Webster (1908-09), is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, having died 19th July 1916, and Harland George Burn (no dates yet), died 25th September 1915.

I am sure there should be more. As yet, I haven't found them. Many more names of those serving are mentioned in the OR magazines, and I feel sure that not all of them could have survived. All schools were given a "Golden Book" in which to record the names of Old Boys who lost their lives in the

Great War. I assume the Roan School had one, but it must have got lost over the years. What a shame as it would have been a mine of information – a real golden book. Maybe one day it will turn up, and we can finish honouring all those Old Boys who made the ultimate sacrifice.

### Lest We Forget.

Marian Darragh (Staff 2003-11).

Dates in brackets refer to the years attending the school.

Sources:  
CWGC records.  
"Old Roan" magazines.  
School admission books.  
Local newspapers.  
"Google" searches.  
"Ancestry" Website.

## THE ROAN THEATRE COMPANY THE SUNSHINE BOYS Neil Simon

The Bob Hope Theatre. May 31 – June 3, 2017

**Review (edited) by Robin Kelly of NODA (National Operatic & Dramatic Association) London Region**

### DIRECTION

Ray Stone was gifted with two exceptionally well-cast main principals and did not waste their talents. Although Neil Simon's reputation rests on his comedy creations, as in all good writing there are layers to the underlying drama which were very much in evidence in this production. This was a very satisfying production, involving as it did both word play and well-timed physical comedy

### PLAYERS

Trevor Talbot (Willie Clark) clearly relished his role and with good reason. This was an excellent performance, on the one hand delivering one liners with perfect timing, acting up for his role as the Doctor in the never to be transmitted TV sketch and at the same time both infuriating and creating sympathy for a situation to an extent of his own making. There was an outstanding stage chemistry between the two main characters,

without which the play as a whole could not have succeeded. There is no way their movement of chairs to recreate their memory of furniture location, apparently oblivious to each other's actions would have created such continuous audience laughs in less skilled hands.

Graham Johnson's character (Al Lewis) makes his appearance only after a significant build up by his former partner, leading the audience to believe he is something of a monstrous character. It therefore comes as a puzzle to discover that, accepting certain aspects such as chest prodding were clearly true, in the scheme of things Al is no more or less infuriating than Willie. This was a part that could so easily have been over-played but Graham found just the right pitch to ensure Al's situation became just as understandable as Willie's.

Kyle Young (Ben Silverman) had the unenviable task of effectively playing straight man to his uncle, allowing for all the best lines to be delivered as well as providing the dramatic link engineering the reunion between the two former partners. Sustaining the impression of active



listening is particularly difficult in such a role. Occasional lapses were minor details in a performance which ticked all other boxes.

As foil for the Sunshine Boys, it is perhaps inevitable that Richard Rickson (The Patient) was not in a position to make as much in the way of stage impact as the main players. Unfortunately, someone has to do it and Richard succeeded in making the most of his limited appearance.

Alan Walter (Eddie) made the most of his role, providing just enough camp and keeping an admirably straight face in refusing to break eye contact with Ben while fielding instructions from the studio control room.

## THE ROAN THEATRE COMPANY SINGLE SPIES Alan Bennett

The Greenwich Theatre Studio – 17-20 January 2018

Review (edited) by Robin Kelly of NODA (National Operatic & Dramatic Association) London Region

### GENERAL

The production was located in the studio beneath the main Greenwich

Jordan Price (Nursey) invested just the right level of enthusiastic political incorrectness in her role as female distraction in the mould of a Benny Hill girl, assisted by well-fitting uniform and blonde wig.

Teresa Wilkins (The Registered Nurse) delivered a wonderfully deadpan performance as Willie's carer, able to stand her ground in the face of his one liners.

### PRODUCTION

This was a most enjoyable production, built around the titular Sunshine Boys but with a strong supporting cast. The audience will definitely have felt their ticket investment was worthwhile.

### DIRECTION - AN ENGLISHMAN ABROAD

There is an essential oddness about the speed in which Browne and Burgess establish a relationship in the most bizarre circumstances, disguised to an extent by whip sharp dialogue and the apparent self-confidence of its protagonists. Simon Clifton succeeded in capitalising on the beauty of that dialogue but to really get under the skin of the drama there also needed to be a sense in which neither character was as confident in themselves or each other as they pretended to be. Monologues were delivered confidently to an unseen audience but the style of delivery was such that the nature of that audience was

unclear, which would have helped in character development as well as audience involvement.

### DIRECTION - A QUESTION OF ATTRIBUTION

Alan Bennett's dialogue is deceptively tricky to get right, particularly in ensuring that the pace crackles along. This aspect was very much achieved. However the other level is in the thinking behind the dialogue. Some actors achieve this instinctively and it is clear to the audience when this happens, others need more support and detailed discussion. The intimacy of a studio venue such as this exposes all actors to a higher degree of inspection and does require much





more subtlety than in larger venues.

