

Burton Grammar School Old Boys' Association Founded 1921

Newsletter Number 47



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by the committee of the BGS Old Boys' Association



Letter from the President

This year has been dominated by the committee's efforts to formulate an appropriate way of celebrating 500 years since the formation of the school and 100 years of the BGSOBA. We all understand that the inevitable would have to happen and we did not wish to see it just cease with no celebrations due to lack of Old Boys.

Following various suggestions for other weekend activities, we will arrange:

- BGSOBA AGM and Dinner to be held on Friday 9 October, at The Pavilion, Branston Golf and Country Club, Burton upon Trent. Old boys and partners invited. We have postponed this from May because of Covid-19.
- An optional tour of Sinai House at 2pm on the afternoon of our AGM. An old timber framed building dating from the 14th century with connections to the Burton Abbey. (further details can be found at www.sinaiparkhouse.co.uk). Old boys and partners invited.
- A visit to the Burton Abbey building was planned for 16th May, but is postponed. This houses some school memorabilia. Old boys and partners invited. When the Tour is over, everyone present will be able to enjoy a drink at The Winery next door!

Further details and an application form for the above events are included with this newsletter.

Can I request that anyone paying by cheque for these events writes the full title of "Burton Grammar School Old Boys Association" and NOT BGSOA as this seems to confuse the software at the bank.

In November 2019 I and many Old Boys represented the Association at the Remembrance Service held at the Abbot Beyne School. By tradition I read a war poem and as always it was a very moving experience.

I look forward to meeting many of you at the forthcoming AGM and Dinner, and would like to finish this report by thanking all the committee members for their support during the past year.



John A Taylor

Farewell to Peel Croft

Several BGS Old Boys played in the last ever over-45 match on the familiar rugby ground, before this season ends and Lidl start to build there. The weather was very sunny, the crowd was massive. What a great day!

This is a still from the movie posted at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/3560071026/permalink/10156937885641027/>



Remembrance Day Service – Friday 8th November 2019

Eleven Old Boys attended the Remembrance service. As usual, it was very professionally and sensitively delivered by the head teacher, Annabel Stoddart, seen here with representatives of the Association.



Old Boys in attendance were: Alistair MacVicar, Bob Andrews, David Lees, Deryk Barker, Gerald Wright, Graham Marshment, John Green, John Taylor, Keith Large, Malcolm Watson and Richard Wain. Apologies were received from: Alan Winfield, Andrew Gentles, Derek Pounds, Duncan Bradley, Gordon Hindle, John Clubb, John Curtis, Ken Stanyon, Lionel Cooper, Martin Cooper, Michael Brown, Mike Hamilton, Mike Smith, Peter Appleby, Peter Evanson, Richard Bell, Robert James, Roger Deacon, Simon Trowell, Stephen Boyd, Steve Wilcox and Trevor Brettell.

Officers of the Burton Grammar School Old Boys' Association 2019-20

President	Mr John Taylor	1950-55
Hon Secretary	Mr Graham Marshment	1957-62
Archivist	Mr RF Andrews	1952-58
Hon Treasurer	Mr S Wilcox	1963-68
Newsletter Editor and BGS Database	Mr Eric Bodger	1956-62
	email: bgs@cicsplex.co.uk	
Hon Membership Officer	Mr KB Large	1967-72

The condolences and sympathy of the Association is expressed to the relatives and families of recently deceased Grammar School Old Boys & Staff.

Dr Robert Ernest Somekh

(1962–65)

died 11 March 2019

Mike Smith (BGS 1958-65), **writes:**

Robert, later known as Rob, was born in 1947 at Nottingham, where his father, Ezra, taught Physics at Nottingham High School. In 1957 Ezra became Head of Physics at BGS. One of my memories of Ezra, among many others, is that at some time when he was (very uncharacteristically) absent, someone had painted outside his Senior Physics Lab. some affectionate caricatures in sci-fi costume, together with the slogan ‘VORK, VORK AND MORE VORK’. (See below.)

On Ezra’s appointment the family moved to Burton. At first Robert attended Ashby-de-la-Zouch Grammar School, but in 1962 he came to BGS, where his elder brother David (now a distinguished psychiatrist, and happily still with us), had preceded him. Unsurprisingly, Robert joined the ‘Science side’ for his A levels. I joined the Sixth Form in the same year, but was on the ‘Modern side’, so I never sat in a class with him. He was appointed Head Boy in 1964, after only two years there, rather than the usual six or seven; moreover, he was a teacher’s son. That sort of thing might have created difficulties, but I don’t recall any, doubtless because he displayed qualities admired since by all: he was genial, he was grown-up, and he got on with the job.

The school was perhaps as proud of its sporting record as of its academic, and the grounds were laid out accordingly. From my grandstand view I watched Robert win the Hundred Yards, and I can still see his determined frown. I can also hear his voice as he fulfilled one of the duties of a Head Boy: to read Rupert Brooke’s ‘If I should die’ at the annual Remembrance Day service. I wondered at the time what he thought, and still do.

Somewhere along the way Robert failed Use of English O level: the Headmaster, W. H. Gillion, told him that the last boy to have done so got a Scholarship to Oxbridge. Robert did too, and in 1965 began a brilliant undergraduate career at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Again, we were on different ‘sides’, and we were at different Colleges, but we met from time to time, and in 1966 we were joined by his cousin Ruth, whom I later married. She has written: ‘When we were undergraduates Robert’s room in Pembroke was sanctuary to me.... it seemed wonderfully romantic-scholarly.... Over the desk dangled his father’s injunction: ‘Work, work and more work’.

Rob went on to gain a PhD in low temperature Physics at the Cavendish Laboratory, followed by a post in Dr Jan Evetts’ laboratory at the then Department of Metallurgy and Materials Science (now the other way round), where his ground-breaking work on thin film sputter deposition became famous worldwide. He stayed in the Department for 25 years, leaving in 1997 to join Plasmon, a company that developed and manufactured professional data storage systems for use by banks. (His retirement talk thence in 2008 was entitled ‘35 years in sputtering’.)

