



## Burton Grammar School OBA 1921 – 2020



### President's Letter – October 2020

Dear Fellow Old Boy,

Please find the following in this letter:

- A. President's Final Letter
- B. Minutes of the Final Meeting of the BGS Old Boys' Association
- C. Secretary's Report.
- D. Archivist's Report.
- E. Financial Report
- F. Future of the Newsletter



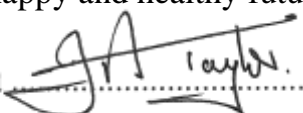
The agenda was to consider the outcome of the member's vote and to finally make a decision on the closure of the BGS OBA. At the meeting on 26th October 2020 it was agreed unanimously by the committee to close the Association after. I am sure most members will have some regrets about this closure. The committee realised that this was the correct decision to take in the circumstances, which included the inevitable decline in the membership, the financial position, the decline in numbers attending the AGM and Dinner and members willing or able to take on a role in the committee.

The committee were able to close the Association whilst there were sufficient funds in the account to settle all the outstanding invoices and the remaining funds could be presented to Robert Andrews, our archivist, to support the upkeep of the artefacts and memorabilia. These will be kept on display at the Burton Club where they may be viewed by appointment. I would also like to remind members of the three ways of keeping in touch with news of past pupils:-

- The emailed newsletter produced by Eric Bodger will continue to provide news and interesting comments from members willing to supply content.
- Mr. Keith Large also runs a website for past pupils to meet for a drink or attend local events.
- Kevin Gallagher maintains historical records of the School which can be found on his website.

Finally, I would like to thank the whole committee for their work and support during my time as President. I felt honoured to be asked to be your President and have enjoyed the role over the last two and a half years. I feel sure the friendships made at school will continue to be enjoyed for as long as possible.

I wish everyone a happy and healthy future during our later years.

Signed 

**John A Taylor** President: (2018 – 2020) Burton Grammar School Old Boys' Association.

# B BGS OBA Final Committee Meeting

## Minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020



**Present:** President John Tylor, Graham Marshment, Keith Large, Andrew Gentles, Eric Bodger, Bob Andrews and Steve Wilcox.

*This meeting was held as a virtual meeting because of pandemic considerations. All members of the Committee took part.*

*The purpose of this meeting was to consider the vote made by members in response to the Committee's Resolutions 1 & 2 and decide the final outcome of the Association's future, on behalf of the members of the Association.*

1. Apologies: None – the meeting was attended by all Committee members.
2. Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 meeting read, approved and signed by the President.
3. There were no Matters arising.
4. Secretary's Report and Voting Results; this had been circulated prior to the meeting and was discussed in detail. It was agreed that this confirmed the decisions outlined in Resolution 1 and 2 to formally close the Association.

It was Proposed to accept the Report: Eric Bodger. Seconded: Andrew Gentles.

**5. It was unanimously agreed by all present that the Association be formally closed.**

6. Archivist's Report: Bob Andrews had already circulated a text which he hoped to have recorded in some form to put in the records and in the Archive room to explain how a legacy of the Association and the BGS could be retained for posterity.

It was unanimously agreed to accept his Report and give full approval and thanks to Bob for his work in ensuring the survival of the archived items and documents.

7. **Financial Report:** The Treasurer reported a total of £710.05 in the Bank but with a cheque for £186.02 which had not yet been cleared.

This left a balance of £524.07 to be donated to cover the future maintenance of the Archive Room at the Burton Club. The Treasurer confirmed that all outstanding bills had been paid and that he would close the account in the next few days and ensure the remaining monies would be passed on to the Archivist. It was agreed to accept the Report: Proposed: Eric Bodger. Seconded: Keith Large. The Committee voted unanimously in favour.

8. Continuation of the three informal contact groups was approved and these will remain operative after the closure of the Association. It was agreed to approve and encourage the information provided in the links detailed in the Agenda.
9. It was confirmed by the school that there would be no Remembrance Service this year but in future years, Old Boys could ring the school and arrange to attend any Service being organised.
10. The President's final letter to all members was discussed and given wholehearted approval.
11. AOB – There was no AOB but various members raised an on screen glass to the survival into the future of the spirit of the BGS Old Boys!

## C Secretary's Report:

### Voting Returns, received by 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Of the just over 400 OBA members on the database, all of whom were sent a proposal, either by email or post, concerning the Committee's proposal to dissolve the Association in May 2020, I received 137 replies (58 votes by email and 79 by post).

### Committee resolution 1:

129 voted to agree the Committee's resolution to dissolve the Association. (plus one later)  
6 voted to disagree and 2 abstained.

### Committee Resolution 2

133 gave consent for the retention of their contact details.  
4 asked for them to be removed.

In order to comply with current data protection laws, this means that the 262 members who did not vote or make their wishes clear will be shortly be removed from the database but Eric will be sending out one further reminder before that happens.