## PLAYERS - AN ENGLISHMAN ABROAD

With significant stage experience to draw upon, Sarah Coleman (Coral Browne) was well cast as the actress finding herself well outside her comfort zone in Moscow and even further isolated in an obscure apartment with a notorious defector. Sarah handled the Bennett dialogue well, with some sparkling exchanges with Burgess. She also managed the change in attitude on her return to London, realising that perhaps Burgess' actions were perhaps not as honourable as he might have presented.

Stuart Mitchell-Smith (Guy Burgess) succeeded in getting under the skin of a complex character, on the surface the picture of confidence and bonhomie. At the same time, his drinking (suggested but never overplayed when the unexpected availability of scotch exceeded his capacity to process) implied a form of escape not wholly satisfied by his state approved lover. Yet this was another character who never quite acknowledged the enormity or advisability of his actions, even in retrospect.

In a small but not insignificant role, Callum Brice (Tolya) adopted an authentic Russian accent

while simultaneously giving the impression of not being the sharpest tool in the box.

Graham Johnson (Tailor) was the epitome of discretion and dignity as the tailor who declined Browne's request to supply Burgess given his Hungarian lineage.

## PLAYERS - A QUESTION OF ATTRIBUTION

John Adcock (Sir Anthony Blunt) maintained the innate arrogance of his character, unwilling to question the motivation behind his actions "It seemed the right thing to do at the time" or even acknowledge in hindsight that his actions might possibly have been in the slightest ill-judged. This was a difficult character to get to grips with, having betrayed his country to support an ideology purporting to promote equality amongst men and yet apparently regarding himself as superior in so many respects. John certainly achieved that lack of engagement on a personal level in all his dialogue.

Richard Rickson (Restorer) provided appropriate authority to his role

As an MI5 interrogator, Jack Woolf (Chubb) had the unenviable task of establishing a relationship with a character who is not in the market for anything other than the minimum

of required transactions. Bennett's dialogue was a huge help in this, allowing Jack to communicate elements of his own humanity in the apparent absence of Blunt's, while not allowing himself to be defeated by intellectual gamesmanship.

In a contrasting role, Callum Brice (Phillips) established a completely fitting air of arrogance and entitlement.

Where some drifted dangerously in the direction of declamation, Graham Johnson (Colin) was completely natural in his role. In a small venue, no exaggeration is necessary but lines must appear to arise from thought process and reaction to other characters and events. This seems to come naturally to Graham, who seemed completely at ease within his role.

The dramatic licence available in other characterisations of real people were not available to Glynis Watson (Her Majesty the Queen) since most of the audience believe they at least have an idea of what HMQ is supposed to sound like. Glynis wisely confined herself to a suggestion of HMQ's vocal characteristics and mannerisms. This was an intelligent interpretation, managing to create the impression of someone maintaining multiple thought processes, never revealing what

she clearly knew or suspected but constantly probing Blunt to determine his actual thoughts.

## PRODUCTION

This was a satisfying production in a venue worthy of future use for other suitable plays. It will also have been a learning experience for all concerned in the possibilities of its use and the particular dramatic demands made by the environment.

## POSTSCRIPT

On Wednesday 21st February the RTC presented "An Englishman Abroad" at the Barn Theatre in Oxted as part of the "Southern Counties Drama Festival". The adjudicator praised the entry and we received three nominations for awards – Sarah Coleman (best actress), Stuart Mitchell-Smith (best actor) and Callum Brice (best supporting actor). Stuart won the award for best actor.





# CARL ROCHE (OLD ROAN)

Volunteer of the Year (Extract from the local newspaper)

St Christopher's is delighted that Carl Roche, who has been a volunteer at the hospice in Sydenham has won Volunteer of the Year at the Hospice UK Awards 2016. The awards were announced at the Hospice UK Conference in Liverpool in November.

Carl, who lives in Kenley, has volunteered at St Christopher's for 33 years - and has never missed a volunteering shift. He started out by looking after patients and families, and during his time at the hospice has worked with many different teams, including the Care Home Team and Fundraising Team.

On receiving his award, Carl said: "It is an honour, but volunteering is a pleasure as I work with friendly, efficient and dedicated staff and volunteers. The public know of the excellent work done by the medical and nursing staff, social

workers and volunteers helping on the wards. However, they are probably unaware of everyone involved keeping up high standards in the hospice, such as caterers, launderers, cleaners and stewards. It is rewarding to feel that we have all made a difference to people when they face difficult times and that St Christopher's maintains a strong team ethic as we approach its 50th anniversary in 2017."

Carl was nominated by Julie Kinley, Nurse Consultant for Care Homes at St Christopher's. Julie comments: "Always bright and cheery when he comes to the office, Carl has a lovely sense of humour and is popular with everyone who meets and works with him. I am so delighted that Carl's dedication has been recognised on a national scale; the award is an amazing tribute to him."



(l-r) George Plumpton, Chief Executive of the National Gardens Scheme, Carl Roche and Lord Howard of Lympne at the Hospice UK Awards 2016

## Congratulate Carl – he's the Volunteer of the Year

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## Could YOU follow Carl and be the next Volunteer of the Year?

Over 1,200 volunteers are an integral part of the St Christopher's team. Working alongside our staff they provide comfort, compassion and encouragement when it is needed most.