When he applied to Plasmon, Rob explained that he had envisaged his career having three stages: (1) Pure Physics; (2) Applied Research; (3) Working in Industry to make a tangible product. Unlike most of us, he achieved what he had set out to do. His work in Materials Science was of huge importance to the understanding and application of many areas of physics, especially, perhaps, low-cost applications of superconductivity, and there are many scientists all over the world whose careers are based on the high-quality materials he



produced. I, as no scientist, am sure that all this pleased him. However, though he did the work, and achieved the results, of the highest-flying academics, he never got the credit. Might this, too, have pleased him?

In 1974 Rob married Bridget Emerson, his former landlady, and now the renowned sociologist Professor Bridget Somekh. He inherited her two children, Suzanne and Gillian, and became as committed and successful a family man as he was a scientist. Gill: ‘Robert was grounded and constant, he was our rock.’ Suzanne: ‘I don’t remember when Robert came into my life but I do remember that I am the person I am because of the man he was.’

Rob and Bridget retired in the same year, 2008, and they pursued many interests, mostly together; a fraction of Rob’s follows. (1) *Cookery*: few professionals could match his range or results, not to mention the time spent, and ‘you felt the affection in every dish’. (2) *Travel*: in his wide peregrinations he always carried a camera, partly to help him ‘learn as much as possible’; the results have benefited us all. (3) *Music*: he had been a keen and knowledgeable listener since our schooldays, and this continued lifelong; opera became a particular passion. In retirement Rob was also a performer: he set himself to learn piano and accordion, and both his teachers admired his enthusiasm, dedication and progress. (4) *Theatre*: he and Bridget attended 1,000 plays during the last ten years of his life, the last less than six weeks before he died.

In putting together this account of Robert I have relied heavily on Bridget’s compilation *Robert Somekh ‘Rob’: A Life Remembered by His Friends and Family* (Cambridge, UK: Thirteen Eighty One LLP, 2019). This splendid book, a remarkable tribute to a remarkable man, contains contributions from no fewer than 108 people – family, friends, colleagues and pupils – across the world. They record *inter alia* ‘true to his middle name, his earnest approach, practical support and willingness to spend time’; his ‘legendary generosity and kindness’; his ‘humaneness, thoughtfulness and genuine interest in people’; his ‘champion [ship] of gender equality’; and his ‘open minded receptiveness to goodness of any kind from anywhere’. He was ‘liked and admired by everyone’, and ‘every cat he met knew at once that he was a master stroker.’

It’s clear from all the above that Robert cannot be summarised. The nearest I can get is also from Bridget’s book: ‘he was fully present in what he was doing.’

Wilfrid J Cross**(1931-39)****died 5 Jan 2018**

Judy Cross wrote the following in her eulogy:

My father was a man of many talents, a polymath, skilled musician, scientist, engineer, artist, motorcyclist and so much more – a brilliant man. He was born in Burton-on-Trent on 19th August 1920, the third child of George, a master plumber, and Florence. His sister Florrie was then 14 and Derrick just two years old. Florrie, Derry and Billy (Wilfrid) shared a love of long-distance cycling and all became church organists.

After he settled in Manchester, the first stop on any visit to Burton-on-Trent was to the organ shop where he would play a classical piece on the keyboard and urge Derry to listen to the bass line on the pedals – a George Formby tune! My cousin Maureen also says that any visit was not complete without Robirch's pies. And only then, would they catch the bus to grandpa's.

Educated at Burton Grammar School, Billy was able to pursue his academic studies until the outbreak of war. He obtained a war degree in Chemistry and joined REME as an officer, rising to the rank of captain. During the war he was stationed on Gibraltar and in Libya. Dad returned from there with a fast motorcycle, a chameleon and malaria.

After the war ended he was sent to Donington for demob. There he was to meet my mother, Jessie Laird, a corporal in the ATS. One evening a scruffy despatch rider, wearing leathers over his pyjamas, showed up in the NCO mess scrounging cigarettes. The following morning on parade, to her great surprise, she saw he was the senior officer taking the salute. My father thought she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen and made up his mind that she would be his wife. In 1947 my mother returned to Scotland and my father to Birmingham University to complete his degree. One of his professors, an organist, recognised his musical abilities and took him under his wing. He graduated with a further first class degree in electrical engineering in 1949 and married my mother that August. They were to be married for over 60 years.



Also that year, Wilfrid joined Ferranti as a design engineer in the microwave laboratory of the guided weapons section at Moston, Manchester. The newlyweds lodged initially in Longsight before moving to a house in Ryebank Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

He moved to Wythenshawe in 1954 and took charge of airborne microwave systems developments on the Bloodhound missile. He continued to work on military design studies until 1967. Design work for printed circuit boards and automatic electro-plating lines followed until he retired in 1983. On his retirement he was presented with a radio and tape system and equipment for his latest hobby – wine-making.

He never talked about his work but we do remember the occasion when Dad came home, chauffeur-driven, with a brief case possibly handcuffed to his wrist and a security man. The next morning, Bentley purring outside, there was a knock on the door and the guard asked if Mr Cross was ready to leave. My father, a stickler for punctuality, had already left for work by bus.

Evenings and weekends were spent playing the piano, crafting a sewing table for my mother, building a model railway, a doll's house, gardening or playing a church or theatre organ. We thought every home had an oscilloscope and a metronome! Even as recently as last year he would wear a lab coat when undertaking serious tasks – such as creosoting the fence, making ginger beer, or having a fry-up.

All through these years we had a baby grand piano, a white Hammond then a Wurlitzer organ. The Hammond would be loaded on to an open lorry with the organ stool and Dad would play some unlikely venues – Strangeways prison and Winnick sanatorium. He could play anything requested, often without the sheet music, and would annotate music for individual church and theatre organs.

Not long after the single was released, Dad went on an expedition to find the music for Whiter Shade of Pale. Not yet available in the Henry Watson Music Library, he went on to Forsyth's where he bought the sheet music, something he seldom did. He was to play this at countless weddings and for pleasure.

After he retired he was able to devote to time to his music. He bought a car and started driving further afield to play, visit and restore theatre organs, and to accompany and entertain friends. Not only could he play any tune but he could also draw anything. One day he asked his beloved granddaughters what they would like him to sketch for them – “A cow on a motorbike, please, Grumpy Grandad” so he did just that to their delight and amazement.

