

PLANE TALKING



A NEWSLETTER FOR OLD ELTHAMIANS

SUMMER 2008 ~ ISSUE 2

Summer Reunion

We thought it couldn't possibly be wetter than last year, but it was. On Sunday 6 July, six a side teams from the OEs, staff, parents and pupils braved the conditions, and eventually the sun shone. The result was almost immaterial but, for the record, the school side won.

In the meantime the Old Elthamians Association held its Annual General Meeting, where three of the committee stood down.

Chris Brain, Andrew Sheehan, Claudia Botham and Michael O'Connell were elected and, after spending some time looking at the History of Scouting at Eltham display, all present joined the cricketers for a BBQ in Old Quad and then watched the knockout stages.

Some were more successful than others - but then it is the taking part!



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From the President

On becoming OEA President, I expressed the wish that the expansion of the Eltham family would continue and communications between its constituent elements strengthen. It was particularly gratifying, therefore, that OEs enjoyed some outstanding and well-attended events in the Centenary year; 200 at the Centenary Dinner and more than 250 on Winter Reunion Day.

The Association has been fortunate in seeking out four new Committee members in their 20s and 30s to reinvigorate our ageing group.



New Committee members: Chris Brain, Andrew Sheehan, Claudia Botham and Mike O'Connell

Whilst recording members' gratitude to three retiring Committee men, Geoff Goemans, Brian Emly and *continues on page 2*

Having a Whale of a time!

It's not often that you get asked to run around Leicester Square in a giant foam whale costume, but this is just what a number of Old Elthamians and staff were asked to do in early May by Siobhan Heraghty.

For the final project of her Graphic Design degree at Loughborough University Siobhan had chosen to create a campaign to 'Save the Whale'. Not wanting to go along the traditional lines of a poster or a flyer, she decided to organise a Flashmob. This is where a large group of people gather in a public place, perform an unusual act then disappear in a 'flash'.

What could have been a more unusual sight than 60 people dressed as whales descending upon a famous London landmark? Predictably there were some very bewildered



looks from the gathered crowd; hopefully this would lead to them spreading the word that the world's whale population is once again in trouble.

With several generations of Elthamians being all too happy to get involved, the Flashmob proved a great success and couldn't have been achieved without their support. Videos of the event can be seen at www.heraghty.co.uk/whale

Siobhan Heraghty 2003

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Chris Langton I should like to pay special tribute to Geoff who has served the OEA and its sportsmen in just about every conceivable capacity for more than 60 consecutive years!



Geoff Goemans and Brian Emly

The Committee is reviewing the arrangements between the OEA and the Old Elthamians Sports Club. We are seeking, in collaboration with the Sports Club's own committee, to strengthen its organization and management. In so doing, the OEA's committee wants to ensure that not only will Foxbury, its biggest asset, play an appropriate part in the pursuit of the Association's objectives but also that it will demonstrate to all OE sportsmen and women, that the Old Elthamians should be their sports club of choice after their schooldays, and Foxbury a centre of social activity.

David Norris 1958



David Norris and President elect Ian Beith



Phil's Million

Major Phil Packer was a pupil at Eltham College between 1980 and 1988. He joined the British Army in 1993 as a Private Soldier and in 1997 went to Sandhurst where he was commissioned into the Royal Military Police. His career has seen him complete six operational tours and fulfil appointments such as Platoon Commander, Intelligence Officer, Police Captain, Adjutant and Company Commander. He has been awarded two Commendations and whilst at Sandhurst was awarded the Communications Studies Prize, Extra-Mural Activities Prize and the Bahrain Trophy.

On 19 February 2008, Phil was injured in an incident following a rocket attack in Basra. He sustained multiple injuries including a broken back. Phil was flown out of Iraq the next day and taken straight to Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham, then onto the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in Stanmore. Sadly, as a result of the accident Phil has lost the use of his legs and is now a paraplegic.

Phil has been donated a practice racing chair and started training for the next

Flora London Marathon after being discharged from hospital in late June. Not only is he training for this, but he has laid down the gauntlet for any challenges, events or sports that you may want to invite him to try.

With the help and kindness of colleagues and friends, he plans to raise £1 million for Help for Heroes, in support of wounded colleagues, by the 26 April 2009, the date of the Marathon. The link to his Just Giving website is <http://www.justgiving.com/philmillion>.

If you want to contact Phil, his email address is packerrmp@hotmail.com; he is also on Facebook with a Group and a link to the Charity Site.