Volunteers give their time through a variety of activities including: visiting isolated people in our community; supporting patients and families on the wards; assisting in our charity shops; helping

projects run smoothly in our offices; assisting at our fundraising events; and much more. In exchange, you'll gain skills, experience and knowledge to enhance your personal life, your next volunteering role or even your next career move.

Find out more – call our HR Team on 020 8768 4677, email [hr@stchristophers.org.uk](mailto:hr@stchristophers.org.uk) or visit [www.stchristophers.org.uk/jobs/volunteering](http://www.stchristophers.org.uk/jobs/volunteering)



## FOUNDERS DAY 2017



Dan Calnan, Des Malone and Bernie Turner



Assad Ahmed and Silvia Ballantyne



Bernie Turner and Cella Davies (ex Governor and parent)



Bryan (Boggy) Marsh, Bernie Hamilton, Trevor Puddifoot and Steve Nelson



revered member of staff who will be remembered by pupils, parents and colleagues alike for his excellent teaching, leadership and role as a form tutor. He was an outstanding teacher and spent a large part of his career as a successful Head of English. Nigel had a very particular talent for 'A' level English which he continued to teach to sixth form students after his retirement until 2012. Nigel was justly proud of his fifty years in the classroom teaching the subject he loved to the young people he had taught and guided through many changes over half a century of education policy.

His selfless contribution to the school and its community continued until January 2017 when he retired after many years as a school governor representing the Roan



in a staff vs. boys' football match. And often were the times when he, along with the likes of Derek Evans, Dr. Taylor, and Alfie Knott would recount stories and sing favourite songs and hymns in the camp kitchen whilst waiting for the main hut to become silent as the boys fell asleep next door.

Many people will be able to do justice to the memory of Nigel better than I and legion are the anecdotes they will tell about this well-loved man. I recall the immensely enjoyable evening that we spent eighteen months ago at a fiftieth reunion of pupils who had joined Roan in 1966, and now that I look back there is a poignancy in the memory of the cheery farewells afterwards, none of us knowing that he was about to become so ill. Like so many others I have been greatly distressed by the time and manner of his passing, and can only imagine the void that it leaves in the life of his dear wife, Silvia, and her family.

Terry Hall

The whole school community was saddened to receive the news that Nigel Ballantyne had died on Saturday June 3rd. Nigel taught full time at the school at the start of his teaching career in 1963 until he retired in 2005.

Nigel was a much respected and

# OBITUARIES

## NIGEL BALLANTYNE (1963-2001)

My wife Val and I have lost a great friend with the passing of Nigel. Just to think of him now is to hear that distinctive voice of his and the special way he had in conversation of seizing upon a comment or reminiscence and developing it with an enthusiasm that made you feel that your modest contribution had a value way beyond its true worth. This quality, combined with a respect for all the pupils in his charge, regardless of background or ability, and seasoned with a little eccentricity (the flapping of the famous 'Batman' gown, the willingness to quote Anthony Buckeridge's 'Jennings' in the same breath as Evelyn Waugh's 'Decline and Fall'.....), were at the core of what made Nigel the inspiring teacher he undoubtedly was.

So many of our conversations would end in laughter and so many of our reminiscences were focused on mutual memories of Roan, its staff and pupils. Nigel was a Roan man through and through and his long and devoted service to the school surely makes him the Mr. Chips of his generation.

Nigel's contribution to school life was enormous. He chaired quizzes, produced plays, helped run the school's Scout troupe, took over the editorship of the Roan Magazine in the Autumn of 1969 and for many years burned midnight oil as the printer's deadline for each issue approached. He was also instrumental in encouraging generations of pupils to take part in cross country running and each week in assembly was genuinely pleased and proud to announce the success of the school team and its individual stars against some local school or other.

I can picture him now in the Lake District, sweater tied around his waist, striding up Green Gable, Catbells or Helvellyn with the leading group of walkers from Braithwaite camp, or standing on the summit of some mountain, battered old Wainwright Guide in hand to help him identify the view, or if the view was obscured getting the boys to jump into the air Wainwright-fashion to see if that improved matters! And I remember – indeed have 8mm film of – him dashing up the rough patch of ground beside the Hope Memorial Camp huts, leading the charge



Foundation. Parents and colleagues will remember his wise words at Governors meetings as well as his sterling work in all the challenging roles that governors perform.

Nigel took part in many school activities, as diverse as being responsible for the cross-country team to co-writing a play which was performed at the Edinburgh Festival. He was always called upon to write poems for important school events. His scripts for numerous school productions were hilarious and in equal measure his poems solemn and respectful.

There will be many former pupils and colleagues who will always value Nigel's work and encouragement. He supported other activities and good causes outside of school, including Centrepont. A collection was made in his memory through 'Just Giving'



Nigel at Braithwaite

which has raised over £2,000.00, a mark of the respect, high esteem held by his colleagues, students and the whole school community.

Governors of The John Roan School



COLIN MICHAEL BROWN (1948 – 53)

"Bones" and I were not only in the same form, 3A, but in the same house, Wolfe, so we were thrown together from the beginning. The opportunity to meet socially did not arise very often, as I lived in New Cross and he lived in Bexleyheath, 8 miles away. We were not even sure that Millwall and Charlton supporters were allowed to associate.