An old-fashioned gentleman, he valued courtesy, loyalty, and integrity. When I graduated in 2000, with a first, I'm not sure what pleased him more; that I also won the Mature Student Award or that a fellow student asked to be introduced to him.

For decades, he was a member of Burton Grammar Old Boys, Birmingham University Alumni Association, Institute of Electrical Engineers, Manchester Organists' Association and the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust. A Baptist, he respected all other religious beliefs.

As he became less mobile, his carers meant much to him and he cared as much for their well-being as they did his.

Some of his skills continue in the next generations: Doug, Pete and Andrew followed in his cycle clips; Savannah gained a first in midwifery, and Bronte is following in his engineering footsteps. He was so proud of all of them.

By about a fortnight, he achieved a final aim – to be retired from Ferranti longer than he worked for them.

Geoffrey Edward Grimsley (1940-47) Died 6 February 2019

Geoffrey was born in Manchester in 1929 and spent his early years in Burton, gaining an Allsopp special scholarship to BGS.

After school, he served for a time in the RAF, and served at the well-known Battle of Britain stations of Biggin Hill, North Weald and Hornchurch, where he tested and put air crew candidates through their paces. From time to time he also had duties at Air Ministry in London.

On leaving the Air Force, he qualified as an architect at Manchester University. His first professional job was with Ind Coope and Allsopp in Burton. There he married Mary, before moving to Luton to work for the borough council. After broadening his experience there, he joined a private practice in Shrewsbury, soon becoming a partner and eventually sole principal. It was in Shrewsbury that their two children, Ian and Sally, were born and a happy family life was enjoyed for many years. Geoffrey's work extended from Shropshire into much of Wales, and always he felt very privileged to be working in such a beautiful part of the country. Mountains and coast were within easy reach, and his love of hill walking gave him much pleasure.

During his 34 years in Shropshire, he served on a number of charitable committees, including that of the Shrewsbury Flower Show. He was also a member of the Sabrina Lodge of Freemasons. After retiring, he returned to Burton to care for his mother who had been left on her own after his father's death.

Music played a major part in Geoffrey's life; he was an amateur classical pianist and gave a number of recitals in his University days, and also sang with the University Choral Society. . He was also an experienced organist and was called upon to play at weddings and funerals, in addition to regular church services. In Burton, he could be heard at St John's, Horninglow, at St Chad's, St Paul's and All Saints, also in Tutbury and many surrounding villages. In his younger years he also enjoyed singing and was for some years a senior chorister at St John's. Although his first love was classical, his musical taste was broad, and he was founder of the dance band at RAF Hornchurch, which he directed and where he played the piano.

Geoffrey had a full life, and will be remembered by friends who have outlived him.

Roger Tomlinson (1957-62) died 28 July 2018.

Roger — affectionately known as Todge by everyone who knew him for as long as his family can remember (everyone includes Neal BGS 1965-1970 and his other brother John BGS 1969-1976).

Roger spent his entire career working for Pirelli Limited in Burton except for a three year period when transferred to Pirelli's other main U.K. operation in Carlisle, he took early retirement aged around 58 or 59 to care for his much loved late wife Rita.

His sporting life revolved around local table tennis for Geary House and until his fatal illness struck in May this year, Crown Green Bowls. He played latterly for Eureka Park, but for many years previously he played for Geary House before it closed.

Prof Gary Acres OBE

(1946-53)

died 26 March 2019



The eminent fuel cell and catalyst researcher, Gary Acres, was captain of Drake House.

He read Chemistry at Nottingham university, getting his BSc in 1956 before working on isotope research at AERE Harwell. He then returned to Nottingham and got his MSc in 1961, and PhD in 1963.

He joined the newly formed catalyst research group of Johnson Matthey in 1963, becoming Director responsible for research and development operations from 1974 to 1985, and then Director, Corporate Development until 1994 when he retired from full time employment.

Since then he has held a number of advisory roles and was currently a Consultant to Johnson Matthey on fuel cell and related activities. He was Chairman of the Grove Fuel Cell Symposium and the first Chairman of the European Fuel Cell Group.

Since 2000, he has been a Royal Academy of Engineering Visiting Professor on Sustainable Development at the University of Birmingham. His awards include the Queen's Award for Technology and the MacRobert Award for the development of automobile emission control catalyst systems. He served on the *European Science and Technology Assembly*, and in 2002, gave evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Science and Technology, which examined hydrogen technology as a way to reduce CO₂ emissions.

Gary's widow, Ann, writes:

Gary never really retired and just kept working on his main interest at the time, Fuel Cells, until dementia slowed him down. He enjoyed sports, particularly rugby, cricket and tennis and we both enjoyed boating on the Thames when we moved to the Thames Valley.

He was secretary of the local River Thames Society for 20 years, taking part in campaigns to protect the river. Gary's other main interest was our two holiday homes in Somerset that I inherited, and he enjoyed spending time there, gardening, painting and decorating them, rather than sitting on a beach abroad which he found boring. Until he was 70 he enjoyed excellent health and energy and lived life to the full. Only at the end did he slow down.

Our children, Jonathan and Caroline, living in Abingdon and Southampton respectively, neither married at present. Jonathan, an engineer, has followed Gary's example of being a workaholic although as a teenager he declared he would never be like his father.

Rt Revd Richard Neil Inwood (1957-64)**died 14 April 2019**

Richard was born on 4 March 1946 at Burton upon Trent, where both his parents worked for Marston's brewery. Cyril, or Cib as he was always called, was Assistant to the Secretary of the Company; Sylvia was a Comptometer Operator. (A notice on her desk said: 'Are you looking for someone with a little authority? I have as little as anyone.')

I first got to know Richard at Burton-on-Trent (as the railways call it) Station on 18 Aug 1959, as we joined the 7.33am train northwards. We recognised each other from Burton Grammar School, but only distantly, as he was a year above me. Both were on trainspotting trips: he to Leeds, I, with my father, to Sheffield. For many of us in those days, train-timetables were much more important than school-ditto. The School was surprisingly indulgent, and the Locospotters' Club met after hours in the care of Dai Davies (Woodwork and Religious Knowledge), and went on exciting trips in the holidays. In 2020, it's hard to imagine thirty first-and-second-formers, led not by Dai but by a fifth-year lad, picking their way between hot ash-heaps, water-filled pits and moving engines, but no-one seemed to get hurt, and it was great fun. Along with fellow-students (including me) and other local enthusiasts, Richard spent countless hours at Moor Street Bridge and other railway locations, reached mainly by bike, or by train when we could afford it.