Welcome Back

Over the last nine months the Old Elthamian Association has been actively searching to re-establish contact with as many OEs as possible. So far we have welcomed back over three hundred. One of those was JR "Dick" Parsons. Dick graduated from Bristol University and started his teaching career on Bristol / S. Gloucester border. He met Jen, his wife, in the same school. They then went to Kenya for two and a half years where they taught in a Girls National Secondary School near to Kisumu before returning to schools in the Bristol area.

Now retired, Dick has been doing all the things which he hadn't had time to do in the garden; proving what he was always told by retired, former colleagues that he, also, couldn't understand how he had had time to work! Dick and Jen went to Peru, Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands to improve their Spanish and to do voluntary work in El Arca, an animal rescue centre in the Amazon Rain forest in Ecuador, and then to work

in the Tortoise breeding Centre on the Island of Isabella. Dick is still playing cricket although, he claims modestly, not to the same standard as 30 years ago. Dick, on the left, is pictured with Chris Bradnock at the South West Reunion. Chris, now retired after being Headmaster at Queen's College Taunton, and Dick had not seen each other since leaving school. They are looking at the March 1960 Elthamian in which they are pictured sitting next to each other in the 1st XV photograph.

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This year's OE Winter Reunion will be on Sunday 14 December

OE OFFICERS

President David Norris, T: 01689 815 736; E: dnorris1@btinternet.com

President Elect Ian Beith, T: 020 8650 5480. (no email because that is in process of change)

Treasurer Robin Foster, T: 01732 365 119; E: robgeo@silvery.wanadoo.co.uk

Secretary Roger Scopes, T: 020 8455 7814; E: rogerscopes@btinternet.com

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Life is a Cabaret Old Chum



In March, 55 members of the cast, orchestra, stage crew, audience plus past and present members of staff got together for a most enjoyable evening. After a reception in Central Hall there was a dinner in Room 1, followed by a rendition of songs from the show performed by present Sixth Formers.

With OEs travelling from far and wide, many of whom hadn't seen each other since leaving the College, the evening flew by. One and all were entertained by seeing photos from the show and also others taken when they were in the Sixth Form.

It was great to see Maurice Paul, the Set Designer and Michael Bailey, the Musical Director along with Julian Yarnold the Director and Dr Death himself, Patrick Condren.

We would like to say a big thank you to Peter Howls for having the original idea, Patrick Harrison, Tim Prifti, Philippa Cowdell and Catherine Taylor for getting everyone together.

Good news from Royal Wimbledon Golf Club!



The team: Truelove, Hills, Houlden, Adair, Keenan and Williams

Holing a putt of more than 30 feet on the last hole for a birdie, Richard Williams took the Eltham team to the finals of the Grafton Morrish Public Schools Golf Competition at Hunstanton and Brancaster in September.

With only 8 of the 20 teams qualifying in the Scratch Stableford Foursomes at Royal Wimbledon the competition is fierce. We scored one point less than last year with a total of 74 Stableford points finishing in 7th place beating Epsom on a count back of the aggregate last 9 holes (that putt again!). Highgate were hot on our heels on 73 points.

The winning team this year was David Keenan (89-95) and Richard Williams (81-88) with 28 points

David Adair (74-81) and Neale Houlden (65-74) with 24 points
Mike Hills (73-77) and Richard Truelove (63-73) with 24 points

My role this year was as non playing Captain and supporter on the day. This is only the third time Eltham has qualified for the match play finals. I played in the last final partnering Richard Truelove and we all had a great time narrowly missing a place in the last 16 of the 64 finalists (losing the third match on the last hole!). The standard of golf in some of the teams is near professional and we will have to take it one round at a time.

Adrain Baulf 1963

Archive Corner



My name is Mark Stickings and I'm the new school archivist. Some of you will remember me as Head of German at Eltham College from 1981-90 under Christopher Porteous and Chris Waller, or as a Governor from 1994-98 under Malcolm Green. Now I'm back at the school as the German Assistant (since 2005) under Paul Henderson, and since June 2008 I've also been the school archivist. So of the eight Headmasters at Mottingham I've known four personally.

David Jones did an excellent job for many years, sorting a large pile of clutter into an organised set of boxes and folders. In what you might call Phase Two, my initial task is to catalogue electronically all the material we have, so that by typing in 1953, for example, we can see exactly what items we hold for that year. This also has the advantage of showing us what we don't have, where for example back issues of the Elthamian or other documents are missing. I have made a start, and at least 800 items are already on the spreadsheet, but there is a long way to go!

I will also continue the work of producing, as required or requested, occasional leaflets

or collections of extracts, covering a particular subject or a period in the school's history, e.g. for reunions.