Both having a warped sense of humour helped to cement our friendship and, after a matter of weeks, we arranged to go to the "Schoolboys' Own" exhibition at Westminster Hall. Colin never let me forget that day, and reminded me of it whenever we spoke in latter years: of which more later. We had some other trips, one being to the Imperial War Museum.

I was lucky that a group from my form, including Colin Bull, Courtney Hockaday, Brian West and "Bones" all enjoyed the delights of the Hope Memorial Camp at Braithwaite. In those days one had one's school clothes and a second set that you changed into as soon as you got home. It was the second set, with a spare shirt, jumper, socks and pants that one took to camp, together with two blankets, a sheet and a pillow case. A sleeping bag, of sorts, was made

using blanket pins and the spare jumper became the pillow. We slept on the hut floorboards, with no spaces in between us, and washed in cold water. Living in such basic conditions and in such close proximity for two weeks each year certainly helped to make us very good friends.

Apart from peak bagging, we would have a "rest day" or two. On one of those I went rowing with "Bones" and Colin Bull on Derwentwater (1953?) and suddenly saw that, thanks to the flooding, we were rowing over the field boundary fences at the southern end of the lake. Afterwards, we walked along to Friar's Crag to look at the view before walking back to camp.

I was sitting up in bed, at home, one day, with my Millwall scarf tied around my head, when my mother popped her head around the door to tell me that the King had died. Yes, I had mumps! I always attributed those few days off school to "Bones" but can't remember where we had been to arrange the transfer.

I remember being disappointed when "Bones" told us after O Levels that he was leaving to go to Dartmouth, as he was joining the Royal Navy. I did not see him again until 1999 when he appeared, at Kidbrooke, at a reunion of our year.



By then we had moved considerably further apart as he lived in Waterlooville, on the south Coast, and I lived in the Lake District. There were a few more meetings at our year's reunions and since those we have managed to meet on four more occasions, twice when my wife and I dropped in on Colin and Elvira and twice when they stayed with us overnight on their family run to Ireland via Scotland! (They said that they preferred that crossing, but I was sure that it was "Bones" crafty way of getting another look at The Lakes).

"Bones" time in the services was spent as a navigator on helicopters in the Fleet Air Arm, becoming a Lieutenant Commander. He has been married to Elvira for 50 years and she tells me that they moved 27 times during his Navy career. On retirement he was a Golf Course secretary. I found that somewhat bizarre, because I am sure that it was he who put his golf ball through the open window of one of the hotels on the other side of the road, when we were using the pitch and put golf course in Keswick. He also did lots of good things for the community, but was probably most pleased with the results he got from making alcoholic beverages.

Back to the Schoolboys Own Exhibition. Part of the centre of the hall had been made into an

arena. The Commandos, I think, were using the arena, part of which was a scaffolding structure about 8 metres high, for demonstrations. A rope was strung from the top of the structure to the other end of the arena, making a prehistoric zip-wire. After several displays, including using the rope slide, a lady was introduced (Joan Rhodes?) as the "World's Strongest Woman". She was dressed in a jumper and longish, thick skirt, it being winter, not the usual show business regalia. She performed several displays of strength and finished by tearing a London telephone directory in half, about 2 inches (5 cm.) thick in those days. She was then persuaded to use the rope slide. I had watched her act from the end of the arena and, as she slid down, her skirt lifted slightly and I and a few others got a glimpse of her knickers. Whenever "Bones" and I met or 'phoned in the last twenty years, he always raised the matter as though it was my fault that he had chosen to stand at the side and miss out on the experience.

He won't be able to blame me now, I wish he could.

Terry (Nobby) Blanchard (1948 - 53)

It is with great sadness I report the death of my brother Colin Michael Brown (1948- 1953). I believe he

was a fully paid up member of the ORA until his death and was always very proud to have been one of John Roan's men. He attended many reunions and remained in contact with his contemporaries over the years. On leaving the school he attended the Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth and served in the Royal Navy for over 40 years. He married Elvira in 1968 and they had two sons and an adopted daughter. He was a lifelong supporter of Charlton Football Club and Kent County Cricket Club. Although he never excelled at sport, he always enjoyed taking part, and became quite proficient at cross country skiing whilst working with NATO in Norway in the 70's. In retirement he spent many hours on the local golf courses, after working as a Club Secretary in Watford and later Hampshire. He was indebted to George Witten (Shag) who instilled in him a love of the English language and he abhorred any written or spoken grammatical errors! He valiantly fought cancer for nearly nine years and took part in several trials at the Royal Marsden hospital which he hoped might help others if not himself but finally the cancer beat him and he died peacefully at home with his family around him on Sunday July 15th July 2018.

Wendy Bennett (nee Brown 1953-56)

CAROLINE FINCH (NEE SPENCER) (1969 - 76)

Caroline started at Roan School for Girls in 1969 at the Devonshire Road site. While not an academic star she was an accomplished musician playing guitar and French horn. She was also goalie for the hockey team.