Despite such distractions, Richard was a great success at BGS. Socially, he was popular with his colleagues, and when mine were less kind to me – doubtless my fault – he was a staunch friend. Academically, he 'skipped a year', and joined the famous Form 5X (1960-61), some of whom assembled many years later to mourn and celebrate their Mathematics mentor Harry ('Brab') Smith (1923-2012). Thence he went on to University College, Oxford, where he read Chemistry and was a member of OICCU (the Christian Union). After graduating, he returned briefly to the School, teaching Physics, and then spent a year in Arua, Uganda, where he taught Physical Science and Maths. That was followed by almost two years as a Research and Development Chemist in ICI at Manchester.

Richard's 'real' career began in 1971, when he went to Nottingham to read Theology at the University, and Pastoral Studies at St John's College. After ordination in the Church of England, he worked in Sheffield, London, Bath, Yeovil and Halifax, the last as Archdeacon (a predecessor in the same post was the great railway photographer Eric Treacy). He became Bishop of Bedford in 2003. After retirement in 2012 he continued his ministry as Honorary Assistant Bishop in the Dioceses of Derby and of Southwell & Nottingham, and was also Acting Bishop in the latter from 2014-15.



Tributes in *The Church of England Newspaper* and *The Church Times* speak of him as 'humble and gracious', 'gentle and godly', 'wise and thoughtful'. 'He was well loved in the parishes he served'; 'he was a great and good man whose love for his Lord shaped and formed all that he did and who he was.'

It was at Oxford that Richard met his future wife Liz, another member of OICCU. They had three daughters, all of whom are involved in Christian ministries, and who between them have given Richard and Liz eight grandchildren. He was as devoted a husband, father and grandfather as he was a clergyman.

In all that he undertook he worked with unrivalled energy and conscientiousness, always without complaint, and almost always with relish.

In retirement he was able to enjoy his family, and to pursue his interests in hill- and mountain-walking, music (especially opera) and birdwatching, all of which were shared with Liz. His love of railways persisted to the end, and though Liz has been heard to say that she couldn't *quite* match his enthusiasm there, she was more than tolerant. I was privileged to be his co-author in two books of steam nostalgia (a third was projected), and to share presentations of them, the audience sometimes including BGS colleagues (one, Cliff Shepherd, himself a distinguished railway author, came all the way from N Yorkshire to Burton to attend).

All this was cut short by Richard's sad death from cancer on 14 April 2019. Three Old Boys, Derek Hawes, Roger Newman and myself, attended the funeral in his large, packed, local church in Chesterfield. He would have been amused, and perhaps pleased, by the heading of the *CEN* obituary: 'a bishop who loved steam engines and God'.

Mike Smith (BGS 1958-65)

David Alan Brown

(1956-63)

died Feb 2020

David Brown has died in Chelmsford, the city where he had lived for the last half century. He underwent a short final illness, aggravated by underlying conditions, which impaired, but did not spoil, his later months of life.

He was at the Grammar School from 1956 and so was in the cohort that experienced one year of the old Bond Street premises. He excelled in science subjects – a fact clear from the start to his classmates, who always respected his calm modesty and generously unassuming demeanour. When it came to the third year sixth, he was put forward for the Oxbridge scholarship exams. He amply succeeded in this and went up to Pembroke College Cambridge on an open exhibition in 1963.

It was notable that he lived very near the new school premises (in Mill Hill Lane) and he allowed himself to be imposed upon to the extent that he took the weekend readings of the weather from the school's Stevenson screen - even though geography, as a school subject, left him cold. Sport too, held little magic for him but numbers, abstract concepts and practical science were meat and drink to him.

After taking a good degree, David became a Patent agent, working for Mathys & Squire in the City. It is fair to say that after many years with the firm, David became a little disenchanted with the corporate matter of patents and took early retirement. He spent this quietly in Essex, enjoying holidays and family life, his children having grown up.

It was while studying at Cambridge that David met Pat. When Pat lived in Ilford and David shared a bachelor flat in Kensington, evening commuting across town was routine. They were married in 1967 and so had 52 years of fruitful married life, producing two sons and a daughter.

The funeral will take place in Chelmsford on March 20th. Our condolences are extended to Pat (who has been a stalwart helpmate throughout) Caroline, Andrew and Owen and their families.

Peter Walton Smith**(1941-45)****died 8 July 2019**

Keen on sports, Peter was the School Swimming Captain and in 1945 swam at the National Championships in London. He played for the Grammar school rugby and cricket teams. School noted that as well as his physical prowess he had good qualities in leadership and organisation.

He was a Corporal in the School Air Training Corps. The cadets were involved in many ceremonial duties. He played in the ATC band, marching in parades and welcoming home returning soldiers. Fortunately the war came to an end shortly before dad became of age, otherwise he might have become a pilot or other aircrew.

He started a 3½ -year apprenticeship with The Bristol Aeroplane Company Limited in June 1946 and gained an O.N.C. in Mechanical Engineering. He remained with Bristol as an Aircraft Engineer until the company split operations in 1956, when he worked for the Bristol Aero Engines division which became Bristol Siddeley in 1959. Bristol Siddeley was purchased by Rolls Royce in 1966. He worked at Rolls Royce, Patchway on engines including the Olympus (Concorde), Pegasus (Harrier) and RB119 (Tornado) .

Following early retirement from Rolls Royce in 1983 he worked for Age Concern, initially doing gardening but later as one of their bus drivers, this involved collecting the elderly from their homes and transporting them safely to the day centres. He really enjoyed this job and it gave him great satisfaction. Sadly, he did this only for a couple of years before joining the council to mowing its grass. He was certainly in his element bombing around on the mowers and loved this work too, you couldn't fail to notice him as he looked like Biggles on wheels. He eventually fully retired in 1993 at the age of 65 after a full working life.