Please feel free to write to me at the school (e-mail best) with your queries about the past or offers of material for the archives. I promise to reply to all messages received, but not necessarily very quickly, as I work only one day per term-time week as archivist! I also look forward to making contact with any OE who has an interest in the school's history.

Mark Stickings: ms@eltham-college.org.uk

Active in Mind

After three decades of Eltham College (1979-90) I was finally ready to leave! I believe that, apart from an education, Eltham taught me two great lessons in life; you get out what you put in and don't fall out with the dinner ladies.

I really did enjoy my time and benefited from the whole array of sporting and extra curricular activities. I also learnt a priceless lesson; no matter who you work for or with, get on with everybody and you'll benefit in the long run (including extra chips on a Friday or credit in the Tuck Shop). I can also look back with affection at some of the slightly mad events during my time at school:

The infamous Junior School U11 football tour to Jersey when an administrative error meant our opposition were U16 teams.

My interview for the Grange with Mr Hughes and Mr Porteous. By the time I arrived at The Grange, Mr Hughes had left, and four years on Mr Porteous saw me coming and also retired.

Being one of the nation's guinea pigs for the first year of GCSE's

The new suits and discovery of hair product on the first day of the Sixth Form when we were joined by the girls!

As a contrast my life today has recently included:

Dressing Richard Branson in an Elvis costume as we landed in Las Vegas.

Helping Pamela Anderson with her bikini in New York!

Finding edamame nuts for the Spice Girls at Heathrow Airport.

At University I became the Entertainment Manager after going to the wrong hustings (I was meant to go for the Student Welfare post). After graduating, I did have a proper job for a while with Cable & Wireless, before setting up Active in 1995.

Thirteen years on and Active is now an award-winning company organising parties, product launches and conferences internationally.



Seb and Matt

I've returned to Eltham over the past couple of years to see that everything which was good about Eltham is the same (except that you can't play football in the New Quad), and that some of my former teachers have discovered Grecian 2000 for the little hair that they still have. I have also realised one of my ambitions - to wear jeans in the headmaster's office!

Matt is pictured at Twickenham with Sebastien Coquelin, an Eltham College teacher, who had been making the French announcements at the Heineken Cup semi-final between London Irish and Toulouse.

Matt Lewis 1990

From Eltham College to the Bank of England



My education at Eltham College started at the Junior School in 1966, just months after England had won the World Cup. But the most significant event in my school life occurred eight years later when I started studying economics at A level. That began my association with the subject which has shaped my career.

Many people study economics at A level or as a degree level subject, but then use it as a platform for a much more general career in business, finance or government service. That was also my original intention. But good job opportunities were scarce after I graduated because of the recession in the early 1980s. I had two brief forays into the business world at that time, but I had much more success in accumulating economics degrees - adding a MSc and PhD from the London School of Economics to my first degree at Cambridge.

In 1986, nearly ten years after leaving Eltham, I started my first substantive job as a professional economist working for the CBI. I joined just as the Lawson boom was getting underway, which greatly helped my promotion

prospects as many other CBI economists left about the same time for lucrative jobs in the City! In 1989, I became Director of Economic Affairs and the CBI's main spokesman on economic issues, providing me with wide media coverage through the early 1990s recession.

After an academic interlude at London Business School in the mid-1990s, I achieved one of my early objectives of working for a major international business. I joined British Airways as Chief Economist in 1998 and stayed there for nearly nine years, helping to develop the recovery plan for the business after the traumatic impact of 9/11 on the airline industry. An economist working in a major business also needs to provide advice on a wide range of issues. I became very involved in the environmental challenges facing the airline industry, in particular climate change - which remains a continuing interest.

In 2006, I was appointed to the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England - responsible for setting interest rates to maintain low inflation. The Committee now faces some big challenges - and I will be drawing on all the economic training and business experience I have accumulated over nearly three and a half decades, as we seek to steer the UK economy through turbulent waters.

Andrew Sentence 1976

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Colin Bishop, Clive Grenyer and Rob Carter are trying to gather together the 1960 leavers for a reunion. If you are interested they can be contacted via the Development Office sjm@eltham-college.org.uk

On September 13 there will be a black tie dinner for the 1998 leavers in King George's Hall. Tickets are available from the website www.elthamians.net or by ringing Penny Waterson on 020 8851 9840

The 2003 leavers are planning a get together in October or November. All those interested should contact Vin Vijayanathan, Jackie Odoch, Sophia Morrell or Jon Rogers via Facebook.

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