They will, of course, be able to retain contact using a variety of digital links as outlined in the President's letter!

Finally, now that the Association has formally closed, I've offered to try and organise an informal celebration next year (2021) if it becomes possible.

I've also offered to help Bob Andrews maintain and record all the materials in the Archive Room and we will be working together on this continuing task.

*Graham Marshment*

Voting Details were given at the meeting.

It was interesting to receive the many comments attached to the voting slips, most of which expressed regret at the possible ending of the Association. I tried to make a personal reply to all of them and confirm that if it becomes possible to hold a celebration in the future, I will do my best to arrange something but it will be a personal effort and will not be a formal one on behalf Old Boys' Association.



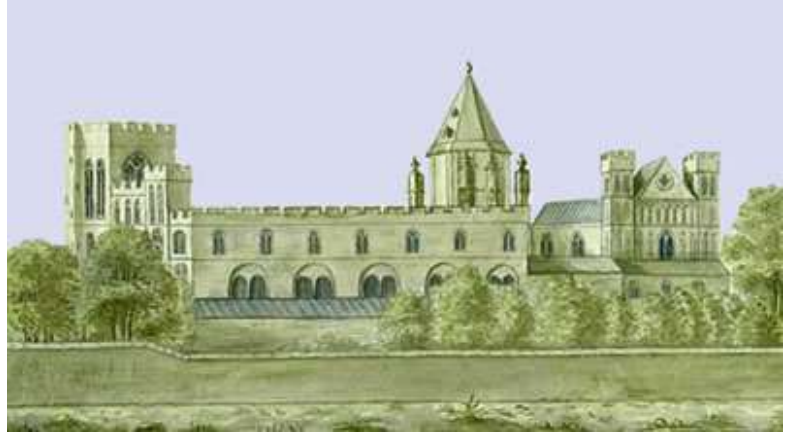
Back Row: D. Blackburn, David Moore, P. Rose, Maurice Pett, G. Marshment  
Front Row: Alan Cure, Graham Barnes, I. Birch, K. Shilton, A. Stewart, Barry Minns  
(Master: Yarlott)

## **D The Archivist's Report**

### Archiving in 'The Abbey'

The archives stored in the loft of the building we know as 'The Abbey' link four important pillars on which the town of Burton-on-Trent was built:

- I. The Abbey itself,
- II. The Brewing Industry,
- III. The Grammar School and
- IV. The Burton Club.



We have set up a facility and a tradition and hope there will be others in the future who will care for these artefacts and that they will be aware they will be preserving a thousand years of local history.

Byrtun, was a small village on the banks of the River Trent, when around the year AD 625 an Irish nun called Modwenna, or Modwen, stopped off on her pilgrimage to Rome. She built a small Church on St.Andrew's Isle opposite where The Abbey now stands. Over the centuries the name gradually changed to Andressey.

Modwenna returned to Burton from Rome and built another Church at the bottom of Mount Calvis (Scalpcliffe Hill) on the other side of the Trent as the area was full of Pagans!

Modwenna then travelled to Scotland and when she died her body was brought back to Burton, at her request, for burial on Andressey Island. Sadly, her tomb was desecrated by a Danish Army around AD 874 and her bones scattered, the church afterwards destroyed.

However, once the Danes had left, local townspeople collected some of her bones and secreted them away as she was now a Saint and miracles were assigned to her, especially for pregnant women.

### **The Abbey**

In AD1002 the local Saxon Lord, Wulfric Spot, decided to build an Abbey in Burton and the bones of St. Modwen were placed there. There is a copy of an engraving of Wulfric and his will in our archives. When you look at his crest note the style and colour, as it reflected in the Grammar School uniform; the first link in our chain of history.

The building that we now call The Abbey is built on the foundation of the infirmary and excavations indicate it has existed since the main Abbey was built. The central part of the building was constructed in AD1316 by Abbot William of Bromley. It is described as a 'Great Hall'.

### **The Grammar School**

The date we have for the foundation of the Grammar School is AD 1520 but it was in existence within the Abbey before that. The Abbot, William Beyne, saw that if the Abbey was destroyed by Henry VIII, the School could be lost so he set aside certain lands to bring rents to pay for a teacher. There are books and records within the archives documenting this.

The lands around Burton were given by Henry VIII to his loyal supporters, one of whom was Sir William Paget whose descendant was one of the founders of The Burton Club; yet another link in our history.

Sadly, the Burton Grammar School was closed in 1976 by government reforms and it was replaced with a new comprehensive school, the Abbot Beyne School.

It is worth remembering that was some of the former Grammar School pupils who originally founded The Burton Club. One of them was Lord Burton, a Grammar School boy who built his family business into the largest brewery in the world. He is another link in our history.