An excerpt from Ian Smith's eulogy published on www.cicsplex.co.uk/BGS/

Chris Shepard – some more from Stuart Haywood (1948-53)

I was a contemporary of Chris in the late '40s and early '50s. He was two years older than me and consequently I had little to do with him and his exalted circle.

I did get to know him when he was in charge of the boys who brought packed lunches in "D" room just off the main hall. I recall him as a boy with a short fuse who could be riled easily. With my friend Nick Toon we hatched a plot to infuriate him. Chris sat at the masters desk to supervise whilst consuming his school lunch. On the day in question he was tucking in to beef stew. Nick and I sat immediately in front of him and grinned inanely at him for few minutes. It was not long before he requested we desist from the silly practice. Naturally we grinned even more. Eventually he furiously shouted "for goodness sake, stop grinning" or words to that effect. Finally, he picked up his plate and raised it violently above his head before bringing it down on the desk. Unfortunately the lunch of stew was cast up the blackboard and wall.

Chris sheepishly left the room and reappeared a short time later with a mop and bucket. He made a good job of clearing up.

Some of the more senior "old boys" may recall Nick Toon. He always had his fairly long hair plastered down with Brylcreem. He was a non-sporting boy but a gifted storyteller. He wrote highly amusing anecdotes of his imaginary country "Tinyeye". He appeared a few times on "Children's Hour" on national radio giving readings.

In those days we shared apparatus in chemistry and my partner was Nick. In the 3 or 4 years we did chemistry we never finished an experiment successfully. We ran out of time separating salt from sand. No wonder we were known as “the professors”.

Nick lived in Newton Solney and cycled to school. He was a poor timekeeper and occasionally did not arrive at school until almost lunch time. His usual excuse was that the traffic lights and level crossings were against him. Mr. "Taffy" Davies sometimes picked him up in his car.

Chris Sheppard's neighbour told me that Chris was interred opposite the Conservative Party headquarters at St Pauls. "Opposite" sounds oddly appropriate for Chris.

Other Condolences

The Association also extends its sympathy to the relations and friends of the following, about whom we do not yet have material for obituaries. As usual, the editor will welcome any information to support a proper obituary next year.

Ian David Deaville (1952-58). Passed away peacefully after a short illness at home on 2nd May 2019 aged 78 . Devoted and deeply loved husband of Valerie. Treasured dad to Duncan, Johanna and Richard. Wonderful brother-in-law, adored granddad, loving uncle, friend and hero to many.

Donald Rowlinson (1942-47) died in December 2018

Brian Sydney Langslow (1961-66) Syd passed away on 5th March 2019, whilst at Burton Rugby Club, which was his second home.

Brian Turner (1944-51) passed away at his home in Parker, CO at age 85 on May 7, 2019

Michael Cooke (1949-56) suffered a stroke in May 2019, and died on 3rd September.

Stuart Haywood notes that **Eric Higginson(1947-1954)** died about 4 years ago. On leaving school, he trained to be a teacher but later became involved in educational administration'

Stuart's old form mate, **Barry Walton(1948-1953)** died earlier last year. He spent his working life as an officer at Messrs.Bass.

BURTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The school was founded about the year 1520 by Abbott William Beyne of Burton Abbey.

He re-established the school, already flourishing within the Abbey walls, as a separate entity, and endowed it with lands in 1529. His action ensured that the School did not perish when the Abbey was dissolved in 1541.

It is known that boys from the School were sent up to Cambridge, and probably to Oxford, before 1530.

During the centuries, further endowments were added, and in 1869, all the revenues were amalgamated and the Burton Endowed Schools came into being. In 1877, it moved from Friars Walk to the premises in Bond Street that some of us remember. In 1957, the school moved to a new building in Winshill, where it remained until 1975, when it was absorbed into the Abbot Beyne comprehensive.

The most famous of the School's known Old Boys was John Jervis, Admiral Lord St. Vincent, under whom Nelson served.

News from Abbot Beyne School

Abbot Beyne continue to offer a varied range of opportunities for our students. The many events have helped to develop their skills of leadership and organisation and contribute their time and effort to their community. The trips and experiences have also helped develop their knowledge of the world in which we live, and in some cases, provide an occasion for awe and wonder.

At our Celebration Evening in December we celebrated another set of excellent GCSE examination results. These results were achieved through a combination of effective teaching, well targeted revision classes, well planned revision and lots of practice. The great results are also testament to the supportive and challenging culture that we nurture at Abbot Beyne and which parents and carers support too. Academic success comes from hard work, self belief and an understanding that the road to success is never smooth or easy, but is ultimately worth it.

I have included some extracts from our newsletter to give you a flavour of Abbot Beyne life.

Annabel Stoddart, Headteacher



Abbot Beyne Head Students, House & Sports Captains 2020

Head Students: Nancy Criddle (Columba House), Charlotte Warren-French (Pyxis House)

	House Captains	Sports Captains
Columba	Eesha Hussain Zhyrelle Perez	Ben Clay
Hercules	Heidi Brown Kareem Hiragy Amy Pointer	Aimee McLean
Orion	Oliver Cooper Noor-ul-ain Wahid- Parveen	Freya Lewis Jack Rothwell
Pyxis	Molly Gould Nicole Saroglou	Jude Leavesley-Richards

KEY STAGE 3 HISTORY CLUB

Year 7 students have been discovering what makes the local area so great by researching the local History of Burton upon Trent, including the towns links with Mary Queen of Scots, the history of The Paget family (and what happened to William Paget's leg at The Battle of Waterloo!) and why Burton has been the top spot for breweries for over 100 years!

Students have also been getting creative by making their very own plasticine models of their favourite characters from history.

Belsen 75

On Wednesday 12th February we had the privilege in taking part in The Belsen 75 project. The project marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camp by the British Forces. We are the only school in Burton to have been accepted on this and are one of 7 visits nationally to take part. It was an honour for myself and two A Level History students to be a part of this one-off opportunity.

British Forces liberated Bergen-Belsen on the 15th April 1945. Thousands of bodies lay unburied around the camp and some 50,000 starving and mortally ill people were packed together without food, water or basic sanitation. Many were suffering from typhus, dysentery and starvation. Even after liberation 15,000 survivors died as a result of disease and the impact of long term neglect. Many survivors remained in the camp until 1950, five years after it had liberated.