Caroline 1st caught my eye in 1975 on the train returning from a school field trip to Inverliever. She spent the journey beating all comers at cribbage, a feat she continued throughout her life. A few weeks later I plucked up courage and asked her out for a drink. Caroline turned up and so began our 40 year partnership.

In 1976 Caroline moved to Plymouth to study Environmental Science while I joined Customs & Excise in London. But love endured the distance. After gaining a 2:1 Honours degree Caroline returned to London.

As our relationship developed a series of common links emerged - both had strong family ties to Greenwich and Charlton, two grandparents lived in adjoining streets; both families had Charlton Athletic die-hards,

We married in November 1981 at Christchurch, Shooters Hill, where Caroline had attended



primary school. Setting up home in Gravesend, Caroline secured a job in Orpington, where I had been transferred the year before.

With the arrival of Christopher in 1983, Caroline 'retired' from work. This was no easing off especially when Louise arrived in 1986. Caroline continued to play hockey at club level, her slight frame almost doubled by her goalkeeping armour. She was an elected school governor, later on the county panel, volunteer swimming pool engineer at the local primary school, and occasional helper at a range of Brownie and Rainbow groups. Over the years she tried a range of different things- Italian, French, calligraphy, archery, yoga, photography, and singing are just some.

Like her father Caroline was able to retain and reproduce the most arcane facts. While too retiring to follow in his footsteps on to TV, Caroline was a regular at local quizzes where knowing the president of Zambia could make the difference between a case of wine and a bag of sweets.

About 16 years ago Caroline suffered the first of a series of unexplained fits. Quickly controlled by drugs they had one effect that greatly upset Caroline. She lost a period of memory covering



Christopher and Louise's early years. Caroline was determined this would not happen again and she took to photography in a big way. High days and holidays, family events, and domestic change were all recorded.

Caroline had an avid interest in sport. While her long association with Charlton Athletic may have only a passing link to sport, she watched or read about most others. She turned my ambivalence to televised sport to her advantage. Holidays were arranged around horse racing, the Tour de France - in Britain and France, international tennis, the Olympics. The advent of Eurostar made the south of France a regular holiday destination. The warmth being good for her bones, the cycle crashes less so.

Once the children were into higher

education, Caroline eased back into work. Firstly as a cycle proficiency trainer then as a member of Kent County Council Road Safety team. She was a founding member of the Gravesend WI Branch, serving on the 1st committee and a continuing supporter of local Guiding charities.

With retirement in prospect Caroline was planning the next stage of our life together brought into greater focus by the arrival of our 1st grandchild, Thea. Having seen Thea 3 weekends out of the 4 available to her, Caroline was again embarking on planning the next great thing. Sadly this was not to be as a brief re-occurrence of her fits ended with her sudden and untimely death on April 9th 2016.

The celebration of Caroline's life at Blue Bell Hill was attended by over 100 family, friends, Old Roans, WI members and colleagues. A common theme of the messages Caroline's family received has been her quiet compassion. Whether



supporting her sister in law through an acrimonious divorce, welcoming new members to the WI, donating time to lesser charities, or just listening.

Peter Finch 1969 - 1976

### ALAN E. HUNTLEY (1944-51)

My brother, Alan died in October 2016. He was born in 1933. His birth completed a trio of paramount global events in that year, namely, The Bodyline Series and Hitler's assumption of power.

He joined the School on a scholarship in 1944 and left in 1951 which was the year I became a pupil. His scholastic career achieved 'A' Levels in English Literature, French, Spanish, and German. His academic achievements were equally matched by his sporting prowess which culminated in opening the batting for the School first X1, skipping the First X1 at football and winning the table-tennis championship held during the School Hobbies Exhibition which was a regular feature of the school year.

After a temporary office job he was conscripted into the Army and, like some his Roan contemporaries, became a sergeant in the Educational Corps



the following year, he continued to serve in the Chichester diocese until he was offered the chance to broaden his experience of parish work and move to Middlesex; he was first in Perivale and then Ruislip. After that brief spell in the London diocese he gladly returned to Sussex where he stayed until retirement in 2010: at St Edward's, Burgess Hill, then as Vicar of The Church of the Good Shepherd, Shoreham-by-Sea, of All Saints, Roffey, Horsham, and of St Barnabas, Hove. He joined Societas Sanctae Crucis, an international fellowship of male priests which, from its founding in the 1850s, has been a driving-force behind the Anglo-Catholic movement, and is greatly valued by its members for the mutual support it offers them in their ministry through local chapters.

Alan had for some time planned to spend his retirement years in Norfolk, and as soon as he was able to do so he moved to Fakenham. Unexpectedly, and after only a short illness, Alan died in late December 2018. Preceded the day before by Vespers of the Dead, his funeral with Requiem Mass was held on 1st February at St Mary's, Little Walsingham. The mourners were led by Alan's brother Graham with his wife and daughters. Over one hundred people attended the service including a significant

## FR ALAN RONALD REED, SSC (1955-62)

Alan Reed came to Roan in September 1955 from Timbercroft Primary School, Plumstead Common. By the time he reached the Sixth Form he had demonstrated a clear aptitude for languages, and chose to take French, Spanish and Latin at Advanced level. In the Upper VI he was made a prefect, and on leaving was awarded a L.C.C. Modern Languages Scholarship in French, in addition to the school's own Ridger Memorial Prize and George Bruce Prize for French.