Amongst the artefacts in The Abbey is a cap as worn by pupils of the school 150 years ago. Lord Burton probably wore a similar hat. The school building which he attended still stands in the Memorial Gardens.

## The Brewing Industry

Burton is Brewing! When did it start and why was it so successful? Beer was brewed universally as a means of purifying water but its condition depended on the quality of its well water. In Burton the water, which for thousands of years has trickled through the gravel into the gypsum beds, made it ideal for brewing beer. In addition, the water has a slight sulphur content known as 'The Burton Snatch' which has been described as making the beer, 'A brightly sparkling bitter, the colour of sherry and the condition of champagne'.

The monks in the Abbey no doubt brewed beer but it was the great brewers in the nineteenth century who made the Burton beer world famous. The link between The Breweries, The Abbey, Burton Grammar School, and The Burton Club was woven by the owners of the breweries who have a close association with all four of our subjects.

We have in our archives the history of the breweries written by, and for, The Burton Club by some of its members. These are not published anywhere else and will remain available for future generations to peruse.

To the custodians of the future we trust the artefacts and the books relating to a thousand years of history and trust you will preserve and pass them to the next generation, as we have passed them to you.

**Robert F Andrews** Archivist - Member of The Burton Club - Grammar School Pupil

## E Financial Report

The Treasurer agreed to close the Association account as soon as possible after the meeting.

After paying all due invoices, he reported that the residual monies amounted to £524.07.

This will be passed on to the Archivist immediately afterwards for the future maintenance of the Archive room and any expenses associated with it.

BURTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION.			
Year Ended 31st December, 1936.			
EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.
Expenses of Annual General Meeting	3	3	0
Less donation	3	6	
	3	1	6
Postages		1	5
Insurance on Lowe		7	6
Golf Cup		4	4
Printing and Stationery		9	7
Purchase of Cygnets		3	4
Magazines		1	2
Postages		2	8
Prize for School		1	2
Cricket Bat		2	8
Excess of Income over Expenditure		5	2
	£27	1	0
Balance Sheet as at 31st December, 1936.			
LIABILITIES.	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions paid in advance	33	12	0
Balance B/O 1935	15	18	0
Balance B/O from Income & Expenditure Account	2	8	6
	50	6	6
Cygnets (two terms)		6	3
Prize hat for School		1	2
Printing & Stationery		2	5
	£58	11	6
ASSETS.	£	s.	d.
Cash at Bank		54	6
Cash in hand		8	4
	£62	11	0
F. T. SHELLY, Hon. Treasurer.			
S. G. EDWARDS, Hon. Financial Secretary.			
I consider that the above accounts are correct as shown by the books of the Association.			
JAY B. SMITH.			
February 25th, 1937.			



## G Future of the Newsletter

I started work on the 2021 Newsletter before the demise of the Association, and hope to issue it in the spring. As in the past, I'll send an email to everyone on my mailing list with a link to the new document on [www.cicsplex.co.uk/BGS/](http://www.cicsplex.co.uk/BGS/)

Everyone who consented to my keeping their email address will automatically be notified when the Newsletter appears. If you didn't reply with consent at the time, you can still add your name by emailing a request to me at [BGS@cicsplex.co.uk](mailto:BGS@cicsplex.co.uk)

As ever, the quality of the newsletter depends on the content sent by Old Boys and their families, so please keep it coming. I shall try to produce newsletters for as long as useful content reaches me.

Eric Bodger (1956-62)

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### Some Grammar School Alumni

Dr Norman Allen CB, President from 1961-2 of the Institute of Metallurgists.

Michael Thomas Bass, brewer.

Prof Alec Beardmore, Professor of Genetics from 1966-97 at Swansea University.

Prof Adrian Brown, Professor of Biology and Chemistry of Fermentation from 1899-1919 at the University of Birmingham.

Bernard Crump, Chief Executive since 2005 of the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement.

Sir Cecil Dannatt OBE MC, Professor of Electrical Engineering from 1940-4 at the University of Birmingham.

Sir Oscar de Ville CBE, Chairman from 1987-91 of Meyer International.

Prof Brian Hackett, Professor of Landscape Architecture from 1967-77 at Newcastle University

Paul Harvey (artist).

Sir Francis Ley.

Alfred Ernest Newbould, Liberal MP from 1919-22 for Leyton West.

Bob Plant (British Army officer) MC.

Prof Roy Pryce, Director from 1983-90 of the Federal Trust for Education and Research.

Professor. Hugh Richmond, Professor of English, University of California, Berkeley, 1957-1994.

Edward Wightman (d.1612), nontrinitarian Baptist pastor, last person burnt at the stake for heresy in England.

Alastair Yates, former BBC & Sky journalist.

Burton Grammar School  
Old Boys' Association  
Founded 1921  
Newsletter Number 47



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by the committee of the BGS Old Boys' Association