In April we have to submit a project based on what we have learned and we will share more of our findings with you then. This project is organised and subsidised by The Holocaust Education Trust, the DfE (Department of Education) and The University of Central London.



BURTON ALBION SCHOOL READING CHALLENGE

To reward the students who have read ten or more books during The Autumn Term 2019, we attended The Burton Albion v Peterborough match on Saturday 29th February 2020.



Students will have the chance to have their photograph taken with the club mascot Billy Brewer and will also receive a certificate.

Keep up the good work students and keep reading!

Fundraising at Abbot Beyne

Students raised 121.65 for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, and £345 towards our school charities; Stonewall, Mind, Burton Queens Hospital & Childline.

Annabel's article is given in full on www.cicsplex.co.uk/BGS

April 2019 to March 2020: Memories from BGS Old Boys

Early Impressions of the Burton Grammar School (1900-07)

This is an extract from a reminiscence by Aubrey C Baggleby

When I arrived with my brother Arthur (I was about eleven and a half and he two years my senior), I felt myself a minnow among the big fish. I was quite small for my age. What was still more frightening was seeing boys whizzing through the air holding on to pieces of wood tied on to the ends of ropes, the other ends of which were fastened to a circulating metal plate at the top of a large, thick, shortened telegraph pole. I learnt afterwards that it was a "Giant Stride", and I enjoyed many a round on it myself in later years,

Assembly for prayers, read in his booming voice by the Rev. T.W. Beckett, followed by the hymn, sung to the accompaniment of a wheezy harmonium played by a young master named Cole. After he left, Cyril Hartshorn took over, but as an accomplished musician, that harmonium was a real trial to him. He hated it, but with only 150 boys or so, no-one else could be found to be pressed into service.

Mr. Beckett was to me a very imposing person with very large hands, which were used in such a way as to put the fear of the Lord into us. On one occasion, Jack Rudd, a member of my brother's form, felt the weight of it. What Jack said I never knew, but as a result, he received a cuff on each side of the face. For two days his face was red and swollen. Such things were accepted in the school in those days.

Mr. Beckett left, after I had been at B.G.S. for only two terms, to become Vicar of Anslow. Having been Headmaster since 1884, he had a special farewell at the prizegiving in the Town Hall. I was greatly impressed by Mrs Beckett, who looked after the twenty or so boarders. She had been greatly liked. With no public transport, except trains, and almost no motor-cars, boys from a distance had to board, Willie Wain from Bretby often came by pony, and stabled it in High Street, near the market place.

In September 1900, Mr. R.T. Robinson, from Wyggeston School, Leicester, succeeded Mr. Beckett, and caused a stir when he introduced Saturday morning school from 9.0 am to 12.30 in place of Wednesday afternoon 2 till 4.0. His reason seemed shameless – we were fresher in the mornings, and Wednesday afternoons could be used for games. He omitted to mention the extra one and a half hours' work. • In fact, not many boys played football and cricket at school then.

The games were run by a Sports Club to which members had to pay a fee of 2/6d per term and supply their own gear, and pay for any travelling, i.e. to Ashby, Lichfield, Atherstone, etc. This was a prohibitive expense for quite a number of boys, in those days of large families and low salaries. The days of financial backing by the Local Authority or the State were yet to come. There were also "Bathing Sheds" by a backwater of the Trent.

Aubrey's article is given in full on www.cicsplex.co.uk/BGS

When BGS was Bombed

31 Jan 1916

During an evening Zeppelin raid, about 50 bombs were dropped on Burton, and 15 people killed. The main loss of life was at Christ Church mission room where six of the audience were killed out of 200 people attending a meeting.

Eyewitnesses reported seeing airmen throwing bombs over the side of two Zeppelins.

Another bomb was dropped on the corner of Lichfield St and Bond Street, and damaged the headmasters house, blowing out the frame and glass from all windows on one side. Part of the wall was destroyed between the ground floor and first floor windows.

More seriously, it killed a young lad named Bertie Geary who had shinned up a gas lamp post in an attempt to extinguish the light.

Stuart Haywood

Association Continuity Body

The Association will “cease trading” after the bills for the 2020 dinner have been paid, after which it will morph into a legacy body whose only asset is the database of members. We need this in order to continue sending newsletters, but don’t yet have a name for it. Please have your suggestions ready for the AGM.

In addition, the Old Boys’ Facebook page has some new subscribers who are not included in the database of members of the organization. They would all be very welcome to join — it’s free, using the form on www.cicsplex.co.uk/BGS/

National Brewery Centre Tour on 24 May 2019

Following the success of our tour of Marston’s in 2018, we visited the National Brewery Centre in the afternoon before our 2019 AGM.

This is on the site of the former Bass Museum, later the Coors Visitor Centre. After Coors announced in 2008 that the centre would close, there was a huge outcry, leading to the setting up of a group that eventually formed the National Brewery Heritage Trust, owners of the centre.