In 1963 he took a place at Durham University to study Theology. Already a server for several years at St Mark's Church, Plumstead Common, he knew by then that his vocation was for the priesthood. He spent six terms at St John's College which had a strong evangelical tradition and was in hindsight a surprising choice for a man who, for all his adult life, was a committed High Churchman. After two years he left Durham and, having applied for ordination training, was in due course given a place at Salisbury Theological College.

In 1969 came ordination as a deacon and his appointment as Curate to St Margaret's Church, Ifield near Crawley. Ordained priest

of subjects and participation and involvement in many sports. I owe Alan a great deal.

John Huntley

## ALAN WEIR (OR 1936-1942)

We have received the sad news of the death of Alan Weir. He was Old Roan president 1978-79 and Vice-President 1989. He was a life member of the ORA joined the John Roan Lodge in 1972 remaining a member for 46 years. He was Trustee and Treasurer of Hope Memorial Trust, Braithwaite, Lake District. He was a very fine Old Roan and a true gentleman. He married Jean in 1951 and remained married for the rest of his life, 67 years. They had a son Malcolm who was also an Old Roan.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. There will be a full obituary in the next magazine



after 6 weeks of basic training. He was posted to Egypt in the Royal Artillery and spent the rest of his service there. It was far from the cushiest posting in the world and after 50 years or so he, and his contemporaries were finally awarded a Campaign Medal.

He married in the late 50's and lived in Jamaica for some years with his wife, Joy, producing 3 children before returning to the UK in the late 60's. He played some cricket and tennis in Jamaica and it was his proud boast that he had some net sessions on his own with a fellow club member named Wesley Hall. Wes was already a test player but Alan had to give him a lift home as sponsored cars were not in vogue then.

He qualified as an accountant and worked for several companies before retiring. He had poor health in later years but never lost his insatiable appetite for argument on any subject known to man. His forthright opinions were based on a thorough knowledge of whatever issue was under discussion. Conversational small talk was not his forté.

I am grateful that I grew up in a household of 2 considerably older brothers and their friends, with no television distractions, profound discussion on all manner



number of priests from the Society of the Holy Cross. All aspects of High Church rites and liturgy were scrupulously observed. Andrew Spence (1955-63) who represented the Association, writes, 'I think Alan would have felt they'd done things properly for him!'

#### DAVE HUTLEY ('68-'75)

Dave was a wonderful asset to the Roan Club. A talented and keen sportsman he was cheerful, unassuming, sharply intelligent, totally dedicated and enthusiastic. Outside of his sports he was always excellent company and full of ideas and enthusiasms often involving another great love – music – and it was always a pleasure to discuss his latest initiatives at the reunion dinners. He had a hard path to follow – his brother, John ('64-'71), was also a talented footballer at Roan and an important member of the 1971 National Schools Cup



Winning Team. Their father was also a well-known figure at the Club and supported their progress. This tradition was continued when Dave brought his son, James, to the Old Roan games and later attended his matches and helped run his youth football side.

Dave's main sport was football and he excelled as a totally committed right full back playing for the school 1st X1, many years for the Old Roan 1st X1 and later the vets. He also played for the Woolwich based team Libra on Sundays. He was strongly competitive but without any malice or anger. Dave was a gifted cricketer, opening the batting, and represented Kent at senior level whilst at school. Dan Calnan recalls batting with him for the Old Roan 1st X1 against Bromley Town and Old Boys when he scored a very classy and attractive 50 but, later in the bar, failed to persuade him to give more time to his cricket – regarding it more as a break between the football seasons. He was a keen Chelsea supporter and would be pleased to know that this article is written on a night when Chelsea host Barcelona in the Champions League.

Dave worked in Croydon and Guildford for Philips Electrical Industries Ltd, a subsidiary of N.V Philips of the Netherlands. His marriage to Nicky was featured on the morning of the

wedding on Capital Radio and he enjoyed occasional dedications and appearances on radio quiz programmes. He was a dedicated family man and they had two children, James and Louise.

Dave died in October 2016 after a lengthy battle with cancer. His final song at the funeral, "Mr. Blue Sky", perfectly reflected his positive nature and attitude to life. Dave was only 59 and a very sad loss to us all.

#### MARTIN RIDER ('54-'60)

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Martin last year after a long battle with cancer.

Martin, together with his lovely wife Margaret, had been long-standing members of the Old Roan Dramatic Society, and had been involved in many plays. I first saw Martin on the Roan School stage in 1967 performing as one of the leads in "Doctor in the House". His cheerful demeanour in life was always put to good effect on stage, particularly in comedies. On occasions, he also directed, and was Chairman of the group for some time. He stayed with the group until the 1980s when work with Barclays Bank took him away from the London area. Later on, he and Margaret bought some land in North Devon, and he enthusiastically spoke about his 50 sheep he looked after!