BGS OBA Past Presidents

1921-22	AH Yeomans	1968-69	W.T.Burman
1922-23	F.Evershed	1969-70	F.W.Fawkes
1923-24	W.Shelley	1970-71	W.H.Gillian
1924-25	A.Slator	1971-72	R.L.Knight
1925-26	R. Samble	1972-73	B.E. Warren
1926-27	W.P.Lowe	1973-74	J.H.Mander
1927-28	H.Leigh-Newton	1974-75	N.A.Binns
1928-29	J.H.Moir	1975-76	D.G.Hardwick
1929-30	C.F.Gothard	1976-77	R.A.Clark
1930-31	F.J.Manners	1977-78	A.Fallon
1931-32	F.Newton-Husbands	1978-79	G.M.Hamilton
1932-33	J.H.Birch	1979-80	A.T.Cole
1933-34	W.E.Briggs	1980-81	P.Minns
1934-35	J.D.Robertson	1981-82	J.A.Woolley
1935-36	B.F.Sadle	1982-83	R.Outhwaite
1936-37	F.J.Hodges	1983-89	G.T.Milnes
1937-38	Col.D.H.Mason	1989-90	H.E.Smith
1938-39	R.T.Robinson	1990-91	E.A.Bailey
1939-40	B.C.Newbold	1991-92	D.A.Sharatt
1940-41	R.C.Sims	1992-93	B.Clements
1941-42	J.B.Smith	1993-94	G.Starback
1942-43	F.T.Shelley	1994-95	N.A.Tomkins
1943-44	T.W.Parkin	1995-96	T.A.Trigg
1944-45	P.J.Williams	1996-97	J.M.Illingworth
1945-46	E.J.Dallard	1997-98	J.P.Hartley
1946-47	H.J.Wain	1998-99	R.Deacon
1947-48	G.W.Britton	1999-00	L.S.Dunkerly
1948-49	F.E.James	2000-01	P.G.Booth
1949-50	B.L.Hubbard	2001-02	G.K.Rushton
1950-51	L.A.Haywood	2002-03	S.A.Neal
1951-52	R.P.Stevenson	2003-04	J.S.Pickering
1952-53	G.H.Cooper	2004-05	R.J.Wain
1953-54	L.E.Churchill	2005-06	F.Toon
1954-55	J.D.Rowland	2006-07	Rev. R.Gilbert
1955-56	D.P.Haywood	2007-08	M. E. Watson
1956-57	J.F.Rose	2008-09	G. P. Evans.
1957-58	W.R.Souster	2009-10	R.F.Andrews
1958-59	F.C.Jenks	2010-11	D.J.Grimsley
1959-60	H.H.Pitchford	2011-12	K.B. Large
1960-61	D.J.Grimsley	2012-13	R.F. Kerry
1961-62	A.E.G.Hardwick	2013-14	M. Brown
1962-63	A.C.Bowden	2014-15	G.S. Marshment
1963-64	R.H.Eggington	2015-16	A. Gentles
1964-65	K.A.Stanyon	2016-17	S Wilcox
1965-66	D.M.Davies	2017-18	J. Ash
1966-67	H.E.C.Weston	2018-20	J. A. Taylor
1967-68	W.F.Howarth		

Burton Grammar School Old Boys' Association Annual General Meeting to be held at 19:00 on Friday 9 October at Branston Golf & Country Club DE14 3DP

AGENDA

- Welcome, Opening Greeting and Apologies
- Names of Old Boys who have passed away during the last twelve months.
- Silence to be observed for one minute.
- Minutes of the last AGM held 24th May 2019.
- President's remarks (John Taylor) on this historic moment.
- Treasurer's report. Use of any remaining funds post dissolution.
- Report from John Taylor, OBA representative on the Beyne Foundation
- Formal Dissolution of the BGS OBA — Discussion and formal vote.
- Arrangements post dissolution — database and legacy arrangements.
- Opportunities for keeping contact with fellow Old Boys.
- Future of the Remembrance service
- AOB
- President John Taylor — final thoughts.

Income and Expenditure Statement for Year Ended 31 December 2019

Income	2018	2019	Expenditure	2018	2019
Dining receipts/donations	£1177	£1625	Newsletter/postages	£380	£411
Golf entry	£0	£0	Dining costs	£1000	£1410
			Engraving	£22	£0
			Brewery Tour	£0	£119
			Miscellaneous	£124	£160
			Deposit for AGM	£0	£200
Total	£1177	£1625		£2074	£2300
Excess income over expenditure for year ending 31 December	(£349)			(£675)	
Balance at bank as at 31 December				£1621	£946
Cash in hand				£98	£98
			Total reserves at 31 December	£1719	£1044

Minutes of the AGM 24th May 2019 held at the Branston Golf & Country Club

1. President John Taylor welcomed Old Boys to the AGM and expressed how good it was to see everyone and the welcome increase of members present.
2. The President then asked the Secretary to note the apologies, which included Colin Battell, Andrew Bauer, Steve Boyd, Duncan Bradley, Mike Clements, Lionel Cooper, Steve Cort, Sir Oscar DeVillle, Peter Ellis, John Fellows, Tony Fisher, Brian Gee, Ian Gilchrist, Mike Hamilton, David Ingham, Roger Kerry, David Mortlock, Frank Over, Derrick Pounds, Keith Shaw, Mike Smith, Keith Stuart-Smith, Ken Stanyon, Anthony Thorniley, Neal Tomlinson, John Toon, Jim Warren, Mike Wilson, Bert Young.
3. A minute's silence was observed after a roll-call of old boys who had sadly passed away during the past twelve months and others not previously recorded. These included: Gary Acres OBE, David John Burns, Wilfrid Cross, Ian Deaville, Geoffrey Grimsley, Syd Langslow, Alan (Toff) Neal, Richard Rackham, Donald Rowlinson, Chris Shepard, Prof Eric M Shooter FRS, Desmond Silcox, Dr Robert Somekh, Robert Street, Roger Tomlinson, Brian Turner and Alastair Yates.
4. The President asked for approval of the minutes of the AGM held 18th May 2018. Proposed by Rob Andrews, Seconded by Terry Hickman, and passed unanimously.
5. Treasurer Steve Wilcox presented the Annual Income & Expenditure Statement for the year to 31st December 2019, and Published in the newsletter. A motion to adopt the accounts was proposed by: Mike Brown, seconded by: Richard Wain, and carried unanimously.
6. Election of Officers: Malcolm Watson proposed that the present committee be re-elected *en bloc* to serve for the final year of the Association. Seconded by Bob Andrews, and accepted.
Confirmation of Officers:

President	John Taylor
Secretary	Graham Marshment
Treasurer	Steve Wilcox
Editor	Eric Bodger
Co-opted Members	Andrew Gentles, Keith Large, and Kevin Gallagher
7. **Beyne Foundation Report** was presented by John Taylor. Having previously reported on the history of the Foundation, John gave a detailed breakdown of its work. He explained that four schools each benefitted by £3,000 per term.



8. President's Remarks: John asked for all OBA members to give thought to the format of the AGM and Dinner in 2020 for a grand finale in celebration of the school. Any input for the September Committee meeting would be welcomed! He was delighted that to learn that the tour of the Brewery Museum in the afternoon had been well supported and very much enjoyed.
9. Abbot Beyne School Report. The many successes of the school were reported.
10. Editors Report, presented by Eric Bodger:
Eric again encouraged the members to provide him with content for the newsletter as he doesn't want it to become a collection of obituaries. It is his intention to continue to publish the newsletter annually and distribute it electronically, maintaining the Association web-site while interest persists after the Association ceases to meet. He explained there were some legal issues to be clarified about maintaining an OBA database after the organisation was formally dissolved, but believed these could be addressed with an informal successor.
11. Dates of future events:
Remembrance Service Friday 8 Nov 2019
AGM and Dinner Friday 15 May 2020 [but postponed because of Covid-19]
12. There being no further business, the President closed the meeting and the members convened for Dinner.

Burton Club Lunch

On the 2nd March a very enjoyable Lunch was held at the Burton Club for Club members who were also BGS Old Boys. Memories were revived and the 25 Club members and their Old Boy guests enjoyed sharing BGS experiences over a most enjoyable lunch. Bob Andrews then gave everyone present a tour of the BGS Archive Room which he has constructed over the last two years and this completed a very much appreciated event.

Sinai Park House to be scheduled

Our trips in the afternoon before the AGM have proved popular, and this year we are moving on from brewing to see one of the most historic places in the Burton Area.

The site was the fortified manor of the de Schobenhale family with its 13th-century hilltop moat, before passing to Burton Abbey, which constructed what are now the wings of the house

we will visit. After the dissolution, the property was bought by William Paget, the first Baron of Beaudesert and one of Henry VIII's chief ministers. [The Paget family](#) built the central section of the house in 1605 and continued to own Sinai for almost 400 years, using it as a hunting lodge.

You can book your place on our tour group on the same form as your dinner booking.



From the Editor:

I should like to thank all who have contributed material to this newsletter, including all the Committee members and others who have provided updates and photographs. People have been so generous this year that I have been unable to fit everything in; my apologies to anyone who has contributed material omitted or abridged.

Those who come to the annual dinner know what a delightful event that is, with excellent food as well as the opportunity to catch up with people you haven't seen for years. So please try to persuade your friends to join you at the dinner. I'll be happy to email this package to anyone you nominate; they will be welcome guests.

Since the 2020 Dinner is the last ever planned, it could be your final opportunity to meet some of your contemporaries face to face. We are celebrating half a millennium since the school was spun off from Burton Abbey by Abbot Beyne; and it is also the 100th year of our Association. Let's go out on a high!

The membership database remains in my hands. It may be that to comply with data-protection laws, we need to carry forward the Association as a legacy body, with no role other than to maintain the database and issue newsletters. That way, we don't have to build an entirely new database. Perhaps "BGS Old Boys' News" would be a suitable name for it.

Please send any database updates to me at bgs@cicsplex.co.uk. If you don't wish me to retain your personal data, please notify me and I will remove your entry. But bear in mind that the database is the only way we can send you newsletters and invitations to any future events. I am happy to forward emails on request, providing the person you want to reach has an email address on record.

I will maintain the www.cicsplex.co.uk/BGS/ web-site for as long as there seems to be an interest, and email links to an annual newsletter so long as input continues to arrive. It will not be possible to print newsletters for posting in future, so please let me have your email address if you are not already getting electronic communications from the Association.

There are several web-sites members may find informative:

- The Association's (soon to be legacy) site at www.cicsplex.co.uk/BGS/ with an archive of newsletters, notices of events, and anything else that comes to me, including a fuller account of activities at Abbot Beyne.
- Kevin Gallagher's general BGS site at www.burtongrammar.co.uk/
- Keith Large's Facebook group for BGS alumni and friends

Eric Bodger (1956-62)

e-mail: bgs@cicsplex.co.uk

Final AGM & Dinner to be held on Friday 9 October 2020

in the PAVILION AT BRANSTON GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

The schedule will be: **18:15 -19:00 hours** – Guests arrive for free drink

19:00 hours – Final AGM **19:45 hours** – Guests called to Dinner

20:00 hours – Welcome and Grace **21:45 hours** – Speeches

23:00 hours – Bar closes **23:30 hours** – Carriages

Menu

Starter:

Marbled salmon terrine served with shallot and caper dressing and crisp toasts

Main:

Honey glazed Leg of Lamb, rosemary and redcurrant jus

OR Sun blushed tomato and spinach frittata with napolitana sauce (V)

Dessert:

Raspberry Bakewell tart with clotted cream ice cream

Coffee or Tea and Dinner mints

Please book for the Dinner using the form sent with this Newsletter.

(Bookings requested by **Friday 24th April**, please).

Guests of either sex are welcome at the dinner



Burton Grammar School Memorabilia

When The Burton Grammar School was converted into the Abbot Beyne, many of its historical artefacts were destroyed or thrown away. It is hard to understand this vandalism, even if it doesn't match the Taliban destroying temples in Afghanistan.

Fortunately some were preserved in a meeting room at the Abbot Beyne School, and for forty years could be seen there. However the school wanted to reflect its own history and I was asked if we wanted the items. With the help of some other old boys we moved the items to old boy, Roger Kerry's house.



As the The Grammar School was endowed by Abbot William Beyne of Burton Abbey, there was a case for housing the memorabilia at the Abbey.

As I am the Archivist of The Burton Club, whose members own the Abbey building, I was able to arrange a suitable permanent home for the memorabilia at the Club.

The Burton Club was founded by an old boy of the school, namely Michael Bass, Lord Burton.

The BGSObA donated £50 to floor an area in the loft at The Abbey and over time there will be references available that show the connection between The Burton Grammar School, The Burton Club and The Abbey.

If any Old boy has items from the school which he feels would be worth saving for posterity, please do not hesitate to contact me on (01283) 820 357 to arrange collection.

All the items that were collected from Abbot Beyne School are now stored in The Abbey, and gradually they will be put on display, allowing future generations of Club members and their guests to understand the history of our Town. Hopefully this will continue long after the last 'old boy' has gone.

The archive is available to anyone who wishes to study the history of the School, and I shall be happy to arrange access to the archive for researchers or Old Boys who are not members of the Burton Club.

An interesting historical note, the shield of Wulfric Spot, the Saxon Lord who commissioned the rebuilding of Burton Abbey, is the same as the blue and gold badge of the Burton Grammar School.

R.F.Andrews (1952-1958)
Archivist, The Burton Club