Cheerfulness was the hallmark of Martin, even in adversity, which no doubt was tested by the loss of Margaret through cancer, and then his own diagnosis. In the late 1990s, after a routine check-up for severe backache, he was told he had myeloma, an incurable cancer of the plasma cell, an important part of the immune system that helps fight infection and disease. His chances of seeing a new millennium were not great, and yet Martin, through sheer willpower and the cheerful disposition already mentioned battled on for close on 20 years. He became a great supporter of the Exeter Leukaemia Fund (ELF), and involved his brother, the Sports' Presenter, Steve Rider to promote the cause. Martin, you see, simply amazed his doctors!

On 7th July last year, a large gathering of family and friends gathered at Holy Trinity Church in Exmouth to celebrate Martin's life. There was a theatrical touch to the service as "All the World's a Stage" was read, and Steve concluded with an excellent tribute to his brother.

As I write this, I can imagine Martin looking down and chuckling away as he so readily did, being the engaging person, he always was.

Graham Johnson





was to guide the 1969 Apollo 12 lunar module to land in precisely the same crater in the Ocean of Storms where the unmanned Surveyor 3 spacecraft had landed 3 years previously.

Ewen visited the Roan School in summer 1989 shortly after his retirement in 1987. He presented a copy of his book – "The University of Arizona's Lunar and Planetary Laboratory – Its Founding and Early Years". He retained his links through the magazine and contributed an article in 1991 based on his letter to his former chemistry teacher, Lionel Berry, thanking him and other masters for their inspiration.

Ewen gained a scholarship to attend the Roan Grammar School and studied mechanical engineering at Woolwich Polytechnic. His first job was with Siemens Brothers where his involvement in spectroscopy led to an offer in 1949 to join the Royal Greenwich Observatory (based in

published in the Malton and Pickering Mercury; it is dedicated to Quentin's memory and contains a 'farewell'. One sentence from the book must suffice to show something of the warm regard in which Quentin was held: "I very much enjoyed his sermons, which he delivered in a relaxed and conversational manner, deploying engaging humour and always without the use of notes".

Quentin died of cancer in St Catherine's Hospice, Scarborough.

Brian Boyden 1957-1965

#### EWEN WHITAKER ('32-'40)

*"From the age of 8 my dream was to work for the Royal Greenwich Observatory"*

Ewen Whitaker was born in 1922 in South London and died on October 11, 2016 in Tucson, Arizona, aged 94. He attended the Roan Grammar School from 1932-40.

In the words of the director of the Lunar & Planetary Laboratory based in Arizona "he knew more about what was where on the Moon than any previous human being in history ever had. To be honest, I'm not sure anyone has reached his level of knowledge".

His greatest single achievement

#### QUENTIN HARCOURT WILSON (1957-65)

Quentin Wilson attended from 1957 to 1965 and was active in the Christian Union, the Middle School Debating Society and the Aristotelian Society. He participated in several school plays including the Knight of the Burning Pestle and was a member of the school choir. He took part in House sporting competitions such as cross-country running. He was Head Boy for his final year at school, and Captain of Nelson House.

After leaving Roan he went to King's College London where he gained a BD and an AKC. After briefly working in a bank, Quentin was made a Deacon in St Paul's Cathedral in 1970 and was subsequently ordained Priest in Southwark Cathedral. His initial ministry was in a triple parish on the Isle of Dogs; from there he moved to St James, Muswell Hill. While working in North London he studied the organ for five years and then took the musical appointment of Succentor and Sacrist at Exeter Cathedral in 1977. Four years later, Quentin was appointed to a similar post at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. The remainder of his work in the Church was as a parish priest, initially in Lancashire where he became Vicar of St Leonard's,

Langho, and then Rector of St Peter's, Burnley. Finally, crossing the Pennines, he was appointed to serve at St Mary's Priory Church, Old Malton, where he was also Rural Dean of Southern Ryedale and Chaplain at Castle Howard.

Before moving to Yorkshire, Quentin wrote an MA dissertation on Samuel Sebastian Wesley for the University of Central Lancashire. Following the move to Yorkshire, he completed further research and was awarded a PhD from York University in 2007 and, in 2009, was granted a postdoctoral Licence in Divinity from the University of Wales, Lampeter.

Quentin retained a warm memory of his school days – on a visit to London a few years before he died, we had a pint in the Plume of Feathers and, surreptitiously walked around the outside of the Maze Hill site, finding such archaeological treasures as wall bricks with rounded holes bored by bored boys seeking to polish pennies! We did live in exciting times!

Quentin had two children, Jennifer and Isobel. After Quentin's death, his widow, Anne, kindly sent me a book "Howard's Way" written by the newspaper columnist Howard Croft, a family friend. The book is a collection of weekly articles



Herstmonceux in East Sussex). He studied the Moon as an amateur astronomer using the telescope facilities available and gained his big break in 1955 when attending a meeting of the International Astronomical Union in Dublin. The American astronomer, Gerard Kuiper, asked for anyone interested in making maps of the Moon to contact him and that led directly to a job at the Yerkes Observatory in Chicago. After a year he moved, with his young family, to Tucson, Arizona where, with Gerard Kuiper, he was a founder member of the Lunar and Planetary Laboratory (LPL).

Ewen's achievements in this field are considerable. He viewed his career in the USA as "fascinatingly interesting from 1958 until my retirement in 1987". In his magazine article in 1991 he wrote: "We were intimately connected with all aspects of the NASA lunar missions, including briefing the Apollo astronauts, over a good steak dinner at Cape Canaveral, on what to photograph in orbit, and so on. Our Moon maps formed the basis for the navigational maps they used to orbit around the Moon."

Ewen enjoyed a long retirement in which he built a harpsichord, collected and shared Moon maps, and indulged his lifelong passion for repairing broken clocks.

If anyone is interested in a fuller tribute to Ewen please read his obituary in *The Times* on 1.11.16 – on the ORA website. The *New York Times* printed a tribute on 27.10.16. His article in the 1992 ORA Magazine includes references to several of the masters at Roan in his time. Lionel Berry (Ewen's Chemistry master) became Deputy Head at Roan, retiring in 1963, and celebrated his 100th birthday at the Club in 2001.

Photo: Courtesy of the Lunar & Planetary Laboratory. The University of Arizona.

David Horsburgh February 2018

## RON PARKER

I have recently heard from Ron's wife, Frances, that Ron died in his sleep, in mid-January. He was 87. The nature of his passing is in sharp contrast to the way he led most of his hectic life, although some would have been in a sedentary position.

I know little of his scholastic career but soon learned of his name when I joined the cricket club in 1956. He had already established himself as a fine medium-pace opening swing bowler but was living in the West Country as a salesman but kept in touch by post with Peter Williams and

other contemporaries in the club. He re-appeared with first wife and children about the early 60's and despite living in Buckinghamshire made the long return journey every Sunday to play our mostly all-day fixtures. He was a regular tourist on the OR and Juggernaut tours to deepest Kent where we often stayed at The New Beach Holiday Centre in Dymnchurch of which Harry Townsend was a director of the parent company. I recall spending the night on Dymnchurch beachfront with Ron in his enormous car in company with Harry and Graham Townsend after Joe Broadfoot's car packed up at Dover CC. He was only down for the day and Harry lent him his car to return to London but forgetting that all the chalet keys went back with him.

Ron had all the attributes for a successful sales career: tall, suave, matinee idol good looks, and a fund of amusing patter and anecdotes.

Often in partnership with Graham Chambers their company guaranteed a lively, hilarious and always bibulous time.

Ron married Frances later in life and lived near Denia in the Alicante province of Spain for the last 20 years or so of his life. Veronica and I went to see him about 3 years ago and he drove us to a restaurant

for a meal and the inevitable few drinks. Despite advancing ill health he had lost none of his ability to find humour in every situation, although he showed utter contempt for coloured clothing and even in test cricket disdain for boots with red panels and heels.

We seem to be losing the environment which nurtures real personalities like Ron Parker. He will be fondly remembered by the reducing numbers of Old Roans who knew him.

John Huntley

## NOTICES OF DEATHS:

Daphne Leach 1926-2016  
I wondered if anyone has been in touch about the passing of Daphne Leach (23 September 1926 – 15 December 2016) who taught music at Roan Girls from the 1960s through to the 1980s?

Daphne was the teacher who left the greatest impression on me. She inspired a life-long love for music and music-making and I'll always be grateful for her encouragement and the faith she showed in me.

It would be wonderful to hear from other old Roans who were touched by her magic.

Sue Johnson



Next ORA Meeting:

16th October 2019  
8pm  
School Playing Fields

Annual Old Roan Dinner:

15th November 2019  
6:30 for 8pm  
To book a place email:  
[montague10@btinternet.com](mailto:montague10@btinternet.com)

Next ORA AGM:

18th March 2020  
8pm  
School Playing Fields

# 94 OLD ROAN ASSOCIATION

## SECRETARIAT

President: 2019-2020  
Past President: 2018-2019  
Past President: 2017-2018

Claire Flynn  
Richard Rice  
Des Malone

Secretariat:

Neal Haslam, Ian Clatworthy,  
Bernie Hampton, Monty Smith,  
Mike Titheridge

Social Secretaries:

Viv Lawrence and Monty Smith

School Liaison Officers:

Viv Lawrence, Chris Strong,  
Trevor Talbot, Linda Nelson

Other Committee Members:

Dave Andrews, Dan Calnan,  
Alison Chumley-Towner,  
Hilary Haslam, Brian Hamer,  
Dave Horsburgh, John Leach

Club and Society Representatives:

Graham Johnson,  
Trevor Talbot (Theatre)

External Examiners:

Dan Calnan

Magazine Editor:

Keith Bradbrook  
[Oldroankgb@gmail.com](mailto:Oldroankgb@gmail.com)



**Magazine Editor:** [Oldroankgb@gmail.com](mailto:Oldroankgb@gmail.com)  
**Old Roan Association website:** [www.johnroan.co.uk](http://www.johnroan.co.uk)  
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